



Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date Friday 23 January 2015
Time 9.30 am
Venue Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

Business

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. Apologies.
2. Substitute Members.
3. Minutes of the meeting held 21 November 2014. (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any.
5. Medium Term Financial Plan (Pages 7 - 82)
 - i) Medium Term Financial Plan Reports – Report of Assistant Chief Executive
 - ii) Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16. – Report of the Corporate Director Resources.
 - iii) Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 (MTFP5) and 2015/16 Budget – Report of the Corporate Director Resources.
6. Quarter 2 2014/15 Performance Management Report (Pages 83 - 100)
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive.
7. Customer Feedback: Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Quarter 2 Report 2014/15 (Pages 101 - 118)
Joint Report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services and Assistant Chief Executive.
8. 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
15 January 2015

To: **The Members of the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Councillor J Lethbridge (Chairman)
Councillor K Henig (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J Alvey, J Armstrong, L Armstrong, G Bleasdale, J Buckham, Carr,
P Crathorne, J Hillary, E Huntington, N Martin, P McCourt, A Shield, T Smith,
P Stradling, L Taylor, A Turner, M Wilkes, S Wilson and R Young.

Other Attendees:

Councillors A Batey, R Bell, J Blakey, D Boyes, J Chaplow, R Crute, B Graham,
D Hall, A Hopgood, T Nearney, C Potts, J Shuttleworth, R Todd and W Stelling.

Contact: Lucy Gladders

Tel: 03000 269712

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE ISSUES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 21 November 2014 at 11.30 am**

Present:

Councillor J Lethbridge (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Armstrong, L Armstrong, G Bleasdale, J Buckham, Carr, K Henig (Vice-Chairman), J Hillary, A Hopgood, E Huntington, N Martin, A Shield, T Smith, P Stradling, L Taylor and R Young

1 Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Wilkes and S Wilson.

2 Substitute Members.

Councillor A Hopgood substitute for Councillor M Wilkes.

3 Minutes of the meetings held on 19 September and 17 October 2014.

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 September and 17 October were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with the inclusion of Councillor A Shield's apologies.

4 Declarations of Interest, if any.

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

5 Report on the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 - Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 - 2014/15

The Committee received a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which provided information about the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') during the period 1 April 2014 until 30 June 2014 (Quarter 1) and 1 July 2014 until 30 September 2014 (Quarter 2) to ensure that it is being used consistently with the Council's policy and that it remains fit for purpose.

Councillor Hillary asked whether any of the evidence collected had been used to bring any successful prosecutions. He added that it may be helpful to include this information in future reports. The Solicitor, Governance advised that she could include details of pending prosecutions within future reports.

Resolved:

- (i) That the quarterly reports on the Council's use of RIPA for Quarters 1 and 2 be noted.
- (ii) That the Council's policy remains fit for purpose.

6 Review of Council Plan and Service Plans.

The Committee received a report and presentation of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on progress on the development of the Council Plan 2015-2018 including the draft aims and objectives contained within the Plan and the proposed performance indicator set to measure our success (for copy of report and slides of presentation see file of minutes).

The Head of Planning and Performance advised that the team were currently reviewing corporate and service planning with a view to the council plan and service plans being agreed by Council in April and a revised set of performance indicators being signed off by Cabinet in June 2015.

It was reported that the four objectives of the Altogether Better theme had remained unchanged however there had been one change to the range of outcomes to include:

- ABC6. Responding to Welfare Reform and the effects of poverty.

Members welcomed the inclusion of poverty within the revised outcome.

The Head of Planning and Performance then proceeded to run through the PIs for each theme within Altogether Better. The first related to Customer Services and it was noted that there was no proposed changes at this time to the indicator set. Councillor Hopgood suggested that an indicator should be included to measure the number of hits on facebook, twitter and other social media sites. In addition she added that she would like to see more focus on the positives and performance regarding the number of compliments should be reported.

Councillor Martin commented that none of the PIs listed, told us anything about the performance of the CRM system and suggested that this was an important piece of data. Councillor Armstrong commented that he too agreed with Councillor Martin's comments.

Councillor K Henig commented that a lot of these points had been picked under during the course of the Customer Services task and finish group and many of the principles discussed dealt with in the recommendations.

Councillor Hillary said that he did consider the CRM system to have some weaknesses and felt that it would be good to provide the customer with feedback on whether the job had been completed, in addition it would be good to advise how long a job or issue was expected to take to resolve.

Further discussion took place regarding Members reporting issues via CRM and Councillor Martin commented that in some cases it may not be the best solution to go through the CRM but to instead go direct to the Lead Officer. It was suggested that in those circumstances it was advisable to both log on to the CRM and approach the officer direct to ensure the job was recorded and followed through correctly.

Moving on the Head of Planning and Performance reported upon Use of Resources PIs. With regard to the Resources set of performance indicators Councillor L Armstrong commented that he would agree that the % of reported street lighting outages under DCC control repaired within target time (10 days) would sit better under the Altogether Safer theme. Councillor Smith commented that street lighting was one of the most reported issues and therefore she could see reasoning for it coming under this theme as it related to corporate reputation. Councillor Henig added that this could also apply to many other services and with such agreed that it would sit better under Altogether Safer.

Councillor Martin commented that in his opinion the target relating to council owned business floor space should sit under the Altogether Wealthier theme. He further commented that he failed to see the point of collecting data relating to capital receipts received, if the council were unable to control them.

Councillor Hillary raised the issue of council owned floor space, to consider monitoring any unoccupied (void) space which is not generating income. He also suggested that indicators on Council tax/business rates recovered could be made more meaningful by including the percentage change from the previous year.

Councillor J Armstrong added that he welcomed the inclusion of the 'undisputed invoices within 30 days' target as he felt that this gave a truer reflection than the existing target.

Councillor Hillary asked whether a PI should be included relating to the income generated from selling back to the grid energy generated from solar installations.

Moving on the Head of Planning and Performance reported upon the proposed PIs relating to welfare benefits and poverty. Full details of the proposed set were included within the slides.

Councillor Hopgood commented that it would be useful to see the split regarding triage between the various housing providers to enable any gaps to be identified. Councillor Hillary added that he would further like to see the impacts that welfare reform had had on the authority including costs to the authority.

Councillor Martin commented that if we are not intending to use the data for anything then he failed to see the point of collecting it unless there was an intention to measure and improve the service.

Councillor L Armstrong made reference to food banks and whether there was any data on how many people were being referred to food banks. The Head of Planning and Performance advised that the council did collect data regarding food banks and this could be provided at a future meeting.

Cllr Buckham asked where the information on Child Poverty comes from. The Head of Planning and Performance to provide information to him.

The final set of indicators related to Human Resources, Councillor Hopgood commented that in her opinion the performance data should not include schools as their inclusion distorted the figures.

Councillor Hillary commented that he would like to see appraisal and sickness absence data by service rather than as a whole. In addition he queried why performance data was collected in respect of lost shifts. Councillor Hillary suggested that it would be good to annotate these figures to explain the indicators more clearly in future reports.

In addition he queried why numbers of staff over the age of 50 was monitored. In response it was reported that this figure was used as part of equalities monitoring of our staff profile, alongside monitoring of numbers of under 25s, gender mix, and staff with a recorded disability and ethnic origin, in line with national requirements.

Councillor Hillary further asked whether details could be provided in respect of FT, PT and agency turnover rates.

Councillor Buckham further asked whether performance that included schools incorporated all schools or those that were maintained by Durham County Council only. In response the Head of Planning and Performance advised that the figures did not include free schools or academies.

In conclusion the Head of Planning and Performance advised that all feedback given at the meeting would be fed in to the review process with a view to the final performance framework being agreed in June as part of the Q4 Cabinet report.

Resolved:

That the content of the report and presentation be noted. In addition all comments and feedback would be fed into the review of the corporate basket of indicators.

7 Quarter 2: Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2014/15.

The Committee considered two reports of the Corporate Director Resources which provided details of the forecast of outturn budget position for the Resources service grouping highlighting major variances in comparison with the budget based on the position to the end of September 2014 (for copy see file of Minutes).

With regard to the Resources service grouping the Finance Manager advised that the service was reporting a cash limit underspend of £1.22m (excluding Centrally Administered Costs) against a revised budget of £18.755m. This compares with the cash limit underspend of £0.398m as at Quarter 1.

The report further detailed the significant variances by subjective analysis and by Head of Service.

With regard to the capital programme it was reported that 20 of the 21 capital programme schemes were managed by ICT and a full breakdown of those schemes and actual expenditure was provided at Appendix 2.

Moving on the Finance Manager provided information relating to the Assistant Chief Executive's service grouping, highlighting that the service was reporting a cash limit underspend of £0.080m against a revised budget of £10.240m. This compares with the cash limit underspend of £0.050m as at Quarter 1.

The report further detailed the actual expenditure and the significant variances by subjective analysis and Head of Service.

Moving on the Finance Manager provided details relating to the Members Neighbourhoods Revenue Budget and AAP Area Budgets. With regard to the capital programme it was noted that the programme comprised of four schemes, Assets in the community, AAPs Capital, Members Neighbourhoods Capital and Community Facilities in Crook.

Councillor Buckham asked whether it would be possible to include in future reports details of the current position in regard to spending. It was agreed that this could be included.

Councillor J Armstrong added that he did have some concerns regarding the amount of money that was still available in the Members Neighbourhood Budget and AAP Budgets and whether schemes would be able to be delivered on time. It was noted that it was important that members had projects earmarked to ensure that funding was not lost.

Resolved:

That the content of the reports be noted.

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**Corporate Issues
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

23rd January 2015



Medium Term Financial Plan Reports

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Members of the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a summary of two recent Cabinet reports relating to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that will be presented at the Committee's meeting by Jeff Garfoot, Head of Finance.

Background

- 2 The two reports titled '*Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16*' and '*Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 and 2015/16 Budget*' were presented to Cabinet in December 2014 and January 2015 respectively.
- 3 In summary the '*Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16*' report provided Cabinet with information on the 2014 Autumn Statement, 2015/16 Budget, MTFP (5) update, budget consultation process, equality impact assessments and cumulative impacts. The report sought approval for the Council Tax base position for 2015/16 and Council Plan and Service Plans for 2015/16 to 2017/18.
- 4 The '*Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 and 2015/16 Budget*' provided an update from the Cabinet report in December on MTFP (5) and budget, the Government's Local Government Finance Settlement announcement on 18th December 2014 and provides feedback from the budget consultation process.
- 5 Within both reports an Executive Summary highlights the current financial challenges faced by the Council and the Head of Finance will be in attendance to present and respond to Member questions.

Recommendation

- 6 Members are asked to note the content of the Cabinet reports and provide comments to formulate an Overview and Scrutiny Committee response to Cabinet.

**Contact: Jenny Haworth Tel. 03000 268071
Email: Jenny.haworth@durham.gov.uk**

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Financial implications are identified within Appendix 1 of both the *'Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16'* and *'Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 and 2015/16 Budget'* reports.

Staffing

Staffing implications are identified within Appendix 1 of both the *'Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16'* and *'Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 and 2015/16 Budget'* reports.

Risk

Risk implications are identified within Appendix 1 of both the *'Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16'* and *'Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 and 2015/16 Budget'* reports.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality considerations are built into the approach to developing MTFP(5) as a key element of the process.

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Human Rights

Any Human Rights issues will be considered for any detailed MTFP(5) and Council Plan proposals as they are developed and decisions made to take these forward.

Consultation

The reports include information on the consultation process.

Procurement

None

Disability Issues

All requirements will be considered as part of the equality process followed as part of MTFP(5) planning.

Legal Implications

Legal implications are identified within Appendix 1 of the Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16'

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Cabinet**17 December 2014**

**Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council
Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18
and Council Tax Base for 2015/16**

Key Decision CORP/R/14/02

Report of Corporate Management Team
Don McLure, Corporate Director of Resources**Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive****Councillor Alan Napier, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance****Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide an update on the 2015/16 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan MTFP(5), to seek approval for the Council Tax base position for 2015/16 and Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16 to 2017/18.

Executive Summary

- 2 The financial outlook for the Council continues to be extremely challenging. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's March 2014 Budget confirmed that funding cuts to the public sector will continue until at least 2018/19.
- 3 Between 2011/12 and the end of 2014/15 the Council will have delivered £136.9m of savings. It is forecast that by the end of the MTFP (5) period 2015/16 to 2017/18 additional savings of £88.501m could be required as outlined in medium term financial plan model shown at Appendix 2. The Council's cumulative savings total between 2011/12 and 2017/18 is now £225.4m.
- 4 The Council has utilised reserves of over £10m in 2014/15 to smooth the delivery timetable of some of our savings projects and thereby reduce the immediate impact of service reductions upon the public. It is likely that this approach will become a constant feature of budget planning in the MTFP (5) period and beyond as the Council continues to deal with the uncertainty of future financial settlements, and seeks to delay where practical, the impact of service cuts.
- 5 The Council's proposed savings plans to deliver the £16.283m savings for 2015/16 are shown at Appendix 3.
- 6 The recent party conference season has confirmed our expectation that Health and Education budgets are likely to continue to be protected during this period of austerity. In addition the Scottish Independence Referendum 'no' vote outcome has resulted in a commitment to give more devolved financial powers to Scotland and possibly English regions with no changes at this stage to the Barnett Formula which has been in existence since 1978. The Barnett Formula is having a beneficial financial impact on

public spending in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to the detriment of areas such as the north east.

- 7 All of these announcements clarify that public spending, particularly in Local Government, will continue to face significant funding reductions until possibly 2020 and maybe beyond. The impact upon Local Government could be significantly worse if other Government Departments such as Defence and Overseas Aid are afforded some level of protection.
- 8 Against this background, it is prudent that the Council continues to plan for the future on the basis that Local Government will continue to face significant funding reductions across the MTFP(5) period and beyond. This planning will continue to utilise the output from the extensive 2013 MTFP consultation process. The Council will continue to plan ahead, will assess the impact of savings plans, will identify efficiencies and protect frontline services wherever possible.
- 9 The flexible utilisation of a 'Planned Delivery Programme' (PDP) Reserve, as agreed by Cabinet in the MTFP (5) Strategy Report on 16 July 2014, will be used to best effect from 2016/17 to smooth the impact of having to make further savings from cuts in services.

Background

- 10 The 16 July 2014 MTFP report to Cabinet provided an update on the 2015/16 Budget and MTFP(5) and identified the following savings targets across MTFP(5).

Year	Savings Requirement
	£m
2015/16	16.362
2016/17	32.011
2017/18	39.100
Total	87.473

- 11 The £87.473m of savings required across MTFP(5) would result in total savings over the 2011/12 - 2017/18 period of £224.4m. It was recognised that achievement of savings in the future will become ever more challenging and a Planned Delivery Programme (PDP) Reserve was to be created to provide flexibility to the Council.
- 12 This report provides an updated position in relation to the 2015/16 Budget and MTFP(5) since July 2014, and also provides an update on the development of savings plans.

2014 Autumn Statement

- 13 The Chancellor of the Exchequer presented his Autumn Statement to the House of Commons on 3 December 2014. No additional funding reductions were announced for local authorities for 2015/16. On this basis, the already significant funding reduction forecasts for 2015/16 should remain broadly in line with the council's estimates and are included in our MTFP5 model in Appendix 2.
- 14 The forecast of funding reductions for local authorities beyond 2015/16 however will continue to be extremely challenging. The government is forecasting that the national budget deficit in 2014/15 will be £6bn higher than forecast at £91.3bn. Although public expenditure spending reductions are being achieved in line with government forecasts,

social security spending mainly on the state pension is higher than forecast and income tax receipts are significantly lower than originally forecast.

- 15 The government is forecasting that further public expenditure reductions will be required to 'close the gap' over the next parliament with significant reductions required in every year up to 2019/20. One of the expectations is that public sector pay restraint will continue to be required until the deficit is eradicated.
- 16 An extension to the current reliefs on business rates were announced as detailed below:
- The business rates multiplier increase for 2015/16 will be capped at 2% rather than the 2.3% expected. Local authorities will receive a Section 31 grant to cover the 0.3% lower than expected income level;
 - The doubling of Small Business Rate Relief will continue for a further year into 2015/16;
 - The £1,000 discount to retailers such as pubs, cafes and restaurants with Rateable Values of under £50,000 will be increased in 2015/16 to £1,500 a year.

2015/16 Budget

- 17 The following updates are required to the 2015/16 budget model as a result of Government announcements and updated financial information.

(i) September Retail Price Inflation (RPI)

The September RPI figure is utilised by the Government to set the Business Rates Multiplier, i.e. the amount by which Business Rates bills will increase the following year. Prior to September, RPI had been above 3% for the majority of the previous 12 months with the estimate in the July Cabinet Report forecasting a September 2014 RPI of 2.8%. RPI has reduced significantly however over the last three months, with the actual September RPI figure announced at 2.3%. The 2015/16 budget assumption for increased income from Business Rates and Top Up Grant has therefore needed to be adjusted, as the RPI uplift applies to these income streams. For completeness, the RPI uplift on the Government's Section 31 grant that the Council receives relating to the Government's decision to cap Business Rates at 2% for 2014/15 and the additional small business rate reliefs will be shown separately. The adjusted figures are as follows:-

	Forecasted Additional Income in 2015/16 from 2.3% RPI Uplift
	£m
Business Rates	1.203
Top Up Grant	1.365
Section 31 Grant	0.080

(ii) New Homes Bonus

New Homes Bonus (NHB) has been part of the local government funding system since 2011/12 and is based upon the principle of an incentive for local authorities to encourage the building of new houses. In 2014/15 we are receiving NHB of

£6.783m which is a cumulative amount that has been increasing since 1 April 2011 which shows how the Council's policy to increase the number of houses across the county is working. However, in order to fund the new homes bonus scheme, the government is top slicing the aggregate cost across the whole country from Local Government's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) quantum allocation. As with all schemes of this nature, there are winners and losers and Durham is a definite loser where the amount of top slice from our share of RSG is now £9.241m as at 31 March 2015. On this basis we are £2.458m worse off due to the implementation of this policy.

The sums we have received for each year of NHB are detailed below:

2011/12	£1.300m
2012/13	£1.251m
2013/14	£2.248m
2014/15	£1.985m
TOTAL	£6.783m

The additional income generated from NHB is calculated based upon the Council's forecasted Council Tax Base (CTB1) return to Government which is submitted by the Council in early October of every year based upon the position at 30 September. The CTB1 submitted in October 2014 provides detailed information on forecasted council tax income the Council is likely to collect in 2015/16 and allows comparison with the previous year. The Council is also able to analyse the CTB1 to accurately estimate the additional NHB the Council will receive in 2015/16. Based upon this analysis, additional income of £1.5m is estimated for 2015/16 compared to £750k that we were forecasting in July 2014.

(iii) Council Tax Base

The CTB1 return identifies the Council Tax Base for 2015/16 and the revised tax base position shows growth when compared to last year which will enable the Council to raise an estimated additional £1.891m of council tax which can be utilised to support the 2015/16 Budget.

(iv) Business Rate Tax Base

Under the Business Rate Retention (BRR) scheme the Council is able to retain 49% of all Business rates collected. An assessment has been made of the forecasted business rates yield for 2015/16. The estimated sum is £0.85m (1.6%) higher than 2014/15. This sum can be utilised to support the 2015/16 budget.

(v) Business Rate Collection Fund Surplus

The 2014/15 Quarter 2 Forecast of Outturn report to Cabinet 19 November 2014 detailed a forecast £1.03m surplus on the Business Rate Collection Fund. The Council share of this is £0.5m. This sum is available as a 'one off' sum to support the 2015/16 budget but would need to be reversed out in 2016/17.

(vi) Pay inflation

The pay award settlement for 2014/15 and 2015/16 will exceed the forecasted sums included in the MTFP where a 1% allowance has been included for both 2014/15 and 2015/16. The pay award settlement however, is for increases of between 2.32% and 8.56% for scale points 5 - 10 for the period January 2015 to March 2016. For all scale points above 11 the increase is 2.2%. In addition one-off lump sum payments will be made in December 2014 and April 2015. Overall, it is estimated that the additional budget pressure over and above the 2% included in current MTFP plans across the two years will be £0.600m which will need to be included in the 2015/16 budget model.

(vii) The Durham Living Wage

The Council on 3 December 2014 agreed to implement the 'Durham Living Wage' with effect from 1 January 2015 by removing the bottom five pay spinal column points (SCP) 5 to 9 from the Council's pay structure. This means the Council's lowest paid employees on SCP 10 will be paid £7.43 an hour and an additional £0.250m cost has been built into our 2015/16 Budget Plan model representing the impact of the introduction of the Durham Living Wage.

- 18 The adjustments above have been included in the MTFP(5) model attached at Appendix 2. Based upon these adjustments the saving target for 2015/16 is £16.283m.
- 19 Proposals for achieving the forecasted £16.283m savings for 2015/16 are attached at Appendix 3. These savings will be consulted upon and kept under review over the coming months before being recommended for approval at Cabinet on 11 February 2015 and Council on 25 February 2015.

MTFP (5) – 2015/16 to 2017/18 Update

- 20 The MTFP(5) strategy report to Cabinet on 16 July 2014 provided an update on the savings required to balance MTFP(5). The savings for 2016/17 and 2017/18 at that time were as follows;

Year	Savings Requirement £m
2016/17	32.011
2017/18	39.100
Total	71.111

- 21 For planning purposes the Council is forecasting government funding reductions of circa £33m for both 2016/17 and 2017/18. After considering the announcements at all party conferences in relation to future austerity, it is felt prudent to retain the current forecast level of future funding reductions.

22 The MTFP(5) model for 2016/17 and 2017/18 has been amended as follows based upon up to date information:

(i) RPI Forecasts

At the present time the RPI assumption for 2016/17 and 2017/18 in the MTFP(5) model is 3% based upon forecasts in the Government's 2014 Red Book. RPI at September 2014 however, was 2.3% and some economic commentators are concerned that there could be a future risk of a 'deflation' period. With this in mind it is felt prudent to reduce the RPI assumption in the MTFP(5) model for 2016/17 and 2017/18 from 3% to 2%.

(ii) New Homes Bonus

The additional income generated from NHB for 2015/16 of £1.5m continues the trend of the Council generating an annual NHB sum of over £1m. Based on outcomes to date in relation to NHB income, it is felt prudent at this stage to increase the NHB estimate for 2016/17 from £750k to £1m.

(iii) Council Tax Base

The current MTFP(5) forecast for Council Tax Base increases for both 2016/17 and 2017/18 was £0.750k for each year. After considering the planned level of house building over the next few years, it is felt prudent to increase the 2016/17 estimate to £1m.

(iv) Business Rate Tax Base

An assessment has been made of increases in business rate from new development in future years e.g. Hitachi at Newton Aycliffe. At this stage it is felt prudent to include an increase in business rates in 2016/17 of £0.5m.

(iv) Pay Inflation

The pay inflation assumption for 2016/17 and 2017/18 is currently 1.5%. It is recommended that this remains unchanged but the sum reported has been updated to reflect the impact of the implementation of single status upon the overall pay bill and the 2016/17 national insurance changes. This has resulted in a £0.2m increase in the forecast pay inflation requirement in both 2016/17 and 2017/18.

- 23 After including the above adjustment, the revised 2016/17 and 2017/18 saving targets are as detailed below. Full detail is included in the MTFP(5) model at Appendix 2.

Year	Saving Requirement £m
2016/17	32.389
2017/18	39.829
Total	72.218

- 24 The 16 July 2014 MTFP(5) Cabinet report also introduced the option of the utilisation of a planned delivery programme (PDP) reserve to support the MTFP(5) process. For indicative purposes the utilisation of PDP of £10m in each of 2016/17 and 2017/18 was modelled to enable consideration to be given to utilising PDP to support the MTFP. It is recommended that an initial PDP reserve of £10m be created. A review of Earmarked Reserves has been carried out to identify options for transfer into PDP. The table overleaf identifies the recommended sums for transfer into the PDP Reserve.

Reserve	Sum to Transfer	
	£m	£m
Earmarked Reserves		
Corporate Procurement	1.500	
Housing Benefit Subsidy	1.200	
Cabinet Reserve	0.200	
Local Stock Voluntary Transfer Reserve	<u>0.100</u>	
Total Earmarked Reserve		3.000
Cash Limit Reserves		
ACE	0.216	
CAS	1.580	
NS	0.022	
RED	0.985	
RES	1.197	
		4.000
General Reserve		3.000
PDP Reserve		10.000

Council Tax Base 2015/16

Tax Base 2015/16

Background

- 25 Regulations made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended)) require each billing authority to calculate its 'Council Tax Base' for each following financial year.
- 26 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914) provides amended statutory guidance to incorporate the changes as a result of the introduction of Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes (LCTRS's) from 1 April 2013.
- 27 The Council Tax Base is a measure of the County Council's 'taxable capacity', for the purpose of setting its Council Tax. Legislation requires the Council to set out the formula for that calculation and that the tax base is formally approved by Cabinet.
- 28 Section 84 of the Local Government Act 2003 enables authorities to set their Council Tax Base, other than by a decision of the full Council, therefore, allowing Cabinet to take the necessary decisions to determine the Council Tax Base for 2015/16.
- 29 Council approved the continuation of the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme on 29 October 2014 into 2015/16, which retains the same level of support to all council tax payers as the previous Council Tax Benefit Scheme, which was abolished on 1 April 2013.
- 30 The extension to the LCTRS is initially for one more year and the Scheme will be kept under continuous review with a further decision to be considered by Cabinet in July/September 2015 and Council by January 2016 with regards proposals for 2016/17. There are no other discount changes impacting on the Tax Base for 2015/16.

