



Special Cabinet

Date Thursday 22 September 2011
Time 10.00 am
Venue Committee Room 2 - County Hall, Durham

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. Declarations of interest, if any.

Key Decision:

2. Policies for the Management of the Council's Cemeteries - Report of Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services [Key Decision NH/NS/15/10] (Pages 1 - 34)

Ordinary Decisions:

3. Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Review Working Group - Area Action Partnerships - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 35 - 66)
4. Quarter 1 2011/12 Performance Management Report - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 67 - 110)
5. Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2011/12 - Period to 30 June 2011 - Report of Corporate Director, Resources (Pages 111 - 130)
6. Roundabout Sponsorship / Illegal Signs and Adverts Policy - Report of Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services (Pages 131 - 158)
7. Private Sector Housing Strategy for County Durham - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 159 - 232)
8. Barnard Castle Vision Governance - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 233 - 248)
9. Update of the Office Accommodation Programme - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 249 - 276)

10. Digital Durham Programme Update - Joint Report of Corporate Director, Resources and Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 277 - 282)
11. Joint Commissioning Strategy for Domestic Abuse Services in County Durham 2011-14 - Report of Corporate Director, Adults, Wellbeing and Health (Pages 283 - 336)
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. 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
14 September 2011

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

Contact: Ros Layfield, Tel: 0191 383 4205

Cabinet

22 September 2011

**Policies for the Management of the
County Councils Cemeteries**



Key Decision: NH/NS/15/10

**Report of Corporate Management Team
Terry Collins, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services,
Cllr Brian Stephens, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local
Partnerships**

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider, in the light of public consultation, proposals for the management of the County Councils Cemeteries.

Background

2. On 13 April 2011 Cabinet reviewed a series of draft policies for the management of the County Councils cemeteries. These proposals were informed using feedback from a Members Seminar held on 15 November 2010 and covered the following areas:
 - Further development of cemeteries as space runs out.
 - Dealing with unsafe memorials
 - Approach to kerbside surrounds
 - Approach to adornments on graves
 - Approach to charging for residents from outside the County.
 - Approach to municipal funerals, incurred at public expense
 - Approach to woodland burial sites
 - Approach to charging for family searches
3. Members recognised that this is a sensitive, and potentially emotive issue in sometimes balancing the wishes of many cemetery visitors, with their expectation of a well maintained and respectful surroundings, with the personal needs of the bereaved who may hold strong views as to the look of their friend or relatives graveside and how they feel they wish them to be remembered. In view of this sensitivity, Members approved a consultation exercise to be undertaken with residents and stakeholders involved in bereavement services (for example clergy, funeral directors, stonemasons and others).
4. Consultation began on 3 May 2011 and ended on 25 July 2011, with a wide variety of organisations contacted and alongside residents invited to respond either directly or using a questionnaire format on the County Councils website.

A total of 235 responses were received, with 218 being online and 17 returned in paper format. The majority of responses (92%) were from members of the public, however clergy, monumental masons and funeral directors also responded. Whilst the majority of respondents (78%) considered themselves of Christian faith, there were small (or single) numbers of Jewish, Humanist, Jehovah's Witness, together with those expressing atheist and 17.7% expressing none. Written responses included a meeting and subsequent letter from the Durham Diocesan Advisory Committee.

5. It is noteworthy that five of the County Councils cemeteries were awarded Green Flag status this year in recognition of their standards of maintenance, environmental practices and community involvement. This represents the largest number awarded for cemeteries in the Country and represents well the future ambitions of this service in providing high quality and respectful surroundings that meet the needs of visitors and the local community.
6. The remainder of this report sets out the consultation findings on the draft proposals (frequency tables in **Appendix 2**, full copy of report in Members library), and concludes with recommendations of the proposed policies. Subject to Members approval, these will be developed into accessible leaflets for bereaved and cemetery visitors' reference, as well as formally adopted in the cemetery rules and regulations.

Proposals - Capacity

7. **Subject to funding, seek to extend or develop new / existing cemeteries where there is demonstrable need.** As a Council there is a statutory duty to make provision for the committal of the deceased, however the method by which this is achieved is not prescribed, and might be for example, if the Council elects, to be reliant solely on crematoria when cemeteries are full. The consultation has revealed however that 80.2% of the respondents supported the proposal of developing more cemetery space as opposed to using up the available space without further extension.
8. It is proposed that Members adopt the principles of cemetery development where there is demonstrable need and subject to resources availability. Further work is being undertaken in conjunction with Town and Parish Councils to establish areas of greatest need, and an operational strategy will be developed to establish further opportunities for expansion should funding become available.
9. **To introduce an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the County.** A large number of Councils control capacity and improve value for money for Council tax payers by charging more for non-residents; indeed this included some of the former Durham District Councils. To put it into perspective however, in the last 12 months 93% of burials were for residents, 7% (43) were non-residents.
10. The consultation has identified that a majority (56.3%) of respondents agreed that there should be an increased charge introduced for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area.

12.6% expressed no view however 31.1% disagreed with this proposal, and of those, 62.1% of the comments regarding this specific question said that people born, raised or with family in the area should be exempt from the charge.

11. Many surrounding local authorities like Darlington, Newcastle, South Tyneside, and Gateshead charge more for those who do not live in these areas. Considering the majority in favour, it is suggested that the proposed alterations to fees be included as part of the new cemetery charges from 1 April 2012.

Proposals - Unsafe Memorials (Headstones)

12. **All new headstones and cemetery fixtures be undertaken by suitably qualified memorial masons** this will be in accordance with the National Association of Memorial Mason's (NAMM) Code of Practice current at the time of installation. All memorial mason companies who work in the cemeteries must be registered with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM). Of those who responded 89.7% agreed that all new headstones and cemetery fixtures should continue to be undertaken by a suitably qualified memorial mason, with just 4.5% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed, the most common reason was that memorial masons are too expensive (although this was just four responses). This affirmation of current practice will help to ensure future safety and reduced risk of faults. The proposal reflective of current practice will be maintained subject to Member's approval.
13. **To "pocket" (where possible) unsafe memorials in instances where no relatives can be traced or the family unwilling to fund full re-instatement.** Pocketing involves the half burying of a headstone in the ground to make it safe. It is considerably less expensive than a full reinstatement, typically will not damage the inscription and is reversible if at some stage the family funds reinstatement.
14. 84.2% of respondents agreed that unsafe memorials should be pocketed (where possible) in instances that no relatives can be traced or the family is unwilling to fund re-instatement, with 11.8% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed, the main reason for this was that inscriptions should be recorded/information maintained. It is considered however that pocketing is the most cost effective, provided a good option for maintenance and visual aesthetics. The proposal would be introduced with immediate effect subject to Member's approval.
15. **To re lift all current memorials that are lying down and pocket (where possible) from existing budgets.** Over two-thirds (66.8%) of respondents agreed that current monuments that are lying down should be lifted and pocketed (where possible) from existing budgets, whilst 19.3% disagreed. Of those disagreeing over half stated that the lying monuments were safe and maintained inscription information. This work is estimated to be in the region of 5,000 and this would be planned over the next 10 years and will be prioritised on current risks and maintenance issues, this will also be in line with the headstone testing programme and the work completed whilst work is being undertaken in each cemetery.

Proposals – Kerb Surrounds

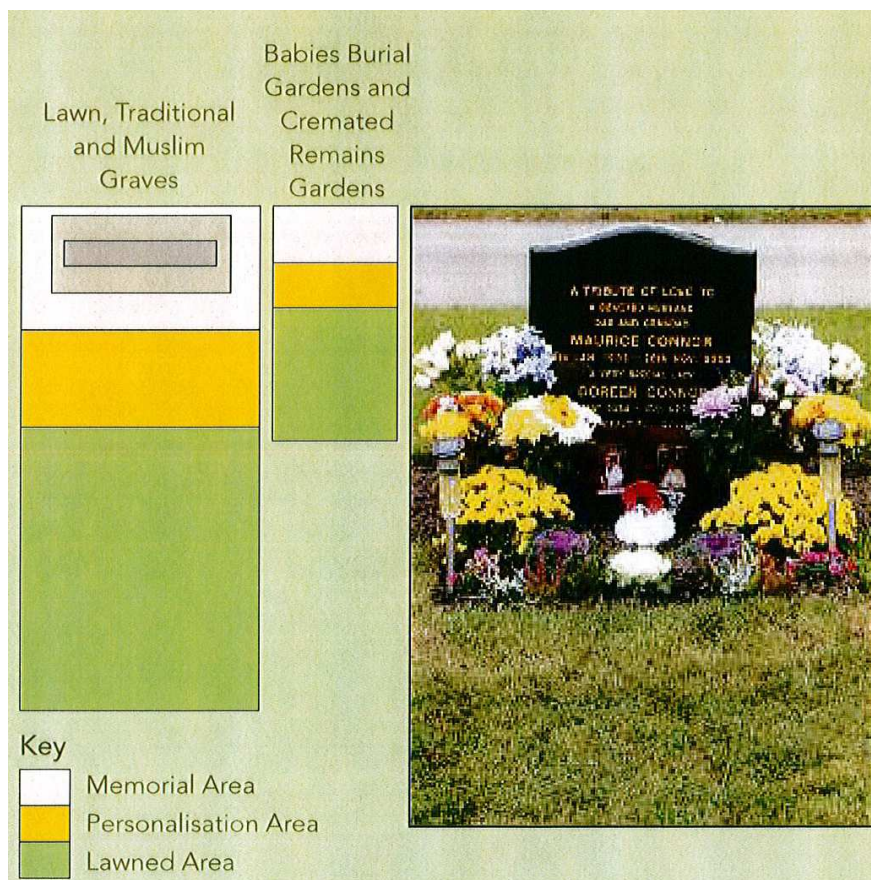
16. **New kerb surrounds will not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free from them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions.** Of those that responded 75.7% agreed that new kerb surrounds should not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free of them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions, with just 15.4% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed the most common complaint was that it should be up to the plot holder/relatives to decide how the grave is presented. At the members seminar 77% of Members voted for 'no surrounds' thus improving the ascetics and reducing maintenance. The Diocesan Advisory Committee, in their feedback on the consultation "wholeheartedly supported any policy which opposed the position of curb surrounds".
17. **Appendix 3** identifies the areas and sections that are proposed to remain kerb surround free (maps displaying cemetery sections available in the Members library). It is also proposed to create a database of those graves in each cemetery that are currently free of kerb surrounds in order to ensure a consistent approach. The proposal to be introduced from 1 October 2011 subject to member's approval.
18. **To permit kerbside surrounds in cemeteries (or parts) areas where there has been a tradition of their use, but this is subject to it being installed by a suitably qualified memorial mason.** Two-thirds of respondents (66.7%) agreed that new kerb surrounds should be allowed in cemeteries (or parts of cemeteries) where there is a tradition of their use, but subject to it being installed by a qualified memorial mason. 13.5% disagreed and of these the most common reason was that cemetery maintenance becomes expensive/difficult.
19. This proposal recognises the current position across many cemeteries. A one off charge is proposed at £308 which takes into consideration the increased costs on the Council for grounds maintenance incurred by these features. This charge also reflects the views of the Members who voted that the highest Authority charge should be set. **Appendix 3** identifies the areas and sections where kerbside surrounds will be permitted. It is also proposed that we create a database of those cemeteries that have kerb surrounds and what types are in existence in order to ensure a consistent approach. The proposal to be introduced from 1 October 2011 subject to member's approval.
20. **In future where new unauthorised surrounds are erected then the Council will contact the family and request removal giving families one month to remove these or they will be removed and stored for collection.** With good communication, these circumstances would be avoided as relatives will be advised at the time of burial which cemeteries (or sections) they may have kerbside surrounds if they are especially keen to have them. In some cemeteries, currently free from kerbs, the introduction of a single unauthorised kerb can spoil the appearance for others.
21. A majority (57.7%) of respondents agreed that it is suitable to allow one month from the moment of the Council contacting families to remove unauthorised surrounds erected, or they will be moved and stored for collection. 32.9% disagreed however, and over three-quarters of these felt a longer period of 2-3 months should be allowed instead.

The unauthorised kerbside surrounds are likely to have been planned as a permanent feature, unlikely have been put in by qualified memorial masons (who would be aware of the rules), and it is felt that that one month strikes the balance between giving the families time, whilst not too long for the kerbside surround to become established.

22. It is also proposed that we create a database of those cemeteries that have kerb surrounds and what type are in existence in order to ensure that any unauthorised surrounds are dealt with by means of enforcement of the Rules and Regulation. The proposal to be introduced from 1 October 2011 subject to member's approval.
23. It is not proposed to apply this rule retrospectively, however if an existing kerbside surround falls into significant disrepair, or looks unsightly the Cemetery Managers will, exercising discretion approach owners in the interest of good cemetery management.

Proposals – Adornments

24. **To allow adornments within a personalisation area at the base of the memorial.** The illustration below outlines a typical personalisation area. 69.9% of respondents agreed that it is suitable to allow adornments within a small personalisation area at the base of the memorial, whilst 45 (20.9%) people disagreed. Of those that disagreed the most common reason was that adornments are not appropriate at all. In view of the majority in favour, it is suggested that the proposal to be introduced from 1st October 2011 subject to member's approval.



25. **Adornments within the curtilage of the grave to be allowed for a period of up to two months, beyond which time the family will be requested to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial.** Just over half (56.9%) of respondents agreed that it is suitable to allow adornments for two months within the boundary of the grave, beyond which time the family will be asked to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial. However, 29.2% disagreed with this; with the most common reason being a longer period of time should be allowed (ranging from 3 months to a year). The disagreement did range between those who were pro and anti adornments.

Adornments are clearly a sensitive issue, and from the 29.1% who disagreed, nearly a thirds (32.1%) wanted longer time. In view of this, it is proposed that a period of time of three months should be allowed beyond this period, items are carefully removed to a safe place for collection and any anniversary will be respected and time given to the family. Areas are also being identified in cemeteries where suitable locations can be used to place these adornments i.e. summer houses, existing buildings etc. The proposal is to be introduced from 1 October 2011 subject to Members approval.

26. The vast majority of existing graves are already consistent with this policy. In instances where the adornments do spill over, onto the graves of others, or impacting on the maintenance of the cemetery, staff will sensitively approach relatives, giving time for adjustments to be made.

Proposal – Municipal Funerals

27. **To provide for a religious/ non denominational representation to attend municipal funerals if denomination can be ascertained.** In cases where no family can be identified it can fall to the local authority to provide a municipal funeral. There were seven during 2009/10. The majority of these are through cremation; however there are instances when the deceased preference for burial is known. There is currently an inconsistency however, in that if the deceased religion/denomination is known, and referred through a hospital, a Minister is provided, although this is not the case, if the death was other than at hospital.

Over four-fifths (81.0%) of respondents agreed that it is suitable for a Minister of religion or other funeral Celebrant to attend municipal burials, if religion/denomination can be ascertained with just 8.5% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed, half said that the Council must be first aware of the deceased's preferences on this matter. This is acknowledged, and where faith cannot be ascertained the current practice of no minister in these circumstances would be respected. It is proposed to introduce these changes with immediate effect subject to Members approval.

Proposal – Family Searches

28. **To continue to charge for searching for family history and introduce a website facility.** 69.8% of respondents agree that we should continue to charge for searching for family history, with 20.0% disagreeing. 89.4% of respondents agreed that it was suitable to introduce a website facility to search for family history.

Just three people disagreed; with the most popular reason being that this should not be funded by the tax payer. However this would provide increased access to the records available for local residents as well as those now further a field. By using this system families wishing to carry out a search will be able to go to our website and make a single credit card payment, enabling them to perform a number of searches. Therefore a charge of £17 is continued subject to member's approval for providing this facility.

Proposal – Woodland Burial Sites

29. **To appraise potential options for implementation and delivery of the woodland burial site at the Durham South Road Cemetery.** There is an increasing interest in a more natural woodland burial, with over 160 sites throughout the Country already established and two, privately operated sites in County Durham. A potential area for a woodland burial site at South Road Cemetery has been recognised for some time, with the former City of Durham Council working in collaboration with a Durham based Community Interest Company who have led the development of the project to this point. It is understood that the site has been confirmed as suitable for this purpose by the Environment Agency.

30. Of those that responded 68.9% agreed that the Council should examine a business case for a proposed burial site at the existing Durham South Road Cemetery. Just 5.3% disagreed with this proposal, with protection of funding of current cemeteries being the most popular reason against the proposal (although this was just two responses). This proposal would extend the service provision possible and make valuable addition on an existing facility.

31. During the consultation exercise a business case has been submitted by the community interest company who have had a longstanding interest and involvement in this site. It is suggested that this is closely examined and progressed subject to this being a robust proposal. A key requirement will be to ensure that this is self funding, and compliments the wider work in the adjacent cemetery.

Conclusion and Next Steps

32. The consultation has revealed an endorsement to the draft proposals from residents and stakeholders with a majority of respondents in favour of each of the specific measures. Strongest support is given to extending cemeteries where there is a need (80.2%), using qualified memorial masons (89.7%), not allowing kerbside surrounds in certain areas (75.7%), providing a minister (where religion can be ascertained) at Municipal funerals (81%) and allowing adornments (69.9%). There was still a majority in favour of charging more for burial for non residents (56.3%), and limiting adornments (with the exception of smaller items) to two months (57%), although with the latter proposal, in the light of 32.1% of those disagreeing citing longer time, it is suggested that this period be lengthened to three months.

33. The rules and regulations are important aspect of cemetery management and will allow a consistent and fair approach to be made. It is important that the bereaved and visitors are familiar with them, and the reasons why, in the interests of the cemetery they are there. To this end, subject to approval, an accessible guide would be produced providing an explanation in a user-friendly way.

Separate and more service specific guides will be distributed to Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons. It is proposed that any enforcement is of course a last resort, with cemetery managers continuing their practice of being sensitive and respectful to the needs of the bereaved as far as possible.

Recommendations and reasons

34. That Cabinet note the content of the report and

- a) Consider and agree the principles to extend or develop new / existing cemeteries where there is demonstrable need, and subject to available resources.
- b) Consider and agree to an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area from 1st April 2012. This would be set out as part of charges for 2012/13.
- c) Consider and agree that all memorial mason companies who work in the cemeteries must be registered with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) scheme and to be implemented with immediate effect.
- d) Consider and agree to pocket (where possible) unsafe memorials after we have written to families informing them of the issues and giving them a period of time to repair, those that we are unable to pocket i.e. crosses/columns will be laid flat.
- e) Consider and agree to re lift all current memorials that are lying down and pocket (where possible) from existing budgets and this would be planned over the next 10 years and will be prioritised on current risks and maintenance issues, this will also be in line with the headstone testing programme and the work completed whilst work is being undertaken in each cemetery.
- f) Consider and agree that new kerb surrounds will not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free from them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions. To be implemented from 1 October 2011.
- g) Consider and agree to permit kerbside surrounds in cemeteries (or parts) areas where there has been a tradition of their use and to setting a one off charge of £308 from 1st October 2011, thereafter to be incorporated in charges.
- h) Consider and agree in future to contact families and request removal of unauthorised kerbside surrounds giving families one month to remove these or they will be removed and stored for collection at a suitable location identified within the cemetery from 1 October 2011.
- i) Consider and agree to allow adornments within a personalisation area at the base of the memorial from 1 October 2011.

- j) Consider and agree to allowing adornments within the curtilage of the grave for a period of up to three months, beyond which time the family will be requested to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial from 1 October 2011.
- k) To consider and agree to provide for a religious/ non denominational representation to attend municipal burials if denomination can be ascertained, to be implemented with immediate effect.
- l) To consider and agree to continue to charge for searching for family history at a charge of £17 to be implemented with immediate effect and to introduce a website facility once all records have been updated.
- m) To examine the business case for the development of a woodland burial site at Durham South Road Cemetery, implementing arrangements subject to no budgetary pressure.
- n) To consider and agree implementation of the Rules and Regulations documents that reflect these policies from 1 October 2011.

Background papers

Members Seminar – ‘Grave Matters’ 15 November 2010

Cabinet Report – 13th April 2011

Consultation Report – full copy available in Members Library

Draft Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries

Maps to display cemetery sections relating to kerbside surrounds (allowed or prohibited) – available in Members Library

Contact: Oliver Sherratt, Head of Direct Services Tel 0191 372 5205

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - The proposals outlined in this report will be met from existing budgets. Any new cemeteries or extensions will be subject to a separate business case to be considered by Members.

Staffing - There are no implications.

Risk – A comprehensive risk assessment has been reviewed with no reportable risks.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – An Equality Impact Assessment screening (EqIA) was undertaken as part of the proposals and presented with the Cabinet report in April 2011. This identified that the introduction of a harmonised County Durham Bereavement Services Cemetery Policy would benefit all regardless of gender, age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation and that by changing the way that we provide some of the services we offer, we will be increasing the choices increasing consistency that we provide for the bereaved, for example extending burial options, provision of ministers where belief/religion can be confirmed.

The EqIA (**Appendix 4**) has been reviewed and updated as a result of further evidence from the consultation process.

Accommodation – There are no implications.

Crime and Disorder – There are no implications

Human Rights – There are no implications

Consultation – This report has been formulated based on considerable consultation, first informed from a Member Seminar held on 15th November 2010, and more recently from extensive consultation with residents and interest groups connected with bereavement services.

Procurement - There are no implications

Disability Discrimination Act - No implications

Legal Implications - The proposals introduce new rules and regulations that if they are not followed, as a last resort, and following contact with relatives will be enforced using the principles outlined with sensitivity and fairness.

Appendix 2 Bereavement Consultation Frequency Tables

Q1: Do you think we should continue with our current provision of cemeteries, using up available space without further extension or seek to extend existing cemeteries and develop new cemeteries where there is demonstrable need, subject to availability?

	Frequency	Percentage
Continue with current provision of cemeteries	44	19.8%
Extend and develop cemeteries	178	80.2%
TOTAL	222	100.0%

Q2: Do you agree or disagree that we should introduce an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	45	19.5%
Agree	85	36.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	29	12.6%
Disagree	44	19.0%
Strongly disagree	28	12.1%
TOTAL	231	100.0%

Q2a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
If born/raised/family in County Durham should be exempt	41	62.1%
Funeral costs expensive already	9	13.6%
Can't be justified	7	10.6%
Makes things too complicated	3	4.5%
Boundary changes mean some people are no longer within the County	2	3.0%
People have a right to be buried where they want	3	4.5%
It is illegal to do so	1	1.5%
TOTAL	66	100.0%

Q3: Do you agree or disagree that all new headstones and cemetery fixtures should continue to be undertaken by suitably qualified memorial masons?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	113	50.4%
Agree	88	39.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	13	5.8%
Disagree	5	2.2%
Strongly disagree	5	2.2%
TOTAL	224	100.0%

Q3a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Memorial masons not of a great standard	1	14.3%
Memorial masons too expensive	4	57.1%
Council staff could perform this	2	28.6%
TOTAL	7	100.0%

Q4: Do you agree or disagree that unsafe memorials should be pocketed (where possible) in instances that no relative can be traced or the family is unwilling to fund full re-instatement?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	76	34.4%
Agree	110	49.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	9	4.1%
Disagree	20	9.0%
Strongly disagree	6	2.7%
TOTAL	221	100.0%

Q4a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Lay flat instead	4	16.0%
Record inscriptions/information maintained	10	40.0%
Maintain in full	4	16.0%
Few graves are unsafe	1	4.0%
Illegible memorials should be removed	1	4.0%
Increase mason's professional levels	2	8.0%
Aesthetics of churchyard lost	2	8.0%
Are there any recognised safety standards to follow?	1	4.0%
TOTAL	25	100.0%

Q5: Do you agree or disagree that current monuments that are lying down should be lifted and pocketed (where possible) from existing budgets?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	50	22.4%
Agree	99	44.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	13.9%
Disagree	35	15.7%
Strongly disagree	8	3.6%
TOTAL	223	100.0%

Q5a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Lying monuments safe and maintain inscription information	20	58.8%
Waste of council money	5	14.7%
Record inscription first	2	5.9%
Only pocket where there is a real Health & Safety issue	5	14.7%
Do on a case by case basis	2	5.9%
TOTAL	34	100.0%

Q6: Do you agree or disagree that new kerb surrounds should not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free of them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	80	37.4%
Agree	82	38.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	19	8.9%
Disagree	15	7.0%
Strongly disagree	18	8.4%
TOTAL	214	100.0%

Q6a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Charge additional fee for kerb surrounds	2	8.0%
Grass cutting speed not a relevant argument	5	20.0%
Should be up to plot holder/relatives	9	36.0%
Employ more people at cemeteries	2	8.0%
Agrees with reasons	1	4.0%
Designate areas for kerb surrounds	1	4.0%
Kerb surrounds look nice/personal	3	12.0%
As long as installed by memorial mason	1	4.0%
Kerb surrounds reduce cemetery capacity	1	4.0%
TOTAL	25	100.0%

Q7: Do you agree or disagree that new kerb surrounds should be allowed in cemeteries (or parts of cemeteries) where there is a tradition of their use, but subject to it being installed by a suitably qualified memorial mason?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	41	19.2%
Agree	101	47.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	21	9.9%
Disagree	23	10.8%
Strongly disagree	27	12.7%
TOTAL	213	100.0%

Q7a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Kerb surrounds not suitable anywhere	8	23.5%
Memorial masons not required	6	17.6%
Cemetery maintenance becomes expensive/difficult	11	32.4%
Kerb surrounds unsightly	7	20.6%
Should be allowed in all cemeteries	1	2.9%
Kerb surrounds reduce cemetery capacity	1	2.9%
TOTAL	34	100.0%

Q8: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to allow one month from the moment of the Council contacting families to remove unauthorised surrounds erected, or they will be moved and stored for collection?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	32	15.0%
Agree	91	42.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	9.4%
Disagree	51	23.9%
Strongly disagree	19	8.9%
TOTAL	213	100.0%

Q8a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Longer period of time required (2-3 months)	49	76.6%
Allow for diplomacy	4	6.3%
Leave alone altogether	7	10.9%
Inform of rules beforehand	1	1.6%
Struggle to enforce	2	3.1%
Allow kerb surrounds erected by memorial masons	1	1.6%
TOTAL	64	100.0%

Q9: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to allow adornments within a small personalisation area at the base of the memorial?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	44	20.4%
Agree	107	49.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	9.3%
Disagree	28	13.0%
Strongly disagree	17	7.9%
TOTAL	216	100.0%

Q9a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Adornments not appropriate at all	11	31.4%
Adornments often too excessive	3	8.6%
No alcohol	1	2.9%
Up to the plot holder	4	11.4%
Allow limited adornments only	4	11.4%
Targeted by thieves/vandals	3	8.6%
Only allow floral arrangements	4	11.4%
They require too much upkeep by relatives	3	8.6%
Cost extra money for cemetery maintenance	1	2.9%
Not all plots have memorials	1	2.9%
TOTAL	35	100.0%

Q10: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to allow adornments for two months within the boundary of the grave, beyond which time the family will be asked to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	28	13.0%
Agree	95	44.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	30	13.9%
Disagree	37	17.1%
Strongly disagree	26	12.0%
TOTAL	216	100.0%

Q10a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Longer period of time (3 months to a year)	17	32.1%
Start with/allow on a permanent basis limited adornments to solve any problems	9	17.0%
Deal with on a case by case basis	3	5.7%
No adornments	9	17.0%
Leave alone	11	20.8%
Make regulations clear	2	3.8%
Have kerb surrounds to hold adornments within	1	1.9%
Reduce time allowed	1	1.9%
TOTAL	53	100.0%

Q11: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable for a Minister of religion or other funeral Celebrant to attend municipal burials?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	69	32.7%
Agree	102	48.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	10.4%
Disagree	10	4.7%
Strongly disagree	8	3.8%
TOTAL	211	100.0%

Q11a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Must be aware of deceased's preferences	7	50.0%
Must be aware of family's preferences	3	21.4%
Just meet legal requirements	1	7.1%
Waste of public funds	1	7.1%
Ministers should offer service for free	1	7.1%
Everyone deserves dignity	1	7.1%
TOTAL	14	100.0%

Q12: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to continue to charge for searching for family history?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	57	26.5%
Agree	93	43.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	10.2%
Disagree	26	12.1%
Strongly disagree	17	7.9%
TOTAL	215	100.0%

Q12a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Reduce the price	9	25.0%
Should be free	14	38.9%
Put on-line and make cheaper/free	3	8.3%
Keeps staff employed	1	2.8%
Free for relatives	2	5.6%
Other sites don't charge	1	2.8%
Problem using from long distance	1	2.8%
No initial charge for searches, but for further in depth searches/certificates	3	8.3%
Work with commercial organisation (Ancestry/Deceased)	2	5.6%
TOTAL	36	100.0%

Q13: We are considering introducing a system whereby people can use a search facility for their family history. Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to introduce a website facility?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	105	48.6%
Agree	88	40.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	5.6%
Disagree	9	4.2%
Strongly disagree	2	0.9%
TOTAL	216	100.0%

Q13a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Should be free	1	12.5%
Recoup implementation costs by charges	1	12.5%
Work with commercial organisations (Ancestry/Deceased)	1	12.5%
Do not remove current system	2	25.0%
Shouldn't be paid for by tax payer	3	37.5%
TOTAL	8	100.0%

Q14: Do you agree or disagree that we should develop a business case for a proposed woodland burial site at the existing Durham South Road Cemetery?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	50	23.9%
Agree	94	45.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	54	25.8%
Disagree	6	2.9%
Strongly disagree	5	2.4%
TOTAL	209	100.0%

Q14a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Funding of proper cemeteries must be protected	2	33.3%
Woodland burial sites motivated by profit	1	16.7%
Keep away from proper cemeteries	1	16.7%
Incoherent sentence	1	16.7%
Future costs could be extensive	1	16.7%
TOTAL	6	100.0%

Are you answering this survey on behalf of an organisation or as a member of public?

	Frequency	Percentage
On behalf of an organisation	17	8.0%
As a member of public	196	92.0%
TOTAL	212	100.0%

What is your position?

	Frequency	Percentage
A member of the clergy	2	11.8%
A funeral director	1	5.9%
A monumental mason	3	17.6%
Other	11	64.7%
TOTAL	17	100.0%

If other please specify.

	Frequency	Percentage
Cemetery Officer	1	10.0%
Church Warden	2	20.0%
Parochial Church Council	1	10.0%
Parish Council	2	20.0%
Executive Officer	1	10.0%
House of Laity Chairman	1	10.0%
Town Council	1	10.0%
Parks and Cemeteries Manager	1	10.0%
TOTAL	10	100.0%

What is your gender?

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	89	46.4%
Female	103	53.6%
TOTAL	192	100.0%

What is your age?

	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	5	2.9%
25-34	15	8.7%
35-44	29	16.9%
45-54	31	18.0%
55-64	56	32.6%
65+	36	20.9%
TOTAL	172	100.0%

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	12.0%
No	169	88.0%
TOTAL	192	100.0%

What is your religion or belief?

	Frequency	Percentage
Christian	145	78.0%
Jewish	2	1.1%
None	33	17.7%
Other	6	3.2%
TOTAL	186	100.0%

If other, please specify.

	Frequency	Percentage
Humanist	3	60.0%
Jehovah's Witness	1	20.0%
Atheist	1	20.0%
TOTAL	5	100.0%

How would you describe your sexuality?

	Frequency	Percentage
Heterosexual/straight	157	94.6%
Gay man	5	3.0%
Bisexual	2	1.2%
Other	2	1.2%
TOTAL	166	100.0%

What is your ethnicity?

	Frequency	Percentage
White British	173	98.3%
White Other	1	0.6%
Gypsy Roma	1	0.6%
Traveller of Irish descent	1	0.6%
TOTAL	176	100.0%

If other, please specify.

	Frequency	Percentage
White Australian	1	100.0%
TOTAL	1	100.0%

A full report of the consultation findings is available in the Members Library

Appendix 3: Kerb surround free cemeteries/areas to allow kerbs

Cemeteries	Kerb surround free cemeteries	Proposed cemetery extensions/ sections not allowing kerb surrounds	Sections allowing kerb surrounds
Bishop Auckland		17	13,15,16
Coundon	√		
Cowshill		2	1
Crook		E,C,D	A,B
Crosshill	√		
Dans Castle			8,9,10
Frosterley	√		
Howden		D	A,B,C
Hunwick		C	A,B
Rookhope	√		
South Church		C,E	A,B,D
Thornley Road	√		
West Auckland		G	A,B,C,D,E
Willington		A New,B New	A old B old
Witton le Wear	√		
Witton Park			2
Sacriston		F, New E	A,B,C,D
Lumley	√		
Pelton		OA-OF,D,E,F,L2	B,C,G,H,L1
Ropery Lane		A,B,C,D,E,F,G,I,J,K,L	H
Barnard Castle	√		
Startforth	√		
Cockfield	√		
Etherley	√		
Evenwood	√		
Gainford	√		
Hamsterley	√		
Lynesack	√		
Romaldkirk	√		
Staindrop	√		
Woodland	√		
Blackhill			All sections

Cemeteries	Kerb surround free cemeteries	Proposed cemetery extensions/ sections not allowing kerb surrounds	Sections allowing kerb surrounds
Stanley		6,30-36	3-5,7-28
Castleside	√		
Harelaw		19,20,21,26	1-18
Langley Park		D,E,F	A,B,C
Lanchester		G,F	A,B,C,D,E
Low Westwood			A,B,C
Moorside	√		
Meadowfield		F,G	A,AA,B,C,D,E,
Parkwood		G,H	A,B,C,D,F
South Road		H2	A2-A4,B1-B3,C1-C2,H3-H4,G1-G3
Ushaw Moor		F,C	1UNC,1CON,A,B,D,E

Maps displaying the individual sections are included in the Report on Consultation Process and Feedback - August 2011 which is available in the Members Library

Appendix 3

Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment

Durham County Council Bereavement Policy



Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments. You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.

Service/team or section: Bereavement Services, Direct Services, Neighbourhood Services	Start date: 04/01/2011
Lead Officer: Bereavement Services , Street Scene Area Manager North, Direct Services	Reviewed: 14/02/2011
Planning and Policy Officer, Planning and Policy, Neighbourhood Services,	Reviewed: 01/08/2011

Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)

County Durham Bereavement Services – Cemetery Policies

Durham County Council as a principal authority has a statutory duty to make provision for the committal of the deceased however the method is not prescribed. For example in some areas nationally this is solely achieved through crematoria. In County Durham Bereavement Services are responsible for 2 crematoriums (through joint committees), 47 open cemeteries and 83 closed churchyards. During 2009/10 the service carried out 3,543 cremations and 763 burials. The Council has a responsibility under the provision of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 to ensure that cemeteries are reasonably clean, tidy and safe places to work and visit.

Prior to Local Government Reorganisation and County Durham becoming a unitary authority in April 2009 the former districts that provided these services had varying local rules and regulations. Whilst the local customs and practices have been respected, there is a clear need for a unified approach. This of course is a highly sensitive and emotive area; accordingly, it is felt prudent to consult widely before any changes are adopted. Bereavement Services provide sympathetic, supportive and confidential advice on funeral service arrangements and can give assistance in co-ordinating the funeral process if required. Overall the Council provides a valued service and one that has achieved a Gold standard through the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management). There are also three green flags awarded to Council cemeteries, in recognition of their maintenance, and community involvement. The service has recently been rated by ICCM as the eighth best performing in the country.

There have been several steps taken since the formation of the new unitary to bring a harmonised approach and include the single pricing structure for the cemeteries from the five former District Councils. This also applies to the two crematoria that are operated by the joint committees. Improvements have been made to bring a consistent standard in the way cemeteries are maintained including the number of times the grass is cut, the standard of grave digging and headstone testing.

As a step towards further harmonisation a Members Seminar "Grave Matters" was held on 15th November 2010. This was an opportunity to understand more about these important services, and through a process of electronic voting, to allow Members to express views on a range of policy options, for instance future cemetery provision, woodland burials, collapsed headstones, kerbside surrounds and adornments. This feedback has provided an opportunity to shape future proposals, which subject to Cabinet consent will be the basis of a wider consultation.

A number of Council documents already set out corporate principles of customer care and approach to achieving value for money. Building on these for bereavement services, the following principles are proposed:

- To provide a sensitive, respectful service fitting for the bereaved.
- To ensure that sympathetic, supportive and confidential advice is given to the recently bereaved on funeral service arrangements and give assistance in co-ordinating the funeral process if required.
- To provide consistent high quality standards of maintenance in cemeteries across County Durham, working to maximise value for money.
- To ensure the proper respect of all Council cemeteries with fair Rules and Regulations, which are explained to bereaved and cemetery visitors.
- Fair and sensitive enforcement where Rules and Regulations are not followed.
-

Who are the main stakeholders: **General public / Employees / Elected Members / Funeral Directors/ Monumental Masons/Religious representatives/ Town and Parish Councils and AAP's.**

Is a copy of the subject attached? No

Contact bereavement Services, Street Scene, Direct Services Neighbourhood Services

Initial screening

The policy development has centred around areas of inconsistency. Proposals in this report cover the following areas:

- a. Capacity
- b. Unsafe Memorials (Headstones)
- c. Kerb Surrounds
- d. Adornments
- e. Municipal Funerals
- f. Family Searches
- g. Woodland Burial Site

Although this area of work is very specialist in nature it is a highly sensitive and emotive area of work that has the potential to impact on all in our communities. Consequently it is proposed to consult with a range of key stakeholders to ensure a balance and appropriate approach and include:

- The public through website and a press release to raise awareness

- The AAP's to support the approach to reach our ultimate users, contact to be made with Shealagh Pearce to discuss contacting the AAPs
- Town and Parish Councils, who may have their own cemeteries, contact to be made with Ann Armstrong, Vicky Prendergast or Steve Ragg to discuss contacting Town and Parish Councils.
- Funeral directors
- Religious representatives
- Monumental masons
- Cruse bereavement care
- Compassionate Friends (support & friendship by those similarly bereaved).
- Age Concern
- Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths
- 24 Hour Cot death helpline
- Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Society (Sands).
- Child Death Helpline
- Elected members
- Employees
- Gypsy and travellers

Funeral Directors, Religious bodies and Stone Masons who have daily contact with the bereaved are a key contact to help provide the appropriate advice and support. We carry out burials regardless of religion or belief and access plans for both crematoriums are currently in place. , Where regulations stipulate that children under the age of 14 cannot visit with out a responsible adult it is because of health and safety reasons not ageism. The same applies to the banning of drinking or leaving alcohol at gravesides (a practise carried out by many including gypsies and travellers). The following highlights the proposals in the County Durham Bereavement Services – Cemetery Policies:

- **Provision of cemeteries:**
Currently the bereaved in County Durham are given a choice of which cemeteries they wish to be interred at, these cemeteries provide facilities such as toilet facilities, shelter, disability access, water facilities etc. We will continue to provide cemeteries so that we meet the needs of our local communities by respecting the wishes of many to be buried close to their relatives. Subject to funding, we will seek to extend or develop new / existing cemeteries where there is a demonstrable need. This will allow the bereaved a greater choice of locations in which they can be interred and also provide burial facilities in the area that they were born and bred. Further work will be undertaken in conjunction with Town and Parish Councils to establish areas of greatest need, and an operational strategy developed to establish further capacity in a cost effective way. The conditions to provide new cemeteries will be based on a number of factors including aspects of land availability, location, size, population, current death rate and cost of development.

- **Introduce an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area.** Some local authorities like Darlington, Newcastle, South Tyneside and Gateshead charge more for those who do not come from the areas. This can be to protect the land for the use by the authorities' residents. Introducing a charge would provide a disincentive to those outside the County and extend the life of the cemeteries. Typically authorities charge double for the grave and 1.5 times for interment. For County Durham this proposal would mean for residents outside the area the cost would be £1725 for the grave and interment, compared to £968 for Durham residents.
- **Unsafe memorials**
It is ultimately the responsibility of the families of those buried to maintain the memorial or headstone. We will however ensure that all memorials are inspected every five years and that this will hopefully reduce any issues with regards to any memorial being unstable. It will help to maintain the standard of the work for the bereaved and will help to prevent future liabilities. Maintaining the safety of memorials or headstones benefits all regardless of gender, age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation.
- **Kerb Surrounds.** Presently only the former City of Durham area allows installation of kerbside surrounds subject to an application process. If after consultation, the proposal to continue this practice in cemeteries (or parts) areas where there has been a tradition of their use and not in others is approved then access to these cemeteries will not be restricted.
- **Adornments**
A number of relatives adorn graves with personal effects and items such as solar lights, soft toys, wind chimes and football shirts. They may also leave gifts, including alcohol, at the graveside. This has a potential impact upon other users of the cemetery, on visual amenity, on the effective maintenance of the cemetery and also raises health and safety issues. Council staff are regularly asked about this issue as some visitors to the cemeteries are unhappy by the extent to which some bereaved families adorn graves. It is felt that their adornments encroach on other surrounding graves. This is clearly a highly emotive issue, especially around the anniversary of the death of their loved ones when bereaved families visit the grave to pay their respects. From the Council's perspective the proposals attempt to strike a balance between allowing adornments as part of the grieving process, but limiting their impact on other graves and cemetery users. It is proposed to allow adornments within the curtilage of the grave a period of up to two months, beyond which time the family will be requested to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial. This was the approach supported by 92% of Members at the Seminar. It is proposed that beyond this period, items are carefully removed to a safe place for collection and any anniversary will be respected and time given to the family. As this is a health and safety issue and will be dealt with on an individual basis with empathy by Durham County Council the introduction of this part of the policy will benefit all.
- **Municipal Funerals**
The Council has a statutory duty to dispose of a deceased body under the provisions of the National Assistance Act 1948 and the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1948, if the person who died has no assets or if there are no relatives who can make funeral arrangements. Hospitals and care homes may also be able to help if the person dies while in their care. Initial contact is usually through the Coroner. If the next of kin is known, contact will be made to establish if they will accept responsibility. Legal responsibility for married couples rests with the spouse, for civil partnerships with the civil

partner, and for children it rests with the parents. When carrying out Municipal Funerals Durham County Council do not provide notices in local newspapers, flowers, funeral cars or a church service / Minister. However we could provide for a religious or non-religious (e.g. humanism) representation to attend municipal burials if the religion or belief of the deceased can be ascertained.

- **Family Searches**

There has been an increasing trend to develop our personal family tree and trace long lost relatives. Much of Durham County Council's information is currently in record book format and requires transferring to an electronic format to allow for a website facility. Currently this information is being transferred onto a new database that will improve the services efficiency. The majority of North East local authorities currently charge for this service, including Durham County Council. We charge £15 for searches, in line with the average for North East Councils. By using this system families wishing to carry out a search can go to our website and make a single credit card payment for several "credits" enabling them to perform a number of searches.

- **Woodland Burial**

Woodland burial first appeared in the UK some years ago since which time over 160 sites throughout Britain have been established, with two privately operated sites within County Durham. A considerable amount of interest has been shown in this "return to nature" expressed either directly from the public or through funeral directors. The site is established with tree planting creating glades which are progressively filled with burials. Once a glade is full, trees are planted over the top and the glade becomes continuous with the wider woodland. The approach does not provide a visible memorial for a specific burial but if requested by relatives, a 'data chip' can be buried with the deceased that enables precise location of the deceased in future years. (This model is proposed by the Arbory Trust and considered the best approach to woodland burial as in reality it is not possible to establish a tree as a permanent marker – the tree might die or the woodland might require thinning). An area for a council operated woodland burial site has already been identified at South Road Cemetery, Durham. The site has already been largely prepared by the former City Council with input from a local resident together with a community organisation. To take forward such a development, the only issues are to prepare a method statement and carrying out final landscaping. We are therefore looking to develop a business case for a proposed woodland burial site at the Durham South Road Cemetery. This will allow us to provide more choice for the bereaved.

The introduction of a harmonised County Durham Bereavement Services Cemetery Policy will benefit all regardless of gender, age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation. By changing the way that we provide some of the services we offer, we will be increasing the choices that we provide for the bereaved. This should be a positive impact for all. We will also be able to produce booklets for the bereaved families, Monumental Mason's and Funeral directors which will give them more detail about the services that we can provide. It is proposed that the following timetable

- 13 April 2011 Cabinet consider this report and formal consultation to commence
- 03/May/2011 Consultation starts
- 25/July/2011 Consultation ends
- 01/August/2011 policy report to back to NSMT

- 17 August/2011 policy to report to CMT
- 22 Sept /2011 report to Cabinet to ratify policy

Reviewed 2 August 2011

This EqIA screening was reviewed after the public consultation closed on 25 July 2011. Our aim was to involve as many people as possible in local decision making and, as such, we would wanted to make sure everyone had the opportunity to become involved. We also have specific responsibilities to ensure that certain groups protected by equality legislation are included. Equalities profiling was included in the questionnaire and respondees were asked if they could answer a few optional questions about themselves to help us to monitor our performance. Equality monitoring data from this is included in section 2 of this assessment.

Prompts to help you:

Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?

Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings?

Indicate : Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure

Gender	Y	Disability	Y	Age	Y	Race/ethnicity	Y	Religion or belief	Y	Sexual orientation	Y
--------	---	------------	---	-----	---	----------------	---	--------------------	---	--------------------	---

How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes **Date: 4/01/2011, 14/02/2011, 2/08/2011**
If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.

	Identify the impact: does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)																								
Gender	No gender sepecific issues were raised during the consultation	Equality profile of consultees: Female: 103 (53.6%) Male: 89 (46.4%)																									
Age	No age sepecific issues were raised during the consultation Where regulations stipulate that children under the age of 14 cannot visit with out a responsible adult it is because of health and safety reasons not ageism.	Equality profile of consultees: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Frequency</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18-24</td> <td>5</td> <td>2.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>15</td> <td>8.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>29</td> <td>16.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>31</td> <td>18.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-64</td> <td>56</td> <td>32.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65+</td> <td>36</td> <td>20.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>172</td> <td>100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Frequency	Percentage	18-24	5	2.9%	25-34	15	8.7%	35-44	29	16.9%	45-54	31	18.0%	55-64	56	32.6%	65+	36	20.9%	TOTAL	172	100.0%	
	Frequency	Percentage																									
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55-64	56	32.6%																									
65+	36	20.9%																									
TOTAL	172	100.0%																									
Disability	Disabled respondents, which accounted for 88% of consultees, did not raise any specific issues in relation to disability. Both crematoriums currently have access plans. If cemeteries are locked pedestrian gates remain open to	Equality profile of consultees: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? Yes: 23 (12%) No: 169 (88%)																									

	gain access. We can arrange to have gates or bollards removed to improve accessibility if requested.		
Race/Ethnicity	<p>Specific issues for GRT communities can be overcome by early liaison with the family, community representatives, undertaker and member of the clergy taking the service. Bereavement services can give assistance in co-ordinating the funeral process if required. Travellers Liaison Manager, Durham County Council can also act as a point of contact .</p> <p>Banning of drinking or leaving alcohol at gravesides (a practise carried out by many including gypsies and travellers) is prohibited on health and safety grounds.</p> <p>We work closely with representatives and/or family in providing assistance with regards to funeral arrangements/type of service. This may be more relevant to certain religious communities such as the Muslim community.</p> <p>In terms of municipal funerals we may provide for a religious or non-religious (e.g. humanism) representation to attend burials if</p>	<p>Equality profile of consultees: White British: 173 (98.3%) White Other: 1 (0.6%)* Gypsy Roma: 1 (0.6%) Traveller of Irish descent: 1 (0.6%)</p> <p>Funerals of Gypsies and Travellers are traditionally very large, public events. They are seen as a public display of both status and respect for the dead. Normally the deceased is buried rather than cremated.</p>	
Religion or belief		<p>Equality profile of consultees: Christian: 78% Jewish: 19% None: 18% Other: 3% NB: Of the other category, 3 were Humanist, 1 Jehovah's Witness and 1 Atheist</p> <p>Islamic law requires wherever possible burial within 24 hours of death. The Muslim community is probably the largest single religious community in England and Wales for whom burial is mandatory. Many local</p>	

	the religion or belief of the deceased can be ascertained.	authorities with Muslims living in their locality provide special areas and services to make rapid burial possible for them.
Sexual Orientation		Equality profile of consultees: Hetrosexual/straight: 95% Gay man: 3% Bisexual: 1% Other: 1%

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities? N/A

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.
 We contacted various groups and organisations including liaison with Durham County Council's Travellers Liaison Manager . No negative comments were received in connection with the protected equality characteristics. Again it is felt that the introduction of a harmonised County Durham Bereavement Services Cemetery Policy will benefit all regardless of gender, age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation. And it was recognised that by changing the way that we provide some of the services we offer, we will be increasing the choices that we provide for the bereaved.

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
When will this assessment be reviewed?			
Date: September 2014			
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?			
No			
Lead officer - sign off: Head of Direct Services			
Date: 23 March 2011			
Head of Direct Services			
Reviewed:			
Service equality representative - sign off: Policy, Performance and Communications Manager			
Date: 23 March 2011			
Policy, Performance and Communications Manager			
Reviewed:			

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

العربية (Arabic) (中文 (繁體字)) (Cantonese) اردو (Urdu)
polski (Polish) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi) Español (Spanish)
বাংলা (Bengali) हिन्दी (Hindi) Deutsch (German)
Français (French) Türkçe (Turkish) Melayu (Malay)

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Cabinet

22 September 2011



**Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board Review
Working Group – Area Action
Partnerships**

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present, for Cabinet consideration, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board working group review of Durham County Council's Area Action Partnerships.

Background

- 2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board established a cross-party Working Group to undertake a review of the County Council's Area Action Partnerships examining practices and processes to establish:-
 - The difference that they have made,
 - Areas for further improvement,
 - The potential for further refinements in light of a changing policy and partner environment.
- 3 The Scope of the Review was framed within a series of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) covering Governance Arrangements; Resources; Community Involvement and Engagement; Impact and Performance Management.
- 4 The summary review report (attached) presents the key findings in relation to these topics and identifies a number of conclusions and recommendations that aim to improve AAPs and provide an evidence base to ensure that they remain "Fit for purpose, Fit for the Future." A copy of the full report can be found in the Cabinet office, Members Resource Centre and the office of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Recommendations

- 5 Cabinet is asked to note the recommendations in the summary of the Overview and Scrutiny working group report and to formulate a response within the six month period identified in the report for systematic review of the recommendations.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance –

Each AAP has brought in a significant amount of matched funding against both Area Budgets and Neighbourhood Budgets. AAPs have already been subject to reductions in line with the first year of the MTFP (2011/12)

Staffing -

Staff team recognised as key in the delivery of AAPs.

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the Review report and Section 8 of the report details the Equality and Diversity issues identified .

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – Section 6 of the report details the steps undertaken as part of the evidence gathering process for the Review to consult with key stakeholders.

Procurement - None

Disability Issues

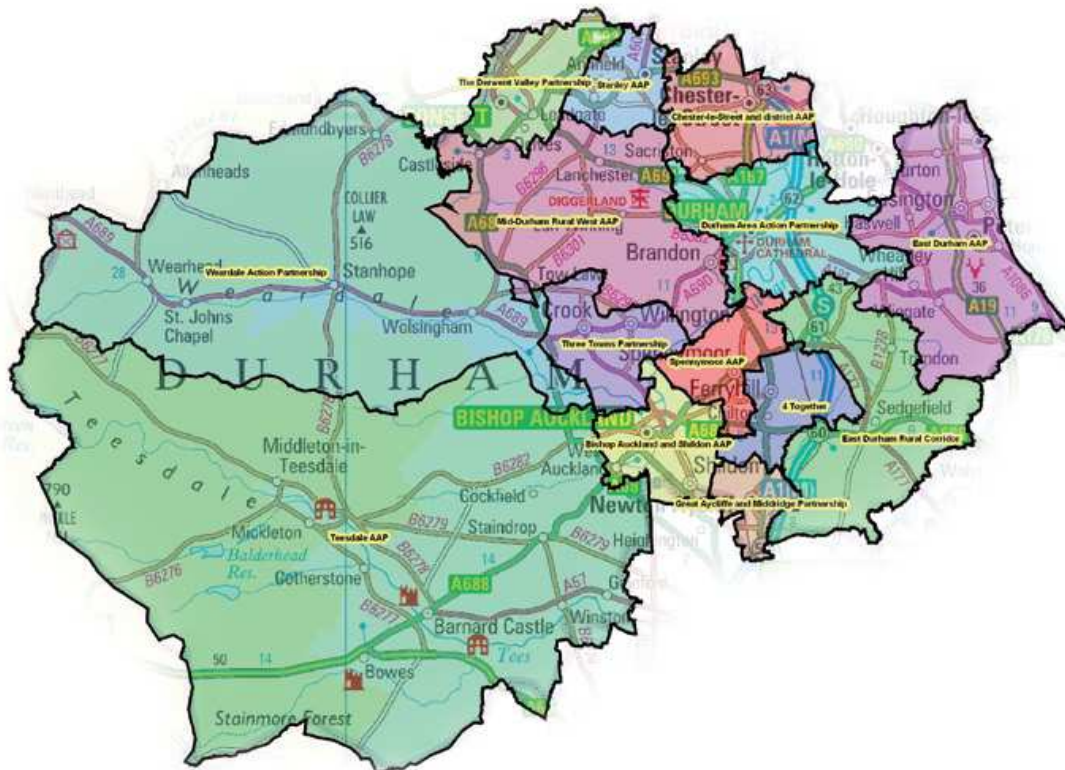
The EqIA will consider Disability issues.

Legal Implications - None

Altogether Better Durham

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

“Fit for Purpose, Fit for the Future” - A Review of Durham County Council’s Area Action Partnerships



Report of Scrutiny Working Group

July 2011



Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

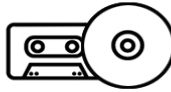
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Foreword

Durham County Council's vision is to build an Altogether Better Durham, which is better for local people and provides better places to live and work. We share this vision with other public, private and voluntary sector partners in the County. We need to make sure that the services of a range of organisations – including the county and town and parish councils, police, fire, health, and voluntary organisations – are directed to meet the needs of local communities.

A key focus of our approach is consulting and engaging effectively with local communities to ensure we are focused on people's needs. The Council's 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) have been set up to give people in County Durham a greater choice and voice in local affairs. The partnerships allow people to have a say on services, and give organisations the chance to speak directly with local communities. They are working with existing community organisations to focus their action and spending on issues important to local communities.

This review of the Area Action Partnerships has examined whether they are "fit for purpose" and, more importantly, in the context of the Government's agenda and public sector funding reductions "fit for the future." We have examined the AAP governance arrangements; the funding and resources allocated to the AAPs, the level of community involvement and engagement with AAPs and associated activity as well as the impact that AAPs have made in the two years since their introduction. We also looked closely at the arrangements that AAPs have and are continuing to develop to make sure that they are delivering against their agreed priorities by way of robust performance management methodology.

AAPs have made immense progress from their inception, indeed the AAPs have been short-listed for a national local government award for the category of Best Community and Neighbourhood Category by the Association for Public Service Excellence. There is more to do and it is essential that the Council, its Partners and local communities continue to support them in striving for an "Altogether Better Durham."



I would like to thank everyone who has participated in the review and particularly those who participated in the 14 AAP Focus Groups and responded to the questionnaire on the Council's website. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Working Group for their valuable contribution and the evidence, advice and information from all of the officers who have supported the review.

Councillor Joe Armstrong
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management
Board and the AAP Review Working Group

1. Key Messages

1.1 The AAP review has highlighted a number of key messages across the agreed Key Lines of Enquiry established for review, including a number of examples of good practice and developmental learning points. Evidence has been received from key officers reporting to the review Working Group and also from the engagement activity carried out which has supported the review.

1.2 These can be summarised as follows:-

- The Governance arrangements established for the AAPs have provided an extremely robust mechanism for ensuring the effective operation of the AAPs through which the Council works with local communities and key partners to make sure those local services meet local needs and that the voice of the community is heard within the service development process.
- The diversity of membership across the AAP Boards coupled with the wider involvement and engagement of some 5000 AAP Forum members has been highlighted across the County as a real strength.
- An extensive training and development induction programme has been delivered across the AAPs to Board members and staff which has included, "Building firm foundations"; decision making as a Board; community works and strategic neighbourhood working; AAP project funding and appraisal and chairing skills.
- Over 900 projects have been delivered across the AAPs up to April 2011. Some £3.7m of Area Budget spend has attracted £5.6m of matched/additional funding and £4.8m Neighbourhood Budget spend has attracted £8.6m of matched/additional funding.
- When examining 2009-11 Area budget (AB) spend against AAP priorities, £1.1m was allocated to Young People's activities and £850,000 to the Community and Voluntary sector
- When examining 2009-11 Neighbourhood budget (NB) spend against AAP priorities, £1.9m was allocated to young people's activities and £800,000 to Environment and street cleansing

- In respect of AAP spend and matched funding by County Durham Partnership theme, the largest allocations for both NB and AB were against the “Altogether Better for Children and Young People” priority. These figures were £6.7m for NB and £3.2m for AB.
- The AAP project application, funding and appraisal process has been developed and enhanced and the working group commends the ability of the AAP Co-ordinators, support staff and funding team to achieve this whilst delivering the number and range of projects to date.
- All AAPs have identified the co-ordinator and staff as being the cornerstone to their success with all displaying professionalism, accessibility and knowledge together with a positive work ethic
- The ability of local community and voluntary sector groups to access small grants has enabled them to become sustainable and, in turn enhances the services delivered by these groups in their localities.
- AAP Board meetings have seen average attendances of around 70-80% with additional observers attending AAP Board meetings although this varies across AAPs.
- AAP task and finish groups are an area in which wider public and AAP Forum members consider that they were engaged well. Statistics showed that almost 1000 people have attended task and finish groups across the AAPs and been involved in project development work in this area.
- The level of engagement and involvement with AAPs should also take into account other AAP related events and activity. Examples of this include:-
 - 800+ people engaged in the Stanley AAP Participatory Budget event
 - 2000+ attendances at the Mobile cinema project
 - Over 1400 young people attending Chester Fest and Have your say events
 - The County Council’s MTFP Consultation process which engaged widely across County Durham via the AAPs.

- There has been a significant level of engagement and involvement by local communities including Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary and community sector organisations. A number of non-parished areas e.g. Derwent Valley, Chester-le-Street and Durham City have highlighted a desire to see local councils established to provide an additional method of local engagement and involvement.
- AAPs have received an incredible amount of publicity and press coverage in the local and regional media and this is largely down to the development of a robust Marketing and Communications strategy for AAPs and the close working between AAP staff and the Council's Communications team. AAPs want to build on the success of their project activity to enhance their profile even further.
- The openness and transparency of AAP meetings has been noted as a positive step forward, which may be reflected in the increasing number of people who feel that they are able to influence local decision making. This figure is 40% in the Residents' survey of 2010 against 25% for the 2008 Place Survey.
- AAPs are fit for purpose. They have a pivotal role in understanding the needs of their area, acting upon those needs and influencing service delivery. They will need to develop their strategic role in responding to the Government's agenda on for example Localism and ideas associated with the Big Society.
- AAPs have delivered projects that have addressed both locally agreed AAP priorities and also the strategic priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy of the County Durham Partnership. There is a clear relationship developing between the AAPs and the CDP and its thematic boards (and sub groups) which AAPs wish to enhance by ensuring that they can influence strategic issues and priorities from the bottom up.
- Examples of good practice in respect of community involvement and engagement include the development of youth forums; the establishment of a local councils group which feeds into the Mid-Durham AAP via its nominated representative; the Council's MTFP consultation process; consultation on the review of indoor facilities; participatory budget events.
- AAPs have also expressed a desire to explore innovative ways of engaging with groups via Facebook, Twitter, text messaging and the Worldwide Web.

- The number and value of projects delivered via the AAPs represents a significant level of investment in the current economic climate and have made a huge impact on the local communities and residents
- AAPs have processes for reporting progress upon projects to AAP boards and this should be shared amongst the wider forum membership.
- Performance and project management information should be reported by project sponsors and deliverers on a quarterly basis to enable AAP Boards to assess progress against targets for agreed projects.
- The development of the Council's Area Action Partnerships has been recognised in a number of arenas:-
 - The Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) has short-listed AAPs for a national local government award for the category of Best Community and Neighbourhood.
 - The Government Select Committee examining Localism has described the success of the County Council's Area Action Partnerships in involving thousands of residents in decision-making.
 - In an address to the Local Government Association's Annual Conference 2011, Ed Milliband, M.P. stated that "the partnership between Town Halls and local communities must continue to evolve. Some of you have been leading the way in rethinking this partnership locally for many years. In Durham, Area Action Partnerships have devolved millions of pounds, successfully engaging and involving thousands of local people in deciding how money is spent."
- A number of examples of good practice have been evidenced by AAPs during the course of the review, including:-
 - Durham AAP has a place on their Board for Durham University to enable the City's student population to have a voice within the AAP
 - Mid Durham Rural AAP has introduced a mechanism whereby local parish councils meet regularly to discuss AAP Board issues and feed this information through the local Council representative member of the AAP Board.

- Greater cross-boundary working and sharing of good practice is already being demonstrated amongst the AAP co-ordinator group who, as well as having regular co-ordinator meetings, also meet as “cluster groups” to share experiences and areas of good practice to discuss “what is working well and what is not so good”.
- Huge success has been demonstrated across all AAPs in securing additional matched funding to support the delivery of local community based projects
- £5.4m of matched funding has been secured against Area Budget spend by County Durham Partnership themes with both Weardale and East Durham Rural AAPs securing over £750,000 worth of matched funding.
- £9.7m of matched funding has been secured against Neighbourhood Budget spend by CDP themes, with Durham City AAP securing more than £2.5m and both 3 Towns and East Durham both receiving over £1m
- A participatory budget pilot called “It’s Up 2 U” has been developed by Stanley, 3 Towns and Derwent Valley AAPs to showcase how local community representatives can have a say in spending decisions within their local communities. These events have generated significant local public interest in the AAPs with over 800 people attending the event in Stanley and a further 200 attending an event in Crook
- Good examples of financial reports being presented to Bishop Auckland and Shildon and Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP Boards
- Chester-le-Street and Stanley AAPs have both enjoyed considerable success in engaging with children and young people with both having established well supported youth forums.
- Strong working relationships have been developed between Spennymoor, Bishop Auckland and Shildon, Stanley and 4 Together AAPs and their respective local Parish/Town Councils
- Examples of good practice adopted by the AAPs in respect of their involvement with Durham County Council consultation exercises, notably in respect of the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan and the County Durham Plan. This involvement has stimulated the engagement of local communities with both the AAP

and, more importantly, the Council's decision making process.

