



Cabinet

Date **Wednesday 14 March 2018**
Time **10.00 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. Public Questions
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2018 (Pages 3 - 6)
3. Declarations of interest

Key Decisions:

4. Welfare Assistance Scheme 2018/19 - Joint Report of Corporate Director of Resources and Director of Transformation and Partnerships [Key Decision: CORP/R/18/03] (Pages 7 - 62)
5. Consultation Feedback on the Proposal for Changes to the Charging Policy for Non-Residential Social Care Services - Joint Report of Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services and Corporate Director of Resources [Key Decision: AHS/03/17] (Pages 63 - 90)
6. Proposal to Change the Age Range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to Close Wingate Junior School as a Registered School on 31 August 2018 - Report of Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services [Key Decision: CYPS/04/17] (Pages 91 - 130)

Ordinary Decisions:

7. Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2017/18 - Period to 31 December 2017 - Report of Corporate Director of Resources (Pages 131 - 158)
8. Update on the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 7 - Report of Director of Transformation and Partnerships (Pages 159 - 162)
9. Quarter Three 2017/18 Performance Management Report - Report of Director of Transformation and Partnerships (Pages 163 - 220)
10. County Durham Partnership Update - Report of Director of Transformation and Partnerships (Pages 221 - 238)

11. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.
12. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information.

Part B

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

13. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

Helen Lynch

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
6 March 2018

To: **The Members of the Cabinet**

Councillors S Henig and A Napier (Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council) together with Councillors J Allen, J Brown, O Gunn, L Hovvels, O Johnson, C Marshall, K Shaw and B Stephens

Contact: Ros Layfield

Tel: 03000 269708

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in **The Main Hall, The Glebe Centre, Murton, Seaham, Co. Durham, SR7 9BX** on **Wednesday 7 February 2018** at **10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor S Henig (Leader of the Council) in the Chair

Cabinet Members:

Councillors J Brown, O Gunn, L Hovvels, O Johnson, C Marshall, A Napier, K Shaw and B Stephens

Apologies:

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Allen

Also Present:

Councillors J Blakey, J Clare, K Corrigan, S Dunn and M McKeon

1 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2018/19 [Key Decision: CORP/R/17/02]

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and the Director of Transformation and Partnerships which provided comprehensive financial information to enable Cabinet to make recommendations to full Council to agree the 2018/19 balanced revenue budget, an outline Medium Term Financial Plan MTFP(8) 2018/19 to 2021/22 and a fully funded capital programme. The report also included a review of the Council's Discretionary Rates Relief and Business Rates Hardship Relief Policy and set out details of the mainstream primary and secondary funding formula for schools in 2018/19 (for copy see file of minutes).

In presenting the report the Corporate Director of Resources advised that the figures based in it were on the provisional settlement, and that as details of the final settlement had only been released yesterday any final adjustments would be reflected in the report for full council consideration. He pointed out that there had been late notification of one-off adult social care funding for 2018/19, and confirmation was awaited of individual local authority allocations. The Corporate Director thanked the staff, colleagues and members for their assistance in bringing this report together.

Cabinet members commented on the scale of the funding cuts that had already been made, and that it was anticipated that austerity would continue well into the next decade. Durham had already made savings of £209m, and was still estimated to make at least a further £44m. The unfairness in the distribution of the funding continued for Durham in comparison to other authorities, and this impacted on Durham's spending power. It was pointed out that once again finding these savings was increasingly difficult, and all efforts were being made to protect front line services as far as possible.

It was disappointing that there was no additional funding for children's social care, or funding the local government pay award which if accepted would represent a significant increase in the pay bill. Although the late notification of one-off funding for adult social care was welcomed it was not recurring beyond 2018/19.

Details of the government's increase in the council tax referendum limit to 3% to reflect cost pressures were noted and that the core spending power figures quoted by government assumed that all council's increased council tax up to this new limit in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Published government figures for 2018/19 also assumed that the Adult Social Care precept would increase by 3% however Cabinet members noted that Durham were proposing a 2% increase.

Public consultation on the budget and council tax was undertaken with over 3,000 people being engaged in the process, and almost 80% of those providing views believed the councils approach to making savings was reasonable. The feedback from overview and scrutiny was welcomed and all were thanked for their input.

Cabinet members thanked officers for another year of accurately forecasting, and diligent planning, and thanked the members and officers who had input into the process.

Resolved:

Upon a recorded vote being taken a unanimous vote in favour of the recommendations detailed in the report, subject to final adjustments to reflect the final settlement, being recommended for full council approval was reached by Cabinet members.

5 School Admission Arrangements for Academic Year 2019/2020, and Proposed changes to the oversubscription criteria for admission to Community and Voluntary Controlled Nursery Schools and Nursery Units from 1 September 2018 [Key Decision: CYPS/02/17]

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which sought approval of the proposed oversubscription criteria for admission to Community and Voluntary Controlled Nursery Schools and Nursery Units from 1 September 2018 to take account of the council's statutory duty to provide 30 hours free childcare per week for entitled 3 and 4 year olds; and requested that Cabinet consider and approve the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2019/20 academic year (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations in the report be approved.

6 Proposal to Change the Age Range of Bowburn Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 From 1 September 2019 in an Enlarged New Build to Create a Primary School and to close Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school on 31 August 2019 [Key Decision: CYPS/03/17]

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service which sought approval to change the age range of Bowburn Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2019 in an enlarged new build to create a Primary School and to close Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school on 31 August 2019, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient places, and to ensure good outcomes for all children and young people in this local area (for copy see file of minutes).

In response to a question from Cllr Mckeon, Councillor Gunn commented on the impact that the new primary school and its facilities in Bowburn would have on the wider community.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

7 Regulation 7 Direction - Proposals to restrict Letting Boards in areas of high number student properties

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which requested Cabinet to authorise the Head of Planning and Assets to make a proposal to the Secretary of State under Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 for a

Direction which would operate to withdraw deemed consent for the display of Letting Boards within the Durham City Conservation Area (for copy of report see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendation in the report be approved.

Cabinet

14 March 2018

Welfare Assistance Scheme 2018/19

Key Decision: CORP/R/18/03



Report of Corporate Management Team

John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources

Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation & Partnerships

Councillor Jane Brown, Portfolio Holder for Social Inclusion

Councillor Alan Napier, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Cabinet with the outcome of a review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme, which has been overseen by the Council's Poverty Action Steering Group and to outline proposals for changes to the policy and delivery arrangements from April 2018.

Executive Summary

- 2 This report provides Cabinet with the outcome of a review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme, which has been overseen by the Council's Poverty Action Steering Group.
- 3 Following the review it is proposed to retain a Welfare Assistance Scheme, administered by the Assessments and Awards Team in Finance and Transactional Services, Resources, with provision for Daily Living Expenses and Settlement Grant payments:
 - (a) The existing scheme / arrangements is considered to have consistent decision making, sound governance arrangements and a strong level of assurance from audit in terms of its processes and procedures;
 - (b) It offers a comprehensive service across the County and avoids the 'postcode lottery' scenario.
- 4 Following the review, a number of changes to the existing policy and delivery arrangements are proposed from April 2018. These amendments take into account the feedback received during the course of the review and seek to strengthen fulfilment arrangements and maximise spending. The updated policy is attached in the Cabinet report at Appendix 2. The proposed changes are summarised below:

- (a) Nappies and Baby Milk - following discussions with stakeholders including colleagues in Public Health, in future the Welfare Assistance Scheme will be revised to incorporate a £20 Paypoint cash out voucher option to enable people to purchase the appropriate nappies and baby milk for their children's needs. This will address difficulties in fulfilling the requirement for nappies under the current processes.
 - (b) Hygiene Packs - it is proposed that the Welfare Assistance Scheme be amended to incorporate a hygiene pack, with a proposed amount of £10.00 per award. This will allow for the purchase of toiletries and sanitary products;
 - (c) Utility Costs (Gas and Electric) - it is proposed that the Welfare Assistance Scheme follows the principles used for food baskets, and that the value of utility costs is awarded according to household composition. The Welfare Assistance Scheme will be amended from £28.30 per household to £30.00 for a single person, £35.00 for a couple and an extra £5.00 per child in terms of utility costs;
 - (d) Travel - it is proposed to keep the provision of travel within the Durham scheme. From April the Welfare Assistance Scheme will include a Paypoint cash out voucher for a maximum amount of £50.00 to fulfil this requirement;
 - (e) Replacement Goods - replacement goods for items such as white goods and furniture are not covered within the existing Welfare Assistance Scheme, however, it is proposed to provide low cost loans through the for replacement goods from the NE Credit Union;
 - (f) Definition of close family member - the Welfare Assistance policy has been clarified to give meaning to 'close family member' using the definition from Housing Benefit legislation.
- 5 Further work is required to promote awareness of the Policy, particularly in Children's Social Care where the review found that needs are being met through s17 Payments rather than through the use of the Welfare Assistance Scheme. A comprehensive communications, promotion and training campaign will be implemented to ensure that internally and externally we raise awareness of the scheme as widely as possible.
- 6 In terms of the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget, it is proposed that the £860,000 funding available for awards via the Welfare Assistance Scheme will be pre-committed as follows:
- (a) Area Action partnerships – £140,000 annual allocation (£10,000 for each AAP) to fund Welfare Reform initiatives in the locality, on this basis that this complements and augments services and provision already funded within the locality e.g. Advice and Support arrangements, foodbank coverage etc.;

- (b) The Durham Foodbank – £50,000 annual grant to fund part of their core countywide infrastructure, on the basis that this complements and augmented the Daily Living expenses provided under the Welfare Assistance Scheme;
 - (c) FEED Project (East Durham Trust) – £2,700 annual contribution to increase capacity / ability to support residents in East Durham, on the basis that this complements and augmented the Daily Living expenses provided under the Welfare Assistance Scheme and via the Foodbank coverage in this area;
 - (d) NE First Credit Union - £10,000 annual allocation to underwrite the low cost loan facilities that have been factored into the Welfare assistance Scheme Policy at Appendix 2.
- 7 Factoring in these allocations, the sums available to meet demand for Daily Living Expenses and Settlement Grant applications in 2018/19 will be £657,300, with any underspending being carried forward in an earmarked reserve at year end. Any overspending against the scheme would be funded via sums being drawn down from the reserve at year end.
- 8 It should be noted in the past that Employment programmes have been funded from underspends from the Welfare Assistance Scheme and if the measures in this report are accepted will leave less scope in future to fund these type of Employment schemes from this budget.

Background

- 9 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the discretionary elements of the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) Social Fund and transferred responsibility to upper tier and unitary authorities. Funding was provided by Central Government to allow local authorities to develop and deliver their own scheme.
- 10 The Council's scheme was approved in March 2013, with the administration of the policy initially outsourced to Civica and Five Lamps to deliver the Welfare Assistance Scheme under an umbrella partnership called Help and Advice Network Durham (HAND) for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2015.
- 11 In 2013/14 and 2014/15 the budget was equal to the specific grant funding provided by the DWP for each of those years (£1,592,057) plus administration grant funding of £336,414 in 2013/14 and £308,359 in 2014/15. The administration grant funding was passported to Civica and Five Lamps as part of the initial contract for fulfilling the Council's Welfare Assistance Scheme policy.
- 12 Since 2015/16, when the Government removed the specific grant funding, the Council has funded its scheme within its core budget, with an annual budget of £1,000,000 per year, including administration costs of £140,000 per annum. The budget established in 2015/16 was equal to the increase in funding provided as

part of the Final Grant settlement for that year, which was allocated in response to the significant representations made against the removal of the specific grant funding provided in the preceding two years.

- 13 To coincide with the change in funding arrangements in April 2015 it was decided to bring the service 'in-house' to be administered by the Resources as part of its Discretionary Awards Team.
- 14 Despite the impact of the ongoing austerity measures on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, no reductions have been made to date to the budget established in 2015/16.
- 15 The Welfare Assistance Scheme is overseen by the Poverty Action Steering Group, providing oversight and governance including the application of delegated powers to make amendments to the Welfare Assistance Scheme. These powers were most recently used in October 2017, when the decision was taken to amend the Welfare Assistance Policy to alleviate some of the financial pressures customers will face moving from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit, the qualifying criteria being changed from one award within twelve months to one in six months.
- 16 Whilst there have been a number of amendments to the policy since 2013, a full review of the Policy was scheduled to be undertaken in 2017/18 to ensure the policy continues to meet the needs of the residents of the County, supports the Councils wider policies on welfare reform and that the administration of the scheme continues to deliver value for money.