Calculating the Tax Base 2015/16

- 31 Appendix 4 shows the number of dwellings in County Durham, allocated across the various Council Tax Bands. At 6 October 2014 there were 238,256 dwellings in County Durham.
- 32 Some of these properties are exempt from council tax (e.g. dwellings occupied solely by students), whilst in single person households only 75% of the tax is payable. Following decisions taken last year, empty properties no longer receive any discount, neither do second homes and long term empty properties (those empty for more than two years) attract a 50% premium.
- 33 The number of dwellings, therefore, needs to be adjusted to reflect these discounts and exemptions, giving a net property base (chargeable dwellings) for each Council Tax band. Council Tax for a Band A property is 6/9ths of the Band D council tax; Band B is 7/9ths and Band C is 8/9ths. Prior to consideration of the impact of the LCTRS, there are 211,557.15 chargeable properties in County Durham. 84.50% of these are within bands A to C, with 59.23% of all properties being in Band A.

- 34 The Council Tax levied varies between the different bands according to proportions laid down in legislation. These proportions are based around Band D, and are fixed so that the bill for a dwelling in Band A will be a third of the bill for a dwelling in Band H. Applying the relevant proportion to each band's net property base produces the number of 'Band D Equivalent' properties for the area. Prior to consideration of the impact of LCTRS, there are 165,753.53 Band D Equivalent properties in County Durham.
- 35 In determining the Council Tax Base for 2015/16, two further issues must be factored into the calculation:
- Forecast reductions in the tax base as a result of the LCTRS, which is a discount rather than a benefit payment and therefore reduces the tax base. The 2015/16 projections include a prudent 4.5% provision for increase in caseload / costs in 2015/16 over the 2014/15 year to date costs of the current LCTRS; and
 - Provision for non-collection.
- 36 In 2014/15, the provision for non-collection was 1.5%, giving a forecast collection rate of 98.5% and based on actual collection performance, it is proposed to retain the same collection rate for 2015/16. In determining the tax base, no provision has been made for new build or other changes in the quantum of discounts and exemptions. This is a prudent approach.
- 37 Taking into account the forecast collection rate and factoring in the adjustments to the Band D Equivalent properties as a result of the LCTRS next year, the Band D Equivalent Tax Base will be 130,493.0 in 2015/16, which compares to the current 2014/15 tax base figure for the County of 129,047.6 – an increase of 1,445.4 (1.12%).
- 38 The council tax base for the County Council will be used by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority to set their council tax precepts for 2015/16, which will be included in the council tax bills sent to every council tax payer in the County.
- 39 The parish and town councils and the Charter Trust for the City of Durham, council tax bases are set out at Appendix 5 and will be used to calculate the parish and town councils and the Charter Trust for the City of Durham precepts in 2015/16. These will also be added to the council tax bills and sent to every council tax payer in the respective parish and town council areas and includes any approved amendments to the ward boundaries.
- 40 The Council's formula grant payment includes an element relating to Town and Parish (T&P) Councils and whilst the Council has passed the grant on to the Town and Parish Councils in 2013/14 and 2014/15, there is no statutory requirement to do so. Following discussions with Town and Parish Councils, Cabinet on 16 July 2014, resolved to continue to pass on the Town and Parish element of its formula grant in 2015/16 but in doing so apply pro-rata reductions in the Council Tax Support Grant paid to Town and Parish Councils from 2015/16 in line with reductions in the overall formula funding made available to the Council.
- 41 Appendix 6 summarises the financial impact on individual parish and town councils across the county and the Charter Trust for the City of Durham from the combined effects of the changes to tax base, and the distribution of LCTRS grant in 2015/16.

- 42 The LCTSS grant payable to individual Town and Parish Councils has been allocated proportionate to impact on tax raising capacity brought about by the LCTSS, which was agreed as the most appropriate method of distribution.
- 43 In overall terms the net reduction in resource next year for the parish and town councils is circa £167,185.
- 44 To maintain spending at current levels, and assuming no efficiencies are achievable to offset these pressures, the average increase in town and parish precepts would be 1.59% in 2015/16.
- 45 Because the level of precepts and Band D Council Tax varies significantly across the various areas, the average actual £ increase varies considerably, ranging from a potential reduction of £0.79 to an increase of £4.48 per annum increase at Band A.

Next Steps

- 46 Police, Fire and local parish and town councils have been notified of their indicative Council Tax Bases. Subject to Cabinet consideration of this report, this will be confirmed. Town and Parish Councils have been requested to submit their precept requests by 31 January 2015 to enable these to be incorporated into the 2015/16 Budget and Council tax setting reports to Cabinet and Council in February 2015.
- 47 Officers will continue to carefully track and monitor the Council Tax Base and Collection Fund performance. The quarter 2 forecast of outturn report (based on the position to 30 September 2014) included details of the Collection Fund performance. For budget setting purposes the Collection Fund is assumed to be balanced at 31 March 2015, i.e. no surplus or deficit on the Fund to be taken into account at Council Tax setting. The major precepting bodies (Police & Fire) have been notified of this.
- 48 In continuing with the current LCTRS next year, members have committed to a full review of the Scheme in early summer of 2015. This review will draw on experiences elsewhere and the impact of the wider welfare reforms in County Durham during 2013/14 and 2014/15 and put forward options for consideration by Cabinet in July/September next year, with a view to consultation on any changes for 2016/17 being in the Autumn of 2015 and a report being presented to Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation in December 2015. The 2016/17 LCTRS scheme will need to be endorsed by Council before 31 January 2016.

Budget Consultation Process

Proposed Approach to Consultation

- 49 During Autumn 2013, the Council attracted over 10,000 people to take part in the largest public engagement event ever held in County Durham. These events were managed through the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and were held across the County. They provided the opportunity for the public to allocate grants to local projects, set AAP priorities and provide views as to how the Council should manage its budget challenges up to March 2017.
- 50 At these events, almost 1,300 people took the time to take part in 270 budget setting group exercises where, over 30-45 minutes they deliberated with other members of the public as to how the Council should allocate savings of £100 million over the next few years. Feedback from those taking part in the activities was very positive, with 97% of participants feeling that it was a good way to involve local people in decision making.
- 51 In addition to the group exercises, comments as to how the Council should achieve its savings target were also provided through different fora, in 2,074 completed paper questionnaires and a further 517 completed online.
- 52 The results of this budget consultation, which included over 4,000 responses, were reported to Cabinet on 12 February 2014. A clear message from the consultation was the requirement to minimise the impact upon frontline service provision wherever possible. These have influenced the development of the budget proposals for 2015/16 as set out in this report and it is anticipated that they will help inform the budget setting process for the next two to three years.
- 53 Having completed such a comprehensive budget consultation in 2013, this year's budget consultation will concentrate on seeking views from the 14 AAPs and the key partner agencies that make up the County Durham Partnership. This will be made up of two distinct elements. The first will focus on the AAP Forums where attendees will be asked to comment on two key issues, namely:
- whether there has been any significant changes in local communities that could affect the priority service areas identified by the 4,000 people who took part in the budget consultation in 2013;
 - seeking views on the Durham Ask and whether there could be opportunities for greater community control of Council assets in local communities.
- 54 The second element of the consultation will focus on AAP Boards and partner agencies. As there is more opportunity for deliberation with these bodies, the form of the consultation will be to seek views on the budget proposed for 2015/16 as set out in this report.
- 55 In line with the Council's approach in previous years, where individual budget proposals, as set out in this report, involve a significant change to the public, these will be subject to specific detailed public consultation prior to a decision being made in line with our established practice.

Council Plan and Service Plans 2015-18

- 56 The Council Plan details the Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), together with its own improvement agenda. It has been amended this year to cover a three year timeframe in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and sets out how we will deliver our corporate priorities and the key actions we will take to support the longer term goals set out in the SCS.
- 57 The Council Plan is refreshed annually and is currently being revised to cover the 2015-18 three year period. The format of this plan is being amended with the aim to introduce a more concise narrative and streamlined performance monitoring arrangements.
- 58 The priorities set out in the current Council Plan reflect the results of an extensive consultation exercise carried out in late 2013 and early 2014 on spending priorities, and include an ongoing focus on protecting frontline services. Our spending plans for this year and 2015/16 are also based on these assumptions.

Draft Objectives and Outcomes

- 59 Overall it is recommended that the 5 key altogether better themes remain unchanged in line with the review of the Altogether Better Durham vision by the County Durham Partnership. It is also recommended that the altogether better council theme is retained giving 6 key themes.
- I. Altogether Wealthier
 - II. Altogether better for children and young people
 - III. Altogether healthier
 - IV. Altogether safer
 - V. Altogether greener
 - VI. Altogether better council
- 60 Sitting beneath each of these six themes are a series of objectives setting out the key goal(s) being pursued over the medium-term. The objectives layer is shared across the SCS and Council Plan. These were agreed by Council last year and are proposed to be retained as unchanged as set out overleaf.

Altogether Wealthier	Altogether Better for Children and Young People	Altogether Healthier	Altogether Safer	Altogether Greener	Altogether Better Council
Thriving Durham City	Children and young people realise and maximise their potential	Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life	Reduce anti-social behaviour	Deliver a cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment	Putting the customer first
Vibrant and successful towns	Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life	Reduce health inequalities and early deaths	Protect vulnerable people from harm	Maximise the value and benefits of Durham's natural environment	Working with our communities
Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities	A Think Family approach is embedded in our support for families	Improve the quality of life, independence and care and support for people with long-term conditions	Reduce re-offending	Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change	Effective use of resources
Competitive and successful people		Improve the mental and physical wellbeing of the population	Alcohol and substance misuse harm reduction		Support our people through change
Top location for business			Embed the Think Family approach		

- 61 Whilst the SCS is a long-term plan, the Council Plan has a medium-term time horizon of three years and is therefore more detailed in nature. The Council Plan therefore contains an additional layer which is the council's outcomes. These are defined as the impacts on or consequences for the community of the activities of the council. Outcomes reflect the intended results from our actions and provide the rationale for our interventions. These are subject to more frequent change than objectives.
- 62 The draft objectives and outcomes for the 2015-2018 Council Plan are set out in full in Appendix 7. These were considered by Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 21 November 2014. A consultation process with partners, Area Action Partnerships and Overview and Scrutiny is taking place between November 2014 and January 2015 which may change or add to the associated outcomes which are contained within the draft refresh of the Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2015/18.

Next steps

63 Next steps in the corporate timetable for production of the Council Plan and service plans are:

Cabinet receives a report on MTFP scope and Council Plan objectives and outcomes	17 December 2014	Director of Resources and Assistant Chief Executive
Individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees consider Council Plan objectives and outcomes framework and performance indicators for their committee to input into the future requirements	January 2015	Assistant Chief Executive and all service groupings
Joint meeting of Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to consider MTFP report prior to Cabinet meeting	13 February 2015	Director of Resources and Assistant Chief Executive
Cabinet consider final draft of the Council Plan 2015-18 and service plans	18 March 2015	Assistant Chief Executive
Council approves Council Plan 2015-18	1 April 2015	Assistant Chief Executive

Equality Impact Assessment of the Medium Term Financial Plan

- 64 This section updates members on the outcomes of the equality impact assessment of the MTFP (5) to date, and summarises the potential cumulative impact of the 2015/16 proposals.
- 65 Equality impact assessments are an essential part of decision making, building them into the MTFP process supports decisions which are both fair and lawful. The aim of the assessments is to:
- (i) Identify any disproportionate impact on service users or staff based on the protected characteristics of age, gender (including pregnancy/maternity and transgender), disability, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation
 - (ii) Identify any mitigating actions which can be taken to reduce negative impact where possible, and
 - (iii) Ensure that we avoid unlawful discrimination as a result of MTFP decisions.
- 66 The council is subject to the legal responsibilities of the Equality Act 2010 which, amongst other things, make discrimination unlawful in relation to the protected characteristics listed above and require us to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. In addition, as a public authority, we are subject to legal equality duties in relation to the protected characteristics. The public sector equality duties require us to:

- (i) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (ii) Advance equality of opportunity; and
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 67 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) issued 'Using the equality duties to make fair financial decisions: a guide for decision makers' in September 2010. The guidance states that "equality duties do not prevent you from making difficult decisions such as reorganisations and relocations, redundancies and service reductions nor do they stop you making decisions which may affect one group more than another. What the equality duties do is enable you to demonstrate that you are making financial decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of your community."
- 68 A number of successful judicial reviews have reinforced the need for robust consideration of the public sector equality duties and the impact on protected characteristics in the decision making process. Members must take full account of the duties and accompanying evidence when considering the MTFP proposals.
- 69 In terms of the ongoing programme of budget decisions the Council has taken steps to ensure that impact assessments:
- (i) Are built in at the formative stages so that they form an integral part of developing proposals with sufficient time for completion ahead of decision making;
 - (ii) Are based on relevant evidence, including consultation where appropriate, to provide a robust assessment;
 - (iii) Objectively consider any negative impacts and alternatives or mitigating actions so that they support fair and lawful decision making;
 - (iv) Are closely linked to the wider MTFP decision-making process;
 - (v) Build on previous assessments to provide an ongoing picture of cumulative impact.
- 70 The process for identifying and completing impact assessments in relation to the MTFP is consistent with previous years. Services, with support from the corporate equalities team, were asked to consider all proposals to identify the level of assessment required – either 'screening' or 'full' depending on the extent of impact and the deadline for the final decision.
- 71 Where proposals are subject to further consultation and further decisions, the relevant impact assessments will be updated as further information becomes available. Final assessments will be considered in the decision making process.

Impact assessments for 2015/16 savings proposals

- 72 A total of 24 assessments are available for Members to inform their decisions on individual proposals. Some are existing assessments from previous years where there is a residual saving or a continuation of a savings proposal. Some are new assessments and a number of proposals do not require an assessment, for example those involving use of cash limits or savings in supplies and services.

Assessments by Service Grouping:

ACE	2
CAS	9
Neighbourhoods	6
RED	1
Resources	4
Corporate	2

- 73 The documentation has been made available for Members via the Member Support team ahead of the 17th December 2014 Cabinet meeting.

Summary of equality impact of 2015/16 MTFP proposals

- 74 Services were required to identify potential impacts likely to arise from implementing each savings proposal. The main equalities impacts in relation to new and continuing savings proposals are summarised below for each service grouping.
- 75 ACE proposals have minimal equality impact and include:
- (i) Staffing proposals and proposals relating to the proposed review and withdrawal of grant funding. Specifically, the grants involved are community buildings grant and grant for the County Durham Foundation (CDF). At this stage neither proposal is thought to have specific impacts on equality groups. However, consultation will take place with community building groups and the CDF to better understand implications of grant withdrawal.
- 76 CAS proposals include potential impacts on age, disability and gender:
- (i) Savings largely relate to the continuation of existing proposals from previous years which continue to produce savings in 2015/16, including non-residential care charging, consistent and effective use of existing eligibility criteria, changes to stairlift maintenance contracts, in house social care provision and efficiencies in relation to management and support services.
 - (ii) Some proposals may lead to positive impacts, for example a proposed procurement exercise to develop additional reablement services in the independent sector is expected to support people to remain in their own homes for longer and lead to fewer, or lower level, care packages. In addition the continuing impact of the Early Help Strategy and the Looked After Children's Reduction Strategy will mean fewer children looked after and more adopted, and fewer children looked after in children's homes.
 - (iii) A further review of in-house day care services will be undertaken looking at reprofiling the service. This may have a potential impact on services users, many of whom are older and /or disabled. Consideration will also be given to the impact on staff which is a predominately female workforce.
 - (iv) The delivery of a new youth support strategy will impact mainly on young people with a key objective to increase the proportion of youth service spend on targeted

support and achieve a more equitable balance between universal provision delivered through open access evening youth provision and targeted youth support.

- (v) The Early Years Strategy and Review was agreed by Cabinet on 19th March 2014. The outcome of the review proposed a new model of service delivery for children and families in early years and a proposed change to the number of children's centres. The identified equalities impact will be on children, young people, families and women. However, the proposed changes are expected to lead to improved service delivery, with an emphasis on targeting resources where deprivation and needs are highest. It will also make better use of existing buildings in the heart of communities to improve access and use of these services.

77 Neighbourhood Services proposals mainly relate to staffing restructures, changes in service delivery and increased income. The assessments indicate potential impacts across all characteristics in relation to staffing reviews whilst there are potential service impacts on age, gender and disability. Fair treatment of staff will be ensured through agreed corporate HR procedures contained within the Change Management Toolkit.

- (i) Existing proposals from previous years produce savings in 2015/16, including the charging for garden waste collection services due to be implemented in 2015, and changes to street lighting provision.
- (ii) The proposal to identify a strategic partner to work with Culture and Sport to develop a cinema, film and catering offer across the county relates in particular to current facilities at the Gala Theatre in Durham and within Bishop Auckland Town Hall. Any changes to services or staffing would be subject to a more detailed impact assessment following agreement for the project to proceed. The Council will expect the provider to maintain the same levels of accessibility and adhere to and advance equality and diversity aims and objectives already embedded within our policies and procedures. This project has the potential to enrich communities and foster good relations between people by providing the opportunity to embrace diversity through film and theatre.
- (iii) Restructure and staffing reviews relating to Direct Services are likely to affect staff and could impact staff from any or all of the protected characteristics. There may be potential service delivery impacts as a result of rationalisation and wherever possible this would be mitigated by better use of resources. The impact on sustainability and continuation of services would be considered where appropriate in specific impact assessments.
- (iv) Restructure and staffing review within Strategic Highways and Culture and Sport will lead to overall reduction in number of posts and changes in responsibilities. However, operational delivery of these services will not be affected.

78 RED and Resources proposals both relate to further staffing restructures, residual savings as a result of previous staffing restructures and efficiencies from supplies and services. Fair treatment of staff will be ensured through agreed corporate HR procedures contained within the Change Management Toolkit.

79 Corporate proposals relate to a reduction in staff car mileage rate to be implemented in 2015 and existing proposals including the use of more sustainable travel options such as use of pool cars and promoting use of video conferencing to minimise travel requirements. Although there are no service delivery impacts identified related to these proposals, and these proposals would be applied consistently to all eligible employees, it should be noted that there may be specific impacts on women and disabled employees. Potential impacts have been identified for low paid female employees and staff with a disability who need to use their own car for work purposes.

Cumulative impacts

- 80 As in previous years the impacts are most likely in relation to increased costs or charges, loss of or reduced access to a particular service or venue and travel to alternative provision. There are potential impacts for community groups with a proposed reduction in grant funding. Overall this is more likely to affect those on low income, people without access to personal transport and those reliant on others for support, with particular impacts on disability, age and gender. There are limited impacts identified in relation to race, religion or belief and no specific impacts on transgender status or sexual orientation which is mainly due to the fact that few council services are provided solely on the basis of these characteristics. However there is also less data and evidence available to show potential impact on these groups.
- 81 Mitigating actions are considered where the assessments have identified negative impacts on protected groups. These generally include ensuring service users can make informed choices or find alternatives, implementing new or improved ways of working, working with partners and providing transition or more flexible arrangements to reduce the initial impact.
- 82 There are a number of 2015/16 proposals relating to staffing restructures and changes, the impacts are comparable to those reported in previous years. Services are required to follow corporate HR procedures to ensure fair and consistent treatment, for example, by making reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. In many cases negative impact can be minimised by progressing requests for early retirement, voluntary redundancy and through redeployment.
- 83 In summary the potential impacts on staff can relate to any of the protected characteristics. In terms of age, employees over 55 may feel at greater risk of redundancy or younger staff who may be more likely to have significant financial burdens in terms of mortgages or young families. There are potential gender impacts on both men and women, for example where reviews relate to senior posts or particular technical roles they are more likely to affect male employees whilst a number of proposals relate to areas with more female employees. Overall the staffing profile still shows significantly more women employed across the council so they are statistically more likely to be affected by change. There are some disabled staff and staff from black or ethnic minority backgrounds included in the reviews and restructures but the overall numbers of those affected are low which reflects the broader workforce profile data. Data on the religion or belief and sexual orientation of staff is collected through Resourcelink but the reporting rates are still very low so this information is not routinely included in equality impact assessments in order that people cannot be identified. Transgender status is not currently monitored.

Key Findings and Next Steps

- 84 The equality impact assessments are vital in order to understand potential outcomes for protected groups and mitigate these where possible. Details of the impacts identified at this stage will be updated for the final Cabinet and Council decision-making meetings.
- 85 The main equalities impacts of the 2015/16 MTFP proposals relate to age, disability and gender. The main mitigating actions include development of alternative provision models, transition arrangements, partnership working and alternative sources of support where possible. The cumulative impacts can increase costs for individuals, reduce access to services and affect their participation in employment, social activities and caring responsibilities. There will be continued focus on equalities issues as we move into future years of this MTFP, with equality impacts revisited and reviewed each year as appropriate. In some cases impact assessments are initial screenings with a full impact assessment to follow at the point of decision, once all necessary stakeholder consultation has been completed.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 86 Cabinet is asked to
- (i) Note the adjustments to the 2015/16 Budget model and the saving requirement of £16.283m
 - (ii) Note the savings included in Appendix 3 to achieve the current 2015/16 saving target of £16.283m
 - (iii) Note the revised savings requirement for 2016/17 and 2017/18 of £72.218m
 - (iv) Note the creation of a Planned Delivery Programme reserve of £10m
 - (v) Approve the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2015/16 for the County, which has been calculated to be 130,493.0 Band D equivalent properties.
 - (vi) Note the process outlined for consultation.
 - (vii) Agree the draft objectives and outcomes framework set out in Appendix 7 as a basis of the development of our plans
 - (viii) Consider the equality impacts identified and mitigating actions both in the report and in the individual equality impact assessments which have been made available in the Members Resource Centre;
 - (ix) Note the programme of future work to ensure full impact assessments are available where appropriate at the point of decision, once all necessary consultations have been completed;
 - (x) Note the ongoing work to assess cumulative impacts over the MTFP period which is regularly reported to Cabinet.

Background Papers

- Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (SI:2012:2914)
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2015/16 – Report to Council 29 October 2014.

Contact: Jeff Garfoot Tel: 03000 261 946

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The report highlights that at this stage £16.283m of savings are required to balance the 2015/16 budget. The current savings requirement for 2016/17 and 2017/18 is £72.218m.

Council approved the Cabinet's recommendations on 29 October 2014 to extend and continue the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme into 2015/16, which retains the same level of support to all council tax payers as the previous Council Tax Benefit Scheme, which was abolished on 1 April 2013.

The extension to the LCTRS is initially for one more year only and the Scheme will be kept under continuous review with a further decision to be considered by Cabinet in July/ September 2015 and Council in January 2016. There are no other discount changes impacting on the Tax Base for 2015/16.

The Council will distribute £1.822m of its formula grant to the Town and Parish Councils and the Charter Trust for the City of Durham in 2015/16, reflecting the Town and Parish element of the LCTRS Grant (as reduced in line with Council formula grant reductions).

Factoring in the Tax Base figures contained in this report, the Council will be able to factor in additional Council Tax revenues of circa £1.891m into MTFP5 in 2015/16.

Staffing – The savings proposals in MTFP(5) could impact upon employees. HR Processes will be followed at all times.

Risk – The key risks associated with this report are financial, in terms of prudence and accuracy of forecasts used to determine the Tax Base.

The Council's performance on recovery of Council Tax, both in year and the overall recovery rate needs careful monitoring. In 2014/15, the provision for non-collection was 1.5%, giving a forecast collection rate of 98.5% and it is proposed to retain the same collection rate for 2015/16.

The tax base forecasts include provision for a 4.5% increase in LCTRS costs and no provision has been made for new build or other changes in the quantum of discounts and exemptions. This is a prudent approach.

Officers will continue to carefully track and monitor the Council Tax Base and Collection Fund performance. The quarter 2 forecast of outturn report (based on the position to 30 September 2014) includes details of the Collection Fund performance. For budget setting purposes the Collection Fund is assumed to be balanced at 31 March 2015, i.e. no surplus or deficit on the Fund to be taken into account at Council Tax setting.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – Equality considerations are built into the proposed approach to developing MTFP(5), Council Plan and Services Plans, as a key element of the process.

Accommodation – None

Crime and Disorder – None

Human Rights – Any Human Rights issues will be considered for any detailed MTFP(5) and Council Plan proposals as they are developed and decisions made to take these forward.

Consultation – The approach to consultation on MTFP(5) is detailed in the report.

Towns and Parish Councils were consulted on the proposals to continue to passport an element of the Councils formula grant, equivalent to the Town and Parish share of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant funding within formula grant for 2015/16.

No further consultation has been undertaken as Cabinet are recommending to Council 3 December 2014 to continue with the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme into 2015/16, thereby retaining the same level of support to all council tax payers as the previous Council Tax Benefit Scheme, which was abolished on 1 April 2013

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – All requirements will be considered as part of the equalities considerations outlined in the main body of the report.

Legal Implications – The Council has a statutory responsibility to set its council tax base for the purpose of levying council tax from its council tax payers in order to raise the required amount of council tax income to balance its 2015/16 revenue budget

There is a statutory requirement for the Council to adopt a local council tax support scheme for 2015/16 by 31 January 2015 and Council will consider continuation of the existing scheme on 3 December 2014.