- Weardale and Teesdale AAPs have developed particularly strong relationships with the local media. The Weardale Gazette and Teesdale Mercury frequently carry stories regarding AAP activity and projects delivered in both areas
- The AAP Funding Team have developed a rigorous project appraisal process together with clear information guides which explain both the Area Budget and Neighbourhood Budget process
- The Partnerships and Community Engagement Team have also produced a case study form which is used to recording engagement and neighbourhood work. It has access to a number of tools and good practice to support this at its disposal.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 In response to the 2006 Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” Durham County Council submitted proposals for a new Unitary Council for County Durham. These were approved by Government in July 2007. Elections to the new Unitary Council were held in May 2008 and the Unitary Council came into being on vesting day, 1st April 2009.

2.1.2 The new County Council’s proposal for Unitary status outlined a model for community engagement and local partnership working through the development of Area Action Partnerships. One of the key drivers for the County Council’s decision to establish AAPs was a desire to devolve decision making to communities in line with the 2006 White Paper and to improve the level of consultation. The new Council’s mantra was to be “Devolve where there’s capacity and demand: develop, consult, listen and respond where there’s not.”

2.1.3 Following the May 2008 election, the new County Council consulted stakeholders and members of the public on the AAP model. Accordingly after this consultation and following inaugural AAP Forum meetings, the following 14 AAPs were established:-

- Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP
- Chester-le-Street AAP
- Derwent Valley AAP
- Durham AAP
- East Durham AAP
- East Durham Rural Corridor AAP
- Four Together AAP
- Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP
- Mid Durham Rural AAP
- Spennymoor AAP
- Stanley AAP
- Teesdale AAP
- Three Towns AAP
- Weardale AAP

2.1.4 Within the 19 March 2009 Cabinet report which considered the arrangements for the establishment of Area Action Partnerships, there was a requirement for a review of AAPs to be undertaken. Given that they have been operational for over two years, it was therefore considered timely to undertake a systematic process of AAP Review that looked back to consider if they were “fit for purpose”, and to look forward within the context of the Government’s policy agenda to ensure that they are “fit for the future”.

2.1.5 A central aim of the review was to assess AAPs, examining practices and processes to establish:

- the difference that they have made
- areas for further improvement
- the potential for further refinements in light of a changing policy and partner environment.

2.1.6 The Scope of the review was framed within a series of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) covering:-

- Governance Arrangements
- Resources
- Community Involvement/Engagement
- Impact
- Performance Management

2.1.7 The methodology for the review involved:-

- “Desk top research” including collating and analysing evidence and information from AAP staff, AAP publications and the AAP Webpages.
- A series of Focus Group meetings with key individuals and organisations including:-
 - AAP Chairs
 - AAP Board and Forum Members including public members and Heads of Service within the County Council
 - Town and Parish Councils
 - Key partner organisations
 - Voluntary sector organisations including those who have received funding support from AAPs
 - AAP staff
 - The Public
- Case study evidence was sought, particularly that which demonstrated how AAPs had sought to address their priorities by way of initiatives funded from within their core funding and also Member Neighbourhood budgets. This also sought to assess the success/impact of these initiatives through the analysis of information obtained from the Area and Neighbourhood Budget grant monitoring process.
- Evidence was also sought from the National and Local Press and media to establish how positively or otherwise the work of AAPs was portrayed in the media.

- A questionnaire amongst the wider AAP forum membership was undertaken.
- Letters to Durham County Councillors, all town and parish Councils/meetings the Chairs of the County Durham Partnership and its thematic sub-groups and the Council's key partners were sent inviting comment and input in to the evidence gathering stage of the Review.

2.1.8 A cross party Working Group was established to conduct the review and take evidence. The Working Group has met on 8 occasions to receive evidence based upon its agreed terms of reference, Review scope and Key Lines of Enquiry.

2.1.9 The conclusions and recommendations are based on the KLOEs

Governance

2.1.10 The Working Group considered information regarding the AAP Terms of Reference and in particular the following key areas:-

- Purpose and Principles
- Functions
- Membership and Terms of Office
- Cessation/Vacancies/Co-optees
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Meetings and Standing Orders
- Decision making and Finance
- Task and Finish Groups
- Complaints
- Equalities and Neighbourhoods

2.1.11 Linked to their consideration of the Terms of Reference, the Working Group also examined the work that had been undertaken in respect of the identification, delivery and appraisal of training and development that had been initially agreed for AAP Boards and staff.

2.1.12 The AAP focus sessions also provided feedback in respect of the AAP Governance arrangements

AAP Governance Arrangements

Working Group Conclusions

1. The Working Group considers that the governance arrangements for the Area Action Partnerships have provided a robust mechanism for ensuring the effective operation of the AAPs and that these have been developed to incorporate key learning from the extensive consultation undertaken prior to their

establishment, the views expressed previously by Overview and Scrutiny and also best practice developed by the County Durham Partnership.

2. The Working Group have nevertheless identified a number of areas that should be reviewed in light of comments made during the AAP Review process as well as the experience of the past two years operation of AAPs. These areas are:-
 - The inclusion of AAPs being non-political within the purpose and principles outlined within the AAP Terms of Reference;
 - The list of alternative public representatives drawn up at the initial appointment stage to be revisited as it is over 2 years old;
 - The rules regarding co-option and their application (currently co-optees have to stand down after 6 months but can be co-opted again formally);
 - The rules relating to the rotation of chairmanship of AAP Board amongst the three Board Groups and their application;
 - The rules regarding speaking at AAP Board meetings and their application;
 - Clarification on the roles of the AAP Forum and Board meetings and which issues can be discussed at which meeting;
 - The inclusion of information and guidance regarding “Conflicts of Interest” and the rules for declaring personal/prejudicial interests;
 - The production of robust terms of reference for task and finish groups to ensure that their activity is conducted within appropriate governance arrangements;
 - Where AAPs identify a need to alter their Terms of Reference this should be done in compliance with the County Council’s Local Code of Corporate Governance.
3. A vital element of ensuring that the AAPs were fit for purpose had been the steps taken in identifying training and development needs and designing and delivering training sessions accordingly. The process has also included an in-built mechanism to ensure that training was evaluated and, where necessary, revised to meet identified needs.
4. There has been a significant amount of training and development delivered to AAP Board members, AAP Staff and other service staff which has contributed to the effectiveness of the AAPs. Between the period January 2010 and March 2011, a total of 732 AAP Staff and Board Members attended training sessions, 148 of which have been held.

5. The Working Group have identified the following challenges faced by AAPs in respect of training, including:
 - Ensuring equal participation across all AAPs.
 - Cancellations of training sessions.
 - Meeting the demand for training with reduced trainer resources.
 - Drawing on the skills and knowledge across AAPs of other services.

AAP Focus Group Session Conclusions

1. The diversity of membership and skills brought to the AAP Board and Forum are considered to be real strengths of the AAPs and are a good example of partnership working at a local level.
2. The work of task and finish groups is vital to all AAPs – this is where projects are developed and delivered with a focus on key AAP priorities. This is where AAPs are making an impact.
3. The involvement of Town and Parish Councils is welcomed across all AAPs where they exist, indeed a number of non-parished AAPs would welcome the establishment of a local Council to work alongside them. Some town and parish councils would like to see an increase in local council representation at AAP Board level. This has been supported by CDALC.
4. The involvement of AAPs in Council and partner consultations is welcomed by all, although some clarification has been requested on the role of AAPs. The need to strike a balance between ensuring debate on local issues with the need for AAPs to input into strategic policy and service decision making has also been highlighted. AAPs also want to ensure that they can influence decision making upwards.
5. All Durham County Councillors should engage with their local AAP.
6. The openness and transparency of AAP Board and Forum meetings has been highlighted as a key strength across all AAPs as well as the ability for local people to have their say on local issues and engage with the Council and partners.

Resources

2.1.13 The Working Group has considered information in relation to the resources allocated to the AAPs including funding arrangements and staffing. They have also examined the project appraisal and funding approval processes to ensure that they are robust and provide appropriate assurances and public accountability.

Working Group Conclusions

1. The Working Group note that in respect of Area Budget (AB) spend, £3.7m grant had been committed up to April 2011 with matched funding levered in of £5.6m. 345 projects had been approved during this period.
2. The Working Group note that in respect of Neighbourhood Budget (NB) spend, £4.8m grant had been committed up to April 2011 with matched funding levered in of £8.6m. 493 projects had been approved during this period.
3. The Working Group recognise the key role that the AAP Funding Team plays in supporting all 14 AAP Boards and Staff in developing and delivering projects which impact on agreed AAP priorities. In providing this role, the Working Group have learned that a considerable amount of development and improvement work has been undertaken to constantly enhance the AAP project Funding and Appraisal process. This development work has been undertaken alongside the AB/NB funding and project appraisal work for existing and new projects. The ability of AAP co-ordinators, support staff and the AAP Funding Team to improve such processes whilst, at the same time ensuring that ongoing projects are developed and appraised is to be commended.
4. The Working Group welcome the internal review that has been undertaken in respect of the AAP project funding process and looks forward to all of the key actions identified in the review being implemented, particularly in respect of training and development. (See Section 5.78 of main report for details)
5. During the course of the AAP Scrutiny Review, concerns have been expressed about the ability of AAPs to continue to deliver the number and value of projects in the current financial climate facing the Council and its partners. The Working Group consider it vital that the positive impact made across County Durham by all 14 AAPs and the value added by AAP generated projects continues to be supported by Durham County Council and partners.

6. The Working Group have noted the importance of having a robust system of performance and project management/ monitoring in place which includes the ability to analyse funding data which will allow for a more comprehensive breakdown of project funding, including matched funding. The Working Group welcomes therefore the development of the “System K” software package which will enable this breakdown to be produced.

AAP Focus Group Session Conclusions

1. All AAPs have identified their co-ordinator and staff as being the cornerstone to their success and as being professional, accessible and knowledgeable with a good work ethic.
2. The financial resource allocated to AAPs in respect of their Area and Neighbourhood budgets have enabled a significant number of projects to be delivered to address local priorities across County Durham. The ability of AAPs to lever in additional matched funding at a higher ratio to AB/NB spend has added significant value.
3. A number of AAPs have established small grants schemes that have proved a vital source of income to the smaller community and voluntary groups and in turn enables these groups to provide much needed services, projects and events in their local communities.
4. The project funding process has been a source of frustration amongst Public Board members and some wider Forum members. There is a perception that the checks and balances within the project appraisal and funding approval process are an additional example of Council bureaucracy. However, there is an acknowledgement that financial probity has to be assured when public money is being spent and accountability must also be demonstrated.
5. All AAPs have expressed concern at their ability to continue to deliver projects that impact on and address local priorities in the current climate of public sector funding reductions. To this end, the continued support of AAPs by the County Council, its Partners and those sources of external/matched funding is seen to be vital to the continued success of AAPs.

Community Involvement and Engagement

2.1.14 When considering the level of community involvement and engagement with AAPs, the Working Group has examined:-

- The level of engagement and attendances at AAP Board, Forum and task and finish group meetings as well as other AAP related events.
- Examples of community led projects including projects that have been developed by community representatives and also where projects have actually been delivered by community groups and organisations.
- How AAPs have used Marketing and Communications to enhance community involvement and engagement.

2.1.15 The AAP focus group sessions have also examined the level of community involvement and engagement with AAP activity and also areas where this could be further enhanced.

Community Involvement and Engagement

Working Group Conclusions

1. The Working Group note that the vast majority of AAP Board meetings had seen average attendances of around 70-80%. Observer attendance at AAP Board meetings varies across AAPs from 3 to 32 although the Working Group are aware that there is a variety of reasons to explain this including venue, transport and accessibility, Board agenda content and procedures adopted at meetings.
2. In considering the number of people engaged in the AAP task and finish groups, the Working Group noted that this was an area in which wider Public and AAP Forum members considered that they were engaged well. Statistics showed that almost 1000 people had attended task and finish groups across the AAPs and been involved in project development work in this area.
3. The Working Group also noted that the level of engagement and involvement with AAPs should also take into account other AAP related events and activity. Examples of this include:-
 - 800+ people engaged in the Stanley AAP Participatory Budget event.
 - 2000+ attendances at the Mobile cinema project.
 - Over 1400 young people attending Chester Fest and Have your say events.
 - The County Council's MTFP Consultation process which engaged widely across County Durham via the AAPs.

4. The Working group note that in relation to the total number of 876 AAP Projects, 50% of Area Budget (AB) related projects and 58% Neighbourhood Budget (NB) related projects were Community – led. This demonstrates the benefit that the Task and Finish Groups have had in increasing community engagement in this element of AAP activity.
5. This increase in community involvement and engagement generated through AAP activity also stands the Council in good stead to deliver against the Government’s Localism and Big Society agendas
6. The AAP Marketing and Communications Strategy provides a robust framework and plan of action for communications regarding AAPs including the development of a bespoke Communications Plan for each AAP which reflects local circumstances.
7. There is a named officer within the Council’s Communications team who works with AAP co-ordinators in respect of press releases, media events and articles relating to AAPs for Durham County News.
8. AAP co-ordinators are extremely proactive in ensuring that information regarding AAP activities including Board and Forum meetings, engagement events such as the recent participatory budget sessions and project launches is produced and shared with media both internal and external. There are regular press articles which feature in the press cuttings digest produced by the Communications Team. However, there is an appetite to do even more in order to increase further the level of awareness and engagement with AAPs by local communities.
9. The Working Group have noted the following potential ways in which AAP Press and Media coverage could be enhanced including:-
 - Actively engaging with Town/Parish Councils and utilise their publications to showcase AAP activity.
 - Enhancing relationships between AAP Boards and co-ordinators with local media.
 - Liaising with community groups/residents associations.
 - Including dedicated AAP pages within Durham County News.

AAP Focus Group Session Conclusions

1. All AAPs have been recognised as having genuinely increased the level of community engagement and involvement in their activities and those of the County Council. Particular successes have been referenced in respect of:-
 - The engagement and involvement of children and young people in AAP activity including the development within some AAPs of youth forums;
 - The involvement of Town and Parish Councils at AAP Board, Forum and task and finish group level activity
 - Access to support and advice by local community organisations and groups via the AAP co-ordinator, support staff and the funding team especially in relation to funding advice and sourcing out external funding streams.
 - The County Council's MTFP Consultation process which engaged widely across County Durham via the AAPs and which also importantly enabled officers to feedback to AAPs on how consultation responses and views had informed the MTFP and budget setting process.
 - Participatory budgeting exercises in Stanley and 3 Towns AAPs (800+ and 220+ attendees respectively) with a further event at Derwent Valley AAP.
2. Challenges have been identified in matching the level of involvement and engagement in the current financial climate particularly where funding is adversely affected.
3. All AAPs have expressed a desire to further enhance the level of engagement and involvement in AAP activity via new ways of working using the Internet, Facebook, Twitter and SMS Messaging.

Impact

- 2.1.16 The Working Group has examined the impact which AAP generated projects have had in delivering against AAP priorities and also how the development of AAPs and delivery of projects have enhanced public awareness of their activity. The Working Group learned that AAPs have also increased the number of people who expressed the view that they can influence local decision making. This figure is 40% in the residents' survey of 2010 against 25% for the 2008 Place Survey.

Working Group Conclusions

1. The fundamental principle behind the establishment of the 14 AAPs was that they should deliver action and not be talking shops. The Working Group have been astounded by the number and diversity of projects that have been developed by the AAPs with over 900 delivered across County Durham.
2. In terms of NB spend against AAP priorities, some £4.8m worth of projects have been delivered up to April 2011 and for AB spend against these same priorities, £3.7m worth of projects delivered.
3. When looking at the spend against County Durham Partnership priorities (including matched funding), a total of £15.2m has been delivered against NB including £9.7m of matched funding. For AB these figures are £9.3m and £5.4m of matched funding.
4. The aforementioned figures are significant investments within County Durham especially given the current economic climate and have made a staggering impact upon the AAPs and their local communities and residents.
5. The Working Group have also noted the success and impact of the AAPs in facilitating changes to both council and partner services at no additional cost during the many debates and discussions at AAP Board and Forum level on local issues that matter to local people. This has in turn enhanced the feeling amongst local communities that they can influence decision making through AAPs, a fact borne out in the survey undertaken amongst the wider AAP Forum membership reported later in this report. This augers well for the future in respect of the AAPs ability and potential to deliver against the Government's Localism agenda.
6. The AAPs have also demonstrated that they have robust project monitoring and performance management processes in place to ensure that delivery of and impact by AAP projects can be monitored, reported and appraised. The AAPs need to get better at publicising, promoting and reporting this impact.
7. The evidence reported to the Working Group in respect of the 2010 Residents Survey has demonstrated that the introduction of the 14 AAPs within County Durham has resulted in a corresponding increase in the percentage of people who feel that they can influence decision making within County Durham.

This figure was 40% in the residents' survey of 2010 against 25% for the 2008 Place Survey.

8. The Working Group have received evidence expressing concerns that delays had been experienced from project appraisal and funding approval to delivery on the ground. Additional concerns were expressed about projects being subsumed into service grouping work schedules and programmes and a subsequent delay in the project benefits/impacts being realised. Greater liaison needs to be undertaken between AAPs and service groupings charged with undertaking these works and assurances given around the project start and finish dates.

AAP Focus Group Sessions – Conclusions

1. Every AAP has identified large numbers of projects that have had a huge beneficial impact on their local communities. The evidence of project delivery that has occurred in such a short period of time from the AAPs' inception has demonstrated the extent of this impact.
2. The AAP Governance arrangements which enabled AAPs to establish task and finish groups have also been recognised within the focus group sessions as having an extremely positive effect on ensuring that projects with impact have been developed and delivered.

Performance Management

2.1.17 The Working Group has considered evidence in relation to:-

- How AAPs reported upon their performance within the County Council and the wider County Durham Partnership, and
- The Role of AAPs within the County Durham Partnership Framework

Working Group Conclusions

1. The Working Group welcome the County Durham Partnership (CDP) Update Reports that are presented to both Cabinet and the CDP. As well as updating on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership and the five thematic partnerships, the report highlighted the work of all 14 Area Action Partnerships including projects delivered and how they were engaging with members of the local community.

2. AAPs have well developed processes for reporting progress upon projects to AAP Board meetings but it is unclear how this gets reported to the wider AAP Forum membership.
3. The development of local performance indicators based upon Quality of life measures has been a high priority for AAP co-ordinators and the AAP funding team and is actively being pursued. At a time when the Council's approach to performance management is being reviewed to incorporate the need for performance reporting at a Sub-County level this work is to be welcomed.
4. There are well established relationships between the CDP, its thematic sub groups and the 14 AAPs in respect of AAP Board Chairs attending the CDP and also the membership of key partners on all AAP Boards. It is also evident that the CDP Priorities within the Sustainable Community Strategy have been impacted upon by a wide range of AAP activity. The Working Group have heard that the relationship needs to be enhanced so that the AAP membership can see how they are able to influence the priorities of the CDP and ensure that a balance is struck between Regional/Sub-Regional and Countywide strategic issues and those issues and priorities developed at the more local, community/ neighbourhood level.

AAP Focus Group Sessions – Conclusions

1. Each AAP has recognised and promoted the importance of having a robust system of performance management and project appraisal to determine if and ensure that projects and AAPs are delivering against the locally agreed priorities and also contributing to the wider strategic priorities of the County Council, partners and the Sustainable Community Strategy.
2. AAP Boards and Co-ordinators work very closely with the Funding Team and also Partners to ensure that regular performance reports are tabled at Board meetings. The Working Group feels that this should be expanded into the Wider Forum members and also local communities. It is therefore essential that robust links continue to be made between performance reporting and the AAP Communications Strategy(ies) to ensure that the public and local community are aware of the progress being made against priorities.
3. The Working Group also supports the opportunity to share performance information across AAPs and also recognise the value of using this information to identify and promote potential areas of joint working.

Additional Engagement and Consultations

2.1.18 *Questionnaire to the Wider AAP Forum Membership*

Methodology

- 2.1.19 To better understand how forum members engage with AAPs a questionnaire was developed by the Research and Consultation team for Overview and Scrutiny in conjunction with AAP co-ordinators and the Council's Consultation Officers' Group.
- 2.1.20 A covering letter by post and email was sent out by each AAP to their own forum members with the necessary information to direct them to questionnaire. The email users had a link sent with the covering letter to the online version of the questionnaire and the postal users were directed towards the link via the Overview and Scrutiny website. This was distributed to the 5,242 AAP forum members from all 14 AAPs with the intention of one month's fieldwork. The invitations for this survey were sent in late May, with a closing date of 1 July 2011.

Response

- 2.1.21 The response from Forum members was lower than expected. Despite extending the deadline beyond 1 July to incorporate some forum events just 273 responses were received. This gave a response rate of 5.2%. The AAP with the highest response with 41 responses was the Derwent Valley AAP.

Initial Findings

- 2.1.22 In terms of level of involvement over half of respondents (57%) were involved in community projects with around three out of five (62%) of these receiving help from an AAP and co-ordinators.
- 2.1.23 Forum members were asked why they joined their local AAP. Many respondents said they joined the AAP out of interest for their own area and because they wanted to get more involved in making a difference. When asked what would result in people attending more, the majority of responses indicated that participants were already involved as much as they could, with time issues being the main reason.
- 2.1.24 The ability of local people to influence decisions in their local area was a very important issue to respondents, with almost nine out of ten respondents (86%) stating this. Almost two in three (64%) agreed they, individually, could influence decisions with, whilst around a third (36%) stated they tended to or definitely disagreed.
- 2.1.25 Around three out of five (62%) respondents rated the performance of AAPs in engaging residents and service users as either fairly or very

good. However around a quarter (23%) thought this was either fairly or very poor.

2.1.26 Half of respondents (50%) felt very strongly that AAPs are an important means of involving local residents about issues in the local community and also an important means of consulting local people about policy changes. A similar proportion (49%) also felt very strongly that they do receive feedback about AAP achievements.

2.1.27 The volume of newsletters was about right according to the majority of respondents (55%) about one in seven (14%) thought there was too little. However around one fifth (19%) indicated their area didn't receive newsletters and very few people (1%) said there was too much publicity and awareness raising. About two thirds of respondents (67%) have said they had seen stories in local newspapers about their local AAP.

2.1.28 In terms of overall impact, around two thirds agreed that their local AAP provides an important point of contact for local people to discuss local public services (70%) and local issues (67%).

2.1.29 Additional comments in terms of overall improvement contained a large number of suggestions regarding the need for more publicity of AAPs and what they do, including feedback from such activities. The comments also outlined the need for the forums to be inclusive and accessible to more local people.

2.1.30 A detailed analysis of the results of the AAP Forum member questionnaire is attached to the full report. (Appendix 1)

2.1.31 Town and Parish Council/Meetings Representations

2.1.32 In accordance with the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Review of Area Action Partnership, a key stakeholder group identified for consultation and engagement was the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) and the 104 Town and Parish Councils and 22 Parish Meetings within County Durham.

2.1.33 The Chair of the AAP Working Group wrote to CDALC and all Town and Parish Councils/Meetings on 10 April 2011 informing them that Overview and Scrutiny would be undertaking a review of Area Action Partnerships and that their input would be welcomed. A further letter was sent to all parties on 18th May 2011 asking for responses based upon a number of KLOEs. A closing date for responses was given of 30 June 2011.

2.1.34 Responses to the consultation letter have been received from 14 Town/Parish Councils.

2.1.35 There have been mixed responses to the AAPs expressed with 6 local Councils acknowledging the success of their local AAP. 6 Local Councils have, in commenting on their local AAPs, suggested potential ways in which they could be improved. 1 Town Council has merely noted the letter inviting them to contribute to the review whilst 1 Parish Council has called for AAPs to be scrapped altogether.

2.1.36 A table is attached to the full report detailing these responses (Appendix 2).

2.1.37 Responses from other interested parties

2.1.38 Additional representations have been received during the course of the Review from County Councillors, Town/Parish Councillors and members of the public. These are detailed in Appendix 3 of the full report.

2.1.39 Staff Focus Groups

2.1.40 A series of Staff focus groups have been held to gauge the views of AAP Co-ordinators, AAP Support staff and the AAP Funding team. The sessions took the same format as the 14 individual AAP Focus Group sessions and asked staff to detail the Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities facing AAPs and to consider where they sat within the agreed KLOEs for the Review. Feedback from the Staff Focus Group sessions is detailed in Appendix 4 of the full report.

2.1.41 In general, the key issues raised by staff included:-

- there is good partnership working across AAPs, with a good set of skill mix.
- the profile of AAPs within the council across all service groups needs raising which could improve the levels of engagement.
- Successful match funding has been achieved across all AAPs, enabling larger projects to be carried out. The AAPs work collectively to achieve Value for Money. The funding team have dealt with a huge amount of projects and have been reactive and responsive to requests. AAPs deliver in a matter of weeks and the funding team is a key strength behind this.
- Engaging with the community is critical to the success of AAPs, as local knowledge reflects community needs in setting the priorities. AAPs can also assist in carrying out the Big Society/Localism agenda. It was agreed that work with the voluntary sector has improved since the set up of AAPs.

- Most AAPs have a good relationship with Town and Parish Councils. This could be strengthened in some areas.
- Successful projects are being carried out throughout the County by all AAPs in relation to the AAP priorities, including projects for young people, transport, job creation.
- There is a need for robust Performance Management systems to be put in place. With demands on the funding team as project numbers increase there is a need to ensure that project outcomes are monitored and evaluated.

2.1.42 Recommendations

2.1.43 The Working Group recommend that:-

- (i) a review of the AAP Terms of Reference be commenced to cover:
 - The inclusion of AAPs being non-political within the purpose and principles outlined within the AAP terms of reference;
 - The list of alternative public representatives drawn up at the initial appointment stage to be revisited as it is over 2 years old;
 - The rules regarding co-option and their application (currently co-optees have to stand down after 6 months but can be co-opted again formally);
 - The rules relating to the rotation of chairmanship of AAP Board amongst the three Board groups and their application;
 - The rules regarding speaking at AAP Board meetings and their application;
 - Clarification on the roles of the AAP Forum and Board meetings and which issues can be discussed at which meeting;
 - The inclusion of information and guidance regarding “Conflicts of Interest” and the rules for declaring personal/prejudicial interests;
 - The production of robust terms of reference for task and finish groups to ensure that their activity is conducted within appropriate governance arrangements;
 - Where AAPs identify a need to alter their Terms of Reference this should be done in compliance with the County Council’s Local Code of Corporate Governance.
- (ii) routine analysis of training needs and training to meet such development needs for both the board and staff should continue as this will enhance their effectiveness in the AAP;

- (iii) all Durham County Councillors be encouraged to engage with their local AAPs.
- (iv) Cabinet reaffirm the role of AAPs as a key mechanism through which the Council and partners will consult upon service and policy reviews; that service groupings, via the Consultation Officer Group ensure that such consultation is timely, appropriate and consistent across all AAPs.
- (v) where Town and Parish Councils are members of the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) appointments to AAP Boards should be made via CDALC. However, not all Town and Parish Councils are affiliated to CDALC and where this is the case in a particular AAP area then every effort should be made to ensure that those Town and Parish Councils have an equal opportunity to become involved with their respective AAP;
- (vi) the key actions identified within the internal review of AAP project funding (Section 5.78 of the main report refers) be implemented, particularly in respect of those areas of training and development identified.
- (vii) Cabinet in determining its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) take into consideration any financial allocation to the AAPs, the value that AAP Area Budget(AB) and Neighbourhood Budget(NB) have brought by way of matched funding opportunities namely, that each £1 of AB funding generates an average of £1.39 matched funding and each £1 of NB funding generates an average of £1.75 matched funding.
- (viii) AAPs look to develop the level of engagement and activity with the press and other media by:
 - Actively engaging with Town and Parish Councils and utilising their publications to evidence and raise awareness of AAP activity
 - Enhancing relationships between AAP Boards and Co-ordinators with local media
 - Liaising with community groups/residents associations
 - Including dedicated AAP pages within Durham County News
 - further enhancing AAP activity via new ways of working using the Internet, Facebook, Twitter and SMS Messaging.
- (ix) that the AAP project funding approval, appraisal process and application forms include a requirement that reports be submitted to AAP Boards on a quarterly basis detailing project progress.

- (x) performance reports for AAP activity be shared with the wider AAP Forum membership and that the AAPs further develop the process of publication and reporting of the delivery of and impact made by AAP projects against local priorities. That the 14 AAPs come together in an annual conference to celebrate their achievements and successes in this respect.
- (xi) AAPs undertake further work in conjunction with the ACE Planning and Performance team to enhance the reporting of performance management information and indicators.
- (xii) the learning and evidence of good practice detailed within this review report be shared by AAP co-ordinators and their respective Chairs across all 14 AAPs and that bespoke improvement plans for each AAP be produced for example engagement with young people, options for broadening representation.
- (xiii) the Council's Equalities and Diversity Team run a seminar with all 14 AAPs to develop an action plan to ensure that equality considerations are embedded in AAP practice and procedures evidencing the good practice that already exists.
- (xiv) an initial response to these recommendations is brought back to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board within six months; and that Cabinet agree to a review of the AAPs in another 2 years.

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Cabinet

22 September 2011


Quarter 1 2011/12 Performance Management Report

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

Purpose of the Report

1. To present progress against the Council's corporate basket of performance indicators (PIs) and report other significant performance issues for the first quarter of 2011/12.

Background

2. This is the quarterly performance report for the Council covering April – June 2011. The report contains information on key performance indicators, risk management and Council Plan progress. The report sets out an overview of performance and progress by Altogether priority theme. A summary of key performance indicators is provided at Appendix 3. More detailed performance information and Altogether theme analyses are available on request from performance@durham.gov.uk.

Developments since last quarter

3. Extensive work has been undertaken by all services to develop a new corporate set of indicators as set out in Appendix 3. This set of indicators is based around our six 'Altogether' priority themes and will be used to measure the performance of both the Council and the County Durham Partnership. Five different types of performance indicator have been introduced:

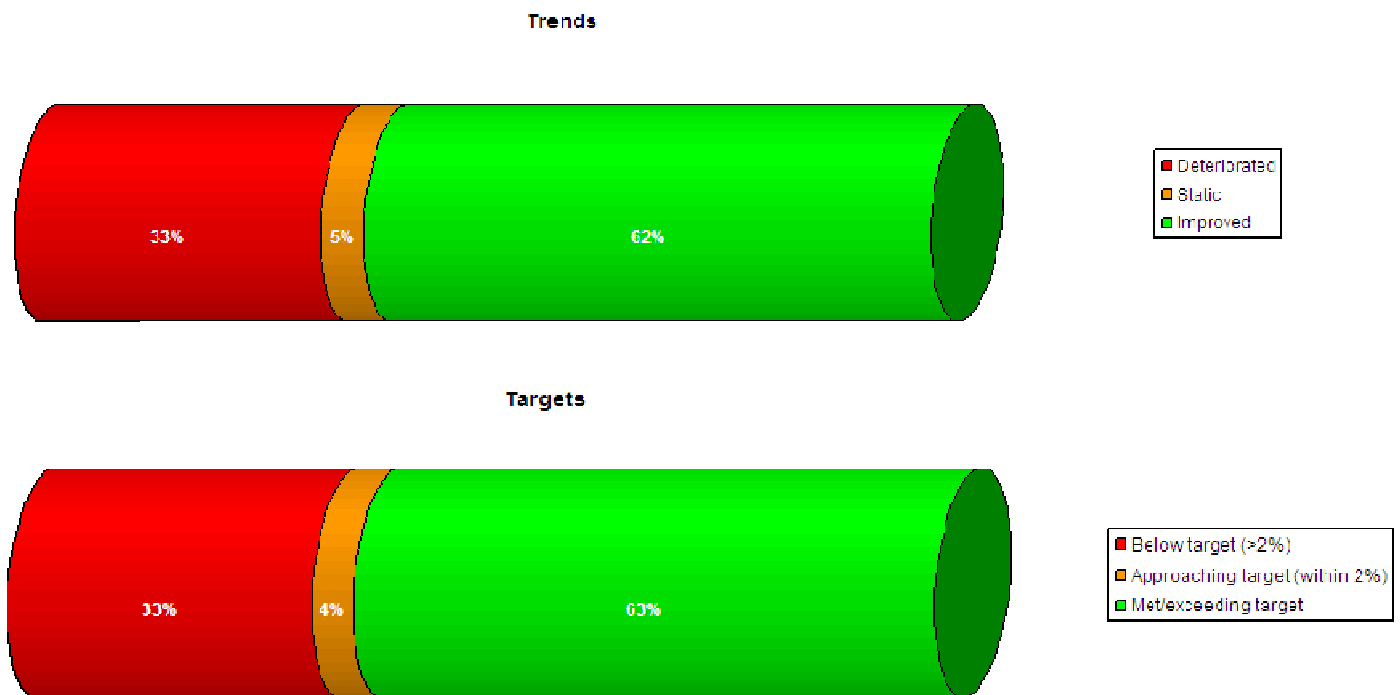
Performance Indicator Type	Rationale
Target Indicators	Targets are set for indicators where improvements can be measured regularly and where improvement can be actively influenced by the Council and its partners.
Tracker Indicators	Performance will be tracked but no targets will be set for indicators which are long term and which the Council and its partners only partially influence. For example life expectancy measures will be tracked but have no targets set.
Input Indicators	Inputs measure the resources (e.g. staff, materials, premises, caseload etc) employed to provide a service. Taken alongside target and tracker indicators, they may help to explain fluctuations in performance, for example caused by reduced staff levels or increased caseload.

Performance Indicator Type	Rationale
Perception and Satisfaction	A small set of core performance measures are included as part of the revised approach to tracking resident and user views.
Productivity	A new set of productivity measures is under development to support scrutiny of the efficiency of service delivery.

4. This new framework is a significant change, as previously the Government required targets to be set for all NIs, and the large number of prescribed indicators tended to detract from a rounded consideration of other aspects of performance such as inputs and productivity measures.
5. Benchmarking comparisons of Durham's performance to other councils are being developed and maintained despite the demise of the National Indicator set, to provide councillors with a view of how our performance compares to our peers. The Local Government Group has developed a prototype benchmarking tool 'LG Inform' which will provide online performance benchmarking and comparison, which individual Members and officers will be able to use to compare Durham's performance to other councils. The prototype for this product was launched in June and the full system will be rolled out early in the New Year. Work continues to utilise the LG Inform product to obtain comparative data which is free of charge. Durham has supported the Local Government Group in product development, as part of a national reference group.
6. Changes have also been made to the way service plans are monitored. Instead of monitoring and reporting corporately on all service plan actions, a number of actions from each service plan have been identified that are key to the corporate health and performance of the Council which will be monitored centrally. More detail on these actions is provided in paragraph 17. Monitoring of these key actions is undertaken on an exception basis using the following system:
 - Red - behind target/not planned to meet target
 - Green - achieved by the deadline/achieved ahead the deadline/on target to meet the deadline.
7. A further area of improvement this year is the introduction of reporting on progress of the Council in delivering Equality and Diversity, Carbon Reduction and Investors in People actions, and in responding to external inspections.

Overall Performance of the Council for Quarter 1

Figure 1: Performance against corporate basket of indicators

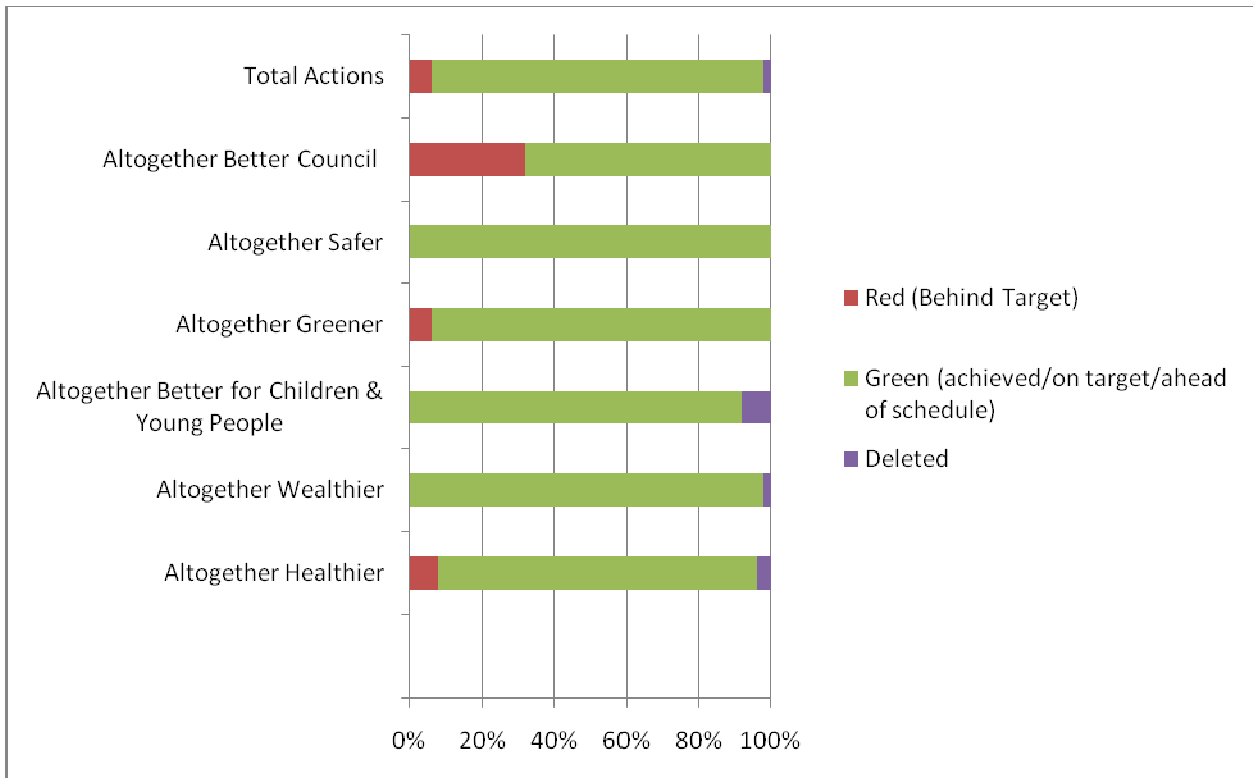


Source: Service performance monitoring data

8. Overall in Quarter 1 the Council is making good progress across its key performance indicators with 28 (67%) of reported indicators improving or maintaining performance when compared to 12 months previously. Examples of indicators that improved compared to 12 months previously are First time entrants to the Youth Justice System (Ref 10); Older people still at home after hospital discharge (Ref 34); Carers receiving a specific carers service (Ref 39); Fly-tipping grade (Ref 74); and Municipal waste landfilled (Ref 80). 14 (33%) of reported indicators have shown a downward trend this period, examples include Processing of Major planning applications (Ref 1); Four week smoking quitters (Ref 40); and Repeat incidents of domestic violence (Ref 54).
9. In relation to performance against target the picture is also positive, with 42 (63%) of reported indicators already meeting or exceeding targets. With many targets being year end targets, it is expected this percentage will increase significantly during the year. Examples of indicators where target has been achieved include Private rented sector properties improved through local authority intervention (Ref 2); Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales (Ref 20) and Percentage of the adult population participating in sport and active recreation at least 3 days a week (Ref 30).
10. 22 (33%) of reported indicators failed to achieve target. Examples include Bus services running on time (Ref 4); Cervical and bowel cancer screening (Ref 25 & 26); Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions (Ref 61); People successfully completing drug treatment (Ref 63); Invoices paid in 30 days (Ref 105); and Processing of housing benefit and council tax benefit claims and change of circumstances (Ref 106 & 107).
11. Further detail of progress against key indicators for each Altogether Theme is detailed from paragraph 41.

Council Plan Actions

Figure 2: Progress against Council Plan by Altogether Theme



Source: Service monitoring data

12. Monitoring of the Council Plan actions is carried out on a quarterly basis to ensure that actions are being completed and efficiency savings are being realised. Overall good progress is being made in the first quarter of 2011/12, with 92% (159 out of 173) of actions being on target, achieved ahead of schedule or achieved by the deadline. The 'Altogether Wealthier' theme has achieved the highest percentage of total actions on track (98%). Only 6% of the total actions are behind target and out of these, the 'Altogether Better Council' theme has the highest number, with six actions out of 19 being behind target.

13. Further information regarding the progress of actions within each Altogether Theme is detailed from paragraph 41.

Service Plan Actions

Figure 3: Service Plan progress to end of Quarter 1 2011_2012

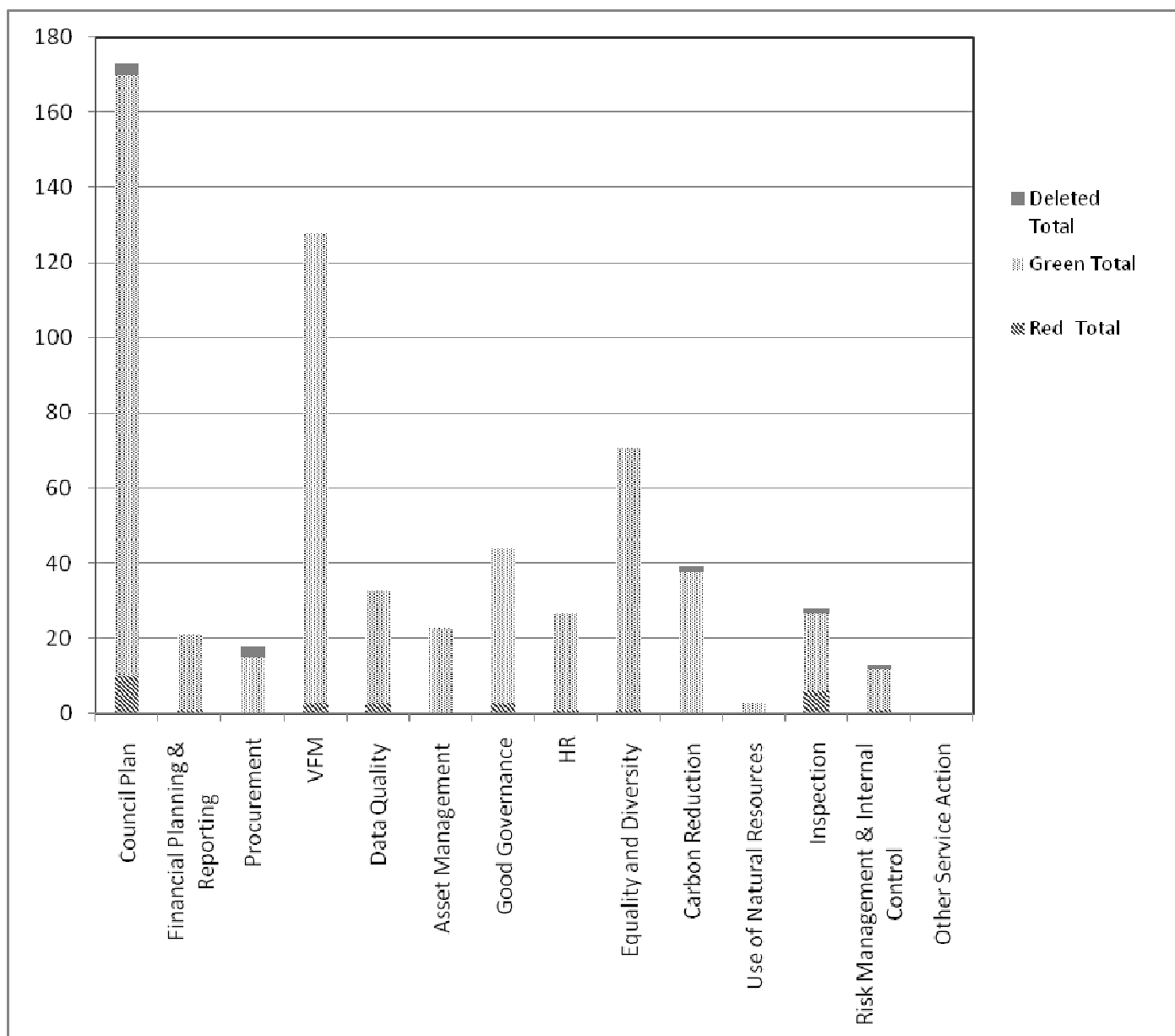
Service Grouping	Total number of SP Actions	Green (achieved or on target)	Red (Behind Target)	Deleted
Adults, Wellbeing & Health (AWH)	179	169 (94%)	8 (5%)	2(1%)
Assistant Chief Executive (ACE)	157	148 (94%)	8 (5%)	1(1%)
Children & Young People Services(CYPS)	201	191(95%)	4(2%)	6(3%)
Neighbourhood Services (NS)	300	290 (97%)	10 (3%)	0
Regeneration & Economic Development (RED)	210	205 (97%)	4 (2%)	1(1%)
Resources (RES)	134	114 (85%)	16 (12%)	4 (3%)
Total	1181	1117 (95%)	50 (4%)	14(1%)

Source: Service monitoring data

14. The above table shows that overall 95% of Service plan actions have either been achieved or on target to be achieved by the deadline and a small proportion (4%) are behind target. The majority of service groupings have a high percentage of actions that are either achieved or are on target to achieve with the exception of Resources who have the highest percentage of actions behind target (12%), although 85% have been assessed as green.
15. From Quarter 1, a number of key actions from each service plan have been identified for detailed corporate monitoring (623 out of 1181). These fall into the following categories:
- a. Carbon reduction actions
 - b. Equality and Diversity actions
 - c. Previous 'Use of Resources' actions
 - Financial Planning & reporting
 - Procurement
 - VFM
 - Data Quality
 - Asset Management
 - Good Governance
 - Human resources
 - Use of Natural Resources
 - Risk Management & Internal Control
 - d. Actions arising from Inspections
16. These have been identified as being the key actions that Members and Corporate Management Team need to be aware of to ensure the Council performs effectively.
17. If there are any additional actions that service areas wish to be drawn to Members' attention, then these actions will also be included in this report.
18. Reporting of these key actions will be on an exception basis. A copy of the exceptions, deletions, amendments and additions is available in on request from performance@durham.gov.uk and a summary is outlined below.

19. The graph below shows performance against key actions previously set out in paragraph 17 of this report.

20. **Figure 4: Key Actions - Service Plans – Progress against categories**



Key Messages

21. In total there are 623 key actions that are monitored corporately. Out of these actions 583 (93%) have either been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline and 31 (5%) of actions are behind target. A further 9 actions are proposed to be deleted

Equalities and Diversity

22. Service Plan monitoring has shown that progress against the Single Equality Scheme actions and Equality Impact Assessment actions are on track. In addition to the equality actions in the Council Plan of the report there are an additional 68 key equality and diversity actions monitored on a quarterly basis. In the first quarter of 2011/12, 98% of these actions were assessed as 'green, being either completed or on target.

23. These 'green' actions include:

- a. the embedding of impact assessments within the Council's financial cycle through the quarterly review of the MTFP;
- b. work with schools and other establishments to encourage take up of Durham Anti Bullying Accreditation status and
- c. the commissioning of independent advocacy services for all adult care service user groups.

Only one action has slipped due to the intensity of work to support the MTFP. The Customer Stakeholder profiles by equalities characteristic have been delayed. It is now anticipated that completion of the profiles will be by March 2012.

Carbon reduction

24. April 2011 saw the start of the Carbon Reduction commitment, where the Council started to be charged for every tonne of carbon emissions from buildings and stationary sources. In 2012 the Council will need to pay £800,000 for allowances. CO₂ and energy reductions through better practices and improving efficiency should be seen as a means of reducing costs which does not impact upon service delivery. Going forward, emissions will be allocated to each Service area, enabling CO₂ reduction targets and carbon budgets to be set. Actions are therefore included in service plans to lay the foundations to enable services to take responsibility for and manage their own emissions.

25. 38 out of 39 actions identified under the category of 'carbon reduction' have either been achieved or are on target to meet the deadline and one has been deleted. Positive progress includes an action to implement Site Waste Management Plans for schemes in excess of £100K to identify waste streams, reduce waste to landfill and increase recycling opportunities. This action was completed in January 2011, ahead of its original deadline of June 2011.

Use of Resources

26. Out of a total of 310 Use of Resources actions, 293 (95%) have been either achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline and 13 (4%) are behind target. A further 4 (1%) are proposed to be deleted. Further details are included under the 'Altogether Better Council' Theme later in the report.

27. Value for Money actions account for 41% of the Use of Resources actions (128 out of 310 actions) and are key to ensuring efficiency savings are made within the Council. Out of these 128 actions, 125 (98%) have either been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline and 3 (2%) are behind target.

Inspection actions

28. There was a total of 28 Inspection actions identified and out of these 21 (75%) have either been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline and one has been deleted. 21% (6 actions) are behind target. All of these actions relate to the Benefits Inspection Plan and this is largely due to the changes occurring within that section, i.e. the implementation of the new Revenues and Benefits System and the internal restructure. Revised deadlines have been proposed for all of the actions, which will all be completed by March 2012. These actions include involving staff/stakeholders in setting service standards and reviewing and amending the reconsideration and appeals procedure. Details of all exceptions are available on request from performance@durham.gov.uk

Investors in People Action Plan

29. As the result of the first assessment against the Investors in People Standards as a Unitary Authority in March 2011, Durham County Council has been recognised as an Investors in People organisation. Following this assessment an action plan was developed and endorsed by the Cabinet in July 2011. This section provides a brief update of progress against the action plan.
30. There are 13 actions in the Council's IIP (Investors in People) Plan. Out of 13 actions only one action has been rescheduled for April 2012. 'Harmonised Pay and Conditions of Employment. Implement a new fully costed pay and grading structure for agreement by CMT and the Council'. Detail of the reasons why this action has slipped is included in paragraph 97 in the 'Altogether Better Council' theme.

Risk Management

31. Effective risk management is a vital component of the Council's challenging improvement agenda, so that any risks to successful delivery can be identified and minimised. The Council's risk management process therefore sits alongside service improvement work and is integrated into all significant change and improvement projects.
32. The key risks to successfully achieving the objectives of each corporate theme are detailed against each Altogether theme in the relevant sections of the report. These risks have been identified using the following criteria:-
- Net impact is critical, and the net likelihood is highly probable, probable or possible.
 - Net impact is major, and the net likelihood is highly probable or probable
 - Net impact is moderate, and the net likelihood is highly probable
33. Where a risk has a direct correlation with performance, this is highlighted in analysis.
34. As at 30 June 2011, there were 60 corporate and service strategic risks, a decrease of 23 from the previous period end at 31 March 2011. Of these, 5 are key risks matching the criteria above. The total number of risks are summarised in the matrix, based on their net risk assessment as at 30 June 2011. Where there have been changes to the number of risks from the last quarter period end, the risk total as at 31 March 2011 is highlighted in brackets.

Figure 4: Corporate Risk Heat Map

Impact					
Critical	(1)	3 (4)	2 (3)		
Major	(1)	5 (5)	9 (7)	3 (3)	
Moderate	(1)	10 (14)	18 (29)	4 (4)	
Minor		0 (3)	5 (8)		
Insignificant					
Likelihood	Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Probable	Highly Probable

Key risks 

35. At a corporate strategic level, key risks to draw attention to are:

- a. Slippage in delivery of the MTFP will require further savings, which may result in further service reductions/ job losses;
- b. The Council may be liable to legal challenge if a single status agreement is not implemented in full;
- c. Insufficient number of adequately skilled staff to maintain the expected level of services;
- d. The loss of Area Based Grant funding may result in the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) failing to narrow inequality and deprivation;
- e. Failure to identify and effectively regulate Contaminated Land.
- f. Delays in processing both new, and changes to, benefit claims. Although this risk is below the criteria for determining key risks, it is highlighted for your attention as it will remain a significant risk until the new IT system is fully implemented, which will not be until quarter 4 of 2011/12.

36. A significant issue highlighted during the quarter which has potential risk implications for the Council is the changes in the Agency Worker Regulations from October 2011, whereby agency workers in the UK will receive "equal treatment" compared to permanent staff after being employed for 12 weeks. This issue has not been scored as there is still a lack of information on which to accurately assess the risk. An assessed risk will be completed in the coming quarterly review.

37. Twenty-four risks have been removed from the register in this quarter. This is due to management of the risks by the Services as mitigating actions have been completed to reduce risks to a level where management now consider existing controls to be adequate.

38. The Implementation of additional mitigation on a number of risks has enabled the Council to improve performance, decision-making and governance, and this is detailed in the relevant sections of the report.

Altogether Wealthier: Overview

39. A development this quarter within this priority theme is the reductions in Area Based Grant (ABG) over 2011/12 that are going to have a major impact on service delivery. The overall budget for the Economic Development Service is being cut by 75% over the MTFP period due to the ABG reductions. Over the last year work has been ongoing to improve performance reporting mechanisms and one of these areas has been to look at business enquiries and new (business) start-ups. Despite the reductions in ABG, the service will continue to track these indicators but anticipate a reduction in performance once key funding for initiatives such as the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative come to an end in the next quarter.

40. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- A reduction in the number of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance. For June 2011 this figure was 4360 equating to 8.6% of the resident 18-24 year old population. This is lower than the 9.4% reported at previous quarter and lower than the regional average of 9.4% but higher than the national average of 6.9% (Ref 116).
- A steady reduction in the total JSA claimants claiming for one year or more. For June 2011 the figure shows 785 (6.2%) total JSA claimants claiming for one year or more compared to 1940 (15.9%) at same period last year. This is lower than the regional average of 11.3% and national average of 14.2% (Ref 117).
- A steady reduction in the employment rate of the working age population. Latest figures for the 12 months January to December 2010 (which relate to Quarter 3 2010/11 as reported 8 months in arrears) show the employment rate has reduced to 66.2% from last years quarter 1 and 2 figures (66.4% and 66.5% respectively) (Ref 118)
- An increase in the total number of Homelessness presentations. For June 2011 the figure shows there were 1326 homeless presentations, an increase from the 1075 reported 12 months previously. Homelessness preventions have also shown a downward trend this period with only 14.9% of homeless presentations being prevented compared with 16.3% at same period last year (Ref 133 & 130).

41. Two satisfaction indicators are reported for this priority theme:

- The percentage of users who felt that cultural events were “good” or “very good”. A new version of the survey has been developed for 2011/12 and data will be available from Quarter 2. Results will be sourced from a survey of people attending the 'Highlights Tour' (a range of cultural events in rural areas) and events as part of the BRASS festival (Ref 7).
- Local Authority Tenant satisfaction with landlord services. This is an annual survey and the latest results are for the survey completed in February 2011 with 83.7% of tenants satisfied or very satisfied. Performance has improved from 2006 by 11.3% (Ref 8).

Performance against key indicators

	Direction of travel		
	Improved	Stable	Declined
Performance indicators	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)

	Performance against Target			
	Red	Amber	Green	Deleted Actions
Performance indicators	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	N/A
Actions	0 (0%)	N/a	48 (98%)	1 (2%)

42. Results for this theme's key corporate performance target indicators show that 3 of the 6 indicators are already achieving or are close to achieving target (see Appendix 3, table 1).

- a. Private rented sector properties improved as a direct consequence of local authority intervention. During this period 170 private rented sector properties have improved which has exceeded the period target of 122 (Ref 2).
- b. Occupancy rates of council owned business support centres. Occupancy levels currently stands at 73% following refurbishment of some units. This is close to achieving the 74% target (Ref 5)
- c. Enrolments on Adult Learning courses leading to qualifications. Latest preliminary data covering the period August 2010 to July 2011 shows the achievement rate of people enrolled on accredited courses supported by the council's Adult Learning service is 81.2% which is close to achieving the 82% period target. Finalised data is due to be published in December 2011 (Ref 6).

43. The service highlight three key performance improvement issues going forward:

- a. Processing of Major planning applications. During this period, 75% of major planning applications were processed within the 13 week timescale. This is below the 79.9% target and the 81.3% processed 12 months earlier. This current dip in performance is due to the effect of a recent staff restructure, including in particular IT problems which affected ability of officers to meet milestones for processing of applications and the effect of the resultant staff relocations across the County arising from the restructure. Durham compares favourably against the National average (69.92%) but is below the North East average (82.43%) (Ref 1).
- b. The percentage of bus services running on time. Over the Quarter 1 period, 89.9% of bus services ran on time which is lower than the 95% target. The reason for this has been identified as a result of punctuality at two particular bus stations (Stanley and Peterlee) being low on the survey day. This may therefore have been as a consequence of local issues. The number of surveys at each location is to be increased in order to get a better representative sample of data. If a pattern is identified, further detailed investigation will be carried out (Ref 4).
- c. Empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention. During this period, 11 properties were brought back into use through local authority intervention. This is below the period target of 20. The Housing Renewals and Improvement team have implemented a new area based approach of multi disciplinary teams covering both empty properties and private landlords, which came into effect at the end of July 2011. The aim of this approach is to focus resources and therefore it is anticipated that this will have a greater impact and performance should increase (Ref 3).

44. In terms of progress against the Council Plan actions, the Altogether Wealthier theme has the highest percentage of actions that are on track or have been achieved (98% - 48 out of 49 actions). The remaining action to undertake infrastructure and public transport improvements on the Priority 4 corridor A690 is proposed to be deleted from the Council Plan due to funding restrictions.

45. Key actions within the Council Plan within this theme are to complete a stock options appraisal on the Council's housing stock and implement the most appropriate housing management vehicle.

46. During the quarter one period a number of activities have been completed or are underway including:

- a. The appointment of a Stock Options Manager and two supporting officers
- b. A Customer Working Group has been established consisting of three customers from each provider area and one leaseholder representative
- c. A Steering Group has also been appointed which consists of the Customer Working Group and three Councillors
- d. Three advisors have been appointed to the project: Engage Associates (Independent Tenants Advisor (ITA)); Consult CIH/Savills (Financial Advisors) and Trowers and Hamlin (Legal Advisors)
- e. Savills have conducted a stock condition appraisal which shows Durham City Homes and Dale and Valley Homes housing stock is of a good condition, however East Durham Homes housing stock requires significant investment
- f. Findings have been presented to the Steering Group and the housing providers, the Steering Group have selected five preferred options to take forward for further consultation
- g. Public consultation on the preferred options has now commenced with the ITA delivering a wide range of activities across the County.
- h. Consultation will be completed at the end of September.

47. The key risk to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme is '*The loss of Area Based Grant funding*', resulting in the CDEP failing to narrow inequality and deprivation gaps. This risk has occurred with the recent reduction in Area Based Grant which will have a major impact in terms of increasing social and economic deprivation in the County. An action plan is being developed to mitigate this risk as far as possible, although it should be recognised that this will remain a significant risk for at least the next 4 years.

48. Other significant risks include:

- a. Private housing stock condition worsens with adverse implications for local economy, health & neighbourhood sustainability.
- b. Reduced future allocations of deprivation based grants to the County resulting from changes to the Council's new deprivation status, which will impact on the delivery of key strategies and investment in the County.
- c. Diminishing Capital Resources, continuing depressed land values and slow growth in the private sector will impact on the ability to deliver major projects and Town initiatives within proposed timescales

Altogether Better for Children and Young People: Overview

49. The development of integrated teams via the Integrated Services Programme has continued during Quarter 1, with progress towards the establishment of the One Point Service for children, young people & families in the autumn. This includes:

- the appointment of the Head of Service and commencement of recruitment for the three Senior Manager posts;
- an extensive 90 day consultation exercise held with staff and Trade Unions has concluded and a determination made on the Service structure;
- a financial agreement has been reached with County Durham & Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) relating to apportionment of costs and efficiencies of the Service;
- a Partnership Agreement with CDDFT and DCC is under development.
- the continued development of buildings which will act as team accommodation for groups of staff in each of the 10 Hub areas;
- a joint IT solution piloted in 1 site.

The Integrated Services Programme remains on target for the 'Go Live' of the integrated teams beginning in September 2011.

50. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- The rate of proven re-offending by young offenders aged 10-17, has slightly deteriorated, from 1.70 offences per young person in quarter 4, 2009-10, to 1.73 offences per young person in quarter 4, 2010-11. (Ref 143).
- The proportion of children in poverty in County Durham has fallen to its lowest level, 23.5%, since November 2008. However, it remains higher than the England average (20.5%) but lower than the North East average (25.3%) (Ref 135).
- The percentage of 16 to 18 year olds, who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), is 9.1% in quarter 1, 2011-12. Comparisons with data for the previous quarter or the same quarter in the previous year are inappropriate as the data reporting criteria was changed from April 2011 by Department for Education. (Ref 145).

51. One satisfaction indicator has been developed as part of the corporate basket of indicators for this theme - Children and young people's satisfaction with the help and support they receive at school. (Ref 22) The results of the survey will be available in Quarter 2.

Performance against key indicators

	Direction of travel		
	Improved	Stable	Declined
Performance indicators	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

	Performance against Target			
	Red	Amber	Green	Deleted Actions
Performance indicators	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	N/A
Actions		N/A	23 (92%)	2 (8%)

52. Results for this theme's key corporate performance target indicators show that 10 indicators with data available this period either met or exceeded target (see Appendix 3, table 1). 9 indicators with trend data have improved compared to 12 months earlier.

53. Summary of key achievements this quarter include:

- Data from July 2010 up to the end of June 2011 illustrates that 1,303 out of 5,793 Children in Need (CIN) referrals occurred within 12 months of the previous referral, which equals 22.5%. Performance has continued to improve from 27.4% in Quarter 2 2010-2011 to 22.5% in the current quarter, and is the best performance has been since 2004-2005. Improvements in the

quality of assessments, the introduction of the Preventative Strategy, and the work of the Family Pathfinder Teams are impacting positively on performance against this indicator (Ref 15).