National Context

- 17 In September 2017 the Centre for Responsible Credit published a report into the impact of Government's decision to abolish Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants and its replacement of these with 'local welfare schemes'.
- 18 It found that the policy, adopted in 2013/14, resulted in widespread cuts to the support that households receive when they experience a financial emergency or need help to live independently.
- 19 The research undertaken involved a desk based review of all local authority schemes in England, incorporating an assessment of Cabinet and Committee papers detailing current budgets for local welfare schemes and the reasons for cuts. Information was obtained for around 70 percent of all English local authorities. Key findings were as follows:
 - (a) 26 local authorities in England had closed their schemes as at the end of April 2017;
 - (b) In 41 other areas, the budget for 2017/18 was at least 60% lower than the initial DWP programme funding allocation made in 2013/14 and in 10 of these areas, the budget was 90% lower;

- (c) In some areas (e.g. Rotherham; Bradford) there have been moves to replace grants with low or no interest loans;
- (d) Where grants were still available demand was being managed by:
 - (i) Limiting the purposes for which grants can be awarded (e.g. no carpets);
 - (ii) Restricting the maximum level, and number of awards in any 12 month period to 1 or 2;
 - (iii) Refusing to accept applications when the annual funding allocation has been exhausted (e.g. Birmingham).
- (e) Investment in local welfare schemes has remained close to DWP initial allocation levels in just a handful of authorities;
- (f) For schemes which are being reduced or have closed:
 - (i) Overall funding pressure on local authorities, caused by a combination of reduction in Revenue Support Grant and rising demand for services – particularly Adult Social Care;
 - (ii) Lack of a statutory requirement to provide support;
 - (iii) Low take-up of schemes;
 - (iv) That DWP has 'stopped funding'.

20 Durham County Council is one of the few Councils that has maintained a Welfare Assistance Scheme in line with the Policy it adopted in 2013 and budget in line with the allocations made in 2015/16.

Current Provision

- 21 The current Welfare Assistance Scheme within County Durham consists of two elements:
- (a) Daily Living Expense (DLE), which covers immediate need such as food and other essentials;
 - (b) Settlement Grants, which covers the requirements for furniture and similar goods to assist the applicant move back into the community.
- 22 The application process and administration of the scheme is managed by the Discretionary Benefit team in Resources. Customers can apply for DLE and Settlement Grant by the following methods:
- (a) Telephone application – speaking direct to dedicated experienced call handlers;

- (b) On-line – completion of intelligent web form applications;
 - (c) Applicants can apply direct or by a trusted partner e.g. Durham County Council Social Workers, housing provider support workers.
- 23 Since the Council took over the direct administration of the scheme in April 2015, assistance has been provided to 3,964 people, with awards totalling £1.320 million. Work undertaken in the past three years has also seen the development of closer working relationships with the voluntary and community sector through the development of service level agreements.
- 24 An important feature of the Welfare assistance Scheme in operation in Durham is to triage the request for an award and to give advice on the basis of a ‘no wrong door’ approach, which underpins the Advice in County Durham partnership. In the event that the Welfare Assistance Scheme team are not able to provide financial support, a referral can be made to a more suitable organisation who would then proactively contact that individual rather than rely on them acting on a sign posting to another organisation.

Delivery Partners

- 25 The Council has developed partnership arrangements with a range of organisations: for white goods and furniture, working with East Durham Partnership and County Durham Furniture Help Scheme. In 2018/19 this important relationship will be maintained, which has been strengthened over recent years through a formal service level agreement, with regular liaison meetings in place.
- 26 The provision of goods and services is currently undertaken by Family Fund Trading (FFT) or by East Durham Partnership and County Durham Furniture Help Scheme. Details of the current arrangements are set out below:

DLE	Settlement Grant
Food – Asda: home delivery of food baskets based on family composition. This scheme is operated through the Family Fund.	White Goods – East Durham Partnership/ County Durham Furniture Help Scheme <i>Where unable to fulfil – FFT/Argos Voucher</i>
Utilities – FFT/Pay Point vouchers	Furniture – East Durham Partnership/County Durham Furniture Help Scheme <i>Where unable to fulfil – FFT/Argos Voucher</i>
Travel – no solution	Household goods – FFT/Argos Voucher
Baby Milk/ Nappies – cash out vouchers or reimbursement of costs incurred via utility payments	Carpets – BACS payment to local outlet/FFT
	Removals – local furniture removal company

Current Costs and Spend

- 27 The 2017/18 budget for the Welfare Assistance Scheme is £1,000,000. Administration costs including staff costs of £94,354 (£31,451 x 3 fte), plus management and non-staffing / system costs of circa £45,000, leaves circa £860,000 available for awards.
- 28 The Welfare Assistance Scheme has made on average 113 awards each month this year, split roughly 33% Settlement Grants and 67% Daily Living Expenses.
- 29 There has been an increase in the both the volume and value of awards following the rollout of Universal Credit in County Durham. Awards to people living in Universal Credit full rollout areas represented 41% of all Daily Living Expenses awards in December 2017. Details of the number and value of awards over the last few years are set out below:

	Daily Living Expenditure (DLE) awarded	Spend
2015/16	934	£62,030.31
2016/17	771	£59,195.75
2017/18 @ 31/1/18	759	£61,014.19
	2,464	£182,240.25

	Support Group (SG) awarded	Cost
2015/16	548	£409,655.74
2016/17	574	£415,739.99
2017/18 @ 31/1/18	378	£313,041.76
	1,500	£1,138,447.49

Total	3,964	£1,320,687.74
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- 30 The Welfare Assistance Scheme budget is overseen by the Poverty Action Steering Group. Any underspend against the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget is carried forward in an earmarked reserve and used to augment the following years' budget allocations.
- 31 Underspending in 2013/14 and 2014/15 net of allocations to AAPs and to Employability initiatives in those initial years, resulted in an earmarked reserve carried forward balance at 31 March 2015, prior to the Council taking on the administration of the scheme, of £1.198 million.
- 32 As expenditure on awards has remained below the levels originally envisaged, the Poverty Action Steering Group have agreed allocations to support other welfare reform initiatives across the last two and half years, details as follows:
- (a) Augmenting the Discretionary Housing Payments budget spend by £118,000 in 2016/17 to offset an overspend on DHP awards last year;

- (b) Allocations to Regeneration and Local Services for funding Employment and Employers Initiatives Schemes - £1,000,000;
- (c) Allocations to Transformation and Partnerships for Area Action Partnerships welfare related projects – £420,000;
- (d) Allocations to Regeneration and Local Services for funding Home Energy Advisors through the Prince Bishops Community Bank - £120,000.

Review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme for 2018/19

33 The review has been wide ranging, involving benchmarking the arrangements in Durham against other authorities and discussions with a wide range of delivery partners and key stakeholders, including:

- (a) A staff survey among DCC staff;
- (b) Adult Health Services Management and Social Work teams;
- (c) Advice in Co Durham Partnership;
- (d) Children Services Think Family and Social Work teams;
- (e) Citizens Advice;
- (f) Customers;
- (g) Registered Social landlords;
- (h) Durham Christian Partnership and East Durham Trust;
- (i) East Durham Trust;
- (j) Housing Solutions;
- (k) Family Fund;
- (l) NE Credit Union.

34 The Welfare Assistance Schemes operated by other local authorities across the North East region have been reviewed and compared to the Durham scheme. There was found to be a great deal of similarity between schemes in operation across the region. All schemes were being delivered 'in house', with the exception of Darlington, who use their local Citizen Advice Service as the main delivery partner. All schemes in operation across the North East have the provision for emergency food and other essentials and provision for help in setting up home or moving home in the community.

35 The key areas highlighted from the review was the need to support key delivery partners and stakeholders, increase awareness of the Welfare Assistance scheme within the Council, and develop the scheme to meet the need for the provision of services for household fuel, hygiene packs, payments to support people in the initial stages of their Universal Credit claim and the need for low cost loans for replacement goods.

Welfare Assistance Scheme Delivery

36 As a part of the review consideration has been given to the delivery arrangements, how they could better meet the needs of customers, meet the challenges presented by the Universal Credit full service roll out and support key stakeholders. Two options have been carefully considered:

(a) In House Delivery Model:

- (i) This would essentially retain the current 'in-house' service delivery arrangements, governance arrangements, access to management information and strong assurance in terms of audit allows the Council to develop the current Welfare Assistance policy;
- (ii) Under this option the process for accessing help would remain the same, with a central team based in the Resources at the current staffing levels. Based on the feedback from stakeholders, the scheme would be improved through, giving increased support to stakeholders and a Communications and Marketing Strategy developed to raise awareness of the scheme and promote access and take-up;
- (iii) Building on the learning from the regional benchmarking the Welfare Assistance Scheme policy would be amended to include the provision of replacement furniture and white goods, facilitated through the Council entering into an arrangement with the NEFirst Credit Union.

(b) External Delivery Model

- (i) Under this option responsibility for administration and fulfilment of the scheme would be outsourced, with funding provided to external organisations to deliver the elements of the Daily Living Expenses and the elements of the settlement grants;
- (ii) As part of the review, County Durham Food Bank put in a proposal to deliver the Daily Living Expenses (DLE) element of the Policy. The proposed application process for food and fuel vouchers would be the same as the current foodbank and fuel bank scheme, where customers may receive three vouchers per annum. In exceptional circumstances, home delivery requests are made after discussion with the relevant referral agency;
- (iii) The County Durham Foodbank covers the whole County, through its 26 distribution points. The dales are not particularly well covered however and the foodbank depends on other support workers to deliver food to people there at present. They did however put forward proposals for the home delivery element of their proposal to provide countywide cover for people who could not visit a distribution point;

- (iv) Like all third sector organisations, the County Durham Foodbank are reliant on grant funding and donations in order to maintain its infrastructure and volunteers to continue with service provision;
- (v) In East Durham, foodbank coverage is augmented by the East Durham Community Development Trust Ltd (East Durham Trust), via the FEED project, which has been running for over six years. As part of the review, a request for a contribution from the council's Welfare Assistance Scheme budget was sought to allow the East Durham Trust to increase the outputs of the FEED project i.e. increase the number of food parcels given out;
- (vi) The FEED project currently distributes up to 70 food parcels per week in the east of the County, with peak periods being the summer holidays (due to families being reliant on school breakfast clubs, free school meals etc.) and the period immediately before and after Christmas. An allocation of £2,654 of funding was requested, in order to increase the provision of an additional 200 parcels per year, for clients living in the east of the County;
- (vii) The proposal to deliver what is now the settlement grant element of the scheme was received from NE First Credit Union. Under this option, low cost loans would be provided by NEFirst credit Union to facilitate the provision of furniture, white goods etc. including replacement goods. The Council would act as guarantor for a loan to the applicant for the purchase of the goods from a nominated supplier, and call on the guarantor where the individual defaults on the loan;
- (viii) The NEFirst Credit Union indicated that based on their experience in running a similar scheme with Gateshead housing that the provision for bad debts is only 10%.

37 Having carefully considered the merits of in-house service delivery vs the outsourced fulfilment proposals received, it is proposed that the Welfare Assistance Scheme continue to be operated in-house, with the policy amended to include the improvements that have been identified in feedback from stakeholders and customers.

Welfare Assistance Scheme Policy & Revised Fulfilment Proposals

38 A significant advantage of the current scheme / fulfilment arrangements is the assurance, governance and control arrangements in place. There is a lack of stigma in delivering the support through Settlement grants with the delivery of brand new white goods with warranties attached rather than second hand goods, which also means that the goods and services provided have a longer lifespan.

39 In addition, using the Family Fund and ASDA as a delivery partner to fulfil Daily Living expense awards at the customers' home rather than having to queue in foodbanks assists also helps reduce stigma to the customers who receive this support. This important feature of the support has been reflected in feedback from customers and front line social work staff.

40 Based on the feedback received during the course of the review, it is however proposed that the policy is revised and fulfilment improved in relation to:

(a) ***Nappies and Baby Milk***

- (i) The Welfare Assistance scheme has had a logistical difficulty in making payments for nappies and baby milk, due to the difficulty in providing these goods via Family Fund / Asda. The issue relates to the provision of substitute goods and the variety of 'basket' types according to the need for types of milk and/or the sizes of nappies;
- (ii) Following discussions with stakeholders including colleagues in Health, in future the Welfare Assistance Scheme will incorporate a Paypoint cash out voucher option to people who are supported in order to fulfil this requirement. This would allow them to purchase the appropriate milk and nappies to their children's needs immediately with an element of customer choice. The proposed amount is £20.00 per award and when incorporated into the Policy would be monitored for take-up and actual spend.

(b) ***Hygiene Packs***

- (i) The current Welfare Assistance Scheme policy does not allow for hygiene packs such as toiletries and sanitary products. People who have applied for assistance have nevertheless requested these and asked for toilet rolls and toiletries to be included as part of their food basket, which are currently excluded items'
- (ii) This is an issue that has recently gained a high profile in the national media, particularly an issue for women on low income.
- (iii) From 2018/19 it is proposed that the Welfare Assistance Scheme be amended to incorporate a hygiene pack, with a proposed amount of £10.00 per award. This would be fulfilled in the same method proposed for satisfying the requirement for nappies and milk, giving customers the freedom to purchase goods on offer, making the award cost effective and potentially last longer.