Appendix 2 - Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP(5)) 2015/16 - 2017/18 Model

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Government Funding			
Government Net Funding Reduction	33,195	33,000	33,000
Town and Parish Council RSG Adjustment for LCTSS funding	-285	-196	-211
Business Rates - RPI increase (2.3%/2%/2%)	-1,203	-1,070	-1,090
Top Up Grant - RPI increase (2.3%/2%/2%)	-1,365	-1,210	-1,240
Section 31 Grant (2.3%/2%/2%)	-80	-70	-70
Other Funding Sources			
Council Tax Increase (2% per annum)	-3,370	-3,440	-3,510
New Homes Bonus (Estimate)	-1,500	-1,000	0
Council Tax Base increase	-1,891	-1,000	-750
Business Rates Tax Base Increase	-850	-500	0
Business Rates 2014/15 Collection Fund Surplus	-500	500	0
Replenishment of 2014/15 Use of General Reserve	933	0	0
NHS Funding - Social Care Transformation	-15,864	-4,432	0
Estimated Variance in Resource Base	7,220	20,582	26,129
Pay inflation (2.2% (15 months) - 1.5% - 1.5%)	2,750	3,300	3,200
Price Inflation (1.5% - 1.5% - 1.5%)	2,650	2,450	2,400
Corporate Risk Contingency Budget	-1,217	-2,183	0
Base Budget Pressures			
Employer National Insurance increase - State Pension changes	0	4,700	0
Single Status Implementation	0	0	4,500
Council Housing - costs related to Stock Transfer	3,550	0	0
Additional Employer Pension Contributions	760	940	1,000
Energy Price Increases	500	500	500
Durham Living Wage	250	0	0
Concessionary Fares	320	100	100
CAS Demographic and Hyper Inflationary Pressures	1,000	1,000	1,000
Use of Earmarked Reserve in CAS	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
Prudential Borrowing to fund new Capital Projects	2,000	2,000	2,000
Capital Financing for current programme	-2,500	0	0
TOTAL PRESSURES	9,063	11,807	13,700
SUM TO BE MET FROM SAVINGS	16,283	32,389	39,829
Savings	-16,283	-32,389	-39,829
Deferred Savings (Utilisation of PDP)	0	0	-10,000
SAVINGS REQUIREMENT	-16,283	-32,389	-49,829
Planned Delivery Programme (PDP)	0	10,000	10,000
REVISED SAVINGS REQUIREMENT	-16,283	-22,389	-39,829
Cumulative Use of PDP Reserve To Support MTFP	0	10,000	20,000

Appendix 3 – MTFP Budget Saving 2015/16

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Saving	Description	2015/16
		£
ACE03	Management Review within ACE	132,340
ACE05	Research Activity	26,000
ACE16	Review of community grants	155,039
ACE19	Review of Parish Budget	34,650
ACE24	Adjustment for previous year use of cash limit	-69,992
TOTAL ACE		278,037

CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICE

Saving	Description	2015/16
		£
CAS01	Review of in-house social care provision	940,000
CAS02	Eligibility Criteria - Consistent and effective application of existing criteria	3,311,000
CAS03	Increased charging income in respect of Adult Care Provision	748,105
CAS04	Savings resulting from purchasing new stairlifts with extended warranties	40,000
CAS05	Management and Support Services, staffing structures and service reviews/rationalisation	4,056,386
CAS09	Review of Children's Care Services	1,186,416
CAS11	Adjustment for previous year use of cash limit	-1,879,000
CAS11	Use of Cash Limit	187,000
TOTAL CAS		8,589,907

NEIGHBOURHOODS SERVICE

Saving	Description	2015/16
		£
NS01	Restructure of Sport & Leisure	557,000
NS03	Structural reviews and more efficient ways of working	605,000
NS11	Review of Technical Services	275,000
NS17	Saving Deferred from 2014/15 - Implementation of charging for Garden Waste	933,000
NS24	Review of Heritage and Culture	298,500
NS29	Adjustment for previous years' use of cash limit	-130,000
NS29	Use of cash limit	80,000
TOTAL NS		2,618,500

REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Saving	Description	2015/16
		£
RED01	RED restructure	719,195
RED14	Review of supplies and services across RED Service grouping	560,500
		1,279,695

RESOURCES

Saving	Description	2015/16
		£
RES02	Reduction in Supplies and services and other non staffing budgets through efficiencies - Corporate Procurement	8,137
RES13	Management restructure of Legal & Democratic Services	130,726
RES14	Restructure of HR Service	648,417
RES16	Restructure of ICT Service	472,155
RES17	Reduction in supplies and services and other non staffing budgets through efficiencies (e-billing, postages etc.) - Financial services	548,699
RES21	Internal Audit and Risk staffing rationalisation	56,808
RES22	Court cost fee income - summons and liability costs recovered - Financial services	85,235
RES23	Welfare Rights	25,000
RES24	Adjustment for previous year use of cash limit	-358,000
	TOTAL RES	1,617,177

CORPORATE

Saving	Description	2015/16
		£
COR12	Reduction in car mileage rate	240,000
COR14	Saving from employees not being a member of the Local Government pension scheme	184,000
COR15	Saving from employees purchasing additional leave	285,000
COR16	Income from capital receipts below de minimis value of £10k	100,000
COR17	Fleet review inc. car mileage volume reduction	591,000
COR18	Durham Villages Regeneration Limited dividend payment	500,000
	TOTAL COR	1,900,000

SUMMARY

Description	2015/16
	£
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVES	278,037
CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES	8,589,907
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES	2,618,500
REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	1,279,695
TOTAL RESOURCES	1,617,177
TOTAL CORPORATE	1,900,000
TOTAL SAVINGS	16,283,316

Appendix 4 - Durham County Council Tax Base 2015/16

	Band								Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
Number of Dwellings shown on the valuation list for the Authority on 06/10/2014	143,377.00	30,272.00	28,936.00	19,894.00	9,727.00	3,739.00	2,051.00	260.00	238,256.00
Discounts, Exemptions and Reliefs	(18,065.51)	(3,171.70)	(2,581.80)	(1,640.44)	(722.84)	(249.81)	(143.99)	(122.75)	(26,698.85)
Chargeable Dwellings before LCTSS	125,311.49	27,100.30	26,354.20	18,253.56	9,004.16	3,489.19	1,907.01	137.25	211,557.15
Band D Equivalents prior to LCTSS	83,498.14	21,078.01	23,425.95	18,253.56	11,005.08	5,039.94	3,178.35	274.50	165,753.53
Local Council Tax Support Scheme impact on tax base (Band D Equivalents)	(28,120.84)	(2,571.33)	(1,470.40)	(689.15)	(300.24)	(88.44)	(33.24)	0.00	(33,273.63)
Band D Equivalent Properties	55,377.30	18,506.68	21,955.55	17,564.41	10,704.84	4,951.50	3,145.11	274.50	132,479.90

Tax Base (98.5%)	130,493.0
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% of Properties per Council Tax Band	59.23%	12.81%	12.46%	8.63%	4.26%	1.65%	0.90%	0.06%	100.00%
% Properties in Band A to C	84.50%								

Appendix 5 - Durham County Council & Parish Council Tax Base 2015/16

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Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
1,693.1	Barnard Castle	Barnard Castle	2,681.0	1,748.0	1,721.8	28.7
81.8	Barnard Castle	Barningham	85.0	83.5	82.2	0.4
48.3	Barnard Castle	Boldron	51.0	51.8	51.0	2.7
160.3	Barnard Castle	Bowes	202.0	168.0	165.5	5.2
378.7	Barnard Castle	Cockfield	791.0	383.0	377.3	(1.4)
247.5	Barnard Castle	Cotherstone	281.0	261.3	257.4	9.9
180.4	Barnard Castle	Eggleston	212.0	187.8	185.0	4.6
639.6	Barnard Castle	Etherley	984.0	655.7	645.8	6.2
634.4	Barnard Castle	Evenwood and Barony	1,270.0	674.4	664.3	29.9
58.7	Barnard Castle	Forest and Frith	80.0	55.9	55.1	(3.6)
473.5	Barnard Castle	Gainford & Langton	618.0	493.3	485.9	12.4
179.5	Barnard Castle	Hamsterley	196.0	183.6	180.8	1.3
46.4	Barnard Castle	Hutton Magna	48.0	50.3	49.5	3.1

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
180.2	Barnard Castle	Ingleton	207.0	179.8	177.1	(3.1)
61.3	Barnard Castle	Lartington	59.0	64.5	63.5	2.2
42.1	Barnard Castle	Lunedale	44.0	43.5	42.8	0.7
381.5	Barnard Castle	Lynesack and Softley	593.0	396.7	390.7	9.2
191.6	Barnard Castle	Marwood	247.0	208.8	205.7	14.1
168.5	Barnard Castle	Mickleton	218.0	175.6	173.0	4.5
448.8	Barnard Castle	Middleton in Teesdale & Newbiggin in Teesdale	707.0	486.3	479.0	30.2
67.0	Barnard Castle	Ovington	68.0	69.0	68.0	1.0
66.6	Barnard Castle	Rokerby, Brignall and Egglestone Abbey	76.0	71.1	70.0	3.4
86.0	Barnard Castle	Romaldkirk	94.0	92.4	91.0	5.0
76.0	Barnard Castle	South Bedburn	76.0	80.0	78.8	2.8
434.1	Barnard Castle	Staindrop	607.0	447.8	441.1	7.0
342.3	Barnard Castle	Startforth	421.0	354.2	348.9	6.6
152.5	Barnard Castle	Streatlam & Stainton	218.0	156.8	154.4	1.9
395.3	Barnard Castle	Unparished Areas	411.0	414.6	408.4	13.1

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
105.8	Barnard Castle	Whorlton & Westwick	120.0	114.4	112.7	6.9
195.2	Barnard Castle	Winston	210.0	203.7	200.6	5.4
74.8	Barnard Castle	Woodland	121.0	76.2	75.1	0.3
573.7	Chester-le-Street	Bournmoor	921.0	589.5	580.7	7.0
137.4	Chester-le-Street	Edmondsley	275.0	141.4	139.3	1.9
1,013.1	Chester-le-Street	Great Lumley	1,656.0	1,042.6	1,027.0	13.9
415.4	Chester-le-Street	Kimbleworth and Plawsworth	749.0	438.2	431.6	16.2
463.8	Chester-le-Street	Little Lumley	712.0	474.3	467.2	3.4
900.1	Chester-le-Street	North Lodge	999.0	911.7	898.0	(2.1)
808.6	Chester-le-Street	Ouston	1,267.0	817.7	805.4	(3.2)
1,374.4	Chester-le-Street	Pelton	2,994.0	1,453.8	1,432.0	57.6
1,233.4	Chester-le-Street	Sacriston	2,429.0	1,260.0	1,241.1	7.7
5,412.8	Chester-le-Street	Unparished Areas	9,716.0	5,510.5	5,427.9	15.1
1,025.4	Chester-le-Street	Urpeth	1,558.0	1,045.1	1,029.5	4.1
1,451.5	Chester-le-Street	Waldridge	1,758.0	1,467.9	1,445.9	(5.6)

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
3,920.2	Crook	Bishop Auckland	7,832.0	3,990.6	3,930.8	10.6
687.8	Crook	Dene Valley	1,323.0	718.7	707.9	20.1
1,641.4	Crook	Greater Willington	3,332.0	1,663.7	1,638.7	(2.7)
1,512.4	Crook	Stanhope	2,399.0	1,613.9	1,589.7	77.3
432.1	Crook	Tow Law	1,015.0	458.9	452.0	19.9
6,685.6	Crook	Unparished Areas	12,735.0	6,818.6	6,716.3	30.7
561.5	Crook	West Auckland	1,238.0	558.1	549.7	(11.8)
284.5	Crook	Witton le Wear	326.0	290.1	285.7	1.2
926.2	Crook	Wolsingham	1,307.0	964.5	950.0	23.8
519.4	Durham	Bearpark	991.0	526.4	518.5	(0.9)
2,770.7	Durham	Belmont	4,144.0	2,840.3	2,797.7	27.0
216.7	Durham	Brancepeth	189.0	222.5	219.2	2.5
4,510.4	Durham	Brandon & Byshottles	8,987.0	4,678.3	4,608.1	97.7
1,350.1	Durham	Cassop-cum-Quarrington Hill	2,641.0	1,427.0	1,405.6	55.5
1,192.6	Durham	Coxhoe	1,994.0	1,233.9	1,215.4	22.8

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
286.7	Durham	Croxdale & Hett	471.0	287.6	283.3	(3.4)
1,627.7	Durham	Framwellgate Moor	2,486.0	1,671.3	1,646.3	18.6
307.1	Durham	Kelloe	686.0	309.8	305.2	(1.9)
458.1	Durham	Pittington	679.0	465.3	458.4	0.3
530.8	Durham	Shadforth	1,002.0	535.3	527.3	(3.5)
820.5	Durham	Sherburn	1,474.0	848.0	835.3	14.8
717.7	Durham	Shincliffe	709.0	731.0	720.1	2.4
7,141.7	Durham	Unparished Areas	11,942.0	7,362.1	7,251.7	110.0
659.3	Durham	West Rainton	1,165.0	673.6	663.5	4.2
718.0	Durham	Witton Gilbert	1,211.0	739.3	728.2	10.2
297.5	Easington	Castle Eden	275.0	309.4	304.8	7.3
474.7	Easington	Dalton-le-Dale	677.0	484.5	477.3	2.6
1,086.3	Easington	Easington Colliery	2,503.0	1,117.8	1,101.0	14.7
681.6	Easington	Easington Village	1,019.0	693.0	682.6	1.0
436.2	Easington	Haswell	888.0	447.4	440.7	4.5

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
202.9	Easington	Hawthorn	228.0	200.8	197.8	(5.1)
1,532.3	Easington	Horden	3,954.0	1,594.4	1,570.5	38.2
395.3	Easington	Hutton Henry	743.0	403.4	397.3	2.0
1,344.5	Easington	Monk Hesleden	2,955.0	1,406.3	1,385.2	40.7
1,670.5	Easington	Murton	3,560.0	1,721.5	1,695.7	25.2
4,157.9	Easington	Peterlee	9,032.0	4,189.8	4,127.0	(30.9)
4,381.0	Easington	Seaham	9,172.0	4,423.2	4,356.8	(24.2)
402.3	Easington	Seaton with Slingley	536.0	414.3	408.1	5.8
879.2	Easington	Shotton	2,084.0	919.5	905.7	26.5
662.1	Easington	South Hetton	1,335.0	680.2	670.0	7.9
573.8	Easington	Thornley	1,184.0	576.9	568.2	(5.6)
338.5	Easington	Trimdon Foundry	692.0	338.4	333.3	(5.2)
55.6	Easington	Unparished Areas	54.0	57.2	56.3	0.7
590.5	Easington	Wheatley Hill	1,430.0	603.0	594.0	3.5
971.2	Easington	Wingate	1,854.0	984.7	969.9	(1.3)

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
401.4	Spennymoor	Bishop Middleham	581.0	414.8	408.6	7.2
59.3	Spennymoor	Bradbury	55.0	60.3	59.4	0.1
846.2	Spennymoor	Chilton	1,881.0	894.0	880.6	34.4
591.8	Spennymoor	Cornforth	1,307.0	585.1	576.3	(15.5)
80.1	Spennymoor	Eldon	208.0	81.8	80.6	0.5
2,177.3	Spennymoor	Ferryhill	5,073.0	2,238.6	2,205.0	27.7
619.4	Spennymoor	Fishburn	1,186.0	619.7	610.4	(9.0)
6,294.3	Spennymoor	Great Aycliffe	11,855.0	6,418.0	6,321.7	27.4
115.1	Spennymoor	Middridge	152.0	119.5	117.7	2.6
113.9	Spennymoor	Mordon	109.0	114.5	112.8	(1.1)
1,813.9	Spennymoor	Sedgefield Town Council	2,321.0	1,845.8	1,818.1	4.2
1,979.0	Spennymoor	Shildon	5,016.0	2,031.8	2,001.3	22.3
5,149.0	Spennymoor	Spennymoor Town Council	9,666.0	5,388.6	5,307.8	158.8
1,053.9	Spennymoor	Trimdon	2,189.0	1,082.5	1,066.3	12.4
107.2	Spennymoor	Windlestone	115.0	112.9	111.2	4.0

Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2014/15	Locality	Parish Area	Number of Dwellings on the Valuation Office List	Band D Equivalent Properties	Tax Base for Council Tax purposes 2015/16	Increase / (Decrease) in Tax Base from 2014/15
No.			No.	No.	No.	No.
379.7	Stanley	Burnhope	745.0	383.7	377.9	(1.8)
242.4	Stanley	Cornsay	500.0	247.1	243.4	1.0
1,306.3	Stanley	Esh	2,294.0	1,326.4	1,306.5	0.2
81.4	Stanley	Greencroft	88.0	82.8	81.6	0.2
495.6	Stanley	Healeyfield	716.0	505.9	498.3	2.7
55.9	Stanley	Hedleyhope	84.0	57.8	56.9	1.0
1,411.6	Stanley	Lanchester	1,931.0	1,450.2	1,428.4	16.8
42.7	Stanley	Muggleswick	56.0	44.6	43.9	1.2
117.8	Stanley	Satley	130.0	122.5	120.7	2.9
7,105.1	Stanley	Stanley	15,665.0	7,276.3	7,167.2	62.1
11,692.8	Stanley	Unparished Areas	20,850.0	11,995.5	11,815.6	122.8
129,047.6			238,256.0	132,479.9	130,493.0	1,445.4
23,827.5	Durham	Chartered Trust	40,771.0	24,551.7	24,183.4	355.9

Appendix 6 - Impact on Parish & Town Councils & The Chartered Trust for the City of Durham 2015/16

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Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Barnard Castle	Barnard Castle Town Council	28.7	88.59	2,542.53	(14,881.00)	11,292.00	(1,046.47)	0.69%	0.61	0.41
Barnard Castle	Barningham Parish Council	0.4	9.17	3.67	0.00	0.00	3.67	-0.49%	(0.04)	(0.03)
Barnard Castle	Boldron Parish Council	2.7	6.73	18.17	(26.00)	7.00	(0.83)	0.24%	0.02	0.01
Barnard Castle	Bowes Parish Council	5.2	21.86	113.67	(47.00)	0.00	66.67	-1.84%	(0.40)	(0.27)
Barnard Castle	Cockfield Parish Council	(1.4)	40.86	(57.20)	(3,667.00)	3,408.00	(316.20)	2.05%	0.84	0.56
Barnard Castle	Cotherstone Parish Council	9.9	23.87	236.31	(193.00)	0.00	43.31	-0.70%	(0.17)	(0.11)
Barnard Castle	Eggleston Parish Council	4.6	33.26	153.00	(145.00)	0.00	8.00	-0.13%	(0.04)	(0.03)
Barnard Castle	Etherly Parish Council	6.2	29.64	183.77	(1,625.00)	1,319.00	(122.23)	0.64%	0.19	0.13

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Barnard Castle	Evenwood and Barony Parish Council	29.9	27.29	815.97	(2,714.00)	1,737.00	(161.03)	0.89%	0.24	0.16
Barnard Castle	Forest and Frith Parish Council	(3.6)	2.56	(9.22)	(67.00)	70.00	(6.22)	4.41%	0.11	0.07
Barnard Castle	Gainford & Langton Parish Council	12.4	77.22	957.53	(1,305.00)	318.00	(29.47)	0.08%	0.06	0.04
Barnard Castle	Hamsterley Parish Council	1.3	16.71	21.72	(75.00)	49.00	(4.28)	0.14%	0.02	0.01
Barnard Castle	Hutton Magna Parish Council	3.1	10.15	31.47	(26.00)	0.00	5.47	-1.09%	(0.11)	(0.07)
Barnard Castle	Ingleton Parish Council	(3.1)	24.92	(77.25)	(170.00)	226.00	(21.25)	0.48%	0.12	0.08
Barnard Castle	Lartington Parish Council	2.2	20.07	44.15	0.00	0.00	44.15	-3.46%	(0.70)	(0.47)
Barnard Castle	Lunedale Parish Council	0.7	4.75	3.32	0.00	0.00	3.32	-1.64%	(0.08)	(0.05)

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Barnard Castle	Lynesack and Softley Parish Council	9.2	21.31	196.05	(669.00)	433.00	(39.95)	0.48%	0.10	0.07
Barnard Castle	Marwood Parish Council	14.1	10.01	141.14	(29.00)	0.00	112.14	-5.45%	(0.55)	(0.37)
Barnard Castle	Mickleton Parish Council	4.5	23.26	104.67	(73.00)	0.00	31.67	-0.79%	(0.18)	(0.12)
Barnard Castle	Middleton in Teesdale & Newbiggin in Teesdale Parish Council	30.2	26.24	792.45	(972.00)	164.00	(15.55)	0.12%	0.03	0.02
Barnard Castle	Ovington Parish Council	1.0	26.87	26.87	(41.00)	13.00	(1.13)	0.06%	0.02	0.01
Barnard Castle	Rokerby, Brignall and Egglestone Abbey Parish Council	3.4	24.32	82.69	(27.00)	0.00	55.69	-3.27%	(0.80)	(0.53)
Barnard Castle	Romaldkirk Parish Council	5.0	22.65	113.25	(47.00)	0.00	66.25	-3.21%	(0.73)	(0.49)

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Barnard Castle	South Bedburn Parish Council	2.8	9.87	27.64	(5.00)	0.00	22.64	-2.91%	(0.29)	(0.19)
Barnard Castle	Staindrop Parish Council	7.0	31.97	223.79	(1,126.00)	826.00	(76.21)	0.54%	0.17	0.11
Barnard Castle	Startforth Parish Council	6.6	33.60	221.76	(241.00)	18.00	(1.24)	0.01%	0.00	0.00
Barnard Castle	Streatlam & Stainton Parish Council	1.9	25.31	48.09	(132.00)	77.00	(6.91)	0.18%	0.04	0.03
Barnard Castle	Whorlton & Westwick Parish Council	6.9	33.08	228.25	(94.00)	0.00	134.25	-3.60%	(1.19)	(0.79)
Barnard Castle	Winston Parish Council	5.4	20.49	110.65	(6.00)	0.00	104.65	-2.55%	(0.52)	(0.35)
Barnard Castle	Woodland Parish Council	0.3	16.39	4.92	(134.00)	118.00	(11.08)	0.90%	0.15	0.10

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Chester-le-Street	Bournmoor Parish Council	7.0	19.43	136.01	(1,553.00)	1,297.00	(119.99)	1.06%	0.21	0.14
Chester-le-Street	Edmondsley Parish Council	1.9	35.64	67.72	(1,211.00)	1,046.00	(97.28)	1.96%	0.70	0.47
Chester-le-Street	Great Lumley Parish Council	13.9	17.81	247.56	(2,422.00)	1,990.00	(184.44)	1.01%	0.18	0.12
Chester-le-Street	Kimbleworth and Plawsworth Parish Council	16.2	21.19	343.28	(1,197.00)	781.00	(72.72)	0.80%	0.17	0.11
Chester-le-Street	Little Lumley Parish Council	3.4	11.44	38.90	(695.00)	600.00	(56.10)	1.05%	0.12	0.08
Chester-le-Street	North Lodge Parish Council	(2.1)	19.35	(40.64)	(640.00)	623.00	(57.64)	0.33%	0.06	0.04
Chester-le-Street	Ouston Parish Council	(3.2)	27.21	(87.07)	(1,634.00)	1,575.00	(146.07)	0.67%	0.18	0.12
Chester-le-Street	Pelton Parish Council	57.6	97.56	5,619.46	(20,387.00)	13,515.00	(1,252.54)	0.90%	0.87	0.58

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Chester-le-Street	Sacriston Parish Council	7.7	40.82	314.31	(7,094.00)	6,205.00	(574.69)	1.13%	0.46	0.31
Chester-le-Street	Urpeth Parish Council	4.1	30.23	123.94	(2,088.00)	1,797.00	(167.06)	0.54%	0.16	0.11
Chester-le-Street	Waldrige Parish Council	(5.6)	20.82	(116.59)	(432.00)	502.00	(46.59)	0.15%	0.03	0.02
Crook	Bishop Auckland Town Council	10.6	36.23	384.04	(20,740.00)	18,629.00	(1,726.96)	1.21%	0.44	0.29
Crook	Dene Valley Parish Council	20.1	16.38	329.24	(1,123.00)	726.00	(67.76)	0.58%	0.10	0.07
Crook	Greater Willington Town Council	(2.7)	46.64	(125.93)	(10,953.00)	10,139.00	(939.93)	1.23%	0.57	0.38
Crook	Stanhope Parish Council	77.3	25.13	1,942.55	(2,916.00)	891.00	(82.45)	0.21%	0.05	0.03
Crook	Tow Law Town Council	19.9	64.81	1,289.72	(6,424.00)	4,699.00	(435.28)	1.49%	0.96	0.64
Crook	West Auckland Parish Council	(11.8)	31.33	(369.69)	(4,611.00)	4,558.00	(422.69)	2.45%	0.77	0.51

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Crook	Witton le Wear Parish Council	1.2	19.52	23.42	(119.00)	87.00	(8.58)	0.15%	0.03	0.02
Crook	Wolsingham Parish Council	23.8	26.85	639.03	(2,215.00)	1,442.00	(133.97)	0.53%	0.14	0.09
Durham	Bearpark Parish Council	(0.9)	24.57	(22.11)	(1,951.00)	1,806.00	(167.11)	1.31%	0.32	0.21
Durham	Belmont Parish Council	27.0	24.90	672.30	(4,811.00)	3,788.00	(350.70)	0.50%	0.13	0.09
Durham	Brancepeth Parish Council	2.5	47.20	118.00	0.00	0.00	118.00	-1.14%	(0.54)	(0.36)
Durham	Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council	97.7	32.18	3,143.99	(22,124.00)	17,370.00	(1,610.01)	1.09%	0.35	0.23
Durham	Cassop-cum-Quarrington Hill Parish Council	55.5	18.36	1,018.98	(3,246.00)	2,038.00	(189.02)	0.73%	0.13	0.09
Durham	Coxhoe Parish Council	22.8	60.95	1,389.66	(4,555.00)	2,897.00	(268.34)	0.36%	0.22	0.15