- b. Data for April to June 2011 shows that 17 out of 165 children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan had previously been the subject of a Plan, which represents 10.3%, which is one of the lowest figures recorded since 2004-2005. Performance has improved as a result of steps to ensure that children are not removed from a Child Protection Plan too early, including monitoring by the Independent Reviewing Officers, earlier targeting of cases of neglect, and more proactive intervention e.g. the Family Pathfinder Teams (Ref 16).
 - c. 99.1% of looked after cases were reviewed within required timescales during Quarter 1 2011-2012 (Ref 20).
 - d. 100% of child protection cases were reviewed within required timescales during Quarter 1 2011-2012 (Ref 21).
 - e. The number of schools and other settings achieving Anti-Bullying Status increased by 3 from 85 in 2010-2011 to 88 during the 1st Quarter 2011-2012 (Ref 14).
 - f. The provisional Quarter 1 Youth Justice Board return indicates 76 First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTEs) which equates to 159 FTEs per 100,000 for the 10-17 year old population. This exceeded the quarterly target of 184 FTEs per 100,000 for 10-17 year old population (Ref 10).
 - g. 4.8% of young people participated in youth work during Quarter 1 2011-2012 exceeding the quarterly target of 3% (Ref 19).
 - h. 304 agencies and organisations have now achieved Investing in Children Membership, which was an increase of 11 from the previous quarter and exceeded the Quarter 1 target of 302 (Ref 18).
54. The main area for improvement is the conception rate amongst girls aged 15-17 years. Data related to the under-18 conceptions per 1,000 girls aged 15-17 years resident in the area, as compared with the 1998 baseline rate, is released 14 months in arrears because of the time-lag for conception figures (Ref 138). 1st Quarter data, which applies to January-March 2010, shows 100 conceptions, which is the third lowest number of conceptions during this period for Durham since 1998 and an improvement on the corresponding period from the previous year. This equates to a conception rate of 44.9 per 1,000 girls aged 15-17, a reduction of 18% from the 1998 baseline. Every teenage conception leads to costs for a range of agencies. The reduction of teenage conceptions by 59 from 2008 to 2009 has saved agencies substantial costs. Although progress has been made, more needs to be done. CYPS and PCT public health professionals have completed a thorough needs analysis and developed commissioning intentions related to this. During the last quarter a peripatetic contraception service has been jointly commissioned by CYPS and Public Health PCT through the Joint Commissioning Board. This is to improve access to contraceptive services. All 5 localities will benefit from a Saturday service. CYPS and Public Health PCT have also improved the delivery of Sexual Relationship Education (SRE) by the commissioning of the Delilah bus (young people specific – sexual health mobile unit).
55. Another specific performance issue which falls outside of the corporate performance indicator set but worthy of noting is the percentage of initial assessments for children's social care completed within 7 working days, which needs further improvement. During Quarter 1 2011-2012, 62.8% of initial assessments were carried out within required timescales compared to the target of 85%. Performance in the corresponding period for the previous year was 83.9%.
56. In terms of Council Plan progress, the Altogether Better for Children & Young People theme has 92% (23 out of 25) of actions that have been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline and no actions that are behind target. There are two actions that are proposed to be

deleted from the Council Plan, one regarding supporting schools to work towards the Rights Respecting Schools Award/ Investing in Children Membership as funding is no longer available to support this activity. The second action relates to ensuring young people have access to high quality, impartial information and advice regarding the learning opportunities and support available to inform their choices by implementing the Information, Advice and Guidance standards. The Education Bill will remove this responsibility from local authorities and it will be a requirement for schools to purchase independent advice for students.

57. A key action in this theme is to work with partners to deliver services that effectively safeguard children, in particular by ensuring the Family Pathfinder Service is embedded within Preventative services. The deadline for this was April 2012 but this has already been achieved.
58. Although the following Service Plan progress update does not relate to the Council Plan or 'key actions', it has been identified as an action that Members may find of particular interest. The volume of Education appeals for school placements has risen dramatically over recent years. Code of practice (COP) guidelines state that primary appeals should be heard within 30 days, and secondary appeals be heard by 6th July prior to the start of the new academic year in September. Combined performance currently stands at 90% of appeals being heard within the COP deadlines. Considering the volume almost trebling since 2006-07, the recent staffing restructure of staff involved, and the fact that there will always be factors outside council control that result in non-compliance, the performance of our committee services team is highly commendable. Appeals work, previously carried out by the former Executive Committee section, is now handled by all staff in the newly restructured Committee Services section. Whilst there are fewer staff since the restructure, there is greater flexibility to manage workloads, particularly at peak times, and this has facilitated more effective and efficient working practices and has delivered the improved performance. There were some cases where deadlines were missed for example House moves where the appeal was reliant on proof of purchase and appellants asking for revised dates due to holidays etc.
59. The most significant risk to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme is '*Failure to deliver integrated services, including the NHS, by September 2011*', as this may result in breach of grant condition and missed MTFP targets'. A project is in place to manage the transition to integrated services, and key operational risks to the delivery are managed within the project.
60. During this quarter, the Phase 3 Children's Centre Capital Build projects have now been successfully completed. The risk of a loss of funding and any residual costs falling on the Local Authority has been avoided as all of the projects have now been successfully completed, and the risks effectively managed.

Altogether Healthier: Overview

61. A new development this quarter within this priority theme relates to a new reablement service that was introduced in April 2011 for domiciliary care to provide vulnerable adults with the opportunity to re-learn everyday skills that have been lost during periods of poor health, accident or illness. The Service is aimed at helping people to maintain their independence. Although still at an early stage, initial feedback from service users is positive with 98% feeling that reablement services met 'all/most/some' of their needs. In relation to the way that reablement helped, the highest numbers responded the service enabled users to feel more confident and also helped meet their care needs.
62. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:
- Data on the annual indicator for alcohol related hospital admissions is not yet available but based on provisional in year data for April to December 2010, there has been a 7.4% increase when compared to the same period for 2009. This is in line with the national (7.6%) and regional (8%) trends for this period (Ref 155).
 - Improvement in mortality rates from all circulatory diseases and all cancers at ages under 75 (based on data for 2009). Data up to the end of 2010 will be reported in Quarter 3 (Ref 148 & 149)
63. Feedback from service users continues to be a touchstone of service quality. This has been reinforced nationally through the inclusion of 7 indicators in the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) which are sourced through national surveys. Latest local performance figures highlight the following:
- The overall satisfaction rating for services users with their adult social care assessments has continued to increase and is currently at 92.6%. This has exceeded the 2011/12 target of 90% (Ref 48)
 - 90.6% of service users reported that the help and support they receive has made their quality of life "much" or a "little" better. This has exceeded the target of 90% (Ref 47)
 - The overall satisfaction for intermediate care services was 98.2%, which has achieved the Service target of 95% (Ref 49)

Performance against key indicators

	Direction of travel		
	Improved	Stable	Declined
Performance indicators	6 (60%)	0 (0%)	4 (40%)

	Performance against Target			
	Red	Amber	Green	Deleted Actions
Performance indicators	7 (32%)	0 (0%)	15 (68%)	N/A
Actions	2 (8%)	N/A	22 (88%)	1 (4%)

64. In terms of performance against target, 15 of the 22 key target performance indicators with data for Quarter 1 have met or achieved the target set (see Appendix 3, table 1). 6 out of 10 indicators with trend data available are showing a positive direction of travel.

65. Summary of key achievements this quarter include:

- The percentage of the adult population participating in at least 30 minutes sport and active recreation of at least moderate intensity on at least 3 days a week: the rolling 24 month figure (April 2009 to April 2011) from the Active People Survey (APS) shows an increase in participation from 22.6% to 23.3%. DCC is one of only 2 unitary authorities in the North East

that have shown a statistically significant increase. Only 2 other North East authorities (Stockton 23.7% and Northumberland 24%) have higher participation rates (Ref 30)

- b. Providing people with a personal budget is a key part of the drive to provide people with greater choice and control of their care. At the end of the 1st quarter, 45.1% of service users are receiving a personal budget (increased from 41.4% in 2010/11). Performance continues to achieve target. In a recent survey by ADASS (March 2011), Durham has the second highest proportion of people with a personal budget in the North East Region (Ref 52).
- c. The number of delayed transfers of care from hospital back to normal place of residence is a key measure of the effectiveness of health and social care services working together. Between April and June 2011, there were 23 delays which equates to an overall figure of 1.89 per 100,000 (NB this figure is based on a sample of one week every month). Latest benchmarking data from the Department of Health (DoH) identifies that Durham is ranked 8th of 151 local authorities nationally. In 2010/11, 93.4% of people were Very / Fairly satisfied with the help and support they received relating to their hospital discharge (Ref 53)

66. Of the seven indicators that have not achieved target, The following are key performance improvement issues:

- a. There has been a significant reduction in relation to the percentage of adults who receive secondary mental health services and who are in employment. Performance in Quarter 1 of 2011/12 was 6.15% which is significantly below the agreed target for 2011/12 (10.3%) and below the higher levels of performance achieved in 2010/11 (9.8%). Whilst it is disappointing that the target has been missed, this is clearly a challenging target within current economic conditions. Performance is below the all England average for 2009/10 but in line with the nearest statistical neighbour average for the period. In response, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (who source the data) have instigated work to assure the quality of the data provided. In addition, the Mental Health Joint Commissioning Group will consider quarter 1 performance to understand those factors which are contributing to current performance levels (Ref 35).
- b. There have been 4,871 four-week smoking quitters, compared to a target of 5,120 for 2010/11 (based on the latest data available for January – March 2011). This equates to 1,157 quitters per 100,000 population compared to a target of 1,215. NHS County Durham is implementing a new electronic system (Quit Manager) to help improve services to people who access the stop smoking service. However, this has proved challenging and it has proved difficult to engage with all stop smoking providers. Durham County Council is contributing to the target through running a range of events for DCC staff (e.g. promoting stop smoking services to manual workers) and will deliver a No Smoking Campaign in March 2012. Based on 2009/10 data, the number of quitters is better than the all England average and in line with the North East average (Ref 40)
- c. The percentage of eligible people who have been screened for bowel cancer is 58.6% against a target of 62.3% (indicator is reported 1 quarter in arrears, so results and target relate to 2010/11 full year). Work is taking place at regional level to try and increase screening take up amongst the target population. In addition, local NHS staff are undertaking research across the county to try and understand attitudes and behaviours towards the screening programme (Ref 25).
- d. The percentage of eligible people who have been screened for cervical cancer is 80.7% against a 2010/11 target of 85.8% (reported 1 quarter in arrears, so results and target relate to 2010/11 full year). To address this, social marketing is taking place within one area of the County in relation to the programme with the intention to expand to other areas. In addition,

work is taking place with GP surgeries to alter current screening practices and to develop a 'best practice' approach (Ref 26).

- e. As mentioned in the Altogether Safer section, latest figures for all exits from alcohol treatment identify that only 51% exited treatment in a planned way compared to a target of 65% (based on the latest data available - January – March 2011). (Ref 41)
67. In terms of progress against the Council Plan, The Altogether Healthier has 88% (22 out of 25) actions that have been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline, two actions behind target and one proposed deletion. The action to develop outreach services in five venues across two localities as part of tackling cardio vascular disease with NHS County Durham is under development but has been deferred from June 2011 until October 2011 as there have been delays in recruitment due to the Health Improvement Service moving over to the Foundation Trust on in April 2011. The Job Description has been agreed and recruitment will start soon.
68. The action to promote the uptake of preventive services through improved advice and information by implementing a programme of signposting to community and universal services was due to be completed by June 2011, but a revised date of September 2011 is sought. The programme will be focussed upon promoting the new 'Prevention and Personalisation' website and the services available. A programme of promotional and publicity activity is scheduled to take place from September 2011 and will include promotional events in libraries and to specific user groups, as well as promotion to staff.
69. It is proposed to delete one action from this theme relating to managing 'Time Bank' in North West Durham (a skills exchange project in the community) because the number of service users wishing to access this service has been low. Therefore, the contract will be terminated in September 2011.
70. The most significant risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:
- a. The potential failure in the external care provider market relating to residential care homes. To mitigate this risk, management are maintaining dialogue with all providers, and administrators where they have been engaged. Contingency plans have also been developed to ensure the continued safeguarding of residents.
 - b. Failure to meet escalating costs of external and high-cost placements effectively. The implementation plan for the new contract to place C&YP with Independent Fostering Providers is monitored by management, to ensure that this risk is being effectively managed.

Altogether Safer: Overview

71. A new development this quarter within this priority theme relates to The Safeguarding Adults Partnership who won the Government to Citizen Communication Award at the national Good Communications Awards. The Good Communications Awards encourage effective government communication with citizens and employees. The award recognises the 'See it... Report it' campaign relating to abuse of vulnerable adults which successfully connected with the intended target audience at a local and regional level.

72. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- a. Reduction in the overall crime rate. This is a key measure for all agencies involved in community safety. Durham Constabulary has set a target to reduce overall crime by 5% compared to crime levels in 2010/11. Between April and June 2011, there were 6,891 crimes (13.64 per 1,000 population) compared to 7,540 in the same period in 2010/11. This represents an overall reduction of 8.61 (Ref 156).
- b. Reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents. 2010/11 figures of 45,202 anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents show an 11% reduction in comparison to 2009/10 incidents of 50,981. This mirrors the 11% reduction in overall crime for the same period (Ref 158).
- c. As mentioned in the Altogether Healthier section, alcohol related hospital admissions are not yet available but based on provisional data have increased when compared to the same period for 2009/10 but this is in line with the national and regional increases for this period (Ref 160).

73. The perception that the police and local council are dealing with concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour is the key satisfaction indicator for Altogether Safer and comes from the Police Confidence Survey (Ref 159). A new version of the survey has been developed for 2011/12 and data will be available from Quarter 2.

Performance against key indicators

	Direction of travel		
	Improved	Stable	Declined
Performance indicators	3 (60%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)

	Performance against Target			
	Red	Amber	Green	Deleted Actions
Performance indicators	5 (38%)	0 (0%)	8 (62%)	N/A
Actions	0 (0%)	N/A	22 (100%)	0

74. In terms of performance against target, of the 13 target performance indicators, 8 have met or achieved the target set at Quarter 1 (see Appendix 3, table 1).

75. Summary of key achievements for this priority theme are:

- a. Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is an overarching framework that allows local partner agencies to come together to ensure that the offenders, whose crimes cause most damage and harm locally, are managed in a coordinated way. The work of IOM focuses on the 139 offenders in Durham at high risk of causing serious harm and/or re-offending. Latest figures are that the 139 offenders in the cohort committed 208 offences in the first quarter of 2010/11. In the same quarter in 2011/12, the same cohort committed 78 crimes. This equates to a reduction of 63% in 2011/12. (Ref 55)
- b. The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) provides a multi agency response for the protection of victims of domestic abuse by aiming to reduce the risk of harm and repeat victimisation. Latest performance from the MARAC is good with 16.9% of incidents

are of repeat victimisation. This continues to outperform the target set for 2011/12 (below 25%). However, the repeat rate has increased from 8% in 2010/11. There have been 12 repeat referrals in Quarter 1 and reasons for the increase will be investigated at the Domestic Abuse Executive Forum Executive Group. (Ref 54)

- c. The number of adult safeguarding referrals which have been investigated within 28 days in this quarter is 80.5%. This has increased from 76.9% in the previous period and has continued to achieve the 2011/12 target (75%). Performance levels are continuing to increase despite a significant increase in the number of adult safeguarding referrals received. In quarter 1, there were 507 referrals, compared to 258 referrals in the same quarter in 2010/11 and 1250 for the full 2010/11 financial year. (Ref 67)
- d. As mentioned in the Altogether Better for Children and Young People theme, the provisional Quarter 1 Youth Justice Board figure for first time entrants into the youth justice system has exceeded the quarterly target (Ref 56).

76. Of the five indicators that have not met target, three key improvement issues have been highlighted:

- a. The number of children killed or seriously injured is unfortunately significantly worse than the profiled target. There have been 11 casualties in the January – March 2011 period (profiled target is 5) consisting of 8 pedestrians, 1 cyclist and 2 passengers travelling in the same car. This compares to 7 casualties for the same period in 2010. 5 of the casualties have occurred in the Durham City area. The Casualty Reduction Partnership considers all incidents and will continue to work with the aim of reducing casualties by Education and encouragement; Police Enforcement and Engineering. (Ref 61)
- b. Misuse of alcohol significantly increases the risk of ill health, as well as being a recurrent factor within community safety. One of the key outcomes for those people referred to the community alcohol service is that they receive appropriate treatment and then leave the Service in accordance with their agreed treatment plan. Latest figures identify that 51% exited treatment in a planned way compared to a target of 65% (based on the latest data available - January – March 2011). The Community Alcohol Service is currently being reviewed by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), with recommendations to be reported in September 2011. New targets will be agreed following the Review. In addition, performance action plans with providers are in place to improve performance and service delivery. (Ref 62)
- c. Within Durham, only 29% of people exiting the drug treatment service successfully completed their treatment in 2010/11 (based on the latest data available – to the end of March 2011). This compares to a national average of 34% and regional average of 28% (as at Feb 2011). Following an end of year review it was identified that County Durham warranted additional support from the National Treatment Agency (NTA) to improve successful completions. The local NTA team will work with the DAAT to interrogate the delivery of the treatment system to reach a better understanding of why performance is not keeping pace with national improvements. Additionally a range of both qualitative and quantitative reviews have been undertaken to identify potential areas of concern and to support the development of an action plan to ensure County Durham achieves/exceeds national performance of 34%. (Ref 63)

77. In terms of progress against the Council Plan, there are 100% of actions in the Altogether Safer theme that have either been achieved or are due to be achieved by the deadline.

78. There are no significant risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme but there is a need to further develop risk management arrangements in relation to identified partnership risks.

Altogether Greener: Overview

79. A new development in relation to Altogether Greener is that Durham County Council increased the number of parks and open spaces awarded a Green Flag from 10 to 15. The judging of all 20 sites submitted for the Green Flag accreditation took place during May and June. The judging process for each site consisted of a desk-top assessment of the site management plan followed by a field visit to each site. In order to be awarded the 'Green Flag' a site must gain a minimum of 50% of the marks on the desk assessment and 60% on the field visit.
80. Tracker indicators for this priority theme show (see Appendix 3, table 2):
- A reduction in CO₂ emissions in the local authority area. Latest data for 2008/09 shows a 5.6% reduction compared with 3% in previous year. (Ref 163)
 - An increase in the Renewable energy generated. At Quarter 1, 169.32 (MwE) renewable energy was generated compared with 159.27 at previous period. (Ref 164)
81. There are 3 satisfaction indicators identified for this theme (satisfaction with parks and open spaces; waste collection; and doorstep recycling collection) (Ref 83-85). Reporting will take place in 2012.

Performance against key indicators

	Direction of travel		
	Improved	Stable	Declined
Performance indicators	7 (88%)	0 (0%)	1 (12%)

	Performance against Target			
	Red	Amber	Green	Deleted Actions
Performance indicators	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	8 (89%)	N/A
Actions	2 (6%)	N/A	31 (94%)	0 (0%)

82. Results for the performance indicators this period show that 8 of the 9 indicators that have data available this quarter are already achieving or close to achieving target (see Appendix 3, table 1). 7 indicators with trend data available are showing a positive direction of travel.
83. Summary of key performance highlights:

- The percentage of municipal waste that is sent to landfill. During the 12 months ending 30 June an estimated 51.73% of waste was sent to landfill. Data in this area continues to show a positive trend. Quarter 1 performance is well within the 56.75% target and continues to show an improved trend from previous quarter (55.80%) and same period last year (60.50%). During Quarter 1 a number of initiatives have taken place to reduce waste sent to landfill which include; Furniture Reuse groups diverting 200 tonnes of waste from landfill; Waste management talks given to over 40 schools and the waste team attending 12 road shows across the county. Waste reduction messages were promoted in libraries, internet and the intranet in support of Real Nappy Week, Compost Awareness Week and Recycle Week for 2011. (Ref 80)
- The percentage of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted. During the 12 months ending 30 June, an estimated 41% of household waste was re-used, recycled or composted. Although this falls slightly short of the 42% target, performance continues to show an improved trend from previous quarter (39.4%) and same period last year (39.6%). Durham compares favourably against the 2010 National average (38.9%) as well as against North East average (35%). The Strategic Waste Team are continuing work to promote recycling and composting including the use of 3 new on street recyclers - large recycle bins to be used in town centres around the county to encourage recycling on the go. 3 road

shows, as part of National Recycle Week (20 – 26 June 2011), were held throughout the county providing advice and information on recycling and encouraging residents to become long term recyclers. (Ref 81)

- c. The Fly-tipping level, which compares year on year change in total incidents and year on year change in enforcement actions (grade 1-4, 1 being most effective), graded the authority level 1 overall for fly-tipping which is very effective. This is an improvement from the level 2 in last quarter. 6,292 fly-tipping incidents occurred during Quarter 1 but 7,210 enforcement actions were carried out. Performance is improving due to the proactive work of the service. (Ref 74)
 - d. Improved Local biodiversity. Performance is calculated as a percentage of all Local Sites in the local authority area where positive conservation management has taken place up to five years prior to the reporting date (31st March). For this reporting period positive conservation management must have taken place between April 2007 and March 2012. Currently there is evidence for 55 Local Sites being in positive conservation management which equates to 14.6% of Local Sites being in positive conservation management. This has exceeded the 12.3% period target and shown an improving trend from 12 months earlier (10.05%). (Ref 75)
84. In terms of Council Plan progress, there are 94% of actions within this theme that have either been achieved or are scheduled to be achieved by the deadline and only two actions behind schedule. The action to reduce the need to travel to access Council services through better use of technology through the adoption of the Channel Migration and Improvement Strategy was originally scheduled to be completed by April 2011 but is to be extended until October 2011. It has been delayed due to an overall review of Customer First Strategy by the Customer Focus Board. A final draft of the Channel Migration Strategy is complete and is to be taken forward following the newly agreed timelines.
85. The action to improve the quality, appearance and biodiversity of Jubilee Park, Howden le Wear was originally scheduled to be completed by May 2011 but due to a number of issues with contractors and procurement this has been delayed and will now be completed by July 2011.
86. The key risk to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme is *'Failure to identify and effectively regulate Contaminated Land.'* Management consider it possible that this risk will occur, which will impact both public health and environmental sustainability across the County. To mitigate this risk, a Contaminated Land Strategy has been approved, which outlines the approach. To date, using specialist software, potential sites have been identified and risk assessed for further investigation.
87. The only other significant risk is *'Failure to effectively develop the proposed Waste Management Solution'*, which will impact both the financial cost and the performance targets of managing waste. A project is in place to manage the development and implementation of the Waste Management Solution, and key operational risks to the implementation are managed within the project.

Altogether Better Council: Overview

88. A new development in relation to the Altogether Better Council theme is that performance management arrangements and processes have been strengthened within the Resources service grouping with developments to the service grouping's performance management framework including the introduction of quarterly performance clinics for each Head of Service. The first round of clinics was held in early August. Ongoing evaluation and modification where appropriate will ensure that performance management arrangements within Resources encompass new and emerging issues and meet the needs of all stakeholders.

89. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- a. The number employed by the Council has reduced compared to 12 months previously in terms of headcount (8%) and FTE (5%) (Ref 166 & 167)
- b. A rise in the proportion of staff under 25 and reduction of staff over 50, which can be attributed to the number of staff leaving the Council through a Council-wide exercise in relation to early retirement/voluntary redundancy (ER/VR) (Ref 171 & 172)
- c. The proportion of staff from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities has decreased slightly and those recorded as having a disability have increased as well as the proportion of top 5% of employees who are female. Due to the low numbers of employees in these categories, the movement of a single member of staff can have a significant impact on the figure (Ref 168 - 170)
- d. the numbers of employees attending career support sessions linked to restructuring remains high (594 compared to 550 at last quarter) (Ref 175)
- e. the percentage of media coverage that is neutral or positive remains consistent every month/quarter at over 90% (Ref 179 & 180)

Performance against key indicators

	Direction of travel		
	Improved	Stable	Declined
Performance indicators	1 (12%)	2 (25%)	5 (63%)

	Performance against Target			
	Red	Amber	Green	Deleted Actions
Performance indicators	7 (64%)	1 (9%)	3 (27%)	N/A
Actions	6 (32%)	N/A	13 (68%)	0 (0%)

90. Results for the target performance indicators for this priority theme show that of the 11 indicators that have data available this period, 3 have met target (see Appendix 3, table 1).

91. The main performance highlights for an Altogether Better Council at Quarter 1 are:

- a. The percentage of debtor accounts paid within 30 days is being reported for the first time this quarter. A target of 60% has been set for the year and so far has been exceeded by 4.8 percentage points (Ref 104).
- b. Staff sickness at quarter 1 shows better than predicted performance for sickness absence across the council. The trend last year saw the average days per full time equivalent employee (FTE) rise from 8.23 to 9.72 at the end of Quarter 4 reflecting improvements in data recording. Through better reporting and management of sickness absence, and against the trend, sickness absence has fallen from previous quarter to 9.09 days per FTE at the Quarter 1 point (12 month rolling figure). Performance has, however, dipped compared to same period last year (8.23 days). The Quarter 1 figure compares favorably against local and National benchmarking (Ref 90).
- c. The number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive has remained stable

compared with 12 months previous. The 35 reported incidents are also within the period target of 41 (Ref 92).

92. Eight indicators have not yet achieved their end of year target. The key areas for improvement are:

- a. The percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within statutory deadlines has shown a dip in performance this period compared with the previous quarter. 73% of requests were responded to on time this quarter compared to 83% in the previous quarter and an 85% target. Performance has however shown an improving trend from same period last year (61%). Planned actions to improve this indicator include a review of the Council's FOI procedures and the publication of an FOI Policy and Procedures. A revised date of November 2011 is requested for these two actions. (Ref 96).
- b. Time taken to process all new claims and all new change events to Housing and Council Tax Benefits has seen an expected deterioration in performance. This is due to the extensive change programme the Benefits Service is going through during 2011/12. This programme includes a staffing restructure, staff relocation and most significantly, the replacement of the 7 former district revenues and benefits computer systems onto one new system. The new system is scheduled to go live at the beginning of December 2011 and, as expected, the implementation is causing considerable logistical and significant system downtime which is causing a detrimental impact on our customers. In order to support the excellent work of the in-house team, the service are to optimise the use of external capacity to keep the backlog of work to an absolute minimum. Over the past 18 months, the volume of customer claims and amendments to circumstances has also increased significantly due to the economic downturn and the rise in unemployment. Whilst delivery of the Benefits Service is a key service area for improvement, the measures that are put in place will ensure the service to customers is given the highest priority (Ref 106 & 107).
- c. The percentage of invoices that were paid by the authority within 30 days remains low at 83% at the end of Quarter 1. July's performance reached 88% and at this point the trend looks promising following a steady improving trend from previous quarters. Non compliance with the Procure to Pay (P2P) process throughout the organisation has also affected performance. In order to address the problems regarding the P2P process and help to improve future performance, there is an ongoing P2P review involving staff from all Services. The P2P project incorporates payment of invoices in its remit and a number of initiatives have been introduced to mitigate the causes of delays in paying invoices. (Ref 105)
- d. % staff performance appraisals completed. A revised definition of completed performance appraisals has been agreed for this year. The revised calculation takes into account employees who received an annual appraisal (or induction or 6 monthly review) in a rolling year. Performance for appraisals completed at Quarter 1 is 39.49% which has not achieved the 60% target. Whilst Quarter 1 reporting is an improvement in relation to data quality, it remains a potentially inaccurate reflection of appraisals completed as more work is required to ensure all appraisals are recorded within our HR, payroll and pensions computer system (ResourceLink) This result reflects a significant problem with data recording and the level of appraisals completed is known to be higher. (Ref 91).
- e. Performance in terms of the percentage of telephone calls answered within 1 minute has failed to achieve the 80% target this period but has shown an improvement trend from the previous two quarters. Analysis of data resulted in a revision of targets for 2011/12. The target for calls answered within one minute for 2011/12 has been adjusted to 80% compared to the 2010/11 target of 90%. 77% of telephone calls were answered within 1 minute this quarter (Ref 97).

	Latest data	Comparator Data			To target		
		2010/11 outturn	variance	Direction of travel	Target	variance	To target
Number of telephone calls handled*	245,052	281,245	-36,183	N/A	-	-	-
Percentage of abandoned calls*	13%	13%	0	STABLE	12%	+1	AMBER
% calls answered within one minute*	77%	73%	+4	IMPROVED	80%	-3	AMBER
Average waiting time at a customer access point (minutes)*	6m	4m 06s	+1m 54s	DECLINED	15m	-9m	GREEN

*latest data relates to quarter 1, 2011/12. Unfortunately, no data is available for quarter 1, 2010/11 so quarter 4, 2010/11 data has been used as a comparator. However, it should be noted that customer services' activity is seasonal and this is likely to be the reason for any increases or decreases.

93. Work will continue over the next year with ICT to try to make the phone system more resilient. Work is ongoing to move towards a single telephony system (rather than the patchwork of 14 current systems) which means calls can be diverted across the network to other locations to be answered. The network is also moving to multiple nodes (BT exchanges) which mean calls can be switched across the network if one node crashes. These are parts of the infrastructure which are being improved over the next year and beyond. In the interim, skills based routing has been incorporated to ensure that the call can be passed to the next available officer as quickly as possible, regardless of where they are based, rather than holding it up in queues. This is shown in the improved performance in speed of handling for the period April – June 2011. This will be further enhanced when the council move to a single Revenue and Benefits ICT system and overall as part of the customer services restructure. In addition, face to face resources have been directed to deal with telephone calls whilst at the same time ensuring the service remains on target for average waiting time for face to face customers at customer access points.
94. In terms of Council Plan progress, the 'Altogether Better Council' theme has 68% of actions, which have either been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline. 32% (6) of the actions are behind schedule. Three of these actions relate to the new Revenues and Benefits System, namely, to implement the new system, to relocate the staff to one location and to undertake a restructure of the Benefits service, all of which were originally scheduled to be completed by August 2011. Work is underway to test robustness of plans and quality assurance. The new system is now scheduled to go live at the beginning of December 2011, the restructure of the service is now anticipated to be complete by October 2011 and the relocation of staff by November 2011.
95. The action to implement a new fully costed pay and grading structure was planned for implementation by 31 December 2011. Although excellent progress has been made, it is now requested that the deadline be postponed until April 2012. Hierarchical quality assurance and sense checking based on proposed grades is complete and further sore thumbing/moderation

based on outcomes has commenced with Service Management Teams. Council approval is required before the formal consultation process with employees and trade unions begins.

96. The action to develop 2 or more Gypsy and Traveller temporary stop over areas, originally scheduled for completion in March 2011 and revised to May 2011, is now not anticipated to be complete until December 2011 due to delays in getting the policy approved. Work is now underway with Elected Members to identify temporary stop over area sites in County Durham
97. Production of the corporate accessibility strategy has also been delayed until November 2011 (from June 2011). This target has been amended to reflect the reorganisation of the Asset Management Service.
98. A key action under this theme was the implementation of the County Council's Accommodation Strategy, which continues to progress with the opening in April 2011 of Spectrum at Seaham. Spectrum is the first County Council office accommodation to fully facilitate modern ways of working and has seen a gradual increase in occupancy through Quarter 1. The closure of the Consett Civic Centre has recently taken place in line with the rationalisation programme.
99. Another key action is delivery of savings in line with the MTFP. An update in relation to progress against the MTFP for the first quarter of 2011/12 was presented to Cabinet on the 13th July 2011. At this early stage of the delivery, the Council is progressing well against the extremely demanding challenge of delivering £66.4m of savings this year and £123.5m over 4 years. Over 85% of the planned changes contained within the proposals for the first year remain on track or have already been delivered and action is being taken to ensure the remaining proposals are delivered on time ensuring the full year's savings for this year are realised. Progress has been made in improving budget holders' understanding of the Durham Oracle e-Business Suite (DeBS) in terms of budgetary control but more training is required to be able to fully utilize the system. A revised date of March 2012 is requested.
100. The review of Fleet Services and optimisation of key transport routes such as refuse collection rounds have been delayed. Optimisation of routes has been delayed due to the need to purchase new hardware to run specialist software on and the review of Fleet Services has been superseded by the need to carry out a more fundamental review of our fleet operations in order to achieve further MTFP savings. It is requested that these two actions be rescheduled to December 2011 and January 2012 respectively.
101. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:-
- a. *'Slippage in delivery of the MTFP will require further savings, which may result in further service reductions/ job losses.'* Management consider it possible that this risk could occur, which will result in a funding shortfall, damaged reputation and reduced levels of service delivery. To mitigate the risk, the implementation of the Delivery plan is closely monitored by CMT and Cabinet as described above. It should be recognised that this will be a significant risk for at least the next 4 years.
 - b. *'The Council may be liable to legal challenge if a single status agreement is not implemented in full.'* Management consider it probable that this risk could occur, which will have a major impact financially and on industrial relations. The Council will bring this risk to an acceptable level by implementing the pay and conditions project by April 2012.
 - c. *'Insufficient number of adequately skilled staff to maintain the expected level of services.'* Management consider that, in the short-term due to the restructuring that is underway, it is probable that this risk may occur, with a consequential impact on service delivery and staff morale. In the longer term, this will be addressed by implementing policies to ensure succession planning. By April 2012, plans will be in place outlining these policies.

- d. *'Delays in processing both new, and changes to, benefit claims.'* Revenues and Benefits performance has deteriorated in recent months as described in paragraph 94b. The key factors impacting upon performance are increasing caseload and the implementation of the new IT system. Management consider this will remain a high risk until the IT system is fully implemented, which will not be until quarter 4 of 2011/12. This will impact on our relationships with landlords and customers, and a potential loss of subsidy. To address the problems in the interim period, and reduce the backlog during periods when the ICT systems are unavailable, additional external resources are being procured to carry out packages of work.
102. Under this theme, the implementation of additional mitigation on a number of risks has enabled the Council to improve performance, decision-making and governance. The beneficial outcomes include:
- a. The risk of *'Impact of delays in implementing the FMS Migration Project'* has been eliminated following the successful transfer of former district and borough council finance systems to DeBS.
 - b. Further improvements to the Events Management process are enabling the risk of *'Failure to effectively support events organised by the Council or taking place on Council land'* to be managed at an acceptable level. In addition, draft procedures are currently out for consultation, and when approved, this will further mitigate this risk.
 - c. The implementation of a new single ICT system and the development of training programmes has mitigated the risk of *"Failure to deliver an effective intervention regime across all regulatory functions delivered by the Environmental Health and Consumer Protection service, leading to an adverse impact on public health"* to an acceptable level.
 - d. The risk of *"The Council's ICT being inadequate due to poor integration between ICT Services and the rest of the Council"* is no longer considered a risk. In particular, this is due to the effectiveness of the prioritisation process for ICT projects, and the ICT Liaison Group with cross-Council representation, which were established earlier in 2011.
 - e. Continuous monitoring of the risk *"The corporate approach to managing procurement across the Council is not consistently applied"* has resulted in the risk being at an acceptable level for over a year, and is therefore no longer considered a risk.
 - f. The introduction of a computerised committee management system has managed the risk *"Council loses challenges because of unlawful calling of meetings"* to an acceptable level.
 - g. Negotiations between the Council and the two main bus operators (accounting for 90% of the cost to the Authority) have delivered a £0.5 million saving and successfully mitigated the risk of *"Increases in concessionary fares"*.
 - h. Implementation of additional mitigation has enabled service management to reduce the Net likelihood of the risk *"Failure to deliver harmonised policies and action with regards to licensing and enforcement across all areas"* from Possible to Unlikely. Further actions are due to be completed over the next quarter when it is hoped this risk will be reduced to an acceptable level.

Conclusions

103. This is the first monitoring report that the Council has published following the abolition of much of the prescribed elements of the former local government performance management framework such as the National Indicator Set.
104. It is based on a corporate basket of indicators and set of actions developed internally and which reflects the key priorities of the Council. Further improvements to our performance monitoring arrangements such as reporting performance at a sub-county level and the reporting of comparative performance information are being developed and their introduction is programmed in for later in the year.
105. Performance against key indicators and delivery against planned actions in the first quarter of 2011/12 is favourable for five out of the Council's six Altogether priority themes. The key area of focus remains against the Altogether Better Council theme. Whilst this area is progressing it remains less strong than other priority themes with 32% of Council Plan actions that are behind schedule. This is reflected in terms of performance with over 60% of key indicators deteriorating and also not achieving target.
106. The Council is taking action to improve these areas. However, it is imperative that attention remains focussed on this priority theme as, by its nature, this reflects the corporate heart of the Council. Improvements made in this area will affect how the council deliver on all of our other priorities.

Recommendations

107. Cabinet is recommended to:-

- a. Note the performance of the Council at Quarter 1 and the actions to remedy under performance.
- b. Agree all changes to the Council Plan outlined below:

Altogether Healthier

- Promote the uptake of preventive services through improved advice and information by: a programme of signposting to community and universal services - Revised from June 2011 to September 2011
- Working with NHS County Durham, implement the Cardio Vascular Disease programme, with specific projects to develop outreach services in 5 venues across 2 localities - revised from June 2011 - October 2011

Altogether Greener

- Improve the quality, appearance and biodiversity of Jubilee Park, Howden le Wear by engaging with communities to enhance this key open space and deliver a mix of creative and natural play features and equipment - revised from May 2011 - July 2011
- Reduce the need to travel to access Council services through better use of technology delivered by the Channel Migration and Improvement Strategy - revised from April 2011 to October 2011

Altogether Better Council

- Produce a corporate accessibility strategy - revised from November 2011- awaiting revised target date
- Development of 2 more Gypsy and Traveller temporary stop-over areas in the county - revised from August 2011 to December 2011
- New Revenues & Benefits System. To implement a new Revenues and Benefits System - revised from August 2011 to December 2011
- New Revenues & Benefits System. To re-locate all revenues staff to one location – revised from August 2011 to November 2011
- New Revenues & Benefits System. To re-structure our Revenues and Benefits service - revised from August 2011 to October 2011
- Harmonised Pay and Conditions of Employment. Implement a new fully costed pay and grading structure for agreement by CMT and the Council – revised from December 2011 to April 2012

Deleted actions

- Review transport connectivity between our towns and evaluate potential infrastructure and public transport improvements. Priority 4 corridor A690
 - Support schools to place participation of children and young people at the heart of learning by working towards Investing in Children Membership and Rights Respecting Schools Award level
 - Ensure that young people have access to high quality, impartial information, advice regarding the learning opportunities and support available to inform their choices - Implement new Information, Advice and Guidance standards
 - Manage the 'Time Bank' project in north West Durham (skills exchange project in the community)
- c. Note progress with key Council and Service Plan actions.

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Appendices

- Appendix 1:** Implications
- Appendix 2:** Key to ratings used in this report
- Appendix 3:** Summary of key performance indicators

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant Corporate Health PIs has been included to monitor staffing levels and absence rates.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly monitoring report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Corporate Health PIs relating to equality and diversity issues are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Accommodation

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

A number of Performance Indicators relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with the Durham Constabulary.

Human Rights

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

Disability Issues

Corporate Health PIs relating to accessibility issues and employees with a disability are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Appendix 2: Key to ratings used within the report

Where ratings appear in this report, they have been applied to the most recently available information.

Target Key

GREEN

Performance better than target

AMBER

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

RED

Performance >2% below target

Trend Key

IMPROVED

The latest performance has improved from the comparable period

STABLE

The latest reported data remains the same as comparable period

DECLINED

The latest performance has deteriorated from the comparable period

Appendix 3: Summary of Key Performance Indicators

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Table 1: Key target indicators

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current status	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel – 12 months earlier
Altogether Wealthier							
1	Processing of Major planning applications (former NI 157a)	75%	Q1 11/12	79.90%	RED	81.30%	DECLINED
2	Number of private rented sector properties improved as a direct consequence of local authority intervention	170	Q1 11/12	122	GREEN	N/A	N/A
3	Number of empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention	11	Q1 11/12	20	RED	N/A	N/A
4	Bus services running on time (former NI178/LTP2/T14)	89.90%	Q1 11/12	95%	RED	N/A	N/A
5	Occupancy rates of council owned business support centres (former REDPI16)	73.14%	Q1 11/12	74%	AMBER	N/A	N/A
6	Percentage of enrolments on Adult Learning courses leading to qualifications	81.20%	1 Aug'10 - 14Jul'11	82%	AMBER	81.70%	DECLINED
7	Percentage of users who felt the cultural events were "good" or "very good" (former AWHAS9)	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
8	Local authority tenant satisfaction with landlord services	83.70%	2010-11	N/A	N/A	N/A	IMPROVED
9	Percentage increase in people engaged in cultural events (former AWHAS10)	Reported Q2			N/A	Annual	N/A
Altogether Better for Children and Young People							
10	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (former NI 111) Also included in Altogether Safer	159 per 100,000	Q1 11/12	184	GREEN	197 per 100,000	IMPROVED
11	Compliance for completions of Treatment Outcome Profile (TOP) for young people at treatment (i) start	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
12	Compliance for completions of Treatment Outcome Profile (TOP) for young people at treatment (ii) review	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
13	Compliance for completions of Treatment Outcome Profile (TOP) for young people at treatment (iii) exit	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
14	Number of schools and other settings with Durham Anti-Bullying Service / Childline / NSPCC Accreditation Status (formerly CYPP SS2.1)	88	Q1 11/12	88	GREEN	65	IMPROVED
15	Percentage of Children In Need (CIN) referrals occurring within 12 months of previous referral	22.50%	Q1 11/12	25%	GREEN	27.20%	IMPROVED

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current status	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel – 12 months earlier
16	Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (former NI 65)	10.30%	Q1 11/12	12%	GREEN	13.20%	IMPROVED
17	Percentage of integrated teams in place by September 2011	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
18	Number of agencies and organisations achieving Investing in Children Membership (former CYPP MPC2)	304	Q1 11/12	302	GREEN	267	IMPROVED
19	Percentage of young people participating in youth work	4.80%	Q1 11/12	3%	GREEN	3.20%	IMPROVED
20	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales (former NI 66)	99.10%	Q1 11/12	97%	GREEN	97.50%	IMPROVED
21	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales (former NI 67)	100%	Q1 11/12	100%	GREEN	99.40%	IMPROVED
22	Children and young people's satisfaction with the help and support they receive at school (provisional – wording to be confirmed as survey is under development)	Reported Q2			N/A	Annual	N/A
23	Number of young people in treatment	248	2010/11	200	GREEN	N/A	N/A
24	Number of short breaks as per Aiming Higher for Disabled Children full service offer in relation to: b) number of hours (formerly CYPP SS1B)	24,735	Q1 11/12	20,000	GREEN	15,550	IMPROVED
Altogether Healthier							
25	Percentage of the total eligible population screened for bowel cancer	58.60%	Q4 10/11	62.30%	RED	N/A	N/A
26	Percentage of the total eligible population screened for cervical cancer	80.70%	Q4 10/11	85.80%	RED	N/A	N/A
27	Promote and encourage uptake to the CPAL programme in CVD risk, their families and others	2,619	Q4 10/11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
28	Number of people in treatment with the Community Alcohol Service (CAS) Also included in Altogether Safer	1,757	Q4 10/11	1,470	GREEN	N/A	N/A
29	Number of new presentations to the Community Alcohol Service (CAS) Also included in Altogether Safer	1,257	Q4 10/11	770	GREEN	N/A	N/A
30	Percentage of the adult population participating in at least 30 minutes sport and active recreation of at least moderate intensity on at least 3 days a week (former NI 8)	23.30%	Apr 09 -Apr 11	22.20%	GREEN	22.60%	IMPROVED
31	Percentage of the adult population participating in at least 30 minutes sport and active recreation of at least moderate intensity on at least 5 days a week in the last 28 days	12.90%	Oct 09 – Oct 10	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
32	Percentage of the adult population participating in zero sport and active recreation in the last 28 days	52.10%	Oct 09 – Oct 10	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
33	Percentage of the adult population involved in at least one hour of	4.90%	Oct 09 – Oct	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current status	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel – 12 months earlier
	volunteer work per week to support sporting activity		10				
34	Percentage of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services (former NI 125)	89.60%	Q1 11/12	85%	GREEN	86%	IMPROVED
35	Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in paid employment (former NI 150)	6.20%	Q1 11/12	10.30%	RED	7.60%	DECLINED
36	Number of health benefits claimants referred to the SALUS Worklessness Programme	135	Q1 11/12	200	RED	N/A	N/A
37	Clients engaged in SALUS Worklessness Programme entering into training, Education, employment or volunteering	18%	Q1 11/12	30%	RED	N/A	N/A
38	Number of individuals benefiting from Arts on Prescription	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
39	Number of carers (all service user types) receiving a specific carers service as a percentage of service users receiving community based services (former NI 135)	29.70%	Jul 10- Jun 11	27%	GREEN	27.10%	IMPROVED
40	Four week smoking quitters (former NI 123)	4,871	2010/11	5,120	RED	5,242	DECLINED
41	Percentage of all exits from alcohol treatment that are planned discharges Also included in Altogether Safer	51%	2010/11	65%	RED	N/A	N/A
42	Service users receiving an ongoing service (continuously) for at least 1 year who have had a review (or re-assessment)	91.10%	Jul 10- Jun 11	90%	GREEN	91.70%	DECLINED
43	Adults aged 18+ per 100,000 population admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care	202.9	Q1 11/12	202.9	GREEN	169.8	DECLINED
44	Percentage of service users in receipt of day services assessed against new charges	81.50%	Q1 11/12	75%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
45	Percentage of mothers breastfeeding	53.80%	2009/10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
46	% of the adult population that are satisfied or very satisfied with sports provision in their local area	68.30%	Oct 09–Oct 10	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
47	Percentage of service users reporting that the help and support they receive has made their life “much” or “a little” better.	90.60%	2010/11	90%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
48	Overall satisfaction rating of social care users	92.60%	2010/11	90%	GREEN	90%	IMPROVED
49	Overall satisfaction rating for intermediate care services	98.20%	2010/11	95%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
50	Proportion of social care users who found it ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ easy to find information and advice about services	86%	2010/11	86%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
51	Number of health checks delivered to target population (aged 40-74)	35,598	2010/11	29,769	GREEN	N/A	N/A
52	Social care service users offered self-directed support (direct payments and individual budgets) (former NI 130)	45.10%	Jun 10-Jul 11	44.80%	GREEN	9.20%	IMPROVED
53	Delayed transfers of care from hospital and those which are	1.89 per	Q1 11/12	3.5 per	GREEN	3.4 per	IMPROVED

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current status	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel – 12 months earlier
	attributable to adult social care (former NI 131)	100,000		100,000		100,000	
Altogether Safer							
54	Repeat incidents of domestic violence (former NI 32)	16.90%	Q1 11/12	25%	GREEN	8.50%	DECLINED
55	Percentage change in detected crimes for offenders in the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) cohort over the last 12 months (replaces NI 30)	63% reduction	Q1 11/12	10%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
56	First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System (former NI 111) Also included in Altogether Better for CYP	159 per 100,000	Q1 11/12	184	GREEN	197 per 100,000	IMPROVED
57	Number of people in treatment with the Community Alcohol Service (CAS) Also included in Altogether Healthier	1,757	Q4 10/11	1,470	GREEN	N/A	N/A
58	Number of new presentations to the Community Alcohol Service (CAS) Also included in Altogether Healthier	1,257	Q4 10/11	770	GREEN	N/A	N/A
59	Percentage of identified traders where action is commenced	42%	Q1 11/12	80%	RED	N/A	N/A
60	Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions	42	Q1 11/12	51	GREEN	N/A	N/A
61	Number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions	11	Q1 11/12	5	RED	7	DECLINED
62	Percentage of all exits from alcohol treatment that are planned discharges Also included in Altogether Healthier	51%	2010/11	65%	RED	N/A	N/A
63	Percentage of people who have successfully completed drug treatment	29%	2010/11	34%	RED	N/A	N/A
64	Perception that the police and local council are dealing with concerns of ASB and crime	Reported Q2[1]			N/A	N/A	N/A
65	Number of people participating in road safety training sessions	2,812	Q1 11/12	2,982	RED	2,334	IMPROVED
66	Percentage of safeguarding strategy meetings completed within 5 days of referral	90.40%	Q1 11/12	90%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
67	Percentage of investigations completed within 28 days following strategy meeting	80.50%	Q1 11/12	75%	GREEN	77.10%	IMPROVED
Altogether Greener							
68	% reduction in CO2 emissions across the County Council fleet (year on year reduction)	5%	2010/11	5%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
69	CO2 reduction from local authority operations (former NI 185)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
70	Reduced energy emissions (CO2) as a result of dimming Street Lighting	Reported Q2			N/A	Annual	N/A
71	Number of registered and approved Feed In Tariff (FIT) installations	236	Q1 11/12	150	GREEN	0	IMPROVED
72	% of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level (former NI 195a)	Reported Q2			N/A	10	N/A

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current status	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel – 12 months earlier
73	% of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level (former NI 195b)		Reported Q2		N/A	14	N/A
74	Fly-tipping Grade (former NI 196)	1	Q1 11/12	1	GREEN	3	IMPROVED
75	Improved local biodiversity. % of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented (former NI 197)	14.60%	Q4 10/11	12.30%	GREEN	10.05%	IMPROVED
76	Number of volunteering episodes actively engaged in Countryside Ranger Services (former NPI 41)	1,141	Q1 11/12	1,100	GREEN	1,397	DECLINED
77	% reduction in Heritage Buildings at Risk (year on year)		Reported Q3		N/A	Annual	N/A
78	% of conservation areas with character appraisals in place	28.70%	Oct 10-Mar 11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
79	Number of additional participating heritage assets that are open for Heritage Open Days		Reported Q2		N/A	Annual	N/A
80	% of municipal waste landfilled (former NI 193)	51.70%	Jul 10- Jun 11	56.75%	GREEN	60.50%	IMPROVED
81	% of household waste that is reused, recycled or composted (former NI 192)	41%	Jul 10- Jun 11	42%	RED	39.60%	IMPROVED
82	Number of Businesses with a Tidy Business Award	117	Q1 11/12	104	GREEN	20	IMPROVED
83	% satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces (Citizens Panel)		Reported 2012		N/A	Annual	N/A
84	% of satisfaction with waste collection		Reported 2012		N/A	Annual	N/A
85	% of satisfaction with doorstep recycling collection		Reported 2012		N/A	Annual	N/A
86	Number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued for enviro-crime (former NPI 43)	801	Q1 11/12	550	GREEN	342	IMPROVED
Altogether Better Council							
87	% gross internal floor space failing to meet a good or satisfactory condition		Reported Q4		N/A	Annual	N/A
88	Unqualified accounts (yes/no)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
89	% of planned internal audit assurance reviews delivered	13%	Q1 11/12	15%	RED	N/A	N/A
90	Staff sickness rate	9.09 FTE	Q1 11/12	10	GREEN	8.23	DECLINED
91	% staff performance appraisals completed	39.48%	Jul 10-Jun 11	60%	RED	N/A	N/A
92	No. of RIDORR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive	35	Q1 2011/12	41	GREEN	35	STABLE
93	% of planned equality impact assessments delivered to time		Reported Q2		N/A	N/A	N/A
94	No. of buildings with an access audit		Reported Q2		N/A	6-monthly	N/A
95	No. of buildings with an accessibility plan		Reported Q2		N/A	6-monthly	N/A
96	% of FOI requests responded to within statutory deadlines	73%	Q1 11/12	85%	RED	60.70%	IMPROVED

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current status	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel – 12 months earlier
97	Percentage of telephone calls answered within 1 minute	77%	Q1 11/12	80%	RED	N/A	N/A
98	An unqualified value for money conclusion (yes/no)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
99	Capital receipts from the sale of surplus assets (£)	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
100	Current tenant arrears as % of rent not collected	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual	N/A
101	Savings delivered against the MTFP (£m)	Reported Q4			N/A	Annual	N/A
102	% Council tax collected	28.05%	Q1 11/12	Available from Q2		29.56%	DECLINED
103	% National non-domestic rates collected	25.65%	Q1 11/12	Available from Q2		28.26%	DECLINED
104	% accounts paid within 30 days (debtors) (collection rate originally suggested by ACE)	64.80%	Q1 11/12	60%	GREEN	N/A	N/A
105	% invoices paid within 30 days	83%	Q1 11/12	84%	AMBER	83%	STABLE
106	Time taken to process all new claims (HB/CTB)	45.92 days	Q1 11/12	30 days	RED	30.17 days	DECLINED
107	Time taken to process all new change events (HB/CTB)	23.13 days	Q1 11/12	14 days	RED	15.94 days	DECLINED
108	% priority 1 service desk incidents resolved on time	55%	Q1 11/12	60%	RED	N/A	N/A

[\[1\] A new version of the Police Confidence Survey has been developed for 2011/12 and data will be available in Quarter 2.](#)

Table 2: Key tracker indicators

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Direction of travel - previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel - 12 months earlier
Altogether Wealthier							
109	New homes completed in Durham City	24	Q1 11/12	281[1]	N/A	36	DECLINED
110	Number of top retailer representation in Durham City	13	Q4 10/11	13	STABLE	13	STABLE
111	Traffic flows in Durham City (New indicator using licence plate recognition. Under development. Expected during 2011)	Reported Q3		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
112	Access to services & facilities- % households accessible to Durham City within 1 hour journey by public transport before 8.30am (former REDPI12)	75.82%	Q1 11/12	74.90%	IMPROVED	N/A	N/A
113	Number of visitors – attraction numbers	813489	2010/11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
114	All homes completed in and near all major settlements as a proportion of total completions (completed as per NI 154 guidance)	66.42%	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
115	% properties in band D and above for Council Tax	14.18%	Q1 11/12	14.59%	DECLINED	N/A	N/A
116	18 - 24 year olds claiming JSA	4360	Q1 11/12	4770	IMPROVED	3885	DECLINED
117	JSA claimants claiming for one year or more	785	Q1 11/12	1120	IMPROVED	1940	IMPROVED
118	Employment rate of the working age population (former NI 151)	66.20%	Q3 10/11	66.50%	STABLE	66.50%	STABLE
119	Number of apprenticeships – started	1006	2010/11	N/A	N/A	1496	DECLINED
120	Child Poverty (former NI116) Also included in Altogether Better for Children & Young People	23.50%	Nov-10	24.10%	IMPROVED	24.05%	IMPROVED
121	Affordable homes provided as a proportion of the total net homes completed (former NI154 & NI155)	6.20%	Q1 11/12	33%	N/A	2.70%	IMPROVED
122	Percentage of non-decent council homes (former NI 158)	37.18%	Q1 11/12	36%	DECLINED	42%	IMPROVED
123	Accessibility of Newton Aycliffe within one hour using public transport and arriving by 8.30am (former LTP3/4c)	30.30%	2010/11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
124	New enterprise start ups (still operating after 12 months)	67	Q1 11/12	2300[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
125	Business registration rate (former NI 171)	34.9	2008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
126	Tourism businesses engaged by Visit County Durham	37	Q1 11/12	193[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
127	Number of passenger journeys on Park and Ride (former LTP3/L17b)	249,700	Q1 11/12	1,021,848[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
128	Total planning applications received	835	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
129	No. of people rehoused through Durham Key Options system	491	Q1 11/12	3270[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
130	No. of preventions as a proportion of the total no. of homelessness presentations (former HH LP15a)	198 (14.9%)	Q1 11/12	257(16.4%)	DECLINED	175(16.3%)	DECLINED

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Direction of travel - previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel - 12 months earlier
131	No. of statutory applications as a proportion of the total no. of homelessness presentations (former HH LP15b)	317 (23.9%)	Q1 11/12	293 (18.7%)	DECLINED	208 (19.3%)	DECLINED
132	No. of acceptances (of a statutory duty) as a proportion of the total no. of homelessness presentations (former HH LP15c)	125 (9.4%)	Q1 11/12	384 (7.1%)	DECLINED	83 (7.7%)	DECLINED
133	Total no. of homelessness presentations (former HH LP15d)	1326	Q1 11/12	1570	IMPROVED	1075	DECLINED
134	Enterprise start-up enquiries	476	Q1 11/12	1685[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Altogether Better for Children and Young People							
135	Child Poverty (former NI116) Also included in Altogether Wealthier	23.50%	Nov-10	24.10%	IMPROVED	24.05%	IMPROVED
136	Percentage of children in Reception with height and weight recorded who are obese (former NI 55i)	9.20%	2010/11	9.40%	IMPROVED	9.40%	IMPROVED
137	Percentage of children in year 6 with height and weight recorded who are obese (former NI 56i)	20.60%	2010/11	20.30%	DECLINED	20.30%	DECLINED
138	Under 18 conception rate – percentage change from 1998 baseline of 54.4 conceptions per 1,000 15-17 year old women (former NI 112)	-18.00%	Jan-Mar 2010	-19.10%	DECLINED	-16.90%	IMPROVED
139	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (former NI 75)	55.30%	2010/11	48.62%	IMPROVED	48.62%	IMPROVED
140	Percentage of pupils on Level 3 programs in maintained secondary schools achieving 2 A Levels at Grade A*-E	96.40%	2010/11	96.50%	DECLINED	96.50%	DECLINED
141	Percentage point gap between pupils eligible for free schools meals (FSM) achieving at least Level 4 in English and Maths at Key Stage (KS) 2 and pupils ineligible for FSM achieving the same outcome (former NI 102i)	23.2	2010/11	24.1	IMPROVED	24.1	IMPROVED
142	Percentage point gap between pupils eligible for free schools meals (FSM) achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE (or equivalent), including English and Maths and pupils ineligible for FSM achieving the same outcome (former NI 102ii)	33.2	2010/11	33.98	IMPROVED	33.98	IMPROVED
143	Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders aged 10-17 (former NI 19)	1.73	2010/11	1.42[1]	N/A	1.7	DECLINED
144	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (official Nov-Jan measure, former NI 117) Also included in Altogether Healthier	Reported Q4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
145	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (quarterly comparison) Also included in Altogether Healthier	9.10%	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Direction of travel - previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel - 12 months earlier
Altogether Healthier							
146	All cause mortality rate at ages under 65 (per 100,000 pop)	245.93	2007-9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
147	All cause mortality rate at ages under 75 (per 100,000 pop)	325.58	2007-9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
148	Mortality rate from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75 (per 100,000 pop, former NI121)	76	2009	86.4	IMPROVED	86.4	IMPROVED
149	Mortality from all cancers at ages under 75 (per 100,000 pop, former NI 122)	123.6	2009	126.4	IMPROVED	126.4	IMPROVED
150	Smoking attributable to mortality per 100,000	Reported Q2			N/A	N/A	N/A
151	Male life expectancy at birth (years)	76.9	2007-9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
152	Female life expectancy at birth (years)	80.7	2007-9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
153	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (official Nov-Jan measure, former NI 117) Also included in Altogether better for CYP	Reported Q4			N/A	N/A	N/A
154	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (quarterly comparison) Also included in Altogether better for CYP	9.10%	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
155	Rate of alcohol related hospital admissions per 100,000 (former NI 39) Also included in Altogether Safer	2286	2009/10	2165	DECLINED	2165	DECLINED
Altogether Safer							
156	Overall Crime Rate	6891	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	7540	IMPROVED
157	Number of reported crimes categorised as stealing	3200	Q1 11/12	13040[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
158	Number of police reported incidents of anti-social behaviour	9,685	Q1 11/12	45202[1]	N/A	12870	IMPROVED
159	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	N/A[2]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
160	Rate of alcohol related hospital admissions (former NI 39) Also included in Altogether Healthier	2286	2009/10	2165	DECLINED	2165	DECLINED
161	Building resilience to violent extremism (former NI 35)	Level 3	2010/11	Level 2	IMPROVED	Level 2	IMPROVED
162	Number of attempted underage sales	44	Q1 11/12	256[1]	N/A	53	N/A
Altogether Greener							
163	% reduction in CO2 emissions per capita in the local authority area (former NI 186) (year on year reduction)	5.60%	2008/09	3%	IMPROVED	3%	IMPROVED
164	Renewable energy generation – MwE installed	169.32 MwE	Q1 11/12	159.27	IMPROVED	N/A	N/A
165	% of hectares of the County that are woodland	6%	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Direction of travel - previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Direction of travel - 12 months earlier
Altogether Better Council							
166	(i) Staff - total headcount	20,284	Q1 11/12	22,115	N/A	22,039	N/A
167	(ii) Staff - total FTE	16,390	Q1 11/12	17,483	N/A	17,338	N/A
168	Workforce equality profile (a) Top 5% of employees who are female	48.61%	Q1 11/12	46.92%	IMPROVED	47.99%	IMPROVED
169	% of all employees (b) from BME communities	0.92%	Q1 11/12	1.06%	DECLINED	N/A	N/A
170	(c) with disabilities	4.69%	Q1 11/12	3.08%	IMPROVED	N/A	N/A
171	(d) < 25 years old	6.83%	Q1 11/12	5.32%	N/A	N/A	N/A
172	(e) > 50 years old	36.90%	Q1 11/12	39.03%	N/A	N/A	N/A
173	Number of employees attending reorganisation support briefing sessions	22	Q1 11/12	69	N/A	N/A	N/A
174	Numbers of managers attending reorganisation support briefing sessions	8	Q1 11/12	16	N/A	N/A	N/A
175	Number of employees attending career transition sessions	594	Q1 11/12	550	N/A	N/A	N/A
176	Number of employees expressing an interest in flexible working options	7	Q1 11/12	60	N/A	N/A	N/A
177	Number of flexible working options agreed	1	Q1 11/12	20	N/A	N/A	N/A
178	% savings targets from Accommodation Strategy achieved	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
179	% of positive media coverage	58.40%	Q1 11/12	54.35%	N/A	60.25%	N/A
180	% of neutral media coverage	33.30%	Q1 11/12	36.75%	N/A	31.29%	N/A
181	No. of data breaches reported to the Information Commissioner's Office	0	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
182	No. of Complaints received and recorded on CRM	581	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
183	No. of Compliments received and recorded on CRM	163	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
184	No. of FOI requests responded to within statutory deadlines	147	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	117	N/A
185	No. of new claims (HB/CTB)	1,504	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
186	No. of change events (HB/CTB)	10,506	Q1 11/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

[\[1\] This data is cumulative and the figure is based on 12 months data for the year end so comparisons are not applicable](#)

[\[2\] A new version of the Police Confidence Survey has been developed for 2011/12 and data will be available in Quarter 2.](#)

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Cabinet

22 September 2011



**Forecast of Revenue and Capital
Outturn 2011/12 – Period to 30
June 2011**

Report of Corporate Management Team

Don McLure, Corporate Director Resources

Councillor Alan Napier, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Cabinet with a forecast of 2011/12 Revenue and Capital outturn for the period to 30 June 2011.

Background

- 2 This report is the first indication of the Revenue and Capital outturn for 2011/12.