(c) ***Utility Costs (Gas and Electric)***

- (i) The current Welfare Assistance Scheme policy allows for an award of £28.30 for 7 days, regardless of household composition and time of the year. Benchmarking with other local authorities in the region has shown a variety of payment amounts and provision from no

help with utility / fuel costs to offering a standard amount from £10.00 to £30.00 per seven days;

- (ii) It is proposed that from April 2018 the Council's scheme follows the principles used for food baskets, and that the value of utility costs is awarded according to household composition. The Welfare Assistance Scheme will be amended from £28.30 per household to £30.00 for a single person, £35.00 for a couple and an extra £5.00 per child in terms of utility costs.

(d) Travel

- (i) The provision of travel is currently in the Welfare Assistance policy but is not utilised to any great extent and can be difficult to award;
- (ii) In practise, where these awards are made, people are encouraged to spend their own money on the travel expense, with compensation being made through an award for gas, electric and food. Quite often once a customer realises that they will not be given cash for this purpose they do not proceed with their application;
- (iii) Whilst benchmarking with other Local authorities in the region has shown that not all schemes offer help with travelling, it is proposed to keep the provision of travel within the Durham scheme. From April the Welfare Assistance Scheme will include a Paypoint cash out voucher for a maximum amount of £50.00 to fulfil this requirement. This will enable emergency help with petrol and taxis, bus and train travel.

(e) Replacement White Goods

- (i) Replacement white goods are not covered within the existing Welfare Assistance Scheme, however, building on the learning from arrangements in other areas and the proposals put forward in terms of settlement grants from NE First Credit Union for replacement goods it is proposed to introduce this facility from April 2018;
- (ii) Under these proposals people would be able take out a low cost loan from NE First Credit Union which, if successfully repaid, would enhance their credit score. To facilitate this the Council, utilising its Welfare Assistance Scheme budget would underwrite the loans. It is suggested that £10,000 is ring fenced and piloted to support this initiative. The PASG would monitor the take-up and delivery of the loans.

(f) Definition of Close Family Member

- (i) The Welfare Assistance Scheme allows applications from people living outside the County in exceptional circumstances where a link to a close family member in County Durham can be proven.

- (ii) The policy has been clarified to give meaning to 'close family member' using the definition from Housing Benefit legislation.

41 The updated Welfare Assistance Scheme Policy factoring in the proposals set out above is attached at Appendix 2.

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

42 The proposals outlined in this report and the updated Welfare Assistance Scheme Policy at Appendix 2 have been subject to an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.

43 Overall, working age groups are considered more likely to be positively impacted by the all aspects of the revised policy. The policy has a positive impact for pregnant women and new mothers via the provision of baby milk/nappy packs and hygiene packs, support with utility costs and enhanced working with children services.

44 Take up amongst people aged over 60 years is low (3%) and this will be addressed through a comprehensive marketing and communications plan aimed at community groups including the 'Advice in County Durham' partnership.

Promotion and Awareness of the Scheme

45 As part of the review, it was clear that there was mixed awareness of the scheme. Whilst there was good awareness within some areas, others, including internally within our social care teams, could be improved. There was strong awareness with Customer Services and amongst partners, with good information sharing and awareness via the Advice in County Durham Partnership.

46 Discussions with colleagues in Children and Young People Service (CYPS) revealed that payments being made by CYPS and charged to the CYPS cash limit budget through Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 included payments where they may have been eligible for support through the Welfare Assistance Scheme.

47 The financial assistance given in terms of goods or services, including food and utility costs, or in exceptional circumstances cash, are approved by the relevant Social Care Team and can be provided to a child, parent or carer under Section 17(6) Children Act 1989 to address identified needs to safeguard and promote a child's welfare where there is no other legitimate source of financial assistance.

48 From these discussions it is evident that the Section 17 payments made for food and fuel are similar in nature to the award criteria of the Welfare Assistance scheme and would be more appropriately met under the terms of this scheme. Payments are currently met in respect of hardship payments and in cases where social security benefits are been transferred between couples where they share responsibility for children.

- 49 With these awards redirected away from Section 17 payments to be fulfilled under the Welfare Assessment Scheme it would create a projected additional spend of circa £178,000 against the Welfare assistance Scheme budget. It would also direct the administration of the awards towards a service that has existing governance and monitoring processes in place.
- 50 Arrangements have been put in place to ensure that the AHS and CYPS social care teams are aware of this scheme and that their service users fully utilise the Welfare Assistance scheme, with regular liaison meetings now taking place between staff internally, including the promotion referral protocols.

Conclusions

- 51 This report provides Cabinet with the outcome of a review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme, which has been overseen by the Council's Poverty Action Steering Group.
- 52 Retaining a Welfare Assistance Scheme, with provision for Daily Living Expenses and Settlement Grant payments is considered essential. However, the report outlines a number of proposals for changes to the existing policy and delivery arrangements from April 2018.
- 53 The review of the Welfare Assistance current scheme has allowed the Council to retain and build on the positive aspects of the current arrangements, around the speed of delivery and the method of delivery which reduces the stigma on the customer receiving this assistance
- 54 The scheme is considered to have consistent decision making, excellent governance arrangements and a strong level of assurance from audit in terms of its processes and procedures.
- 55 It offers a comprehensive service across the County and avoids the 'postcode lottery' scenario. It provides a responsive service through the home delivery service for daily living expenses that is non-stigmatising to customers.
- 56 A number of enhancements and improvements are proposed however and the updated policy is attached at Appendix 2. These amendments take into account the feedback received during the course of the review.
- 57 Further work is required to promote awareness of the Policy, particularly in Children's Social Care where needs are being met through s17 Payments rather than through the use of the Welfare Assistance Scheme. A comprehensive communications, promotion and training campaign will be implemented to ensure that internally and externally we raise awareness of the scheme as widely as possible.
- 58 In terms of the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget, it is proposed that the £860,000 funding available awards via the Welfare Assistance Scheme will be pre-committed as follows:

- (a) Area Action partnerships – £140,000 annual allocation (£10,000 for each AAP) to fund Welfare Reform initiatives in the locality, on this basis that this complements and augments services and provision already funded within the locality e.g. Advice and Support arrangements, foodbank coverage etc.;
- (b) The Durham Foodbank – £50,000 annual grant to fund part of their core countywide infrastructure, on the basis that this complements and augmented the Daily Living expenses provided under the Welfare Assistance Scheme;
- (c) FEED Project (East Durham Trust) – £2,700 annual contribution to increase capacity / ability to support residents in East Durham, on the basis that this complements and augmented the Daily Living expenses provided under the Welfare Assistance Scheme and via the Foodbank coverage in this area;
- (d) NE First Credit Union - £10,000 annual allocation to underwrite the low cost loan facilities that have been factored into the Welfare assistance Scheme Policy at Appendix 2.

59 Factoring in these allocations, the sums available to meet demand for Daily Living Expenses and Settlement Grant applications in 2018/19 will be £657,300, with any underspending being carried forward in an earmarked reserve at year end. Any overspending against the scheme would be funded via sums being drawn down from the reserve at year end.

Recommendations and Reasons

60 Cabinet is asked to:

- (a) Note the outcomes of a review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme, which has been overseen by the Councils Poverty Action Steering Group and which outlines proposals for changes to the policy and delivery arrangements from April 2018;
- (b) Approve the updated Welfare Assistance Scheme Policy, as attached at Appendix 2;
- (c) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and Director of Transformation and Partnerships, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, to make any further amendments to the Welfare Assistance Scheme going forward.

Contact:	Paul Darby	03000 261 930
	Chris Graham	03000 268 965
	Tracey Robinson	03000 260 477

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The Council’s Welfare assistance Scheme budget is £1,000,000 per annum. The budget is overseen by the Councils Poverty Action Steering Group.

Administration costs including staff costs of £94,354 (£31,451 x 3 fte), plus management and non-staffing / system costs of circa £45,000, leaves circa £860,000 available for awards.

Any underspend against the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget is carried forward in an earmarked reserve and used to augment the following years’ budget allocations.

Underspending in 2013/14 and 2014/15 net of allocations to AAPs and to Employability initiatives in those initial years, resulted in an earmarked reserve carried forward balance at 31 March 2015, prior to the Council taking on the administration of the scheme, of £1.198 million.

As expenditure on awards has remained below the levels originally envisaged, the Poverty Action Steering Group have agreed allocations to support other welfare reform initiatives across the last two and half years, details as follows:

- Augmenting the Discretionary Housing Payments budget spend by £118,000 in 2016/17 to offset an overspend on DHP awards last year;
- Allocations to Regeneration and Local Services for funding Employment and Employers Initiatives Schemes - £1,000,000
- Allocations to Transformation and Partnerships for Area Action Partnerships welfare related projects – £420,000.
- Allocations to Regeneration and Local Services for funding Home Energy Advisors through the Prince Bishops Community Bank - £120,000

The changes detailed in this report are to help ensure we achieve spending of the full budget in year. It is proposed that the £860,000 funding available awards via the Welfare Assistance Scheme will be pre-committed as follows:

- Area Action partnerships – £140,000 annual allocation (£10,000 for each AAP) to fund Welfare Reform initiatives in the locality, on this basis that this complements and augments services and provision already funded within the locality e.g. Advice and Support arrangements, foodbank coverage etc.;
- The Durham Foodbank – £50,000 annual grant to fund part of their core countywide infrastructure, on the basis that this complements and augmented the Daily Living expenses provided under the Welfare Assistance Scheme;
- FEED Project (East Durham Trust) – £2,700 annual contribution to increase capacity / ability to support residents in East Durham, on the basis that this complements and augmented the Daily Living expenses provided under the Welfare Assistance Scheme and via the Foodbank coverage in this area;

- NE First Credit Union - £10,000 annual allocation to underwrite the low cost loan facilities that have been factored into the Welfare assistance Scheme Policy at Appendix 2.

Staffing – There are no additional staffing requirements associated with this report. The Welfare Assistance Scheme is administered by officers within the Discretionary Payments, Assessment and Awards Team of the Resources Service.

Risk – The implementation of welfare reform is included as a strategic risk in the corporate risk register. It should be noted in the past that Employment programmes have been funded from underspends from the Welfare Assistance Scheme and if the measures in this report are accepted it will reduce the likelihood of underspends carried forward, which would leave less scope in future to fund these type of Employment schemes from this budget.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - An impact assessment has been undertaken. The impact assessment showed that overall working age groups are more likely to be positively impacted by the all aspects of the revised policy.

Accommodation – not applicable.

Crime and Disorder – not applicable.

Human Rights – not applicable to these changes.

Consultation – the changes to the policy have been made in consultation with the Poverty Action Steering Group and stakeholder groups.

Procurement – not applicable.

Disability Issues – not applicable.

Legal Implications – The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the discretionary elements of the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) Social Fund and transferred responsibility to upper tier and unitary authorities. Funding was initially provided by Central Government by way of a specific grant to allow local authorities to develop and deliver their own schemes. The Council's scheme was approved in March 2013. Since 2015/16, when the Government removed the specific grant funding, the Council has funded its scheme within its core budget, with an annual budget of £1,000,000 per year, including administration costs of £140,000 per annum. The budget established in 2015/16 was equal to the increase in funding provided as part of the Final Grant settlement for that year, which was allocated in response to the significant representations made against the removal of the specific grant funding provided in the preceding two years.

Local Welfare Assistance Schemes are discretionary, with some authorities having closed their schemes over the last two to three years and most having reduced funding towards their schemes in recent years.

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Durham County Council

Welfare Assistance Scheme Policy

2018/19

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1. Introduction and aims of the Welfare Assistance Scheme

The Welfare Assistance Scheme is designed to assist the most vulnerable in meeting their immediate short term needs or maintaining their independence in the community in accordance with Durham County Council's equality and child poverty duties.

The main features of the scheme are that:

- The scheme is operated at the Council's discretion
- There is no statutory right to a Welfare Assistance Scheme award
- The amount of Welfare Assistance Scheme awards in any given year will be limited by the budget set for each individual scheme

There are two elements to the Welfare Assistance Scheme:

- **Daily Living Expenses** which aims to help meet an applicant's immediate short term needs for goods or services that arise because of a disaster or unforeseen circumstances. In particular if the inability to afford the goods/services will result in a deterioration of the health or well-being of the applicant or a member of their household. This includes direct payments to utilities and prepayment card/voucher for food and travel.
- **Settlement Grant** which aims to help applicants remain in the community or move back into the community after a period in supported or unsettled accommodation. This will be achieved by providing access to a range of standard items such as beds, bedding, furniture and white goods.