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Durham	Croxdale & Hett Parish Council	(3.4)	33.28	(113.15)	(1,189.00)	1,192.00	(110.15)	1.17%	0.39	0.26
Durham	Framwellgate Moor Parish Council	18.6	24.98	464.63	(1,321.00)	784.00	(72.37)	0.18%	0.04	0.03
Durham	Kelloe Parish Council	(1.9)	30.21	(57.40)	(2,188.00)	2,055.00	(190.40)	2.07%	0.62	0.41
Durham	Pittington Parish Council	0.3	50.21	15.06	(906.00)	815.00	(75.94)	0.33%	0.17	0.11
Durham	Shadforth Parish Council	(3.5)	22.47	(78.65)	(2,072.00)	1,968.00	(182.65)	1.54%	0.35	0.23
Durham	Sherburn Village Parish Council	14.8	24.54	363.19	(3,621.00)	2,981.00	(276.81)	1.35%	0.33	0.22
Durham	Shincliffe Parish Council	2.4	19.68	47.23	0.00	0.00	47.23	-0.33%	(0.07)	(0.05)
Durham	West Rainton Parish Council	4.2	37.92	159.26	(3,470.00)	3,030.00	(280.74)	1.12%	0.42	0.28
Durham	Witton Gilbert Parish Council	10.2	37.52	382.70	(2,561.00)	1,994.00	(184.30)	0.67%	0.25	0.17

Locality	Parish Area	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Base Band D Equivalent in 2015/16 -	Band D Council Tax 2014/15	Increase / (Loss) of Tax Raising Capacity	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2014/15	Parish Element of LCTSS Grant 2015/16	Net Position After Distribution of LCTSS Grant	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Increase / (Decrease) in Band D Council Tax Required to retain current Precept	Additional Council Tax Amount payable at Band A to retain current Precept
		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Easington	Castle Eden Parish Council	7.3	26.34	192.28	(244.00)	47.00	(4.72)	0.06%	0.02	0.01
Easington	Dalton-le-Dale Parish Council	2.6	26.53	68.98	(893.00)	754.00	(70.02)	0.55%	0.15	0.10
Easington	Easington Colliery Parish Council	14.7	257.08	3,779.08	(60,964.00)	52,334.00	(4,850.92)	1.71%	4.41	2.94
Easington	Easington Village Parish Council	1.0	164.00	164.00	(6,437.00)	5,741.00	(532.00)	0.48%	0.78	0.52
Easington	Haswell Parish Council	4.5	141.50	636.75	(13,162.00)	11,463.00	(1,062.25)	1.70%	2.41	1.61
Easington	Hawthorn Parish Council	(5.1)	34.50	(175.95)	(85.00)	239.00	(21.95)	0.32%	0.11	0.07
Easington	Horden Parish Council	38.2	236.81	9,046.14	(118,331.00)	100,014.00	(9,270.86)	2.49%	5.90	3.93
Easington	Hutton Henry Parish Council	2.0	98.20	196.40	(6,807.00)	6,050.00	(560.60)	1.44%	1.41	0.94

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		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Easington	Monk Hesleden Parish Council	40.7	167.35	6,811.15	(46,883.00)	36,673.00	(3,398.86)	1.47%	2.45	1.63
Easington	Murton Parish Council	25.2	164.62	4,148.42	(50,203.00)	42,148.00	(3,906.58)	1.40%	2.30	1.53
Easington	Peterlee Town Council	(30.9)	276.62	(8,547.56)	(306,481.00)	288,304.00	(26,724.56)	2.34%	6.48	4.32
Easington	Seaham Town Council	(24.2)	206.79	(5,004.32)	(185,151.00)	174,025.00	(16,130.32)	1.79%	3.70	2.47
Easington	Seaton with Slingley Parish Council	5.8	29.08	168.66	(604.00)	398.00	(37.34)	0.31%	0.09	0.06
Easington	Shotton Parish Council	26.5	98.93	2,621.65	(23,319.00)	18,942.00	(1,755.36)	1.96%	1.94	1.29
Easington	South Hetton Parish Council	7.9	131.80	1,041.22	(15,533.00)	13,262.00	(1,229.78)	1.39%	1.84	1.23
Easington	Thornley Parish Council	(5.6)	229.85	(1,287.16)	(19,578.00)	19,095.00	(1,770.16)	1.36%	3.12	2.08

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		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Easington	Trimdon Foundry Parish Council	(5.2)	172.43	(896.64)	(11,160.00)	11,034.00	(1,022.64)	1.78%	3.07	2.05
Easington	Wheatley Hill Parish Council	3.5	161.16	564.06	(32,579.00)	29,299.00	(2,715.94)	2.84%	4.57	3.05
Easington	Wingate Parish Council	(1.3)	133.86	(174.02)	(20,270.00)	18,710.00	(1,734.02)	1.34%	1.79	1.19
Spennymoor	Bishop Middleham Parish Council	7.2	117.28	844.42	(3,436.00)	2,372.00	(219.58)	0.46%	0.54	0.36
Spennymoor	Bradbury and The Isles Parish Council	0.1	23.35	2.34	0.00	0.00	2.34	-0.17%	(0.04)	(0.03)
Spennymoor	Chilton Town Council	34.4	189.48	6,518.11	(37,857.00)	28,680.00	(2,658.89)	1.59%	3.02	2.01
Spennymoor	Cornforth Parish Council	(15.5)	137.99	(2,138.85)	(18,240.00)	18,650.00	(1,728.85)	2.17%	3.00	2.00
Spennymoor	Eldon Parish Council	0.5	110.85	55.43	(3,121.00)	2,806.00	(259.58)	2.91%	3.22	2.15

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		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Spennymoor	Ferryhill Town Council	27.7	209.41	5,800.66	(138,202.00)	121,170.00	(11,231.34)	2.43%	5.09	3.39
Spennymoor	Fishburn Parish Council	(9.0)	107.22	(964.98)	(10,297.00)	10,307.00	(954.98)	1.46%	1.56	1.04
Spennymoor	Great Aycliffe Town Council	27.4	209.17	5,731.26	(255,847.00)	228,898.00	(21,217.74)	1.60%	3.36	2.24
Spennymoor	Middridge Parish Council	2.6	52.91	137.57	(488.00)	321.00	(29.43)	0.47%	0.25	0.17
Spennymoor	Mordon Parish Council	(1.1)	17.31	(19.04)	0.00	17.00	(2.04)	0.10%	0.02	0.01
Spennymoor	Sedgefield Town Council	4.2	127.60	535.92	(13,942.00)	12,269.00	(1,137.08)	0.49%	0.63	0.42
Spennymoor	Sildon Town Council	22.3	245.28	5,469.74	(163,916.00)	145,005.00	(13,441.26)	2.74%	6.72	4.48
Spennymoor	Spennymoor Town Council	158.8	204.27	32,438.08	(154,448.00)	111,660.00	(10,349.92)	0.95%	1.95	1.30
Spennymoor	Trimdon Parish Council	12.4	139.59	1,730.92	(24,957.00)	21,256.00	(1,970.08)	1.32%	1.85	1.23
Spennymoor	Windlestone Parish Council	4.0	23.32	93.28	(55.00)	0.00	38.28	-1.48%	(0.34)	(0.23)

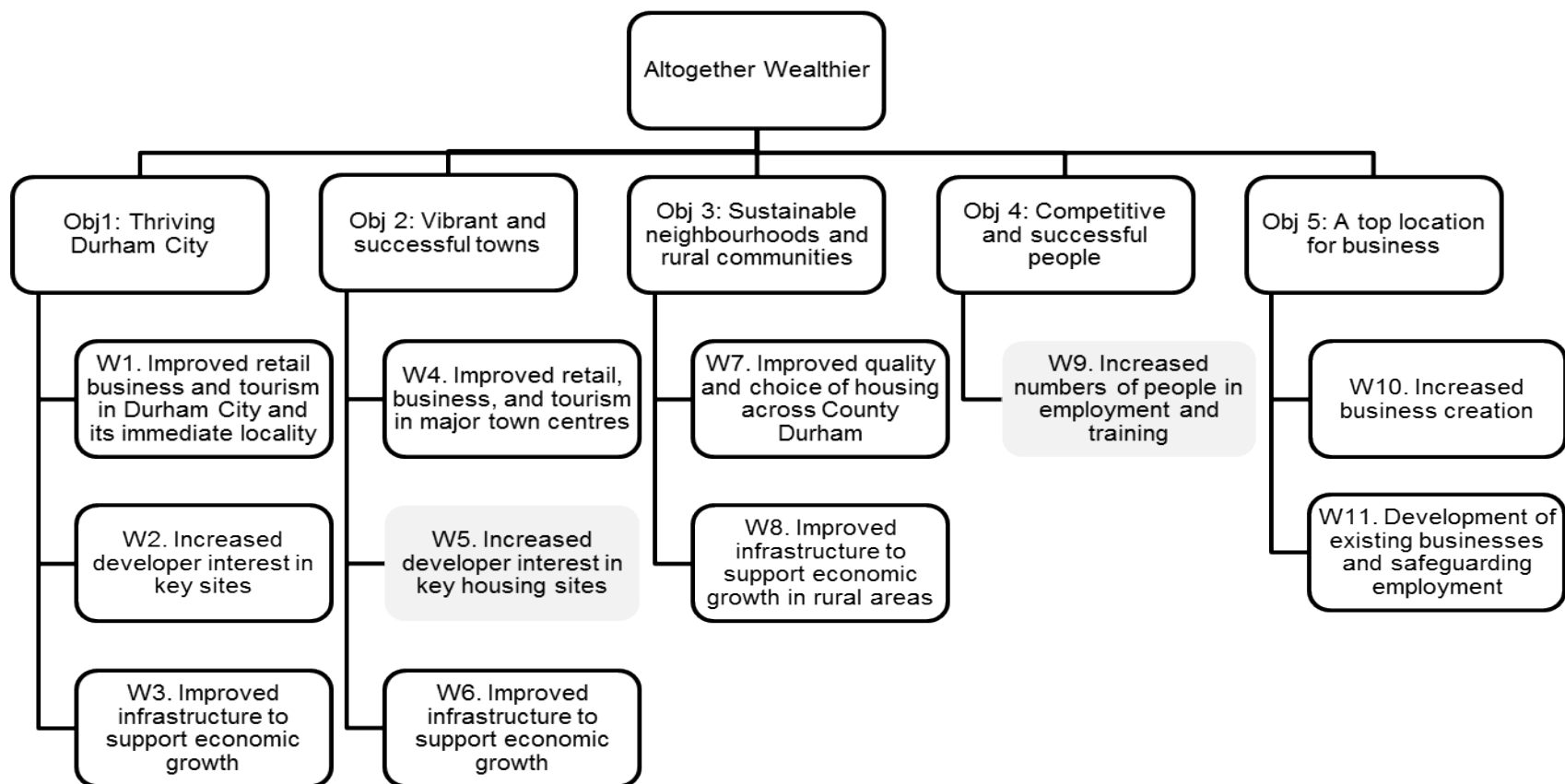
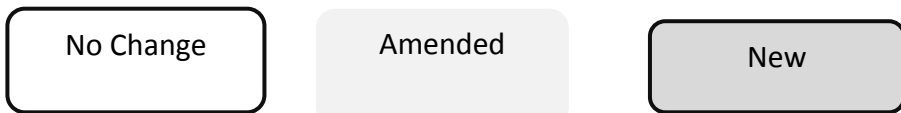
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		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Stanley	Burnhope Parish Council	(1.8)	13.43	(24.17)	(851.00)	801.00	(74.17)	1.46%	0.20	0.13
Stanley	Cornsay Parish Council	1.0	49.67	49.67	(2,429.00)	2,177.00	(202.33)	1.67%	0.83	0.55
Stanley	Esh Parish Council	0.2	55.58	11.12	(7,626.00)	6,969.00	(645.88)	0.89%	0.49	0.33
Stanley	Greencroft Parish Council	0.2	38.19	7.64	(82.00)	68.00	(6.36)	0.20%	0.08	0.05
Stanley	Healeyfield Parish Council	2.7	17.24	46.55	(524.00)	437.00	(40.45)	0.47%	0.08	0.05
Stanley	Hedleyhope Parish Council	1.0	53.09	53.09	(81.00)	26.00	(1.91)	0.06%	0.03	0.02
Stanley	Lanchester Parish Council	16.8	36.58	614.54	(3,341.00)	2,495.00	(231.46)	0.44%	0.16	0.11
Stanley	Muggleswick Parish Council	1.2	28.10	33.72	(66.00)	30.00	(2.28)	0.18%	0.05	0.03

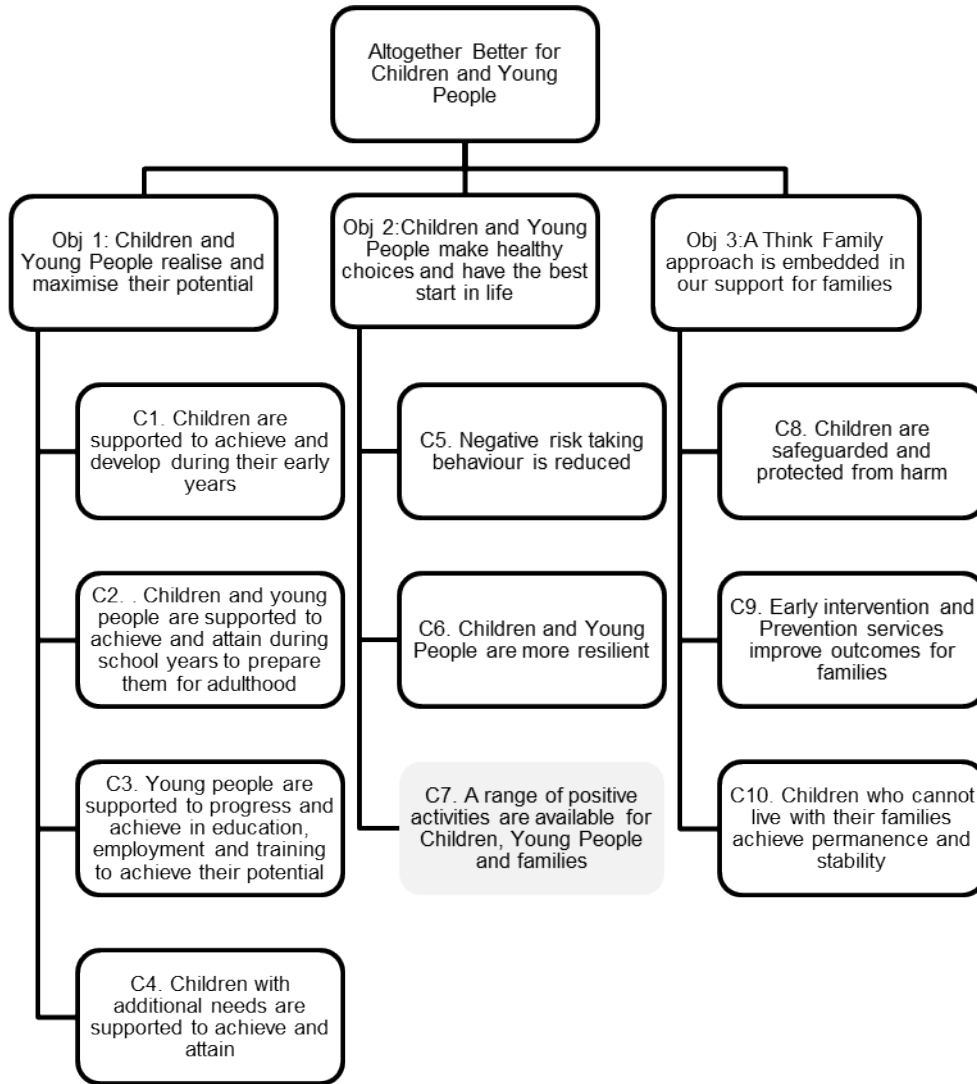
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		No.	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Stanley	Satley Parish Council	2.9	25.40	73.66	(28.00)	0.00	45.66	-1.49%	(0.38)	(0.25)
Stanley	Stanley Town Council	62.1	86.48	5,370.41	(152,988.00)	135,095.00	(12,522.59)	2.02%	1.75	1.17
		1,153.0	106.54	101,390.98	(2,082,512.00)	1,813,936.00	(167,185.02)	1.59%	1.69	1.13

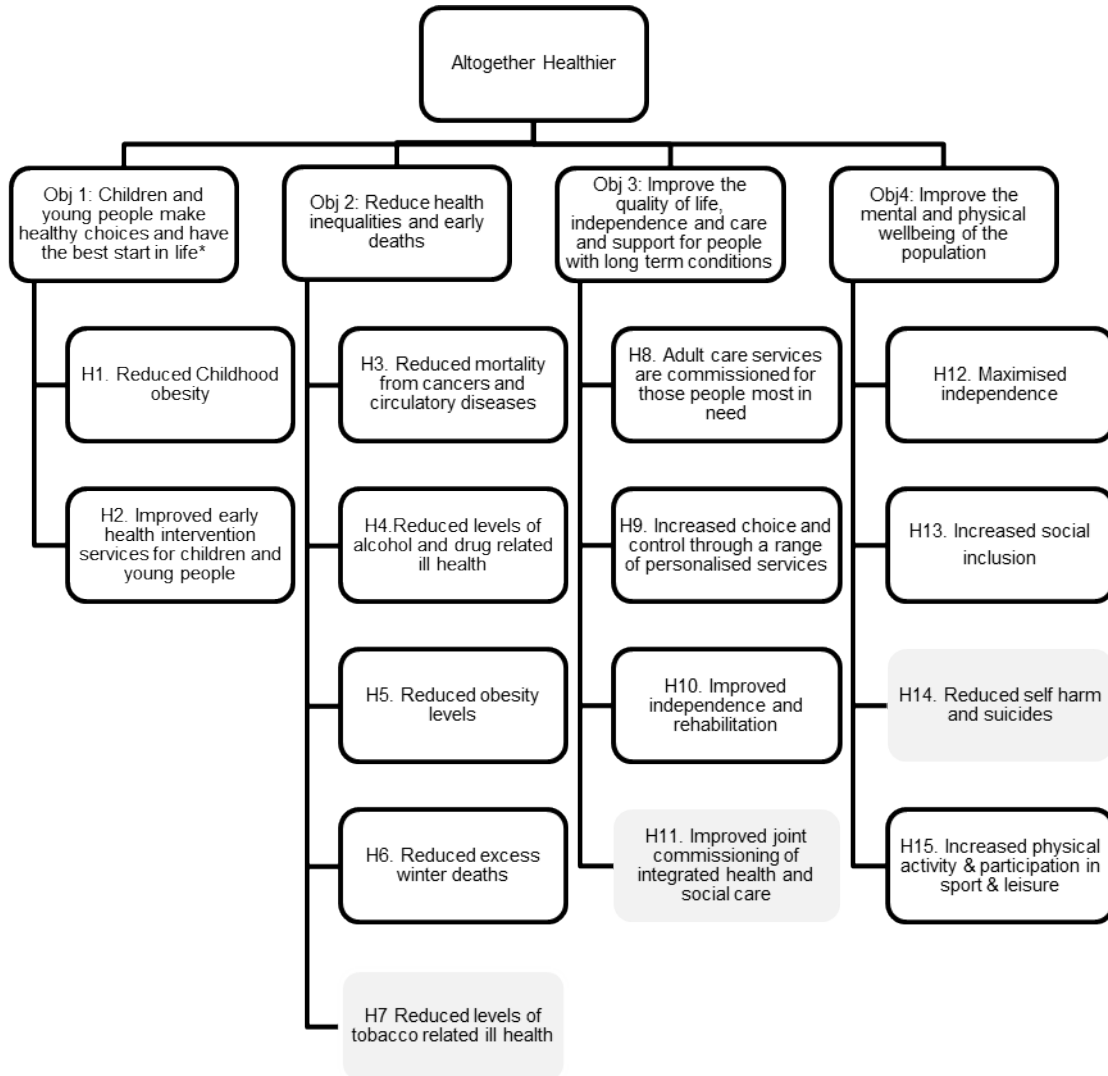
Durham	The Chartered Trust for the City of Durham	355.9	1.90	676.21	(9,488.00)	8,064.00	(747.79)	1.63%	0.03	0.02
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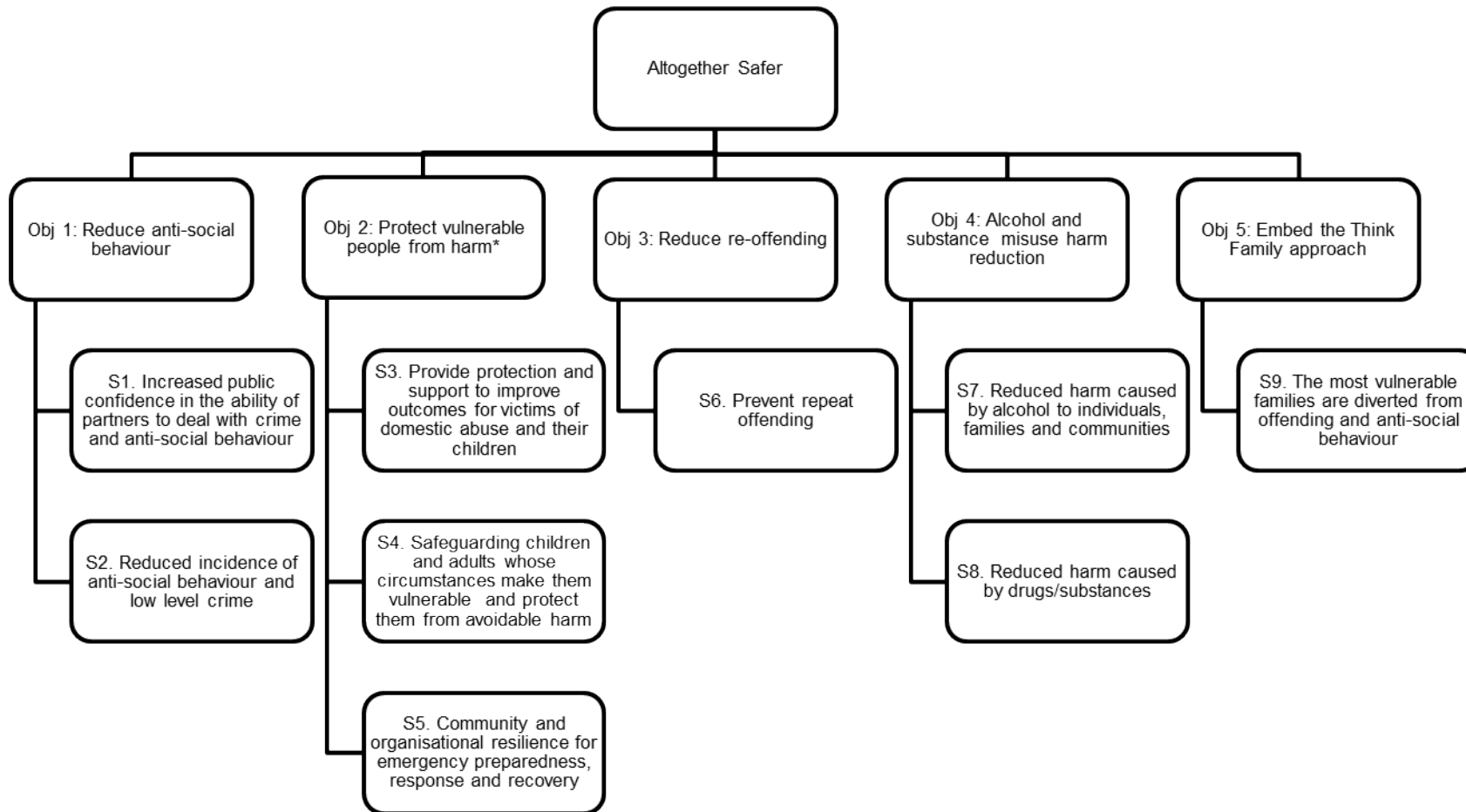
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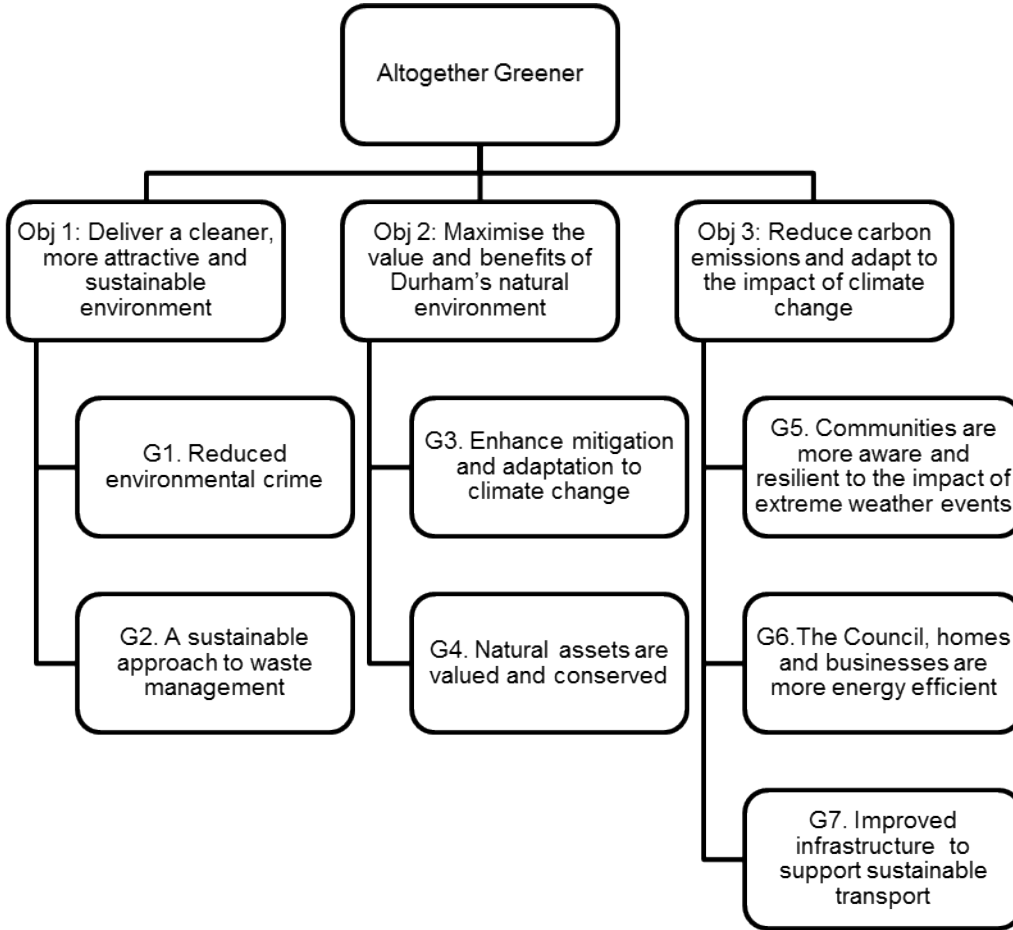
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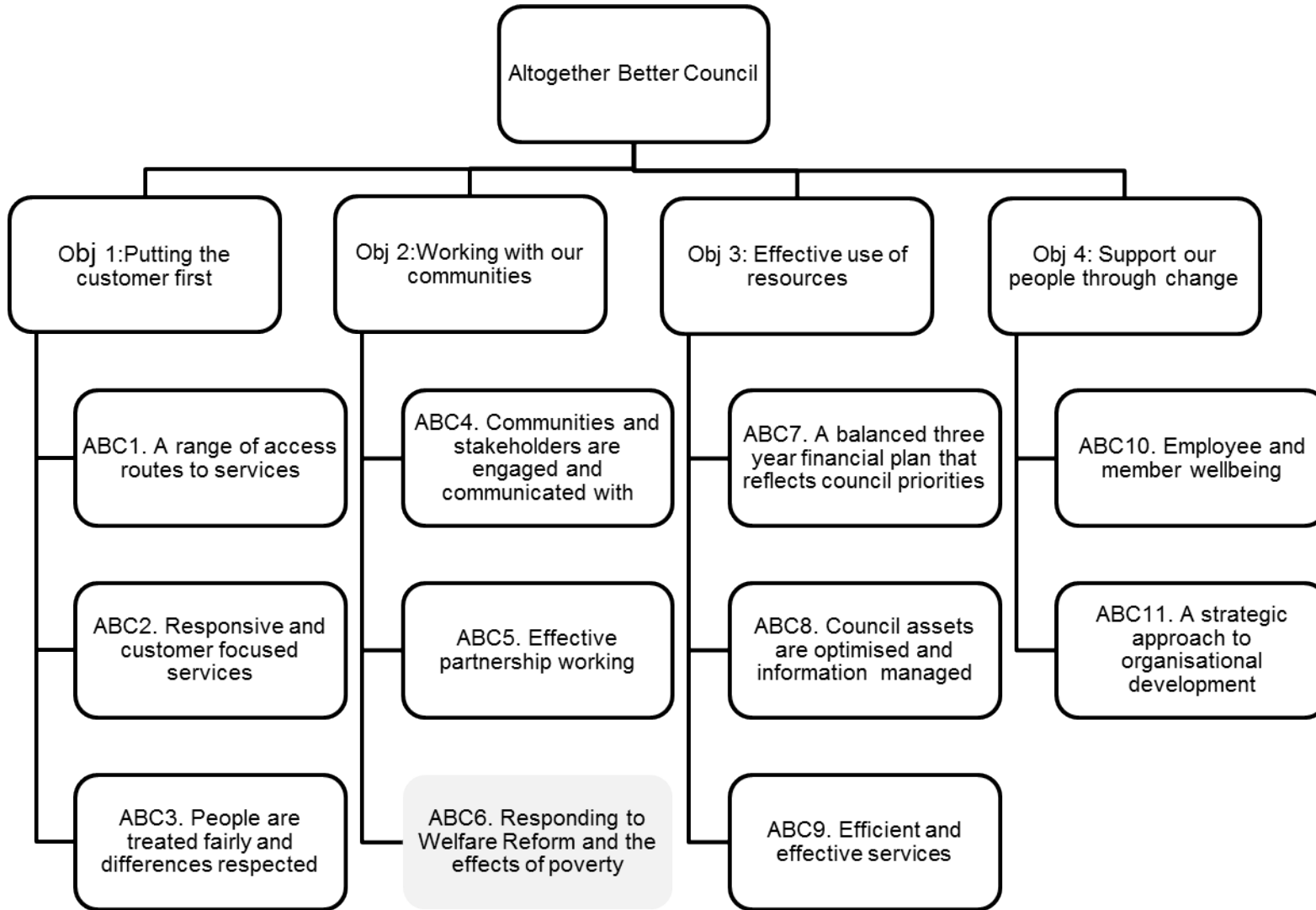