Revenue

Current Position

- 3 The table overleaf compares the forecast with the revised budgets and is shown in more detail in Appendices 2 and 3:

Key to Table

Original Budget	As agreed by County Council on 23 February 2011
Revised Budget	Original Budget adjusted for budget revisions to be agreed by Cabinet.
Service Grouping Forecast of Outturn	Service Groupings' forecasted income and expenditure for 2011/12.
Variance	Over and underspendings when comparing Service Grouping outturns to the Revised Budget.

	Original Budget	Budget - incorporating adjustments	Service Groupings Forecast of Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children & Young People	105,274	108,037	107,629	-408
Adult Wellbeing and Health	176,328	176,144	173,244	-2,900
Neighbourhood Services	99,290	105,703	106,914	1,211
Regeneration and Economic Dev	39,617	40,598	40,319	-279
Resources	19,125	21,001	21,978	977
Assistant Chief Executive	10,479	13,111	13,050	-61
Contingencies	9,547	8,051	8,051	0
NET COST OF SERVICES	459,660	472,645	471,185	-1,460
Capital charges	-49,020	-49,020	-49,020	-0
Interest and Investment income	-577	-577	-1,167	-590
Interest payable and similar charges	26,271	25,321	24,674	-647
Net Expenditure	436,334	448,369	445,672	-2,697
Funded By:				
Council tax	-198,870	-198,870	-198,870	0
Use of earmarked reserves	-1,193	-13,228	-13,228	0
Estimated net surplus on Collection Fund	-814	-814	-814	0
Revenue Support Grant	-55,596	-55,596	-55,596	0
Re-distributed Non Domestic Rates	-179,861	-179,861	-179,861	0
Forecast Use of (-) / contribution to Cash Limit Reserve	0	0	1,460	1,460
Forecast Use of (-) / contribution to General Reserves	0	0	1,237	1,237
TOTAL	0	0	-0	-0

Note: Negative figures in the variance column represent an underspend

- 4 The following adjustments have been made to the Original Budget:
- (i) agreed budget transfers between Service Groupings;
 - (ii) budget transfer from contingencies for items outside the cash limit - the key pressure is for hyper inflation on fuel and energy of £1.395m;
 - (iii) planned use of or contribution to Earmarked Reserves (see Appendix 4).
- 5 After adjusting the budgets as detailed above the forecast outturn for Cash Limit Reserves and the General Reserve are summarised below:

Type of Reserve	Opening Balance as at 1/4/11	Planned Use at 1/4/11	Movement during 2011/12		2011/12 Forecast Outturn
			Use of Reserve	Contribution to Reserve	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<u>Cash Limit</u>					
ACE	0.894	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.955
AWH	5.423	0.000	0.000	2.900	8.323
CYPS	1.253	- 0.933	0.000	0.408	0.728
NS	1.292	0.000	- 1.211	0.000	0.081
RED	2.391	0.000	0.000	0.279	2.670
RES	0.873	0.000	- 0.977	0.000	- 0.104
TOTAL CASH LIMIT	12.126	- 0.933	- 2.188	3.648	12.653
General Reserve	17.300	0.000	0.000	1.237	18.537

- 6 Detailed below are the major variances for each Service Groupings.

Children and Young People's Services

- 7 The initial focus in Quarter One of the financial year has been on the delivery of MTFP savings (£7.3m in 2011/12). Most are on target with key savings involving Transport Policy changes beginning to be implemented in September 2011. In addition the impact of £10.58m of grant loss is being addressed and plans are also progressing well.
- 8 The most volatile parts of the CYPS budget continue to be Fostering and Adoption costs and Agency Placements for increasing numbers of Looked After Children. Whilst costs driven by rising numbers are slowing a little, there is still an underlying base budget pressure that is being supported by "slippage" on posts, and the use of balances during 2011/12. The other major variable cost for CYPS is Home to School and College Transport and firm data on contract ticket demand and number of pupils being transported will not be clear until part way through the Academic Year 2011/12.
- 9 During the early part of the financial year budget planning and monitoring for CYPS has been affected significantly by Government Policy on funding:-

- The impact of significant **grant reductions** in December 2010 has still to be fully resolved, particularly in relation to the creation of a new 14 Plus service (replacing previous Connexions and 14 to 19 Planning Teams). It will be September 2011 before a new structure is in place and the April to August 2011 cost is being managed with the assistance of grant balances from 2010/11.
- The conversion of some secondary schools to **Academy status** is now picking up pace and by January 2012, it is expected there will be at least 9 Academies in County Durham. Discussions are continuing with the DfE about the impact on the value of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) payable to the County Council in the 2011/12 financial year. The value of each school's budget, plus a top slice for certain functions will be deducted and passed over to the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), which handles Academy funding. This adjustment is expected to be worth over £28m for 2011/12 and over £40m in a full financial year.
- **Extra Grant** has been released by DfE, after the financial year started, bringing in £0.367m to support newly qualified Social Workers.

10 The original 2011/12 budget was supported by the use of 'Cash Limit Reserve' of £0.93m. Although this sum has been utilised, the Service are forecasting an underspend of £0.41m in 2011/12.

Adults, Wellbeing and Health

11 The service is currently reporting a forecast underspend of £2.9m (1.99%).

12 The service has continued to target an underspend for 2011/12, continuing the practice applied in 2010/11. This is to assist in the management of the significant demographic pressures facing the service over the MTFP period.

13 Key variations against budget are as follows:

- The re-tendering of the Domiciliary Care contract arrangement for the County was successful in securing a reduction in the price paid for this service. This has created a saving of £1.8m in the current year
- Through the careful management and control of both vacancies and general budgets across the service, an underspend of £0.9m is projected. This approach will ensure that the planned underspend for the service is achieved as targeted and also create opportunities for achieving restructures and service rationalisation required whilst minimising the impact of such changes on existing employees.
- The service has also been successful in overachieving on a number of management and support service MTFP savings, creating an underspend of £0.5m in the current year.
- The government allocated additional funding to PCT's late in 2010/11 to support winter pressures which together with additional

funding made available through PCT's in the current year has allowed the development of a range of preventative services to be provided in 2011/12 (£2.0m) and 2012/13 (£2.5m).

- Two of the approved 2011/12 Adults, Wellbeing and Health MTFP savings totalling £0.275m, relating to the reviews of the Adult Learning service and stairlift maintenance arrangements have re-profiled into 2012/13 to allow further consultations on the proposals. Mitigating savings have been identified through the use of one off funding and increased vacancy management to offset the reduction.

Neighbourhood Services

14 The forecast revenue outturn for 2011/12 is an over spend of £1.211m. Included in the outturn are a number of items of expenditure that have been deemed to be outside the cash limit:

- Costs relating to the acquisition of a single Environmental Health IT system, which was not fully expended by 31 March 2011, of £0.068m; and
- Forecast overspends, due to “hyper-inflationary” increases, on fuel (£0.895m) and Street Lighting energy (£0.45m), which would normally be met from corporate contingencies. Members will note that additional costs are included in the MTFP forecasts for 2012/13 to build these sums into the base going forward.

15 Taking into account the above items, the variances are as follows:

- Building & Construction Services is forecasting a trading deficit of £0.372m at the present time, but a range of measures are being taken to mitigate this including a restructuring of the service, and a review of charging rates;
- There is a shortfall in income from Leisure Centres / Indoor Facilities of £0.225m as a result of a delay in achieving some of the proposed MTFP efficiency proposals. There has also been a fall in income over the last few months at those leisure centres that were targeted for closure;
- Within Technical Services, there is a forecast overspend of £0.21m due to unachieved MTFP efficiency proposals, mainly in the areas of Street Lighting and Gully waste;
- There is a shortfall in income within Environment, Health and Consumer Protection of approximately £0.150m;
- Finally, there is a forecast overspend of £0.497m in relation to Waste Disposal costs as a result of issues surrounding the sale of Premier Waste, although this is partially offset by additional income of £0.192m relating to the sale of Dry Waste Recyclates.

16 Although the service is currently forecasting a cash limit overspend of £1.211m, it should be noted that every effort is being made to address this, in

addition, and as a last resort, the service has a Cash Limit Reserve brought forward from 2010/11 of £1.296m.

Regeneration and Economic Development

17 The service is reporting an underspend of £0.279m.

18 The key variances are as follows:

- Policy Planning Performance - £0.006m saving in staffing and running expenses
- Economic Development - £0.106m saving. The service is experiencing an income pressure of £0.2m on rents from industrial estates plus an additional £0.08m on business rates on vacant units. This is mitigated by savings secured on staffing and supplies and services.
- Housing - £0.044m overspend attributable to staffing costs
- Planning - £0.093m underspend of which £0.087m relates to staffing costs.
- Transport - £0.118m saving of which £0.1m relates to staffing and additional income of £0.063m although there are some additional costs being incurred on water charges, vehicle and service contracts to reduce the underspend.

Resources

19 The service is currently reporting a forecast outturn overspend of £0.977m.

20 The key areas of pressure are in Finance and ICT. In Finance work continues to assimilate disparate district financial systems, most notably in Revenues and Benefits. Additional agency staffing and external support is required during the transition period to ensure reasonable performance levels are maintained. In ICT additional agency staff have been recruited to assist in achieving the 'Better Basics' project deadlines.

21 Although an overspend is forecast at this stage all attempts will be made to reduce expenditure and maximise income. The Cash Limit Reserve of £0.87m will be utilised, if necessary, to offset overspends.

Assistant Chief Executives

22 Initial forecast for Assistant Chief Executives (ACE) service 2011/12 revenue outturn is an under spend position of £0.061m after:

- accounting for access of earmarked reserve to carry out planned activity and
- accounting for redundancy costs met from the strategic reserve.

- 23 The majority of the reported under spend relates to Employee costs which are projected to under spend by £0.145m as a result of careful management by the ACE management team of vacancies within the service.
- 24 This has been achieved by utilising Agency staff during the first 3 months of the year to complete the required service activity at a cost of £0.131m. This will enable the service to maintain vacancies for the full year leading to a saving of £0.276m and the net under spend noted of £0.145m. This underspend has been earmarked to provide the support required to implement the community buildings review.
- 25 The outturn position for ACE does not reflect any utility running costs in connection with Community Buildings. This area of activity is currently being administered by ACE pending a corporate decision on where this activity is best managed within the authority. It is anticipated that if the activity remains within ACE that residual budgets within other services connected with the provision of community buildings will be transferred to ACE to finance this budget pressure.

Central Budgets

- Interest Payable and Similar Charges - Capital Financing

- 26 The budget is forecast to underspend. The underspend relates to reduced Capital financing costs linked to the revised Capital programme and reduced borrowing costs due to lower than expected interest rates.
- 27 The level of underspend creates budget flexibility which has enabled an in-year transfer of £0.95m to Resources to offset base budget pressures.
- 28 After the budget transfer the underspend is forecast to be £0.65m.

- Interest and Investment Income

- 29 The forecast of outturn is an overachievement of income of £0.590m which takes into account the higher than anticipated levels of cash. This is due in the main to slower than expected use of reserves and capital spend.

Earmarked Reserves Forecast

- 30 Appendix 4 details the forecast use of Earmarked Reserves. Based on the latest forecast the position at the end of the year is estimated to be as follows:

	£m
Balance as at 1.4.11	94.97
Less forecast use:	
Quarter 1	<u>11.77</u>
Forecasted Balance as at 31.3.12	<u>83.20</u>

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 31 Appendix 5 shows the summary position on the HRA. In overall terms, there is no change in HRA balances and it is estimated that there will be a surplus generated of £0.694m. This will be used to support the capital programme and reduce borrowing in the run up to self financing. At the time the budget was developed no information was available on the level of Decent Homes Backlog Funding from Government and the savings arise due to prudent assumptions being made on capital financing charges and debt levels. There is an additional cost of rent rebates which are provided to tenants and if these exceed a certain threshold set by Government, a contribution of the excess must be paid to Government and this amounts to £0.302m in the projections.

Capital

Background

- 32 The General Fund capital budget for 2011/12 was set at £194.155m and was approved by County Council on 23 February 2011. Slippage from the 2010/11 capital programme was approved by Cabinet on 13 July 2011 amounting to £37.29m.
- 33 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget was set at £25.245m with approved slippage of £0.71m from 2010/11.
- 34 The Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) has recently reviewed the capital programme taking into account further developments and analysis of changes and demands on resources.

Current Position

- 35 As part of the development of the next Medium Term Financial Plan, Service Groupings have re-profiled the capital programme over the years in which expenditure is expected to be incurred. The re-profiled capital budgets were approved by MOWG on 27 July 2011, along with additions to the Capital programme relating to the receipt of additional funding / contributions. At this meeting MOWG also approved the addition of £1.67m to the 2011/12 capital programme for the following:
- (i) Gala Theatre - £0.15m for essential equipment to invest in digital projection facilities for the theatre;
 - (ii) £1.52m to be added to the current Twin Bin capital budget to enable more / larger bins to be purchased and to account for price increases.
- 36 The table below summarises the recommended adjustments with the revised Capital programme for 2011/12 being £256.3m.

Service	Original Budget 2011/12	Slippage from 10/11	Adj re Cabinet approval, new grant and internal transfers	Amendments recommended by MOWG 27/07/2011	Revised Budget 2011/12	Reprofiled to/from future years	Revised Base Budget / Projected Outturn 2011/12	Actual Spend to 30th June 2011
ACE	3,598	1,175	-	-	4,774	-	4,774	230
AWH	4,912	636	-	150	5,698	-4,501	1,196	48
CYPS	82,454	11,699	50,406	-	144,560	-54,921	89,639	10,336
HRA	25,245	708	14,407	-	40,359	-2,000	38,359	4,128
NEI	36,630	7,248	-14,391	1,520	31,007	3,667	34,674	2,028
RED	46,741	12,883	18,250	-	77,874	-9,170	68,705	5,811
RES	19,820	3,648	-2,338	-	21,130	-2,196	18,935	1,473
Grand Total	219,400	37,997	66,334	1,670	325,402	-69,121	256,282	24,054

37 Detailed below are the individual service commentaries:

Children and Young People's Services

38 The CYPS Capital budget has a number of significant components that are available for different purposes. From the 2010/11 financial year there has been £11.7m of project "slippage" associated with the pace of spend on the BSF programme in East Durham, the "hub" buildings for Integrated Teams and 4 new primary schools.

39 The capital funds currently available have been reprofiled to reflect latest planning and construction timelines and the planned spend over the next 3 financial years is set out below:-

2011/2012	£89.64m
2012/2013	£76.39m
2013/2014	£26.38m

40 New additions to the programme for 2011/2012 are as follows:

Short Breaks for Disabled Children	£0.32m
North Durham Academy	£33.42m
Consett Academy / Leisure Project	£43.8m

Adults, Wellbeing and Health

41 Following the approval of the original AWH capital budget of £4.912m by Council on 23 February 2011, Cabinet on 13 July approved slippage of £0.636m from 2010/11 into 2011/12 resulting in a revised Capital Budget for Adults, Wellbeing and Health of £5.548m.

42 One bid for additional in-year investment of £0.15m is being put forward for approval by Cabinet. This relates to the proposals to introduce digital projection facilities at the Gala Cinema.

43 Over the last year technological advancements have driven a change from the use of 35mm film to that of digital projection. Over the next 18 months it is anticipated that all blockbuster and first run movies will only be available in digital format. Without the investment to move to digital projection it is anticipated that The Gala Cinema will become unviable within 18 months, risking the future of the Gala complex as a whole.

44 The AWH capital programme for 2011/12 to 2014/15 has also been re-examined taking into account current progress, design, work programming, planning and other considerations to re-profile these budgets, where necessary.

45 The schemes which have been identified as requiring re-profiling are as follows;

- Library Modernisation and Maintenance Backlog – Re-profiled over 2011/12 to 2014/15 to reflect the analysis in the recently received building condition survey and to take account of the ongoing work in the development of the Library Strategy.

- Adult Care in-house Day Care Services Modernisation and Maintenance Backlog – Re-profiled from 2011/12 into 2012/13 to link with the completion of the Day Care strategy
- Mental Health Grants – Re-profiled over the years 2011/12 to 2013/14 to reflect likely demand from mental health groups and to maintain funding over those years following with the fallout of further specific grant funding. It should be noted that the 2011/12 budget includes provision for suicide prevention works at Hownsgill Viaduct.
- Residential Homes for the Elderly – Major spend re-profiled to 2012/13 and 2014/15 awaiting the outcome on the future of the remaining in-house residential homes. £100,000 has been left in 2011/12 to cover any urgent/essential works which may be required in advance of a decision on the future of the homes.
- ICT Infrastructure – Re-profiled over 2011/12 to 2013/14 to reflect service development requirements

46 The revised AWH capital budget for 2011/12 will be £1.195m.

Neighbourhood Services

47 The original Capital Programme for Neighbourhood Services in 2011/12 was £36.630m (as per Council report 23 February 2011).

48 In addition to these budgets, slippage from 2010/11 totalling £7.249m was also identified, and this was approved by Cabinet on 13 July 2011.

49 Further proposed adjustments to the Capital Budget were approved by the Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) in a report on 27 July 2011. These related to a number of budget transfers that have been agreed with other Service Groupings, along with the receipt of additional grants and contributions that are available to enhance the Capital Budget. The 2011/12 budget must also be reduced to compensate for overspends that occurred in 2010/11.

50 Further requests to revise the budget were presented to MOWG on 27 July 2011 regarding the approval of additional 2011/12 bids, approval for re-profiling budgets from 2012/13 forward into 2011/12 and moving budgets from 2011/12 into 2012/13.

51 The additional 2011/12 bid that was approved by MOWG relates to an increase of £1.520M in the budget for Wheelie Bins, linked to the introduction of the Twin Bin collection system in April 2012. The increase is necessary to accommodate the anticipated additional costs that will be incurred, over and above the original estimate, for the provision of bins to households.

52 The re-profiling of budgets relates to the Twin Bin budget of £4m which was initially programmed into 2012/13. This has been revised forward into 2011/12. Further re-profiling to move £1m of the budget for the replacement of Queen Street Depot into 2012/13 was requested as to date no land has been secured for the new site. Also, £0.2m from the Floodlighting of the Cathedral & Castle has been re-profiled into 2012/13 to align with the budget holders profiling of this scheme.

- 53 The MOWG approved all of these additional adjustments and as a consequence the Capital Programme for Neighbourhood Services has now been revised to £34.674m.
- 54 At this stage of the financial year, it is anticipated that all capital budgets within Neighbourhoods will be fully spent. The only exception to this is in regard to AAP Highways schemes which are not currently in the capital budget but are forecast to incur expenditure of £0.8m. However, this overspend will be funded from the AAP reserve that was carried forward into 2011/12 from 2010/11, and this will be shown as being financed from Revenue Contributions to Capital.

Regeneration and Economic Development

- 55 The RED capital programme makes a significant contribution to the Regeneration ambitions of County Durham. The programme is relatively large and comprises over 200 schemes managed by around 40 project delivery officers although there are a smaller number of projects of high value.
- 56 The Regeneration and Economic Development capital programme for 2011/12 is £107.064m - consisting of £68.705m General Fund and £38.359m for the HRA. The current budget is derived from that approved by Council in February 2011 plus slippage from 2010/11 and other changes arising from additional funding being secured.
- 57 Actual spend for the first quarter amounts to £9.939m – consisting of £5.810m for the General Fund and £4.128m for the HRA
- 58 The programme has been re-profiled and the outturn is expected to be in line with the budget.

Resources

- 59 The original Capital Programme for Corporate Resources for 2011/12 was £19.820m (as per Council report 23 February 2011). In addition to this a budget of £3.648m was slipped forward into 2011/12 and £0.338m relating to 2011/12 capital projects was spent in 2010/11. Following these amendments, the total 2011/12 capital budget was £23.13m.
- 60 As agreed at the MOWG on 27 July 2011 four capital schemes formerly managed by Asset Management have been reassigned to RED. MOWG also approved slippage of budget into 2012/13 leaving a revised 2011/12 budget of £18.935m.
- 61 Four projects, Biomass Boilers, Gas Boiler Replacements, Away from G – carbon reduction and the Energy Efficiency Fund have been transferred to Regeneration and Economic Development. This transfer is for a total of £2m.
- 62 A total of £3.540m relating to Asset Management projects was slipped into 2011/12 from 2010/11. The largest schemes were the Office Accommodation Project (£1.790m) and Structural Maintenance (£1.026m) which were slipped due to the large number of service reviews taking place which are focusing on the rationalisation of property. Due to these reviews, some commitments to major expenditure were deferred to 2011/12.

- 63 In addition to the slippage and transfers mentioned above, there has been a revision to the MTFP current profile for the project relating to accommodation review. This scheme has been reprofiled over financial years 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14, based on the latest activity information. This has resulted in a reduction of £2.195m for 2011/12.

ACE

- 64 The original Capital Programme for Assistant Chief Executives (ACE) for 2011/12 was £3.598m (as per Council report 23 February 2011). In addition, slippage from 2010/11 totalling £1.176m was added to the 2011/12 budget, resulting in a total approved 2011/12 capital budget of £4.774m. Total expenditure to the end of quarter 1 was £0.230m. Details of the schemes are listed below:

- Members Neighbourhoods Budgets of £1.176m were slipped forward from 2010/11 for investment in Member's local priorities in 2011/12. This results in a total budget of £2.924m. Expenditure of £0.225m has been incurred to date.
- The Assets to Communities project relates to work required on community buildings. The total budget for this scheme is £1.850m. No expenditure is expected to be incurred on Community Buildings until after the current consultation period.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 65 The HRA programme relating to maintenance and refurbishment of Council dwellings is expected to be fully spent. The second phase of the new build schemes at Crook will slip into the next financial year as will the regeneration programme where some delays are being experienced relating to purchase of homes from owner occupiers.

Recommendations

- 66 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- Approve the Revised Net Expenditure Budget of £448.369m for 2011/12.
 - Approve the Revised Capital Budget of £256.282m for 2011/12.
 - Note the forecast use of Earmarked Reserves.
 - Note the forecast end of year position for the Cash Limit and General Reserve.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance -

The report details the 2011/12 forecast of outturn position for Revenue and Capital and details the forecast movement on Reserve.

Staffing -

None

Risk -

None

Equality and Diversity -

None

Accommodation -

None

Crime and Disorder -

None

Human Rights -

None

Consultation -

None

Procurement -

None

Disability Discrimination Act -

None

Legal Implications -

None

Appendix 2: Revenue Summary 2011/12

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Proposed Budget Revisions	Contribution to / Use of Earmarked Reserves	Budget - incorporating adjustments	Service Groupings Forecast of Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children & Young People	105,274	105,274	-39	2,802	108,037	107,629	-408
Adult Wellbeing and Health	176,328	176,328	-184	0	176,144	173,244	-2,900
Neighbourhood Services	99,290	99,290	1,795	4,618	105,703	106,914	1,211
Regeneration and Economic Dev Resources	39,617	39,617	-189	1,170	40,598	40,319	-279
Assistant Chief Executive	19,125	19,125	981	895	21,001	21,978	977
Contingencies	10,479	10,479	82	2,550	13,111	13,050	-61
	9,547	9,547	-1,496		8,051	8,051	0
NET COST OF SERVICES	459,660	459,660	950	12,035	472,645	471,185	-1,460
Capital charges	-49,020	-49,020			-49,020	-49,020	-0
Interest and Investment income	-577	-577			-577	-1,167	-590
Interest payable and similar charges	26,271	26,271	-950		25,321	24,674	-647
Net Expenditure	436,334	436,334	-0	12,035	448,369	445,672	-2,697
Funded By:							
Council tax	-198,870	-198,870			-198,870	-198,870	0
Use of earmarked reserves	-1,193	-1,193		-12,035	-13,228	-13,228	0
Estimated net surplus on Collection Fund	-814	-814			-814	-814	0
Revenue Support Grant	-55,596	-55,596			-55,596	-55,596	0
Re-distributed Non Domestic Rates	-179,861	-179,861			-179,861	-179,861	0
Forecast Use of (-) / contribution to Cash Limit Reserve	0	0			0	1,460	1,460
Forecast Use of (-) / contribution to General Reserves	0	0			0	1,237	1,237
TOTAL	0	0	-0	-0	0	-0	-0

	Original Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Reserve			
Budgetted Use of General Reserve			
Budgetted Use of General Reserve	0	0	0
Transfer to/from General Reserve			
Outside Cash Limit Service Under/Overspend	0	0	0
Under/Overspends on Corporate Financing Budgets	0	0	0
Contingencies		0	0
Capital charges		-0	-0
Interest and Investment income		-590	-590
Interest payable and similar charges		-647	-647
			0
	0	-1,237	-1,237
Service Under / Overspends			
Children and Young People	0	-408	-408
Adult Wellbeing and Health	0	-2,900	-2,900
Neighbourhood Services	0	1,211	1,211
Regeneration and Economic Development	0	-279	-279
Resources	0	977	977
Assistant Chief Executive	0	-61	-61
Non Budgetted Use of Cash Limit Reserves	0	-1,460	-1,460
Movement on General Reserve and Cash Limit Reserves	0	-2,697	-2,697
Earmarked Reserves			
Budgetted Use of Earmarked Reserves			
<i>CYPS - Planned Use of Cash Limit Reserve</i>	933	933	0
<i>RED</i>	260	260	0
Budgetted Use of Earmarked Reserves	1,193	1,193	0
In Year use of Reserves			
<i>CYPS</i>	0	2,802	2,802
<i>Neighbourhoods</i>	0	4,618	4,618
<i>ACE</i>	0	2,550	2,550
<i>AWH</i>	0	0	0
<i>RED</i>	0	1,170	1,170
<i>Resources</i>	0	895	895
<i>Capital Financing - Aycliffe Secure Unit</i>	0		0
<i>Strategic Reserve</i>	0		0
Movement on Earmarked Reserves	1,193	13,228	12,035
Movement on Reserves	1,193	10,531	9,338

Appendix 3: Revenue Summary by Expenditure / Income

	Original Budget	Proposed Budget Revisions	Agreed Budget	Service Groupings Forecast of Outturn	Sums Outside the Cash Limit	Contribution to / Use of Reserves	Revised Service Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employees	573,681	-649	573,032	578,596	0	-7,696	570,900	-2,132
Premises	51,066	648	51,714	52,924	-633	0	52,291	577
Transport	54,173	1,025	55,199	57,382	-895	0	56,487	1,288
Supplies & Services	144,590	551	145,141	137,385	-100	-1,590	135,695	-9,446
Agency & Contracted	211,392	5,017	216,409	230,062	200	-821	229,441	13,032
Transfer Payments	231,690	2,329	234,018	235,066	0	-1,104	233,962	-56
Central Costs	86,329	2,092	88,421	99,044	0	0	99,044	10,623
Other	7,903	0	7,903	-3	0	0	-3	-7,906
Capital Charges	49,020	2	49,022	47,365	-68	-824	46,473	-2,549
GROSS EXPENDITURE	1,409,844	11,015	1,420,859	1,437,821	-1,496	-12,035	1,424,290	3,430
Income								
- Specific Grants	640,387	5,655	646,042	639,719	0	0	639,719	6,323
- Other Grants & conts	24,854	5,176	30,030	35,004	0	0	35,004	-4,973
- Sales	5,743	-225	5,518	5,876	0	0	5,876	-358
- Fees & charges	98,359	2,546	100,905	101,868	0	0	101,868	-963
- Recharges	170,920	338	171,258	177,135	0	0	177,135	-5,877
- Other	19,468	-3,425	16,043	15,085	0	0	15,085	958
Total Income	959,731	10,066	969,796	974,687	0	0	974,687	-4,890
NET EXPENDITURE	450,113	950	451,063	463,134	-1,496	-12,035	449,603	-1,460

Appendix 4: Earmarked Reserves as at 30 June 2011

EARMARKED RESERVES AND CASH LIMIT RESERVES	SERVICE GROUPING	2010/11 CLOSING BALANCE	USE OF EARMARKED RESERVE IN 2011/12	2011/12 CLOSING BALANCE
		£,000	Q1 £,000	£,000
Earmarked Reserves				
AAP Reserve	ACE	1,104	1,104	0
Members Initiative Fund Reserve	ACE	51	51	0
Members Neighbourhood Initiative Reserve	ACE	1,259	1,259	0
Regeneration & Communities	ACE	1,880		1,880
Communities for Health	AWH	895		895
Community Safety Development	AWH	22		22
Book Fund Reserve	AWH	41		41
Carers	AWH	25		25
Community Safety	AWH	53		53
Corporate Reserve	AWH	1		1
Culture and Leisure - Other Services	AWH	133		133
Culture and Leisure	AWH	97		97
DLI Bequests	AWH	90		90
Health and Wellbeing	AWH	382		382
Heritage Development	AWH	21		21
Innovation	AWH	54		54
Outreach Health	AWH	40		40
Preventative Technology	AWH	303		303
Health Lifecheck/Initiatives	AWH/NS	194		194
Corporate Procurement Reserve	Corp Res	565	42	523
Corporate Reserve	Corp Res	300	29	271
DWP ATLAS Grant Reserve	Corp Res	35	35	0
DWP IB(IS) Reassessment Reserve	Corp Res	35	35	0
DWP Local Housing Allowance Grant Reserve	Corp Res	16	16	0
Aycliffe Young People's Centre	CYPS	300		300
Continuing Professional Development	CYPS	278		278
Education Reserve	CYPS	3,652	455	3,197
Leisure Reserves - CYPS	CYPS	52		52
LEP Reserve	CYPS	80		80
Special Projects	CYPS	60		60
Youth Forum	CYPS	64		64
Schools' Revenue Balance	CYPS	19,734		19,734
Schools' Unspent Grants	CYPS	639		639
AAP - Neighbourhoods Reserve	NS	824	824	0
Building Services Defects Liability Reserve	NS	612		612
Chester-le-Street Sports Development Reserve	NS	184	31	153
CPAL Reserve	NS	46		46
Countywide Funding Reserve	NS	251		251
Durham City Sports Development Reserve	NS	76		76
Easington Sports Development Reserve	NS	6		6
Neighbourhoods Education and Enforcement	NS	45	45	0
NETSA	NS	28		28
Registered Traders Reserve	NS	12		12
Sedgefield Sports Development Reserve	NS	160	12	148
Sports and Leisure - Big Lottery Grant	NS	24	3	21
Sports and Leisure - British Coal Dowry	NS	26		26
Sports and Leisure - Hawthorn to Ryhope Railway	NS	15		15
Sports and Leisure - Lanchester Valley Railway	NS	200	200	0
TAMP Funding Reserve	NS	515	150	365
Teesdale Sports Development Reserve	NS	78		78
Wear Valley DCMS (Glenholme)	NS	23		23
Wear Valley IFU Reserve	NS	9	9	0
Wear Valley Sports Development Reserve	NS	115		115
Dowry	NS	465	20	445
ABG Reserve	RED	3,565	235	3,330
City Centre Visioning	RED	22		22
Commuted Sums	RED	83		83
Derwentside Business Development	RED	247		247
Derwentside Training	RED	240	30	210
Durham City Vision	RED	119	35	84
East Durham Business Service Reserve	RED	223		223
East Shore Village	RED	18		18
Empty Homes	RED	25		25
Family Intervention Project	RED	283		283
Growth Point	RED	148		148

EARMARKED RESERVES AND CASH LIMIT RESERVES	SERVICE GROUPING	2010/11 CLOSING BALANCE	USE OF EARMARKED RESERVE IN 2011/12	2011/12 CLOSING BALANCE
		£,000	Q1 £,000	£,000
Housing Solutions	RED	540		540
LABGI Economic Growth Fund	RED	402		402
LEGI Reserve	RED	1,004	511	493
Lottery	RED	23		23
LSVT Reserve	RED	133		133
North Pennines	RED	169		169
Planning	RED	1,901	260	1,641
Prevention Fund	RED	37		37
Regeneration Reserve	RED	578	30	548
Seaside Town Reserve	RED	200		200
Section 106 Agreements	RED	-83		-83
Social Housing Fraud	RED	50		50
Cabinet Reserve	Strat Finance	498		498
Equal Pay Reserve	Strat Finance	3,473	65	3,408
Insurance Reserve	Strat Finance	11,284		11,284
Performance Reward Grant Reserve	Strat Finance	1,694	167	1,527
MTFP Redundancy and Early Retirement Reserve	Strat Finance	19,798	6,642	13,156
Sub-Total Earmarked Reserves		82,843	12,295	70,548
Cash Limit Reserves				
Assistant Chief Executive		894	-61	955
Adult Wellbeing and Health		5,423	-2,900	8,323
Children & Young People		1,253	525	728
Neighbourhood Services		1,292	1,211	81
Regeneration and Economic Dev Resources		2,391	-279	2,670
		873	977	-104
Sub-Total Cash Limit Reserves		12,126	-527	12,653
Total		94,969	11,768	83,201

Appendix 5: Housing Revenue Account

Year to Date Budget	Year to Date Actual	Variance		Annual Budget	Projected Outturn Position	Variance
£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
14,479	14,489	-10	Dwelling Rents	56,611	56,626	-15
220	232	-12	Non Dwelling Rents	865	922	-57
17	-8	25	Charges for Services	66	55	11
14,716	14,713	3	INCOME	57,542	57,603	-61
4,567	4,567	0	ALMO Management Fee	18,266	18,266	0
1,039	999	-40	Repairs and Maintenance	4,156	4,156	0
1,415	1,149	-266	Supervision and Management	5,658	5,886	228
10		-10	Rent, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	42	42	0
1,129	830	-299	HRA Subsidy Payable to CLG	4,514	3,928	-586
30	30	0	Bad Debt Provision	250	250	0
5,786	5,890	104	Capital Financing Charges	23,011	23,430	419
411	411	0	Corporate and Other Costs	1,645	1,645	0
14,387	13,876	-511	EXPENDITURE	57,542	57,603	61
-329	-837	-508	NET EXPENDITURE	0	0	0

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Cabinet**22 September 2011****Roundabout Sponsorship / Illegal signs and Adverts Policy**

Report of Corporate Management Team**Terry Collins, Corporate Director of Neighbourhood Services,
Cllr Bob Young, Strategic Environment**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to identify to Cabinet the potential for environmental improvements that could be generated by the sponsorship of highways assets e.g. verges, roundabouts, lamp-post banners and Christmas trees/lights etc.
- 2 The report also identifies a consistent approach to the enforcement of A-boards, goods for sale and illegal signs on the highway.
- 3 Temporary Event signage is not considered as part of this report as such signage is permitted under the Traffic Signs Regulations. Durham County Council has an approved policy that is followed for each request. The management of these requests and their approval is currently undertaken by colleagues in Regeneration & Economic Development.

Background

- 4 In September 2005 Cabinet approved an Enforcement Policy Statement that sought to prioritise monitoring/inspections and standardised enforcement procedures of 'Display of Goods and A-Boards on Footpaths, Paved Areas and Highway Verges'. This is shown in Appendix 2. This policy statement accepted that compliance monitoring would be based on the hierarchy of footways and subject to available resources. A leaflet entitled 'Display of Goods and A-Boards on the Highway' was produced and was 'A guide to enforcement policy for Traders, Pedestrians and Other Highway Users'. This is shown in Appendix 3.
- 5 Members of Durham County Council have requested that the Highway Authority adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach with regard to signs placed within the highway which do not comply with Traffic Signs Regulations and are hence considered to be illegal. This follows a mandate agreed at the Members Workshop on enforcement in 2009 and was introduced to reduce street clutter and improve the environment.

Current Position

- 6 Currently there are many areas across the County that are subjected to issues of encroachment onto the public highway through a proliferation of signage for the marketing of businesses. This is both unsightly and gives cause for concern with regard to safety of the travelling public due to causing a distraction to motorists.
- 7 The enforcement of the current approach requires significant daily resources and leads to frequent frustration and objection from sign owners about inconsistent enforcement and also complaints that other Authorities licence advertising signs.
- 8 Durham County Council has also recently received several approaches to allow sponsorship of roundabouts. This could see improved maintenance and landscaping of the roundabout funded by the applicant in return for the erection of advertising signs by the sponsoring company and/or generate a revenue for the Council. These applications have been considered, however, a competitive procurement exercise would need to be undertaken to include the wider highway asset as identified within this report. It is anticipated that this would take several months to undertake.
- 9 The A-Board Guidance Note is in conflict with the 'zero tolerance' mandate as it may allow A-Boards to remain when they are considered to be illegal signs. This has been raised by the owners of some signs when we have removed their signs whilst allowing others to remain in accordance with the guidance note. The guidance note was agreed as a method of determining priorities whilst ensuring that they did not prevent the free and safe passage of pedestrians and other highway users.
- 10 An investigation of the policies of other Authorities, both locally and nationally, is detailed in Appendix 4 and this shows no definitive or consistent approach across the local area or nationally. Some local Authorities operate a 'zero tolerance' policy whilst others licence the signs and allow sponsorship of roundabouts.

Preliminary Consultations

- 11 Preliminary consultations have been carried out within the Council to gain an understanding of views of others. The consultation was in the form of a meeting between Legal & Town Centre Management and Planning within Regeneration & Economic Development. The views of each discipline is outlined below:

Legal

- (i) Display of goods and A-boards can block the free flow of pedestrian passage, create obstacles to persons with disabilities and pushchair users, produce an untidy appearance and cause conflict between neighbouring traders.

- (ii) Any obstruction of the highway is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 and the Highway Authority also has a duty under Section 130 of the Highways Act 1980 to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which they are the Highway Authority.
- (iii) The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Highway Authority to 'secure the expeditious movement of traffic' on its network. 'Traffic' in this context includes all forms of pedestrian usage.
- (iv) The Highway Authority can only use the highway for purposes in connection with the public passing and re-passing, as set out above, or where there are statutory powers to undertake other activities. Such powers are limited and do not include powers to authorise others to place signs on the highway for commercial gain.
- (v) Planting of highway assets can be carried out under licence and any income, from possible sponsorship, must cover the costs associated with the administration of such a scheme only i.e. not for profit.
- (vi) It is accepted that enforcement is based on priorities and available resources

Regeneration – Town Centre Management

- (vii) The business community are in favour of advertising signs within the highway.
- (viii) The business community favour sponsorship of highway assets and would like to see this extended to A-boards and display of goods.
- (ix) The Business Service Manager from Economic Development would not like to see town centres become sterile areas and would encourage selling of goods to make the centres vibrant. This statement was made following a meeting with local businesses organisations (Federation of Small Businesses, NECC, Enterprise Agencies, Business Clubs etc)

Planning

- (x) Support the view that advertising signs are illegal and that they open the Authority up to potential claims.
- (xi) Advertising signs do not fall within any of the permitted exemptions for planning approval
- (xii) Most advertisements within the highway will require Advertisement Consent. It is therefore important that any 'sponsorship' scheme recognises the need for consent from the Council as the Local Planning Authority as opposed to the Council's role as the Highway Authority.
- (xiii) The 'Sponsorship' scheme should be restricted to a limited number of roundabouts to avoid a proliferation of street clutter across the County. The use of lamp-post banners should be limited to city/town centre locations. Careful consideration should be given to sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas and World Heritage sites.

- (xiv) Local Planning Authorities are required to exercise their powers under the Advertisement Regulations with regard to amenity and public safety taking into account relevant development plan policies. "Public safety" is not confined to road safety. Crime prevention and detection are relevant; the obstruction of highway surveillance cameras, speed cameras and security cameras by advertisements is now included. Any scheme should therefore carefully consider both the impact upon amenity and public safety.
- (xv) A 'sponsorship' scheme may have implications for the enforcement of unauthorised signs elsewhere within the County. The Council may be accused of operating double standards in pursuing action against other signs particularly on public safety grounds.
- (xvi) Whilst the need to target resources in respect of the enforcement of unauthorised A-boards is acknowledged, exercising discretion from a public safety perspective is only one aspect of advertisement control (see above). The impact upon public amenity will also need to be taken into account when deciding whether or not to allow an advertisement within the public highway.

Proposal

- 12 The proposal, subject to full consideration of all safety, legal and other issues through further consultation on items ii) and iii), is to accept the following.
 - (i) Sponsorship of highways assets within the County, which will provide a revenue income and support, improved landscaping and planting whilst permitting the erection of small advertising signs (considered de minimis).
 - (ii) A-Boards on the highway within the County will be managed within the guidance as set out above, subject to further consultation.
 - (iii) Display of goods on the highway within the County will be managed within the guidance as set out above, subject to further consultation.
 - (iv) Illegal signs, such as fly posting and signs attached to lighting columns, within the County are removed from the highway.
- 13 Further details and examples of items (i) to (iv) are provided within the following sections.

Sponsorship of Highways Assets

- 14 Roundabouts and verge signs: One sign on the central island facing each approach road would be permitted and the size of each sign (to be confirmed) would be approximately 600mm wide by 300mm high. An example used elsewhere is shown below.



- 15 Lamp-post banners: These would be located at key city and neighbourhood locations/along main routes and would allow organisations or Durham County Council to publicise upcoming events. An example used elsewhere is shown overleaf.



- 16 Christmas trees and lights: Individual Christmas trees on roundabouts/other locations or an entire town's Christmas lights could be sponsored with appropriate recognition given to the sponsoring company via a suitable name plate/sign potentially similar in nature to those of roundabout/verge signs.
- 17 Managing the sponsorship of the highways assets could be undertaken 'in-house' or an external agency could be appointed through a competitive procurement process based on the most economically advantageous arrangement for Durham County Council. The successful company, after understanding the Council's key requirements and locations, would then source advertisers and manage the process, returning revenue to Durham County Council.
- 18 Preliminary discussions have taken place through soft market testing with regard to sole roundabout sponsorship. It has been suggested that, if handled by a management company, a total annual income would be in the region of £40 to £50 per sign per week. This equates to circa £8,000 per year per roundabout. Based on similar arrangements in place elsewhere this means that approximately half, after payment of sign development/erection costs, of the revenues generated would be payable to the Authority. This is given solely as a guide and the marketability of our sites would be tested through the procurement process and in the seeking of sponsoring organisations. Appendix 5 details examples of income generated by other Authorities.

Other Environmental Considerations for Sponsorship

- 19 The Environment Partnership is one of five key thematic partnerships under the County Durham Partnership and it aims to bring together representatives from key organisations throughout County Durham and the wider North East region to work towards an 'Altogether Greener' County Durham. The fourteen Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) cover all areas of the County to help us deliver services and give local people and organisations a say on how our services are provided and help us improve Civic Pride.
- 20 In County Durham we want to create a cleaner and our environment for all who live and work here and for those who visit with Altogether Greener approach, ensuring an attractive and 'liveable' local environment and contributing to tackling global environment challenge is one of Durham County Council's priorities.
- 21 Each year a large number of communities take part in Northumbria in Bloom to show their achievements in horticulture, environmental responsibility and community participation. It forms part of an environmental campaign to create a cleaner and greener Britain.
- 22 Business sponsorship is a good way to raise a company's profile as well as giving something back to the community. Sponsorship can take the form of the following.
 - (i) Hanging baskets
 - (ii) Floral displays
 - (iii) In-kind support
 - (iv) Beautiful Durham competition sponsorship
 - (v) Bloom volunteers scheme

A-Boards and Other Signs

- 23 The current policy statement enforces the removal of A-boards by way of a prioritised, resource dependent, monitoring and inspection procedure. This means that resources are targeted to areas where the risk to the user of the footway is greatest.
- 24 Action may not be taken in circumstances where the A-board location is considered low risk. This practice may permit A-boards similar to the one shown below and no change to this is proposed.



Display of Goods

- 25 The current policy statement enforces the removal of goods for display by way of a prioritised, resource dependent monitoring and inspection procedure. This means that resources are targeted to areas where the risk to the user of the footway is greatest.
- 26 The safe display of goods will look similar to that shown on the left hand side detailed overleaf however one such as shown on the right below would not be considered acceptable.



Enforcement of illegal signs

- 27 In order to ensure the effective operation of the sponsorship and A-boards and Display of Goods arrangements it will be essential that Durham County Council robustly enforce the removal of all unacceptable signs and goods.
- 28 To ensure an effective use of resources and maximise staff, such as Highway Inspectors, Neighbourhood Wardens and Planning Enforcement Officers that operate within the County environment, an operational protocol will be agreed. The protocol would operate between Technical Services, Streetscene and Planning Enforcement, and would mean that staff from these areas would all assist with monitoring and the enforcement of illegal signs
- 29 Where traders, in contravention of the Highways Act 1980, are displaying goods, or have placed A-boards outside of the guidelines, thereby causing an obstruction of the highway, they will be notified of possible offences being committed and the steps that are required to ensure compliance.
- 30 Where a serious obstruction is occurring the trader will be required to remedy the matter immediately; failure to do so may result in the removal of the display and any supporting structure by Durham County Council. In situations where the matter is less serious and the trader refuses to take the measures necessary to ensure compliance, enforcement of this policy will be implemented by the serving of a statutory Notice of Contravention under Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 31 Any non serious enforcement issues will be escalated as detailed below.
- (i) Written instruction to move within 7 days.
 - (ii) If no action after 7 days a Notice will be served on the offender.
 - (iii) Where signs do not have contact details then a notice to that effect will be attached to the illegal sign and removed after 7 days.
 - (iv) For goods on display a Notice will be served on the offender.

- 32 Durham County Council must consider the legal implications of signs and goods for display in relation to liability for personal injury accidents and subsequent claims. This would apply where no action is taken on an offending sign.

Consultation

- 33 Whilst internal consultations have been carried out, it is intended to consult with local access groups in respect of A Boards and Goods for sale.

Conclusion

Sponsorship

- 34 Further detailed work would be needed with regard to the number of signs and locations along with acceptable sponsoring organisations and brands. These would not include references to matters such as alcohol, tobacco, religion or sexual in content.
- 35 It would not be acceptable for large nationals or multi-nationals to dominate sponsorship of sites. Small and medium enterprises must be supported and a pre-qualifying tender will need to be submitted to identify the benefits that such sponsorship would bring to the Authority.

A-Boards and Goods for Display

- 36 Compliance monitoring will be undertaken as part of the planned programme of highway safety inspections, with assistance from Neighbourhood Wardens, based on the hierarchy of footways.
- 37 The safety of pedestrians using the highway is of paramount importance and hence it will be essential that a guidance note is produced giving the criteria by which signs and locations will be assessed. The guidance note will seek to clarify residual footway width, the number of signs permitted, the location of these signs in respect of the property and style.
- 38 The enforcement policy statement and guidance note for the placement of A-boards and goods for sale on the highway maintains public safety, protects the Highway Authority and enhances town centres (we do not look to sterilise these areas) and recognise the importance of signage for rural enterprises thus benefiting the local economy.
- 39 The approving of the policy for sponsorship of highway assets, signs and goods for display on the highway and the approach to illegal signs provides the opportunity for Durham County Council to develop a consistent policy whilst maintaining an improved street environment and providing an enhanced level of landscaping.
- 40 Licensing of these features places the Highway Authority in a position of liability by condoning the placement of such features.

- 41 It is necessary to consider exemptions to the policy that relate to events run by charitable organisations, community groups, churches and schools etc. where signs are placed on the highway for a few days before and a day following a local event.

Illegal Signs

- 42 It is proposed to proactively tackle the issue of illegal signs on Council highways following the introduction of an operational protocol that would maximise the use of our enforcement action as required.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 43 Cabinet are recommended, subject to consultation with relevant access groups, to:
- (i) Agree sponsorship of highways assets within the County to allow improved landscaping and planting whilst permitting the erection of small advertising signs and generation of a revenue stream.
 - (ii) Agree to consult on the continuance of the enforcement policy statement relating to A-Boards, goods for display and other signs within the County
 - (iii) Agree to the enforcement and subsequent removal of all illegal signs.
 - (iv) Agree the production of a Communication Plan and use this as part of the consultation process for A Boards and Goods for Sale to ensure that any proposed policy is supported by internal and external stakeholders

Background Papers

Fly Posting Consultation

Cabinet Report Sept 2005, Enforcement policy Statement on A Boards and Goods for Display

Contact: Terry Collins

Tel: 0191 383 4447

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

There may be system costs in setting up and running of the sponsorship scheme.

Staffing

Staff resources may be required to manage the sponsorship scheme

Risk

If an accident occurred that could be attributable in any way to signs that have not been removed then Durham County Council could be at risk of being included in any third party claim.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The removal of illegal signs which cause an obstruction will make the highway safer for persons within restricted vision and persons with disabilities. Appendix 6

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

The removal of all illegal signs will ensure equitable action is taken against all persons wishing to erect signs.

Human Rights

None

Consultation

Full consultation will be carried out on the proposed policy as detailed in Appendix 5.

Procurement

A competitive procurement process may be undertaken in order to appoint a suitable organisation to manage the introduction of sponsorship of the highways assets.

Disability Issues

Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The removal of illegal signs which cause an obstruction will make the highway safer for persons within restricted vision and persons with disabilities.

Legal Implications

If the decision is taken not to remove signs and Goods for Display on the Highway and/or allow Sponsorship of Roundabouts then there is a risk that this decision could be challenged as it is uncertain whether there are powers within the Highways Act to allow such signs, goods or sponsorship. If an accident occurred that could be attributable in any way to signs not having been removed then Durham County Council could be at risk of being included in any third party claim.

Cabinet

2 September 2005



**Proposed Enforcement Policy
Statement for the 'Display of Goods
and A-boards on Footways, Paved
Areas and Highway Verges'
Key Decision Env/EN/03/05**

Report of David Miller, Acting Director of Environment

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek approval for the adoption of an Enforcement Policy Statement and procedure in respect of the 'Display of Goods and 'A' Boards on Footways, Paved Areas and Highway Verges'.

Background

- 2 Many traders currently display goods and erect A-boards on footways, paved areas and highway verges in an unregulated manner.
- 3 Although this practice constitutes an offence under the Highways Act 1980, Durham County Council in its role as Highway Authority does not as a matter of course take action against offenders because of resource implications. However, if complaints have been received, or Highway Management Service staff consider that an identified display of goods, or A-board is causing a safety hazard to pedestrians or other road users, then steps will be taken to remedy the situation. Prosecutions are rare, with only one recorded in the past five years as most incidents are resolved without recourse to court proceedings.

Current Position

- 4 There has been an increasing number of complaints and reports from members of the public of alleged accidents in connection with the display of goods and A-boards, which may result in Public Liability Claims and these have brought this matter to the fore. In addition, the Traffic Management Act 2004 also places a new duty on Highway Authorities to "secure the expeditious movement of traffic" on its network, "traffic" in this context including all forms of pedestrian usage. Current monitoring of the practice of displaying goods and A-boards, is in accordance with the recommendations of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and enforcement is based on priorities and the availability of resources. In the circumstances, the setting of standards applicable to all relevant traders will ensure a consistent approach.

- 5 Under the provisions of Section 115 of the Highways Act 1980 there is authority for Highway Authorities to permit certain activities and facilities within the confines of the highway, such as the provision of tables and chairs, information bureaux etc. Durham County Council Environment Service in accordance with Section 115 of the Highways Act 1980, allows the granting of consent to catering establishments, including public houses, for the placement of tables and chairs on parts of the pedestrianised paved area of the highway adjacent to their premises where appropriate. However, the provisions of this Section do not authorise the placing of 'displays of goods', or 'A-boards' within the confines of the highway.

Proposal

- 6 The following proposed Enforcement Policy Statement aims at prioritising monitoring and inspections based on the availability of resources, and standardised enforcement procedures following complaints or Officer observations. The proposed Enforcement Policy Statements are as follows:

Durham County Council Enforcement Policy relating to the 'Display of Goods' and 'A-boards' on Footways, Paved Areas and Highway Verges.

Displays of Goods and A-boards

Displays of goods and A-boards can block the free flow of pedestrian passage, create obstacles to persons with disabilities and pushchair users, produce an untidy appearance and cause conflict between neighbouring Traders. Any obstruction of the highway is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 and the County Council shall endeavour to enforce this by way of a prioritised, resource dependent monitoring and inspection procedure.

Compliance monitoring will be undertaken as part of the planned programme of highway safety inspections based on the hierarchy of footways and subject to the availability of resources. In addition, ad hoc inspections will be undertaken following the receipt of a complaint or information regarding instances of obstruction of the highway, based on priorities and the availability of resources.

Where Traders in contravention of the Highways Act 1980 are displaying goods, or have placed A-boards, thereby causing an obstruction of the highway, they will be notified of possible offences being committed and the steps required in order to ensure compliance.

Where a serious obstruction is occurring the Trader will be required to remedy the matter immediately, failure to do so may result in the removal of the display and any supporting structure by the County Council.

Where the Trader refuses to take the measures necessary to ensure compliance, enforcement of this Policy will be implemented by the serving of a statutory Notice of Contravention under Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980. This Notice will be served at a prescribed minimum interval following the initial notification to allow the Trader sufficient time to make any necessary changes in order to achieve compliance.

Where subsequent to the issuing of the above Notices, the Trader continues to refuse to take the measures necessary, the County Council will consider prosecution and/or institute other legal proceedings to secure compliance.

'A-boards'

Where an 'A-board' has been placed upon the highway and following the serving of a Notice requesting that it be removed, if it is not removed within a prescribed time interval, it will be removed by the County Council or its Agents and may be collected by the owner at their own expense within 21 days, or on expiry of which time it shall be disposed of.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 7 You are recommended to approve the proposed Policy Statements outlined in 6 above.

Background Papers

Office files

Contact: Brian Taylor Tel: 0191 383 3467

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Set up cost approximately £10,000 for initial publicity/statutory notices/leaflets, with gross annual running costs, including on site inspections and enforcement, approximately £5,000. However, although it is envisaged that there will be no additional cost to the County Council, any funding required will need to be met from existing budgets probably at the expense of a lower priority activity.

Staffing

No additional staffing requirements as the work will be undertaken by existing staff; however this situation needs to be regularly monitored.

Equality and Diversity

Adoption of this Policy will ensure that adequate provision is maintained for the use of footways and paved areas by all pedestrian users including those with disabilities.

For traders whose first language may not be English, information can be provided in other languages, it can also be provided in other formats, upon request. A press release regarding this issue will be publicised with the Race Equality Council and Chinese Association.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Crime and disorder

Will regulate the behaviour of all Traders committing offences under the Highways Act 1980.

Sustainability

Adoption of this Policy will improve the environment for all pedestrians and disabled highway users, as compliance and enforcement of the conditions will ensure that high quality access standards are maintained.

Human rights

Not applicable.

Localities and Rurality

Anywhere there are trading premises adjacent to footways, paved areas and verges within the adopted highway.

The same standards shall be applied to all settlements and enforcement of the Policy in rural areas will not adversely affect the provision of services, legitimate business activities or the character of the surroundings.

Young people

Not applicable.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Health

Adoption of this policy will reduce the number of incidents causing injury.

Appendix 3

Display of Goods and A-Boards on Highway - A Guide to enforcement Policy for Traders, Pedestrians and Other Highway Users 'September 2005



A guide to enforcement policy for Traders, Pedestrians and other Highway Users

Display of Goods and A-boards on the Highway

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

Making a difference where you live

If you require this information summarised in other languages or formats, such as Braille or talking tapes, please contact: (0191) 383 3467

*اذا كنت بحاجة إلى نقل خلاصة هذه المعلومات في لغة أخرى أو صيغة أخرى (مثل: برايل، 383 3467 (0191) 383 3467

如果你需要得到這信息的其他語言或格式，請致電：(0191) 383 3467

اذا كنت بحاجة إلى نقل خلاصة هذه المعلومات في لغة أخرى أو صيغة أخرى (مثل: برايل، 383 3467 (0191) 383 3467

*اذا كنت بحاجة إلى نقل خلاصة هذه المعلومات في لغة أخرى أو صيغة أخرى (مثل: برايل، 383 3467 (0191) 383 3467



Making a difference where you live

The County Council has a duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy any highway for which they are responsible - Highways Act 1980, Section 130(1). And.....

It is an offence to obstruct the highway so as to cause a nuisance - Highways Act 1980, Section 149(1).

Displays of goods and the placing of A-boards outside retail premises can cause an obstruction or nuisance on the footway or highway verge. This is of particular concern where the goods or A-board;

- Prevents the free passage of pedestrians, whether able bodied or not
- Causes a nuisance, or
- Constitutes a danger (including a danger caused by obstructing the view) to legitimate users of the highway.



Enforcement Policy

Goods or A-boards placed on the footway or within the highway verge will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that nuisance or danger is not being caused to legitimate highway users as a result. Durham County Council is especially aware of the needs of visually impaired pedestrians, persons confined to wheelchairs/ electrically powered scooters and parents with children in pushchairs and the monitoring of displays of goods and A-boards will be undertaken with these groups in mind.

Enforcement Procedure

Where offenders in contravention of the Highways Act 1980 are displaying goods, or have placed A-boards, thereby causing an obstruction of the highway, they will be notified of possible offences being committed and the steps required in order to ensure compliance.

Where a serious obstruction is occurring the offender will be required to remedy the matter immediately, failure to do so may result in the removal of the display and any supporting structure by the County Council.

Should the offender refuse to take the measures necessary to ensure compliance, enforcement will be implemented by serving a statutory Notice of Contravention under Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980. Where subsequent to the issuing of the above Notice, the offender continues to refuse to take the measures necessary, the County Council will consider taking legal proceedings to secure compliance.



Contact Details

Should you have any queries or concerns with regard to displays of goods or A-boards, or you require further copies of this leaflet, please contact the HIGHWAYS ACTION LINE (HAL).

Tel: 0191 370 6000

Email: hal@durham.gov.uk

Web: www.durham.gov.uk/HAL

Dr, you can write to

Highway Management Services
ENVIRONMENT
Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UQ



A - Sponsorship of Highway Verges and Roundabouts.

- a) Marketing Force – Municipal Sponsorship Experts – are currently working with over 70 authorities across the country, including Redcar and Cleveland, providing a lucrative marketing tool for businesses and generating supplementary income for the authorities from their highway assets whilst also raising the quality of their local highway environment.
- b) Other authorities which operate roundabout sponsorship include:
- North Tyneside Council
 - Darlington Borough Council
 - Leicestershire County Council
 - Devon County Council
 - Borough of Poole Council
 - Thurrock Council
 - Peterborough City Council (from £1,000 per roundabout per year)
 - Southampton City Council (from £3,000 per roundabout per year)
 - Chelmsford Borough Council (from £950 per roundabout per year)
 - Leeds City Council
 - Stoke on Trent City Council
 - Harrogate Borough Council

B - Licensing and Enforcement by other Authorities on Signs and Goods for Sale within the Highway***Local Authorities***

- a) Middlesbrough
- Subject to satisfying conditions Highway Amenity Licence can be issued which is renewable annually.
 - Consent requirements to place Advertising Boards and Display of Goods on the Public Highway are in accordance with the Highway Act 1980.
 - Charges for A-boards and display of goods (new and renewal) are included in fees and charges list of Council
 - A different charge is levied for displays over 5 sq.m and this is also included in fees and charges list of Council
 - Each applicant is required to hold £5 million Public Liability Insurance cover
 - The applicant is required to complete an application form and site plan and agree to conditions of licence.
 - Consultation process prior to determining request for licence is initially within the authority and police and then neighbouring premises. There is no right of appeal if an application is refused other than a judicial review. It will normally take 2 months to determine an application for a licence.
 - No requirement normally for planning permission – applicant needs to check
 - Size, layout, suitable furniture considered.
 - Highway Authority not liable for any licensed sign as it is placed at owner's responsibility.

b) Darlington

- The Council has the power to licence objects or structures on the Highway subject to conditions. It is considered that certain shop displays could be licensed, however where they are considered to be a nuisance or a danger, they will be dealt with in the same way as A-Boards.
- The Council has the necessary powers to require the removal of objects on the Highway that cause nuisance and where there is a danger the Council can, and will, remove objects straight away. It is also an offence with a maximum fine of £1,000.
- By their nature A-Boards are a significant hazard in most situations, they can be difficult to see, they are a nuisance and they can be a danger. There are alternative ways of advertising such as signs above head height.
- The Council will generally require the removal of A-Boards and will remove them where they are considered to be a danger.

c) Stockton

- Do not licence signs and remove signs as detailed below.
- Highways must be kept clear of obstructions/projections for safety reasons. The Council has the power to serve notice on a person who commits an offence of wilful obstruction on the highway. In certain circumstances the courts allow the Highway Authority to remove obstructions and recover reasonable costs incurred in doing so from the offender.
- Website asks members of the public if they see an obstruction on the highway or pavements, which includes hoardings and advertising boards, to report it.

d) Sunderland

- Do not licence signs and remove signs using a system of letters issued to offending businesses and individuals and stickers on signs where those responsible cannot be readily identified.
- Their letter states:
'It has been quite common to see unauthorised advertising material of this type placed on the Highway in recent years, but the number of locations where it is happening has increased considerably and has now become a problem. Under the Highways Act 1980 it has always been illegal to use the Highway for this purpose, but over recent years the Council has tried to deal with the problem using a light touch approach, preferring to deal with the problem signs on an individual basis. Unfortunately, the number of signs has increased to the extent that it is no longer possible for the Council to ignore its legal obligations and the safety and obstruction problems that these signs can cause.'
'The City Council has adopted a policy for dealing with unauthorised advertising material placed on the Highway. The policy states that unauthorised advertising on the Highway throughout the City will no longer be permitted.'

e) Newcastle

- Pavements are constructed and maintained for pedestrian use – blocked pavements can cause an obstruction or possibly put safety at risk.
- Responsible for ensuring any obstructions on pavements are there in a safe and legal manner. If not will ensure they are removed as soon as possible.
- Advertising boards that block the pavement will be removed.
- Obstructions on the road ask that they be reported to the Police.

f) Northumberland

- Do not licence signs and remove signs as detailed below.
- Pavement obstructions – They ask that problems relating to an advertising board where it is blocking the pavement is reported to the Authority.
- Road obstructions – Highway Authority has a duty to protect public rights on the highway network ensuring that they are free from nuisance, dangerous obstructions, unlawful closure, interference and encroachment eg include illegal signs.
- Where there is clear evidence that an organisation or individuals may be in breach of the law relating to highways, it is their intention to give informal advice without causing unnecessary expense or duress. However, firm action will be taken against those who disregard the law.
- Officers may deal with matters informally or formally and the action may lead to prosecution.