The above awards are discretionary and will be awarded to applicants whose circumstances meet the criteria outlined in this policy. **All applications will be assessed in line with the qualifying conditions in this policy and be subject to the amount of grant available at the time of application.**

2. Links to Durham County Council priorities

The Policy links to the following Council outcomes:

Priority Theme: Altogether Better Council

Outcome: Working with our Communities

Outcome: Effective use of Resources

Priority Theme: Altogether Safer

Outcome: Protect vulnerable people from harm

Priority Theme: Altogether Wealthier

Outcome: Competitive and successful people

Outcome: Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities

Priority Theme: Altogether Better for Children and Young People

Outcome: A Think Family approach is embedded in our support for families

Priority Theme: Altogether Healthier

Outcome: Improve the quality of life, independence and care and support for people with long term conditions

Outcome: Improve the mental and physical wellbeing of the population

3. Daily Living Expenses (DLE)

An applicant must be resident in County Durham, must be able to show evidence of hardship and meet the qualifying conditions set out below:

There will be two stages to the assessment of a DLE application:

- 1) An assessment of need - to establish if the applicant meets all of the qualifying conditions set out in 3.1 below.
- 2) A financial assessment - to establish if the applicant has immediate access to any other form of financial assistance or funding.

3.1 Qualifying Conditions

To qualify for a DLE Grant, the applicant must:

- meet one of the qualifying conditions defined in paragraph 1 or paragraph 2;
- and**
- meet the conditions defined in paragraphs 3 and 4.
- 1) As a direct result of the inability to afford the goods or services requested, either the health or well-being of the applicant or a member of their household will immediately deteriorate. In addition the applicant or a member of their household who lives with them should also meet at least one of the following:
 - a) Have a serious physical health problem for which treatment is being received;
 - b) Have a dependent child who normally lives with them and that child is at immediate risk;
 - c) Have a substance or alcohol misuse problem, for which treatment or support is being received;
 - d) Are on probation or receiving support relating to previous offences;
 - e) Are affected by, or at risk of domestic abuse or hate crime;
 - f) Have a learning disability;
 - g) Have a physical or sensory impairment;
 - h) Have a mental health problem, for which treatment or support is being received;
 - i) Are an older person (over 60) with support needs;
 - j) Are pregnant;
 - k) There is a serious risk to the health and safety of the applicant; or
 - 2) Exceptional circumstances - An immediate need for items and services has arisen following the occurrence of an exceptional event or unforeseen circumstances. This may include:
 - a) sudden misfortune involving the destruction or loss of property or

- possessions
 - b) the death of a family member
 - c) not receiving any monies from DWP (sanction, disallowance or waiting for first payment of Universal Credit
- 3) The applicant has no other form of immediate financial assistance, for example family, friends, employer, own resources or other available funding streams.
- 4) The applicant must be aged 16 years of age or over.

Any award of DLE will be limited to a maximum of 1 calendar month. The qualifying conditions for a DLE, as outlined in this policy, must be met.

3.2 DLE Budget

Please note that even if the applicant meets the above conditions an award will not always be given. Consideration will also be given to the balance available in the DLE Grant budget. In doing this, the priority of each case will be compared to other applications. There is a duty not to overspend the annual budget and consideration will be given to each application on its individual merits.

3.3 What is covered by Daily Living Expenses?

The following is covered by DLE:

- Living expenses such as food including baby milk/ nappies and hygiene products
- Emergency pre-payment for heating, lighting
- Travel expenses

The methods of support will include:

- Supermarket food delivery
- Pre-payment vouchers or card

Support will **not** include:

- Cash payments

3.4 Amount of award

A DLE award is intended to cover immediate short-term needs that arise because of a disaster or unforeseen circumstances for those meeting the qualifying criteria. An award may be for a specific item or service or to meet immediate living expenses for a short period, usually up to a calendar month.

If the applicant has received a DLE grant for the same item or service within the previous 6 months, then a further award will not normally be allocated.

The above list is provided to give a set of examples and a DLE will not be appropriate in every case. Similarly, if a situation is not mentioned, it does not mean the applicant would not be entitled to help. The individual circumstances of an application will be considered on its merits. The application will be considered only if a DLE award is the only means by which serious harm or serious risk to the applicant or applicant's family may be prevented.

A DLE award is intended to help the applicant for short-term requirements. It may not necessarily solve the crisis altogether.

The amount of money the applicant is applying for may be queried if it seems too much for his/her needs.

3.5 Application and assessment process (direct presentation by the applicant, their appointee, carer, or advocate)

- 1) Applications can be made by telephone or on-line. Reasonable adjustments will be made where the applicant is unable to complete the on-line form without assistance.
- 2) Applications can be made by the applicant, appointee, carer, or advocate acting on their behalf. Proof will be sought that they are acting on behalf of, and with the consent of, the applicant.
- 3) Evidence will be sought from the applicant, appointee, carer, or advocate to ensure that at all qualifying conditions set out in 3.1 have been met.
- 4) A financial assessment will be made, which will involve a series of questions to establish if the applicant has immediate access to any other form of financial assistance or funding.
- 5) Once the application has been processed, the applicant will be informed of the outcome of the application within 2 hours of the initial telephone call (providing this is prior to 3pm, otherwise this will be the following working day). This will be followed up in writing within 24 hours. If successful, the decision may be made pending the provision of evidence by the applicant, appointee, carer, or advocate.
- 6) If successful:
 - a) The award will be issued to the applicant on the same day if a decision is made before 3.00pm that day.
 - Or
 - b) If a decision is made after 3.00pm the award will be issued to the applicant on the following working day.

- 7) If unsuccessful, the applicant will be notified of the right to appeal by telephone. Applicants will have the right to appeal in writing or verbally. (See Decision Making and Appeals: Section 6).
- 8) A letter (which will be made available in different formats/language), text or e-mail will be sent within 24 hours explaining the award decision and the appeals process.
- 9) The applicant will be provided with any welfare advice and signposted to other advice agencies where possible and this may include a referral to a foodbank.
- 10) For successful applicants, relevant evidence (of need and/or identity) will need to be provided or confirmed. Acceptable evidence will be agreed or confirmed with the applicant during the application process.

3.6 Application and assessment process (referral from a support organisation)

- 1) Applications will be made by telephone or on-line from the support organisation. Confirmation will be accepted verbally that the organisation is acting on behalf of, and with the consent of the applicant.
- 2) A decision will be made as to whether one of the qualifying conditions set out in 3.1 have been met. Evidence will be required from a support organisation that the applicant meets all of the qualifying conditions set out in 3.1. Details of the treatment, support or care being provided, or whether the applicant is currently engaging with services, are not required.
- 3) A financial assessment will be undertaken, which will involve a series of questions to establish if the applicant has immediate access to any other form of financial assistance or funding.
- 4) The application will be processed and the support organisation will be informed of the outcome of the application by telephone.
- 5) The applicant will be provided with any welfare advice and signposted to other advice agencies where possible.
- 6) If successful:
 - a) The award will be issued to the applicant on the same day if a decision is made before 3.00pm that day.
 - Or
 - b) If a decision is made after 3.00pm the award will be issued to the applicant on the following working day.
- 7) For the majority of successful applicants, relevant evidence (of identity) will need to be provided or confirmed. Acceptable evidence will be agreed or confirmed with the support organisation during the application process.

- 8) If unsuccessful, the applicant will be notified of their appeal rights by telephone. Applicants will have the right to appeal in writing or verbally.
- 9) A letter (which will be made available in different formats), e-mail or text will be sent within 24 hours explaining the award decision and the appeals process.

4 Settlement Grant

An applicant must be resident in County Durham. Unless the need is for a person who is in the process of moving into County Durham:

- a) either having previously resided in Durham for 3 months in the last 12 months prior to the application or
- b) having been in hospital for a long stay or
- c) having other exceptional circumstances where a link to a close family member in County Durham can be proven (moving into the area to provide care and support to the family member) or
- d) as a result of the Police (i.e. domestic violence)

A grant will not be considered to replace or renew old white goods and furniture. A referral will be made to NE First Credit Union for a low cost loan.

There will be two stages to the assessment of a Settlement Grant application:

- 1) An assessment of need - to establish if the applicant meets all of the qualifying conditions set out in below.
- 2) A financial assessment - to establish if the applicant has any excess income or capital that could be used to meet some or all of the required support or funding.

4.1 Qualifying Conditions

To qualify for a **Settlement Grant**, the applicant must meet the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant requires support for at least one of the following:
 - a) Support to move back into the community after a stay in supported or temporary accommodation or prison
 - b) Support to move out of inappropriate accommodation
 - c) Support to stay in the home and prevent a move into residential care or hospital
 - d) Disasters - including events of great or sudden misfortune, the result of which will normally be significant damage to, destruction or loss of possessions or property e.g. floods, fire.
 - e) Support to set up home as part of a planned resettlement programme following an unsettled way of life
- 2) The applicant should be in receipt or about to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit including:
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction

3) The applicant has no other form of immediate financial assistance, for example family, friends, employer, own resources or other available funding streams.

4) The applicant must be 16 years of age or over.

4.2 Settlement Grant Budget

Please note that even if the applicant meets the above criteria an award will not always be given. Consideration will also be given to the balance available in the Settlement Grant budget. In doing this, the priority of each case will be compared to other applications. There is a duty not to overspend the annual budget and consideration will be given to each application on its individual merits.

4.3 Settlement

Settlement includes leaving long term hospital stay, residential or nursing care; prison or foster care; help to remain in the community or to help set up home as part of a planned resettlement programme.

Consultation must be undertaken with a social worker or other specialist referral agency about the application.

Whether a grant can be awarded depends on all of the conditions being met and on the needs being of sufficient priority to warrant a payment from limited funds. As part of the decision as to whether a Settlement Grant is awarded consideration will be given to all the circumstances of the application.

Settlement categories include:

4.3.1 Support to move back into the community after a stay in supported or temporary accommodation

Applicants may receive a Settlement Grant if they are leaving accommodation in which they have received significant and substantial care and supervision. Examples of such accommodation are:

- Hospital or other medical establishment
- Care or nursing home
- Hostel
- Staff intensive sheltered or supported housing
- Local authority care
- Prison or detention centre
- Short term supported housing
- Bed and breakfast accommodation with a high level of floating support

Not only must applicants be leaving one of these places, they must be establishing themselves in the community. Account is taken of both the length of time the applicants were receiving care or support within the accommodation, and the level of individual care and supervision that they received while they were living there in order to assess the level of support required.

If applicants are looking after someone, they may be entitled to expenses to assist them to establish themselves in the community if necessary. For example, if they have to move home to look after someone in these circumstances, then they may get help with, for example removal expenses. Applicants would need to be receiving a qualifying benefit or due to receive it even if the person they are caring for does not.

4.3.2 Support to stay in their home and prevent a move into residential care or hospital

Applicants may receive a Settlement Grant if this will help them stay in the community, rather than enter residential care or hospital. Some of the factors considered when making a decision will include:

- How immediate is the likelihood of going into such accommodation
- How long they are anticipated to remain in such accommodation
- Whether the type of item or service required would prevent or delay entering such accommodation
- If the support will reduce the frequency of stays in such accommodation

Some examples are:

- Help with expenses for improving their home to maintain living conditions
- Help to move to a more suitable place to live or to be nearer someone who will give them care and support.

Applicants may also get a Settlement Grant if they are caring for someone and it is agreed that a payment to them will help the person they care for to remain in the community rather than enter accommodation to receive care. Applicants would need to be receiving a qualifying benefit or due to receive it irrespective of whether the person they were caring for does.

4.3.3 To help people set up home in the community, as part of a planned resettlement programme, following an unsettled way of life

People who have been without a settled way of life may have been:

- Using a night shelter
- Staying in a hostel
- Sleeping on the streets or in a make-shift shelter on the streets
- Using an emergency winter shelter
- Using a temporary supported lodging scheme
- Staying in temporary accommodation provided by the Home Office pending a decision on their application for asylum in this country

- Using a combination of these

The grant may be given to help applicants set up home in their own accommodation, if they are on a planned resettlement programme following an unsettled way of life. For example, they may have stayed in a night shelter before they were on a resettlement programme.

In all cases, the applicant must be resident in County Durham, has previously resided in Durham for 3 months prior to the application or has a proven family link in County Durham.

4.3.4 Support to move out of inappropriate Accommodation

Applicants may receive a Settlement Grant to support the move out of inappropriate accommodation in the following circumstances:

- Moving to prevent a move to residential care or hospital
- Moving to flee domestic violence or hate crime
- Moving to specially adapted accommodation
- Homeless

The applicant must provide evidence to support the reason for the move explaining why the current accommodation is unsuitable.

The grant may be given to help pay the removal costs. A grant may be considered for furniture or white goods if the applicant is moving from a furnished property to an unfurnished property.

Grants will not be considered in certain circumstances, see Exclusions.