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Cabinet**14 January 2015****Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2017/18 (MTFP5) and 2015/16 Budget****Key Decision CORP/R/14/02**

Report of Corporate Management Team
Don McLure, Corporate Director Resources
Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
Councillor Alan Napier, Cabinet Portfolio Holder Finance
Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Cabinet with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP(5)) 2015/16 to 2017/18 and the 2015/16 Budget following the Government's Local Government Finance Settlement announcement on 18 December 2014 and feedback from the budget consultation process.

Executive Summary

- 2 The financial outlook for the Council continues to be extremely challenging. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's December 2014 Autumn Statement confirmed that funding cuts to the public sector will continue until 2019/20. It is now forecast that Government funding to Local Government will have reduced by over 60% between 2011 and 2019.
- 3 The Autumn Statement confirmed that due to the deterioration in the forecast for the national deficit, additional public expenditure funding cuts would be required in 2016/17. To reflect this, the Council has increased the forecast of Government funding reductions in 2016/17 from £33m to £38m.
- 4 Overall the forecast for total savings between 2011 and 2018 up to the end of the MTFP(5) period is £224.8m. Based upon analysis of public expenditure funding reductions in the Autumn Statement however it is forecast that the savings figure will exceed £250m by 2018/2019.
- 5 The provisional financial settlement was received on 18 December 2014 and details are included within this report. The main points are:
 - (i) Revenue Support Grant will reduce by £39.4m to £99.3m. This is in line with Council forecasts.
 - (ii) Specific grant allocations are broadly in line with Council forecasts.
 - (iii) It is still apparent that deprived areas will continue to see higher levels of funding reduction in 2015/16.

- (iv) Although the Government's Spending Power figures are unrepresentative of actual funding reductions faced by local authorities, they do highlight the regional variation in settlements. The published average spending power reduction for England is 1.8%, for Durham it is 2.7%.

Background

- 6 The MTFP(5) update report to Cabinet on 17 December 2014 identified the Council faced £225.4m of savings across the period 2011 to 2018. Although the Council would have delivered £136.9m of savings by the end of 2014/15, there was still £88.5m of savings required to balance MTFP(5).
- 7 It was reported that an additional report would be brought to Cabinet on 14 January 2015 which would provide details of the provisional settlement and provide an analysis of the MTFP(5) consultation process.
- 8 The draft Council Plan and Service Plans for 2015/16 – 2017/18 continue to be developed within the context of the financial settlement and budget planning, and will be presented to Cabinet in March once the budget has been set.

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

- 9 The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published on 18 December 2014. The final settlement will be confirmed in late January/ early February 2015. The settlement is for 2015/16 only. It is hoped that in the future local authorities will receive multi-year financial settlements to aid effective financial management.
- 10 The Council Tax Referendum Limit is confirmed at 2%. The Government has also confirmed that a 1% Council Tax Freeze Grant will be paid to any authority which freezes Council Tax in 2015/16.
- 11 The settlement includes details of core grants e.g. Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Business Rates 'Top Up' Grant. In addition confirmation was received in relation to specific grants. The table below highlights the reduction in the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA). It is important to note that the Business Rates figure below is a 'notional' figure published by the Government.

Funding Stream	2014/15	2015/16	Variance	
	£m	£m	£m	%
Revenue Support Grant	138.710	99.274	(39.346)	(28.4)
Business Rates	54.045	55.050	1.005	1.9
Top Up Grant	59.357	60.491	1.134	1.9
SFA	252.112	214.815	(37.297)	(14.8)

- 12 The table above highlights that the SFA has reduced by 14.8% in 2015/16. In addition to the above 'core' grants the Council continues to face reductions in other Specific Grants as detailed overleaf.

Specific Grant	2014/15	2015/16	Variance	
	£m	£m	£m	%
Education Services Grant	7.523	6.002	(1.521)	(20)
Housing Benefit Admin Grant	4.091	3.765	(0.326)	(8)
Extended Free Rights to Transport	1.086	0.999	(0.087)	(8)
Local Welfare Assistance	1.900	-	(1.900)	(100)

- 13 In relation to the withdrawal of Local Welfare Provision Grant (£1.9m), the Government have notionally identified a sum of £1.4m in the Council's RSG for Local Welfare Provision but have not transferred additional funding into RSG in this regard.
- 14 It is disappointing to note that the 2015/16 Public Health Grant has been announced unchanged at £45.780m. At a time when health budgets are being protected and receiving above inflation increases it is disappointing that the Public Health budget has not increased in 2015/16.
- 15 The Council has been forecasting the outcome of the settlement and the table below identifies where the settlement in relation to core grants varies from the forecast.

Grant/Income	2015/16 Settlement	2015/16 Forecast	Difference
	£m	£m	£m
Revenue Support Grant	99.274	98.665	0.609
Town and Parish RSG Adjustments	0.270	0.285	(0.015)
Business Rate RPI Increase	1.005	1.203	(0.198)
Top-Up Grant RPI Increase	1.134	1.365	(0.231)
Section 31 Grant Increase	0.509	0.080	0.429
New Homes Bonus (NHB) Increase	1.538	1.500	0.038
NHB Re-imburement	0.377	0.390	(0.013)
Total Variance	103.822	103.203	0.619

- 16 The main issues to note in relation to the table above are as follows:-
- (i) The Government had originally top-sliced £300m from RSG to finance the additional 2015/16 New Homes Bonus. Nationally only an additional £250m has been allocated. The Government has re-instated the £50m difference to RSG resulting in a £0.609m increase in RSG for the Council.
 - (ii) The Government has capped the increase in business rates for 2015/16 at 2%. The forecast was 2.3%. This reduction of £0.429m in Business Rate income and Top Up Grant will be reimbursed via an increase in Section 31 Grant.
 - (iii) The additional New Homes Bonus allocation for 2015/16 of £1.538m is in line with the Council forecast.
- 17 The table above highlights that although overall Government funding has reduced by circa £40m, the settlement is £0.619m better than forecast.

Impact upon 2015/16 Budget

- 18 The variance detailed in the above table of £0.619m has been utilised in the 2015/16 Budget at this stage by reducing the call on the contingency budget. A revised MTFP(5) model is attached at Appendix 2.
- 19 Based upon the above the savings target for 2015/16 remains unchanged at £16.283m.

Spending Power

- 20 The Government has published data on the national Spending Power variations. Spending Power includes certain Government grants, Council Tax income and health funding. The national average Spending Power reduction in 2015/16 has been published as 1.8%. This calculation is not representative of the actual challenge faced by local authorities for the following reasons:
- (i) The totality of the Better Care Fund revenue allocation of £39.193m is included in 2015/16 for the first time. The majority of this funding however, is either already being expended by the Council or will be expended within the national health sector. Showing the figures in this way is skewing the data and is masking the actual level of government funding reductions faced by local authorities.
 - (ii) Certain grants are excluded from the Spending Power calculation e.g. the Education Services Grant. In 2015/16, the council has lost £1.521m of Education Services Grant funding but this is not included in the Spending Power calculation.
- 21 Although the actual level of funding reduction is not fairly represented in the Spending Power figures, the government's analysis does reflect the regional variations in the funding settlement. Detailed below are a number of examples of 2015/16 Spending Power variations.

Area	Spending Power Variation
England	-1.8%
Durham	-2.7%
Newcastle	-4.9%
Middlesbrough	-5.6%
North Yorkshire	+1.1%
Wokingham	+2.6%
Surrey County	+3.1%

- 22 The Government has also published details of Spending Power 'per dwelling' for all local authorities. Areas of deprivation like Durham naturally require higher funding levels than affluent areas for a range of reasons including the following:
- (i) In affluent areas, more service users, especially in adult care can afford to contribute to the cost of services. This is especially the case for residential care and home care services for the elderly. In these circumstances the budget required in affluent areas is lower than in deprived areas.

- (ii) Demand for services in deprived areas such as Children’s Social Care is significantly higher than in affluent areas and therefore deprived areas need higher budgets.

23 The logic therefore that local authorities which have higher Spending Power or are more reliant upon Government grant should face higher funding reductions should continue to be challenged.

24 The Spending Power per dwelling data does however highlight that the funding for an area such as Durham is now lower than the national average and lower than affluent areas such as Surrey and Reading. The table below highlights the 2015/16 Spending Power per dwelling for a range of local authorities.

Area	Spending Power Per Dwelling
	£
England	2,083
Durham	2,049
Bristol	2,128
Reading	2,070
Wokingham	1,931
Surrey County	1,863
Surrey County and Districts	2,184

25 It is significant that if the pace of funding reduction continues as forecast, then the Spending Power of Surrey County Council excluding the Surrey Districts will exceed that of Durham by 2017/18 notwithstanding that the Spending Power for Durham is already below that of Surrey County consolidated with the Surrey District Councils. We will continue to challenge how a deprived area such as Durham should have a lower Spending Power per dwelling than an affluent area such as Surrey.

MTFP(5) – 2015/16 to 2017/18 Update

26 The MTFP(5) strategy report to Cabinet on 17 December 2014 provided an update on the savings required to balance MTFP(5). The forecast savings for 2016/17 and 2017/18 at that time were as follows:

Year	Savings Requirement
	£m
2016/17	32.389
2017/18	39.829
TOTAL	72.218

27 At that point for planning purposes the Council was forecasting Government funding reductions of circa £33m for both 2016/17 and 2017/18. The Chancellor of the Exchequer’s Autumn Statement published on 3 December 2014 provided an update on the likely level of public sector funding reductions up to 2019/20. The Autumn Statement detailed that:

- (i) The national deficit at the end of 2014/15 will still be £91bn;
- (ii) Even greater reductions would be required in public expenditure than previously forecast;

- (iii) Funding reductions would continue until 2019/20 enabling a national budget surplus of £23bn to be generated in 2019/20 which could be utilised to repay national debt;
- (iv) The Government intention is still to save £12bn from welfare spend.

28 The table below highlights the impact of the deterioration in public sector expenditure forecasts over the last two years upon the 2016/17 and 2017/18 national budget, based upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget and Autumn Statement announcements. The variance detailed below is in relation to the Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL). These budgets relate to Government departmental budgets and exclude expenditure such as for the state pension, welfare, debt repayments, etc.

Year	FORECAST DEL REDUCTION			
	March 13 Budget	Dec. 13 Autumn Statement	March 14 Budget	Dec. 14 Autumn Statement
	%	%	%	%
2016/17	(3.00)	(2.17)	(3.20)	(5.46)
2017/18	(2.64)	(3.79)	(3.43)	(3.74)
Total DEL Reduction	(5.64)	(5.96)	(6.63)	(9.20)

29 The table highlights that the forecast reduction in DEL for 2016/17 and 2017/18 in the March 2013 Budget was 5.64% whereas the reduction announced in the Autumn Statement 2014 has increased to 9.20%. Of particular note is the increase in the 2016/17 reduction between the March 2014 Budget and the December 2014 Autumn Statement from 3.2% to 5.46%.

30 This increase in the need to reduce public expenditure has resulted from the national deficit not being eradicated and still expected to be £91bn at the end of 2014/15.

31 The size and scope of the funding reductions facing local authorities however are greater than the sums identified in the table above. This is due to significant budgets in DEL being protected. The table below identifies the 2014/15 DEL budgets of protected and unprotected government departments.

Government Department	2014/15 Budget
	£bn
Health	108.3
Education	53.5
International Aid	8.3
Scotland	25.8
Wales	13.7
Northern Ireland	9.7
Unprotected Departments	99.4
TOTAL DEL	318.7

32 The table above highlights that unprotected Government Departments which will face the brunt of funding reductions only have a total budget of £99.4bn or

31% of the total. The major Government departments in the ‘Unprotected’ category are as follows:

Government Department	2014/15 Budget
	£bn
Defence	25.3
Business Innovation & Skills	13.8
Local Government	13.8
Home Office	10.4
Justice	6.7

33 If the required public expenditure reductions are achieved in line with the 2014 Autumn Statement forecasts the budgets of ‘unprotected’ departments would fall to circa £64bn by 2018/19, a reduction of 36%. This would result in Local Government losing in excess of 60% of Government funding between 2011 and 2019.

34 The Council has forecast the reductions in Government funding likely to be faced for 2016/17 to 2018/19 based upon the 2014 Autumn Statement. Previously the Council’s forecasts assumed that the £12bn of welfare savings would not be achieved. It is now felt appropriate to revise this assumption and forecast the achievement of the £12bn welfare savings.

35 The forecast of the future funding reductions for the Council, are based upon the following assumptions:

- (i) Health budgets annually receiving above inflation budget increases;
- (ii) Education funding increasing at 1% per annum;
- (iii) International Aid, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland budgets staying constant;
- (iv) Unprotected Government departments receiving the same percentage reduction;
- (v) Durham receiving a 1.5% higher reduction than the local authority average in line with the last four years settlements.
- (vi) £6bn of welfare savings are realised in each of 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- (vii) Other specific grants e.g. Education Services Grant, Housing Benefit Grant, continue to be reduced.

36 Based upon these assumptions, the forecast Government grant reductions for the Council for 2016/17 to 2018/19 would be as follows:

Year	£m
2016/17	38
2017/18	28
2018/19	25
TOTAL	91

- 37 Based upon this calculation the Council's RSG would reduce to less than £15m in 2018/19.
- 38 In the round, across the MTFP(5) period, the impact upon the current savings requirement is neutral as the funding reduction forecast is £5m higher in 2016/17 and £5m lower in 2017/18. This is as a result of the following:
- (i) The public expenditure reductions in 2016/17 now being significantly higher than previously forecast.
 - (ii) The assumption of the achievement of £12bn of welfare savings partially offsets the 2016/17 position but benefits 2017/18.
- 39 Overall therefore the total savings required for the period 2011 to 2018 is broadly unchanged at £224.8m. It is likely however, once the 2018/19 forecast is included, that savings required by March 2019 will exceed £250m.
- 40 The table below details the revised savings targets for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Year	Savings Requirement
	£m
2016/17	36.770
2017/18	34.829
TOTAL	71.599

Consultation results

- 41 During autumn 2013, the Council attracted over 10,000 people to take part in the largest public engagement programme of events ever held in County Durham. These events were managed through the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and were held across the county. They provided the opportunity for the public to allocate grants to local projects, set AAP priorities and provide views as to how the Council should manage its budget challenges up to March 2017.
- 42 At these events, almost 1,300 people took the time to take part in 270 budget setting group exercises where, over 30-45 minutes they deliberated with other members of the public as to how the Council should allocate savings of £100 million over the next few years. Feedback from those taking part in the activities was very positive, with 97% of participants feeling that it was a good way to involve local people in decision making.
- 43 In addition to the group exercises, comments as to how the Council should achieve its savings target were also provided through different forms. There were 2,074 completed paper questionnaires and a further 517 completed online.
- 44 The results of this budget consultation, which included over 4,000 responses, were reported to Cabinet on 12 February 2014. A clear message from the consultation was the requirement to minimise the impact upon frontline service provision wherever possible. These have influenced the development of the budget proposals for 2015/16 as set out in this report and it is

anticipated that they will help inform the budget setting process for the next two to three years.

- 45 Having completed such a comprehensive budget consultation in 2013, this year's budget consultation concentrated on seeking views from the 14 AAPs and the key partner agencies that make up the County Durham Partnership. This involved two distinct phases. The first focussed on the AAP Boards and Forums where attendees were asked specific questions, namely:
- Since the public consultation in 2013, has anything changed in your area that you feel would affect which services should have larger or smaller reductions?
 - Where a local organisation has shown interest, should the council explore the opportunity of them managing a facility or service to reduce the impact of budget savings on communities?
 - Are there any council facilities or services in your area that could be managed by local people?
- 46 The second phase of the consultation which will conclude on 15 January 2015, sought views on the draft 2015/16 budget proposals (as reported to Cabinet on 17 December 2014) from AAP Boards and partner agencies.

Phase I – Public Consultation

- 47 The first phase of the consultation which concluded on 12 December 2014 and involved presentations to all 14 AAP Boards as well as the completion of questionnaires at the 14 AAP Forum events. A total of 602 hard copy questionnaires were collected at the AAP Forums and a further 110 were submitted online bringing the overall total to 712.
- 48 Overall, a majority of respondents (65%) said that nothing changed in their area that would affect which services should have larger or smaller reductions. Where respondents did identify change they were more likely to identify services or issues that should be **protected** from larger budget reductions (86%), rather than those to be cut by more (14%).
- 49 Most commonly and in order of priority, respondents who did identify change tended to say the following services should be protected from larger budget reductions:
- Subsidised Bus Travel
 - Roads, footpaths, traffic and lighting
 - Job Creation
 - Support for Community Projects, Centres, Partnerships and Groups.
- 50 Respondents identified the following services that should have larger budget reductions:
- Finance, Legal, information Technologies and Human Resources
 - Gritting and Snow Clearance
 - Roads, footpaths, traffic and lighting

- Democratic Support - Decisions and Elections
 - Social Work and Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults.
- 51 A full list of the services identified by respondents is available in Appendix 3.
- 52 Older respondents tended to be more likely to identify change than younger ones and most commonly they identified the following issues:
- Subsidised Bus Travel
 - Roads, footpaths, traffic and lighting
 - Social Work and Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults
- 53 As with the consultation carried out in 2013/2014, there was a general understanding of the scale of the financial challenge facing the council. In the light of this situation, a large majority of respondents (93%) felt that the council should explore opportunities for local organisations to manage council facilities or services as being promoted through The Durham Ask.
- 54 The services respondents felt there could be most scope for transfer, included:
- Libraries
 - Community centres
 - Grass Cutting, flower beds.
- 55 Similar to the questionnaire responses, AAP Boards were in favour of progressing with The Durham Ask. However, in reaching their conclusion, it was suggested the council needed to:
- Ensure the focus includes established organisations (including local councils and other partners) in addition to smaller voluntary organisations and groups.
 - Ensure that groups are confident that they can operate appropriately post transfer.
 - Provide training/support so groups understand the full scale and responsibilities and are able to apply for funding. This support could be offered by council staff or the VCS.
- 56 A number of other suggestions for achieving the necessary savings whilst maintaining community services and facilities were highlighted by AAP Boards. These included proposals that:
- More work should be undertaken to consider whether joint arrangements could be developed with neighbouring authorities and other private sector organisations.
 - Consideration should be given to ensure there is sufficient executive housing across the County to help attract new businesses to the area.
 - When considering service provision/withdrawal, account should be taken of the varying levels of need across the county, in terms of population size (current and planned growth) as well as deprivation levels.

- 57 In general, the most common response from AAP Boards was concern at the level of the cuts facing the council and the need to develop innovative solutions such as The Durham Ask to try to safeguard frontline services.
- 58 Finally, in addition to the consultation set out above, the opportunity was taken to supplement this consultation by seeking views of children and young people at a series of school based events in the east of the county. Overall 724 took part from various schools. Overall, a large majority of children and young people consulted supported last year's results with respect to services that should have a smaller reduction. However, a small majority of respondents disagreed about the services that should receive larger reductions. This was most so with **subsidised bus services** where 62% of children and young people disagreed that the council should save money on this service.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 59 Cabinet is asked to:
- (i) Note the 2015/16 budget and Medium Term Financial Plan update in relation to the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 18 December 2014.
 - (ii) Note that the Council continues to face funding reductions in excess of the national average.
 - (iii) Note the impact of the 2014 Autumn Statement upon the Medium Term Financial Plan.
 - (iv) Note the results of the phase 1 consultation.

Background papers

Contact: Jeff Garfoot 03000 261946
Gordon Elliott 03000 263605

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The report highlights that the Local Government Finance Settlement is broadly in line with forecasts. A savings target of £16.283m is still required for 2015/16.

Staffing – The savings proposals in MTFP(5) could impact upon employees. HR processes will be followed at all times.

Risk - Risk will be continually assessed throughout the budget-setting process especially in relation to funding reduction assumptions and risk assessment of savings plans.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – Equality considerations are built into the proposed approach to developing MTFP(5) as a key element of the process.

Accommodation – None.

Crime and Disorder – None.

proposals as they are developed and decisions made to take these forward.

Consultation – The consultation outputs to date are detailed in the report.

Procurement – None.

Disability Issues – All requirements will be considered as part of the equality process followed as part of MTFP(5) planning.

Legal Implications – None.