National Authorities

a. Leeds City Council

- Do not licence commercial signs and remove signs using a system of letters and stickers.
- The Highways Act 1980 Section 132 is stated to be the preferred legislation but it does not preclude the use of Town & Country Planning Act 1990 Section 224 or Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 Part 6 Section 43 where necessary to secure conviction.
- Signs advertising local community activities are tolerated provided they:
 - Do not cause an obstruction or danger to Highway Users.
 - They are only erected within 14 days of the event.
 - They are removed within 1 day of the event happening.
 - They are erected within the immediate environs of the event location to inform the community and guests rather than be located so that they are seen 'at every turn'.

b. Rotherham

- Pedestrianisation schemes in town centres make it vehicle free and therefore safer for pedestrians. Resulting increase in A- Boards means there is a need to control them.
- An A-Board is an advertisement for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 and requires express consent of the Council and therefore any request for an A_Board needs planning consent from planning authority.
- Decision on applications made by Director as delegated by the Planning committee.
- If an application is refused the applicant can appeal to Office of Deputy Prime Minister
- If consent is granted the licence lasts for 5 years but can remain after that unless the Authority serve a discontinuance notice.
- Also need consent of Highway Authority – conditions apply and will be removed if not got relevant consents.
- No fee attached to consent of Highway Authority.

- Penalties for contravention of advertising regulations and for wilfully obstruction of the highway under S137(1) of the Highways Act 1980 carries a maximum fine of £1,000
- Conditions in the licence stipulate where the applicant can site any A-Board

c. Bury

- Do not licence signs which are classed as illegal and a cause for obstruction.
- Officers may deal with matters informally or formally and the action may lead to prosecution
- Powers to remove obstructions
 - Section 137 – penalty for wilful obstruction
 - Section 143 – power to remove structures for the highway
 - Section 148 – penalty for depositing things or pitching booths etc on the highway
 - Section 149 – removal of things so deposited on Highways as to be of a nuisance etc

d. Waltham Forest

- Do not licence signs which are classed as illegal and a cause for obstruction.
- Obstruction of free passage under section 137 Highways Act 1980
- Illegal signs dealt with under Section 132 Highways Act 1980

Appendix 5: Income Generated by Other Authorities

- a. Leeds Council aim to generate £500,000 per year.
- b. In 2009/10 Salford City Council made £349,982.
- c. In 2009/10 Tower Hamlets Council made £206,930 from outdoor advertising deals. Tower Hamlets charge between £3,000 to £15,000 per year per banner/sign on Council land.
- d. North Tyneside Council charges and income are shown in the table detailed below.

North Tyneside Council Advertising Income

Income source:	Approx. annual income:	Rate card:	Notes:
Roundabout advertising	£7,200* per roundabout per year (four panels)	Average annual income: £56,051** (gross)	North Tyneside Council has sold roundabout advertising since 1998. The council maintains the roundabouts and an external company sells the advertising; the income is split between the two organisations.
	All profit goes to Environmental Services to help keep North Tyneside cleaner and greener	Average annual income: £7,841** (net)	Planning permission is essential and the overheads can prove expensive.
		Average annual outgoings (sign manufacture, installation and traffic management): £14,579**	* Based on 2009 figures when Poster Identity held the contract **Based on 1998 – 2007 figures

Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment

Policy for the Roundabout Sponsorship/ Illegal Signs and Adverts



Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments. You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.	
Service/team or section: Strategic Highways, Technical Services, Neighbourhood Services	Start date:
Lead Officer, Strategic Highways Manager, Technical Services, Neighbourhood Services Planning and Policy Team Leader	30 June 2011
Strategic Highways Manager, Technical Services, Neighbourhood Services	24 Aug 2011
Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)	
Policy for the Roundabout Sponsorship/ Illegal Signs and Adverts	
<p>The report discusses the need for and content of a revised Durham County Council policy position on Sponsorship of Highway Assets, Signs and Goods for Display on the Highway and Approach to Illegal Signs. In particular:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Sponsorship of highways assets within the county to allow improved landscaping and planting whilst permitting the erection of small advertising signs. (ii) Enforcement of compliance with the policy for the erection of A-Boards and other signs within the county subject to a prioritised, resource dependent, monitoring and inspection procedure. (iii) Enforcement of compliance with the policy of display of goods within the county subject to a prioritised, resource dependent, monitoring and inspection procedure. 	
<p>The enforcement of signs and goods for display on the highway and the sponsorship of highway verges and roundabouts provides the opportunity for Durham County Council to develop a consistent policy whilst also generating income and maintaining an improved street environment and providing an enhanced level of landscaping.</p>	
<p>Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and traders • Motorists, 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrians, • Residents of the County, • Tourists 	<p>Is a copy of the subject attached? No If not, where could it be viewed? Contact Strategic Highways, Technical Services, Neighbourhood Services</p>	<p>Initial screening Currently, as the council does not allow the display of signs, A-boards, goods and produce this has resulted in proliferation of inappropriately placed and un-approved signage. This approach has also restricted the council's capability of regulating the presentation of signs, A-boards and goods to ensure that they do not restrict access and present a hazard. Following implementation of the policy, Durham County Council will introduce an enforcement procedure for all roadside and roundabout signs, A-boards and displays of goods and produce to require provision of sufficient access for pedestrians. Consequently, it is envisaged by officers that the regulation of street signs, A-Boards and shop side displays of produce will bring associated benefits to the visually impaired, pedestrians with restricted mobility and people with push chairs through reducing the likelihood of tripping and injury.</p>	<p>Prompts to help you: Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?</p>	<p>Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings? Indicate : Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Gender</td> <td>N</td> <td>Disability</td> <td>Y</td> <td>Age</td> <td>Y</td> <td>Race/ethnicity</td> <td>N</td> <td>Religion or belief</td> <td>N</td> <td>Sexual orientation</td> <td>N</td> </tr> </table>	Gender	N	Disability	Y	Age	Y	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	N	Sexual orientation	N	<p>How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities? Reminder of our legal duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment ○ Promoting equality of opportunity ○ Promoting good relations between people from different groups ○ Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people ○ Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making <p>This policy will support the Council's commitment to promote equality, in particular through reducing barriers to physical access experienced by disabled people and those with push chairs. It will have a potential positive impact and will create greater equality of opportunity for these groups. The screening has not identified any negative impact to the protected characteristics associated with the changes it will create, and so does not require a full EqIA. However, it is considered that a further screening should be conducted following implementation of the policy to assess the benefits it has created for the abovementioned groups. This</p>
Gender	N	Disability	Y	Age	Y	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	N	Sexual orientation	N							

screening should be conducted in **October 2012** to provide a sufficient period following Cabinet approval for changes to embed into practice.

What evidence do you have to support your findings? DCC have reviewed the policies and procedures in place by numerous other Councils

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – No **Date:** 30 June 2011

If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.

	Identify the impact : does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Gender			
Age			
Disability			
Race/Ethnicity			
Religion or belief			
Sexual Orientation			

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities? N/A

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
When will this assessment be reviewed? Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	Date: October 2012		
Lead officer -sign off - Head of Technical Services			Date: 4 July 2011 24 Aug 2011
Service equality representative - sign off: , Policy Performance and Communications officer			Date: 4 July 2011 24 Aug 2011

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

العربية (Arabic) (中文 (繁體字)) (Cantonese) اردو (Urdu)
 polski (Polish) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi) Español (Spanish)
 বাংলা (Bengali) हिन्दी (Hindi) Deutsch (German)
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Cabinet**22 September 2011****Private Sector Housing Strategy for
County Durham****Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and
Economic Development****Councillor Clive Robson, Portfolio Holder for Housing and
Councillor Alan Napier, Portfolio Holder for Resources****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is for Cabinet to approve the Private Sector Housing Strategy (2011- 2015) for County Durham. An executive summary of the strategy is attached to the report as Appendix 2.

Background & housing issues in the private sector**The Housing Stock**

2. There are about 232,000 homes in County Durham. Of these around 80% or 185,000 are private sector housing, which means they are owned by an owner occupier, private landlord or private company. In short, private sector housing is all housing except that which is owned by the Council or another social landlord.

Stock Condition

3. Work which Durham County Council carried out with the Building Research Establishment in 2009 using English House Condition Survey information showed a correlation between older housing and non-decency, often due to the poor thermal efficiency of older housing stock. Around 34% of private housing appeared to be failing the decent homes standard and 16,000 households living in these properties are classed as vulnerable. The total estimated cost of bringing all private sector homes up to standard is a staggering £492million, dropping to £147million to improve the homes of the most vulnerable.

Area based regeneration

4. In County Durham many areas offer residents a wide range of housing choice, from good quality affordable social housing to smaller starter homes, two and three bedroom family houses, and larger executive homes. But in other areas the housing mix still reflects the historic role of settlements and is less suited to the demands of modern householders, with more social rented and older terraced properties and fewer new properties on offer.
In Derwentside, East Durham, Sedgefield and Wear Valley almost 50% of the stock is terraced, and in some cases the quality is of a poor standard. A number of communities with older terraced housing also have poor environmental amenities, with poor access to health services and leisure facilities.

Vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties

5. The Council works in partnership with local Home Improvement Agencies to provide a range of support to householders to improve their homes and quality of life, either using their own funds or with the aid of grants and loans when appropriate.

Currently the Council's Occupational Therapists refer over 700 cases each year for adaptations, often supported by Disabled Facilities Grants to fund works carried out through a Home Improvement Agency

Management practices in the private rented sector

6. Anecdotal evidence suggests that County Durham has a high level of private rented housing, with a significant proportion failing to meet the decent homes standard. Ineffective management by some Private Landlords, together with an unwillingness to invest and a lack of engagement with local communities, has unsettled neighbourhoods by causing a high turnover of tenants and other residents.

Councils have discretion to use various measures to improve housing management in the private rented sector, including landlord accreditation projects or selective licensing schemes to cover all privately rented property in areas which suffer from low housing demand or significant anti social behaviour. There are now three selective licensing schemes in County Durham in Easington Colliery, Dean Bank and Chilton.

Empty homes

7. Analysis of data from council tax suggests that over 4,000 private sector homes across County Durham have been empty for 6 months or more. The Council's approach is to investigate and deal with those that have been empty for more than six months in the designated Housing Regeneration areas.

The Council has a range of interventions at its disposal to address long term empty homes ranging from negotiation through to Empty Dwellings Management Orders

Energy efficiency

8. Fuel poverty affects the most vulnerable in our society, cold homes, cold-related illness, increased winter deaths, housing in poor repair and high healthcare costs are all visible signs of fuel poverty – a problem that affects more than 27% of households in County Durham each year. Improving the quality of life for residents is a key priority for Durham County Council by helping the most vulnerable members of our community to afford to heat their homes to a healthy level is vital if we are to achieve that aim.

Private sector housing priorities

9. The priorities included within the Private Sector Housing Strategy are based on those issues set out within the background of this report and are aligned with the objectives of the overall housing strategy. The five priorities for the private sector housing strategy are:

1. Area based regeneration in the following eight areas;
 - Esh Winning Durham
 - Wheatley Hill East Durham
 - Dawdon Seaham East Durham
 - Easington Colliery (Wembley) East Durham
 - Dean Bank, FerryHill South Durham
 - West Chilton South Durham
 - Ferryhill Station South Durham
 - Craghead North Durham
2. Meeting the needs of vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties
3. Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector
4. Bringing empty homes back into use
5. Making properties more energy efficient

Delivery of the strategy

10. A review of factors affecting the private sector housing service has taken place and the results were used to determine the best approach to intervening in private sector housing in County Durham.

The chosen strategic option for the Private Sector Housing Service is a targeted service with a safety net. This offers an approach which combines suitability, feasibility and acceptability to optimum effect.

This chosen option offers a three-pronged approach:

- Concentrate work in identified housing regeneration areas with the worst housing conditions and highest levels of deprivation, led by the area based housing regeneration team using a project management approach to draw in other elements of the Private Sector Housing Service around them. The Private Sector Housing Strategy describes how the private sector housing service's resources will be targeted on the existing housing regeneration projects inherited from the previous District Councils and how each element of the service will play its part in a coordinated approach to deliver sustainable improvements. Future priorities will seek to align this work and the identification of new areas for regeneration with the priorities for economic growth and with areas of economic opportunity.
 - A safety net service to deal with other priorities, for example, if an empty home outside of a regeneration area is found to be significantly contributing to neighbourhood blight.
 - Work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, disabled adaptations and energy efficiency
11. An action plan has been produced which includes a number of actions which will deliver the following range of activities for each of the five priorities. The action plan is included as section 5 in the Private Sector Housing Strategy.

Priority 1: Area based regeneration in the eight identified housing regeneration areas

- Group repair and facelift schemes
- Selective acquisition and demolition
- Environmental improvements such as the provision of car parking facilities and green spaces
- Working in areas with concentrated pockets of poor quality private sector housing to improve the quality of accommodation and housing standards
- Bringing empty homes back into use working with owners and private landlords and addressing anti social behaviour
- Delivering an intensive approach to improving energy efficiency

Priority 2: Meeting the needs of vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Provision of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants
- Home improvements and repairs for vulnerable financially excluded home owners including accelerating the shift away from grants to loans
- Technical advice and assistance to households wanting to improve or adapt their properties who don't qualify for financial assistance through a project management approach
- Assistance for vulnerable owner occupiers across the whole of County Durham, liaising with Occupational Therapists and Home Improvement Agencies to ensure that a consistent service is delivered to vulnerable people wherever they live
- An equitable adaptations service for all social housing tenants across County Durham is in place
- Ten owner occupiers (in each of the housing identified regeneration areas) to take up a loan product via the Council's Financial Assistance Policy

Priority 3: Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Working in partnership with private landlords to improve their properties and assist some landlords to improve their housing management practices
- To promote ,strengthen and effectively manage Selective Licensing in current licensed areas, and evaluate the schemes' effectiveness
- When formal action has failed, take robust enforcement action on the poorest private rented stock and worst housing management practices
- Advertise properties owned by private landlords into the County Durham's Choice Based Lettings Scheme

Priority 4: Bringing empty homes back into use with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below
- Quick wins to increase the supply of affordable homes outside of regeneration areas
- Make use of all available tools to bring empty properties back into use, for example Empty Dwelling Management Orders

- Introduction of leasing arrangements for bringing empty properties back into use through use of a managing agent

Priority 5: Making properties more energy efficient

- improving the energy efficiency of properties occupied by the most vulnerable households living across the County
- Improve the energy efficiency of those properties in the identified regeneration areas
- Increase average SAP ratings to above 65 to those properties in the eight housing regeneration areas

12. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed (see Appendix 3)

Recommendations

- 13 The Private Sector Housing Strategy is one of the principal strategies that is integral to the Council's Housing Strategy 'Building Altogether Better Lives' 2010-15. Cabinet are there asked to:
- 14 Approve the Private Sector Housing Strategy for County Durham.

Norman Hunt & Marie Smith 03000 262019

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Over the term of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, subject to confirmation, around £23.4 million has been earmarked to deliver the strategy. This is made up of £4 million, exclusive of grants, for Disabled Facilities, £14.6 million for area based regeneration and safety net projects and a further £4.8 million for the Financial Assistance Policy.

Staffing

The strategy will be delivered through existing staffing resources.

Risk

A risk assessment has been completed for the Private Sector Housing Strategy.

Equality and Diversity

An equality impact assessment has been carried out and is attached to the report.

Accommodation

There are no accommodation issues.

Crime and disorder

The implementation of this strategy aims to contribute to reducing anti social behaviour in particular through bringing empty homes back into use.

Human rights

There are no human rights issues.

Consultation

Consultation has been carried out with relevant stakeholders and feedback from customers has been obtained to inform the Strategy.

Procurement

Elements of the action plan require procurement of services from external contractors and agencies. Wherever appropriate Corporate Procurement assist with this process to achieve value for money.

Disability Discrimination Act

The strategy addresses the needs of vulnerable people and services are directed towards those in need including the work of the Home Improvement Agencies and core team details are set out in the strategy and action plan.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

Section One: Executive Summary

The Private Sector Housing Strategy sets out how the Council and our partners will ensure that the key objectives of the Housing Strategy will be met in relation to private sector housing.

The **five key priorities** covered by the Private Sector Housing Strategy include:

1. Area based regeneration
2. Meeting needs of vulnerable people/ Improving and adapting properties
3. Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector
4. Bringing empty homes back into use
5. Making properties more energy efficient

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is framed within the three overall objectives of the Housing Strategy:

Altogether better housing markets,
Altogether better housing standards, and
Altogether better at housing people.

Its purpose is to identify the activities to be undertaken which have the greatest impact on private sector housing, and in doing so make the greatest contribution to economic regeneration across the county.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy describes how the private sector housing service's resources will be targeted on the existing housing regeneration projects inherited from the previous District Councils and how each element of the service will play its part in a coordinated approach to deliver sustainable improvements. These are areas with the worst concentrations of housing problems including poor stock condition, high numbers of empty properties, high levels of deprivation and anti social behaviour.

The delivery of capital investment programmes, the selective acquisition and demolition of some housing, group repair schemes, environmental improvements, and new housing development, each play a part in this form of housing renewal, but they also need to be supplemented by effective work on energy efficiency, empty properties, with private landlords and with wider economic regeneration interventions. It is recognised that in the future housing will be more integrated with wider economic activity. The action plan within this strategy includes the introduction of a more systematic approach to the prioritisation of regeneration and areas of opportunity involving housing, planning, transport and economic functions.

Every opportunity will be taken to lever in private sector funding streams and develop private sector partnerships aimed at increasing financial resources to enable the delivery of additional housing.

The Strategy will focus on areas with the worst concentrations of housing problems and describes how the needs of vulnerable people across the whole of County Durham will continue to be met through the provision of a repairs and adaptations service supported by the provision of loans for vulnerable and financially excluded households.

A safety net service will be provided to ensure that priority housing issues in the private sector occurring outside of priority regeneration areas can be effectively dealt with.

Over the term of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, subject to confirmation, around £23.4 million has been earmarked to deliver the strategy. This is made up of £4 million, exclusive of grants, for Disabled Facilities, £14.6 million for area based regeneration and safety net projects and a further £4.8 million for the Financial Assistance Policy.

Appendix Three: Private Sector Housing Strategy

Durham County Council – Private Sector Housing Strategy equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments. You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.

Service/team or section: **Housing Renewal and Improvements, Housing Services, Regeneration and Economic Development**

Lead Officer: **Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager** | Start Date: 1/4/2011

Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)

This Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the following document: **Durham County Council Private Sector Housing Strategy 2010-2015**, which sets out how Durham County Council's Housing Service, Public Health Service and other partners will ensure that the key objectives of the Housing Strategy will be met in relation to private sector housing.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is a “business level” strategy, dealing only with issues that are specific to private sector housing, and working in the context of the Council's overall Housing Strategy, which sets out an overall housing programme for the county, having been subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment..

The key functions covered by the Private Sector Housing Service are:

- helping the most vulnerable households improve their homes;
- improving the energy efficiency of properties occupied by the most vulnerable households;;
- improving stock condition and management practices in the private rented sector;
- adapting properties to enable disabled people to maintain independent living;
- bringing empty homes back into use to increase the supply of affordable homes and make neighbourhoods more sustainable;

- working in areas with concentrated pockets of poor quality private rented sector housing to improve the quality of accommodation and housing standards.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy adopts a three-way, targeted approach to service delivery:

- *Concentrated work in identified housing regeneration areas with the worst housing conditions and highest levels of deprivation, led by housing renewal programmes using a project management approach to draw in other elements of the Private Sector Housing Service around them;*
- *Work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, disabled adaptations and energy efficiency;*
- *A safety net service to deal with other priorities, for example, if an empty home outside of a regeneration area is found to be significantly contributing to neighbourhood blight, or if new "hot spot" areas begin to emerge.*

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is framed within the three overall objectives of the Housing Strategy: better housing markets, better housing standards, and better at housing people. Its purpose is to set out a rationale and programme for the detailed activity needed to make the most of private sector housing's contribution to meeting these objectives in a challenging economic environment.

Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify)

The main stakeholders include the general public, elected members and colleagues in other DCC services, in particular:

- Private householders (tenants and owner occupiers) across County Durham;
- Private Landlords letting property in County Durham
- Letting Agents
- DCC Housing Solutions Service
- Area Action Partnerships
- Community Action Teams

- Developers and social landlords involved in housing renewal projects					
Is a copy of the subject attached? Yes					
If not, where could it be viewed?					
Initial screening					
Prompts to help you: Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?					
Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings? Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure					
Gender No measure impacting specifically on men or women.	Disability Yes, potential positive impact on people with a disability who wish to live independently, through further improvements to systems helping with aids and adaptations, and energy efficiency measures.	Age Yes, potential positive impact of energy efficiency measures on older people and children in particular.	Race/ethnicity Yes, potential positive impact on all ethnic groups due to improved housing management practices in private rented sector, improved access to housing due to private landlords advertising property through Choice Based Lettings, and benefit to Gypsy, Traveller communities due to re-furbishment of	Religion or belief No measures impacting specifically on any faith group are included in this strategy. In so far as they are affected, faith groups are likely to benefit from the various improvements in private sector housing and neighbourhood management and to access to housing proposed in the	Sexual orientation No measures impacting specifically on any particular sexual orientation are included in this strategy. The various improvements in private sector housing and neighbourhood management and to access to housing proposed in the strategy are likely to benefit residents whatever their sexual orientation.

			<p>official sites.</p> <p>The strategic service delivery option selected in the Private Sector Housing Strategy offers a safety net service to ensure that issues involving race/ethnicity can be responded to wherever they occur in County Durham, in addition to in priority regeneration areas.</p>	<p>strategy.</p> <p>The strategy also creates an opportunity for faith groups to take part in community-based steering groups set up in each priority housing regeneration area.</p>	
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How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

Generally: through sharing the Council's active commitment to promote equality, achieved through a range of protocols and other working relationships with other Council services and stakeholders.

Specifically:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment - *by improving housing management in the private rented sector*
- Promoting equality of opportunity - *by improving access to affordable rented housing and by helping vulnerable homeowners improve their homes*
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups - *by involving communities in local housing renewal programmes and supporting Area Action Partnerships*
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people - *by further improving processes around the installation of aids and adaptations to help people live independently and with dignity for as long as they want to*
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making - *by involving communities in local housing renewal programmes and supporting Area Action Partnerships and working on customer care issues around aids and adaptations*

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

In addition to the evidence cited in the Equality Impact Assessment for the full Housing Strategy, we have the following evidence:

- Private Sector Housing Market Assessment
- Self-assessment of performance against the Key Lines of Enquiry used by the Audit Commission to inspect local authorities;
- Benchmarking current practices and costs against those of similar local authorities;
- A Value Chain Analysis to show what parts of the service were most and least effective, by identifying how much impact activities had on residents' quality of life, and how many resources they used up;
- Audit of staff skills, capacity and resources to identify areas needing development;
- Cultural analysis to raise staff awareness of how the service should be delivered and support behaviours that increase customer focus;
- Stakeholder consultation to add to information gathered by the consultation exercise carried out for the main Housing Strategy;
- Scrutiny Review of Anti Social Behaviour identifying work with private landlords and empty homes as important components of a new Anti Social Behaviour Strategy

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes Date: 9/8/10

If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

	Identify the impact : does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Gender	<p>The delivery of the Private Sector Housing Strategy will have a positive impact on men and women.</p> <p>The EIA for the overall Housing Strategy identified services for male victims of domestic violence and male young parents as possible focuses for further work.</p>	<p>As noted in the EIA for the overall Housing strategy, accommodation for victims of domestic violence or for young parents is currently for women only.</p> <p>If such accommodation is required for men, then this might be through arrangements with private landlords, and require an input from the Private Sector Housing Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of the Housing Service's assessment of need in respect of male victims of domestic violence and young parents who are male. - Facilitate, when required, the provision of accommodation for men by working with private landlords. - Ensure equality and diversity training delivered to all staff/ liaise with HR to secure training. - Ensure that performance under all joint protocols is

			<p>routinely monitored, and report on how areas of concern are being addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of complaints received about housing management and related issues.
Age	<p>The strategy's commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will have a positive impact on older people and children in particular.</p> <p>The strategy's commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> and to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will have a positive impact on younger people by increasing the range of decent housing on offer to them.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will bring about specific benefits through improvements in the delivery of aids and adaptations and energy efficiency measures, and also result in a wider range of financial support products being offered to vulnerable homeowners who need to improve their home.</p> <p>The commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> will bring about specific benefits by delivering housing renewal in the most deprived areas to improve the range of housing on offer,</p>	<p><i>See below under Disability re Financial Assistance Policy (FAP)/Central Improvement Team (CIT)/Housing Improvement Agencies (HIAs)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality & Diversity monitoring of involvement in community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas. - Provide equality and diversity training as

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that the age-related needs of individual residents can be addressed, wherever they live in County Durham.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will bring about specific benefits by development of ‘intermediate’ housing (between social renting and market rent/sale) and by advertising private landlord properties through Durham Key Solutions, Choice Based Letting scheme.</p> <p>The strategic option developed in the strategy contains a commitment to work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, aids and adaptations and energy efficiency, and to provide a safety net service to deal with other priorities. These two strategic elements of the service complement the focus on delivering local housing regeneration projects in priority areas.</p>	<p>necessary to community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas.</p> <p>See below under <i>Race/Ethnicity re effective monitoring of take up of housing through CBL</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service.
Disability	<p>The strategy’s commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will have a positive impact on adults and children with disabilities.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will bring about specific benefits for people with disabilities through improvements in the delivery of aids and adaptations and energy efficiency measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete EIA on CIT and in-house and out-house HIAs. - Review and update DCC’s Financial

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that the needs of individual residents with disabilities can be addressed, wherever they live in County Durham.</p>	<p>The strategic option contains a commitment to work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, aids and adaptations and energy efficiency; a safety net service will also be provided to deal with other priorities.</p>	<p>Assistance policy.</p>
<p>Race/ Ethnicity</p>	<p>The strategy's commitments to <i>Better Housing Management</i> and to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will have positive impacts for all ethnic groups, including minority ethnic groups.</p> <p>The strategic commitment to deliver re-furbishments to official sites is of particular benefit to the Gypsy, Traveller community in the county.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will bring about specific benefits by increasing the range of decent housing on offer and by advertising private landlord properties through Durham Key Solutions, Choice Based Letting scheme, making them more likely to be available on an equal-opportunities basis.</p> <p>The commitment to <i>Better Housing Management</i> will make discrimination on the basis of race less likely, and improve landlords' responses to situations in which race is a factor.</p> <p>Only two of the county's six official sites for Gypsies and Travellers have been re-furnished so far, but the strategy contains a specific commitment to refurbish the rest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure equality and diversity monitoring of take up of private sector housing via Choice Based Lettings is effective in collecting data on all relevant groups, including Gypsies and Travellers. - Work with the other partners to on the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Action plan to establish a re-furbishment programme for official sites, and respond to issues from

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that issues in the private housing sector with a race, ethnicity or related social cohesion component can be addressed wherever they occur in County Durham.</p>	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy offers a safety net service to enable the service to respond to issues anywhere in County Durham, in addition to work on area-based housing regeneration and improvements or adaptations for vulnerable people.</p>	<p>recent Gypsy, Traveller Health Needs Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service. Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team
Religion or belief	<p>The strategy's commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> creates opportunities for working in partnership with faith groups.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> will bring about specific opportunities for the involvement of faith groups in local steering groups overseeing area-based housing regeneration projects; a Big Society-style approach.</p>	<p><i>See above under Age re monitoring of involvement in community-based steering groups, and provision of equality and diversity training to their members</i></p>
Sexual orientation	<p>Like the main Housing Strategy, the Private Sector Housing Strategy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>By increasing the quality and range of affordable housing on offer across the county, the strategy's commitments around <i>Better Housing Markets</i>, <i>Better Access to Housing</i> and <i>Better Housing Management</i>, are likely to make County Durham a more attractive place to live for people of all sexual orientations.</p> <p>However, there is currently no way of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review monitoring arrangements with Housing Solutions to ensure any issues are

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that issues in the private housing sector with a sexual orientation component can be addressed wherever they occur in County Durham.</p>	<p>measuring this.</p> <p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy offers a safety net service to enable the service to respond to issues anywhere in County Durham, in addition to work on area-based housing regeneration and improvements or adaptations for vulnerable people.</p>	<p>being picked up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service
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How will this promote positive relationships between different communities?
 By developing a more customer-focussed approach, with opportunities for community involvement, in a framework of effective equality and diversity monitoring to alert the service and its partners to where further changes will be required.

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.			
Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target date	In which plan will this action appear
<p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate, when required, the provision of accommodation for male victims of domestic violence and young parents who are male by working with private landlords. - Ensure equality and diversity training delivered to all staff/ liaise with HR to secure training. 	<p>Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</p> <p>DCC HR</p>	<p>April 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p>	<p>Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</p> <p>Private Sector housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that performance under all joint protocols is routinely monitored, and report on how areas of concern are being addressed. 	Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team	April 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
<p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality & Diversity monitoring of involvement in community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas<i>[NB in respect of all 6 equality strands]</i> - Provide equality and diversity training as necessary to community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas. - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service. 	Housing Regeneration Manager Housing Regeneration Manager Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team	July 2011 October 2011 July 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
<p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete EIA on CIT and in-house and out-house HIAs. - Review and update DCC's Financial Assistance policy. 	Decent Homes Manager Housing Regeneration Manager	March 2011 April 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
<p>Race/Ethnicity</p>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure equality and diversity monitoring of take up of private sector housing via Choice Based Lettings is effective in collecting data on all relevant groups, including Gypsies and Travellers. - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of complaints received about housing management and related issues. - Work with the other partners to on the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Action plan to establish a re-furbishment programme for official sites, and respond to issues from recent Gypsy, Traveller Health Needs Assessment. - Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service. 	<p>Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</p> <p>Decent Homes Manager</p> <p>Housing Regeneration Manager</p> <p>Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</p>	<p>July 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p> <p>April 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p> <p>Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Action Plan</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p>
<p>Religion/belief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote opportunities for faith groups to be involved in community-based housing regeneration steering groups. 	<p>Housing Regeneration Manager</p>	<p>October 2011</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Strategy delivery Plan</p> <p>Work plans for specific area based regeneration projects</p>

Sexual Orientation			
- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service.	Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team	July 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
- Review monitoring arrangements with Housing Solutions to ensure any issues are being picked up.	Housing Renewals and Improvements Manager/Core Team	October 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan

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Draft version 19th July

**Private Sector Housing Strategy
For County Durham**

2011- 2015

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY

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Appendices

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Section One: Executive Summary

The Private Sector Housing Strategy sets out how the Council and our partners will ensure that the key objectives of the Housing Strategy will be met in relation to private sector housing.

The **five key priorities** covered by the Private Sector Housing Strategy include:

1. Area based regeneration
2. Meeting needs of vulnerable people/ Improving and adapting properties
3. Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector
4. Bringing empty homes back into use
5. Making properties more energy efficient

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is framed within the three overall objectives of the Housing Strategy:

Altogether better housing markets,
Altogether better housing standards, and
Altogether better at housing people.

Its purpose is to identify the activities to be undertaken which have the greatest impact on private sector housing, and in doing so make the greatest contribution to economic regeneration across the county.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy describes how the private sector housing service's resources will be targeted on the existing housing regeneration projects inherited from the previous District Councils and how each element of the service will play its part in a coordinated approach to deliver sustainable improvements. These are areas with the worst concentrations of housing problems including poor stock condition, high numbers of empty properties, high levels of deprivation and anti social behaviour. Maps of these priority areas are shown in Appendix 5.

The delivery of capital investment programmes, the selective acquisition and demolition of some housing, group repair schemes, environmental improvements, and new housing development, each play a part in this form of housing renewal, but they also need to be supplemented by effective work on energy efficiency, bringing back empty properties, working with private landlords and with wider economic regeneration interventions. It is recognised that in the future housing will be more integrated with wider economic activity. The action plan within this strategy includes the introduction of a more systematic approach to the prioritisation of regeneration to areas of opportunity involving housing, planning, transport and economic functions.

Every opportunity will be taken to lever in private sector funding streams and develop private sector partnerships aimed at increasing financial resources to enable the delivery of additional housing.

The Strategy will focus on areas with the worst concentrations of housing problems and describes how the needs of vulnerable people across the whole of County Durham will continue to be met through the provision of a repairs and adaptations service supported by the provision of loans for vulnerable and financially excluded households.

A safety net service will be provided to ensure that priority housing issues in the private sector occurring outside of priority regeneration areas can be effectively dealt with.

Over the term of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, subject to confirmation, around £23.4 million has been earmarked to deliver the strategy. This is made up of £4 million, exclusive of grants, for Disabled Facilities, £14.6 million for area based regeneration and safety net projects and a further £4.8 million for the Financial Assistance Policy.

Section Two: Introduction

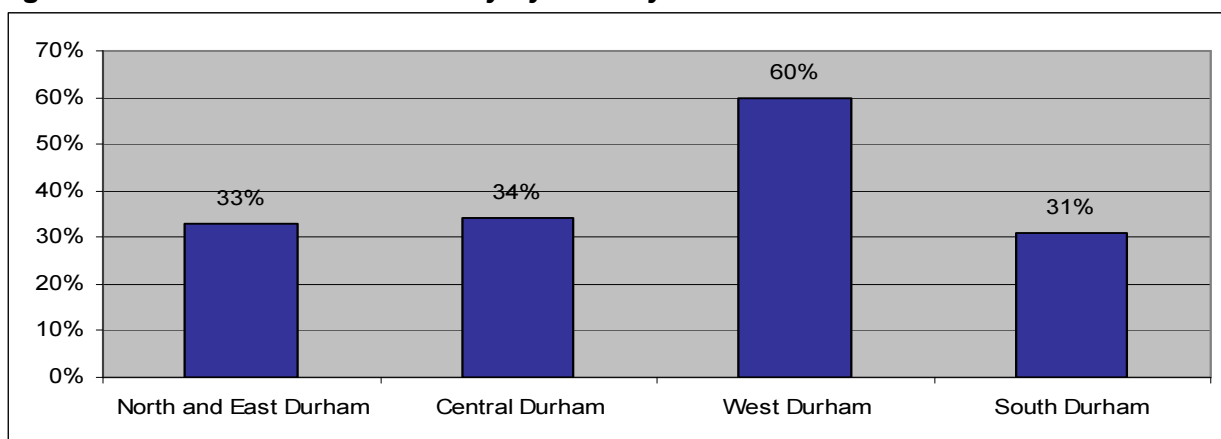
2.1 Private Sector Housing in Durham

Durham is a large and diverse authority and different parts of the County have distinct characteristics, functions and needs. We have identified **five** localities/delivery areas for County Durham: North Durham; East Durham; Durham City; South Durham; and West Durham (see section 3.1 for further detail)

As at April 2010 there were 185,159¹ private sector dwellings in County Durham representing 80% of the total housing stock; this includes both owner occupied and private rented housing. There is a need to ensure that all sectors of the housing market contribute to meeting local housing needs.

Around 34% of private housing is failing to meet the decent homes standard and there are 16,000 households living in these properties who are classed as vulnerable.²

Figure1: Private sector non decency by delivery area



There is a high proportion of terraced housing within the private sector and a number of these are privately rented. These are mainly in ex mining settlements where there are high levels of deprivation. There is a shortage of high quality market housing specifically executive housing.

The aim of this Private Sector Housing Strategy is to improve the quality of private sector housing, and in doing so, contribute to achieving other key priorities notably:

¹ HSSA 2009/10, RSR March 2010

² Private Sector Housing Stock Models update March 2009

Better health:

- By providing more homes that are warm
- By reducing financial exclusion by offering loans to less well off
- By supporting independent living

Better economy:

- By delivering housing renewal programmes
- By delivering housing improvement initiatives in areas of opportunity across the county

Better environment:

- By reducing carbon emissions

2.2 Context

The private sector housing strategy is set within the context of wider strategies in particular [“Building Altogether Better Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015”](#), describing the overall vision for housing in County Durham. Developed with its partners, it reviews housing issues in the county, identifies options for addressing them, and presents a strategic delivery plan for the whole housing service.

The strategy also explains how housing objectives are linked to the Council’s key corporate priority of improving the economy in County Durham, which is fully explained under the “Altogether Wealthier” theme of the [“Sustainable Community Strategy”](#) and in the Regeneration and Economic Development Service’s [“Regeneration Statement”](#).

The County Durham Regeneration Statement outlines how the underlying ambition of creating sustainable places where people want to live, work, invest and visit can be achieved. This partnership led Regeneration Statement underpins the Sustainable Community Strategy, the County Durham Partnership’s Altogether Wealthier theme, and the County Durham Economic Partnership’s priority to create a vibrant economy.

The Statement’s five objectives are to create:

- A Thriving Durham City
- Vibrant and Successful Towns
- Competitive and Successful People
- Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities
- Top Location for Business

The Private Sector Housing Strategy contributes to the delivery of these objectives and will significantly contribute to the Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities objective, by illustrating the Council’s and partners commitment to:

- Working with the Homes and Communities Agency to provide new homes, investment in existing housing, refurbishment of Council owned Gypsy and Traveller sites and bringing empty homes back into use.
- Delivering housing regeneration in the eight identified areas
- Improving housing standards through the use of the Council's Financial Assistance Policy

The link between housing and other high level priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-30 is described too, including "Altogether Better for Children and Young People"; "Altogether Healthier"; "Altogether Greener" and "Altogether Safer".

Under its general aim of *Building Altogether Better Lives*, the Council's Housing Strategy sets out three key objectives for dealing with the issues facing County Durham:

Altogether Better Housing Markets - housing's role in economic growth, including a more joined-up approach to regeneration, getting the most from investment and building new housing with a range of housing types, tenures and levels of affordability.

Altogether Better Housing Standards - improving standards in the existing housing stock, with more homes that are warm, safe and decent, fewer that are empty or in disrepair, and with professional management standards in the private rented sector and enforcement taken against problem landlords.

Altogether Better at Housing People - the 'people side' of housing including improved support for vulnerable people of all ages, housing advice to prevent homelessness, decent housing for Gypsies and Travellers, and the wider benefits from better housing such as improved health, educational attainment, social inclusion and less crime and anti social behaviour.

Financing the Delivery of the Strategy

Over the term of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, subject to confirmation, around £23.4 million has been earmarked to deliver the strategy. This is made up of £4 million, exclusive of grants, for Disabled Facilities, £14.6 million for area based regeneration and safety net projects and a further £4.8 million for the Financial Assistance Policy.

2.3 Key components of the Private Sector Housing Strategy

The key components of the work of the Council in private sector housing are:

Area based regeneration & renewal

Although a number of housing renewal programmes have been implemented which have involved selective clearance of the worst housing, environmental improvements and group repair schemes, the Council recognises that some settlements and neighbourhoods still reflect their historic role, have unimproved stock, a poor environment and contain large levels of deprivation. It is acknowledged that housing regeneration plays a significant role in the economic regeneration of an area and

therefore in the future a holistic approach to economic regeneration will be taken which will include housing regeneration and renewal activity.

Improving standards in the private rented sector

Private landlords make an essential contribution to meeting housing need in County Durham, through providing rented homes, where the tenure of choice is in the private sector. However, poor housing management by some private landlords continues to have a negative impact on neighbourhoods. The aim of Durham County Council's Private Landlords Initiatives Service is to work with private landlords to improve housing standards overall and at the same time helping private landlords secure a decent, reliable return on their investment.

Bringing empty homes in the private sector back into use

Across County Durham as at April 2010 there were approximately 4,000 properties empty for six months or more. Longer term empty homes can cause problems for local residents as they attract crime and anti-social behaviour. Empty homes also reduce the supply of affordable homes.

Delivering adaptations and repairs for vulnerable people living in the private sector

The local authority has a role in assisting *vulnerable* households in the private sector. Vulnerable households are those facing financial hardship, or needing help to adapt or repair their home because of the effects of disability.

Given the projected ageing of the population in County Durham, it is essential that housing allows people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. This service also supports children who may have lifetime needs, as well as adults of various ages. This can be supported by Disabled Facilities Grants and the work of the Home Improvement Agencies which involves the promotion of loan products the council's financial assistance policy.

Figure 2: Vulnerable Households, Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty

Delivery Area	Location	Private Sector Dwellings	Vulnerable Households	Vulnerable Households in Non-Decent Dwellings	% SAP* < 35	% Fuel Poverty
North & East Durham	Chester-le-Street	18216	23%	8%	7%	15%
North & East Durham	Derwentside	28843	29%	12%	12%	19%
North & East Durham	Easington	28348	39%	14%	7%	19%
South	Sedgefield	27440	31%	11%	9%	18%

Durham						
Central Durham	Durham City	27831	25%	10%	11%	16%
West Durham	Teesdale	9799	27%	16%	32%	34%
West & South Durham	Wear Valley	21294	31%	14%	16%	21%
	County Durham	161862	30%	12%	12%	19%
	England	18053000	18%	8%	13%	12%

* Standard Assessment Procedure – energy rating of dwellings

Figure 2 illustrates that across the county 30% of households in the private sector are classed as vulnerable by virtue of their age, income or infirmity and the highest percentage are living in the East Durham area.

Energy efficiency

Energy efficiency of the home contributes to a reduction in fuel poverty. Homes that are not energy efficient (currently assessed as fewer than 65) affect the most vulnerable in our society, a problem that affects more than 27% of households in County Durham each year. The priority for this strategy is to raise those SAP ratings currently assessed as lower than 65 particularly in those properties in the eight priority housing regeneration areas.

Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation

The Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation are part of the Governments Energy Bill due to be introduced in December 2012. Durham County Council are currently part of the national pilot Scheme along with The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) National Energy Action and Durham University commencing in July 2011. This will identify forthcoming national targets and explore opportunities to maximise external funding ahead of the Bill being enacted.

National Green Deal Pilot Scheme

Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation will offer significant financial benefits to Local Authorities to assist them to raise housing standards, provision of decent homes and the well being of local residents. Local Authorities with Financial Assistance Policies will be well placed to access Green Deal external funding and this will have a direct effect of increasing the numbers of private and private rented households able to meet the decent homes energy efficiency standard.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) have invited Durham County Council, National Energy Action and Durham University to undertake a National Green Deal (ECO) Pilot Scheme commencing in July 2011. The key elements of the national pilot are listed below:

- Maximise external funding opportunities
- Establish delivery mechanisms within existing resources

- Target properties to receive grant funded energy conservation measures
- Promote uptake of measures in regeneration areas
- maximise community engagement and provide scheme credibility
- Establish targets and monitoring mechanisms
- Integrate externally funded measures into the Durham County Council Financial Assistance Policy

The council's Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) supports the delivery of the Private Sector Housing Strategy. The FAP has been reviewed and amended to ensure it is completely aligned with this strategy.

This strategy covers and works in the context of the Council's overall housing strategy and the five priorities therefore on which the private sector housing strategy is based are:

- 1. Area based regeneration**
- 2. Meeting needs of vulnerable people/ Improving and adapting properties**
- 3. Improving management practises and stock condition in the private rented sector**
- 4. Bringing empty homes back into use**
- 5. Making properties more energy efficient**

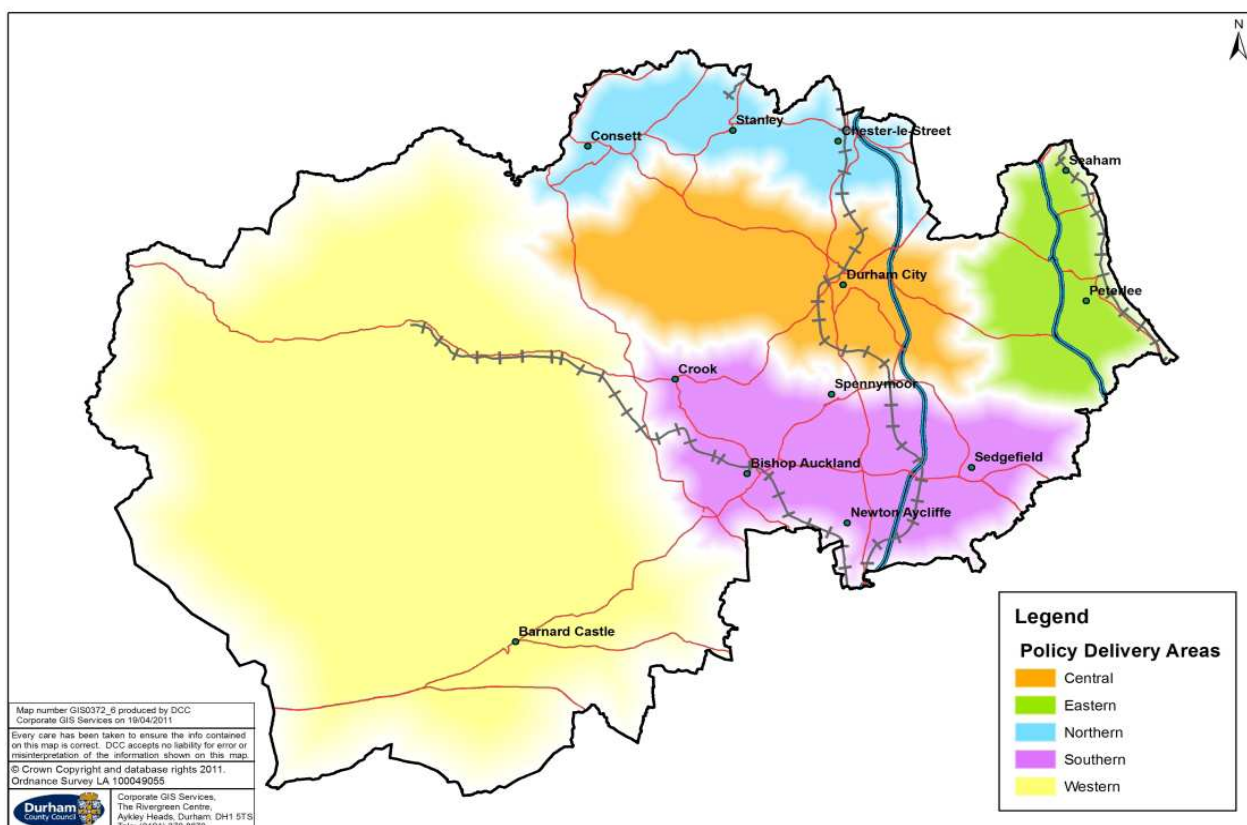
Section Three: The Current Picture

This section provides additional details on the priorities for the private sector housing strategy and sets them within the local context. Additional information in relation to the private sector housing market in County Durham is available at Appendix 4.

3.1 Locality profiles

We have identified five localities for County Durham: North Durham, East Durham; Durham City; South Durham; and West Durham. For each of these areas we set out the local housing & regeneration context. The delivery areas are shown on the map of the County below and further details of the settlements in the individual delivery areas are included at Appendix 3.

Figure 3: Map of the 5 Delivery Areas across County Durham



Operational Delivery Areas for the Private Sector Housing Service

The Private Sector Housing Team deliver all functions from three operational areas

- The Stanley area office covers both North and Central Durham
- The Seaham area office covers East Durham
- The Spennymoor area office covers West and South Durham

CENTRAL DURHAM

At the heart of the North East, **Durham City and the surrounding area** is an important population centre, employment location, visitor destination and transport hub. The locality stands out as the key economic driver to the County and of regional importance; it symbolises the economic potential and opportunities available. Generally, the Index of Deprivation scores for areas in and around Durham City compare well against the County's averages.

Average house prices in some parts of Durham City are three times the County average at over £300,000 but nevertheless it has significant private sector challenges and some surrounding villages have average prices nearer £100,000 or below.

Altogether Better Housing Markets

Housing sites near the centre are high value and properties within a mile of the city centre command some of the highest prices in the County. It is the only place in the County where apartments can be sold or rented in large numbers and where the privately rented sector is flourishing.

Durham City's future growth must be seen within the context of **regeneration of surrounding settlements**. In contrast to the wealth within the city, there are deprived communities on the other side of the City's green belt that require public sector intervention in order for them to remain as viable places to live. These include places where Area Development Frameworks have been produced (Bowburn and Sacriston) or where masterplans have been developed (Esh Winning).

Durham City has benefited from a pioneering '**joint venture**' **partnership** between the Council and Keepmoat plc (the Durham Villages Regeneration Company (DVRC) which has delivered nearly 1000 houses and bungalows for sale and social rent since 2004. This joint venture arrangement will be used to deliver further regeneration in Esh Winning and in Brandon.

Altogether Better Housing Standards

The **private rented sector** is greatly affected by the student population that place considerable demands on this housing despite the University's collegiate system. Older terraced housing in certain quarters (such as Gilesgate and Crossgate) is so dominated by rented housing for students to share (predominantly in term time) that it is likely that the supply of lower cost housing to other household groups has diminished; forcing first time buyers in particular to seek housing away from the city centre areas. Further work on how this element of the housing market can reconcile differing needs and demands is required and will be undertaken with our partners in higher and further education. There will be close liaison with the Durham AAP over completing this work.

Altogether Better at Housing People

The needs of **older people** (50+) who comprise 20.5% of the population of Durham City and its environs will be of paramount importance. As well as reviewing social housing sheltered schemes, there is an over-riding need to consider how older people can be encouraged to stay in their existing accommodation through either aids and adaptations or through financial assistance to enable improvement and repair.

Other **special needs** require assistance:

- The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community has a site at West Rainton that is in need of refurbishment.

Housing Regeneration Areas

The main centre for area based regeneration in Central Durham is:

- Esh Winning

Esh Winning Regeneration Programme

Esh Winning is a former mining community 6 miles to the west of Durham City. A master plan was prepared in conjunction with Durham Villages Regeneration Company the recommendations of which started to be delivered in April 2010.

The focus for housing regeneration was identified as the social housing areas of Durham City Homes stock which includes The Oaks, Rowan Court, Pine Tree and a redundant site at the rear of the Co-op supermarket know as West View. Funds have since been secured and agreed through the 2010-2013 Housing Revenue Account Regeneration Delivery Plan. An amount of £1million has been identified over the three year period; these funds will pay for acquisition and demolition of the social housing and private sector housing stock.

The funding programme has been set out initially in three phases covering 78 properties. This includes 7 private sector properties and 71 Durham City Homes properties. Phase 1 The Oaks within 2010/11, Phase 2 Rowan Court within 2011/12 and Phase 3 Pine Tree within 2012/2013.

New housing will be built as part of the regeneration plan and will include approximately nine two bedroom bungalows for social rent and 20 new housing units for market sale.

NORTH AND EAST DURHAM

North and East Durham is closely connected to the **Tyne and Wear City Region** and forms part of wider employment, housing and travel to learn markets, supported through a transport infrastructure which includes major arterial roads and rail links to the East Coast rail network. North Durham is served by the towns of Consett, Stanley and Chester-Le-Street whilst the East contains the towns of Peterlee and Seaham, where the A19 forms a good connection between the two City Regions. This part of the County contains some of the most **deprived communities** in the North East and although progress has been made in recent years, much more remains to be done. The population for N&E Durham is around 220,000.

Employment is a concern, with over 90% of the populations in two areas being ranked in the worst 30% nationally. Unsurprisingly, income also compares poorly against the County averages, along with health, education and children index of deprivation ratings.

Average house prices range from some of the lowest at £30,000 through to over £150,000. Main service centres (set out below) tend to be the places where greatest housing and employment growth is located but interspersed are a dispersed pattern of former coalfield communities that through lack of investment and poor social and physical infrastructure are relatively deprived and where private sector interventions are most required.

North Durham

Consett and Stanley are two important local centres of employment, shopping, leisure and public services in North West Durham. The strong growth in housing schemes for sale needs to be counter-balanced with housing renewal in order to sustain the towns' long term roles

Chester-le-Street is the main centre to the north of Durham City and the town has consolidated its role as a local retail centre in recent years. Although relatively prosperous, limited housing growth opportunities will curtail its development in future years.

East Durham

Seaham is the gateway to Durham's coast and its growth and revitalisation, based around the regeneration of the town centre and the redevelopment of former colliery sites, is an emerging success story.

Peterlee is a former new town and is a significant residential and employment base within the County halfway along the coast between Hartlepool and Sunderland.

Altogether Better Housing Markets

Despite North and East Durham having some of the lowest **affordability ratios** in the country and some of the largest supplies of social housing (averaging around

23%% of total stock with some neighbourhoods closer to 50%) the provision of good quality private sector accommodation (alongside social housing) remains critical to the well being of vulnerable persons and newly forming households.

The **low values inherent in housing land** in this area place additional emphasis on the public sector (either through investment by the HCA or through the local authority's land assets) to deliver the required range of good quality affordable housing to meet needs and to stimulate the private sector.

As part of the Coalfields Housing work, the settlements at Easington Colliery and Dawdon were identified as priorities for selective clearance. Further interventions may be required in places such as Horden, Blackhall, Shotton Colliery and Thornley in East Durham and South Stanley, New Kyo, Quaking Houses and Craghead in North Durham.

Altogether Better Housing Standards

Existing housing in North and East Durham requires considerable new investment. In particular, the smaller communities that are situated on the fringes of the main centres of population often have poorer quality housing and a weaker infrastructure to support the communities that live there.

In the **private sector**:

- Non decency is a particular problem especially for marginal owner-occupiers, older persons on limited incomes and other vulnerable groups.
- Renewal areas are benefiting from limited group repair and environmental improvement schemes such as those at Dawdon (near Seaham), Wembley (Easington Colliery) and Craghead (near Stanley). However more extensive work to regenerate these communities is needed and therefore the Council must secure finance and recommit to clearance for those areas of housing where neither private nor public investment will deliver the necessary improvements.

Also, of concern is the welfare and living standards of those in the **privately rented sector** where absentee landlords do not provide an adequate management and maintenance service. Landlords in Wembley; an area within Easington Colliery; are now subject to compulsory licensing as part of an intensive neighbourhood management scheme but further work is required to ensure the efficacy of the scheme.

Altogether Better at Housing People

The needs of **older people**, who comprise 22.5% of the population of North and East Durham, will be of paramount importance. Opportunities to alleviate under-occupancy to maximise the efficient use of stock should be taken while at the same time additional two bedroomed bungalows should be procured in the right locations.

The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community has sites at Birtley and Stanley in North Durham which require refurbishment but there are currently no permanent sites in East Durham.

Housing Regeneration Areas

The main centres for area based regeneration in North and East Durham are:

East Durham

Wheatley Hill
Easington Colliery
Dawdon (Seaham)

Wheatley Hill Regeneration Programme

Since the closure of the local collieries in the late 1960s/early 1970s Wheatley Hill village lost its traditional focus and main source of employment. In recent years, considerable efforts have been made to address some of these issues and the regeneration of the village. The colliery sites have been reclaimed and work on a range of housing, environmental and community schemes are currently taking place.

There are around 1450 dwellings in Wheatley Hill. The local authority stock is located on the older estates in the south of the village and a more recent development in the east. A large number of these council houses have been subject to partial improvement programmes.

The private housing is generally in good condition and in attractive surroundings and the village has a decent range of local services, including the Primary School, Front Street shops, the Community Centre and other community facilities.

The former Easington District Council commissioned a Masterplan for Wheatley Hill and development appraisals generated proposals for two specific sites in Wheatley Hill with accompanying implementation plans to provide for the long term regeneration of the village up to 2016. The housing regeneration plan for Wheatley Hill includes selective acquisition and demolition of surplus properties, environmental improvements, possible re-provision of new two bedroom bungalows for older people, bringing empty properties back into use and targeting energy efficiency initiatives.

Easington Colliery Regeneration Programme Wembley/Easington Colliery

Easington Colliery is a former coal mining settlement located on Durham's Heritage Coast mid way between Seaham to the north and Peterlee/Horden to the south. It has a population of around 5,000 with basic shopping facilities and some other community amenities.

Low income levels, poor health and low aspirations associated with a low skills base created a community with high levels of multiple deprivation. For instance 18% of the working age population claim incapacity benefits about double the average for the North East. About 37% of households do not have access to a car, a particular problem for such an isolated community. Nearly all the houses fall within Council Tax band A.

The housing stock is primarily privately owned with some smaller infill developments of local authority and housing association property. Absentee landlords with poor management records have compounded issues of anti-social behaviour amongst some residents.

Our current priorities include action to address the poor condition of privately owned stock in the neighbourhood of Wembley through selective licensing, group repair and other housing regeneration activity (energy efficiency initiatives, bringing empty homes back into use)

The area of the village nearest the rail line and coast has previously benefited from selective clearance. The majority landlord in some of the terraces (in the 'C' streets) is the housing association Accent Housing who took over the ownership of former Coal Board properties in the 1980's.

There is evidence though that those streets where private ownership predominates require further intervention and this could include further selective demolition.

The former colliery site (To the north of the village centre) is now an extensive area of reclaimed grassland and has been the subject of 'option studies' to establish its suitability for new development. This is dependant on whether the private sector is interested in participating in investing in this area.

Dawdon

Dawdon a former coal mining settlement was identified as a strategic focus for intervention having close proximity to Seaham and the potential to support the main town role. The neighbourhood had been identified as a low demand area and a ten year housing renewal programme was approved by the former Easington District Council.

A further Coalfield Settlement Study and Area Development Framework also highlighted the accessibility and connections between Dawdon and the rest of Seaham particularly to the town Centre, Group repair which has included renewal of doors, windows, facia's guttering etc, to private sector terraced housing with Dawdon has progressed into year 9 covering 94 properties and commenced in August 2010 with work nearing completion.

A succession strategy is currently in development and the impact of the investment will be evaluated at the end of the scheme and 12 and 24 months after project completion.

**North Durham
Craghead Regeneration Programme**

The Craghead Housing Intervention Project (CHIP) began in April 2007 with its overall aim being to improve housing conditions and to strengthen the housing market. The main intervention area includes just over 119 private sector terraced dwellings within 5 key streets in central Craghead.

Initially the first phase of the programme commenced in 2007/08 included, acquisition and demolition of a small number of failing private sector housing. The second phase of the programme commenced in September 2009 and encompasses a range of environmental improvements, The third phase commenced in August 2010 and is due for completion June 2011 and includes boundary wall treatment works which are being undertaken to the identified 119 terraced private sector housing within the area. The fourth phase which is due to commence in June 2011 includes group repair works comprising of renewal of roofs, doors, window, inclusion of an energy efficient render system and work is under way to facilitate the fitting of photovoltaic cells to properties. Work is progressing with Craghead Development Trust to develop a business plan linking with Homes and Communities Agency and Derwentside Homes to bring empty homes back into use.

SOUTH DURHAM

South Durham is closely connected to the **Tees Valley City Region**. The main commercial centres of Bishop Auckland, Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor and Shildon form an important southern gateway to the County. The links with Darlington and Tees Valley, afford opportunities for complementary economic growth, to widen labour market catchments and extend the benefits of growth in Tees Valley to residents in the south of County.

The area incorporates a **network of strategic employment sites** including Green Lane industrial estate, Newton Aycliffe Industrial Estate and NETPark. The population of South Durham is around 155,000.

Health is a major issue across South Durham, with between 65% and 92% of the populations of different areas being ranked in the worst 30% nationally. Education, employment and older person index rankings also compare negatively to the County averages. Average house prices vary from £70,000 in former coalfield settlements and up to over £150,000 in the more rural areas. Its main service centres are described below.

Bishop Auckland in particular is a key retail and service centre with a population of 24,000 but a catchment area of over 150,000 people within 10 miles of the town. Bishop Auckland Further Education College is based in the town. There are strong public transport links to other settlements in the County; it has rail links to Darlington and will be connected to the Weardale railway in the future.

Newton Aycliffe is one of the larger towns in the County with a population of 26,725 and was the first new town in the North of England. It hosts the second largest industrial park in the region at Aycliffe Business Park, a major source of manufacturing-related employment for this and surrounding areas. A key issue for Newton Aycliffe is the vitality and potential redevelopment of the town centre and the strengthening of the Business Park.

Spennymoor, also a major town, was founded to service heavy and extractive industry but now requires significant investment in its town centre and the former Industrial Estate at Green Lane and Merrington Lane.

Sedgefield is host to the regionally important science and technology park of NETPark. It has ambitious expansion plans and is a key component of the County's strategy to make its economy more competitive. Recent private financing will boost the products being developed on the site. Sedgefield Community College is one of the first schools in County Durham to benefit from the **BSF programme** and work began on site on a 'state of the art' energy efficient building in July 2009.

Altogether Better Housing Markets

Mirroring the situation in North and East Durham, the need for **regeneration** is primarily focussed on places and settlements on the fringes of the main centres. Existing clearance and group repair funding has been concentrated on Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton (to the south of Spennymoor) and to a lesser extent Coundon and the Dene Valley to the east of Bishop Auckland.

Altogether Better Housing Standards

The challenges of **poor stock in the private sector**:

- Has been confronted through a long term commitment to clearance in some of the settlements south of Spennymoor (Dean Bank, Chilton and Ferryhill Station); though future funding to continue the programme beyond its current phases is not yet identified. The majority of recent clearance and rehousing has taken place in these communities and the positive impact that this has had must be sustained.
- An integrated investment programme needs to be revived in Coundon and the Dene Valley where regeneration has halted. Market confidence can only be reinstated when a clear programme of work has been agreed – this will benefit private sector sites as well the public realm.
- A licensing scheme for private landlords has been established in Dean Bank and West Chilton where ongoing intensive neighbourhood management is helping to halt the decline of the community and its infrastructure.

Altogether Better at Housing People

South Durham has much in common with North Durham in terms of housing need:

- It has some of the lowest **affordability** ratios in the country and yet some of the largest supplies of social housing (averaging around 22% of total stock). The 2008 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) shows that additional private sector affordable housing is still required for the continued well being of vulnerable persons and newly forming households. However the need for additional affordable housing conflicts with the need to attract inward business investment and the role that a good housing offer plays in this; and further the need to create mixed communities in order to make such communities sustainable in the longer term.
- The needs of **older people**, who comprise 22.5% of the population of South Durham, are of paramount importance. Additional two bedroomed bungalows are required in locations close to services as well as schemes for the frail elderly (including flexible-tenure options).
- Other **special needs** require assistance:
- The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community has 3 sites at Auckland Park, Dene Valley, East Howle, near Ferryhill and Bishop Auckland in South Durham; two of which have benefited from funding from HCA for refurbishment.

Housing Regeneration Areas

The main centres for area based regeneration in South Durham are: Chilton, Ferryhill Station, Dean Bank, Ferryhill.