4.3.5 Support following a disaster

Applicants may receive a Settlement Grant to support the move into new accommodation in the following circumstances:

- Events of great or sudden misfortune with significant damage to goods
- Destruction or loss of possessions/property after a fire or flood

4.4 What a Settlement Grant covers

Awards will be made for the provision of:

- Beds
- Bedding
- Chairs/Sofas
- Tables
- Wardrobes
- White goods
- Pans, utensils, crockery and cutlery
- Floor coverings

- Curtains
- Storage or removal costs
- Vacuum Cleaner

4.1 Amount of Award

The value of the Settlement Grant will be discretionary up to a maximum of £1,000, in relation to the needs being presented and the financial situation of applicants. A full income and expenditure calculation of applicants and their household will be undertaken to determine if they have any excess income that could be used to meet all or part of the cost of the support and this will be reduced, on a pound for pound basis, by any savings the applicants or their partners have over £500 (£1000 if applicants and/or their partners are aged 61 or over).

Awards will be made via a prepayment card or voucher up to a maximum value of £1,000 or goods will be provided up to this amount for the purposes of removal, storage and essential non fixed household items, such as those listed above.

The cost of carpet(s)/floor coverings will not exceed £500 and will be included in the £1,000 maximum award.

4.2 Application and assessment (direct presentation by the applicant, their appointee, their carer or advocate)

- 1) Applications will be made by telephone or on-line. Applications can be made by the applicant, or an appointee, carer, or advocate acting on behalf of the applicant. Reasonable adjustments will be made where the applicant is unable to complete the on-line form without assistance. Assistance will be available to help the applicant complete the application form, if required.
- 2) A decision will be taken to assess if all of the qualifying conditions set out in above have been met.
- 3) Evidence will be required to show all of those qualifying conditions have been met by either:
 - a) Confirmation by telephone with a specialist
 - b) Referral organisation, or
 - c) Other evidence provided by the applicant, appointee, carer, or advocate based on the individual circumstances of each case.
- 4) A financial assessment will also be made which will involve an assessment of the income and expenditure of the applicant to establish if he/she has any excess income or capital that could be used to meet some or all of the required support.
- 5) The application will be processed and the applicant informed of the outcome of his/her application. If successful, the decision may be pending the provision of evidence by the applicant, or confirmation with a specialist referral organisation.
- 6) The applicant will be provided with any relevant welfare advice, or signposted to other advice agencies where possible.

- 7) The application will be processed as follows:
 - a) If the application is fully complete, the applicant will be contacted within five working days with a decision
If the application is incomplete, the applicant (or third party, where permission has been given) will be contacted for further information. Once all relevant information and evidence has been received, the applicant will be contacted within five working days with a decision.
 - b) If successful, awards will be provided in line with the applicants' needs but usually not within 48 hours of the award decision
- 8) A letter (which will be made available in different formats and languages) will be sent within five working days explaining the award decision and the appeals process. (See Decision Making and Appeals: Section 6).

4.3 Application and assessment process (referral from a support organisation)

- 1) Applications will be made online or by telephone. . The application form will include confirmation that a support organisation is acting on behalf of, and with the consent of the applicant.
- 2) A decision will be made as to whether all of the qualifying conditions set out have been met. Written evidence from a support organisation that the applicant meets all qualifying conditions set out in 4.1 only will be required. Details of the treatment support or care being provided, or whether the applicant is currently engaging with services will not be required.
- 3) A financial assessment will be undertaken which will involve an assessment of the income and expenditure of the applicant to establish if he/she has any excess income or capital that could be used to meet some or all of the required support.
- 4) The application will be processed and the applicant and the support organisation informed of the outcome of his/her application.
- 5) The applicant will be provided with any relevant welfare advice, or signposted to an advice agency, where necessary.
- 6) The application will be processed as follows:
 - a) If the application is fully complete, the applicant and the support organisation will be contacted within five working days with a decision.
 - b) If the application is incomplete, the support organisation will be contacted for further information. Once all relevant information and evidence has been received, the applicant and the specialist referral organisation will be contacted within five working days with a decision.
 - c) If successful, awards will provided in line with the applicants' needs but usually not within 48 hours of the award decision.

- 7) A letter (which will be made available in different formats and languages) will be sent within five working days explaining the award decision and the appeals process. (See Decision Making and Appeals: Section 6).

5. Evidence required as part of the application process

Information or evidence may be requested in support of an application for a Welfare Assistance Scheme award.

For DLE, the information and evidence to be provided will be identified during the telephone application and evidence will be provided as part of the application process.

For the Settlement Grant, the information and evidence required will be outlined on the application form and should be provided when the application form is submitted. If evidence is not provided, the applicant or the support organisation will be contacted, requesting the information and evidence required. Applicants or support organisations will be expected to provide the requested information and evidence within five working days and a final decision will be made within five working days, once all requested information and evidence is received.

Any information or evidence provided by the applicant will be verified if required. Any such request will be essential to the decision making process and will only be used in connection with the Welfare Assistance Scheme. If the applicant is unable to or does not provide the required evidence, the application will be considered on the available information and evidence.

The online application form for both applications will include a set of security questions, including one requiring them to provide evidence that the applicant lives in County Durham.

Examples of evidence that may be required include:

- Passport, driving licence or other evidence of identity e.g. birth certificate
- Wage slips or self-employed accounts
- Benefit or Tax Credit letters
- Bank statements or other evidence of savings
- Receipts, utility bills or other evidence of expenditure
- Doctors letters confirming health conditions or prescriptions for relevant medication
- Contact details for support worker in relevant support agencies (e.g. Social workers)
- Police crime reference number, where the application relates to an alleged crime.

6. Decision Making and Appeals

6.1 Notification of Decisions

Once a decision on the Welfare Assistance application has been made, the applicant (and support organisation, if relevant) will be notified of the outcome in writing. For DLE, the decision will also be notified verbally by telephone.

The notification letter will be available in alternative formats and languages and will include the following:

- Where Welfare Assistance is awarded, the item(s) and value to be provided
- Where the Welfare Assistance awarded does not provide all support requested, the reasons for this decision
- Where Welfare Assistance is not awarded, the reasons for this decision
- The applicant's appeal rights
- Information on who to contact if they need further information or advice
- The duty to notify of any changes in circumstances, which may affect either a DLE or a Settlement Grant award.

6.2 Daily Living Expenses Appeals

An appeal can be lodged about a DLE decision as follows:

- An appeal about a DLE application should be made within five working days of the notification of the decision being made, or a longer period if considered reasonable
- The appeal can be made in writing, verbally or by e-mail.
- The appeal can be made by the applicant, appointee, carer, advocate or a third party, with the applicant's consent where appropriate.
- Where an appeal is made, a dedicated officer will conduct a review of the decision and contact the applicant within one working day of the appeal being received. This will be done by an officer different to the one who made the initial decision and the outcome will be notified verbally by telephone and confirmed in writing.

6.3 Settlement Grant Appeals

Appeals about Settlement Grants will be dealt with as follows:

- An appeal about a Settlement Grant decision should be made within one calendar month of the notification of the decision being made.
- The appeal can be made in writing, verbally or by e-mail
- The appeal can be made by the applicant, appointee, carer, their advocate or a third party, with the applicant's consent where appropriate
- Where an appeal is made, an Officer will conduct a review of the decision and contact the applicant within five working days of the appeal being received. This will be done by an officer different to the one who made the initial decision and the outcome will be notified in writing. This will be a vigorous process involving liaison with partner agencies.

7. Factors used to decide the financial need for support

When deciding the potential support to be provided, the following may be taken into account: (this list is not exhaustive):

	You	Your Partner	Children
Cash Savings			
Bank Savings			
Building Society Savings			
Premium Bonds			
National Savings Certificates			
Stocks and Shares List Name and Number held			
Value of any other property that you own, other than your home			
One off Payments received in the last 12 months: Please give details			
Other savings not specified above (Please give details)			

If you have no Capital or Savings Please state 'none'.	
---	--

Please can you state the amount that you receive for:	You		Your Partner		How often do you receive this amount?	OFFICE USE ONLY
	£	p	£	p		
Wages						
Salary (Take Home Pay)						
Self Employed Earnings						
Pensions						
Occupational / Private / Personal Pension						
State Retirement Pension						
Guarantee / Savings Pension Credit						
War Disablement Pension						
Benefits						
Universal Credit						
Child Benefit						
Child Tax Credit						
Working Tax Credit						
Income Support						
Maternity/Paternity Pay / Maternity						
Adoption / Custodian Allowance						
Payments for Foster Children						
Employment and Support Allowance						
Incapacity Benefit						
Severe Disablement Allowance						
Statutory Sick Pay						
Disability Living Allowance/PIP						
Attendance Allowance						
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit						
Carers Allowance						
Job Seekers Allowance						
Widowed Allowance / Payments						
Bereavement Benefit						
Other Income						
Personal Injury Payments						
Rental Income from other properties						
Student Grant						
Student Loan						
Cash In lieu of coal						
Educational Maintenance Allowance						
Income from Boarders / Lodgers						
Maintenance Payments Received						
Any other Income (please specify)						
TOTAL INCOME						
Please state the amount that you pay	You		Your Partner			

out each month on the following: If paid by direct debit please state exact amount as on bank statement	£	p	£	p	Office Use Only
Housing Costs:					
Mortgage repayments					
Mortgage Endowment					
Council Tax					
Ground Rent					
House insurance - buildings					
House insurance - contents					
Life insurance and health cover					
Utility Costs:					
Gas					
Electricity					
Water rates					
Coal/Oil/Paraffin					
Calor Gas					
Telephone (including internet)					
Mobile telephone					
Other Important Costs:					
TV Licence					
Court Fine Payments/CCJ					
Maintenance/Child Support (documentary proof required)					
Pension Contributions (do not include if deducted from wage & shown on payslip)					
Other Life Assurances					
HP Conditional Sale					
Loan Repayments:					
Bank or building society loan -secured against your home					
Other loans -secured against your home					
Other loans -not secured against your home (catalogue payments etc.)					
Hire Purchase payments					
Credit Card Repayments					
Travel Costs:					
Travelling to Work					
Travelling to School					
Travelling to the Shops					
Other Fares					
Road Tax					
Vehicle Insurance					
Vehicle Fuel					
MOT/Maintenance					
Breakdown Cover					
Parking Charges/Road Tolls					

Expenditure

Please state the amount that you pay out each month on the following: If paid by direct debit please state exact amount as on bank statement	You		Your Partner		Office use
	£	p	£	p	
Housekeeping:					
Food					
Cleaning/Toiletries					
Newspapers/magazines					
Cigarettes/Tobacco/Sweets					
Alcohol					
Laundry/Dry Cleaning					
Clothing/ Footwear					
Other Expenditure:					
TV, Cable, Sky etc.					
Postage					
Hairdressing/Haircuts					
TV/Satellite/Cable Packages					
Other appliance rentals					
Pub/Outings					
Lottery					
Hobbies					
Religious / Charities					
Gifts (e.g. Christmas/Birthdays)					
Student Course fees					
Student Tuition Fees					
Home Repairs and Maintenance:					
Repairs					
Household maintenance					
Window Cleaning					
Boiler, pipes, electrical etc. insurances					
Children:					
Childcare fees					
Nappies/Baby care Items					
School Fees					
School Meals					
Pocket Money					
Health:					
Dentist/Medical Prescriptions/Glasses					
Medical/Care services other than Childcare					
Pets:					
Pet Food					
Vets Bills/Pet Insurance					
TOTALS:					

In addition the following is also taken into account:

- Whether other funds such as Discretionary Housing Payments or Section 17 payments would be more appropriate to meet the items or services being requested
- Other funding sources have been explored/finished
- The amount of Welfare Assistance Scheme budget available for the remainder of the financial year
- Other Welfare Assistance Scheme requests and awards being made and the overall impact on the remaining Welfare Assistance Scheme budget available.

A Welfare Assistance Scheme award does not necessarily make the applicant eligible to receive a further award if, for example, the initial DLE award runs out, as each application is decided on the individual merits at that time. This applies even if the applicant's circumstances remain the same.

8. Exclusions

Support will **not** be awarded for the following items or services as in most cases signposting to other agencies who can provide support will be given.