Appendix 2: Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP(6)) 2015/16 - 2017/18 Model

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Government Funding			
Government Net Funding Reduction	32,599	38,000	28,000
Town and Parish Council RSG Adjustment for LCTSS funding	-270	-196	-211
Business Rates - RPI increase (2%/2%/2%/2%)	-1,005	-1,070	-1,090
Top Up Grant - RPI increase (2%/2%/2%/2%)	-1,134	-1,210	-1,240
Section 31 Grant	-509	-70	-70
Other Funding Sources			
Council Tax Increase (2% per annum)	-3,370	-3,440	-3,510
New Homes Bonus	-1,538	-1,000	0
Council Tax Base increase	-1,891	-1,000	-750
Business Rates Tax Base Increase	-850	-500	0
Business Rates 2014/15 Collection Fund Surplus	-500	500	0
Replenishment of 2014/15 Use of General Reserve	933	0	0
NHS Funding - Social Care Transformation	-15,864	-4,432	0
Estimated Variance in Resource Base	6,601	25,582	21,129
Pay inflation (2.2% (15 months) - 1.5% - 1.5% - 1.5%)	2,750	3,300	3,200
Price Inflation (1.5% - 1.5% - 1.5% - 1.5%)	2,650	2,450	2,400
Corporate Risk Contingency Budget	-598	-2,802	0
Base Budget Pressures			
Employer National Insurance increase - State Pension changes	0	4,700	0
Single Status Implementation	0	0	4,500
Council Housing - costs related to Stock Transfer	3,550	0	0
Additional Employer Pension Contributions	760	940	1,000
Energy Price Increases	500	500	500
Durham Living Wage	250	0	0
Concessionary Fares	320	100	100
CAS Demographic and Hyper Inflationary Pressures	1,000	1,000	1,000
Use of Earmarked Reserve in CAS	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
Prudential Borrowing to fund new Capital Projects	2,000	2,000	2,000
Capital Financing for current programme	-2,500	0	0
TOTAL PRESSURES	9,682	11,188	13,700
SUM TO BE MET FROM SAVINGS	16,283	36,770	34,829
Savings	-16,283	-36,770	-34,829
Deferred Savings (Utilisation of PDP)	0	0	-10,000
SAVINGS REQUIREMENT	-16,283	-36,770	-44,829
Planned Delivery Programme (PDP)	0	10,000	10,000
REVISED SAVINGS REQUIREMENT	-16,283	-26,770	-34,829
Cumulative Use of PDP Reserve To Support MTFP	0	10,000	20,000

Appendix 3 - Council Budget Consultation

Full Tables of responses

Q1 Since the public consultation in 2013, has anything changed in your area that you feel would affect which services should have larger or smaller reductions?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	224	34.5%
No	425	65.5%
Total	649	100.0%

Q2 If so, please outline the changes.

Smaller Reductions	Number of mentions
Subsidised Bus Travel	36
Roads, footpaths, traffic and lighting	26
Job Creation	21
Support for Community Projects, Centres, Partnerships and Groups	20
Collection, disposal and recycling of waste	13
Street Cleaning	13
Social Work and Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults	11
Grass cutting, trees and flower beds	10
Services to keep people safe	9
School Support and Education Services	8
Sports, parks and play areas	8
Day Centres and support for families	7
Gritting and Snow Clearance	6
Libraries	6
Support for Adults in their Homes	3
Art, museums and theatres	2
Other	6
TOTAL	237

Larger reductions:	Number of mentions
Finance, Legal, information Technologies and Human Resources	7
Gritting and Snow Clearance	4
Roads, footpaths, traffic and lighting	4
Democratic Support - Decisions and Elections	2
Social Work and Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults	2
Street Cleaning	2
Other	11
TOTAL	237

Q3 Where a local organisation has shown interest, should the council explore the opportunity of them managing a facility or service to reduce the impact of budget savings on communities?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	573	92.7%
No	45	7.3%
Total	618	100.0%

Q4 Are there any council facilities or services in your area that could be managed by local people? If so, please outline them below.

Facilities which could be managed by local people	Number of mentions
Libraries	59
Community centres	40
Grass Cutting, flower beds	19
Sports facilities	16
Leisure centres	12
Parks	11
Street Cleaning	10
Surestart/Day centres	8
Litter pick/Dog waste (emptying)	6
Other	27
TOTAL	225

Equalities Breakdown

Responses were broadly representative of all age groups (shown in the table below), although older people were more likely to take part and make reference to experiencing changes since the last consultation than younger people.

In addition, supplementary consultation with 724 children and young people at a series of school based events was conducted in the east of the county.

What is your age?	Frequency	Percent
Under 16	16	3.0%
16-24	36	6.8%
25-44	125	23.5%
45-54	110	20.7%
55-64	113	21.3%
65-74	92	17.3%
75+	39	7.3%
Total	531	100.0

The responses from the different age groups to the question asking if anything had changed in the area are shown below.

Since the public consultation in 2013, has anything changed in your area that you feel would affect which services should have larger or smaller reductions? * What is your age?				
What is your age?		Yes	No	Total
Under 45	Frequency	55	108	163
	Percentage	33.7%	66.3%	100.0%
45-64	Frequency	71	132	203
	Percentage	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
65+	Frequency	49	71	120
	Percentage	40.8%	59.2%	100.0%
Total	Frequency	175	311	486
	Percentage	36.0%	64.0%	100.0%

When asked to outline those changes Over-65s responded to changes affecting the following services. These focused mainly on applying a smaller reduction with only three respondents citing services for a higher reduction.

Smaller Reductions:	Number of Responses
Subsidised Bus Travel	9
Roads, footpaths, traffic and lighting	5
Social Work and Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults	5
Services to keep people safe	4
Collection, disposal and recycling of waste	3
Libraries	3
Street Cleaning	3
Support for Community Projects, Centres, Partnerships and Groups	3
Grass cutting, trees and flower beds	2
Gritting and Snow Clearance	2
Job Creation	2
Support for Adults in their Homes	2
Other	3
TOTAL	49

Other protected characteristic groups

We received feedback from individuals from various protected characteristic groups such as:

- Gender
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnicity

However, there were no discernible differences in the responses they made.

**Corporate Issues
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

23 January 2015



**Quarter 2 2014/15
Performance Management Report**

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

Purpose of the Report

1. To present progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators for the Altogether Better Council theme and report other significant performance issues for the second quarter of 2014/15 covering the period July to September 2014.

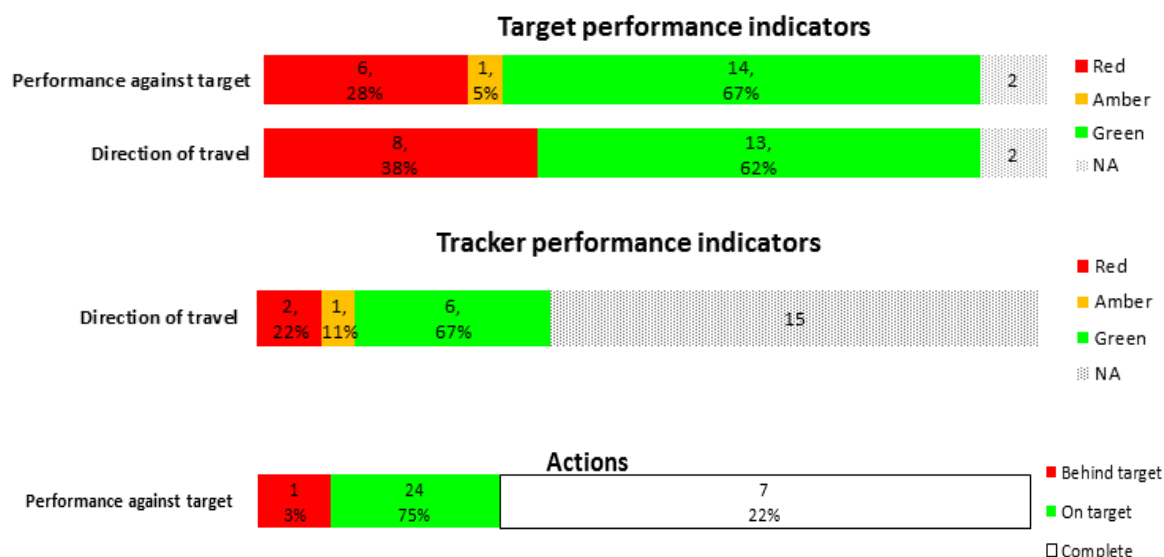
Background

2. The report sets out an overview of performance and progress for the Altogether Better Council priority theme. Key performance indicator progress is reported against two indicator types which comprise of:
 - a. Key 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 (see Appendix 3, table 1); and
 - b. Key tracker indicators – performance will be tracked but no targets are set for indicators which are long-term and/or which the council and its partners only partially influence (see Appendix 3, table 2).
3. The report continues to incorporate a stronger focus on volume measures in our performance framework. This allows us to better quantify productivity and to monitor the effects of reductions in resources and changes in volume of activity. Charts detailing some of the key volume measures which form part of the council's corporate basket of performance indicators are presented in Appendix 4.

Developments since Last Quarter

4. Corporate performance indicator guidance which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources will soon be available from the Councillors Intranet homepage at: <http://intranet/sites/Councillors/default.aspx>. Any queries relating to the definition manual can be directed to the Corporate Performance Team at performance@durham.gov.uk.

Altogether Better Council: Overview



Council Performance

5. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. Quarter 2 has seen the Revenues and Benefits Service maintain the improved performance seen last year. Whether new claims or changes of circumstances, housing benefit (HB) or council tax reduction (CTR) claims, the processing time for each is better than the respective profiled target for quarter 2.
 - i. New HB claims were processed in 20.28 days on average, within the 23 day target and comparable to the same period last year. The volume of new HB claims processed increased from 3,160 in quarter 1 to 3,429 this period (Appendix 4, chart 1).
 - ii. New CTR claims were processed in 20.31 days on average, within the 23 day target and 1.8 days quicker than the same period last year. During quarter 2, 3,798 new CTR claims were processed compared to 3,531 in quarter 1 (Appendix 4, chart 2).
 - iii. Changes to HB claims were processed in 9.24 days on average, within the 11 day target and 2.5 days more quickly than the same period last year. The volume of change of circumstances for HB claims processed increased from 26,679 in quarter 1 to 27,308 this period. (Appendix 4, chart 3).
 - iv. Changes to CTR claims were processed in 9.43 days on average, within the 11 day target and 3.25 days more quickly than the same period last year. During quarter 2, 28,732 change of circumstances for CTR claims were processed compared to 27,570 in quarter 1 (Appendix 4, chart 4).
- b. Between July and September 2014, 230,937 telephone calls were answered, which is 95% of all calls received, compared to 88% at the same period last year. 93% were answered within three minutes against the target of 80%. This was an improvement on the same period last year, when 78% were

answered within three minutes. The volume of telephone calls shows an increase in calls received this quarter (244,074) when compared with the previous quarter (236,372) but a decrease when compared to the same period last year (258,047) (see Appendix 4, chart 5). During this quarter calls from four new telephony lines were added to this indicator; Durham, Bishop Auckland and Seaham registrars from August and garden waste from September. There was a 4% decrease in contact received via emails and web forms (17,191) compared to the same quarter last year (17,883).

- c. During quarter 2, the percentage of customers seen at a customer access point (CAP) within the 15 minutes target was 97%, better than the same period last year (93%). The figures show a decrease in customers from 62,388 in quarter 1 to 57,763 in quarter 2 as well as a decrease when comparing to the same period last year (71,342) (see Appendix 4, chart 6).
- d. This quarter saw a high degree of activity in relation to business lettings within council owned factories and business support centres with 20 new lettings, bringing the occupancy levels to 77.4%. Performance is above the target of 76% and the same period last year (75%). In particular there were six units at NETPark taken by Centre for Process Innovation.
- e. Progress has been made with the following Council Plan and service plan actions:
 - i. Good progress has been made with the action to support, develop and embed a partnership approach to investment planning. A County Durham Economic Partnership Social Inclusion Conference was held with partners on 26th September 2014. Over 130 delegates attended, with guest speakers and area specific workshops held to consider the priorities and use of European Social Fund resources in the next round of European Union (EU) funding 2014-2020. Following the conference, further project ideas and proposals will be considered and developed to progress the planned Durham EU Programme.
 - ii. The council's new and improved website has now been launched. The new design will make it easier for customers to find what they are looking for. It is also designed for use with mobiles and tablets.
 - iii. The Durham at War interactive mapping website was launched on 10 September 2014. It tells the story of County Durham and its people in the First World War, exactly one hundred years after the first Durham Light Infantry soldiers arrived in France with the British Expeditionary Force. The website will be live until the end of 2018 and will help to commemorate the role of Durham people at a momentous period in the county's history.

6. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- a. Improving the management of attendance and reducing sickness absence continues to be a priority for the council. A broader suite of sickness-related measures was introduced in quarter 2 to track progress.
 - i. The percentage time lost to sickness absence (excluding schools) has increased from 4.8% in quarter 2 2013/14 to 4.85% in quarter 2

2014/15. There has been a shift to less long and more short and medium term absence from the corresponding period last year, however, there is little change from last quarter. During the rolling year, 47% of posts (excluding school based employees) had no sickness absence.

- ii. The average days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent (FTE) employee (including school based employees) for the rolling year has increased from 8.96 days at quarter 1 to 9.18 days at the end of quarter 2 2014/15, a deterioration of 2.5%. The average number of days lost to sickness absence per FTE (when excluding schools based employees) for the rolling year has also increased from 11.93 days at quarter 1 to 12.27 days at the end of quarter 2, a deterioration of 2.9%. The improvement targets we set ourselves for 2014/15 of 11.8 days per FTE (excluding school based employees) and 8.7 days per FTE (including school based employees) have not been achieved.
- iii. Recent and forthcoming developments to manage reporting and support for managers across the organisation include:
 - Compulsory sickness absence training for managers (tiers 4 and 5)
 - The rollout of ResourceLink's leave management module, initially to Assistant Chief Executives and Resources, with other service groupings to follow
 - Streamlining the Sickness Absence Policy, which will include a 'rehabilitation' section with guidance for managers to ensure consistent practice and recording
 - Development of an e-learning package for managers by December 2014.
 - Detailed sickness data tracking with individual services, including follow up management actions in relation to short, medium and long term sickness.
- b. The percentage of employee performance appraisals completed over the 12 months to September 2014 was 66%. This is an increase of 2% compared to quarter 1 (64%). Although the recent trend of deterioration over consecutive quarters appears to have halted at the end of quarter 2, the current rate is 19 percentage points worse than the target of 85%, and nine percentage points worse than the equivalent quarter in 2013/14 (75%). All heads of service are now provided with a monthly summary identifying all employees in their service who have not had an appraisal event recorded in the last rolling year, to facilitate active management of appraisal performance at a senior level. Human resources will continue to support and encourage managers in relation to appraisal activity, developments and training, in order to deliver improvements in this key area.
- c. The percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers during quarter 2 was 90% which is a 2.5 percentage point deterioration against the previous quarter and two percentage points below the target of 92%. Although the target was achieved last quarter, this could not be sustained during quarter 2, mainly due to the unavailability of management

reports during the upgrade of Oracle. Efforts to resume on target performance are ongoing during quarter 3.

- d. The percentage of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests responded to within 20 days was 78% this quarter, one percentage point deterioration from the previous quarter (79%) and remaining below the national target of 85%. An increased volume of requests compared to quarter 1 (11% increase) may have contributed to this decrease. The volume of requests has increased by 26% to 313 from 249 at the same period last year and is also higher than at quarter 1 (281) (see Appendix 4, chart 7).
7. A key Council Plan action which has not achieved target relates to the delivery and completion of the current accommodation programme for council buildings. This was due to be achieved by November 2015 and the revised target is now set as February 2016. The relocation of the Newton Aycliffe Library which will include the Customer Services surgery has now been put back to January 2016. In addition, the opening of Stanley Louisa Centre customer access point has also been delayed until February 2016. The scheme is currently in the design phase. The new Customer Services surgery to be operated from Bishop Auckland Town Hall is still awaiting listed building consent before construction can start. Hopper House, Durham has now been closed and is currently in the process of being decommissioned.
 8. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:
 - a. If there was to be slippage in the delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings projects, this will require further savings to be made from other areas, which may result in further service reductions and 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, a programme management approach for key projects has been established and embedded across the council. Monitoring by Corporate Management Team and Cabinet provides assurance over the implementation of the agreed MTFP savings projects. It should be recognised that this will be a significant risk for at least the next four years.
 - b. Ongoing Government funding cuts which now extend to at least 2017/18 will continue to have an increasing major impact on all council services. Management consider it highly probable that this risk could occur, and to mitigate the risk, sound financial forecasting is in place based on thorough examination of the Government's "red book" plans. This will also be a significant risk for at least the next four years.
 - c. Potential restitution of search fees income going back to 2005. Management consider it highly probable that the risk will occur as a firm of solicitors has taken action against all councils across England and Wales to recover the alleged land charge fees overpayment. The mitigation of this risk is dependent upon the outcome of the negotiations and litigation currently being defended by lawyers instructed in group litigation. A framework for settlement has been produced and this is currently being considered.

- d. The council could suffer significant adverse service delivery and financial impact if there are delays in the procurement and implementation of the new banking contract. Pre-procurement meetings will be held with alternative providers to establish what services can and cannot be provided. Awareness-raising will take place at tier four manager level, that banking arrangements are due to change. The new contract is expected to be in place by March 2015 to ensure a smooth transition.
- e. If we were to fail to comply with Central Government's Public Services Network (PSN) Code of Connection criteria, this would put some of our core business processes, such as Revenues and Benefits, at risk. An ongoing project is in place to ensure compliance. A backup ICT site is now in place. The equipment has been installed, data has been transferred, and a full test is planned once remedial electrical work is carried out at the council's primary data site.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 9. That the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the report and consider any performance issues arising there from.

Contact: Jenny Haworth, Head of Planning and Performance
Tel: 03000 268071 **E-Mail** jenny.haworth@durham.gov.uk

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 issues.

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 are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Accommodation - Not applicable

Crime and Disorder - A number of PIs and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Human Rights - Not applicable

Consultation - Not applicable

Procurement - Not applicable

Disability Issues - Employees with a disability are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Legal Implications - Not applicable

Appendix 2: Key to symbols used within the report

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

Performance Indicators:

Direction of travel

Performance against target

Latest reported data have improved from comparable period

GREEN

Performance better than target

Latest reported data remain in line with comparable period

AMBER

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

Latest reported data have deteriorated from comparable period

RED

Performance >2% behind target

Actions:

WHITE

Complete (Action achieved by deadline/achieved ahead of deadline)

GREEN

Action on track to be achieved by the deadline

RED

Action not achieved by the deadline/unlikely to be achieved by the deadline

Benchmarking:

GREEN

Performance better than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

AMBER

Performance in line with other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

RED

Performance worse than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

Appendix 3: Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Table 1: Key Target Indicators

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Better Council											
64	NS22	Percentage of calls answered within three minutes	93	Jul - Sep 2014	80	GREEN	78	GREEN			
65	NS24	Percentage of customers seen within 15 minutes at a customer access point	97	Jul - Sep 2014	95	GREEN	93	GREEN			
66	RES/038	Percentage all ICT service desk incidents resolved on time	94	Jul - Sep 2014	90	GREEN	90	GREEN			
67	RES/NI/181a1	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims (days)	20.28	Jul - Sep 2014	23.00	GREEN	20.23	RED	21.00 GREEN	25** GREEN	Jan - Mar 2014
68	RES/NI/181a2	Average time taken to process new council tax reduction claims (days)	20.31	Jul - Sep 2014	23.00	GREEN	22.11	GREEN			
69	RES/NI/181b1	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for housing benefit claims (days)	9.24	Jul - Sep 2014	11.00	GREEN	11.74	GREEN	4.00 RED	6** RED	Jan - Mar 2014
70	RES/NI/181b2	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for council tax reduction claims (days)	9.43	Jul - Sep 2014	11.00	GREEN	12.68	GREEN			
71	RES/001	Savings delivered against the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) (£m)	18.9	As at Sep 2014	23.0	Not comparable [1]	15.7	NA			
72	RES/002	Percentage of council tax collected in-year	55.91	As at Sep 2014	55.50	GREEN	55.18	GREEN	97.00 Not comparable	96.01* Not comparable	2013/14

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
73	RES/003	Percentage of business rates collected in-year	58.00	As at Sep 2014	57.61	GREEN	60.71	RED	97.90 Not comparable	97.76* Not comparable	2013/14
74	RES/129	Percentage of council tax recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.0	As at Sep 2014	98.5	GREEN	99.0	GREEN			
75	RES/130	Percentage of business rates recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.15	As at Sep 2014	98.50	GREEN	99.20	RED			
76	REDPI39	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit	1.91	Jul - Sep 2014	2.45	GREEN	2.86	GREEN			
77	REDPI78	Percentage of capital receipts received	25.0	Apr - Sep 2014	50.0	RED	13.0	GREEN			
78	REDPI33	Percentage of council owned business floor space that is occupied	77.38	As at Sep 2014	76.00	GREEN	75.00	GREEN			
79	REDPI76	Income generated from council owned business space (£)	1,557,000	Apr - Sep 2014	1,505,000	GREEN	1,270,980	GREEN			
80	REDPI49b	£ saved from solar installations on council owned buildings	214,000	2013/14	Not set	NA	New indicator	NA			
81	REDPI68	Average asset rating of Display Energy Certificates in county council buildings	99.40	As at Sep 2014	98.00	AMBER	98.90	RED			
82	RES/LPI/010	Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers	90.0	Jul - Sep 2014	92.0	RED	91.3	RED			
83	ACE006	Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information	78	Jul - Sep 2014	85	RED	85	RED			

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
		Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within statutory deadlines									
84	RES/LPI/012	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services including school staff	9.18	Oct 2013 - Sep 2014	8.70	RED	9.31	GREEN			
85	RES/LPI/012a	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services excluding school staff	12.27	Oct 2013 - Sep 2014	11.80	RED	12.15	RED			
86	RES/011	Percentage of performance appraisals completed – all services excluding school staff	65.6	Oct 2013 - Sep 2014	85.0	RED	75.3	RED			

[\[1\] Annual target](#)

Table 2: Key Tracker Indicators

Page 94 Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Better Council											
183	NS43a	Number of customer contacts- face to face	57,763	Jul - Sep 2014	62,388	NA	71,342	NA			
184	NS43b	Number of customer contacts-telephone	244,074	Jul - Sep 2014	236,372	NA	258,047	NA			
185	NS43c	Number of customer contacts- web forms	4,352	Jul - Sep 2014	3,991	NA	4,697	NA			
186	NS43d	Number of customer contacts- emails	12,839	Jul - Sep 2014	13,539	NA	13,186	NA			
187	NS20	Percentage of abandoned calls	5	Jul - Sep 2014	4	RED	12	GREEN			
188	NS100	Number of complaints recorded on the Customer Relationship Management database (CRM)	898	Jul - Sep 2014	617	RED	856	RED			
189	RES/013	Staff aged under 25 as a percentage of post count	5.63	As at Sep 2014	5.47	NA	5.55	NA			
190	RES/014	Staff aged over 50 as a percentage of post count	38.16	As at Sep 2014	38.02	NA	36.84	NA			
191	RES/LPI/011a	Women in the top five percent of earners	52.3	As at Sep 2014	51.44	NA	51.53	NA			
192	RES/LPI/011bi	Black and minority ethnic (BME) as a percentage of post count	1.53	As at Sep 2014	1.47	NA	1.40	NA			
193	RES/LPI/011ci	Staff with disability as a percentage of post count	2.75	As at Sep 2014	2.79	NA	2.93	NA			

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
194	REDPI79	Number of tenants of the seven main housing providers seen through the triage process	506	Jul - Aug 2014	587	RED	494	GREEN			
195	REDPI 79a	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given employability advice	33	Jul - Sep 2014	34	RED	22	GREEN			
196	REDPI 79b	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given debt advice	33	Jul - Sep 2014	37	RED	33	AMBER			
197	REDPI 79c	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given income advice	65	Jul - Sep 2014	54	GREEN	53	GREEN			
198	REDPI 79d	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers that have been rehoused	4	Jan - Mar 2014	5	RED	New indicator	NA			
199	RES028	Discretionary Housing Payments - value (£) for customers affected by social sector size criteria	813,326.00	Jul - Sep 2014	629,272.88	NA	197,120.90	NA			
200	RES029	Discretionary Housing Payments - value (£) for customers affected by local housing allowance reforms	84,430.00	Jul - Sep 2014	62,342.77	NA	48,677.44	NA			
201	ACE016	Percentage of children in poverty (quarterly proxy measure) (Also in Altogether Better for Children and Young People)	23.3	As at May 2014	23.6	AMBER	24.4	GREEN	17.6	24*	As at May 2014

Report	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Page 96 202	ACE017	Percentage of children in poverty (national annual measure) (Also in Altogether Better for Children and Young People)	22.7	2012	23.0	GREEN	23.0	GREEN	18.9	23.4*	2012
203	RES/034	Staff - total headcount (including schools)	17,453	As at Sep 2014	17,951	NA	17,533	NA			
204	RES/035	Staff - total full time equivalent (FTE) (including schools)	14,076	As at Sep 2014	14,068	NA	14,198	NA			
205	RES/052	Percentage of posts with no absence (excluding schools)	46.58	Oct 2013 - Sep 2014	48.14	RED	Data not available	NA [1]			
206	RES/020	Percentage of time lost to sickness in rolling year (excluding schools)	4.85	Oct 2013 - Sep 2014	4.71	RED	4.80	RED			
207	RES/036	Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	14	Apr - Jun 2014	15	N/A	16	NA			