West Chilton

Chilton is based off the A167 bypass and in common with many former coalmining villages within County Durham has declined since the closure of the mines. Chilton has a population of 4,192, the area is relatively disadvantaged compared to the average for England and in particular is deprived in terms of employment, health and education with the area ranked in the worst 10% of all lower super output areas. Unemployment is at 2.5% broadly in line with local, regional averages however the rate of incapacity benefit and severe disability claimants at 13.4% is almost twice the average for England.

Dean Bank, Ferryhill

Dean Bank was built at the turn of the 20th century to house miners from the Dean and Chapter Colliery and is located west of the A167. The area consists of long terraced streets running east to west along the north and south sides of Dean Bank. Private rented stock accounts for a large proportion of homes with a mixture of Sedgefield Borough Homes and Three Rivers social housing stock. Low demand has led to issues of empty properties and high turnover.

Ferryhill Station, Ferryhill

Ferryhill Station a former mining community is based to the east of Ferryhill and runs alongside the main East Coast railway line. The designated housing market renewal (HMR) area was a small linear settlement of mainly pre 1919 terraced colliery housing. The overall area has suffered from years of under investment in its ageing housing stock which has contributed to significant levels of disrepair, empty properties, low values and in general a poor local environment.

A Master Plan for the three priority communities was commissioned in April 2005. The Master Plan involved a review of the existing evidence base, wide community involvement and consultation, option generation and financial modelling. This resulted in the production of Area Development Frameworks to support the regeneration of the priority communities. The former Sedgefield Borough Council adopted the ten year Master Plans on the 13th July 2006. The Housing Regeneration Plan for these three areas includes demolition and acquisition, group repair, environmental improvements, selective licensing work to bring empty homes back into use and targeting energy efficiency initiatives.

WEST DURHAM

County Durham is essentially a rural County with the West of the County displaying many 'deep rural' characteristics due to its topography and remoteness. The market towns of Barnard Castle, Stanhope, and Middleton-in-Teesdale are important rural centres serving their rural hinterland needs. However net population gains have resulted in housing affordability problems.

The population of West Durham is around 32,000. Despite apparent higher standards of living in West Durham, housing and wider deprivation is a significant issue with 59.5% and 37.4% of the populations of Weardale and Teesdale respectively being ranked within the 30% most deprived areas for housing nationally in terms of the index of deprivation.

Average house prices range from £106,000 in isolated former mining villages in the east to over £200,000 in the more desirable market towns. This area has the highest proportion of private sector dwellings and some of the highest non decency levels in the County – especially amongst those houses built before 1919.

Barnard Castle is the main town within this area and attracts residents, visitors and businesses. Its 20 year regeneration plan, developed by Barnard Castle Vision, sets out objectives around improving the local economy through business growth and diversification; through developing the town as a visitor destination and enhancing its role as a rural service centre.

Altogether Better Housing Markets

The affordability ratio in Teesdale is the second highest in the County and the 2008 local housing market assessments for Teesdale and Wear Valley have shown that there is a continuing need for affordable housing in both private and social sectors. The high level of second home owners accentuates the housing shortage in these rural areas. Particular requirements exist for 2 bedroomed starter homes and accommodation for older people (both bungalows and apartments).

It should be noted that outliers of the former coalfield area exist at Cockfield and Evenwood and the housing in these isolated communities would also benefit from some levels of regeneration and renewal.

Altogether Better Housing Standards

The housing exhibits relatively high levels of non decency in the private sector – mainly associated with poor thermal efficiency. The stock is older and less well heated and this is combined with many properties being off the mains gas network; the levels of fuel poverty in the area need to be brought down. Good practise examples such as the installation of ground source heat pumps in Teesdale HA's properties in Cockfield could be replicated.

Altogether Better at Housing People

Rural homelessness is regarded as an issue and increasing the supply of housing for single persons and couples in particular is seen as a priority.

The percentage of older people at 28% is the highest in the County and older people's needs, particularly when staying put is an additional challenge in isolated rural communities require particular attention either through the Home Improvement Agency or through telecare products and services. Where rehousing is a more appropriate solution then new housing schemes should be pursued in main centres of population where services exist and access to them is acceptable.

The Gypsy and Traveller community do not have a permanent site in West Durham but do benefit from 'stopover' sites along the route to Appleby in neighbouring Cumbria. The needs of this group in May/June each year needs to be continually assessed and provided.

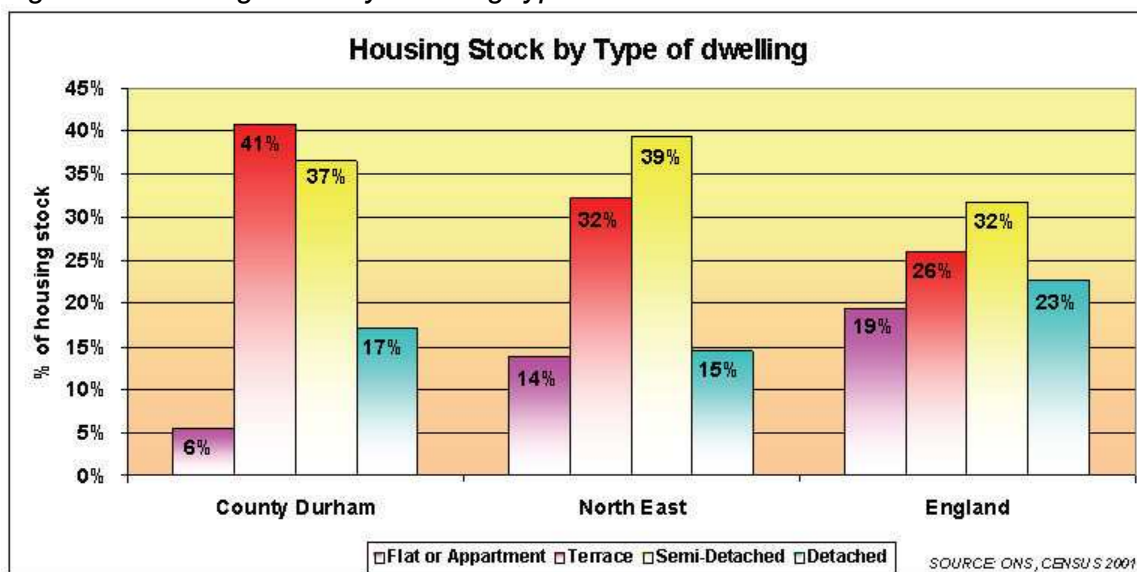
3.2 Issues and evidence

Some basic facts about private sector housing in County Durham

There are about 232,000 homes in County Durham. Of these around 80% or 185,000 are private sector housing, which means they are owned by an owner occupier, private landlord or private company. In short, private sector housing is all housing except that which is owned by the Council or another social landlord.

The various types of private sector housing in County Durham are set out in the table below, for comparison with the rest of England:

Figure 4: Housing stock by dwelling type



In terms of the age of housing across County Durham:

- around 15% of housing was built before 1900, ranging from 39% in Teesdale to 6% in Easington;
- around 24% was built between 1900 and 1939, ranging from 38% in Easington to 12% in Wear Valley;
- around 42% dates from between 1939 and 1982, ranging from 52% in Sedgefield to 30% in Teesdale;
- around 19% of stock has been built since 1983, ranging from 21% in Chester le Street to 17% in Teesdale.

We estimate that approximately 16% of private sector housing is owned by Private Landlords.

Stock Condition

The primary responsibility to maintain homes in the private sector rests with owner occupiers and private landlords. Work which Durham County Council carried out with the Building Research Establishment in 2009 using English House Condition Survey information showed a correlation between older housing and non-decency, often due to the poor thermal efficiency of older housing stock. Around 34% of

private housing appeared to be failing the decent homes standard and 16,000 households living in these properties classed as vulnerable. The total estimated cost of bringing all private sector homes up to standard is a staggering £492million, dropping to £147million to improve the homes of the most vulnerable.

Although government has dropped the decent homes standard in the private sector from national indicators, Durham County Council remains committed to addressing decency and will continue to monitor performance in this sector.

Figure 5: Modelled Private Sector Stock Condition

Delivery Area		Private Sector Dwellings	% Non-Decent	% Inadequate Thermal Comfort	% HHSRS* Cat. 1	% Disrepair	% Non-Modern
North & East Durham	Chester-le-Street	18216	29%	13%	17%	8%	1%
North & East Durham	Derwentside	28843	36%	15%	23%	11%	1%
North & East Durham	Easington	28348	29%	13%	18%	8%	1%
South Durham	Sedgefield	27440	30%	13%	18%	10%	1%
West Durham	Teesdale	9799	57%	22%	44%	21%	2%
West Durham	Wear Valley	21294	42%	17%	30%	15%	2%
Central Durham	Durham City	27831	32%	14%	22%	10%	1%
	County Durham	161862	34%	14%	23%	11%	1%
	England	18053000	36%	17%	24%	8%	2%

* Housing Health and Safety Rating System

Source: BRE Stock Condition Model March 2009

Durham County Council's Financial Assistance Policy sets out the approach to providing financial help to private sector vulnerable householders whose homes are in poor condition. The policy makes use of new flexibilities introduced by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, enabling local authorities to provide financial help in various new ways. The policy sees a shift from grants to loans and offers a suite of low cost loan products to people who cannot access finance through a commercial lender.

Regeneration and renewal

In County Durham many areas offer residents a wide range of housing choice, from good quality affordable social housing to smaller starter homes, two and three bedroom family houses, and larger executive homes. But in other areas the

housing mix still reflects the historic role of settlements and is less suited to the demands of modern householders, with more social rented and older terraced properties and fewer new properties on offer.

In Derwentside, East Durham, Sedgefield and Wear Valley almost 50% of the stock is terraced, and in some cases the quality is of a poor standard. A number of communities with older terraced housing also have poor environmental amenities with poor access to health services and leisure facilities.

Working within the framework of a Coalfield Settlement Study to address issues such as low demand and abandonment (leaving homes empty), the Private Sector Housing Service is taking forward housing renewal work inherited from the former District Councils in the following **eight** regeneration areas:

- Esh Winning Durham
- Wheatley Hill East Durham
- Dawdon Seaham East Durham
- Easington Colliery (Wembley) East Durham
- Dean Bank, Ferryhill South Durham
- West Chilton South Durham
- Ferryhill Station South Durham
- Craghead North Durham

Vulnerable households /Aids and Adaptations

The Council works in partnership with local Home Improvement Agencies to provide a range of support to householders to improve their homes and quality of life, either using their own funds or with the aid of grants and loans when appropriate.

Currently the Council's Occupational Therapists refer over 700 cases each year for adaptations, often supported by Disabled Facilities Grants to fund works carried out through the Home Improvement Agencies. The Home Improvement Agencies (HIA's) offer a project management service to vulnerable people who are able to pay or have the financial capacity yet require practical support from design stage to completion of works.

A review of the Home Improvement Agencies across the county has been completed resulting in the merger of 2 HIA's into one covering South and West Durham (in house service South Durham and Dales HIA). Service Level Agreements have been established with Three Rivers Care and Repair service to provide services in the North and East of county and a Central Improvement Team within the private sector housing service monitors the performance of all HIA provision across the county.

Better housing standards in the private rented sector

County Durham has a high level of private rented housing, with a significant proportion failing to meet the decent homes standard. Ineffective management by some private landlords, together with an unwillingness to invest and a lack of

engagement with local communities, has unsettled neighbourhoods by causing a high turnover of tenants and other residents.

Councils have discretion to use various measures to improve housing management in the private rented sector, including landlord accreditation projects or selective licensing schemes to cover all privately rented property in areas which suffer from low housing demand or significant anti social behaviour. There are now three selective licensing schemes in County Durham in Easington Colliery, Dean Bank and Chilton.

Durham County Council wants to support a thriving private rented sector, where housing conditions are improving, homes are well managed, fewer properties remain empty and it is easier for people to find a home that suits their needs

Initiatives with landlords represent a dual approach to the private rented sector, making a major contribution to the programme of area-based housing renewal, and also handling priority cases across County Durham involving the most vulnerable householders and the worst private landlords.

Ensuring that more private rented properties are advertised through the Choice Based Lettings system will also make a significant contribution to improving access to decent, affordable housing across the county.

In order to raise standards generally, the Private Sector Housing Service offers private landlords advice and information through a number of sources, including Durham County Council's website. It also runs networking and training events in a number of localities during the year. Where housing management problems arise, the service will work face-to-face with a landlord, offering support until a resolution is found.

The Private Sector Housing Service wants to show landlords that it makes business sense to maintain properties at a decent standard and follow sound, fair housing management practices. Therefore a joint approach with Neighbourhood Services has recently been developed in the form a joint working protocol. This approach involves the Private Sector Housing Service providing a high quality advice line to landlords and tenants across the county with more proactive intervention within the regeneration areas. Within these areas the Private Sector Housing Service will engage with landlords, in the first instance, to resolve any issues informally through education, information and negotiation. Only in cases where issues cannot be resolved by informal methods will Neighbourhood Services begin to consider enforcement proceedings.

Empty Homes

Analysis of data from council tax records suggests that over 4,000 private sector homes across county Durham have been empty for 6 months or more. There are many reasons why homes are empty and it will not be possible to bring all these homes back into use; indeed the Council recognises a proportion of empty homes are necessary and demonstrative of a healthy functioning open housing market. However, there is a need to reduce the level of empty homes in identified housing regeneration areas in order to increase the sustainability of those neighbourhoods.

In addition there is an under supply of housing across the county and the council needs to identify those properties that can be brought back into use relatively quickly. In this way the council is utilising its limited resources effectively to maximise the supply of housing. Finally, it is important to retain some resource to deal with empty homes outside identified housing regeneration areas where it can be evidenced that the empty home is directly causing neighbourhood blight.

The private sector housing team take a proactive, informal approach to influence and encourage owners to bring empty homes back into use including:

- Face to face meeting with owners to assess needs and develop a set of actions designed to bring the property back into use
- Advice on becoming a responsible private landlord where sale is not an option
- A free tenant referencing service for new and existing landlords in identified housing regeneration areas
- Access to loans to complete essential repairs through the council's financial assistance policy
- Free advice and support regarding disrepair and refurbishment needs including drafting schedules of work if required

The strategy delivery plan identifies future actions to increase the council's effectiveness at bringing empty homes back into use, notably the establishment of a range of private sector leasing schemes, and setting a policy and framework for the use of Empty Dwelling Management Order and Enforced sales.

Once informal approaches have been exhausted the team prioritise empty homes that will be brought back into use using an enforcement approach as detailed in the joint protocol with the council's Environment Protection Team".

Energy efficiency

Installing energy efficiency measures can result in a warmer home, lower fuel bills, reductions in fuel poverty and safeguarding health and well being. It also brings associated environmental benefits in terms of reductions in climate change emissions and assisting with the achievement of decent homes.

Up to 33% of the heat is lost through external walls and up to 20% can be lost through the roof. The faster heat escapes the higher your heating bills will be. There are numerous cost effective measures that can be installed in most traditional houses such as cavity wall and loft insulation, high efficiency gas boilers and highly controllable heating controls with central heating boilers accounting for around 60% of overall heating costs.

Durham County Council has developed some excellent projects and schemes over the years to help mitigate the effects of high fuel prices and energy inefficient homes and with vast changes to UK energy policy, a new strategy is very timely.

Accurate targeting of assistance to the people who most need support and assistance is crucial to tackling fuel poverty in the future. Local Authorities play a

pivotal role in delivering real change through the application of local knowledge and delivery of area based intervention schemes.

While inefficient heating systems can be expensive to run, other forms of heating can be even more costly for settlements in the off gas areas of West Durham where on peak electric heating, liquid petroleum gas (LPG) heaters and oil central heating is used.

Some households in County Durham do not have access to mains gas particularly in west durham therefore their choice of heating system is more limited. It is important, with the introduction of more stringent carbon reduction targets that Durham County Council considers the introduction of more renewable technologies for householders, but also ensuring that these systems do save money and are amenable to vulnerable people.

Section Four: Future Challenges

4.1 Future Delivery and Improvement of the Service

Delivering the Private Sector Housing Service - options for the future

A review of internal and external factors affecting the private sector housing service has taken place and the results were used to determine the best approach to intervening in private sector housing in County Durham. Details of this analysis are included at Appendix 1.

Seven different strategic delivery options were examined to see how they each fared against three essential tests.

- Is the option **suitable**? - Does it meet the needs of residents and landlords in a way that represents value for money? Does it fit with the Council's overall strategy?
- Is the option **acceptable**? - Does it meet the Council's housing and regeneration objectives in a way that is legal and ethical?
- Is the option **feasible**? Is it actually possible to put it into practice?

The chosen strategic option for the Private Sector Housing Service: a targeted service with a safety net. This offers an approach which combines suitability, feasibility and acceptability to optimum effect.

Details of the seven options considered are included at Appendix 2.

This chosen option offers a three-pronged approach:

- Concentrated work in identified housing regeneration areas with the worst housing conditions and highest levels of deprivation, or where regeneration schemes link to wider economic regeneration activity, this will be led by the area based housing regeneration team using a project management approach to draw in other elements of the Private Sector Housing Service and increasingly other social and economic regeneration agencies.
- A safety net service to deal with other priorities, for example, if an empty home outside a regeneration area is found to be significantly contributing to neighbourhood blight.
- Work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, disabled adaptations and energy efficiency.

An advice line will be available to report queries and complaints about any service area. These will be prioritised using a set of criteria to determine the level of

neighbourhood blight and identify quick wins in relation to empty homes in order to maximise supply of housing.

Under the chosen strategic option, the Private Sector Housing Service will seek to deliver the following range of activities in an effective and efficient manner, subject to available capital:

Priority 1: Area based regeneration in the eight identified housing regeneration areas

- Group repair and facelift schemes
- Selective acquisition and demolition
- Environmental improvements such as the provision of car parking facilities and green spaces
- Working in areas with concentrated pockets of poor quality private sector housing to improve the quality of accommodation and housing standards
- Bringing empty homes back into use and working with owners and private landlords
- Delivering an intensive approach to improving energy efficiency

Priority 2: Meeting the needs of vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Provision of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants
- Home improvements and repairs for vulnerable financially excluded home owners including accelerating the shift away from grants to loans
- Technical advice and assistance to households wanting to improve or adapt their properties who don't qualify for financial assistance through a project management approach
- Assistance for vulnerable owner occupiers across the whole of County Durham, liaising with Occupational Therapists and Home Improvement Agencies to ensure that a consistent service is delivered to vulnerable people wherever they live
- An equitable adaptations service for all social housing tenants across County Durham is in place
- Ten owner occupiers (in each of the housing identified regeneration areas) to take up a loan product via the Council's Financial Assistance Policy

Priority 3: Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Working in partnership with private landlords to improve their properties and assist some landlords to improve their housing management practices
- To promote ,strengthen and effectively manage Selective Licensing in current licensed areas, and evaluate the schemes' effectiveness
- When formal action has failed, take robust enforcement action on the poorest private rented stock and worst housing management practices
- Advertise properties owned by private landlords into the County Durham's Choice Based Lettings Scheme

Priority 4: Bringing empty homes back into use with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below

- Quick wins to increase the supply of affordable homes outside of regeneration areas
- Make use of all available tools to bring empty properties back into use, for example Empty Dwelling Management Orders
- Introduction of leasing arrangements for bringing empty properties back into use through use of a managing agent

Priority 5: Making properties more energy efficient

- improving the energy efficiency of properties occupied by the most vulnerable households living across the County
- Improve the energy efficiency of those properties in the identified regeneration areas
- Increase average SAP ratings to above 65 to those properties in the eight housing regeneration areas

4.2 Applying a new approach to the private sector housing service

The new approach to the private sector housing service will involve the following activities:

4.2.1 Approach to housing regeneration

The approach to private sector renewal is to be focussed on area based regeneration. Area based housing regeneration will be based on a project management approach and is exemplified as follows.

Holistic renewal

By a project-based approach in the most deprived areas linking to any economic and development schemes with the worst housing conditions to draw in contributions from each strand of the Private Sector Housing Service and other stakeholders/partners.

Project management approach

There is a named project manager designated to each of the eight interventions drawn from the Housing Renewal and Improvement Housing regeneration team.

There is a project plan in place for each of the interventions.

There is a steering group for each area.

Programmed approach

A coordinated capital programme geographically targeted and linked to wider regeneration strategies.

Measuring impact

A set of outputs and outcome measure to ensure effective performance management will be identified

4.2.2 Approach to improving and adapting properties for vulnerable households

The approach to improving and adapting properties will distinguish between regeneration and non regeneration areas as follows:

Within housing regeneration areas

Heavily promote the advice and project management service

Produce an intensive marketing campaign to promote the Council's Financial Assistance Policy /loan products

Outside regeneration areas

Publicise the advice and project management service

Provide adaptations via Disabled Facilities Grants for those vulnerable people referred by Social Services for assistance

Publicise the financial assistance policy/ loan products

4.2.3 Approach to improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector

The approach to improving standards in the private rented sector will distinguish between regeneration and non regeneration areas as follows:

Within regeneration areas

Signpost to appropriate support mechanisms including 'Enhanced tenancy support schemes' for vulnerable tenants

Close links established with landlords with high levels of stock

Maintain a selective licensing framework in 3 areas (Wembley, Dean Bank and Chilton West) including selective licensing enforcement activity

Housing enforcement activity through housing enforcement protocol

The delivery of briefing & training sessions.

Outside regeneration areas

A high quality advice line, with excellent information offering a range of advice on housing and tenancy issues and assessing incoming calls to prioritise calls for intervention and tracking outcomes.

4.2.4 Approach to bringing empty homes back into use

The approach to bringing empty properties back into use will distinguish between regeneration and non regeneration areas as follows:

Within regeneration areas

Will play a key role in the project management structure to ensure all empty properties are appraised and appropriate action taken.

Outside of regeneration areas

Respond where there is significant blight or anti social behaviour or danger to the public.

Quick wins in order to increase the supply of affordable homes

4.2.5 Approach to making properties more energy efficient

The approach to making properties more energy efficient will distinguish between regeneration and non regeneration areas as follows:

Within regeneration areas

Ensure that all individual properties are recorded on an energy database

Produce an intensive marketing campaign to promote energy efficiency initiatives in regeneration areas

Engage stakeholders including social landlords in delivering comprehensive energy efficiency measures.

Progress innovative investment initiatives

Outside regeneration areas

Provide general publicity and advice on energy efficiency initiatives where demand and needs are identified.

Section Five: The Delivery Plan					
Priority 1: Area Based Regeneration Includes bringing empty homes back into use, working with private landlords to improve standards and practices, intensive approach to energy efficiency and helping vulnerable households.					
ACTION	TIME SCALE	RESOURCES	LEAD	OUT- PUTS	OUTCOME
1. Carry out a review of regeneration vehicles with a view to establishing a vehicle that levers in private sector funding for housing renewal in areas of need including the utilisation of DVRC as a private sector housing regeneration vehicle where appropriate	February 2013	Existing staff resources	KH	Review complete and report produced including clear recommendations	Increased private sector investment for housing regeneration activity
2. Deliver housing regeneration project in the Craghead area of Stanley	August 2013	Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital Capital= £3.68m	ACJ	Improvements carried out to 137 properties Complete group repair to 89 properties Complete environmental improvements	Reduction in fuel poverty Improved stock condition Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon

				<p>Provision of free solar P.V. panels through Scottish and Southern Electricity.</p> <p>Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below</p> <p>Increase average SAP ratings to above 65 (to a defined number of properties)</p> <p>100% of stock free from Cat 1 hazards. Community development trust,</p> <p>10 owner occupiers to take up a FAP loan product (over the lifetime of the strategy and subject to funding)</p> <p>Succession Strategy</p>	<p>emissions Neighbourhood sustainability</p>
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				& Evaluation	
				Business Plan developed by Craghead Development Trust to bring empty homes back into use	
3. Deliver housing regeneration project in the Wembley area of Easington Colliery Integrate with economic development to consider retail, schools and wider regeneration of Easington Colliery.	August 2014	Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital £823,500 (phase 1, now complete) £850,000 phase 2 due to commence September 2011 Phase 3 2012/13 subject to funding	JW	Group repair of 195 properties split over 3 phases (subject to funding) license 100% of licensable properties Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below Increase average SAP ratings to above 65 (to a defined number of properties) 100% of stock free from Cat 1 hazards	Reduction fuel poverty Improved stock condition Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon emissions Neighbourhood sustainability

				<p>(only for the properties in the designated licensed area)</p> <p>10 owner occupiers to take up a FAP loan product(over the lifetime of the strategy and subject to funding)</p> <p>Succession strategy & Evaluation</p>	
4. Deliver housing regeneration project in the Dawdon area of Seaham and to continue to endeavour to secure capital for acquisition and demolition.	August 2012	Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital £1.228m	JW	Succession strategy and evaluation of the project	Reduction fuel poverty Improved stock condition Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon emissions Neighbourhood

					sustainability
5. Deliver Ferryhill Station housing regeneration project	March 2013	Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital £340k	DL	<p>Deanbank, Ferryhill Environmental improvements completed in June 2011 and the remainder in August 2011</p> <p>Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below</p> <p>Increase SAP ratings to above 65 (to a defined number of properties)</p> <p>100% of stock free from Cat 1 hazards</p> <p>license 100% of licensable properties</p> <p>10 owner occupiers to take up a FAP loan product (over the lifetime of the</p>	<p>Reduction fuel poverty</p> <p>Improved stock condition</p> <p>Better health outcomes</p> <p>Reduction in carbon emissions</p> <p>Neighbourhood sustainability</p>

				strategy and subject to funding) Succession strategy & Evaluation	
6. Deliver housing regeneration project in the Dean Bank area of Sedgfield	August 2013	Existing staffing resource FAP budget – as required Capital SHIP/GF = £330,000	DL	Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below Increase SAP ratings to above 65 (to a defined number of properties) 100% of stock free from Cat 1 hazards(only for the properties in the designated licensed area) 10 owner occupiers	Reduction fuel poverty Improved stock condition Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon emissions Neighbourhood sustainability

				<p>to take up a FAP loan product(over the lifetime of the strategy and subject to funding)</p> <p>Succession strategy</p> <p>Evaluation</p>	
7. Deliver housing regeneration project to the West Chilton area of Sedgfield	August 2013	Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital /GF = £748k	DL	<p>Acquisition and demolition of 57 residential properties and 10 garages.</p> <p>Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below</p> <p>Increase SAP ratings to above 65 (to a defined number of properties)</p> <p>100% of stock free from Cat 1 hazards(only for the</p>	<p>Reduction fuel poverty</p> <p>Improved stock condition</p> <p>Better health outcomes</p> <p>Reduction in carbon emissions</p> <p>Neighbourhood sustainability</p>

				<p>properties in the designated licensed area)</p> <p>10 owner occupiers to take up a FAP loan product(over the lifetime of the strategy and subject to funding)</p>	
8. Deliver housing regeneration project in the Esh Winning area of Durham	August 2013	Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital HRA = £570k	DH	<p>78 demolitions</p> <p>9 two bed bungalows for rent</p> <p>20 open market housing for sale</p> <p>Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below</p>	<p>Reduction fuel poverty</p> <p>Improved stock condition</p> <p>Better health outcomes</p> <p>Reduction in carbon emissions</p> <p>Neighbourhood sustainability</p>

<p>9. Deliver housing regeneration project to the Wheatley Hill area in East Durham</p>	<p>August 2013</p>	<p>Existing staffing resource FAP budget Capital HRA = £700k</p>	<p>JW</p>	<p>Demolish 50 properties</p> <p>In Cain, Henderson and Ryan Terrace</p> <p>Land assembly for future housing development</p> <p>Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below</p> <p>Increase average SAP ratings to above 65 (to a defined number of properties)</p> <p>100% of PRS properties free from cat 1 hazards</p> <p>10 owners occupiers to take up a FAP loan product (over the lifetime of the strategy and subject to funding)</p>	<p>Reduction fuel poverty Improved stock condition Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon emissions Neighbourhood sustainability</p>
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10. Continue to engage effectively with HCA to lever in funding to improve private sector stock condition	On-going	Existing staffing resource	KH	Maximising resources for housing regeneration	Accelerated activity in housing regeneration Reduction fuel poverty Improved stock condition Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon emissions Neighbourhood sustainability
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11. Develop an approach for the identification of future areas of opportunity or at risk of market failure.	February 2012	Existing staffing resource	KH	Process in place	Effective approach to regeneration
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Priority 2: Improving and adapting properties for vulnerable people					
ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESOURCES	LEAD	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME
1. Evaluate the HIA implementation plan.	October 2011	Existing staff resources	SJ	An equitable service across the county.	Better HIA service
2. Carry out a strategic review of the County's HIA service jointly with Adults Health and Wellbeing.	Starting in April 2012	Existing staff resources	SJ/DE	Service reviewed and recommendations made.	Value for money service
3. Maximise the take up of loan products across the County	On-going from June 2010	Existing staffing resources	NP	More people taking up loans to improve their properties 90 properties per year made decent	Improvement in County Durham stock condition More balanced housing markets Individuals lives improved
4. Engage with RSL's in County Durham to agree levels of funding for adaptations within their stock	November 2010 - April 2012	Existing staffing resources	SJ	RSL's contributing to the funding of adaptations	More efficient and effective service with more of County Durham housing stock appropriately adapted
5. Provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	2011-2015	Existing staffing resources	SJ	700 properties adapted per year	Enable residents to live more independently

Priority 3: Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector (In addition to the intensive approach in housing regeneration areas as set out in Priority 1)					
ACTION	TIME SCALE	RESOURCES	LEAD	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME
1. Complete option appraisal of the introduction of a charging system for tenant referencing	April 2012	Existing staff resources	Delivery Team	Option appraisal complete	Increased revenue to the Council
2. Complete a comprehensive evaluation of selective licensing & report outcomes with recommendation regarding future use of licensing	September 2012	Existing staffing resources	KH	Clear understanding of benefits (or otherwise) of licensing to inform future decision making	Effective use of resources
3. Complete a comprehensive evaluation of the joint protocol for housing enforcement	February 2013	Existing staffing resources		Clear understanding of effectiveness of protocol & how improvements can be implemented	Effective and efficient service delivery to maximise Council's impact on improving housing standards
4. Private landlords to advertise properties as part of County Durham's Choice based lettings scheme	December 2012	Existing staffing resources		Good quality private rented sector accommodation advertised in same way as social rented accommodation Private landlords incentivised to improve accommodation in order to be included in CBL	Maximising supply of affordable housing Improving housing standards

Priority 4: Bringing Empty Properties back into Use (In addition to the intensive approach in housing regeneration areas as set out in Priority 1)					
ACTION	TIME SCALE	RESOURCES	LEAD	OUT- PUTS	OUT COMES
1. Assess the need and make recommendations in relation to additional licensing of HMOs	April 2012	Existing staffing resource	Neil Laws	Report produced and a decision reached regarding additional licensing of HMOs	Better standards in HMOs
2. Introduce leasing arrangements for bringing empty properties back into use through the use of a managing agent.	August 2012	Existing staffing resources	Delivery Team	Private sector leasing schemes established	Better housing standards. Maximising supply of affordable housing

Priority 5: Energy efficiency					
ACTION	TIME SCALE	RESOURCES	LEAD	OUT- PUTS	OUTCOMES
1. Produce an energy audit for each property with energy saving options identified in a report	April 2012	Existing staffing resource	Cliff Duff	All properties in	Countywide energy

				regeneration areas are SAP rated Countywide energy database extended	database to allow strategic targeting and monitoring
2. Work with communities and identify Energy Champions training to include one resident from each regeneration area.	April 2012	Existing staffing resource	Cliff Duff	Numbers of local residents engaged in training programme	Increased community engagement to maximise uptake of energy conservation schemes
3. Explore opportunities for enhanced energy efficiency grant schemes within regeneration areas and research all external funding opportunities within CERT, CESP and Warm Front	September 2011	Existing staffing resource	Cliff Duff	Properties made energy efficient using external funding	Improved energy efficiency and stock condition Reduction fuel poverty Better health outcomes Reduction in carbon emissions
4. Establish a toolkit for energy efficiency officer working in	June 2011	Existing staff	Cliff Duff	Toolkit	Improved

regeneration areas and targeting vulnerable groups		resource		produced and being applied	energy efficiency of properties in regeneration areas
5. Work in regeneration/licensed areas to target vulnerable groups and achieve energy efficiency targets	April 2011 and following 2 years of delivery plan	Existing staffing resource Capital: FAP budget	Cliff Duff	Properties made energy efficient in regeneration areas or occupied by vulnerable households	Private sector properties made energy efficient with lower fuel bills for residents Reduction in carbon emissions
6. Undertake a National Green Deal (Energy Company Obligation) Pilot Scheme based in regeneration areas	Dec 2012	Existing staffing resource	Cliff Duff	Clear understanding of benefits and external funding opportunities offered by the Green Deal to improve energy efficiency in private sector properties	Better understanding of how to access Green Deal funding

Cross cutting issues across the 5 priorities					
ACTION	TIME SCALE	RESOURCES	LEAD	OUT- PUTS	OUTCOMES
1. Review and update the financial assistance policy	Annual	Existing staffing resources	KH	Revised policy in place	Improved and adapted stock.
2.Enhance the existing data base for information on condition of private sector housing stock	October 2011 and 6 monthly thereafter	Existing	KR	Detailed information on the private sector housing market	Ability to determine areas of housing need and opportunity

Cabinet**22 September 2011****Barnard Castle Vision Governance**

Report of Ian Thompson, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development
Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides an update on the activities of Barnard Castle Vision, includes details of achievements to date, reports on the recent independent evaluation, outlines current governance arrangements and makes recommendations for future governance arrangements.

Background

2. Barnard Castle Vision (BCV) was established in 2006 to lead a 20-year programme of economic regeneration activities within the town of Barnard Castle. Initially membership of the partnership included Teesdale District Council as accountable body for funding, Teesdale LSP, One NorthEast, Durham County Council, County Durham Economic Partnership, a voluntary and community sector representative, Teesdale Marketing Limited and the Enterprise Agency.
3. A broad programme of activity strands developing the actual and potential resources of the town linked to physical areas within it was agreed, underpinned by core principles of benefit to residents, young people, inward investors, and visitors, and a commitment to 'transformational change'.
4. The delivery team is managed by an officer in Economic Regeneration and includes a small number of specialist staff on either a secondment or contract basis.
5. The BCV has been responsible for 15 projects, which have spent £1,962,000 of One North East funding within Barnard Castle. This sum includes initial research, survey, delivery team and development costs. Achievements are as follows:
 - Building the Digital Dale broadband infrastructure.
 - Preparing comprehensive designs for the forthcoming redevelopment of the Witham Hall.
 - Creating and managing NeST gallery, cafe and digital studio on the site of a former car salesroom on Newgate.

- Setting up and supporting the Barney Guild of retailers to make a stronger, more competitive retail offer in the town centre; providing support and resources for festivals and shopping events, Christmas celebrations, and improvement to festive lighting.
- Investing in shop improvement grants for retailers; including ongoing business viability support and consultancy.
- Seeking, identifying and working with potential inward investors, leading to a significant reduction in vacancy rates within the town. Publishing and disseminating materials for investors.
- Raising the profile of the town through professional and other networks, nationally and internationally, including press features in the Washington Post, a visit by an OECD reporting team, profile at the EU conference on citizenship in Malmo, national engagement with NESTA, and a wide variety of other connections.
- Improving parking access with a new entrance to and upgrading of the Hole in the Wall car park.
- Making improvements to the riverside footpaths through lighting and clearing of pathways; involving local volunteers through the 1000 Voices project.
- A study into the viability of installing hydroelectric plant near the town.
- Providing and installing new energy efficient lighting to illuminate the Castle in evening hours.
- Commissioning studies into improving the protection of and access to the Market Cross, and managing the on-going provision of assessment and repair.
- Forging international partnerships with European towns to create opportunities for joint working and submission of EU funding bids.
- Engaging with and bringing to the region one of the biggest providers of apprenticeships in France, trialling three craft placements in Barnard Castle, and ensuring that their UK office is now based in the North East. Participation on the UK steering group of new developments to create European apprenticeships across the region and elsewhere, creating placements for Teesdale.
- Connecting with large scale investment projects at Digital City in Middlesbrough to create new opportunities for businesses in Teesdale; and becoming their first rural satellite, gaining funding and other resource for the town.
- Completing detailed comprehensive appraisals of 10 potential development sites to aid discussions with developers.
- Providing a masterplan for Shaw Bank and detailed studies to bring improvements to the streetscape, transport and access for the town.

- Commissioning and developing a comprehensive landscape study working with one of the UK's leading landscape architects, resulting in a programme of projects to upgrade and maintain the natural assets of the town.
 - Developing and initiating the implementation of a coherent and aesthetically appropriate way-finding strategy.
 - Investing in tourism and local food projects to help increase visitor numbers and provide vital help for local retail and service providers such as B&Bs and hotels; including time-limited projects to assist farmers and food producers during difficult periods.
 - Resourcing and managing the Witham cinema project, including holding a Film and Animation festival with local creative businesses.
 - Running a programme of leadership events bringing together leadership expertise from local, regional, national and international platforms to benefit the town.
 - Working with young people and children to identify their ideas for the town and to support a number of projects including provision of interactive studio facilities to Teesdale school, and the creation of a 'young vision' group.
 - The 1000 Voices engagement project, which to date has gathered approximately 200 local people to contribute to and find out about the Vision's work on a regular basis.
6. In addition to this the Barnard Castle Vision successfully applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £87,000 of landscape development funding. This initial funding enabled the Vision to work towards securing a full HLF grant of £1.9m to enhance the landscape of Barnard Castle and the surrounding area, incorporating many of the projects arising from the Vision's existing landscape strategy.
7. Over the past two years the political and funding landscape has changed considerably and it is therefore an appropriate time to consider the way forward. A recently produced evaluation carried out by Newcastle University (CURDS) presents an appropriate opportunity to consider the role of BCV, revisit the Board structure and refresh the governance model.
8. The current governance model has developed from a structure proposed by EKOS Consulting in 2007 to oversee the development and implementation of a 20 year programme of regeneration activities in Barnard Castle, and has been amended twice in recent years to reflect the needs of the work programme.
9. A key consideration from the outset has been to ensure effective delivery. This is important not only in terms of community engagement and delivery of the overall Vision, but also in delivering key regeneration projects and interventions which arise from this. The priority was and remains to have a regeneration vision for Barnard Castle which is not only ambitious and maximises the economic contribution of the Town, but which also reflects the views of local people, is realistic and deliverable.

- 10 A report produced by Ekos Consulting in 2007 (undertaken prior to the development of the BCV Partnership Board) set out potential delivery model options and made clear recommendations on the governance arrangements for both the development and delivery phases of a regeneration partnership in Barnard Castle. A strong focus was placed on ensuring that the delivery mechanism was sustainable, sought to achieve maximum value for money, avoided duplication and ensured that as much resource as possible was directed towards project implementation.
- 11 Following this, appropriate arrangements to oversee the development of the BCV Partnership structure were agreed. These involved:
- Clear and transparent principles of governance and terms of reference.
 - A focused management board supported by partnership structures and accountable body.
 - An independent chair; and a dedicated delivery team.
 - An accountable body taking responsibility for the legal and financial management of the BCV – particularly with reference to the management of public sector funding resources. This provides a clear audit trail for funds defrayed, oversees contract management and ensures that cashflow is adequately sustained. This was previously Teesdale District Council and became Durham County Council at Local Government Re-organisation.
 - Strong engagement between the public, private and voluntary sectors, a factor which has been key to the success of the BCV.
- 12 The Community Engagement Strategy for the Vision was developed to ensure local residents and businesses effectively engaged and influenced the activities of BCV. Mediums used include Radio Teesdale, the local press and the internet, which are important in communicating and co-ordinating the latest information about new developments as well as gaining input and views. All press releases are signed off by the DCC press office.
- 13 The governance model adopted is set out below and is structured around a small, focused, high calibre Board, with an independent Chair. The involvement of wider communities of interest has been formalised through the establishment of project steering groups and through liaison via the 1000 Voices project. The project steering groups bring additional expertise through Durham County Council officers, individuals, businesses and local and regional organisations. This mechanism ensures stakeholders not represented on the Board have the opportunity to feed into the development and delivery of the Vision. Diagram 1 below sets this out:

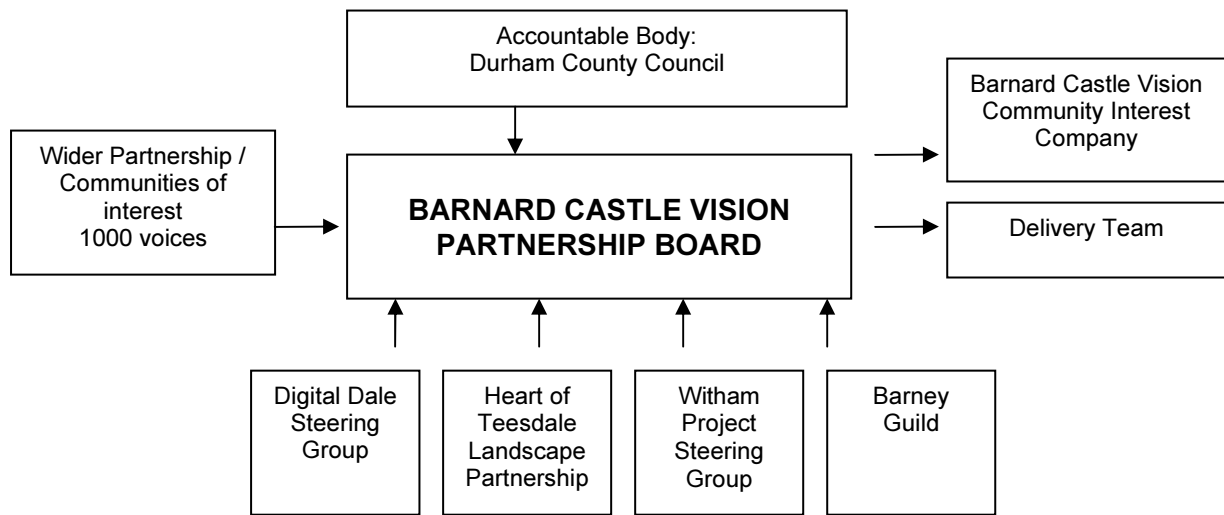


Diagram1.

14 The membership of the Board brings specific project-related skills and experience of relevance to the work programme:

- Durham County Council (as accountable body)
- Business Sector
- Rural Specialist
- Education Sector
- Voluntary Sector
- Independent Chair

15 In terms of DCC there are 2 representatives: the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, and the Head of Economic Development.

16 Appendix 2 sets out the Principles of Governance and Terms of Reference.

17 Additionally, a community interest company (CIC) has been created, primarily to provide the opportunity to gather resources and activities which could not be committed to statutory authorities and to run commercial activities to generate sustainable income for further projects of benefit to the town.

18 Currently the biggest of these is NeST, which operates as a creative space for digital and creative businesses (eg filmmakers, photographers, architects, graphic designers and visual artists), combined with gallery and café spaces. For instance, the NeST creative studios and gallery buildings are leased by the CIC. Community Interest Companies are limited companies, with special additional features, created for the use of people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage. This is achieved by a “community interest test” and “asset lock”, which ensure that the CIC is established for community purposes and the assets and profits are dedicated to these purposes. Registration of a

company as a CIC has to be approved by the Regulator who also has a continuing monitoring and enforcement role.

Current Position

- 19 During the past four years BCV has implemented regeneration projects in several key areas within Barnard Castle, such as site and retail development, master planning and landscape enhancement and development of the digital and creative sectors. It has intervened in the public realm, has established links with similar organisations in other parts of Europe, and has carried out several projects that have had a considerable impact on the town, set out in the schedule at Appendix 3.
- 20 Over the last three financial years 2008-2011 through £1,962,000 single programme funding, the following outputs have been delivered: assistance to over 60 businesses, created 20 jobs and nine new businesses as well as attracting 2 retail inward investors.
- Digital Dale broadband project (£80,000) from single programme - remainder of funding through RDPE and private sector
 - Creating a gallery and workspace for digital and creative businesses at Newgate Studios (NeST) (£129,500)
 - Connecting with large scale investment projects at Digital City in Middlesbrough to create new opportunities for businesses in Teesdale (£50,000)
 - Supporting local businesses through the Barney Guild and Shop Front Grants (£191,459)
 - Designs, surveys and ground works to redevelop the Witham Hall to enable it to become a state of the art cultural and business facility (£237,812)
 - Creating apprenticeships and training opportunities (£18,000)
 - Surveying and repairing the Market Cross (£20,000)
 - Improving parking and toilet facilities, signage and lighting (£129,889)
 - Renewing riverside walks (£32,972) - includes funding from North Pennines Leader grant
 - Plans for landscaping Scar Top and bringing landscape characteristics back into focus, by renewing rural and town features and opening up views (£62,969)
 - Championing local food production and take up by local businesses (£39,000)
 - Completing detailed appraisals of potential development sites to aid discussions with developers (£75,000)
 - Providing a masterplan for Shaw Bank and investment in The Youth Hub (£95,000)
 - Investing in tourism and local food projects to help increase visitor numbers and provide vital help for local retail and service providers such as B&Bs and hotels (£102,000)
 - Holding a Film and Animation festival with local creative businesses (£300.00).
- 21 BCV has won 7 Action for Market Towns Awards over the three years 2008, 2010 and 2011 for projects in the categories of Partnership and Strategic Working; Social and Community and Vibrant Retail Heart and also a Regional Best Use of Digital Technology Award in 2008.

- 22 An evaluation report in 2010 by Newcastle University's Centre for Urban & Regional Development Studies (CURDS) states that the strategy employed by BCV is in line with the directives established by the OECD and the EU for place based and integrated regeneration approaches, specifically in relation to rural development. The report states that around £8m worth of investment has been attracted to the town and that progress has been achieved as a result of attracting a rich blend of skills and experience both within the implementation team and at the Board level.
- 23 Project management is undertaken by a small team comprising an experienced DCC regeneration officer, part time specialists and a secondment arrangement from a partnering organisation. The evaluation report states that those recruited to the team have between them an impressive track record in securing funds and delivering a wide array of projects.
- 24 The Newcastle University CURD's evaluation report recommends that if BCV is to maximise its funding potential and its regenerative impact on Barnard Castle the structure of the Board may need to change in order to further integrate local priorities with county level aspirations and strategies. An ongoing programme of partner engagement should also be sustained as the BCV moves through subsequent phases of delivery.
- 25 The original programme objectives recognised the inter-connected nature of intervention required to ensure the continued adaptation and prosperity of the town and the requirement for a flexible response as needs have been addressed and priorities have emerged. Between 2007 and 2011 the pattern of assistance from the BCV Partnership shifted strongly away from an initial emphasis on research, planning and project preparation, towards delivery and completion of physical projects. The existing governance model may need to change/adapt as a result of the need to deliver current projects, but in future, there will be new projects to be researched and developed, and that it should not be assumed that major funding for new physical projects will be impossible, as is currently evidenced by the likelihood that the HoT programme will have a budget of almost £3m. BCV is only one quarter of the way through the original time-frame of 20 years.
- 26 In the future, with the absence of ONE funding and limited spend available to the County Council, BCV will need to demonstrate a clear purpose which can be delivered through success in attracting external funds. A focus on delivering the Witham, landscape and other projects and co-ordination and promotion will be important, alongside the generation of new programmes and projects and the pursuit of the original thematic strands identified by the partnership.
- 27 In addition, it is now timely that the governance arrangements for the Heart of Teesdale HLF programme are appropriately reviewed as this moves into the delivery phase.
- 28 **Governance Options:**
An analysis of the individual and collective capacity of partners and stakeholders, as well as potential mechanisms and delivery vehicles brings forward the following options:

Option 1: Barnard Castle Vision Partnership Board (status quo)

Option 2: No governing structure (BCV ceases)

Option 3: Barnard Castle Vision Partnership Board (amended)

29

Considerations:

Option 1 – Barnard Castle Vision Partnership Board (status quo)

This option would see a continuation of current arrangements, which whilst having proven to perform well to date, would not take on board the CURDS recommendations about strengthening governance arrangements and strategic political involvement.

Option 2 – No governing structure (BCV ceases)

This option would involve the closure of BCV and instead, activities would be undertaken by regeneration officers employed by and reporting to DCC. The County Council would continue to oversee the development and delivery of regeneration activity, but without a formalised multi agency partnership approach.

This approach fits with DCC's strategy to deliver regeneration, but ignores the benefits of partnership working, which is of utmost importance in delivering regeneration activity. This would also result in the loss of high calibre Board involvement.

Option 3 - Barnard Castle Vision Partnership Board (amended)

This option includes additional Board representation, rather than changing an existing structure and capacity. A central decision making Board continues, strengthened by representation from the Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder (or as a substitute, the Assistant Portfolio Holder who is also Rural Champion). Distinct advantages in achieving continuity between the Vision development and longer term delivery stages. Led by a respected Chair – preferably independent from the other organisations represented on the Board. Supported by a delivery team which is well connected to partner organisations (potential secondment arrangements). Existing structure has worked well, with success demonstrated and this amendment could further strengthen that position.

This would capitalise on existing project success and support the continuation of a partnership approach, involving partners in the co-ordination and implementation of projects. The recommended addition to membership of the Board would help further integrate local priorities with county level aspirations and strategies. It is also recommended that BCV provides regular updates on activity to the AAP.

Conclusion

30

This paper recommends the implementation of Option 3. Expansion of membership of the Board by one post to accommodate the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development (or the Assistant Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development as a substitute) which

would clarify the relationship between BCV and Durham County Council. The RED Assistant Portfolio Holder is also rural champion and it is therefore apt in relation to the market town of Barnard Castle and the rural hinterland that this relationship is established. These additional board members would strengthen accountability and links with DCC.

31 The delivery team should continue to be resourced by the direct recruitment of a small core team, with technical support bought in on an as-needed basis to build the capacity of the existing team's local knowledge and track record of delivery. This would allow for maximum flexibility and would require BCV to continue to demonstrate success in attracting external funding to resource such activity.

32 The terms of reference of the Board of BCV are included in appendix 2. It is recommended that these be reviewed once the new Board arrangements are in place to ensure their continued fit for purpose. This should be done in consultation with the RED Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the local members.

33 **Recommendations**

33.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Endorse the Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder joining the Board of Barnard Castle Vision with the Assistant Portfolio Holder acting as substitute.
- Seek a review of the BCV Board Terms of Reference by the Board once new arrangements are in place.

34 **Reason for Recommendations:**

To ensure the recommendations of the independent evaluation are appropriately addressed and to strengthen political engagement.

Background papers

Ekos Consultancy, BDP & Donaldsons report / Barnard Castle Vision 2007
Newcastle University CURDS evaluation report 2010

Contact: Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development
Tel: 0191 383 3444

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – 1

Capital allocation for 2010/11 and 2011/12 is £3,608,000 (includes £2m for Witham Hall redevelopment).

Staffing – 2

Existing staffing arrangements.

Risk – 3

Reinforces good governance and probity.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – 4

- Young People – greater opportunities within the area so that they are encouraged to stay here to live, work and bring up their families
- Older People – improved access for people with limited mobility, improved cultural and leisure provision so that they may enjoy an active and enjoyable life
- The wider community – through investment to improve the attractiveness of the area and sustainable living
- Those volunteers who will be encouraged to invest their time to develop the area as a good place to live

Accommodation – 5

The delivery team would require accommodation within Barnard Castle.

Crime and Disorder – 6

None.

Human Rights – 7

None.

Consultation – 8

Statutory and stakeholder consultation has been carried out during Newcastle University CURDS evaluation.

Procurement – 9

All procurement and financial management is carried out within DCC procurement and contract procedure rules.

Disability Issues – 10

Complies with DCC general equality duty.

Legal Implications – 11

Legal support is provided by DCC as and when required.

PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE

- 1 To establish a Memorandum of Understanding between BCV Partnership and DCC as accountable body
- 2 Use Existing Structures – wherever possible, the delivery of regeneration should seek to use and interface with existing partnership structures. In some circumstances it may be necessary to supplement or build capacity within existing organisations to enable them to perform a delivery role. Unnecessary duplication or the creation of bespoke delivery bodies should be avoided where possible.
- 3 Accountable Body – DCC will take responsibility for the legal and financial management of the BCV – particularly with reference to the management of public sector funding resources. This body will provide a clear audit trail for funds defrayed, oversee contract management and ensure that cashflow is adequately sustained.
- 4 Clear, transparent Terms of Reference must be put in place for all delivery structures and partnerships involved in the delivery of the Barnard Castle Vision. The role and remit of each component should be clearly defined so that all partners have a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and the expectations which are placed upon them. These Terms of Reference must be widely available and clear.
- 5 Appropriate measures to deal with actual or perceived conflicts of interest must be put into place to ensure probity.
- 6 A focused Management Board supported by partnership structures – the effectiveness of the BCV will be attributed to the establishment of a small, focused, high calibre Board which oversees the activity of the partnership. Wider engagement networks and consultation arrangements are best used as vehicles to achieve large scale partnership working and community ownership. The exact scale and range of partners who are represented upon the Board will be dependent upon the final range of projects which it is charged with delivery, and the geographic spread of its projects.
- 7 The Barnard Castle Vision will be led by an independent chair, with a background in the private, public or voluntary sectors. Procedures covering conflicts of interest will be required. Although the active involvement of public sector partners is critical, a degree of independence from these organisations is felt to be beneficial in fostering effective partnership working. This would suggest that an independent person not already involved in the life of the district as a councillor, director or having another affiliation to public or partnership organisations would be most appropriate. However, the limited capacity in Teesdale has to be recognised, and individuals who are already involved in such activities may be considered if there are difficulties in recruiting an independent chair. Appropriate checks and balances would be required in such as case, with a clear understanding of who the chair represents. To help overcome this, consideration should be given to appointing a chair using Nolan principles, with an open advertisement and selection on merit, together with clear guidance on how to deal with potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 8 It is considered critical that a dedicated staff resource is put in place to assist in the timely implementation of the Vision and programme of delivery, and to develop, commission and project manage individual projects. The size, character and skill requirement of this team will be dependent upon the scale and nature of the ongoing Vision. There may be advantages in staff from

partner organisations being seconded into a delivery team, either on a full time or part time basis – specifically overcoming employment issues associated with fixed term contracts. It may also provide benefits in fostering key linkages between the Delivery Team and key partner organisations. It is felt to be critical, however, that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that staff time (be in full or part time) is effectively managed and directed towards the delivery of the Vision. This may include a requirement for staff to work out of a central project office.

Barnard Castle Vision Board Terms of Reference

- Each member will commit to the initiative and adhere to the agreed Terms of Reference. Terms of Reference can be amended by the group, however these must be endorsed by Durham County Council.
- No actions will be undertaken by members that can threaten or compromise the success of the Barnard Castle Vision regeneration programme.
- The role and contribution of every member of the Board will be valued.
- All members will act in an open and honest manner, giving constructive comment and opinion to improve and enhance the programme.
- Members are requested to advise when information is of a confidential nature. All members will respect and adhere to the confidential nature of any items relating to the Barnard Castle Vision, its activities and users.
- Members of the Interim Board must declare all interests (be they pecuniary or non-pecuniary) relating to a matter under consideration. Members of the Barnard Castle Vision Board must also declare a conflict if he or she has some other, non-pecuniary type of interest that places the person in a conflict position (e.g. bias). This could include any benefit obtained by relations, friends, or associates of a member who is in conflict.
- Individual Barnard Castle Vision members will be responsible for reporting back to the organisation they represent.
- Additional membership can be determined by the Board.
- The Barnard Castle Vision Board will be considered quorate if 50% of members are in attendance.
- There will be no nominated substitutes for non-attending members.
- It is the responsibility of the Board member to give reasonable notice if unable to attend.
- Minutes will be produced for all meetings and circulated to members of the Board.
- If a decision is required it will be reached by consensus, when consensus cannot be reached then voting will be required. The Chair will have a casting vote.
- All press statements made on behalf of the Board must be cleared through the DCC press office.

Appendix 3: Barnard Castle Vision programme delivery and achievements 2006-2010

Schedule of delivery:

<i>Feasibility and Appraisal Studies</i>	<i>Status</i>
Strategic Site Appraisals	Completed
Streetscape & Wayfinding Strategy	Completed
Transport & Access Plan	Completed
Landscape Appraisal	Completed
Hydro Feasibility	Completed
Higher Education Hub Report	Completed
Market Cross Survey	Completed
Shaw Bank Masterplan	Completed
Landscape Appraisal	Completed
Scar Top Improvement Scheme	Completed

<i>Physical Project delivery</i>	<i>Outline of Scheme</i>	<i>Cost</i>
DIGITAL DALE BROADBAND	Wireless Broadband Infrastructure to connect remote rural communities	£900,000
NeST DIGITAL AND CREATIVE STUDIO	Gallery, hot-desking and café to support creative businesses	£129,000
DIGITAL CITY RURAL SATILLITE INSTALLATION	Programme of support for NeST creative cluster	£50,000
HEART OF TEESDALE LANDSCAPE SCHEME	Enhance the Landscape of Barnard Castle and surrounding area	£87,000 initial development costs
RETAIL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS LEADING TO SEVERAL MAJOR REFURBISHMENTS	Support for retail businesses and attractiveness of high street	£191,459
NEW FLOODLIGHTING FOR THE CASTLE	Low energy lighting scheme to illuminate the Castle in the evening hours	£50,508

WITHAM HALL REDEVELOPMENT	Cultural and business facility, together with combined customer services and library	£237,812
HOLE IN THE WALL CAR PARKING WORKS	Improved access to previously under-used car park behind the high street	£79,381
TOWN WI FI CONNECTIVITY	To allow internet access for residents and visitors	£50,000
RIVERSIDE ENVIRONMENTAL & PATHWAY ENHANCEMENTS	Restore and enhance views of the River Tees and increase walking access	£32,972
SURVEYING AND REPAIR OF THE MARKET CROSS	Conservation and protection of Grade 1 Listed building	£20,000
SCAR TOP LANDSCAPING	Landscaping of Scar Top and Castle area and bringing landscape characteristics back into focus, by renewing rural and town features and opening up views	£62,969

<i>Wider regeneration activities</i>
Setting up the Barney Guild – a consortium of retail businesses
Tourism and Festival Activities
Film and animation Festival
Partners to the North Pennines Love Food project
Leadership Forum

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Cabinet

22 September 2011

Update of the Office Accommodation Programme



Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development and Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update of the Office Accommodation Programme following the first 6 months of delivering the strategy which was agreed by Cabinet in November 2010.
2. This report establishes the Office Accommodation Strategy and scope against revised programme objectives, provides an update on progress to date, the challenges that have been faced and actions that are being implemented to ensure improved performance and successful delivery going forwards.

Background

3. Cabinet approved the original office accommodation strategy on 2 November 2010 to enhance the council's customer services provision. This will be achieved through improved Customer Access Points (CAP's) via 14 dedicated facilities and 4 main office centres, and also by rationalising not 'fit for purpose' office accommodation before April 2014.
4. The Office Accommodation Strategy is an invest to save programme. It is anticipated that the capital expenditure (£8 million) will be exceeded by the sale of vacated sites via capital receipts. Longer term revenue savings will be achieved by vacating inefficient buildings, rationalising office accommodation, maximising space usage and co-locating services. Monitoring of savings will be presented to Cabinet post 2011.

Progress to Date

5. The original strategy identified the main centres as being Crook, Durham, Seaham and Spennymoor. The supporting centres and level of CAP to be developed in each settlement area is summarised in Appendix 2. The programme is well underway in implementation stage.
6. Spectrum 8 in Seaham is operational.
7. The refurbishment works to Green Lane Spennymoor to centralise the Revenues and Benefits service is on schedule for completion. Staff have

already moved into Level 2 and the remaining staff will move during September.

8. To date, Customer Access Points have opened in:
 - Seaham
 - Stanhope
 - Consett
9. To date, the following buildings have been vacated ready for disposal:
 - East Durham Education Centre (EDEC)
 - Consett Civic Centre
10. The programme is on target to vacate the former Civic Centre at Seaside Lane, Easington by the end of this year.

The Way Ahead

11. To support the programme going forwards, a rigorous review of the governance arrangements and the structure with supporting processes has been undertaken.
12. The revised Office Accommodation structure and process arrangements attached as Appendix 3 will address the challenges the programme has faced to date.
13. The proposed office accommodation programme is attached as Appendix 4.
14. Officers are conducting robust option appraisals for each individual project to ensure that the optimum solution is implemented for each CAP.

Options Appraisals

15. Officers have assessed available sites in Durham City, Crook and Barnard Castle within the scope of the initial project briefs for each location and have identified long lists that were considered at the Assets Officer Working Group on 13 July 2011.
16. The Assets Officer Working Group reviewed each option and evaluated them against key selection criteria as follows:
 - Capital costs
 - Impact on revenue running costs
 - Site suitability
 - Location
 - Impact upon the regeneration of the city/town
 - Risks to successful delivery
17. The option appraisals are attached as appendices:
 - 5 – Durham City
 - 6 – Crook
 - 7 – Barnard Castle

Preferred Solutions:

Durham City

18. The Assets Officer Working Group approved the option to use 7 Millennium Place in conjunction with the Clayport library. This option creates a joint reception desk, reconfiguration of the former office accommodation, and adaptations to the library entrance.
19. The Customer Focus Board considered the CAP options for Durham City on 5 July and agreed that 7 Millennium Place in conjunction with Clayport library was their preferred solution from a service delivery perspective.

Crook

20. The Assets Officer Working Group approved the option to integrate the provision of a newly configured CAP in the Civic Centre in Crook and co-locate the library here also as the most cost effective solution which provides joined up service delivery within high quality premises owned by the County Council.
21. The Library is due to be relocated as the current provision within Crook is on a site which has been already been agreed as a redevelopment opportunity for new retail provision in the town.
22. The Customer Focus Board considered the CAP options for Crook on 5 July and agreed with officer recommendations to retain this in Crook Civic Centre.

Barnard Castle

23. The preferred solution is to join up with the Witham Scheme and integrate the provision of a new CAP/Library into the project. This is separately funded via the Regeneration and Economic Development Capital Programme.
24. This demonstrates prudent use of resources and seizes the opportunity to maximise the use of DCC funding to support both a regeneration programme and develop the Council accommodation strategy as a joint venture.
25. The Customer Focus Board considered the CAP options for Barnard Castle on 5 July and agreed with officer recommendations.