- A need which occurs outside County Durham, unless the need is for a person who is in the process of moving into County Durham, either having previously resided in Durham for 3 months within the last 12 months prior to the application, or having been in hospital for a long stay or having other exceptional circumstances where a link to a close family member in County Durham can be proven and that item or service will assist him/her in the move.
- An educational or training need including clothing and tools
- School uniform or sports clothes for use at school or equipment to be used at school
- Travelling expenses to or from school
- Meals taken during school holidays by children who are entitled to free school meals
- Expenses in connection with court (legal) proceedings such as legal fees, court fees, fines, costs, damages, subsistence or travelling expenses (other than emergency travelling expenses when stranded away from home)
- Removal or storage charges if the applicant is being re-housed following a compulsory purchase order, a redevelopment or closing order, a compulsory exchange of tenancies, or under a housing authority's statutory duty to the homeless
- Domestic assistance and respite care
- A medical, surgical, optical, aural or dental item or service (these needs can be provided free of charge by the National Health Service, if the applicant is getting Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit or Universal Credit)
- Work related expenses
- Debts to Government departments or Local Authorities
- Investments
- Purchase, installation, rental and call charges for a telephone

- Mobility needs
- Holidays
- A television or a radio, or a licence, aerial or rental charges for a television or a radio
- Garaging, parking, purchase, and running costs of any motor vehicle, except where the payment is being considered for emergency travel expenses
- Housing costs (other than minor repairs and improvements)
- Council Tax or Council Tax arrears

The following people **cannot** be supported by the Welfare Assistance Scheme:

- People who normally reside outside of County Durham.
- People who are deemed by a support organisation to have no local connection to County Durham.
- Care home residents and hospital in-patients, unless the need is for a person who will be discharged as part of a planned resettlement programme
- Persons who are members of and fully maintained by a religious order
- People in full-time education unless they are entitled to:
 - Income Support
 - Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Pension Credit
 - Universal Credit
- Prisoners who are in prison or released on temporary licence
- A person who is, or would be, treated as a person from abroad for the purpose of Income Support, income based Jobseeker's Allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit and Pension Credit, and has no entitlement to those benefits, including:
 - Foreign nationals with limited immigration status,
 - Foreign nationals with no recourse to public funds
 - Non-economically active European Union individuals
 - United Kingdom nationals who are not habitually resident in the United Kingdom

9. Monitoring Arrangements for the Welfare Assistance Scheme

The on-line application service offered is integrated with Durham County Council's current revenues and benefits system, thus ensuring that identity checks can be undertaken as part of the Council's monitoring arrangements to ensure the validity of applications.

Durham County Council monitor the number, amount and period of Welfare Assistance Scheme awards in relation to the available Welfare Assistance Scheme budget. The sum paid each month from the annual Welfare Assistance Scheme budget will be a set amount that should be apportioned between DLE and Settlement Grant. In addition, monitoring is undertaken to assess performance against a set of key management information and performance indicators. The purpose is to ensure that there are sufficient funds to meet current and future demands on the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget throughout the financial year and the Council's aims and objectives are being met.

In addition a sample of cases will be audited at random to ensure consistency in assessment and decision making.

The Council also monitor the type of referrals, which organisations are making referrals and the type of awards to ensure, where possible, they are meeting positive outcomes for the applicant, in accordance with the aims the Welfare Assistance Scheme.

All findings from monitoring checks will be included within the Durham County Council quarterly performance report to Cabinet.

Compliance with Equality Duties

It is Durham County Council's overall policy to meet equality law requirements and to treat people fairly. Every employee and council representative has a responsibility to treat other people in a fair and lawful way. Durham County Council also takes steps to meet the public sector equality duty which aims to stop unlawful discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations. The Council will monitor where a Welfare Assistance Scheme Application has been refused, to ensure decisions are being made fairly and consistently, in accordance with our Equality duties. This policy will be implemented to provide fair treatment and take account of the needs of people protected under the Equality Act on the grounds of age, disability, gender (including pregnancy and maternity), race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender.

10. Access to the Service

Applications will be received and dealt with at the following times (with the exception of bank and public holidays):

Monday - Thursday	8:30am to 5:00pm
Friday	8:30am to 4:30pm

11. Counter Fraud

Durham County Council is committed to the fight against fraud in all its forms. An applicant who fraudulently claims or attempts to fraudulently claim a Welfare Assistance Scheme award by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing false statements or evidence in support of their application, may have committed an offence under the Fraud Act 2006. Where it is alleged, or suspected that such a fraud may have been committed, the matter will be investigated. If an offence is found to have occurred, action will be taken including, if appropriate criminal proceedings.

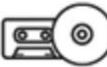
Any payments of Welfare Assistance Scheme that have been fraudulently claimed will be recoverable from the person who made the claim.

12. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed as and when required and at least on an annual basis by a steering group and will take into account the views of applicants, council staff, Councillors, specialist referral organisations, other referral agencies and other voluntary sector organisations with an interest in the Welfare Assistance Scheme.

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

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

 Braille  Audio  Large Print

Durham County Council Equality Impact Assessment

NB: The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Durham County Council to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Assessing impact on equality and recording this is one of the key ways in which we can show due regard.

Section One: Description and Screening

Service/Team or Section	Resources- Financial Services
Lead Officer	Paul Darby
Title	Proposal for Changes to the Welfare Assistance Policy
MTFP Reference (if relevant)	N/A
Cabinet Date (if relevant)	14 th March 2018
Start Date	February 2018
Review Date	October 2018

Subject of the Impact Assessment

Please give a brief description of the policy, proposal or practice as appropriate (a copy of the subject can be attached or insert a web-link):

Welfare Assistance Scheme

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the discretionary elements of the DWP Social Fund and transferred responsibility to upper tier and unitary authorities. Funding was provided by Central Government to allow local authorities to develop and deliver their own scheme.

The welfare assistance scheme helps people with a nil or low income to get short term support, or help to live on their own. There are two types of help:

- Daily living expenses are paid if circumstances change unexpectedly. An application for help can be made for daily living expenses (for up to seven days). This includes food, baby milk and nappies, heating, and travel.
- Settlement grant is paid to help applicants stay in their home, or move back into housing, after living in supported or unsettled accommodation. For

example if leaving care or been made homeless. This includes help towards beds and / or bedding, furniture, white goods (for example, cooker, fridge, washing machine), kitchen equipment, floor coverings, curtains, storage and / or removal costs.

Durham County Council's scheme was approved in March 2013, with the administration of the policy initially outsourced to Civica and Five Lamps to deliver the Welfare Assistance Scheme under an umbrella partnership called Help and Advice Network Durham (HAND) for the period 2013/15.

In 2013/14 & 2014/15 the budget was equal to the specific grant funding provided by the DWP of £1,592,057 for both years plus admin grant of £336,414 in 2013/14 and £308,359 in 2014/15. The administration grant funding was passported to Civica and Five Lamps as part of the initial contract.

Since 2015/16, when the Government removed the specific grant funding, the Council has funded its scheme within its core budget, with an annual budget of £1,000,000 per year, including administration costs of £140,000 per annum.

To coincide with the change in funding arrangements in April 2015 it was decided to bring the service 'in house' to be administered by the Resources service on behalf of the County Council. The work of the Welfare Assistance scheme is overseen by the Poverty Action Steering Group (PASG).

A review of the Welfare Assistance policy was carried out in 2017 with a view to implementation in April 2018. The need for a review of the policy was emphasised by the roll out of Universal Credit Full Service to all 10 Job Centre plus offices in County Durham which will be completed by June 2018.

The roll out of Universal Credit Full Service started in October 2017 and following the September Poverty Action Steering Group (PASG) meeting a delegated decision was taken to amend the Welfare Assistance Policy to support Universal Credit (UC) claimants through the initial five weeks wait for payment.

This was intended to alleviate the financial pressures for those customers who will face moving from Housing Benefit (HB) to UC. The qualifying criteria for customers moving on to UC, has been changed from one award within twelve months to one in six months. In addition, a second week award of a food basket can now be claimed within one month (from one week) of the award date.

It is recommended that the Welfare Assistance Scheme continue to be operated in-house, with the policy amended to include the improvements that have been identified in feedback from stakeholders and customers.

It is proposed to review the policy and improve services in relation to:

Nappies and baby milk

Following discussions with stakeholders including colleagues in Health, in future the Welfare Assistance Scheme will incorporate a Paypoint cash out voucher option to customers in order to fulfil this requirement. This would allow them to

purchase the appropriate milk and nappies to their children's needs, therefore minimising the risk of allergies for the child and giving the customer the freedom to purchase goods potentially on offer and take advantage of sale offers. The proposed amount is £20.00 per award and when incorporated into the Policy would be monitored for take-up and actual spend.

Hygiene packs

The current Welfare Assistance Scheme policy does not allow for hygiene packs such as toiletries and sanitary products. Customers have nevertheless requested these and asked for toilet rolls and toiletries to be included as part of their food basket, which are currently excluded items. This is an issue that has been raised by Members and recently gained a high profile in the national media as the issue of period poverty has been highlighted as an issue for women on low income. Due to VAT implications with the Family Fund they are unable to provide this as part of the Asda basket.

From 2018/19 the Welfare Assistance Scheme will incorporate a hygiene pack, with a proposed amount of £10.00 per award. This would be fulfilled in the same method proposed for satisfying the requirement for nappies and milk, giving customers the freedom to purchase goods on offer, making the award cost effective and potentially last longer. It is not possible to accurately estimate the costs of this policy change at this stage.

Utility Costs (gas and electric)

The current Welfare Assistance Scheme policy allows for an award of £28.30 for 7 days regardless of household composition and time of the year. Benchmarking with other local authorities in the region has shown a variety of payment amounts and provision from no help with utility / fuel costs to offering a standard amount from £10.00 to £30.00 per seven days.

It is proposed from April 2018 to follow the principles used for food baskets, and the value of utility costs is awarded according to household composition. The Welfare Assistance Scheme will be amended from £28.30 per household to £30.00 for a single person, £35.00 for a couple and an extra £5.00 per child.

Analysis shows for the period of April to November 2017 the total utility costs awarded was £15,156. Using the new proposed figures the projected spend would have been £19,610. Spend in this area is however expected to increase once full roll out of Universal Credit is live within the whole of County Durham.

Travel

The provision of travel is currently in the Welfare Assistance policy but is not utilised to any great extent and can be difficult to award. Whilst benchmarking with other Local authorities in the region has shown that not all schemes offer help with travelling it is proposed to keep the provision of travel within our scheme. From April the Welfare Assistance Scheme will include a Paypoint cash out voucher for a maximum amount of £50.00. This will enable emergency help with petrol and taxis, bus and train travel.

Low cost loans for replacement goods

It is proposed to agree to develop the proposal around settlement grants from NE First Credit Union for replacement goods which are not catered for under the current scheme. Customers would take out a low cost loan from NE First Credit Union which, if successfully repaid, would enhance the credit score of the customer. It is suggested that £10,000 is ring fenced and piloted to support this initiative. Further reports will be taken to the Poverty Action Steering Group to agree the elements of and delivery of the loans.

Section 17 Payments in CYPS

As part of the review, discussions with colleagues in Children and Young People Service (CYPS) revealed that payments being made by CYPS and charged to the CYPS cash limit budget through Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 included payments which may have been eligible for support through the Welfare Assistance Scheme. The financial assistance given in terms of goods or services, including food and utility costs, or in exceptional circumstances cash, are approved by the relevant Social Care Team and can be provided to a child, parent or carer under Section 17(6) to address identified needs to safeguard and promote a child's welfare where there is no other legitimate source of financial assistance.

Arrangements have been put in place to ensure that the CYPS and their service users fully utilise the Welfare Assistance scheme including awareness raising among CYPS staff, regular liaison meetings between staff and the setting up of referral protocols made through the Advice in Co Durham partnership.

It has been recommended that funding awards via the Welfare Assistance Scheme is pre-committed in 2018/19 and granted to:

- a. Area Action partnerships – to mainstream the annual allocations
- b. The Durham Foodbank – to fund part of their infrastructure and help maintain / augment provision going forward, on the basis that this complemented / augmented the Welfare Assistance Scheme
- c. FEED Project (East Durham Trust) – to increase capacity / ability to support residents in East Durham
- d. NE First Credit Union for the supply of replacement goods.

Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. general public, staff, members, specific clients/service users):

- General public
- Frontline staff including Social workers, Housing Officers and finance staff
- Relevant charities and Community / voluntary groups

Screening

Is there any actual or potential negative or positive impact on the following protected characteristics?		
Protected Characteristic	Negative Impact Indicate: Y = Yes, N = No, ? = unsure	Positive Impact Indicate: Y = Yes, N = No, ? = unsure
Age	N	Y
Disability	N	Y
Marriage and civil partnership (workplace only)	N	N
Pregnancy and maternity	N	Y
Race (ethnicity)	N	N
Religion or Belief	N	N
Sex (gender)	N	Y
Sexual orientation	N	N
Transgender	N	N

Please provide **brief** details of any potential to cause adverse impact. Record full details and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

N/A

How will this policy/proposal/practice promote our commitment to our legal responsibilities under the public sector equality duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between people from different groups?

The proposed improvements to the Welfare Assistance Scheme aims to positively promote our commitment to the public sector equality duty. There are particular positive impacts in relation to working age, disability, pregnancy and maternity and gender. Furthermore, it is anticipated that implementation of this policy from April 2018 will ensure consistency and fairness in decision making.