[1] Frequency changed and past data not available

Appendix 4: Volume Measures Chart numbers

Chart 1 – Housing Benefits – new claims

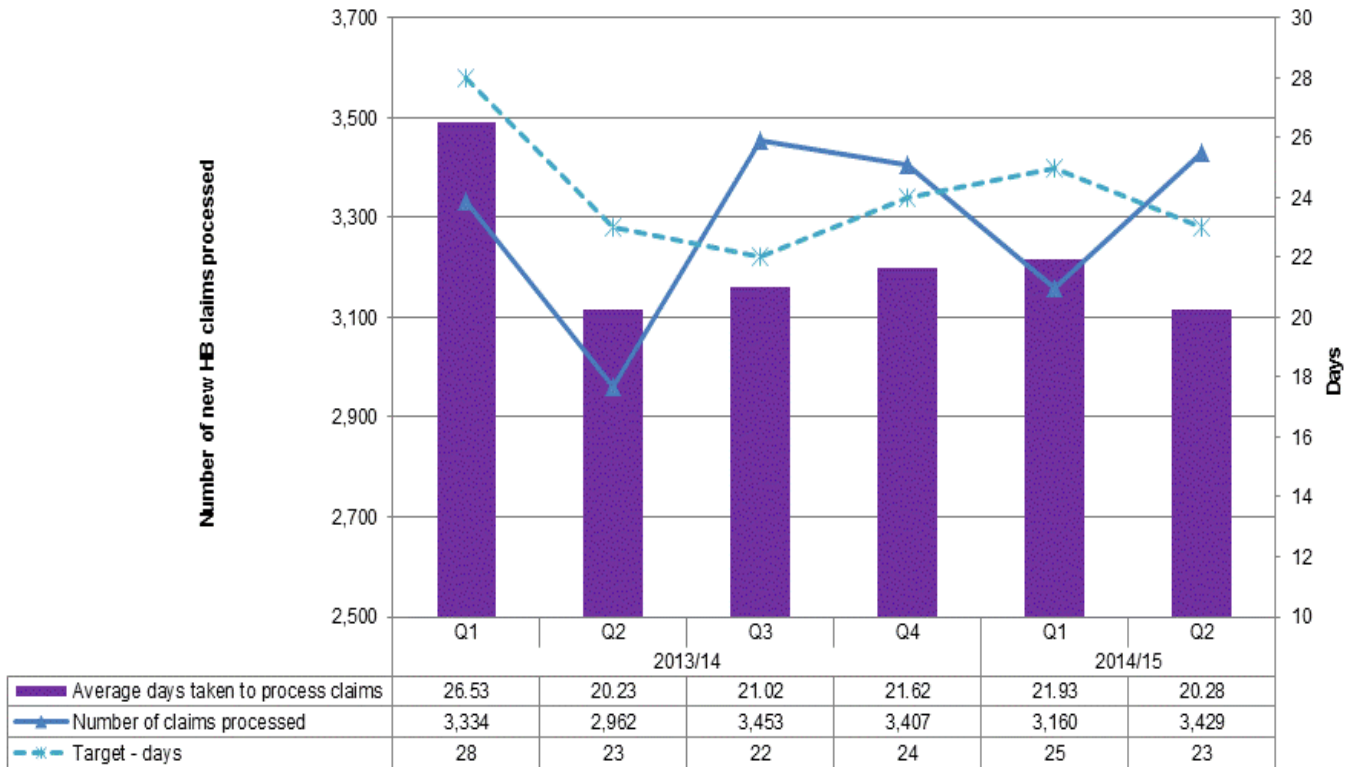


Chart 2 – Council Tax Reduction – new claims

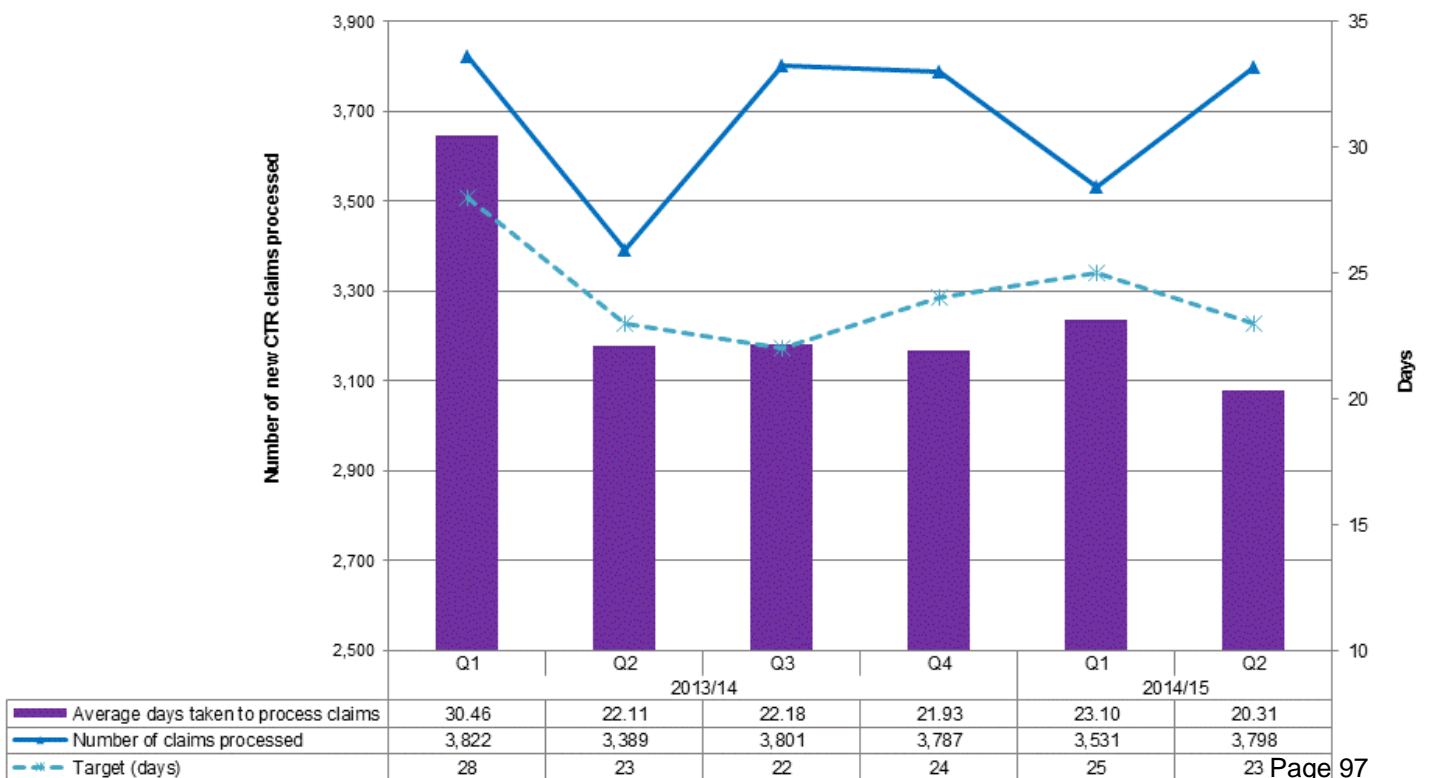


Chart 3 - Housing Benefits – changes of circumstances

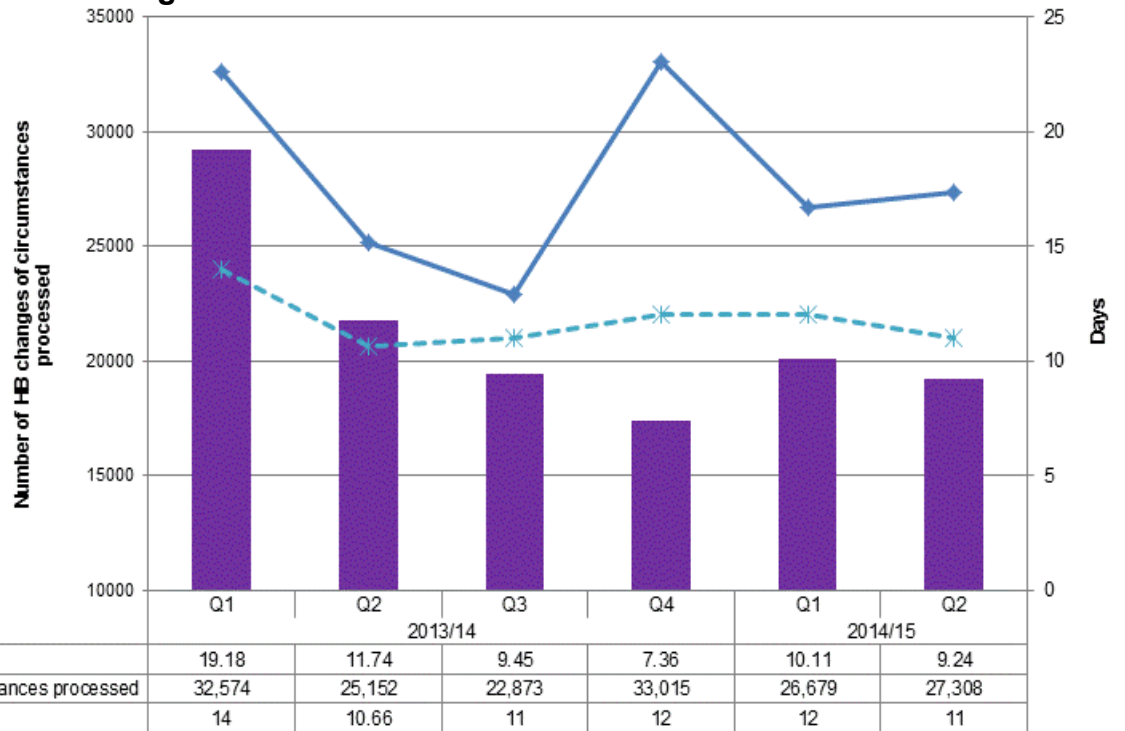


Chart 4 - Council Tax Reduction – changes of circumstances

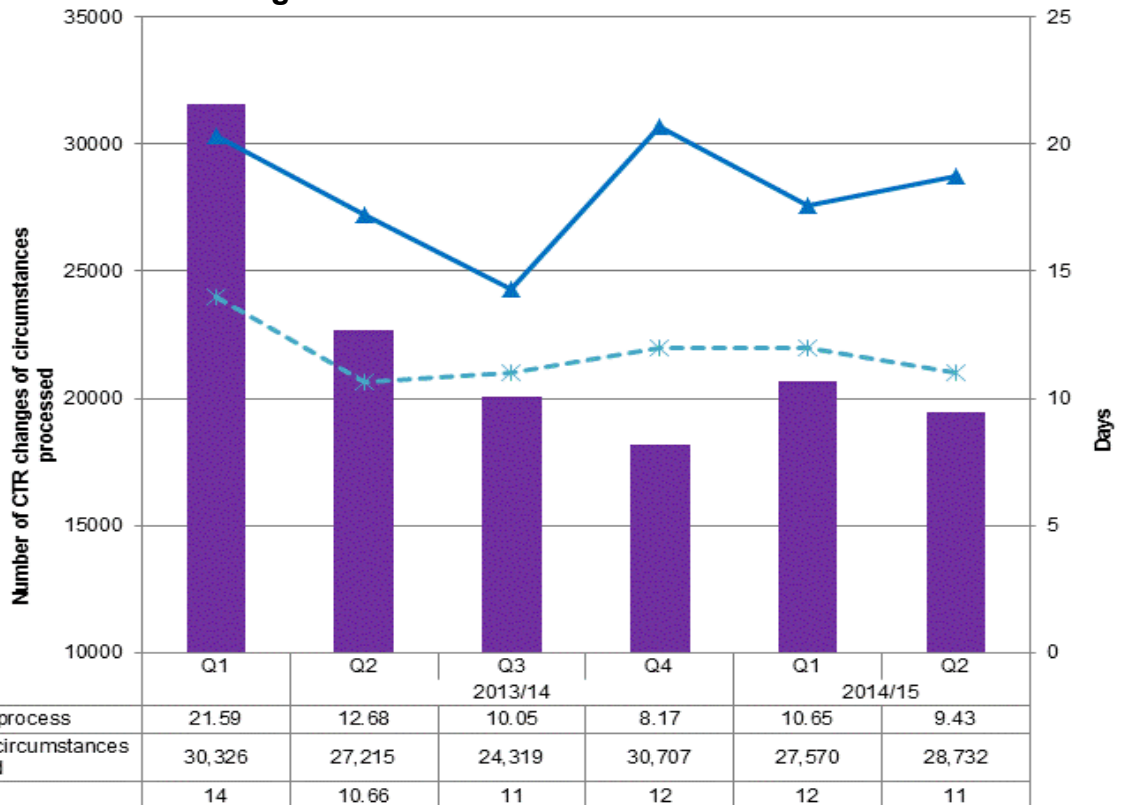


Chart 5 - Telephone calls

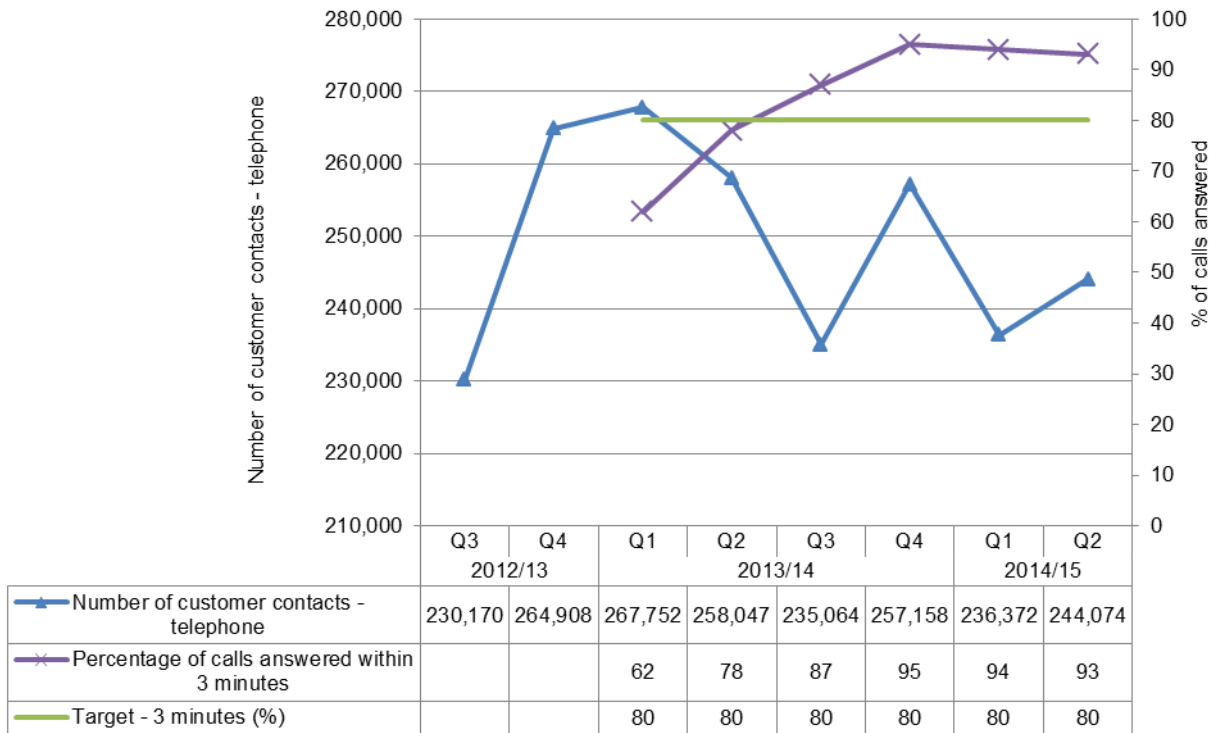


Chart 6 – Face to face contacts

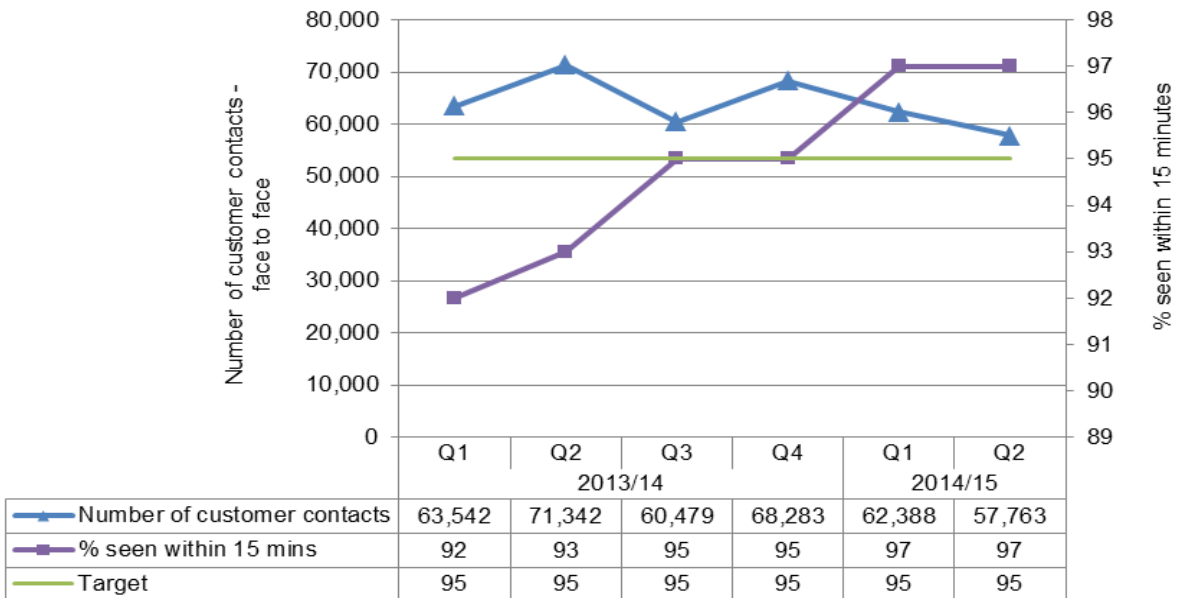
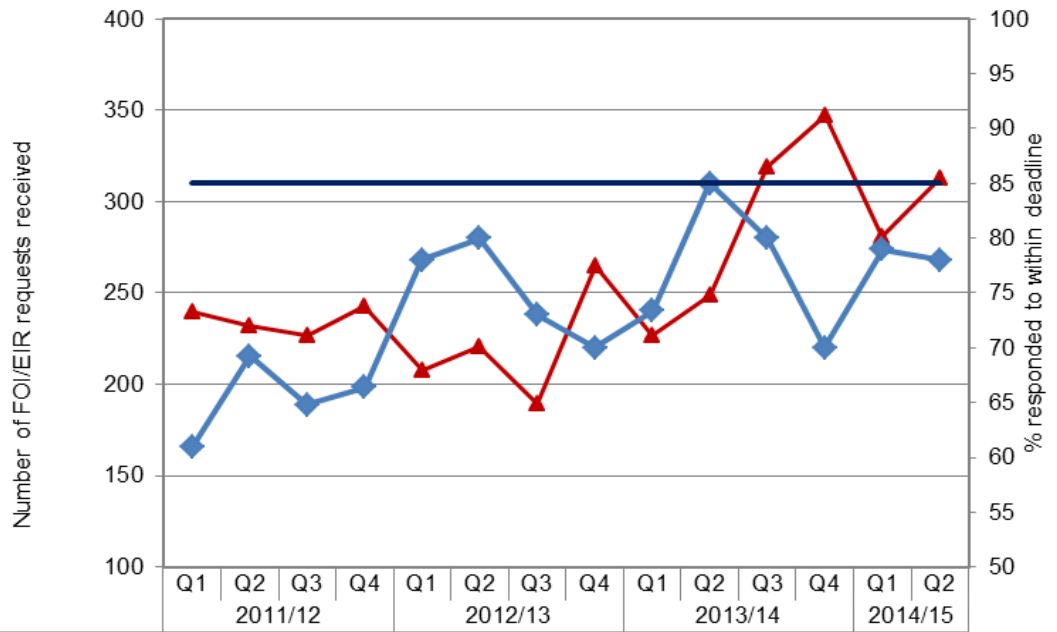


Chart 7 – Freedom of Information (FOI) requests



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	2011/12				2012/13				2013/14				2014/15	
Number of FOI/EIR requests received	240	232	227	243	208	221	189	265	227	249	319	347	281	313
% of FOI/EIR requests responded to within statutory deadlines	61	69	65	66	78	80	73	70	73	85	80	70	79	78
Target (%)	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85

23 January 2015

Customer Feedback Report Q2 2014 15

**Report of Terry Collins, Corporate Director of Neighbourhood
Services and Lorraine O'Donnell Assistant Chief Executive**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present to Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Customer Feedback: Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Quarter 2 Report 2014/15 (full report attached at Appendix 2).

Background

- 2 The report in relation to the council's performance and key issues regarding complaints, compliments and suggestions is aligned to the performance reporting mechanisms, so the implications of this customer feedback can inform scrutiny of council performance. The full report at Appendix 2 provides details for each service grouping in relation to both statutory and non-statutory complaints compliments and suggestions received in Quarter 2 2014/15.

Recommendation and Next Steps

- 3 The Committee is asked to note the information in the report and provide feedback on the details surrounding the Q2 information.

Contact: Mary Readman Tel. 03000 268161

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

There can be financial settlements awarded by the Local Government Ombudsman where the council is found to be at fault.

Staffing

Complaints regarding staff are dealt with through the Council's HR policies

Risk

Complaints can have an impact on the reputation of the Council

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Complaints regarding equalities issues are highlighted to the Corporate Equalities Team

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

Disability Issues

As equalities

Legal Implications

Legal advice is sought for complex stage 2 complaints. Complaints escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman are handled within the Legal and Democratic Services Team.

Customer Feedback Report: Complaints, compliments and suggestions Quarter 2 report 2014/15



Putting our customers first

A strategy for 2014 to 2017



Altogether better



Altogether better



Overview

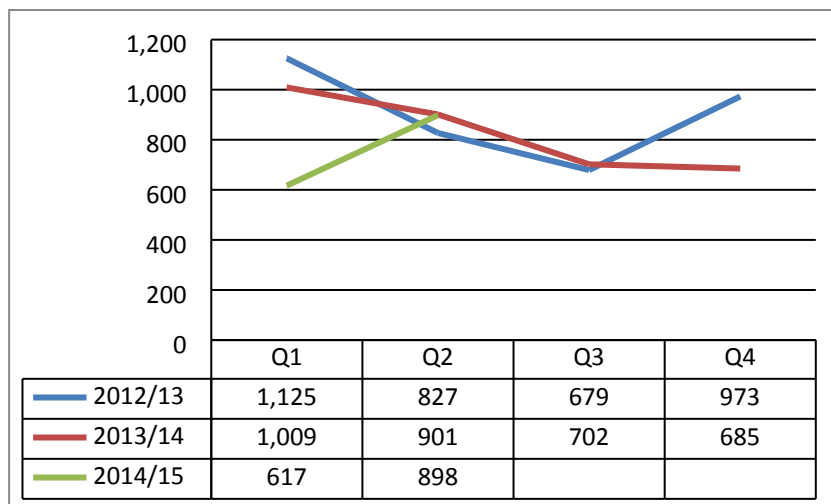
- This report provides the performance information and learning outcomes in relation to Customer Feedback: Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions received for all Council Services during quarter 2 2014/15. Complaints are categorised as:
 - Statutory** - A complaint arising from the duties placed on a local social services authority to provide assessments and care services under the provisions of relevant adult and children's social care legislation.
 - "Corporate"** - All other complaints

PART ONE: Summary of complaints, compliments and suggestions received across the Council during quarter 2 2014/15

- Between 1 July and 30 September 2014, the Council received 898 corporate complaints, 286 compliments and 61 suggestions. During this quarter, 62 complaints were escalated to stage 2 of the complaints process.
- During the period, the Council also received 41 statutory complaints and 130 compliments in relation to the statutory service.
- Performance against the target in relation to the council's service standards for dealing with corporate complaints was:
 - 86% of stage 1 and 100% of stage 2 complaints were acknowledged within 2 working days;
 - 81% of stage 1 complaints were responded to within 10 working days
 - 55% of stage 2 complaints were responded to within 20 working days.
- Performance against the target in relation to service standards for dealing with Statutory complaints was:
 - 95% of Stage 1 complaints were acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt
 - 38% of the 21 statutory complaints about children's social care services were resolved within the prescribed timescale of 20 working days. Of the remaining 13 Stage 1 complaints, 3 were resolved after 20 working days; and 10 were ongoing at the quarter end. Five of these were received near the quarter end and are on target to be resolved within timescales.
- The table below shows numbers of complaints received across Service Groupings since 2012/13:

Service Grouping	2012-13	2013-2014					2014-2015		
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Total
ACE	7	3	3	2	1	9	1	2	3
CAS	33	10	15	18	11	54	6	8	14
NS	2,398	724	614	446	446	2230	447	691	1138
RED	357	92	128	97	95	412	67	79	146
RES	809	180	141	139	132	592	96	118	214
TOTAL	3,604	1,009	901	702	685	3,297	617	898	1,515

7. Despite a previously reducing trend in volumes of complaints since quarter 1 2013/14, quarter 2 of this year has seen an increase in complaints received across the Council as illustrated in the graph below. The increase in complaints is apparent across all Service Groupings.