Newton Aycliffe

26. The preferred solution is to integrate the provision of a new CAP into the existing Leisure Centre and refurbish some retail premises to incorporate a new Library.
27. This demonstrates prudent use of resources, enables the permanent relocation of the temporary Library, seizes the opportunity to maximise the use of floor space and develop co-located services

28. This scheme would need to be dovetailed in with the Town Centre redevelopment programme.
29. The Customer Focus Board considered the CAP options for Newton Aycliffe on 5 July and agreed with officer recommendations

Programme Scope and Budget

30. The original strategy and scope has been revised against the new objectives in Appendix 3 which has resulted in clearer definitions of the projects and a detailed programme (Appendix 4) with indicative budgets and timescales.
31. The programme is still within budget. As the programme moves forward, any new proposals which require additional funding in order to meet operational requirements or maximise opportunities will be reported to Members.

Conclusion

32. We have learnt lessons over the first six months of implementing the office accommodation strategy. By establishing a clear process we are looking to continue to deliver the new customer access points as soon as possible, and will work to keep Members and customers informed as we progress.
33. The Council now has a clearer definition and understanding of the individual projects that need to be delivered as the programme is implemented and a detailed review of the budget and timescale for the programme as a whole.

Recommendations

34. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - 34.1. Agree the proposed governance model to support delivery of the Office Accommodation Programme.
 - 34.2. Agree the programme as proposed in Appendix 4.
 - 34.3. Approve the proposals for new CAPS in the following locations:
 - Durham City CAP to be located in 7 Millennium Square and Clayport Library
 - Crook CAP to be reconfigured in the former Civic Centre and co-located with the Library
 - Barnard Castle CAP to be co-located into a refurbished Library building as part of the Witham scheme
 - Newton Aycliffe CAP to be co-located with the Library into Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre

Reasons for Recommendations

35. To continue to develop robust programme management and project monitoring for the office accommodation strategy.
36. To make the office accommodation for Durham County Council sustainable in the medium term.
37. Co-locating services will enable efficient use of staff resources.
38. Joint service space usage will maximise the use of available floor plate to optimum capacity.
39. Customers are familiar with public services in the proposed locations for Durham, Crook and Barnard Castle, so business continuity will be easier to maintain.
40. The CAP locations are all central, accessible by public transport and public car parks are in close proximity.
41. There will be savings to revenue running costs to the authority longer term from co-location of services.
42. These proposed schemes are prime examples of pooling resources, funding and schemes to achieve Council priorities.

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	David Theobald	Tel:	0191 370 8853

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - 1

An approved capital budget of £8m is in place to deliver this programme on a spend to save basis. The ongoing budget monitoring and reporting mechanisms are being refined.

Staffing - 2

Around 1000 members of staff will be affected by the office moves.

Risk – 3

A risk log is prepared for each project within the programme, but for the purposes of this report there are no reportable risks.

Equality and Diversity - 4

All access points which will be open to members of the public will be DDA compliant. Access points will have buggy storage areas, accessible toilets and baby changing facilities.

Seaham Multi User Centre, Seaham Spectrum and Consett Access Point all have disabled parking facilities.

Accommodation - 5

The report addresses the needs of the Council's office accommodation within the next 3 years and updates on progress on delivery of the strategy to date. Further regular updates will be provided on a six monthly basis.

Crime and Disorder - 6

All reasonable efforts will be taken during implementation to ensure that personal security issues of members of staff are accounted for as well as security to the building and to members of the public.

Human Rights - 7

None

Consultation - 8

The establishment of the stakeholder group will be part of the consultation process around the implementation of this work.

Procurement - 9

None

Disability Discrimination Act - 10

None

Legal Implications - 11

None

Appendix 2

Settlement Area	Type of Customer Access Point
Bishop Auckland Durham Seaham	<p>Tier 1 Customer Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception Desk (Meet and Greet Point To accommodate 3x staff) • Waiting /Seating Area (To include information displays and children's play equipment) • Self Service Area (to Accommodate 3x members of the public) • 4x Private Interview Rooms • 1x Telly Talk Pod (Interview Room) • 4x Open Plan Interview Areas <p>Staff Office Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x Staff Desk areas • Toilet Facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen Area • Staff Locker Area • Information Storage Area • Safe
Barnard Castle Consett Chester-le-Street Crook Newton Aycliffe Stanley	<p>Tier 2 Customer Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception Desk (Meet and Greet Point To accommodate 2x staff) • Waiting /Seating Area (To include information displays and children's play equipment) • Self Service Area (to Accommodate 2x members of the public) • 3x Private Interview Rooms • 1x Telly Talk Pod (Interview Room) • 3x Open Plan Interview Areas <p>Staff Office Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2x Staff Desk areas • Toilet Facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen Area • Staff Locker Area • Information Storage Area • Safe
Spennymoor Stanhope Peterlee	<p>Tier 3 Customer Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Telly Talk Pod / Internet Access (Interview Room)

Appendix 3:

The Office Accommodation Programme Structure and Process

Structure and Process

1. Since early April, a review has been undertaken to ensure a fit for purpose and sufficiently robust programme for delivery of future CAPs and main office centres is in place.
2. The Office Accommodation Programme (OAP) breaks down into four stages, as shown in the diagram below. This also shows the split of responsibilities between the Regeneration and Economic Development and Neighbourhood Services teams, with overarching leadership from the Assets Officer Working Group, an officer management board established as part of the review of assets to support this high priority activity.

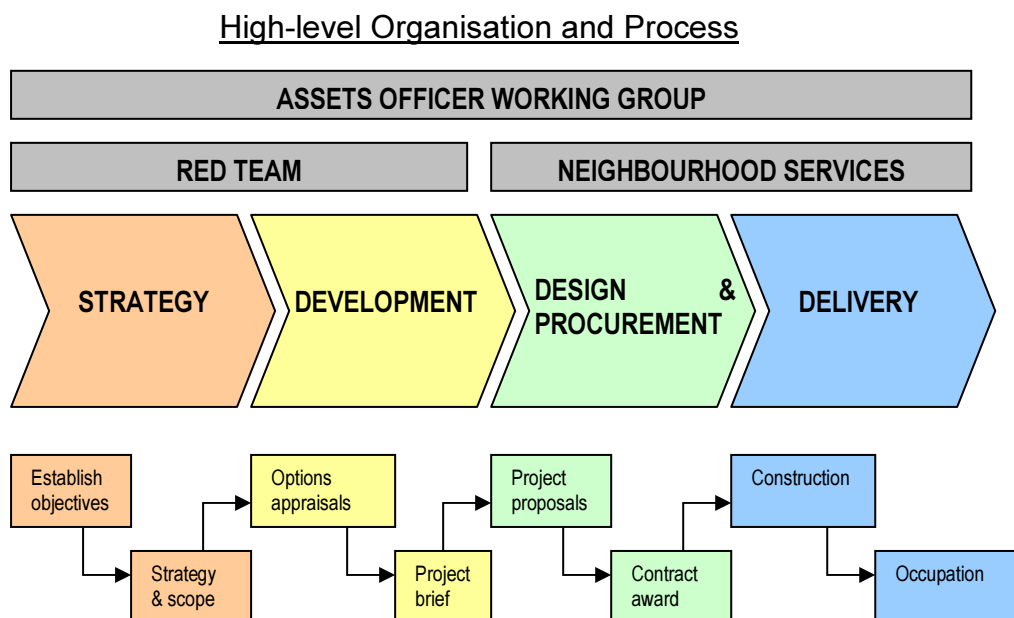


Diagram 1

3. The diagram also summarises the basic process that the programme follows to ensure successful delivery.
4. The programme is currently gathering pace and improvements to the procedural aspects should support this continued improvement.

Programme Objectives and Strategy

5. The programme's objectives have been reviewed in order to define the issues that the project intends to address and improvements it intends to make. The objectives aim to set out the key parameters for the programme, particularly budget and timescale. Revised objectives are as follows:

To develop customer access points and office accommodation to:

- **Meet the needs of our customers**
through appropriate access points in convenient locations.
- **Improve the way we work**
through improved working environments in locations that suit the operational needs of our business.
- **Reduce operating costs**
through occupying and wherever possible sharing fit for purpose buildings, maximising space utilisation and improving efficiencies through better use of ICT.
- **Maximise the regenerative impact**
through the positioning of facilities to support local improvements, releasing the value of redundant property for reinvestment, and distributing jobs to support the economy across the County.
- **Contribute to the long term assets strategy**
through developing accommodation in line with the broader assets plan, and integrating facilities with other services.

Programme Strategy and Scope

6. The team has reviewed the established strategy and scope against the programme objectives to ensure that the optimum solution has been established.

Customer and Stakeholder Input

7. Customer and stakeholder input is being strengthened through the establishment of a stakeholder consultation group which will engage stakeholders in the initial planning activity, and ensure that they are consulted during project development and party to gateway approvals.
8. This includes working with appropriate Members and the approach will ensure that the programme continues to focus on the needs of end users, whilst also building confidence in our approach to delivery of the programme.

Option Appraisal

9. Option appraisals are being conducted for each individual project to ensure that the optimum solution is implemented. This will commence with a long list of potential solutions which will progress through a consistent and structured analysis to establish the preferred option.
10. The process around this activity is currently being refined to ensure consistency for the officer management board and will also include reference to appropriate Cabinet members.

11. Option appraisals will be undertaken for disposal projects as well as new accommodation projects and will consider alternative uses, development opportunities and options for sale. The appraisals will carefully consider the timescales for disposal or redevelopment, and the wasted costs incurred by empty accommodation.

Project Briefs

12. Once the preferred option has been established a detailed project brief will be developed based on a standard template. This will include:
 - the extent and specification of accommodation and facilities to be provided;
 - the anticipated scope of works to achieve this;
 - constraints on delivery of the project;
 - environmental targets;
 - planning and other statutory requirements;
 - timescales for delivery;
 - the cost envelope for the project;
 - identified risks;
 - proposed contractual arrangements.
13. Depending on the size and complexity of the project, the brief may include an outline design and on completion, the project brief will be presented to the Assets Officer Working Group for approval.

Process - Legal Agreements

14. Some options will entail the negotiation of lease arrangements with landlords or tenants, and potentially property acquisitions. The timing of the negotiations will be fully co-ordinated with project development, to ensure that sufficient commitment from landlords and tenants is in place at each project gateway.

Design and Procurement

15. Each project follows a structured approach to establish a detailed proposal that meets the requirements of the brief and forms the basis on which the contract can proceed.
16. The project proposal will consist of a full design, programme and method statement, cost plan and risk register, plus the contractual arrangements and the key organisations / individuals that will be responsible for successful delivery.
17. The proposals will be developed in two stages, with the initial stage used to agree the direction and viability of the project before more extensive work is undertaken and statutory approvals instigated.

Project Delivery

18. Following approval of the detailed proposals the project will proceed to 'contract award' and into the delivery phase.
19. The working assumption is that projects will be delivered internally through Technical Services and Direct Services, unless there is a clear rationale for external procurement. This may include:
 - a requirement for particular expertise;
 - internal capacity constraints;
 - project risks that are better passed to the private sector.
20. Periodic market testing will also be beneficial to benchmark internal delivery and ensure this offers value for money.

Monitoring and Control

21. The programme as a whole and each individual project will be closely monitored to ensure the delivery of objectives within the defined budgets and timescales and summaries will be provided to the Assets Officer Working Group to establish performance and identify issues for specific intervention.

Governance Arrangements

22. The organisation and process chart shown in Diagram 1 at paragraph 2 define the governance arrangements for the OAP, which are summarised below:
 - The Assets Officer Working Group will oversee the programme objectives, approve the refreshed OAP strategy and scope and oversee the delivery of this through a range of projects;
 - The RED Team will be responsible for the strategy and development stages, and Neighbourhood Services for project design, procurement and delivery. The teams will work collaboratively during all stages;
 - Projects will be controlled through a series of gateways, requiring formal approval by the Assets Officer Working Group;
 - Customers and stakeholders will be engaged throughout and will be party to the gateway approvals. A stakeholder group has been instigated to facilitate this. During the design, procurement and delivery phases the OAP project team based in Economic Development will act as client for the project and represent the interests of the customer;
 - Change control will be rigorously applied at all stages to ensure that any identified need to deviate from approved arrangements is fully considered before implementation;

- Programme and progress will be regularly monitored through reports and progress meetings, with overall status presented monthly to the Assets Officer Working Group and exceptional issues identified for resolution.
 - As part of the governance arrangements, a six monthly report for Cabinet will be prepared to update on progress.
23. The revised governance model for asset management and related schemes is now embedded within the Council.
24. The Assets Officer Working Group, chaired by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services, meets monthly to oversee the Office Accommodation Strategy and monitor progress against budget and timescales.
25. The Assets Officer Working Group report to CMT and Cabinet as appropriate.
26. The office accommodation budget is reported and monitored by MOWG.
27. The office accommodation stakeholder group has been created and its purpose is to ensure the involvement and ownership across Durham County Council of the Office Accommodation Strategy and delivery thereof to maximise the use of the Council's assets, especially customer facing assets, and achieve value for money. Responsibilities include:
- Provide an active channel of communication between key stakeholders and the Assets Officer Working Group
 - All services will be party to the Programme to encourage buy in and cross service working
 - Influence the strategy and programme by service priorities, strategies and policies
 - Develop high level options for Customer Access Points (CAPS) and back office accommodation
 - Consider and challenge detailed options appraisals and reach consensus for recommendations
 - Develop and monitor the scope
 - Monitor delivery of the programme

Member Engagement

28. Local Members are consulted on the option appraisals for the Customer Access Points (CAP) at concept stage in conjunction with the Portfolio Holders for Economic Regeneration and Resources.

29. Engagement sessions for Members are proposed at CAP design stage along with quarterly updates on project progress.
30. The same engagement process will be followed when the programme is at concept stage for back office / former civic centre provision.

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Durham City Customer Access Point (CAP) Site Options – Summary of Initial Appraisal (Long List) V2.0

Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m ²	1. 17 Claypath	2. Tourist Information Centre and 3/4 Millennium Place (Connexions)	3. 7 Millennium Place with Customer Services split over ground and first floors	4. 7 Millennium Place with Customer Services sharing ground floor with library and first floor use as back office accommodation	5. Durham Bus Station	6. Millburngate Shopping Centre, or similar
Section 1 - Site Characteristics						
Description	Former Durham City Council offices. Concrete framed structure, flat roof, with brickwork external skin. The floor-plate is inefficient due to the cellular nature of the office accommodation. Ground floor Customer Services. All upper floors back office staff/contact centre/CCTV. Very small rear staff car park 6 spaces maximum but restricted by Gala operations and access by large vehicles.	The Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is currently scheduled to become vacant autumn 2011. 3/4 Millennium Place (Connections) is currently being vacated. Modern accommodation. Marketing of these units for commercial use currently considered.	Ground floor occupied by 20/20 Vision. First floor occupied by CDC. Modern accommodation. Both services are scheduled to vacate in the near future.	Ground floor occupied by Durham City Vision and on the opposite side by the Clayport Library. First floor occupied by C&DDC. Modern accommodation. Both DCV and C&DDC are scheduled to vacate in the near future.	Second floor office space has been vacant for some time. Capital investment required to upgrade to modern office accommodation.	Reason for inclusion is for comparative purposes only. To distinguish between the occupancy of a retail unit and that of a current office base. No vacant retail unit was identified, however planning restrictions may apply.
Location	Near the Market Place/Millennium Square. Bus stop outside also park and ride drop off/pick up point nearby. Public Car parks in close proximity.	Near the Market Place/Millennium Square. Bus stop outside also park and ride drop off/pick up point nearby. Public Car parks in close proximity.	Near the Market Place/Millennium Square. Bus stop outside also park and ride drop off/pick up point nearby. Public Car parks in close proximity.	Near the Market Place/Millennium Square. Bus stop outside also park and ride drop off/pick up point nearby. Public Car parks in close proximity.	Above main bus station and rail station nearby	Within prime retail location in the City centre, car parking in close proximity. Depending upon the exact location the CAP may not be publicly visible.
Ownership / Title	This property is owned by DCC.	This property is owned by DCC.	This property is owned by DCC.	This property is owned by DCC.	This property is owned by DCC, but all income generated to One North East as part of previous funding agreement. But presumably this will be subject to review?	Lease would need to be entered into.
Size	1,850m ² NIFA over 4 floors.	TIC 175m ² NIFA (approx) to include both floors. Connections 155m ² NIFA (approx)	100m ² NIFA ground floor (approx) 200m ² to the first floor (approx).	The area considered being 100m ² NIFA ground floor (approx), entrance foyer, and part of the Clayport Library as a shared customer service reception and waiting area. 200m ² to the first floor (approx), being for back office provision.	572 m ² NIFA second floor only (approx).	No information – subject to premises availability.
Accessibility/Condition	Minor adaptations required to make the CAP totally accessible. Requires significant repairs and maintenance for longer term use.	Both these units adjoin however there is an approximate 1.00M difference in level between both ground floor levels. A structural column restricts having both an accessible lift and stairs of sufficient width.	The building is DDA accessible. The existing public lift can be used to gain access to the upper floor.	The building is DDA accessible. The existing public lift can be used to gain access to the upper floor.	Access to the second floor is via a non compliant lift or a stairwell. All the accommodation is on three different levels and is non DDA accessible.	No information – subject to premises availability.
Availability of property	Currently in use as the main CAP for Durham City and back office staff.	Upon the vacation of both services.	Existing service providers could be re-located as an interim measure to allow for adaptations.	Existing service providers could be re-located as an interim measure to allow for adaptations. The library service needs to be consulted regarding the sharing of services, with sign-in by both	Vacant possession.	No information – subject to premises availability.

Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m²	1. 17 Claypath	2. Tourist Information Centre and 3/4 Millennium Place (Connexions)	3. 7 Millennium Place with Customer Services split over ground and first floors	4. 7 Millennium Place with Customer Services sharing ground floor with library and first floor use as back office accommodation	5. Durham Bus Station	6. Millburngate Shopping Centre, or similar
Considerations, opportunities and benefits	Longer term this site will be disposed as the condition of the building is poor. Prime development site which is adjacent to a commercial scheme.	Enables co-location of public services but would totally compromise any use as commercial entity Soft market testing of Millennium Square to ascertain commercial demand commencing this summer	Enables co-location of public services but would totally compromise any use as commercial entity Soft market testing of Millennium Square to ascertain commercial demand commencing this summer	Directors. Enables co-location of public services but would totally compromise any use as commercial entity Soft market testing of Millennium Square to ascertain commercial demand commencing this summer	Market rent may be payable to One North East. However due to the imminent demise, future arrangements are not known. Also this site forms part of a big city regeneration scheme working jointly with the private sector. Relocating the CAP here would therefore only be temporary.	Significant commercial rents for retail premises are in prime city locations. Planning approval for change of use would be required.
Section 2 - Assessment of Options						
1. Capital Costs (or receipt)	£30,000 Cost of minor DDA adaptations	£294,000 Cost of adaptations to include refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items.	£328,000 Cost of adaptations to include refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items.	£344,000 Cost of adaptations to include refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items.	£500,000 Cost of adaptations to include structural alterations, refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items.	£800,000+ based on Consett CAP Cost of adaptations to include refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items.
2. Revenue implications	As existing. Longer term running costs negated when building declared surplus.	As existing.	As existing.	As existing. Staffing revenue savings on operation of one reception desk.	Significant increase in revenue as accommodation currently empty / running costs partially offset by loss of NNDR reduction.	Significant increase in revenue costs as new accommodation without the benefit of co-location with other services.
3. Site Suitability	Existing premises currently delivering CAP services. Not deemed fit for purpose as a long term solution. Has accessibility issues.	Split site unsuitable – numerous levels.	Good location. DCC ownership. CAP could operate effectively between 2 levels Co-location of DCC services	Good location, DCC ownership CAP could operate effectively between 2 levels Co-location of DCC services.	To be DDA compliant would require significant capital investment.	Premises will generally be too small.
4. Location that supports service delivery	Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.	Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.	Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.	Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.	Central location. Public access would be via a discreet entrance. Main reception desk could only be located on the second floor. No car parking provision in the vicinity.	Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.
5. Regeneration impact	Potential to redevelop this and adjacent sites as part of the regeneration of the city centre. Alternative venue for a CAP and smaller back office support may be required.	Would impact on the potential to regenerate Millennium Square with the introduction of further commercial lets which would generate income to the authority.	Would impact on the potential to regenerate Millennium Square with the introduction of further commercial lets which would generate income to the authority. Co-locates services to one central point in the square.	Would impact on the potential to regenerate Millennium Square with the introduction of further commercial lets which would generate income to the authority. Co-locates services and creates joined-up service delivery for both the CAP and library.	May impact on the future regeneration of North Road and the bus station.	Reduces retail accommodation in the City centre.
6. Risks to successful delivery	The closure of Annand House may increase customer footfall, with insufficient accommodation to meet peak service delivery. However it is uncertain at what level will this materialise.	Insufficient space for both an accessible lift and staircase may require customers to leave and re-enter the building via the upper door. The accommodation cannot be DDA compliant. Cannot generate the space required	CAP split over two floors. Joint service delivery between CAP and Library services become essential although needs to be balanced with any potential detrimental affect of service users. Inability to segregate accommodation due to differing operational hours.	Joint service delivery between Library and CAP becomes essential although needs to be balanced with any potential detrimental affect of service users. Inability to segregate accommodation due to differing operational hours.	Accommodation on the second floor cannot be adapted to meet the service delivery brief.	Impact on the revenue budget. Inability to locate suitable vacant premises.

Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m ²	1. 17 Claypath	2. Tourist Information Centre and 3/4 Millennium Place (Connexions)	3. 7 Millennium Place with Customer Services split over ground and first floors	4. 7 Millennium Place with Customer Services sharing ground floor with library and first floor use as back office accommodation	5. Durham Bus Station	6. Millburngate Shopping Centre, or similar
		due to the shape of the floor-plate. No accommodation for back office staff. Staff accommodation for CAP staff cannot be made DDA accessible.	operational hours.	May require planning consent if reception lobby is modified.		
Section 3 - Conclusions						
Recommendation for Short List Consideration	Discount due to short term future occupation of premises which would require significant investment to upgrade for limited occupation and lack of ability to deliver a shared public service business model.	Discount due to:- a) Changes in level between both buildings that are insurmountable. b) Insufficient space for supporting back office staff. c) Floor-plate cannot deliver the brief. d) Impact on commercial opportunities	Worthy of further consideration - Shortlist	Worthy of further consideration - Shortlist	Discount due to – a) due to further redevelopment opportunities so short term solution b) Poor access c) All upper floor accommodation d) Split levels not ideal. e) Unsuitable location	Discount due to – a) Unpredictable availability of units of suitable size b) Rental cost of prime retail units in the City centre is prohibitive. c) Lack of co-location with other services.

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Site area requirement for new CAP = 275 m ²	Option 1 CAP in Crook Civic Centre	Option 2 CAP and library in Crook Civic Centre	Option 3 Typical retail outlet
Site Characteristics			
Description	<p>Four storey purpose built Civic Centre located on the north side of the market place in the centre of the town and opened in 1989.</p> <p>Possibly the best located office building of all the former district councils for the delivery of frontline public service, and currently providing the CAP for Crook and surrounding settlements.</p>	<p>Four storey purpose built Civic Centre located on the north side of the market place in the centre of the town and opened in 1989.</p> <p>Possibly the best located office building of all the former district councils for delivering a frontline public service and currently providing the CAP for Crook and the surrounding settlements.</p> <p>The library is a 1970s brick building with flat roof, located on the southern side of the market place.</p> <p>This option is to incorporate the library and CAP into part of the ground floor of the civic building as part of the regeneration of the market place.</p>	<p>Reason for inclusion is for comparative purposes only. To distinguish between the occupancy of a retail unit and that of a current office base.</p> <p>No vacant retail unit was identified, however planning restrictions may apply.</p>
Location	<p>Town Centre.</p> <p>Located in a prominent position on the north of the market place in close proximity to the public transport network and public car.</p>	<p>Town Centre.</p> <p>Located in a prominent position on the north of the market place in close proximity to the public transport network and public car.</p>	<p>No vacant unit identified in the vicinity.</p> <p>Any vacant retail would need to be situated on the main high street, or market place.</p> <p>Located in a prominent position in close proximity to the public transport network and public car.</p>
Ownership / Title	DCC ownership except for part of the ground floor leased from the adjacent bank.	Both buildings in DCC ownership except for part of the ground floor of the civic leased from the adjacent bank.	Private ownership
Size	<p>Four storey building of 5,521m². The total of the ground floor equates to 1,355m².</p> <p>Major parts of the ground floor are under-utilised with the current CAP and Registrar being the only occupying services. Office accommodation, central mall, former café and staff rest room all vacant.</p>	<p>Four storey building of 5,521m². The total of the ground floor equates to 1,355m².</p> <p>With major parts of the ground floor under-utilised (see option 1), the relocation of the library service and the creation of a CAP that matches the service requirements, maximises the use of space allowing the remaining area to be better utilised for alternative service delivery.</p>	No information – subject to premises availability.
Accessibility/Condition	The building is fully accessible. Good condition.	The building is fully accessible. Good condition.	No information – subject to premises availability.
Availability of property	<p>The vacant office accommodation assists the reconfiguration for the CAP.</p> <p>The remaining space on the ground floor remains unaffected.</p> <p>The upper floors are currently operational.</p>	<p>The vacant office accommodation assists the phasing of the work to create both the library and CAP accommodation.</p> <p>The upper floors are currently operational.</p>	No information – subject to premises availability.
Considerations, opportunities and benefits	<p>This is a prime location for the CAP and an opportunity to deliver the required brief.</p> <p>To create a CAP that matches the brief, and maximises the underutilised space in the central mall and the creation of a main reception desk.</p>	<p>This is a prime location for the CAP and opportunity to deliver a joint service delivery with the relocation of the library service.</p> <p>Reduced library revenue costs of £25,000pa.</p> <p>Removal of the urgent repairs and maintenance to the structure of the library building, and the consequential disruption of service (possible closure).</p> <p>Co-locates public services for ease of Customer access and enhanced service provision.</p> <p>Customer point of contact will be via a joined up service delivery reception desk negating the need to operate 2 reception desks and streamlining the customer experience.</p>	<p>Would be perceived by the public as being waste of money, and draw severe criticism as it is a current, although non compliant CAP in a modern civic building.</p> <p>Occupying a non DCC building would result in additional surplus accommodation.</p> <p>No alternative use of the surplus space on the ground floor.</p> <p>Planning approval for change of use would be required.</p>

Site area requirement for new CAP = 275 m ²	Option 1 CAP in Crook Civic Centre	Option 2 CAP and library in Crook Civic Centre	Option 3 Typical retail outlet
Assessment of Options			
1. Capital Costs (or receipt)	<p>Feasibility estimates from Technical Services are:</p> <p>CAP adaptations £504,562 (excludes the library adaptation costs).</p>	<p>Feasibility estimates from Technical Services are:</p> <p>£786,815 inclusive of furniture and fit out costs for both the relocation of the library and adaptations to enhance the CAP facility. Separately the costs would be: Library relocation £430,566 CAP adaptations £504,562</p> <p>It should be noted that there is no budget provision for any of these works. There may be £200,000 available from the land deal for the relocation of the library.</p>	<p>Circa £800,000+</p> <p>Cost of adaptations to include refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items.</p>
2. Revenue implications	As existing.	Library revenue savings of £25,000.	Significant increase in revenue cost.
3. Site Suitability	The current CAP is well situated, but the existing configuration does not comply with the requirements to deliver an improved customer service.	The site is suitable for joint service delivery.	Unable to comment until vacant premises identified.
4. Location that supports service delivery	Central location – ideal for public access	Central location – ideal for public access	Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.
5. Regeneration impact	Maintain benefit of current town centre focus.	Co-location of services within the town centre may improve footfall in the town which in turn could help stimulate retail and market custom.	Reduces retail accommodation in the town centre.
6. Risks to successful delivery	<p>No budget to support the project.</p> <p>The reconfiguration for the CAP also needs to consider the relocation of the library. Failure would result in abortive work and not address a future joint service delivery.</p> <p>Failure to incorporate the library would compromise the sale of the former library site and proposed retail development opportunity.</p> <p>If undertaken as a separate project prior to the library, then there would be no opportunity to create a joint service reception desk.</p> <p>The project to relocate the library will result in the loss of three existing interview rooms, which would need to be re-provided, together with an additional reception desk in an alternative location.</p> <p>Alterations to provide a CAP to the required specification would result in abortive work having to be undertaken in the future for the library, if both projects are not done simultaneously as one project.</p>	<p>No budget to support the scheme.</p> <p>Agreement to deliver services jointly needed.</p> <p>Failure to relocate the Library and incorporate as one project would compromise the sale of the former Library site/development opportunity.</p> <p>If the relocation of the library is undertaken as a separate project prior to the CAP, then there would be no opportunity to create a joint service reception desk. The creation of new library accommodation results in the loss of three interview rooms that would need to be re-provided, and a reception desk in an inappropriate location for joint service delivery.</p> <p>Future alterations to provide a CAP to the required specification would then have resulted in abortive work having to be undertaken as part of the library project. It is therefore financially advantageous that alterations to create a CAP and library are undertaken simultaneously as one project and to minimise disruption.</p>	<p>Impact on the revenue budget.</p> <p>Inability to locate suitable vacant premises.</p>
Recommendation for Short List Consideration	Dismiss on the basis that it does not future proof a joint service delivery between the CAP and library service and the urgency of relocating the library service.	<p>Recommend.</p> <p>Creates a joint service delivery for the CAP and library service, but dependant on being approved for both elements.</p>	<p>Dismiss:-</p> <p>a) Does not integrate both services. b) Substantial increase in revenue costs. c) Very high capital investment required. d) Timescales for the town centre redevelopment.</p>

Barnard Castle Customer Access Point (CAP) Site Options – Summary of Initial Appraisal (Long List).

Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m ²		1. Woodleigh, Flatts Road	2. Witham Hall	3. Teesdale House	4. Library	5. Auction Mart	6. Harmire Enterprise Park
Section 1 - Site Characteristics							
Nature of Scheme	Adaptation to existing premises						
Description	Adaptation to existing premises to include Witham Hall, Library and CAP	Adaptation to existing premises	Adaptation to existing premises	Adaptation to existing premises	Adaptation to existing premises	New build	New Build
	<p>Current use: Tourist Information Centre/café/offices/file storage.</p> <p>Woodleigh is an attractive large stone built detached late Victorian villa. Consists of two storeys of accommodation.</p> <p>Constructed of rough coursed masonry with ashlar detailing. Pitched roof in Welsh Slate.</p> <p>House and parkland (Scar Top) located in a highly sensitive and visible location in close proximity to Grade 1 listed Castle (English Heritage), other listed buildings (including adjacent Methodist Church) and retail centre buildings. Grounds (Scar Top) subject of a 2nd Stage HLF Landscapes bid to implement landscaping improvements.</p> <p>Vehicle access is via Flatts Road and provides small space for parking (5 spaces) and servicing to the North (rear) of the building. Small storage building situated in the corner of the site.</p> <p>The building is not listed but it does lie within the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>Lies at the heart of the Barnard Castle Conservation area and is Grade II listed. Large vacant brown field area behind the hall gifted to the Witham Hall Trustees by former Yorkshire Bank.</p> <p>Its façade makes a valuable contribution to the character of the Horse Market Area. Statement of Significance document produced in 2010.</p> <p>Classical style. 2 storeys. Ground floor use as art/crafts gallery, café, kitchen, linking corridor, music hall, toilets, offices. First floor has room overlooking main shopping street and two ancillary storage rooms..</p> <p>It is in community use and has the potential to link through to Morrisons car park. Charitable status precludes sale for commercial use.</p>	<p>Council offices are located on the site which is approx 0.1Ha in size.</p> <p>Includes buildings fronting onto Galgate (Nos 43-49), with a later addition to the rear of No 45 fronting onto King Street, and also incorporates the north-western two former houses on that side of King Street (Nos 2 and 4). The site lies within both the Barnard Castle Conservation and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.</p> <p>All of the buildings on Galgate, together with the 1930s extension, are Listed Grade II (HER 388672 and 388673).</p> <p>Small garden to rear.</p>	<p>Modern two storey building, ground floor houses library and small first floor area used as storage, office, toilets and kitchen.</p> <p>Natural stone faced cavity walls and timber link roof trusses supported a slated roof. Flat roof above the main library area – suspended timber type.</p> <p>Abuts the Witham Hall.</p>	<p>Cattle Mart, Salesroom, car parking and agricultural fields.</p> <p>Approaches to the site are via residential and light industrial areas. The site is bounded to the south by Vere Road, to the west and north by residential units and gardens and to the east by Barnard Castle Cricket Club.</p> <p>Current proposal from the Auction Mart directors is to work with a developer to create food store, some housing and car parking.</p> <p>The site lies adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary</p>	<p>33.44Ha</p> <p>Prestige industrial estate, next to Golf Club and adjacent to GlaxoSmithKline on Harmire Road, Barnard Castle.</p> <p>The Harmire site is partially designated as Industrial Land and partially covered by the protected route for a proposed By Pass (a long standing proposal). The site sits within an area of high landscape value.</p> <p>The Enterprise Park has good occupancy rates.</p>	
Location	Corner of Flatts Road/Galgate, Barnard Castle	Horse Market area of Barnard Castle. Located within the main shopping area and Conservation Area and designated area of Archaeological Interest. Good public access.	The site occupies a rectangular plot of land located at the north-eastern side of King Street at its junction with Galgate, Barnard Castle.	Off main high street in Barnard Castle, along Hall Street and adjoining Queen Street. Has been here since c.1970s and customers are familiar with it's location	The Auction Mart is located to the north of the main thoroughfare of Galgate. It is not central to the town and public access is less direct.	To the north of the residential area of Barnard Castle along the B2678	
Ownership / Title	This property is owned by DCC.	Title is with the Witham Hall Trustees (charitable status).	This property is owned by DCC.	This property is owned by DCC.		The land is in the ownership of a third party.	One North East – may become HCA as part of asset transfer.
Size	203 sq m over 2 floors	The site is approx 0.1 Ha in size. CAP provision of 300 ² could be provided?	0.1Ha	238msq The current floor plate would require extension to absorb the Customer Services function in a joint CAP/Library.	1.4Ha		33.44Ha

<p>Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m²</p>	<p>1. Woodleigh, Flatts Road</p> <p>Ground floor accessible, first floor adaptations required to make the CAP totally accessible.</p> <p>Requires repairs and maintenance for longer term use.</p> <p>The street-front part of the property is likely to overlay the site of medieval and early post-medieval structures. The rear part of the site overlies the in-filled castle moat. The site lies within the Barnard Castle Conservation and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.</p>	<p>2. Witham Hall</p> <p>Recent condition survey shows that the building is in need of repair, with the roof needing urgent attention. Not currently DDA compliant.</p> <p>No dedicated parking, but town centre provides parking</p>	<p>3. Teesdale House</p> <p>The accommodation is cellular, there is no off street parking. Building in need of significant repair and remedial works to meet basic health and safety requirements. Not currently DDA compliant.</p> <p>No dedicated parking, but town centre provides parking.</p>	<p>4. Library</p> <p>The building is DDA accessible. The existing public lift can be used to gain access from the street to the ground floor although this is far from ideal and wastes valuable space.</p>	<p>5. Auction Mart</p> <p>Struggles to meet Defra auction mart standards.</p>	<p>6. Harmire Enterprise Park</p> <p>Out of town. Main access road opposite GlaxoSmithKline, easy access by car and selection of different units.</p> <p>Public transport stops at nearby GlaxoSmithKline, opposite the Enterprise Park entrance.</p>
<p>Availability of property</p>	<p>Currently in use as TIC/Café/office storage. TIC likely to cease current operation in October 2011.</p> <p>Current redevelopment and restoration of Witham Hall building presents an opportunity for temporary re-location of Witham Hall services, such as the box-office, to this building.</p>	<p>A partnership has been formed with the Witham Hall Trustees and Durham County Council in relation to future use.</p> <p>The Witham scheme would allow for the opportunity to combine customer services and existing library services.</p> <p>The library service needs to be consulted regarding the sharing of services.</p>	<p>Currently occupied by DCC staff including customer services desk.</p>	<p>DCC owned.</p>	<p>Private ownership.</p>	<p>Vacancy rates are low.</p>
<p>Considerations, opportunities and benefits</p>	<p>Potential for Witham Hall box office, local food hub and office use whilst Witham Hall is redeveloped (2011-13). Will bring in rental income.</p> <p>Site runs alongside proposed access/walking/cycle route to riverside paths, and proposed suspension bridge 0.8 miles upstream. Site not large enough to combine with other front facing services e.g. library. Ongoing Revenue savings not therefore possible.</p> <p>Site is close to a number of significant landmarks for the town including the Castle and Trinity Methodist Church. This is a highly visible site which can be seen from the town centre and the Castle and therefore design and context must be carefully considered.</p>	<p>Potential to take on a more mixed use offer and include small units as meeting space/conferencing space as well as maintaining the existing community uses.</p> <p>Suitability as office accommodation established and proximity to library allows co-location of public services. Access from high street and supermarket car park.</p> <p>The Witham Hall is the subject of DCC supported redevelopment and some planning permissions in place and project underway.</p> <p>Opportunity for amalgamation with library site.</p> <p>Morrisons' car park is located to the north of Witham Hall; there is an opportunity to create a direct pedestrian link between the two sites as part of development proposals.</p> <p>Enables co-location of public services and enabled joint provision of customer/library services.</p>	<p>Longer term this site will be disposed as the condition of the building is poor and the size exceeds current staffing requirements.</p> <p>There is the opportunity to generate a Capital Receipt for DCC through the disposal of the site. This is estimated to be between £500,000 and £380,000 (Carvers Commercial and DCC estate management).</p> <p>Robust current valuations are being sought and will be verbally reported at the board meeting.</p>	<p>Co-location of public services cannot be met without significant expenditure and there is no budget provision for a stand-alone library enhancement.</p> <p>Condition survey shows capacity to extend first floor area</p>	<p>The Auction Mart directors wish to relocate to out of town site and are progressing with an offer from a developer who is seeking to deliver a retail led scheme including food store, some residential and car parking.</p> <p>Analysis of offer to provide customer services/back office accommodation found that the proposal was too expensive in terms of cost/benefit ratios.</p> <p>An offer has been made to DCC to provide office accommodation for customer services/back office staff, at cost of providing the building.</p>	<p>Commercial rents as properties currently in the ownership of One North East.</p>
<p>Section 2 - Assessment of Options</p>						

Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m ²	1. Woodleigh, Flatts Road	2. Witham Hall	3. Teesdale House	4. Library	5. Auction Mart	6. Harmire Enterprise Park
<p>1. Capital Costs (or receipt)</p> <p>£40,000 Cost of minor adaptations. Access to first floor is not DDA compliant. This would require installation of a lift.</p>	<p>£3M redevelopment costs (DCC/ERDF/HLF) £1.28m for the provision of a co-located CAP/Library with back office service provision. The individual values are estimated as: Library Refurb £285,000 CAP £549,000 Back Office £447,000 Cost of adaptations to include refurbishment, furniture and ancillary items. The co-location of the library and the CAP can be funded as part of Witham Hall redevelopment. Re-location of customer services to the new development on the Library site will free up Teesdale House for disposal and capital receipt.</p>	<p>Cost of adaptations/work required to make this option feasible would include works to meet DDA compliance and access to first floor plus immediate repairs and essential maintenance. The total estimate for all of the critical works required is £921,811 exclusive of dry/wet rot, bat, DDA, all refurbishment and provision of a new CAP.</p>	<p>Witham project funding could incorporate extension works to enable joint library / CAP £1.25M).</p>	<p>The fit out costs of a new build were prohibitive – estimated to be circa £1million.</p>	<p>Commercial rental – see comment above plus fit out costs circa £1million* are prohibitive.</p>	
<p>2. Revenue implications</p>	<p>No current revenue. Use by Witham Trustees/office accommodation as temporary rentable space will bring in rental income to DCC. Mothballing of site would result in additional revenue costs until long term future of building becomes known</p>	<p>No revenue implications to DCC. Staffing revenue savings on operation of one reception desk</p>	<p>As existing</p>	<p>As existing.</p>	<p>New running costs estimated to be £55,000 per annum</p>	<p>Significant increase in revenue as new accommodation (see above).</p>
<p>3. Site Suitability</p>	<p>Existing premises currently delivering TIC services. Has accessibility issues to first floor.</p>	<p>Amalgamation of Witham/Library will create potential for combined customer services/library services and access to Morrisons car park. Off the main high street. Good location, CAP could operate effectively between Witham/Library. Co-location of DCC services. Potential to create joined-up DCC service delivery. It would also offer opportunity for linked trips to community facilities.</p>	<p>Good location. DCC ownership. Issues over DDA capability – unlikely to be able to be fully DDA compliant</p>	<p>Off the main high street. Good location, DCC ownership</p>	<p>Off main street and away from town centre. Car parking.</p>	<p>More suitable as employment land for local businesses. Lack of current passing footfall due to its location away from residential area.</p>
<p>4. Location that supports service delivery</p>	<p>Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to visitor attractions, shopping and riverside walks/ cycleways.</p>	<p>Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park. Joining the library building to the new Witham will enable access to Morrison's car park. The Witham Hall currently offers educational and social activities and events for all ages and serves people from all of the rural district of Teesdale. However, the Grade II listed building is in need of repair and restoration and significant investment is needed to preserve the structure, upgrade the services infrastructure to current regulatory standards and ensure DDA compliance. An improved Witham</p>	<p>Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.</p>	<p>Central location. Easily accessible by public transport, and close to car park.</p>	<p>Not a prime location. Public access would be via a discreet entrance and short walk from town centre.</p>	<p>Away from town centre. Would not be suitable for Customer Services.</p>
<p>5. Regeneration impact</p>	<p>The existing visitor numbers at the Castle are low and it feels 'separate' from the rest of the Town. Improved visitor infrastructure would enhance orientation for visitors. A consultation process has highlighted the need to make more use of the Castle which is one of the key historic and authentic assets of the Town</p>	<p>This building represents an opportunity to house local businesses in terms of office accommodation. Hotel development is another option. The buildings could be converted back to their original purpose of residential development</p>	<p>Little impact retaining the 'as is'.</p>	<p>The most significant issue to consider, and aside from access constraints and deliverability is the future of the Mart as a focal point and functioning Mart for the Market Town. A new retail scheme may weaken the independent food offering in the town centre.</p>	<p>From a regeneration perspective it is important that this site is able to accommodate future traditional employment demand.</p>	

Site area requirement for new CAP = 300 m²	1. Woodleigh, Flatts Road	2. Witham Hall	3. Teesdale House	4. Library	5. Auction Mart	6. Harmire Enterprise Park
	Scar Top parkland identified as part of Heritage Lottery Fund landscaping improvement area.	would provide a venue for theatre, cinema and the performing arts and contribute to the development of an evening and night time economy in Barnard Castle. The Hall is in a prominent location and the proposed focus on creative and cultural activity fits with the wider economic development and diversification of Barnard Castle's economy. Co-locates services and creates joined-up service delivery for both the CAP and library.	Lack of market demand due to slowing of property market.	Will require planning consent if library is to be extended.	Auction Mart scheme may not go ahead – an application to planning has been delayed by the developer and may not gain approval. The cost of providing customer services/back office staffing accommodation in this location is judged to be too expensive.	Impact on the revenue budget. Out of town site.
6. Risks to successful delivery	Limited size of the building restricts potential usage.	Listed building status entails sensitive treatment and liaison with Conservation bodies.				
Section 3 - Conclusions						
Recommendation for Short List Consideration	It is appropriate to retain the existing building and allow uses that reflect the visitor and amenity potential of the area.	The development will provide a multi-purpose community resource, shared customer services/library service, improved evening economy for the town, including an auditorium /cinema and an expanded programme of cultural activities. It will also create studio/office space. Opportunity for joint provision of library/customer services.	Discount –Whole life costing business case for longer term retention is not viable.	Opportunity for combined CAP and Library Services.	Discount due to – a) Out of town location b) Fit out and running costs too high c) Risks & deliverability	Discount due to – a) Out of town location b) Rental cost of prime units and fit out costs too high

Newton Aycliffe Customer Access Point (CAP) Site Options – Summary of Initial Appraisal (Long List).

Site area requirement for new CAP = 275 m ²		Option 1 Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre entrance foyer only.	Option 2 Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre and adjoining retail shop.	Option 3 Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre and the adjoining three retail shops	Option 4 Newton Aycliffe Library – temporary accommodation	Option 5 Retail unit (former Woolworths)	Option 6 Retail unit (adjacent the amusement arcade and Greggs)
Site Characteristics							
Description	Existing leisure centre to be retained as part of the overall Leisure Strategy. Public access is from the covered walk-through that links Greenwell Road to the main central shopping area of the town. The building is a three storey concrete framed structure with brick cladding, and dates from the mid 1960s. Refurbished in the mid 1980s, but visually looking tired. The area under consideration is on the ground floor.	Existing leisure centre to be retained as part of the overall Leisure Strategy. Public access is from the covered walk-through that links Greenwell Road to the main central shopping area of the town. The building is concrete framed structure with brick cladding, and dates from the mid 1960s. Refurbished in the mid 1980s, but visually looking tired. The retail shop nr4 (left hand side facing) is currently being held over since the lease expired June 2011. The area under consideration is on the ground floor.	Existing leisure centre to be retained as part of the overall Leisure Strategy. Public access is from the covered walk-through that links Greenwell Road to the main central shopping area of the town. The building is concrete framed structure with brick cladding, and dates from the mid 1960s. Refurbished in the mid 1980s, but visually looking tired. The retail shops (left hand side facing) are as follows:- Nr 2 vacant (Estates seeking short term leases) Nr 3 is in the process of being vacated. (Estates seeking short term leases) Nr 4 is currently being held over since the lease expired June 2011. The area under consideration is on the ground floor.	Temporary library facility created in demountable accommodation on the site of a former petrol station that allowed for the former site to be redeveloped as part of the future regeneration of the town centre.	Existing vacant retail unit that will be given a new frontage as part of the redevelopment of the town centre.	Existing vacant retail unit that will be given a new frontage as part of the redevelopment of the town centre.	Existing vacant retail unit that will be given a new frontage as part of the redevelopment of the town centre.
Location	Town Centre	Town Centre	Town Centre	Outskirts of the main town centre.	Town Centre	Town Centre	Town Centre
Ownership / Title	DCC ownership	DCC ownership (Leisure Centre) Retail shop nr4 in private ownership.	DCC ownership (Leisure Centre) Retail shops nrs 2 to 4 in our ownership.	DCC ownership, but land leasehold.	Private ownership	Private ownership	Private ownership
Size	The ground floor entrance area circa 552m ² . (note this area extends from the main entrance to the inner security doors)	The ground floor entrance area circa 552m ² . Adjoining retail shop 96m ² Total 648 m ²	The ground floor entrance area circa 552m ² . Adjoining retail shop 288 m ² Total 840m ²	Total NIFA 324m ² Existing library cannot spatially support the CAP.	Total NIFA 553m ²	Total NIFA 570m ²	Total NIFA 570m ²
Accessibility/Condition	Level access. Reasonable condition.	Level access. Retail shop in need of refurbishment.	Level access. Retail shop in need of refurbishment.	Ramped access (DDA compliant). Good condition.	Level access to the ground floor only. Very poor condition.	Level access to the ground floor only. Very poor condition.	Level access to the ground floor only. Very poor condition.
Availability of property	Sedgefield Borough Homes (SBH) have withdrawn their cash desk service, resulting in vacant office accommodation (right-hand side). Any alterations work needs to be undertaken simultaneously with the reconfiguration of the leisure reception area, subject to available funding from the leisure service.	Sedgefield Borough Homes have withdrawn their cash desk service resulting in vacant office accommodation (right-hand side). Any alterations work needs to be undertaken simultaneously with the reconfiguration of the leisure reception area, subject to available funding from the leisure service. Subject to the vacation of the retail unit (nr 4).	Sedgefield Borough Homes have withdrawn their cash desk service resulting in vacant office accommodation (right-hand side). Any alterations work needs to be undertaken simultaneously with the reconfiguration of the leisure reception area, subject to available funding from the leisure service. Subject to the vacation of the retail unit (nr 4).	Currently delivering the library service.	Currently vacant.	Currently vacant.	Currently vacant.
Considerations, opportunities and benefits	Share the same main entrance. Final decision subject to indicative sketch design to ascertain if there is sufficient space for both services. Maximises the floor-plate as a consequence of the vacation	Share the same main entrance, with the opportunity of segregating due to differing operational hours. Final decision subject to indicative sketch design to ascertain if there is sufficient space for both services.	Share the same main entrance, with the opportunity of segregating due to differing operational hours. Final decision subject to indicative sketch design to ascertain if there is sufficient space for all three services.	This is only regarded a temporary location for the library service as the former site was required to start the regeneration of the town centre.	None	None	None

Site area requirement for new CAP = 275 m ²	Option 1 Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre entrance foyer only.	Option 2 Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre and adjoining retail shop.	Option 3 Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre and the adjoining three retail shops	Option 4 Newton Aycliffe Library – temporary accommodation	Option 5 Retail unit (former Woolworths)	Option 6 Retail unit (adjacent the amusement arcade and Greggs)
	by SBH and ensuring that the public have clear access to the leisure reception desk and beyond. Needs to be undertaken as part of the refurbishment of the main leisure centre entrance foyer (subject to available leisure funding). No back office accommodation included (subject to discussions with the leisure service).	Maximises the floor-plate as a consequence of the vacation by SBH and ensuring that the public have clear access to the leisure centre reception desk and beyond. Needs to be undertaken as part of the refurbishment of the main leisure centre entrance foyer (subject to available leisure funding). No back office accommodation included (subject to discussions with the leisure service).	Maximising the floor-plate as a consequence of the vacation by SBH and ensuring that the public have access to the leisure centre reception desk and beyond. Needs to be undertaken as part of the refurbishment of the main leisure centre entrance foyer (subject to available leisure funding). No back office accommodation included (subject to discussions with the leisure service).			
Assessment of Options						
1. Capital Costs (or receipt)	Circa £650,000 for all the area.	Circa £810,000 for all the areas.	Circa £1,050,000 for all the areas.	No solution	Circa £1,100,000	Circa £1,150,000
2. Revenue implications	As existing, less any income from SBH (unknown).	Total additional revenue cost £23,650 (inclusive of £16,500 rental for nr4)	Total additional revenue cost £70,950 (inclusive of £49,500 rental for nr4)		Total additional revenue cost £108,800 (inclusive of £67,500 rental)	Total additional revenue cost £112,250 (inclusive of £69,600)
3. Site Suitability	Subject to sketch designs to indicate layouts and operational use.	Subject to sketch designs to indicate layouts and operational use.	Subject to sketch designs to indicate layouts and operational use.	Not suitable due to insufficient space to extend the existing accommodation.	Unsuitable due to size, and extent of adaptation works required.	Unsuitable due to size, and extent of adaptation works required.
4. Location that supports service delivery	Central location. Easy access by public transport and close to car park.	Central location. Easy access by public transport and close to car park.	Central location. Easy access by public transport and close to car park.	Remote from the main town centre.	Central location. Easy access by public transport and close to car park.	Central location. Easy access by public transport and close to car park.
5. Regeneration impact	Co-locates all public services to one central location in the town centre. Supports the Leisure Centre.	Co-locates all public services to one central location in the town centre. Supports the Leisure Centre. Utilises a vacant retail shop, thus supporting the town centre redevelopment.	Co-locates all public services to one central location in the town centre. Supports the Leisure Centre. Utilises three vacant retail shops, thus supporting the town centre redevelopment.	None.	Supports the town centre redevelopment.	Supports the town centre redevelopment.
6. Risks to successful delivery	Due to the internal reconfiguration required, and location of services, initial sketch designs are required to ascertain if the area could be adapted for both a CAP and leisure reception area. Public accessing through a non segregated CAP into the leisure centre may cause operational issues. The creation for new public toilets needs to be considered. Alternative main entrance to the leisure centre may develop as part of the master planning exercise.	Dependent on the vacation of the adjacent retail unit. The master plan for the redeveloped town centre is for the library facility to be relocated into the adjoining retail units (nr5 2 to 4 inclusive). There is therefore a conflict of services being considered for the same accommodation.	Dependent on the vacation of the adjacent retail unit. The master plan for the redeveloped town centre is for the library facility to be relocated into the adjoining retail units (nr5 2 to 4 inclusive). There is therefore a conflict of services being considered for the same accommodation. No capital bid for a library replacement. Timescales of the Town Centre Redevelopment do not correlate with the Office Accommodation Programme – contingency of a Durham Talk as interim solution.	Cannot be achieved.	Subject to the timescales of the redevelopment of the town centre. The overall area does not comply with the brief. First floor accommodation is not required.	Subject to the timescales of the redevelopment of the town centre. The overall area does not comply with the brief. First floor accommodation is not required.
Recommendation for Short List Consideration	Dismiss on the basis that it does not future proof a joint service delivery between the CAP and library service.	Dismiss as the project needs to consider the future implications of the relocation of the library and providing integrated service delivery.	Worthy of further consideration and recommend sketch designs undertaken that considers:- 1) CAP 2) Library Service 3) Refurbishment of the leisure foyer On completion submit to the Asset Board for final consideration.	Dismiss due to temporary nature and insufficient space to extend the existing unit.	Dismiss:- a) Does not integrate both services. b) Substantial increase in revenue costs. c) Very high capital investment required. d) timescales for the town centre redevelopment.	Dismiss:- a) Does not integrate both services. b) Substantial increase in revenue costs. c) Very high capital investment required. d) timescales for the town centre redevelopment.

Cabinet

22 September 2011



Digital Durham Programme Update

Report of Corporate Management Team

Don McLure, Corporate Director Resources

Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development

Councillor Alan Napier, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Resources

Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder Regeneration and Economic Development

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on the Digital Durham programme and the bid for funding to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK)
2. To seek Cabinet agreement to the proposed governance arrangements for the programme going forward

Background

3. Cabinet agreed on 9 March 2011 to the proposed plans to provide next generation (super fast) broadband in County Durham through a funding bid to seek the investment required from Broadband Delivery United Kingdom (BDUK) and the commercial broadband providers.
4. The original bid to BDUK was submitted on 15 June, requesting a £10.2 million grant. The awards were announced on 27 May but Durham was not successful at this time. Three bids were successful including Wiltshire, Norfolk and Devon and Somerset (a joint bid) sharing £50 million.
5. BDUK have since announced that Durham (and Gateshead) has been allocated an indicative amount of £7.79m (£30k), which equates to approximately £52 per unconnected property across the county.
6. For context, Northumberland has been allocated £7.03m, Tyne and Wear (excluding Gateshead) £3.42m and Tees Valley £0.77m. None of these has yet submitted a bid.
7. The money will be made available once a Local Broadband Plan (equivalent of the bid document) has been signed off by BDUK and governance arrangements are in place. The bid will be resubmitted on

30 September with an announcement on our funding from BDUK in October.

Pre-procurement

8. The Council has entered into a pre-procurement exercise, inviting potential commercial providers of broadband to engage in a dialogue to:
 - a. Assess market interest in working on the Digital Durham programme and
 - b. Test the Council's approach to market.
9. Expressions of interest closed on 5 August. Over 50 organisations have registered an interest in the programme with 11 completing a written submission.
10. These 11 organisations have been invited to come and discuss their thinking and possible approach to the programme at separate meetings during September.
11. The outcome of these discussions will be used to shape the Council's final tender document.

Engagement

12. Engagement with residents and businesses continues. Presentations are being given to all the Area Action Partnership meetings.
13. A number of Local Broadband Champions has been identified; people who are interested in working with the programme and can support activities at a local level. An event is being planned for October to launch the role of these Local Broadband Champions.
14. A newsletter was circulated to all members in July and was subsequently sent to the local MPs and other interested parties. Following this, the MPs were requested to write a letter to Ed Vaizey, MP Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries in support of the programme.
15. The Digital Durham programme continues to have a strong presence on the social media sites Twitter and Facebook, with daily updates. A programme web site is in development.

Governance

16. The Digital Durham programme has been operating with an officer working group that meets on a monthly basis. As the programme is now set to enter the procurement and delivery phase it is appropriate to set up a strategic board to ensure that the programme achieves its objectives.

17. It is proposed that the board has the following make up:

- a. Independent chair
- b. Programme officer sponsor
- c. Member sponsor
- d. Commercial provider representative
- e. Other public sector representative
- f. Community and Voluntary sector representative
- g. Business representative
- h. Public representative

Recommendations

18. Cabinet is requested to:

- a. Note the ongoing activities within the programme;
- b. Agree to the proposed structure and make up of the Digital Durham Strategic Programme board;

Contact: Phil Jackman Tel:07775025096

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - The Council has identified £2 million of capital for the programme. At this stage it is not known if the Council will need to make any additional revenue or capital contributions to any investments either as a one off or ongoing. This will be part of any bidding process and will be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – Broadband will play a significant role in improving the equality of access to service delivery by making more services available in their homes.

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation - A considerable amount of discussions have taken place with interested parties and stakeholders, including potential providers, government agencies, local authorities, broadband interest groups, senior officers, members, etc. in order to develop this report. Consultation will be required with individual users and their representatives as bids for funding are developed.

Procurement - A pre-procurement exercise is underway.

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications - The EU has issued Guidelines on the circumstances where State Aid may be permissible for Next Generation Access broadband projects and the proposed approach will be designed to be compatible with those guidelines.

Appendix 2: Proposed timetable

Key milestone*	Expected date
Issue of pre-procurement notice	July 2011
Procure legal advice for State Aid	September 2011
Pre-procurement exercise	September 2011
BDUK funding announcement	October 2011
Seek guidance on State Aid application	October 2011
Set up programme board	October 2011
Produce final tender for Delivery Partner	October 2011
Submit State Aid application	October 2011
Organisational structure confirmed	October 2011
Procurement Notice published	October 2011
Draft EU Regulations out for consultation	October 2011
RDPE Rural Broadband Programme Announced	December 2011
Additional capital sought via partnership arrangements	November 2011
PQQ issues for Delivery Partner	November 2011
Public sector partnership arrangements finalized	December 2011
Tender issued for Delivery Partner	December 2011
Delivery partner tender evaluation	February / March 2012
State Aid approval confirmed	March 2012
Delivery partner contract awarded	April 2012
Commencement of implementation	April 2012
European Programme negotiations complete	December 2013
Potential ERDF funding submission	March 2014
Potential ERDF funding approval	September 2014
Completion of delivery phase 1	March 2013
Completion of delivery phase 2	March 2014
Completion of delivery phase 3	March 2015
Completion of delivery phase 4	March 2016
Implementation complete	March 2017
Additional funding bid(s) submitted	Annually and as opportunities arise
Additional funding approval	Not applicable at this stage

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Cabinet

22 September 2011

**Joint Commissioning Strategy for
Domestic Abuse Services in County
Durham 2011-14**



**Report of Corporate Management Team
Report of Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Adults Wellbeing
and Health
Report of Lucy Hovvels, Portfolio holder for Safer & Healthier
Communities.**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with a final draft of the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Domestic Abuse Services 2011-14.

Background

2. The Safe Durham Partnership recognised that the development and delivery of Specialist Domestic Abuse Services across the county particularly in respect of adults and Children's outreach services was necessary especially in the context of a unitary Council. A Scrutiny report in 2007 had highlighted the problems associated with domestic abuse in the County.
3. A single approach to these services has been developed by the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group (DAFEG) and this has been accepted by the Safe Durham Partnership Board.
4. The Safe Durham Partnership Board agreed that a commissioning approach should be adopted and Durham County Council and NHS County Durham agreed to combine budgets and commit recurrent funding to commission specialist domestic abuse services.
5. The Safe Durham Partnership Board approved this approach in January 2011 and at the DAFEG meeting held on the 8th February 2011 the consultation framework was agreed. The draft strategy was then circulated for a three month period of consultation.
6. A consultation pro forma and questionnaire was circulated electronically to stakeholders, practitioners and other interested parties. It was placed on the County Durham Partnership website for public access (see Appendix 3 for full details). The strategy was also considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
7. Following the three month consultation period the strategy was updated and the final draft agreed by the Safe Durham Partnership Board at their meeting on

24th May 2011.

Purpose of the Strategy

8. The purpose of the strategy (which is attached at Appendix 4) is to bring together information from a range of sources, including service users, and service providers in both the statutory and voluntary sectors. It considers access to current service provision and the performance of those services related to outcomes. This will assist in identifying gaps in service demands and the potential cost of the services required in meeting that demand.
9. The strategy provides framework to support the commissioning of high quality services which respond to the broad spectrum of needs for those experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse.
10. Furthermore it establishes how and what the Safe Durham Partnership will commission in respect of specialist services based on identified needs linked to the key priorities identified within the SDP Plan. The strategy will support the vision of the Partnership that *“every child, adult and place in County Durham will be, and will feel safe.”*
11. The main changes that the strategy will facilitate are provided in the Executive Summary provided at Appendix 2 of this report.
12. Durham County Council and NHS County Durham have identified the funding that will be available to support the commissioning of services from 2012. It is envisaged that Supporting People will continue to fund the accommodation based refuge services but at a reduced level; Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) will continue to be funded by partner agencies from core funding. Given the combined funding from the Council and NHS County Durham is limited and based on the assessment of need it has been agreed by the Council and NHS County Durham and the Safe Durham Partnership that the priorities for change attached to this commissioning strategy are:
 - Specialist outreach services for adults and children.
 - Awareness raising and specialist preventative work based around a zero tolerance approach.
 - Remain safe scheme.
 - Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes.

Recommendations and reasons

13. Cabinet is recommended to:
 - a) Agree the strategy which will enable the commissioning process to commence.

Background Papers

- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Domestic Abuse Services July 2011
- County Durham Domestic Violence Strategy 2008-11
- County Durham and Darlington Draft Sexual Violence Strategy 2011-14

- “A Hidden Truth..?” A Scrutiny Report About Domestic Abuse in County Durham, 2007

Contact: Gerald Tompkins
Head of Social Inclusion Tel: 0191 3833176

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

DCC and NHS County Durham and NHS Darlington have agreed to combine budgets to support the strategy.

Staffing

Implementing the strategy would require the staff currently employed in the DCC Domestic Abuse Outreach Service to be TUPE'd over to the new provider. H.R advice would be sought once the strategy was formally agreed by Cabinet.