Evidence

What evidence do you have to support your findings?
Please **outline** your data sets and/or proposed evidence sources, highlight any gaps and say whether or not you propose to carry out consultation. Record greater detail and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

Analysis of caseload data from 2017/18 shows that over a 10 month period 1137 awards were made. The following table demonstrates the percentage breakdown of applicants by equality characteristic and this has been used as a proxy for future caseload in terms of this Equality Impact Assessment:

Characteristic	Successful Applicants (%)	Unsuccessful Applicants (%)
Age Range		
Aged 16-24	23	27
Aged 25-34	33	37
Aged 35-59	41	33
Aged 60+	3	3
Household		
Single (no children)	60.1	47
Single (with children)	26.1	34
Couple (with children)	8.3	8
Couple (no children)	5.5	11
Sex		
Female	55	60
Male	45	40
Disability		
Considered disabled	53	53
Not disabled	47	47

At this stage it is clear that the vast majority of existing claimants are from working age and single households with 34% of claimants having children.

Unsuccessful application (where we have collected data) display similar characteristics to those that were successful in their applications:
60% of unsuccessful applications were made by females and 40% by males.
53% of unsuccessful applications were made by people with a disability.

For those single household that made applications the characteristics on gender shows 41% of successful applications were from males with no children. This group represented 35% of all unsuccessful applications.

Characteristic	Successful Applicants (%)	Unsuccessful Applicants (%)
Single Households		
Male (no children)	41	35
Female(no children)	26	23
Male(with children)	4	7
Female (with children)	29	35

Support for Service Users

Advice and support is always given to help service users to maximise their income and benefit entitlement where ever possible during the assessment of an application to the Welfare Assistance scheme.

Consultation

The scope of the review and consultation has been wide ranging, involving benchmarking the arrangements in Durham against other authorities and discussions with a wide range of delivery partners and key stakeholders, including:

- A staff survey among DCC staff;
- Adult Health Services Management and Social Work teams, including the Sensory Support team;
- Advice in Co Durham Partnership;
- Children Services Think Family and Social Work teams;
- Citizens Advice
- Customers who had received an award;
- County Durham Housing Group;
- Durham Christian Partnership;
- East Durham Trust;
- Housing Solutions
- MacMillan Joining the Dots project, supporting people affected by cancer;
- Family Fund;
- NE Credit Union;
- Public Health;
- Social Care Direct;
- Welfare Assistance Scheme team;
- Welfare Rights Officers

Further Evidence

- Views expressed via the consultation process
- As more users of services are women, then the potential is for women to be more affected by any changes than men. (Source: WAS data).

- A majority of service users have some form of physical disability, mental infirmity, or sensory impairment.

Screening Summary

On the basis of this screening is there:	Confirm which refers (Y/N)
Evidence of actual or potential impact on some/all of the protected characteristics which will proceed to full assessment?	Yes
No evidence of actual or potential impact on some/all of the protected characteristics?	

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off: Paul Darby, Head Of Finance & Transactional Services	Date: 1.2.18
Service equality representative sign off: M Gallagher, Equality and Diversity Officer	Date: 1.2.18

If carrying out a full assessment please proceed to section two.

If not proceeding to full assessment please return completed screenings to your service equality representative and forward a copy to equalities@durham.gov.uk

If you are unsure of potential impact please contact the corporate research and equalities team for further advice at equalities@durham.gov.uk

Section Two: Data analysis and assessment of impact

Please provide details on impacts for people with different protected characteristics relevant to your screening findings. You need to decide if there is or likely to be a differential impact for some. Highlight the positives e.g. benefits for certain groups, advancing equality, as well as the negatives e.g. barriers for and/or exclusion of particular groups. Record the evidence you have used to support or explain your conclusions. Devise and record mitigating actions where necessary.

Protected Characteristic: Age										
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Record of evidence to support or explain your conclusions on impact.	What further action or mitigation is required?								
<p>Existing applicants are more likely to be younger and female. It can be anticipated that future applicants will form a similar age and gender profile. Overall working age groups are more likely to be positively impacted by the all aspects of the revised policy.</p> <p>Take up amongst people aged over 60 years is low (3%) and this will be addressed through a comprehensive marketing and communications plan aimed at community groups including the 'Advice in County Durham' partnership.</p>	<p>Age range of existing successful claimants:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>23%</td> <td>Aged 16-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>33%</td> <td>25-34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>41%</td> <td>35-59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3%</td> <td>60+</td> </tr> </table> <p>97% of successful claims are by people aged 16-59.</p>	23%	Aged 16-24	33%	25-34	41%	35-59	3%	60+	<p>These impacts will be further enhanced through the support to service users plus a marketing and communications plan to raise awareness of the scheme. In particular working with the Advice in County Durham partnership to increase claims among older people.</p> <p>Continued advice and support will help to maximise income and benefit entitlement where ever possible during the financial assessment.</p>
23%	Aged 16-24									
33%	25-34									
41%	35-59									
3%	60+									

Protected Characteristic: Disability		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
Existing applicants are more likely to have a disability compared to the overall	Of existing successful applicants 53% have a disability. There is no	These impacts will be further enhanced through

population profile for County Durham therefore this policy is a positive source of support for those with a disability.	<p>difference in the proportion of disabled applicants submitting an unsuccessful application.</p> <p>17.8% of working age County Durham residents have a disability (Census 2011)</p>	<p>the support to service users plus a marketing and communication plan.</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments will be made where required.</p>
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Protected Characteristic: Marriage and civil partnership (workplace only)		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
N/A		

Protected Characteristic: Pregnancy and maternity		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
<p>The policy has a positive impact for pregnant women and new mothers via the provision of baby milk/nappy packs and hygiene packs, support with utility costs and enhanced working with children services.</p> <p>Policy improvements include incorporation of a Paypoint cash out voucher option to allow purchases appropriate to need and providing an opportunity to purchase goods on offer, making an award cost effective and potentially lasting longer.</p>	<p>Discussions and consultation with Children Services, members feedback from service users have identified a need for these services.</p> <p>Applicant data specific to pregnancy and maternity is not available.</p>	<p>Marketing and communications plan. Joint work with children services.</p>

Protected Characteristic: Race (ethnicity)

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to indicate impact.		

Protected Characteristic: Religion or belief		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to indicate impact.		

Protected Characteristic: Sex (gender)		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
<p>The policy is positive for both men and women but will benefit women more as the larger proportion of applicants and those more likely to have greater childcare responsibilities.</p> <p>Positive impact includes increased work with Children Services and the provision of nappies and baby milk, hygiene packs which may beneficially impact women more than men.</p> <p>Policy improvements include incorporation of a Paypoint cash out voucher option to allow purchases appropriate to need and providing an opportunity to purchase goods on offer, making an award cost effective and potentially lasting longer.</p>	<p>Of all successful claims 55% were female and 45% male.</p> <p>60% of all unsuccessful claims were made by females and 40% by males.</p> <p>60.1% of applicants are single with no children and 26.1% are single with children.</p> <p>34.4 % of claimants overall have children.29% of all single claimants are females with children.</p> <p>Women are more likely to undertake the bulk of care responsibilities and be the main carer in a single parent household.</p>	<p>These impacts will be further enhanced through the support to service users plus a marketing and communication plan.</p>

Protected Characteristic: Sexual orientation		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to show whether or not impact is likely.		

Protected Characteristic: Transgender		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to show whether or not impact is likely.		

Section Three: Conclusion and Review

Summary

Please provide a brief summary of your findings stating the main impacts, both positive and negative, across the protected characteristics.
<p>The EIA states that there are impacts of the change overall, (positively affected people are more likely to be younger, female and have a disability) and that future service users are likely to be of a similar profile. Policy improvements such as incorporation of a Paypoint cash out voucher option and increased utility cost support is beneficial to all.</p> <p>There are unlikely to be any disproportionate negative effects with respect to the protected characteristics by making these changes to the Welfare Assistance policy.</p> <p>Further action has been put in place by way of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan to promote the Welfare Assistance Scheme. Joint working with CYPS will ensure that this service fully utilises the scheme. Working with the Advice in County Durham partnership aims to increase claims among older people.</p>

Will this promote positive relationships between different communities? If so how?
--

As more working age people access the Welfare Assistance fund it means that they are less likely to be reliant on older relatives.

Action Plan

Action	Responsibility	Timescales for implementation	In which plan will the action appear?
Advice and support is always given to help service users to maximise their income and benefit entitlement where ever possible during the financial assessment.	Welfare Assistance Team-Chris Graham	January 2018+	Assessment and Awards Team Plan
Comprehensive marketing and communications plan to promote the Welfare Assistance Scheme.	Welfare Assistance Team-Chris Graham	January 2018+	Assessment and Awards Team Plan
Governance of the Welfare Assistance Scheme is provided by the Poverty Action Steering Group.(PASG)	PASG	January 2018+	PASG Action Plan
Work with the Advice in County Durham partnership to increase claims among older people.	Welfare Assistance Team-Chris Graham	January 2018+	Assessment and Awards Team Plan
Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled people where required.	Welfare Assistance Team-Chris Graham	January 2018+	Assessment and Awards Team Plan

Review

Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken? (Y/N)	N
When will this assessment be reviewed? Please also insert this date at the front of the template	October 2018

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off: Paul Darby, Head Of Finance & Transactional Services	Date: 9.2.18
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Service equality representative sign off: M Gallagher, Equality and Diversity Officer	Date: 9.2.18
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Please return the completed form to your service equality representative and forward a copy to equalities@durham.gov.uk

Cabinet

14 March 2018

**Consultation Feedback on the Proposal
for Changes to the Charging Policy for
Non-Residential Social Care Services**



Key Decision (AHS/03/17)

MTFP Savings Ref: AHS 3.2

Report of Corporate Management Team

Jane Robinson, Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services

John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources

**Councillor Lucy Hovvels, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Health
Services**

Councillor Alan Napier, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide Cabinet with the results of the consultation exercise on proposals to make changes to the non-residential charging policy in relation to the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) applied for people who receive social care services.

Background

- 2 On 18 October 2017 Cabinet agree that a consultation exercise should be undertaken on whether to change the current charging arrangements. The proposed changes approved by Cabinet would apply to the Minimum Income Guarantee allowances applied when assessing a person's contribution to the cost of their non-residential care services.
- 3 When the Care Act 2014 came into force on 1 April 2015, the Department of Health prescribed the minimum amount of income a person must be left with after charging for care and support. Councils can allow people to keep more income if they wish. This is referred to as the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). The MIG allowances can be found in the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) 2014 regulations. Paragraph 8.42 of Care Act Guidance states that ' Because a person who receives care and support outside a care home will need to pay their daily living costs such as rent, food and utilities, the charging rules must ensure they have enough money to meet these costs. After charging, a person must be left with the minimum income guarantee (MIG), as set out in the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulation 2014. In addition, where a person

receives benefits to meet their disability needs that do not meet the eligibility criteria for local authority care and support, the charging arrangements should ensure that they keep enough money to cover the cost of meeting these disability-related costs.'

- 4 The Care and Support Statutory Guidance provides that 'There are differences in how income is treated in a care home and in all other settings. Charging a person in a care home is provided for in a consistent national framework. When charging a person in all other settings, a local authority has more discretion to enable it to take account of local practices and innovations.' (Care Act Statutory Guidance, Annex C, par 2).
- 5 Durham County Council currently use the weekly DWP benefit rates +25% as a mechanism by which service users can be left with a minimum income guarantee (MIG). The concept of weekly DWP benefit rates +25% was originally devised by Torbay Council in 2002/2003 when Fairer Charging was introduced for Adult Care financial assessments and was recommended as best practise by the Department of Health.
- 6 The Department of Health has issued a circular [LAC (DH) (2017) 1], which states that the MIG allowances for 2017/18 will remain frozen to the rates first set in 2015/16.
- 7 This puts Durham in a position where it is currently applying a minimum income guarantee higher than those defined in DH guidance, which applies a buffer equivalent to weekly DWP benefit rates + 18.6%. This results in service users in County Durham contributing less towards their care than if the allowances set out in the Department of Health's circular were applied.
- 8 The proposal put forward to Cabinet in October was to change the weekly DWP benefits rate+25% disregard and replace this with the disregards as set out in the DH guidance with this policy change applying to new service users only, subject to a public consultation on those proposals.
- 9 Based on a strategy of applying the changes to new service recipients, it is reasonable to assume that if the changes are implemented a MTFP savings of c£267,000 per annum across the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 can be achieved. The savings therefore would be as follows:

Year	Savings: MIG Changes Applied to New Service Users Only [AHS3.2]
2018/19	266,667
2019/20	266,667
2020/21	266,666
	800,000

- 10 The proposals reflect the need for the Council to carry out financial assessments which are equitable to all and which are bespoke to the individual service user.
- 11 The proposals are in line with the Care Act guidance in respect of charging and financial assessments by adopting the Department of Health national guidelines on the rate of minimum income guarantee. If agreed the changes would apply for all new financial assessments processed from 1 April 2018 for new service users. Existing service users will continue to have the old policy applied to them upon any future financial reassessment, i.e. they will be fully protected.
- 12 Analysis of case load data shows that in service users aged 65+ category there is an attrition rate of 34%, as they stop receiving non-residential services because they either go into residential/ nursing care or pass away. The attrition rate for people aged 18-64 is lower at 14%, as they are likely move into the aged 65+ cohort with the passage of time
- 13 All financial assessments comply with the Government's Care Act Guidance which will ensure that no-one is asked to pay more than they can afford, in line with national guidelines. During this assessment a benefit maximisation check is carried out for those who require it. It is not proposed to change the way in which financial assessments are carried out. The assessment is means tested and takes into account income, including welfare benefits, savings and assets. Allowances and disregards are applied in the financial assessment depending on individual circumstances.
- 14 These changes would bring the Council's policy in-line with a number of other authorities in the region. Four Local authorities in the region are now using the Department of Health thresholds rather than a MIG of weekly DWP benefit rate + 25%. None report any noticeable reduction in take up of services when they adopted the DH rate.