Key Challenges

Neighbourhood Services

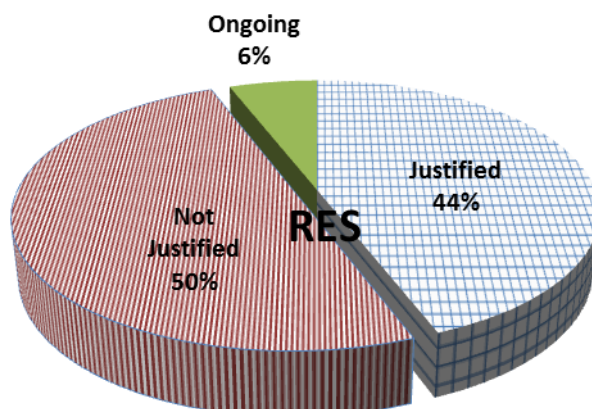
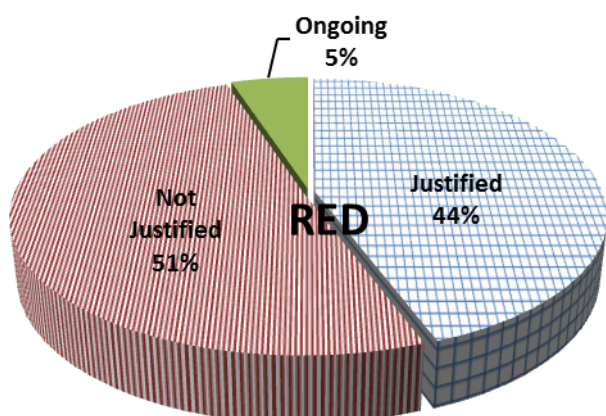
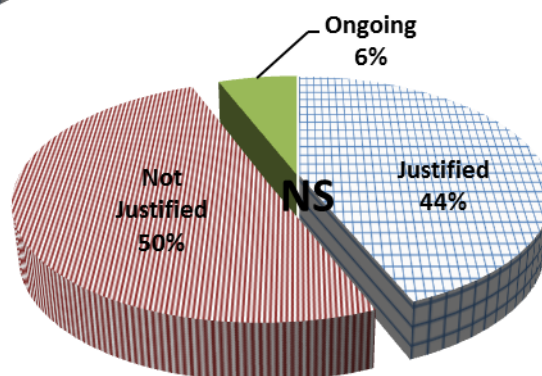
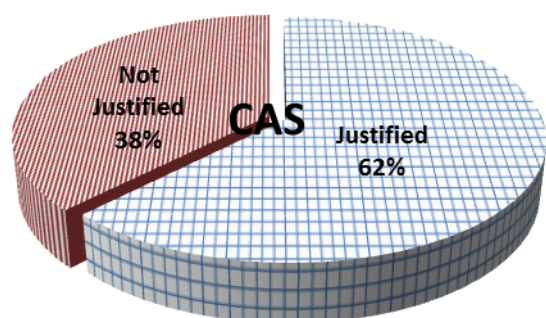
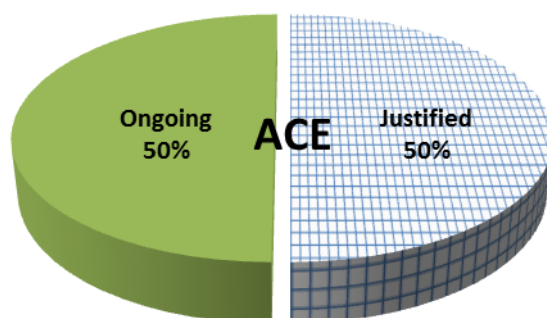
8. **Garden Waste Service:** During the quarter we received 52 complaints in relation to the Garden Waste service. We started to receive complaints of this nature during September as a result of communications in relation to the introduction of a charge for the service under the new scheme.
9. **Missed Bins:** In the main we have seen a significant reduction in the number of complaints in relation to missed bin collections. However, during quarter 2, 241 complaints were received regarding missed bins, which is a 46% increase when compared with the same period in 2013/14. This is due to the industrial action in July 2014, with 56% of complaints relating solely to the impact of this action.

Resources

10. **Revenues and Benefits Service:** Despite ongoing improvements to practices & procedures to ensure the maximum level of service is being achieved, the Revenues and Benefits Service has seen a slight increase in the number of complaints received during quarter 2. The Benefits Service received 43 complaints which is a 35% reduction when compared with the same period in 2013/14. The Revenues Service received 53 complaints which is a 9% reduction when compared with the same period in 2013/14. The increase in complaints covered a broad range of issues and there were no significant trends or issues identified within the complaints received.
11. **Legal & Democratic Services:** The number of complaints for quarter 2, 2014/15, has doubled when compared with the same period last year. This can be attributed to changes in processes and procedures in line with changes in legislation regarding Electoral Registration. The changes have placed more emphasis on moving from household registration to one of individual registration. As a result we have received 16 complaints during the period from residents in relation to the changes.

Investigation of complaints: Outcomes

12. Further investigation of stage 1 complaints received shows that during quarter 2 2014/15 there were 450 occasions (50% of complaints processed) where the complaint was not upheld. This indicates that, although service users were dissatisfied, the service had acted properly and followed the correct procedures.
13. If the not justified complaints and those that are ongoing are removed, the Council is left with 395 (44%) justified complaints, from which there is possibility of learning.
14. The charts below show a breakdown of the categorisation of complaints in terms of justification for each Service Grouping.



Compliments and Suggestions

15. The following table shows the numbers of compliments and suggestions received across service groupings during quarter 2 2014/15:

Service Grouping	Compliments	Suggestions
ACE	5	2
CAS	51	4
NS	161	49
RED	27	5
RES	42	1
TOTAL	286	61

16. A large proportion of compliments are for staff in recognition of their support and help in resolving the customer's concerns and issues. On each of these occasions the individual officer is notified of the compliment and thanked by their line manager. Many of these relate to the professionalism, speed of service and general helpfulness of staff.

PART TWO: Detailed report for each service grouping for quarter 2 2014/15

Assistant Chief Executive's Office (ACE)

Overview

17. A summary of feedback since 2012/2013 is shown below:

Service Grouping ACE	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14				13/14 Total	14/15				14/15 Total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	7	3	3	2	1	9	1	2	-	-	3
Compliments	25	3	9	25	12	49	8	5	-	-	13
Suggestions	9	3	3	4	14	24	1	2	-	-	3

Complaints

18. There were two complaints during quarter 2. One complaint related to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. This is now being investigated by an FOI internal review. The other was in relation to non-delivery of Durham County News. This has now been resolved.

Compliments and Suggestions

19. 4 of the 5 compliments were thanking staff in the County Records Office for their help in providing comprehensive and swift replies in relation to various family and local history queries, including a compliment on the DLI World War 1 event. One compliment was received in relation to the successful 'Party in the Park' event.

20. There were 2 suggestions received; one regarding the possibility of a company operating in the Durham area being listed on the council's website; the other came from a political association regarding the possibility of raising a flag over the Council on a certain day.

Children and Adults Services (CAS)

Corporate Complaints Overview

21. A summary of feedback since 2012/2013 is shown below:

Service Grouping CAS	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14				13/14 Total	14/15				13/14 Total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	33	10	15	18	11	54	6	8			14
Compliments	547	88	42	47	7	184	55	51			106
Suggestions	26	0	0	1	4	5	0	4			4

Complaints

22. Although the number of complaints has increased by 2 from quarter 1 they have decreased by 7 when compared to quarter 2 of 2013/14. The complaints relate to:
- Children's Services received 1 complaint in relation to the One Point Service.
 - Education received 6 complaints (4 relating to Special Educational Needs services, 1 relating to the Music Service, and 1 relating to School Places and Admissions).
 - Commissioning received 1 complaint.

Compliments and Suggestions

23. There were 51 compliments were received which is an increase of 9 when compared to the same period in 2013/14. Children's Services received 29 compliments (14 for the One Point service and 15 for the Youth Offending Service); Education received 20 compliments (17 for School and Governor Support Service and 3 for SEN Placement and Provision) and Planning and Service Strategy received 2 compliments (both in relation to Service Quality and Development complaints function).
24. Four suggestions were received of which three referred to a newspaper story relating to a school bus pass and one concerned the online information in relation to the Blue Badge scheme.

CAS Statutory Complaints, Compliments and Comments Q2 2014/15

25. As shown in the table below, the total number of statutory complaints, compliments and comments has decreased from 206 in quarter 1 to 173 in quarter 2.

Service	Number Received
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Grouping CAS	13/14				13/14 Total	14/15				14/15 Total
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	64	75	43	47	229	58	41			99
Compliments	155	100	97	87	439	148	130			278
Comments	0	0	0	0	0	0	2			2
Total	219	175	140	134	668	206	173			379

26. In relation to the 2 comments received, 1 was anonymous and couldn't be responded to and the other is being considered by the Head of Adult Care.

Children's Services Statutory Complaints, Compliments and Comments Q2 2014/15

27. During quarter 2 a total of 21 complaints in relation to the Children's social care services were logged at Stage 1 of the complaints procedure. This represents a decrease of 9 complaints in comparison to the previous quarter.

Comparison of Children's Services Complaints received by quarter					
Complaint type	Q1 14/15	Q2 14/15	Q3 14/15	Q4 14/15	Direction of Travel from previous quarter
Stage 1	29	21			↓
Stage 2	1	0			↓
Total	30	21			↓

28. Continued efforts to resolve complaints as soon as possible through senior managers, meeting with complainants and working with Service staff to achieve early resolution, have contributed to there being no complaints taken to Stage 2 during quarter 2.
29. Stage 1 complaints received by the team are broken down as follows:

Stage 1 Complaints received by Teams in the quarter		
Teams	Current Q2	Previous Q1
Assessment and Intervention – Bishop Auckland	2	1
Assessment and Intervention - Durham	1	1
Assessment and Intervention – Peterlee & Easington	1	1
Assessment and Intervention - Seaham	2	3
Assessment and Intervention - Spennymoor	0	2
Assessment and Intervention – Stanley 1	1	1
Child Protection – Peterlee	2	5
Child Protection – Spennymoor	1	4
Child Protection – Stanley	3	1
Children's Home*	1	0
Disability social work	1	1
Fostering	2	1
Independent Reviewing Officers	0	1
Initial Response Team	0	4
Looked After and Permanence	4	1
Safeguarding Children - Chester-le-Street	0	1
Safeguarding Children - Peterlee	0	1
Total	21	29

*Note: complaint was about another young person resident in the home

Declined Complaints

30. Two complaints were declined during quarter 2, with both cases subject to legal processes requiring resolution through the Courts.

Themes of Complaints

31. *Disputed Decision* constituted the category with the highest number of complaints. *Lack of Service - Communications/Information* was a theme in 3 complaints. It is possible for a complaint to contain more than one theme.

Outcomes

32. Of the 11 complaints completed in the quarter, 3 were not upheld, 4 were partially upheld and 4 complaints were fully upheld as outlined in the table below:

Outcome of Children's Complaints received in the Quarter			
Team	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Upheld
Assessment and Intervention – Stanley 1		1	
Assessment and Intervention – Bishop Auckland			1
Child Protection - Peterlee	1		
Child Protection - Spennymoor			1
Child Protection - Stanley		1	
Children's Home			1
Disability social work	1		
Fostering		1	1
Looked After and Permanence	1	1	
Total	3	4	4

Actions as a Result of Statutory Complaints

33. As a result of some of the statutory complaints, staff have been reminded to:
- be vigilant when writing and checking reports, particularly where information is carried over or 'copied and pasted' from previous or other documents, to avoid potential data breaches, and incorrect or out of date information being included.
 - be mindful of not leaving behind personal items when visiting service user's homes, particularly mobile phones.
 - ensure good communications between colleagues in different teams, or when handing over cases, to reduce unnecessary delays.
 - ensure that policies and procedures in relation to Foster Carers are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current working practices.

Compliments

34. There were 84 compliments received in quarter 2 which represents a decrease of 20 in comparison to the previous quarter. A breakdown of compliments received by the team is shown on the table below.

Teams	Compliments Received	
	Current Q2	Previous Q1

Aycliffe Secure Services	0	3
Assessment and Intervention Teams	11	6
Children's Homes	6	10
Child Protection Teams	1	0
Community Support Team	10	21
Disabled Children and Families Team	0	3
Emergency Duty Team	0	5
First Contact and Prevention service	1	1
Fostering and Adoption	0	0
Looked After and Permanence Teams	6	2
4 Real	3	2
Pathfinder teams	16	49
The Full Circle	1	2
Think Family	29	0
Total	84	104

Adults Services Statutory Complaints, Compliments and Comments Q2 2014/15

35. 20 complaints were received in relation to adult social care services, as shown below.

Comparison of Complaints received by quarter					
Service Area	Q3 13/14	Q4 13/14	Q1 14/15	Q2 14/15	Direction of Travel from previous quarter
Adult Care	20	23	28	20	↓

36. Of the 20 complaints received, 17 were acknowledged within 2 working days and 14 were completed within the quarter and within target timescales. The remaining 6 cases were ongoing at the quarter end but within their agreed completion timescales.

Complaints received by Service area in the quarter		
Service area	Current Q2	Previous Q1
Adult Social Work Teams: Older Persons /Mental Health Services for Older Persons/Physical Disability/ Sensory Support services	12	14
Adult Social Work Teams: Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Substance Misuse services	7	5
Commissioning	1	5
County Durham Care and Support	0	3
Emergency Duty Team	0	1
Total	20	28

37. The Adult Social Work Teams (Older Persons/Mental Health Services for Older People/Physical Disability/Sensory Support Services) received the greatest number of complaints at 12, followed by 7 in Adult Social Work Teams (Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Substance Misuse) and 1 in Commissioning.

Declined Complaints

38. One complaint was declined in the quarter on the grounds that the service user had not given his permission for his care worker to make a complaint on his behalf, and the issues raised were more than 1 year old.

Category of Complaint

39. *Lack of Communications/Information* constituted the category with the highest number of complaints. *Professional Conduct of Staff* was a theme in 5 complaints. It is possible for a complaint to contain more than one theme.

Outcome of Complaints

40. Of the 14 completed complaints, 6 were not upheld, 3 were partially upheld and 5 were upheld in full.

Outcome of Complaints received and completed in the quarter			
	Not upheld	Partially Upheld	Upheld
Social Work Teams: Older Persons /Mental Health Services for Older Persons/Physical Disability/ Sensory Support services	4	3	3
Adult Social Work Teams: Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Substance Misuse services	2	0	1
Commissioning	0	0	1
Total	6	3	5

Actions as a Result of Statutory complaints

41. As a result of some of the statutory complaints received and concluded during the period, Team Managers/ staff are to be reminded about the following:
- To ensure caseload is managed when Social Workers are absent for extended/unplanned periods.
 - The need to act promptly when there are changes made in the type/provision of care for a service user.

Compliments

42. There were 46 compliments received during the quarter which is an increase of 2 from the previous quarter.

Service area	Compliments Received	
	Current Q2	Previous Q1
County Durham Care and Support	22	29
Social Work Teams: (Older Persons /Mental Health Services for Older Persons/Physical Disability/ Sensory Support services)	21	13
Social Work Teams (Learning Disabilities/Mental Health/Substance Misuse Services)	3	1
Commissioning	0	1
Total	46	44

43. Work continues to highlight to staff the importance of capturing compliments using the monthly 'Staff Update' and senior managers are also reminded in Service Area management team meetings.

Neighbourhood Services (NS)

Overview

44. During quarter 2 2014/2015, 691 complaints, 161 compliments and 49 suggestions were received. A summary of feedback since 2012/2013 is shown in the following table:

NS	Number Received										
	12/13	13/14 split by quarter				12/13 Total	14/15 split by quarter				14/15 Total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	2,398	724	614	446	446	2,230	447	691			1,138
Compliments	402	126	134	125	121	506	129	161			290
Suggestions	215	62	57	41	88	248	52	49			101

45. Analysis shows that when compared to the same quarter in 2013/14, the number of complaints received increased by 13%.

Improvement

- **Staff Attitude:** We have seen a 37% reduction in complaints received in relation to staff attitude when compared with the same period last year.
- **Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** We received 18 complaints regarding HWRCs during this quarter which is a 75% decrease when compared with quarter 2 in 2013/14. Complaints related to a number of issues including tighter control of the waste being put through the sites, waste permit issues and staff attitude.
- **Charges for replacement wheeled bins:** 17 complaints were received from residents objecting to the £20 charge for replacement bins which is a 29% reduction from the same period last year.
- **Customer services administration:** 6 complaints were received from customers who were unhappy with their customer service experience which is a 57% reduction from the previous quarter. Complaints included service request details being logged incorrectly by staff, customers being asked to repeatedly provide the same information and the handling of documents.

Challenges

- **Grass cutting:** 20 complaints were received regarding various aspects of the grass cutting service during quarter 2 which is a 20% increase when compared with the same period last year. Complaints include standard of grass cutting, areas being missed off grass cutting schedules and mess left by grass cutters.
- **Missed Bins:** 241 complaints were received regarding missed bins during quarter 2 which is a 46% increase when compared with the same period in 2013/14. However this can be largely attributed to industrial action in July 2014, as 56% of the missed container complaints related solely to the impact of this action.
- **Garden waste service:** During the quarter we received 52 complaints regarding the garden waste service. We started to receive complaints of this nature during September as a result of communications in relation to the introduction of a charge for the service under the new scheme.

Compliments and Suggestions

46. 161 compliments were received during quarter 2 2014/15. The majority of compliments relate to staff in recognition of their support and help in resolving customer enquiries in a professional and timely manner.
47. 49 suggestions were received, a number of these were in relation to the installation of litter and dog bins. As a result of the “Bin It Right” campaign, there were a number of suggestions in relation to improving communications around bin contamination.

Regeneration and Economic Development (RED)

Overview

48. During quarter 2, 79 complaints, 27 compliments and 5 suggestions were received by the Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) Service Grouping.
49. A full summary is shown below:

Service Grouping RED	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14 split by quarter				13/14 Total	14/15 split by quarter				14/15 Total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	357	92	128	97	95	412	67	79			146
Compliments	125	34	27	85	39	185	15	27			42
Suggestions	33	11	6	13	10	40	8	5			13

Complaints

50. RED received 79 complaints which is a decrease of 38% compared to the same period in the previous year. However this is an increase of 18% when compared to the previous quarter. RED responded to 68% of Stage 1 complaints within the 10 working day deadline. 17 complaints were escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints process during quarter 2, 8 of which were in relation to Planning Development.
51. Detailed analysis of the complaints received during quarter 2 shows that 3 areas of the service grouping account for 72% of the complaints received.
- **Durham City Homes:** 23 complaints were received in relation to Durham City Homes, particularly in regard to the handling of repairs and maintenance issues and the associated contractors. Complaints of this nature have decreased by 52% when compared to the same period in the previous year but have increased by 35% from quarter 1.
 - **Planning Development:** 21 complaints received were in relation to Planning Development mainly in connection to planning decisions and building control. This is a significant decrease (35%) on the same period of the previous year when 33 complaints were received. 8 Planning Development complaints were escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints process during quarter 2 which is a significant reduction from quarter 1 when 15 complaints were received.
 - **Strategic Traffic:** 13 complaints were received by Strategic Traffic. The majority are parking and road works related. This is a significant decrease of 41% from the same

period in the previous year but an increase from quarter 1 when 10 complaints were received.

Compliments and Suggestions

52. The service grouping received 27 compliments in quarter 2 of which 13 related to Planning Development. These are generally thanking staff for the service they have provided.
53. RED received 5 suggestions during quarter 2 which covered a variety of subjects and service areas including parking and tourism.

Resources (RES)

Overview

54. In the second quarter of 2014/15, Resources received 118 complaints which is a 23% increase from quarter 1 and a 16% reduction compared to the same period in 2013/14.

RES	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14 split by quarter				13/14 Total	14/15 split by quarter				14/15
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	809	180	141	139	132	592	96	118			214
Compliments	69	14	10	17	38	79	32	42			74
Suggestions	24	3	5	3	8	19	6	1			7

Key Areas and Learning

55. Detailed analysis of customer feedback received during quarter 2 reveals that 98% of the complaints are attributable to the Revenues and Benefits Services and Legal and Democratic Services. This is outlined below.
56. **Benefits Service:** The Benefits Service received 43 complaints during this quarter, 11 (26%) of which were made by landlords or agents regarding issues with payments, such as payments being made directly to tenants instead of themselves, or the frequency of payments. 6 (14%) complaints were made by customers whose benefit claims had been suspended due to the service receiving notification of a change in their circumstances. There were no significant trends or issues within the complaints received.
57. **Revenues Service:** The Revenues Service received 53 complaints this quarter. 8 (15%) related to recovery action being taken. 4 complaints were against the council policy on empty property discounts and the long term empty property premium. 2 complaints were received in respect of a review of mobile homes / caravan sites that was undertaken in the quarter. There were no other significant issues or trends within the other complaints received.
58. During quarter 2 the Revenues and Benefit Service has been piloting a revised complaints process. It is anticipated that this will be rolled out across the organisation in due course. Early indications are that the new process, which involves resolving the complaint by telephone wherever possible, has been well received by both staff and

customers, has improved performance in complaints handling and is more efficient. 34% of the complaints received in quarter 2 have been resolved in this manner.

59. The Revenues and Benefits Service is committed to service improvement and is continually reviewing processes and procedures as well as working with its software suppliers to ensure that the service functions as efficiently as possible. The service is in the process of rolling out an e-communications strategy to implement e-billing and a SMS text messaging service from next year.
60. The service has regular meetings with key stakeholders including landlords to improve information flows, communication and working relationships. Likewise regular liaison meetings are held with Customer Services to ensure that processes and procedures are continually reviewed. As well as an ongoing review of recovery processes, bailiff action is monitored and reviewed at regular meetings with the three appointed bailiff companies to enable them to develop effective processes and procedures.
61. **Legal and Democratic Services:** During quarter 2 of 2014/15, this service received 16 complaints. Nearly half of these related to Electoral Services, several of which are as a direct result of the additional information which electors are being asked to provide in order to remain on the Electoral Register, prompted by Legislation changes. In order to make the electoral registration system more secure, electors are being asked to provide additional information to confirm proof of identity such as date of birth or National Insurance Number. This has therefore generated several complaints from people reluctant to provide additional information about themselves.
62. Other electoral services complaints relate to objections to details appearing on the “open register”, resulting in individuals receiving “cold calls” from companies such as 192.com, who have indicated that they obtained details from the Register. The onus is on the elector to “opt out” of appearing on the Open Register and in all the complaint cases, the elector had not indicated that they wished to opt out, meaning that the Council is not at fault.
63. Four of the complaints received during the quarter related to the Registration Service. One complainant is currently challenging several local authorities on the fees charged for duplicate certificates. Another complaint related to delays in the issuing of a duplicate certificate and in that particular case, the fees charge was waived as a goodwill gesture.

Compliments and Suggestions

64. There were 42 compliments received by the Resources service grouping in quarter 2 2014/15. Of these 23 were for the Revenues and Benefits with 12 referring to the excellent service provided by individual members of staff in the Welfare Rights team and 1 by a member of staff in the Collections team. A further 2 compliments were received for the Welfare Rights team as a whole.
65. Eight compliments related to employees in Human Resources & Organisational Development.
66. Legal & Democratic Services received a number of compliments arising from conducting wedding ceremonies.
67. 1 suggestion was received this quarter relating to security checks for account holders.

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO): current activity

68. During this quarter the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) made initial enquiries / initiated investigations into 31 matters.
69. The Ombudsman discounted their involvement in 8 of these cases as they found no fault by the Council. These related to:
- 4 – School admissions appeals
 - 2 – Council tax
 - 1 – Highways issue
 - 1 – Missing refuse bin
70. The Ombudsman also discontinued investigations into 6 cases as they were found to be outside of their jurisdiction. These cases related to:
- 2 – Childrens services issues
 - 1 – Council tax
 - 1 – Planning
 - 1 – Land ownership issue
 - 1 – Insurance
71. Enquiries made by the Ombudsman in respect of the remaining 17 cases have now had the Council's response. The outcomes are currently awaited and relate to the following areas:
- 5 – Adult social care
 - 4 – Planning
 - 2 – Childrens services
 - 2 – Highways
 - 1 – School admissions
 - 1 – School transport
 - 1 – Housing allocation
 - 1 – Environmental Health
72. The Ombudsman delivered decisions on 4 matters which had been subject to investigations that had been initiated prior to the beginning of the quarter. These matters can be summarised as follows:
- Planning issue – no fault by the Council.
 - Council's approved list of contractors – The investigation was concluded, the Ombudsman did identify some errors by the Council (maladministration), however did not identify any evidence that the complainant had been caused an injustice.
 - Home to School Transport complaint – The Ombudsman concluded the investigation and found both maladministration and injustice to the complainant. The investigation was closed on the basis that the Council agreed to various actions to remedy the issues raised in the complaint. This included a financial settlement.
 - Adult Mental Health Services complaint – The Ombudsman concluded the investigation and found both maladministration and injustice to the complainant. The investigation was closed on the basis that the Council agreed to various actions to remedy the issues raised in the complaint.

73. During the quarter the Ombudsman also notified the Council of the outcome in relation to a range of matters which were not subject to full investigation. The Ombudsman's investigators reached their decisions on the basis of the details supplied by complainants, supplemented in some instances with contextual information from Council officers. These matters can be summarised as follows:
- 9 refuse collection complaints – the Ombudsman found no fault by the Council in respect of the complaints and as such discontinued their involvement.
 - The following cases were reported to the Ombudsman prematurely and was therefore referred back to the Council to deal with under the complaints procedure:
 - 1 electoral services issue,
 - 1 bonfire/allotments issue
 - 1 land purchase issue
 - 1 code of conduct complaints procedure issue
 - 1 insurance issue
 - 1 drainage issue
 - 1 council tax complaint, 1 childrens services issue and 1 manhole cover issue – all determined to be outside the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

Recommendation

74. To note the contents of the report

Contact: Mary Readman 03000 268161