Risk

If the strategy is not implemented victims of domestic abuse and their children could be put at risk through a lack of service provision.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

An impact assessment has been completed. The strategy would positively impact on all victims and children who experience and witness domestic abuse and would contribute to increasing their safety. The Strategy would also ensure that a service was available to all men across the county which is currently not the case.

Accommodation

Once implemented the issue of accommodation would be addressed by the providers.

Crime and Disorder

Implementing the strategy would contribute to the Crime and Disorder agenda, by improving the safety of victims of domestic abuse.

Human Rights

Implementing the strategy would contribute to promoting the Human Rights of victims and children affected by domestic abuse.

Consultation

A three month period of consultation was carried out from February to May 2011 with partners, key stakeholders, service users and members of the general public.

Procurement

Advice on procurement will be sought at the implementation stage of the strategy.

Disability Issues

No adverse implications.

Legal Implications

Under the Equality Act, in carrying out its functions, the Council must have regard to the following:

- a) Promotion of equality and opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- b) Elimination of discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act.
- c) Elimination of harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- d) Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- e) Encouragement of participation by disabled people in public life.

f) The taking of steps to meet disabled peoples' needs even if this requires favourable treatment.

Under The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended imposes a duty on local authorities and the police to "without prejudice to any other obligation imposed upon it - exercise its function with due regard to the need to do all it reasonably can do to prevent crime and disorder, substance use, anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the environment and reducing re-offending in its area.

**Appendix 2: Executive Summary of the Joint Commissioning Strategy
for Domestic Abuse Services 2011-14**

See attached.

Appendix 3: Consulted Groups

- Elected Members
- Members of the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group
- Chairs of Safe Durham Partnership Thematic Groups
- Safer Neighbourhood Units
- Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Groups
- Anti Social Behaviour teams
- Members of the Domestic Abuse Core Group
- Regional LGBT Development Officer
- Victim Support
- Area Action Partnership's
- Independent Advisory Group's
- Town and Parish Councils
- Service Providers
- Service Users
- Safe Durham Partnership Board
- Safe Durham Partnership Planning and Performance Group
- The consultation pro forma was placed on the County Durham Partnership website to enable wider public consultation
- A language panel was included on the consultation and an option was given for face to face consultation on the Strategy if required. However this option was not requested by any of the consulted groups

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The Safe Durham Partnership

Altogether safer

**Joint Commissioning Strategy
2011-14
for Domestic Abuse Services
in County Durham**

Executive Summary

**Durham County Council
and
NHS County Durham**

July 2011

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1. Summary

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy sets out the framework by which the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) will match the needs and aspirations of local communities and agree priorities and desired outcomes with the resources available to it. It is the plan that describes the needs of people in County Durham who are victims of domestic abuse in terms of prevention, provision and protection.

It brings together information from a range of sources, including service users, and service providers in both the statutory and voluntary sectors. It considers access to current service provision and performance of those services related to outcomes. This will assist in identifying gaps in service demands and the potential cost of the services required meeting that demand.

The strategy provides a strategic framework to support the commissioning of high quality services which respond to the broad spectrum of needs for those experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse.

It implements the recommendation from the Domestic Violence sub-group of the NHS Taskforce on the Health Aspects of Violence Against Women and Children to jointly commission services in partnership with the local authority and the Community Safety Partnership.

It will take into account the combined funding which has been made available for the commissioning of specialist domestic abuse services by Durham County Council and NHS County Durham.

Furthermore it establishes how and what the SDP will commission in respect of specialist services based on identified needs linked to the key priorities identified within the SDP Plan. The strategy will support the vision of the Partnership that *“every child, adult and place in County Durham will be, and will feel safe.”*

The strategy is structured in six sections, an introduction; national and local guidance and research; future demand; market analysis; gap analysis and the design of future provision; and monitoring arrangements.

1.2 Summary of Needs

The Joint Commissioning Strategy has identified the following needs in terms of Domestic Abuse services. These needs are based on findings from plans previous strategic assessments and policy documents including information from service users, providers and partner agencies.

Prevention

- Awareness raising about domestic abuse
- Social marketing to change attitudes
- A whole school response to children and young people
- Teenage partner violence awareness raising programmes
- Early identification, early intervention
- Domestic abuse training for professionals

Provision

- Refuge services
- Specialist domestic abuse outreach services for adults
- Specialist domestic abuse outreach services for children
- Group work programmes for women, for example, Freedom Programme, Power to Change Programme
- Remain safe scheme
- Independent domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)
- Communication and advertising the services available

Protection

- Specialist domestic violence courts (SDVCs)
- Court mandated domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Positive policing and criminal justice responses

1.3 Summary of changes

The main changes that the Joint Commissioning Strategy will facilitate are identified below.

- Safeguard Domestic Abuse accommodation based services and specialist floating support services as much as possible
- Recurrent mainstream funding will be made available to support service provision
- Equal standards of domestic abuse service provision across the County
- Provision of services based on needs within a strategic commissioning framework
- Enhanced provision through the joint implementation plan and shared commitments to commissioning high quality services

1.4 Recommended priorities for the future provision of services

Based on the assessment of need, and taking into account the limited funding available, it has been agreed by Durham County Council, NHS County Durham and

the Safe Durham Partnership that the services this commissioning strategy aims to deliver are:

- Specialist outreach services for adults and children
- Awareness raising and specialist preventative work based around the adoption of a zero-tolerance approach
- Continuation of the Remain safe scheme
- Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes

These services will contribute to the SDP achieving its aims in respect of domestic abuse which are to:

- Increase public confidence in services and help to make people feel safe.
- Improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.

and deliver the agreed outcomes, which are:

- To improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.
- Improved quality of life within our communities.
- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods.
- To reduce serious violent crime across County Durham and in priority locations.

The delivery of this strategy and accompanying action plan (appendix 4) will be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group (DAFEG) the thematic sub group of the Safe Durham Partnership. An accompanying performance management framework has been developed with relevant outcomes and performance indicators.

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The Safe Durham Partnership

Altogether safer

**Joint Commissioning Strategy
2011-14
for Domestic Abuse Services
in County Durham**

**Durham County Council
and
NHS County Durham**

July 2011

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1. Summary

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy sets out the framework by which the SDP will match the needs and aspirations of local communities and agree priorities and desired outcomes with the resources available to it. It is the plan that describes the needs of people in County Durham who are victims of domestic abuse in terms of prevention, provision and protection.

The strategy brings together information from a range of sources, including service users, and service providers in both the statutory and voluntary sectors. It considers access to current service provision and performance of those services related to outcomes. This will assist in identifying gaps in service demands and the potential cost of the services required meeting that demand.

The strategy aims to provide a strategic framework to support the commissioning of high quality services to respond to the broad spectrum of needs for those experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse.

It implements the recommendation from the Domestic Violence sub-group of the NHS Taskforce on the Health Aspects of Violence Against Women and Children to jointly commission services in partnership with the local authority and the Community Safety Partnership.

It will take into account the combined funding which has been made available for the commissioning of specialist domestic abuse services by Durham County Council and NHS County Durham.

The strategy aims to establish how and what the SDP will commission in respect of specialist services based on identified needs and through the planning processes, linked to the key priorities identified within the SDP Plan. The strategy will support the vision of the Partnership that *“every child, adult and place in County Durham will be, and will feel safe.”*

The strategy is structured in six sections, an introduction; national and local guidance and research; future demand; market analysis; gap analysis and the design of future provision; and monitoring arrangements.

1.2 Summary of Needs

The Joint Commissioning Strategy has identified the following needs in terms of Domestic Abuse services. These needs are based on findings from strategies, plans and policy documents including information from service users, providers and partner agencies.

Prevention

- Awareness raising about domestic abuse
- Social marketing to change attitudes
- A whole school response to children and young people
- Teenage partner violence awareness raising programmes
- Early identification, early intervention
- Domestic abuse training for professionals

Provision

- Refuge services
- Specialist domestic abuse outreach services for adults
- Specialist domestic abuse outreach services for children
- Group work programmes for women, for example, Freedom Programme, Power to Change Programme
- Remain safe scheme
- Independent domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)
- Communication and advertising the services available

Protection

- Specialist domestic violence courts (SDVCs)
- Court mandated domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Positive policing and criminal justice responses

1.3 Summary of changes

The main changes that the Joint Commissioning Strategy will facilitate are identified below.

- Safeguard Domestic Abuse accommodation based services and specialist floating support services as much as possible
- Recurrent mainstream funding will be made available to support service provision
- Equal standards of domestic abuse service provision across the County
- Provision of services based on needs within a strategic commissioning framework
- Enhanced provision through the joint implementation plan and shared commitments to commissioning high quality services

1.4 Recommended priorities for the future provision of services

Based on the assessment of need, and taking into account the limited funding available, it has been agreed by Durham County Council, NHS County Durham and the Safe Durham Partnership that the services this commissioning strategy aims to deliver are:

- Specialist outreach services for adults and children
- Awareness raising and specialist preventative work based around the adoption of a zero-tolerance approach
- Continuation of the Remain safe scheme
- Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes

These services will contribute to the SDP achieving its aims in respect of domestic abuse which are to:

- Increase public confidence in services and help to make people feel safe.
- Improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.

and deliver the agreed outcomes, which are:

- To improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.
- Improved quality of life within our communities.
- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods.
- To reduce serious violent crime across County Durham and in priority locations.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The definition of domestic abuse used within this document, is the one adopted in County Durham by all partner agencies and is:

“any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. (Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents, whether directly related, in-laws or step family).” (Home Office, 2005)

Although domestic abuse affecting those aged under 18 is a child safeguarding issue, the Safe Durham Partnership acknowledges that issues such as teenage partner violence exist and will support the County Durham Children’s Trust to address these issues. The Home Office has pledged to consult on the current definition of domestic abuse within the Violence against Women and Girls Action Plan to take into account younger victims aged 16 years and over. The SDP will review its adopted definition in line with Home Office findings, once published.

The Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) Commissioning Strategy for Specialist Domestic Abuse Services has been produced with input from service users, service providers and other professionals working with people affected by domestic abuse issues. It

builds on work that has been ongoing across County Durham in recent years which has highlighted the need to address domestic abuse as a priority area.

This is the first commissioning strategy for specialist domestic abuse services in County Durham and represents the considerable progress the Partnership has made in the strategic planning and future commissioning of specialist services for those affected by domestic abuse. It will be the first time many of the specialist services will have the benefit of recurrent mainstream funding to support service provision. This provision will be further enhanced through the joint implementation plan and shared commitments to commissioning high quality services.

2.2 What is meant by Commissioning?

Commissioning is defined as:

The strategic activity of assessing needs, resources and current services and developing a strategy of how to make best use of available resources to meet needs.'
(Department of Health 1995)

Through the SDP planning processes, delivery groups have identified areas where they feel services need to be commissioned in order to achieve the outcomes set out in the Partnership Plan. The multi agency strategic delivery group for domestic abuse is the Domestic Abuse Executive Forum Group (DAFEG).

The DAFEG is chaired by the Cabinet member with the portfolio for Safer Communities and attended by key individuals from a number of responsible authorities of the SDP (Appendix 2).

The introduction of a Unitary Authority in County Durham in 2009 posed a number of issues for the Safe Durham Partnership in respect of domestic abuse services:

- Disparity in domestic abuse service provision across the County in terms of what is available and standards of service.
- Disparity in terms of funding arrangements for domestic abuse services. There are services which are currently funded by statutory organisations and some through charitable sources, the majority of which are short term and non recurrent funding streams. These need to be reviewed taking into consideration the impact upon the desired outcomes of the Partnership and their value for money.
- The future of accommodation based services and floating support funded through Adults Wellbeing and Health Supporting People Funding.

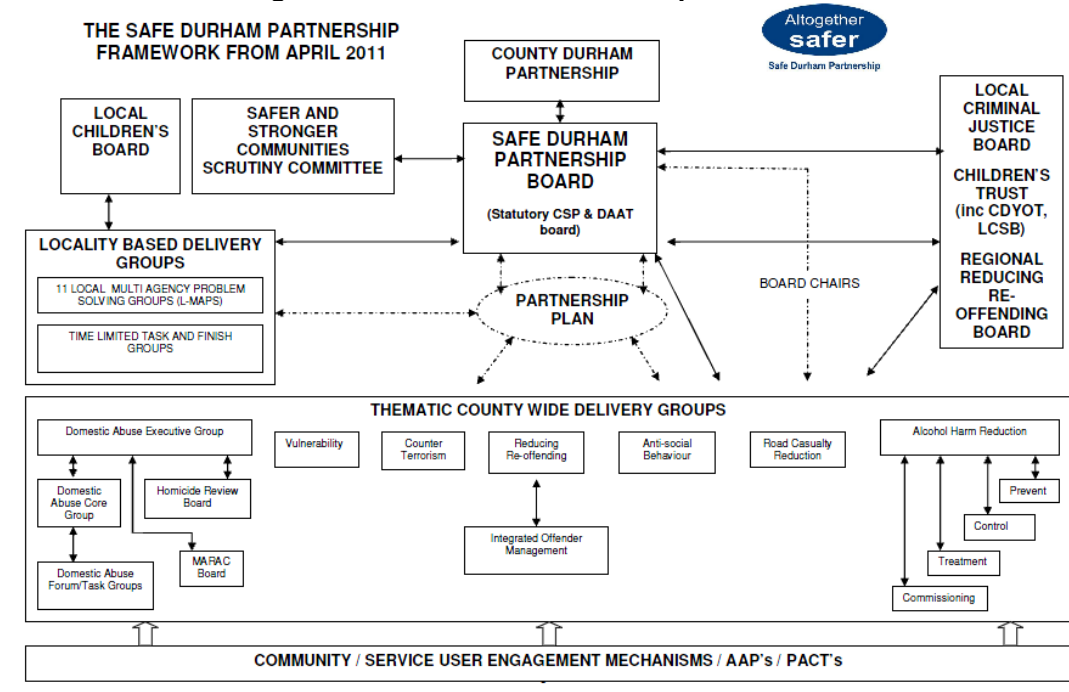
The development of this commissioning strategy provides a framework for agencies to review and develop services and agree priorities. The strategy will identify gaps in services, responsibilities and priorities for future developments in line with Government guidance and with the aim of sharing a joint vision.

2.3 Vision and Pledge of the Safe Durham Partnership

The Safe Durham Partnership is the statutory Community Safety Partnership that covers County Durham as prescribed in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and subsequent legislation. The SDP oversees the strategic delivery of the 'Altogether Safer' theme of the County Durham Partnership.

The SDP is made up of responsible authorities, who work together to tackle crime and disorder, the misuse of drugs, anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the environment. The responsible authorities are Durham County Council, Durham Police Authority, Durham Constabulary, County Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service, NHS County Durham and Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust. Outlined below is the framework for community safety in County Durham.

Figure 1 - Safe Durham Partnership Framework



The vision for the future for the Safe Durham Partnership is that:

- Every child, adult and place in County Durham will be, and will feel safe.

The Safe Durham Partnership pledges to:

- Listen, engage and work with local communities.
- Provide a responsive, consistent, and coordinated approach across all agencies.

In doing so, in respect of domestic abuse issues, we will:

- Increase public confidence in services and help to make people feel safe.
- Improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.

2.4 Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships

The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced the Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships. These Hallmarks are the minimum standards with which Community Safety Partnerships are expected to operate.

Under the Hallmarks, the way in which Community Safety Partnerships utilise their funding resources under scrutiny, partnerships are expected to ensure that in allocating resources they have in mind:

- Value for money
- Areas of most need
- They are allocated through a clear and transparent process
- Inextricable links to desired outcomes, and
- Making the best use of joint specialist and non-specialist resources

In April 2009 the SDP became the Community Safety Partnership for County Durham and is the body accountable for funding allocated to the Community Safety Fund. In order to adhere to the minimum standards the Partnership needs to ensure that it has a robust process for allocating funding against agreed priorities. This underpins the reason for developing a commissioning approach to domestic abuse services.

2.5 Safeguarding

The Safe Durham Partnership recognises that every person within our community has the right to live their lives free from violence and abuse. Safeguarding adults and children is a shared responsibility and a high priority for all agencies in County Durham. All commissioned service providers must ensure they follow the safeguarding procedures for adults and children and are subject to monitoring and reviewing processes, which includes an assessment of their safeguarding processes.

2.6 Equality and Diversity

This commissioning strategy has a number of implications for equality and diversity in line with the Equality Act 2010 in relation to age; ethnicity; religion or belief; disability; sexual orientation; and gender (including transgender, pregnancy and maternity). Issues are integrated within the strategy an example being the emphasis on services for women, who are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse.

All commissioned services will be monitored and reviewed against a set of standards contained within a quality assurance framework. Specific standards relate to equality and diversity both within employment and work with service users.

2.7 Underpinning Principles and Values in Respect of Domestic Abuse

The SDP defines its commitment through a set of principles and values. These are:

- Domestic abuse occurs in all sections of our community. It is a deliberate violation of a person's human rights. Domestic abuse is an issue of inequality, most commonly perpetrated by men towards women though, to a lesser degree, is perpetrated by women on men and within same sex relationships.
- Service provision needs to be flexible to take account of individual need, but sufficiently standardised to ensure a similar response in similar circumstances.
- Survivors need to be an integral part of seeking solutions to the issue.
- There is a strong correlation between domestic abuse and child abuse and children who witness domestic abuse are also at risk of significant harm.
- Effective services are those that offer support and the focus needs to be on what can be offered to increase safety.
- Resource allocation must be inextricably linked to desired outcomes of the Safe Durham Partnership.
- Resource allocation must be based on assessed need as identified through the Strategic Threat Assessment, Problem Profiles, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, national policy development, evidence of good practice and information from current service providers and service users.
- All resources available to the Safe Durham Partnership Board for domestic abuse services must be allocated through a clear and transparent framework and demonstrate open competition.

3. National and Local Guidance and Research

3.1 Evidence Base

- The British Crime Survey found that there were an estimated 12.9 million incidents of domestic violence acts (that constituted non-sexual threats or force) against women and 2.5 million against men in England and Wales in the year preceding interview (Walby & Allen, 2004).
- According to the government National Delivery Plan, less than 24% of domestic violence crime is reported to the police (Walby and Allen, 2004).
- Repeat victimisation is common, 44% of victims of domestic violence are involved in more than one incident. No other type of crime has a rate of repeat victimisation as high (Dodd et al, July 2004).
- On average, two women a week are killed by a violent partner or ex-partner. This constitutes nearly 40% of all female homicide victims (Povey, (ed.), 2005; Home Office, 1999; Department of Health, 2005).
- In a study of 173 children subject to serious case review, domestic violence was an issue for 47 (27%) (Ofsted, 2009).
- In a survey of 13 to 17 year old girls in intimate relationships, one in six girls said they had been hit by their boyfriends (4% regularly) and one in sixteen said they had been raped (NSPCC & University of Bristol, 2009).
- Domestic Violence is the major cause of injury to women under 60 years of age and a major factor for psychiatric disorders, chronic physical conditions and substance abuse (Home Office).

3.2 National Priorities

National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan

The National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan was published by central Government in 2005 and has been reviewed on two occasions. The five key outcomes of the plan are:

- To reduce the number of domestic violence related homicides.
- To reduce the prevalence of domestic violence, particularly in high incidence areas and/or communities.
- To increase the rate of reporting for domestic violence particularly in high incidence areas and /or communities.
- To increase the rate of reported domestic violence offences that are brought to justice, particularly in high incidence areas and/or communities, as well as in areas with high attrition rates.
- To ensure that victims of domestic violence are adequately protected and supported nationwide.

The objectives agreed in 2007/08 reflect the move towards developing a Coordinated Community Response and are:

- To increase the early identification of, and intervention with, victims of domestic violence by utilising all points of contact with front-line professionals.
- To build capacity within the domestic violence sector to provide effective advice and support to victims of domestic violence.
- To improve the criminal justice response to domestic violence.
- To support victims through the Criminal Justice System and to manage perpetrators to reduce risk.

Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls has a significant impact on a range of agencies, from those in the criminal justice system, to health, housing, children and young people's services to name but a few. As a consequence it is recognised that all Government departments and local agencies have a role to play in addressing and ultimately eliminating all forms of violence towards women and girls.

The Government recognised that, up until 2009, the focus of policy had been on protection through the intervention of the criminal justice agencies and on the provision of services once a female has been victimised. Following a period of extensive consultation and national debate, the new 'Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy' was published in December 2009.

The new Coalition Government has reaffirmed the commitment to tackling the issue of violence against women and girls and has stated that no level of violence against women and girls is acceptable. The strategy has recently been refreshed and is centred on four key strands of prevention, provision, partnership working and risk

reduction. It will also focus on justice outcomes, with particular focus on the prevention strand.

The key areas for action the Government intended to take in respect of the four strands are:

Prevention

- Change attitudes, behaviours and practices.
- Increase public understanding.
- Strengthen the understanding of the unacceptability of VAWG.
- Protect vulnerable children.

Provision

- Create a robust commissioning framework.
- Provide continued central funding to frontline services over the next four years.
- Enable local areas to tailor service provision to meet their local needs.
- Provision of training to frontline partners to recognize VAWG and understand the actions to be taken.

Partnership Working

- Support community and voluntary groups to take a stand against violence and help them understand how to do this effectively.
- Encourage people to help themselves and each other using community-based initiatives such as community coaching.
- Work with our European and international partners to tackle VAWG on a collaborative basis

Risk Reduction and Justice Outcomes

- Improve the effectiveness of the Criminal Justice response to VAWG.
- Ensure the application of current legislative powers and risk management processes are both understood and effective.
- Ensure the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes.

NHS Taskforce on Health Aspects of Violence Against Women and Children

In March 2010 the NHS Taskforce produced the 'Report from the Domestic Violence sub-group'. The report looked at the prevalence and impact of domestic abuse, service, internal staff and service users experiences of the NHS and best practice within the NHS structure. The report highlighted a number of summary recommendations for the NHS in tackling domestic abuse issues. These being:

- **Prevention:** Healthcare professionals need to work in partnership to challenge the acceptability of domestic abuse amongst young people.
- **Identification and Management:** Implementation of a rolling programme of training to clinical teams to provide for rapid turnover of staff.

- Key services and successful pathways: Commission intervention programmes for women survivors and their children. The integration of psychological support and treatment for survivors and their children into mainstream health services in primary and secondary care and specialist agencies.
- Improving availability of and access to services: Provide national guidance on the commissioning of a specialist domestic violence service for women and children and commission services jointly with the local authority and the Community Safety Partnership.
- Information Sharing: Integrate child protection and partner domestic violence information sharing.
- Workforce: Set up training in domestic violence at a number of levels within the NHS and require that all NHS employers/contractors have a domestic violence policy.
- Systems and incentives: Provide national commissioning guidance based on national outcome-based standards. Develop common definitions for the collection of data where violence against women has been disclosed.

NHS Operating Framework 2011/12

The NHS Operating Framework for 2011/12 outlines the first full year of the proposed transition to the new structure of the NHS. The goal of the next 12 months' activities is to build a strong foundation for the new system by "maintaining and improving quality, by keeping tight financial control and delivering on the quality and productivity challenge and by creating energy and momentum for transition and reform".

The framework discusses three interrelated themes of 'Transition and reform', 'Transparency and local accountability' and 'Service quality'.

Specialist Domestic Violence Courts

'Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) Programme Guidance' produced by Her Majesty's Courts Service, Crown Prosecution Service and the Home Office in 2005, outlined the requirements for areas selected to achieve SDVC status. An evaluation of a pilot project demonstrated that by adopting particular working practices, significant improvements could be made to the outcomes of domestic violence cases, and contributed to developing a coordinated community response to the issue. The evaluation showed that SDVCs:

- Enhance the effectiveness of court and support services for victims.
- Make support for victims and information-sharing easier.
- Improve victim participation and satisfaction.
- Increase public confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

Key positive outcomes included:

- Increasing the number of domestic violence incidents reported to police that result in a case at court.
- Reducing the number of cases lost before trial (withdrawals and discontinuances).

- Increasing the number of perpetrators brought to justice (via increased early and late guilty pleas of defendants).
- More appropriate sentencing.
- Strengthening cases to enable them to continue if a victim withdraws through the use of evidence other than victim statements.
- Providing advice and support to victims of domestic violence, and enabling victims to access a range of services, had a positive effect on their feelings of safety, their experience with and confidence in the CJS.

To achieve SDVC status a number of core elements had to be demonstrated. These include: issues around the court processes and crucially implementation of the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process for high risk victims; the provision of Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors to support victims through the court process; and the delivery of a voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programme.

3.3 Local Priorities

Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2030

The Sustainable Community Strategy of the County Durham Partnership sets out how the local authority will work with partners over the next 20 years to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the area. The vision for achieving safer communities is that there will be low crime, safer neighbourhoods and public confidence. One of the key priority objectives to achieve this is to protect vulnerable people from harm including those suffering domestic violence. The aim is to have less violent crime, with low numbers of serious injuries, fewer repeat incidents of domestic violence and ensure the MARAC is available across the county.

Durham County Council Plan 2011-14

The Council Plan sets out Durham County Councils corporate priorities for improvement and the key actions it will take to deliver the long term goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy. Under the 'Altogether Safer' objective, a key priority is to protect vulnerable people from harm, including domestic abuse, with a view to improving the safety of victims and reduce repeat incidents. The areas identified for action which are relevant to Domestic Abuse are to:

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Domestic Abuse Services.
- Work with partners to provide individual emotional and practical support services to victims of domestic abuse. Work with partners to provide individual emotional and practical support services to victims of domestic abuse.

Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2011-14

The Safe Durham Partnership Plan describes the 'Altogether Safer' priorities outlined in the Sustainable Community Strategy and continues to drive the work of the Partnership.

The Plan provides a clear picture of how the Safe Durham Partnership will continue to work towards creating a safer and more socially cohesive County and an 'Altogether Better' Durham.

The desired outcome relating to Domestic Abuse is: 'to improve the safety of victims and reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse'. In addition to the desired outcome, the Partnership has also identified six key areas for improvement to be addressed over the Partnership Plan period 2011-14.

The six key areas for improvement are:

- High impact households
- High impact localities
- Anti-social behaviour
- Alcohol harm reduction
- A partnership approach to tackling organised crime
- Improve data and information sharing

County Durham Domestic Abuse Strategy 2008-2011

The County Durham Domestic Abuse Strategy is an over-arching strategy for County Durham and covers the period 2008/11. It has been prepared in consultation with partners in the voluntary and statutory sectors. Its purpose is to provide a framework to ensure the active contribution of partner agencies to the enhancement, strengthening and development of services to reduce domestic abuse and support the large number of adults and children whose safety and well being are affected in our communities.

The strategic vision is for all agencies to work together to seek to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse in County Durham and to develop a coordinated community response that provides high quality support and protection services for those experiencing and witnessing domestic abuse and effectively deals with perpetrators. The strategic priorities are:

- To provide safe and accessible support services to victims and children of domestic abuse.
- To ensure perpetrators of domestic abuse are held accountable for their behaviour.
- To reduce the number of domestic violence related homicides.
- To increase awareness of the extent and impact of domestic abuse within local communities and across agencies and increase the rate of reporting.
- To address issues of funding relating to domestic abuse services.

There are a number of specialist domestic abuse services within County Durham supporting victims of domestic abuse. These services are performing well with significant numbers of victims accessing support on a voluntary basis (see section 4 for detail).

A refresh of the strategy is currently taking place, to cover the period 2011-14, which will take into account more recent policy developments. However this refreshed strategy will need to be reviewed once the Joint Commissioning Strategy has been implemented to take into account any changes to funding and services.

County Durham and Darlington Draft Sexual Violence Strategy 2011 – 2014

The Draft Sexual Violence Strategy highlights that much evidence exists of the links between domestic violence and sexual violence. Rape and sexual violence within the confines of an intimate relationship leaves the victim feeling betrayed, humiliated and confused and is often unrecognised by the victim as a crime.

The strategic priorities of the Strategy are:

- Prevention: to prevent sexual violence and sexual exploitation and reduce the associated harm.
- Provision: to ensure that survivors of sexual violence are provided with access to the right end to end help and support, and that services are available to address their needs.
- Protection: to improve the criminal justice response to sexual violence.

A Hidden Truth...? A Scrutiny report about Domestic Abuse in County Durham 2007

Durham County Council's Scrutiny Sub Committee for Strong, Healthy and Safe Communities established a working group reviewing Domestic Violence. The group primarily focused on the support provided to those victims who seek to flee domestic violence, the impact of domestic violence on families and particularly children, abuse of the elderly.

The following recommendations were suggested by the working group:

- Stronger Leadership
- Greater Awareness
- Better Data
- Enhanced Partnership Working
- Support for Victims and Perpetrators

Adults Wellbeing and Health – Service Improvement Plan 2010-13

The Service Improvement Plan provides an overview of the strategic improvement priorities for Adults Wellbeing and Health. For domestic violence the actions are those as described in the Council Plan detailed above.

Durham County Council are moving towards achieving the actions outlined in the plans. This strategy will contribute to securing the outreach services through the commissioning process. MARAC has now rolled out across the whole of the County.

Homelessness Strategy for County Durham 2008-2013

County Durham's first Homelessness Strategy sets out the challenges and opportunities ahead to meet customers housing, support and advice needs, and the action required to address current and future demands for services. The strategy recognises that this vision will not be realised in isolation. It identifies that statutory and voluntary sector organisations must continue to work together to meet the needs and aspirations of customers, enable access to a range of housing options and prevention services; in short, provide solutions in response to homelessness across the County.

A key objective in the action plan is 'Customers at risk of violence or harassment are able to remain in their home if it is their choice and safe to do so'. Key actions to be delivered are:

- Develop cross tenure target hardening/sanctuary schemes available to all at risk of violence or harassment where homelessness is threatened.
- Work with partnership organisations to develop perpetrator programmes to enable perpetrators to change behaviour.
- Work in partnership with organisations to deliver the Freedom Programme to victims of domestic violence.
- Work with landlords to offer alternative housing to perpetrators to enable victims to remain in their home.
- Develop safe houses and partnership responses to enable victims to remain at home or access suitable alternative accommodation.

3.4 Summary of national and local guidance

This strategy will follow national and local policy objectives. These include:

- Developing a coordinated community response to tackle domestic abuse
- Developing our approach to address the key areas of prevention, provision and protection
- Recognising the gendered aspect of domestic abuse when it comes to commissioning services whilst ensuring services are able to respond to the needs of all victims
- Adopting a zero tolerance approach to all forms of violence.

4 Future Demand

4.1 Demographic Trends

The Office of National Statistics in 2009 estimated that the 15+ age group of County Durham was 424,200 of which 48.9% were male (2206, 100) and 51.1% were female (218,200). The Department of Health estimates that approximately 5% of the population is made up of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people.

Given research indicates 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will experience domestic violence in their lifetime, based on the population figures this means potentially 54,500 female, 34,350 male including 21,210 LGBT people will experience domestic violence in County Durham.

The 'Ready Reckoner' produced by the Home Office to estimate volume and costs of violence against women and girls' estimates that in County Durham, based on the population size and the regional prevalence rate from the British Crime Survey, 10,817 women will have been victims of domestic violence in the last year.

Ethnicity

The ethnic make-up of the County Durham population (ONS Mid-2007 experimental estimates) is shown in the table below:

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percentage of Population</i>
White	488,382	97.4%
Mixed	1,566	0.6%
Asian/ Asian British	1,687	0.9%
Black/ Black British	400	0.4%
Chinese	828	0.4%
Other Ethnic Group	620	0.3%

In 2006 the Commission for Racial Equality suggested that Gypsy and Traveller Communities make up 0.6% of the overall population of County Durham.

Religion

The 2001 census recorded the most common religions within the County, after Christianity, to be Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Judaism. Over 45,000 respondents recorded "no religion".

Age

The age of the population within County Durham has been taken from the Registrar General's Mid-2009, population estimates, and is shown in the table below:

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Population (in 000s)</i>
0-4 years	27.7
5-14 years	54.5
15-24 years	69.4
25-44 years	126.7
45-59 years	105.1
60-64 years	34.0
65+ years	89.1

Projections predict that there will be significant changes to the age profile of the population of County Durham due to an increase in birth rate and net inward migration. Despite this, however, the County has now entered a period of natural

population decline (numbers of deaths exceed the number of births) due to an increasing elderly population in the area.

Disability

The number of people with a registered disability or health issue has been provided by Durham County Council and is accurate to the end of March 2011.

<i>People registered as:</i>	<i>Number</i>
Having a physical disability	29,506
Having a learning disability	2,032
Deaf/ hard of hearing	3,006
Blind/ partially sighted	3,913
Having a car badge	35,815

4.2 Socio-Economic Data

- 11.1% of the population of County Durham are deemed to live in the top 10% deprived wards. 28.5% are within the top 20%, (Index of Deprivation 2010, Registrar General's Mid-2009 population estimates).
- 16.9% of under-16s in County Durham are living in households which claim Income Support. This is slightly higher than the average of 15.6% in England and Wales, Department of Works and Pensions May 2008).
- 4.0% of the Working Age population in County Durham is claiming Job Seekers Allowance. This is slightly more than the 3.7% average across England and Wales, (ONS March 2011).
- The gross weekly pay for residents of County Durham is £380.80 compared with £408.90 in England and Wales (ASHE Survey 2010).
- In County Durham 13.8% of the working population are workless. This is much higher than the average of 10.1% across England and Wales (ONS August 2010).
- 9.3% of the working age population in County Durham is claiming Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance. This is compared with 6.0% in England and Wales (ONS August 2010).
- Of the households in County Durham, 66.9% are owner occupiers, which is lower than the national percentage of 68.9%.

The demographic trends identify that:

- Over half of the population is female
- There are low numbers of people from ethnic minority groups
- Over half of the population is in the age range 15-59 years
- 28.5% of the population in County Durham live in the 20% most deprived locations nationally.

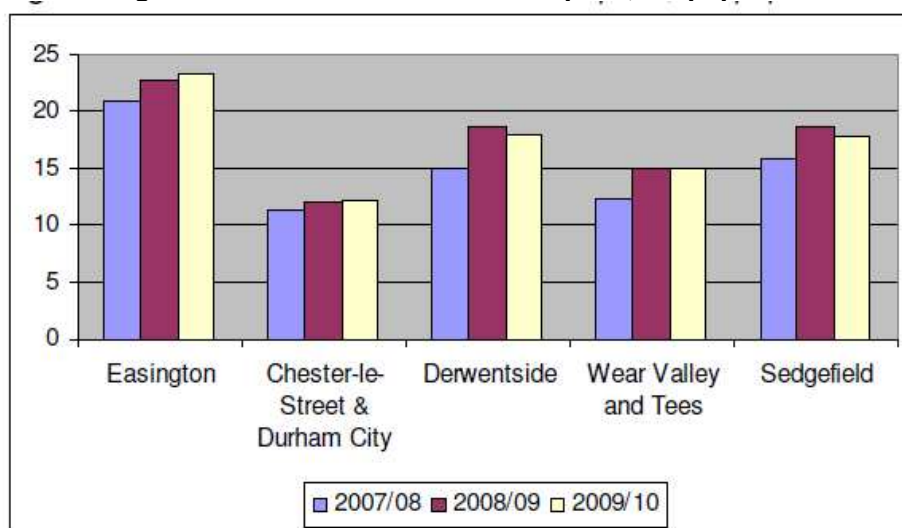
4.3 Domestic Abuse in County Durham

Domestic Abuse Data

The County Durham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2010-2011 identified that:

- There were 8,449 domestic incidents reported to the Police in 2009/10. Figure 2 below shows the breakdown of these incidents by location over the previous three years.
- Information provided by Durham Constabulary's Intelligence Unit shows that there has been a 14% increase in reported incidents of domestic violence within the County.

Figure 2 - Domestic Abuse Incident per 1,000 population



Source: Durham Constabulary Intelligence Unit

- This rise in incidents is a result of the activity across the partnership to raise awareness and confidence (SDP Strategic Assessment, 2009).
- 1,667 adult victims have used or accessed Outreach Support in County Durham in 2009/10.
- 183 children or young people have accessed or used Specialist Children's Outreach Support.
- 93% of adult referrals to outreach services were female, 4% were male, and the remaining data was incomplete. Ages ranged from 16–73 years.
- In 2009/10 the four refuges within the County provided accommodation and support for 154 women with 160 children. Of these women 60 came from 'out of county' and 3 were victims of so-called 'honour based violence'
- A large number of referrals were received from the Police (44%) and the service user themselves (12%).
- During the period 2009/10 Easington remained the SNU with the highest rate per 1,000 population of recorded domestic abuse incidents followed by Sedgefield and Derwentside. Chester le Street & Durham SNU have had much lower levels than other areas over the previous three years, with Derwentside seeing the greatest increase between 2007/08 and 2009/10 (Fig. 2).
- Although domestic abuse is not confined to a specific socioeconomic grouping, the prevalence around reported incidents indicates an association with stressors such as

poor housing, unemployment/low wages and high deprivation levels; requiring long term solutions.

- It is estimated nationally that only a quarter of all domestic abuse incidents are reported to the Police.
- Drugs and alcohol are often involved in reported incidents of domestic abuse.
- Although not a causation factor, there is a strong complex association between domestic abuse and substance use.
- People in same sex relationships and from the transgender community are less likely to engage with current service structures.

4.4 Cost of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

The Home Office 'Ready Reckoner' has been used to calculate the estimated annual cost of domestic abuse and sexual violence in County Durham, detailed in the table below. The figures are based on the population size and are derived from national estimated costs. It does not include estimated costs related to female genital mutilation, stalking, forced marriage or so called honour based violence.

Cost Heading	£
Physical and mental health care	17,461,695
Criminal justice costs	10,998,521
Social services	2,071,235
Other costs (including housing, civil legal, employment)	50,502,628
Total costs (not including human and emotional)	81,034,079

Based on the 10,817 victims estimated by the population size, this equates to £7,491 per victim per year.

4.5 Feedback from Surveys

Service User Feedback

A paper based consultation exercise was carried out with service users. Although the response was limited, it has highlighted those areas which may be required in the future to meet expectations and aspirations. These include:

- Provision of outreach services.
- Provision of refuges.
- Information / publicity on services, particularly outreach services.
- Group support programmes.
- Services for children who have lived with domestic abuse, particularly the 14-19 age range.
- Emphasis on the affect on the family rather than focussing on it being a woman's issue.
- Preventative work, including work in schools.

Partner Agencies Feedback

In 2010 an online survey was circulated to all partner agencies to highlight areas that need to be developed to address the issue of domestic abuse. The results of this survey indicated that partners were aware of the specialist services in their area and were able to access training. Knowledge of MARAC and the referral process was highlighted as a gap.

4.6 Summary

- Domestic abuse affects a significant number of people in County Durham, particularly women.
- Over half of the population in the county is female.
- It is estimated that, within County Durham over 10,000 women were victims in the last year.
- There were over 8,000 incidents reported to the police and the trend is set to continue to rise.
- Deprivation is a stressor associated with domestic abuse which is a significant issue for many residents of County Durham.
- Victims are subject to a range of crimes including violence and criminal damage.
- Over 1600 victims accessed specialist domestic abuse services in 2009/10.
- Significant numbers of children are living in households where domestic abuse is an issue and require targeted and specialist services.
- The annual cost of domestic abuse to services in County Durham is estimated to be in excess of £80,000,000.
- Research has highlighted a strong complex association between domestic abuse and substance misuse.

5. Market Analysis

5.1 A Map of Services

This section presents a picture of existing specialist domestic abuse services delivered across County Durham based on the most recent data available. This assessment will take into account service quality and performance. The financial analysis will identify current spending on services and the sources of funding. Analysis of the market will assess strengths and weakness for current and future trends in provision.

5.1.1 Specialist Services

Outreach Services

The outreach services across the county provide services within the community to adult victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse, with a view to reducing domestic abuse in all of its forms. The services provide individual practical and emotional support to adult victims; counselling services for adults and children; group programmes; training to other agencies; and awareness raising to partner

agencies and the general public to highlight that domestic abuse is unacceptable in our community.

Derwentside Domestic Abuse Service and East Durham Domestic Violence Forum are independent charities and Number 31/75 Domestic Abuse Service is provided by DCC within Social Inclusion Service area and provides services in the south of the county. The two charities receive short-term and non-recurrent funding from charitable sources, NHS County Durham and DCC. The cost of the current services is as follows:

	<i>£,000</i>
Derwentside DAS	250
East Durham DVF	125
31/75- DCC service	126
Total	501

The Derwentside outreach service had charitable income to cover most of its costs in 2010/11, with the exception of one Adult Support Worker which was funded for one year by Durham County Council and £33k through Supporting People for floating support for 10 service users. The East Durham Forum had charitable funding for one children's worker, the rest of the funding for 2010/11 was provided by NHS County Durham and Darlington. The cost of 31/75 is provided for within Social Inclusion's base budget and the amount identified above is for staffing costs.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and Independent Specialist Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA)

The purpose of MARAC is to combine in a single meeting relevant up to date risk information with a comprehensive assessment of the victim's needs and links those directly to the provision of appropriate services for high risk cases of domestic violence: victim, children and perpetrator. In 2009/10, 97 cases were heard at MARAC and there was a repeat victim rate as measured by NI 32 of 10%, well below the Home Office target of 28%. During this period MARAC was operational in Easington and rolled out into the south of the County in January 2010, with full coverage from July 2010.

The IDVA service provides individual advice and support to victims of domestic violence once a perpetrator has been charged with an offence, with a view to maintaining support for the prosecution through the criminal justice process. There are four IDVAs in post located with the police Domestic Violence Units in County Durham and Darlington. One has been in post since MARAC became operational in 2007; the other three have come into post as MARAC has rolled out across the county. In quarter one of 2010, the first quarter that data is available for, the IDVAs worked with 68 victims, 54 engaged with the service, 47 were referred to MARAC and 37 were supported through the court process.

CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse), a national charity supporting multi agency responses to domestic violence, quality assessed MARAC, through the Easington operation. The MARAC process is assessed on 10 principles ranging from identification and referral criteria through to issues relating to equality and diversity, with a view to making recommendations to sustain and improve the MARAC process.

Areas of good practice were identified and areas for development which are to be incorporated into an improvement plan.

Funding for MARAC, for the coordinator, administrator and 4 IDVAs, is split between the NHS County Durham, Durham Constabulary, Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust, and the two Local Authorities on an equal basis, £44k per annum for each partner, although the Probation Trust makes its contribution in kind. The local government contribution is split between Darlington BC and Durham County Council. DCC's contribution of £34k was previously allocated from the Stronger Safer Communities ABG through the Safe Durham Partnership. This funding stream is not available for 2011/12 and the shortfall has been allocated from DCC's core budget. To date the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on funding for MARAC from partner agencies has not yet been determined though partners have indicated that in principle they are committed to providing the service.

Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVC)

When referring to a specialist DV court, this is not so much referring to a court building or jurisdiction, but to a specialised way of dealing with domestic violence cases in the magistrates' courts. The aim of the SDVCs is:

- To provide a coordinated judicial response to criminal proceedings involving domestic violence incidents.
- To develop and coordinate the provision of victim/witness services within the criminal justice system.
- To encourage the victims of domestic violence incidents to come forward and report cases and to remain engaged with the criminal justice system throughout the process.
- To improve the experience of victims and witnesses.
- To increase the confidence of the public and victims in the criminal justice system to deal justly with offences.
- To increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice.

County Durham achieved SDVC status in 2006 and the Courts are performing well. In 2009/10, 546 cases were heard in the SDVC with 80.11% resulting in a prosecution. This is continuing in 2010/11 during April to June 81.6% of cases resulted in a prosecution compared to the national average of 71.8% with County Durham courts ranking as one of the highest achieving courts in the country.

Voluntary and Mandated Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme

The Voluntary Perpetrator Programme has been funded on a non-recurrent basis since 2007 from the Community Safety Area Based Grant and NHS County Durham and Darlington, £22,000 in total for the 3 years. The programme ran as a pilot and provided a 32 week rolling group work programme. In 2009/10 24 assessments were undertaken and 5 men completed the programme during that period.

During 2010/11 an integrated voluntary perpetrator programme was commissioned by Children's and Young People's Service, with funding from NHS County Durham, through the 'think family' approach. £100,000 was awarded to Barnados, and the funding, although reduced, has been continued for 2011/12. From May to September 2010, 21 men have been assessed, 4 attend the group programme and 6 women

have been offered support. The programme has recently received accreditation by Respect, the membership association for perpetrator programmes and associated support services.

The mandated perpetrator programme is provided by the Probation Trust funded through the service base budget. It is a 29 session programme for men with a women's safety worker attached to the programme to support the partners of participants. Seven programmes run a year across County Durham and in 2009/10, 35 men completed the programme.

Remain Safe

The Remain Safe Scheme provides target hardening/security measures to the homes of victims of domestic violence. During 2010/11 Housing Solutions had funded the project to the value of £60,000 for those at risk of homelessness, with the Total Home Safety project funding the service for anyone not at risk of losing their home. In 2009/10 Housing Solutions target hardened 220 homes at an average cost of £400 per unit. This scheme is a key service to protect victims of domestic violence and enable them to remain in their own homes. Housing Solutions continues to fund DISC to provide the Remain Safe scheme to provide target hardening measures for victims of domestic abuse. This funding is confirmed until 2014.

Refuge Services

Supporting People provide £496,162 for four refuges, with 28 places to accommodate women and children fleeing domestic abuse. As well as accommodation the services provide emotional and practical support to enable women to make decisions about their future. A further £84,000 was provided to two refuges to provide floating support for 20 service users a year. This funding was continued in 2010/11 albeit at a reduced level (see 5.1.1).

In 2009/10 the refuges accommodated 154 women along with 160 children. 60 families were from County Durham, 7 from the North East and 54 from other areas of the country. There is felt to be adequate refuge provision overall in the county based on the size of the population.

It must be noted that other service areas do provide services that benefit victims and children affected by domestic abuse, but the focus of their intervention is not primarily to respond to domestic abuse and they are not specialist providers in this area. For example, substance misuse services and mental health services.

The specialist domestic abuse services are contributing to the priorities outlined in strategies and plans in line with the national and local policy approach. With the exception of the refuge services and MARAC, there is a heavy reliance upon non-recurrent and charitable funding. As a consequence of the current funding arrangements there has been a lack of consistency in terms of the development of some of the services, particularly in respect of the outreach support services for victims and children, with some areas better served than others.

Freedom Programme

The Freedom Programme is a 12 week awareness raising group programme for female victims of domestic abuse. In County Durham programmes are facilitated

largely by Surestart workers and specialist domestic abuse support workers. During 2009/10, 65 women completed the programme across the county.

5.1.2 Other Services

Children and Young People's Safeguarding and Specialist Services

Significant numbers of children required Safeguarding and Specialist Services as a consequence of witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse. From February 2009 to January 2010, 49% (113) of cases at the initial child protection conferences identified domestic abuse as an issue; rising to 200 cases at the first review.

Pathfinder

Pathfinder provides intensive support to vulnerable families where the children are at risk of entering Safeguarding and Specialist Services. In 2009/10, 167 families were referred to the service. Of those, 36 had domestic abuse as the presenting issue and a further 50 presented with two or more issues, domestic abuse being one.

Family Intervention Project

The Family Intervention Project (FIP) seeks to address issues relating to anti-social behaviour with a view to restoring safety to the family home and wider community. Domestic abuse does present as an issue in these families, and in 2009/10 the FIP worked with 16 families where domestic abuse was an issue as well as anti-social behaviour.

Housing Services

During 2010/11, 453 victims (8.5%) presented to housing services as homeless due to fleeing domestic abuse. 120 people were referred to the Remain Safe project and 153 were accepted as homeless due to violence (40% of all acceptances).

5.2 Current Contracting and Procurement Arrangements

Historically, funding activity within the Community Safety arena has involved requests for funding to meet particular priorities. There has been no strategic framework for commissioning specialist domestic abuse services across the agencies or within agencies. The short term provision of such an approach has proved problematic. One of the intentions of this document is to shift towards a more planned, coordinated and strategic approach which achieves better value for money, quality and consistency across the County. This way, services commissioned through the SDP are then more likely to meet the needs of individuals and contribute to achieving the objectives and outcomes.

The commissioning and procurement cycles devised by the Institute for Public Care will be followed by SDP (Appendix 3). The following is a description of the different elements of the cycle.

Analysis – understanding the values and purpose of the agencies involved, the needs they must address, and the environment in which they operate. This element of the commissioning cycle involves activities such as:

- Clarifying the priorities through reviewing legislation, national guidance and local strategies and policy statements.
- Undertaking needs assessment.
- Mapping and reviewing existing and potential services across agencies to understand provider strengths and weaknesses, and identify opportunities for improvement or change in providers.
- Identifying resources needed and risks involved in implementing change and/or continuing with the status quo.

Planning – identifying the gaps between what is needed and what is available, and planning how these gaps will be addressed within available resources. This element of the commissioning cycle involves activities such as:

- Undertaking a gap analysis and identify what is needed in the future.
- Designing services to meet need.
- Writing a commissioning strategy.

Doing – ensuring that the services needed are delivered as planned, in ways which efficiently and effectively deliver the priorities and targets set out in the commissioning strategy. This element of the commissioning cycle involves activities such as:

- Supply management and capacity building to ensure a good mix of service providers, offering consumers an element of choice in how their needs are met.
- Developing good communications and effective relationships with existing and potential suppliers.
- Purchasing and contracting of services and de-commissioning services that do not meet the needs of the population group.

Reviewing – monitoring the impact of services and analysing the extent to which they have achieved the purpose intended. This element of the commissioning cycle involves activities such as:

- Pulling together information from individual contracts or service level agreements.
- Developing systems to bring together relevant data on finance, activity and outcomes.
- Analysing any changes in legislative requirements, population need and reviewing the overall impact of services to identify revisions needed to the strategic priorities.

The procurement or purchasing cycle follows the same pattern of analysis, plan do and review, and consists of similar activities, but at a different level. Activities in the procurement cycle include:

- Analysing service users needs.
- Developing service specifications and deciding on the contract type and terms.
- Day-to day care and contract management and communication with providers.
- Monitoring and reviewing contracts.

A service quality monitoring framework will need to be developed for any services commissioned through this strategy, as currently this is dictated by the funding stream accessed by service providers. The Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework model will be adopted which will ensure that there are consistent monitoring and review arrangements in place. This model assesses providers through core service objectives related to assessment and support planning; security and health and safety; safeguarding and protection from violence; fair access, diversity and inclusion; and client involvement and empowerment.

5.3 Finance and Funding

Durham County Council and NHS County Durham

It is acknowledged that the statutory partners directly and indirectly address the issue of domestic abuse through the delivery of core business, which cannot be separately costed. However this strategy is concerned with the provision of specialist domestic abuse services targeted to provide both practical and emotional support to increase the safety of victims and children and to help abusers address their behaviour.

Durham County Council and NHS County Durham have set aside specific funding committed to 2012/13 to support the delivery of this strategy. It is anticipated that service providers will continue to secure funding from charitable sources to support their operations.

MARAC

The partner agencies Durham County Council, Darlington Borough Council, Durham Constabulary, Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust and NHS County Durham have all committed mainstreamed funding to continue the operation of the MARAC process.

Supporting People

In response to the financial situation it has been decided to safeguard accommodation based services and specialist floating support services as much as possible, which includes Domestic Abuse Services. As a result Adults, Wellbeing & Health (Supporting People) remain committed to funding Domestic Abuse Services and have been able to limit the reduction to 5% (based on spend made in 2010/11) over the next four years from April 2011. However, it must be noted that the financial settlement from Central Government is only for two years and it is currently unclear as to what the settlement will be for the following two years. Once the settlement is known this will provide an appropriate opportunity to revise the savings impact as necessary.

5.4 Summary

- Funding has been made available for specialist services to contribute to addressing domestic abuse.
- Funding historically has been generally short term and not recurrent.

- Funding through community safety has been based on requests for funding to address priorities.
- There is a requirement to provide services based on needs within a strategic commissioning framework.

6 Gap Analysis and the Design of Future Provision

6.1 Future Priorities

This section sets out the future commissioning priorities for specialist domestic abuse services in County Durham. These priorities have been identified from strategies, plans and policy documents including information from service users, providers and partner agencies obtained as a result of a recent survey carried out to inform this strategy.

The priorities have been grouped under the headings of prevention, provision and protection.

Prevention

- Awareness raising about domestic abuse
- Social marketing to change attitudes
- A whole school response to children and young people
- Teenage partner violence awareness raising programmes
- Early identification, early intervention
- Domestic abuse training for professionals

Provision

- Refuge services
- Specialist domestic abuse outreach services for adults
- Specialist domestic abuse outreach services for children
- Group work programmes for women, for example, Freedom Programme, Power to Change Programme
- Remain safe scheme
- Independent domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)
- Communication and advertising the services available

Protection

- Specialist domestic violence courts (SDVCs)
- Court mandated domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Positive policing and criminal justice responses

These priorities would contribute to the outcomes for domestic abuse identified by the SDP which are:

- To improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.
- Improved quality of life within our communities.
- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods.
- To reduce serious violent crime across County Durham and in priority locations.

6.2 Priorities for Change

The SDP, Durham County Council and NHS County Durham have identified the funding that will be available to support the commissioning of services from 2012. It is envisaged that Supporting People will continue to fund the accommodation based refuge services but at a reduced level; MARAC will continue to be funded by partner agencies from core funding. Given the combined funding from DCC and NHS County Durham is limited and based on the assessment of need it has been agreed by Durham County Council, NHS County Durham and the Safe Durham Partnership that the priorities for change attached to this commissioning strategy will be:

- Specialist outreach services for adults and children.
- Awareness raising and specialist preventative work based around a zero tolerance approach.
- Remain safe scheme.
- Voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programmes.

It is envisaged that specialist outreach services will be commissioned and involve the transfer of the existing Durham County Council domestic abuse workers to the new provider; this provider will take a lead in respect of awareness raising and developing preventative approaches. Joint commissioning will continue with Housing Solutions to provide the Remain Safe Scheme; and the Partnership will look to facilitate the ongoing commissioning of a voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programme.

It must be noted that the funding of any services will depend on value for money and clear outcomes being able to be demonstrated.

Funding these services will contribute to the SDP achieving its aims in respect of domestic abuse which are to:

- Increase public confidence in services and help to make people feel safe.
- improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.

and deliver the agreed outcomes, which are:

- To improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.
- Improved quality of life within our communities.

- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods.
- To reduce serious violent crime across County Durham and in priority locations.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

This strategy and accompanying action plan (appendix 4) developed to implement this strategy will be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group (DAFEG) the thematic sub group of the Safe Durham Partnership. DAFEG meets quarterly, is chaired by the Cabinet member with the portfolio for safer communities and is attended by senior managers from the responsible authorities. Regular reports will be provided to the Performance and Planning Group and the Safe Durham Partnership Board.

The SDP expects all projects supported financially to be properly project managed. Any service specification for commissioned services will include the evaluation criteria which will outline how the Partnership will assess whether their desired outcome has been achieved. Service providers will need to provide regular “Checkpoint” reports (Appendix 5) and reporting any risks or issues affecting the project.

A quality assurance framework will be used to monitor the projects and services delivered. The quality assessments standards will include key objectives around:

- Security and health and safety
- Safeguarding and protection from abuse
- Complaints and comments
- Confidentiality
- Fair access, diversity and inclusion
- Recruitment, selection and staff development
- Needs and risk assessment
- Care and support planning
- Service user finances
- Transport

7.1 Outcomes to be Delivered by Commissioning Proposals

The outcomes to be delivered by any commissioning proposals for domestic abuse are:

- To improve the safety of victims and children who witness and experience domestic abuse and to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse
- Improved quality of life within our communities
- People feel safe in their neighbourhoods
- To reduce serious violent crime across County Durham and in priority locations

The lead officer of the service will need to determine how the success of the outcome can be measured at the outset and ensure that they have the data to support the performance measures available to them on a quarterly basis.

7.2 Performance Indicators

The SDP, Durham County Council and NHS County Durham performance, in respect of this strategy, will be monitored through the Performance Management Framework which lays out the performance indicators of the Partnership. Any domestic abuse service commissioned by the Partnership will be expected to contribute to achieving improvements in performance for the following indicators:

- NI32 MARAC
Percentage of Domestic Abuse victims at MARAC who are repeat victims
- Domestic Abuse - Homicides
Number of Domestic Abuse homicides
- Number of children accessing or using Outreach support services
Children accessing Outreach in Durham County
- Number of victims accessing or using Outreach support services
Adults accessing Outreach from Durham County Services
- Number of 16 and 17 year olds who are victims of Domestic Abuse accessing Outreach services
- Number of 16 and 17 year olds who are victims of Domestic Abuse accessing Refuge services
- Percentage of beds occupied in Refuges (Adults)
- Percentage of beds occupied in Refuges (Children)
- Number of referrals received by Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) in Durham County
- Percentage of IDVA referrals where the IDVA provided support to the victim
- Proportion of offenders NOT convicted (guilty plea or guilty after trial) as a proportion of Domestic Violence cases heard at Magistrates courts
Figure includes those cases heard at DV Specialist Courts
- Number of cases where a person has been arrested and charged with a Domestic Abuse related offence and percentage that resulted in successful prosecution at court
- The number of incidents of Domestic Abuse reported annually either directly to the Police or through a third party
- Number of Domestic Abuse incidents that lead to an arrest
- Number of men completing the Voluntary Perpetrator Programme
- Number of men completing the Court Mandated Perpetrator Programme
- Number and Percentage of Initial Conferences resulting in a Child Protection Plan due to one of the Parental Risk Factors being Domestic Abuse
- Number and Percentage of Review Child Protection Conferences due to one of the Parental Risk Factors being Domestic Abuse
- Number of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse
Data collected from the Police re. repeat victims of Domestic Abuse

Appendix 1 : Glossary of Terms

Area Based Grant	<i>Funding allocated to address the priorities of the Local Area Agreement</i>
County Durham Children's Trust	<i>The Children's Trust has strategic responsibility for the development and implementation of integrated children's services across County Durham.</i>
DAFEG	<i>Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group, the thematic sub group of the Safe Durham Partnership</i>
DCC	<i>Durham County Council</i>
IDVA	<i>Independent Specialist Domestic Violence Advisors</i>
JSNA	<i>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</i>
LGR	<i>Local Government Re-organisation</i>
MARAC	<i>Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference</i>
NHS County Durham Partnership Plan	<i>The Primary Care Trust for County Durham Three year plan of the Safe Durham Partnership to tackle crime and disorder</i>
Ready Reckoner	<i>This tool is a key action in the initial Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy. Using findings from the British Crime Survey, it enables commissioners of services from a range of providers such as health, policing and housing, to estimate the need for local services for domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking in their area.</i>
SDVC	<i>Specialist Domestic Violence Court</i>
SNU	<i>Safer Neighbourhood Unit</i>
Specialist Service	<i>Any service referred to within this document as a 'specialist service' is specialist in terms of the sole purpose being to address to issue of Domestic Abuse.</i>
Strategic Threat Assessment	<i>The presentation and interpretation of the summary of findings of intelligence analysis for the Safe Durham Partnership</i>
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	<i>Sets out the community's long term vision for the future of County Durham.</i>
The Safe Durham Partnership (SDP)	<i>Community Safety Partnership for County Durham</i>
VFM	<i>Value For Money</i>

Appendix 2 : Membership of the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group

- Detective Superintendent within Vulnerability, Durham Constabulary;
- A representative from Durham Police Authority;
- Lead Senior Nurse, Safeguarding Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust;
- Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services and chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Durham County Council;
- Head of Housing, Durham County Council;
- Director of Offender Management, Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust;
- Associate Director of Nursing County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust;
- Consultant in Public Health;
- Head of Social Inclusion, Durham County Council;
- Strategic Coordinator for Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage & And Honour Based Violence, Durham Constabulary; and
- Safer Communities Officer, Durham County Council.

Appendix 3: Joint Commissioning Framework



Source: Institute for Public Care

Appendix 4: Implementation Plan

To address the priorities for change identified in the Commissioning Strategy the following action plan has been developed describing how the work will be implemented. Progress against the plan will be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group. The Action Plan will be updated annually.

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action Required</i>	<i>Resources/ Commissioning Required</i>	<i>Target/ Intended Outcome</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Lead Officer</i>
Provide refuge services for women and children	Continued procurement and contracting with service providers	Funding through Supporting People to commission services	Reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse	March 2011	DCC Adults Well being and Health Commissioning manager
Provide specialist domestic abuse outreach services and group work programmes for victims and children	Develop service specification Address HR issues related to DCC staff Procurement and contracting activity	Funding required to commission service	Improve safety of victims and children	2011/12	Head of Social inclusion and Director of Public Health
Provide the remain safe scheme to enable victims to remain in their own homes	Develop service specification Procurement and contracting activity	Funding required to commission service	People feel safe in their neighbourhood and improved quality of life within our communities	2011/12	Head of Housing Services
Deliver MARAC across the county	Agencies to provide single points of contact Continue to provide a	Staff time Partnership funding	Reduce serious violent crime and reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse	Ongoing during 2011/12	Chief Officers in partner agencies

	MARAC coordinator				
Provide an IDVA service	Continued provision of the service	Partnership funding	Reduce serious violent crime and reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse	Ongoing during 2011/12	Chief Officers of the Responsible Authorities of the Safe Durham partnership
Provide a voluntary domestic abuse perpetrator programme	Develop service specification Procurement and contracting activity	Funding required to commission service	Improve the safety of victims and children	2011/12	Head of Social inclusion and Director of Public Health
Assess identified priorities for change against value for money and outcomes and make recommendations to DAFEG in respect of commissioning/decommissioning services	Undertake the assessment	Staff time	Services to be commissioned are identified	March 2011	Head of Social inclusion and Director of Public Health
Review the commissioning strategy	Undertake the review	Staff time	Strategy reviewed and refreshed	By March 2012	Head of Social inclusion and Director of Public Health

Appendix 5: Checkpoint Report

Service/Project Name:

Date:

Service/Project Lead Officer:

**Outcomes that the service/project
Contribute to:**

*Insert the AGREED
outcomes as set out in
your contract*

Performance Indicators

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

*Insert here the PIs agreed in
your contract*

Service/project Update:

Insert service/project update here

Issues:

*Identify any issues which are
affecting service delivery or
performance*

**Expected developments with
Service/project in the next 3
Months:**

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

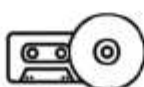
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