Consultation

- 15 Consultation was carried out from 23 October 2017 to 14 January 2018. Explanatory information and a consultation questionnaires were signposted on the Council's website. A press release was issued on the 10 October 17 giving details of the proposals that would be put to Cabinet on 18 October 17.
- 16 In addition, the views of key stakeholders were invited from relevant disability charities and community and voluntary sector groups. Letters and supporting explanatory information were sent to 8 of the key stakeholder groups in the area:
 - Advice in County Durham Partnership;
 - Disability Partnership;
 - Durham Community Action;
 - Citizens Advice, County Durham;
 - Age UK;

- Mental Health Forum;
 - People's Parliament;
 - Durham County Carers Support.
- 17 The letter sent to these groups also stated that if the organisation would like someone to attend one of their meetings or forums to discuss the consultation to contact and this would be arranged. No organisations took up this offer.
- 18 Reminders were sent out twice during the consultation period via media and via reminder emails to the above stakeholder groups to encourage participation and responses to the consultation.
- 19 The questionnaire comprised of key questions. The consultation information and questionnaire are attached as Appendix 2.

Responses received from the Consultation

- 20 During the consultation period, 10 responses were received, all of which were online. The responses received were as follows:

Q1. I am responding to this Consultation as:

- A recipient of non-residential services - 10%;
- A carer of a person receiving non-residential services – 10%;
- A carer/disabled person not receiving non-residential services - 40%;
- Organisation or other respondent 40% of which:
 - Interested individual – 10%;
 - Resident – 10%;
 - Named organisation (not on list of those written to) – 10%;
 - Not defined – 10%.

Q2. As part of the council's financial challenges, we propose to follow the Department of Health national guidelines when assessing charges for new service users. From 1 April 2018 we propose to provide the Minimum Income Guarantee + 18.6%. Do you think that this proposal is fair or unfair? (please refer to the supporting information leaflet for more information)?

- Fair – 0%;
- Unfair – 100%.

Q3. If we proceed with the proposal, how do you feel this could affect you or your organisation?

- One person left this blank and one answered N/A;
- One person commented that to pay more for services would not be fair and would leave people on a low income more disadvantaged;

- One person commented that the whole system was unfair with no real support and the only interest is to take the little savings and income a person has off them;
- One stated that 'one shoe doesn't fit all' and that the Care Act gives discretion for Local Authorities for flexibility. They added that it was obvious that this was a cost saving exercise;
- The same respondent also stated that citing what other councils are doing is a well-used poor excuse for not fulfilling our obligation for equality in financial assessments to all recipients of care past, current and future;
- One respondent (the organisational response) commented on additional costs for disabled people and that when prices increased many people have no way of increasing their income through work; They stated that this was particularly the case for people with a severe learning disability;
- This same respondent also commented on the fact that as people have less money they are in less of a position to use universal community services to meet their needs and become socially isolated;
- The organisation that responded also made a comment regarding disability related expenditure. They said that there was little promotion of disability related expenditure and usually that the way it is assessed and put into practice did not take the full disability related expenditure into account. They made specific reference to concerns regarding taking disability related expenditure into account for people under financial protection who lack capacity as it appeared that a conflict of interest may exist. They added that an advocate should be available with good knowledge of the assessment process;
- This organisation also made reference to the introduction in universal credit and considered that this change would mean disabled people will be multi impacted and this should be taken into account when assessing whether the council is meeting its equality duties.

Q4. Do you have any further comments regarding these proposals, or alternative ways in which the savings can be made in non-residential care services?

- One respondent did not add any further comments;
- One respondent said they didn't think it would be fair to even consider making any further savings;
- There was a comment that Durham County Council has a Duty of Care towards its residents and that savings must be found from elsewhere;
- Another respondent commented that the proposal were unfair. They stated that people being cared for at home by unpaid family carers or friends were already saving the country a fortune, currently the cost of a second NHS, that they should not have to pay anything when it comes to them, or their carers, needing some help or support. They commented that they personally thought that no one should pay anything for homecare as most people have worked and paid tax all

their lives and that if home care keeps them out of hospital it is saving the country money;

- One person commented that they could not see why the changes have to be brought in. They commented on the fact that people already make a 'huge' contribution to their homecare costs as a result of financial assessment and that it seems that those who have achieved higher paid jobs, made adequate pension provision and saved for their later life are penalised by having to pay more than those who haven't;
- There was a comment that having to pay for homecare often affects people's quality of life and that of their spouse. This person also commented that many of the people affected by this are already paying the additional amount for Social Care that has been added to our Council Tax;
- One person commented that the 'consultation' had no real purpose other than a PR exercise and that no matter how badly it affects people, it will be done anyway;
- One person felt that there should be a review of assessment needs and reconsider disability related expenditure within the policy.
- The organisation that responded stated that it would welcome a council officer visiting the club and similar organisations to consult properly and accessibly with people with learning disabilities, to ensure the duties under the Equality act, care act and accessible information standards are fully met. They commented that online and postal consultation is not accessible and other forms of consultation and impact assessments should take place. This organisation is a small organisation that was not on the list of those contacted separately. The Learning Disability parliament, who have involvement of people with learning disabilities, was contacted, but did not respond;
- There was a comment that the consultation wasn't meaningful with comments about the consultation information, saying that it would have been helpful if the documentation provided more detail including on financial boundaries, what actual services were and how discretionary powers can and will be applied;
- This person also commented that there needed to be a valid reason for the change other than other councils are doing it so we may as well;
- One person commented that they understand the need to make changes because of the challenges the council faces but that they felt it was unfair just to target new recipients of care. They believed that a fairer way would be to introduce the reduced MIG + % to existing service users through a phased process perhaps over 2-3 years.

21 Although the views of those who responded to the consultation indicated that there was consensus that the changes proposed were considered to be unfair, support is provided for service users where there are concerns about charges. This is detailed below. Disability Related Expenditure is always taken into account when completing financial assessments.

- 22 There was only one comment about introducing changes in a phased way for all recipients of non-residential care. Paragraph 12 above indicates that there would be an attrition rate due to service users moving to residential care or passing away. This would mean that after a period of some years all service users would be on the new rate.
- 23 Taking into account the MTFP savings required, work is undertaken when examining proposals to benchmark these proposals with what other Local Authorities are doing. Decisions are not made on this alone.
- 24 There were comments about how service users should not have to pay for residential services. The legal framework for charging is set out in sections 14 and 17 of the Care Act. When a local authority has decided to charge it must carry out a financial assessment of what the person can afford to pay. In carrying out the assessment the local authority must have regard to the detailed guidance set out in Annexes B and C of the Care Act.
- 25 In addition, a wider consultation in respect of the councils budget approach and savings proposals for 2018/19 was undertaken with the public and stakeholders between October and December 2017. This included a specific reference to changes in charging. In total, the council engaged over 3,300 people and received 1,175 responses. Overall, 78.1% of respondents stated the approach to making future savings is reasonable, although there were some specific comments made with regard to fee levels and the need to ensure that when increasing charges the most vulnerable are not priced out of much needed services

Equality Impact Assessment

- 26 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been updated following the consultation to assess the impact on the groups most likely to be affected by the proposals and to take into account the consultation responses. The EIA is attached at Appendix 3. The EIA has also been updated following the consultation to reflect current figures. It is noted that there is very little change in numbers or ratios from the EIA submitted with the Cabinet report in October 2017, therefore analysis of the effect of the changes remains the same.
- 27 The EIA shows that existing service users are more likely to be older and female. It can be anticipated that future service users will form a similar age and gender profile. Overall these groups are more likely to be adversely affected through the financial impacts of additional charging as a result of this policy change. These impacts will be mitigated through the support to service users detailed below.

Support for Service Users

- 28 Advice and support is always given to help service users to maximise their income and benefit entitlement wherever possible during the financial assessment process. This is undertaken through joint work between the Financial Assessments Team and Welfare Rights, who also support the appeals process.
- 29 Care management and social work teams will have carried out a care assessment and identified any care needs, they will draw up a care plan to identify how these needs should be met. Should service users consider that their charges are prohibitive and subsequently decline a service, a reassessment of the service user's care needs can be undertaken.
- 30 Service users who are unhappy with the contribution they would be assessed to make will be offered a further review of their financial assessment on request through our fast track review process. The appeal would be considered by an independent officer and with the support of the Welfare Rights Team.
- 31 In line with general charging principles there is the potential to consider the waiving of charges in exceptional circumstances due to severe hardship or if care management / social work staff consider a person to be at risk.
- 32 When assessing financial contributions for non-residential service disability related expenditure is taken into account. DRE's are actively promoted by the Financial Assessment Team and reference to DRE's is included in the script the team use when they speak to the service user (usually with their families / carers) when completing the financial assessment.
- 33 The rollout of full service Universal Credit in Co Durham will mean that working age service users will undergo a migration from their existing benefits from 2019. The DWP have indicated that those service users that move from their existing legacy benefits will be protected at the point of change.

Conclusion

- 34 This report provides the results of the consultation exercise on the proposals to make changes to the non-residential charging policy for people who receive social care services in respect of the Minimum Income Guarantee. The changes would apply to new clients only from 1 April 2018.
- 35 The proposal is to change the weekly DWP benefit rate +25% disregard and replace this with the disregards as set out in the DH guidance with this policy change applying to new service users only. This would bring the Councils policy in line with other Councils.

- 36 Analysis of caseload data shows that every year 34% of service users aged 65+ stop receiving non-residential services because they either go into residential/ nursing care or pass away. The attrition rate for people aged 18-64 is lower at 14%, as they are likely move into the aged 65+ cohort with the passage of time. The attrition rate is a reason for applying the new rate to new service users only as after a period of time the new rate will apply to all service users.
- 37 There was a limited response to the consultation, possibly reflecting the fact that the Council was not seeking to make these changes for existing recipients of service and the fact that the changes proposed are based on an actual assessment of need. There were only 10 responses, 9 from individuals and 1 from a small organisation. One person who did respond thought that the changes should be made for current service users as well as new service users.
- 38 All of those responding stated that they thought that the change being proposed was unfair and should not proceed.
- 39 The savings from the proposed changes are estimated at c£267,000 per annum across the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 can be achieved, a total of £800,000, which has been built into MTFP(8), as agreed by Council on 21 February 2018.

Recommendations

- 40 Cabinet is recommended to accept the proposal that:
- a) with effect from 1 April 2018, we change the figures used when calculating a MIG from weekly DWP benefit rates +25% to the Department of Health MIG rate;
 - b) the Council do not revise the current financial assessment for people currently receiving services who will remain under the existing policy.

Background Papers

Care Act 2014

Charging Policy for Non-residential Care Services

Proposal for Changes to the Charging Policy for Non-Residential Social Care Services – Report to Cabinet 18 October 2017

Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2018/19 – Report to Council 21 February 2018

Contact:	Lee Alexander	Tel: 03000 268180
	Paul Darby	Tel: 03000 261930

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - If the policy changes proposed in this report are implemented then MTFP savings in the region of £800,000 would be achieved over a three year period. Implementation would be in April 2018 and apply to the financial assessments of new service users only, therefore, based on average caseload and customer turnover, savings would accrue across the period 2018/19 to 2020/21.

Staffing – None. Financial assessments are already undertaken and this policy change will be applied to new assessments for new service users and implemented as part of business as usual.

Risk – Should service users consider that their charges are prohibitive and decline a service then a reassessment of the service user’s care plan could be undertaken.

If a service user considered that their charges are prohibitive and declined a service and the social worker considered that there could be risks to the service user’s well-being as a consequence they would need to carry out a risk assessment and consider reviewing the care plan or if there are sufficient risks to consider waiving charges.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – An Equality Impact Assessment is attached to this report.

Accommodation – None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – This is a significant policy change which requires consultation. A consultation took place between the 23 October 2017 and 14 January 2018. The Council sought the views of key stakeholders and the wider public, including relevant disability charities and Community and Voluntary Sector groups, through both targeted and open consultation on the proposed changes in adopting the Department of Health’s Minimum Income Guarantee. There was a poor response to the consultation.

This report gives details of the result of the consultation, to enable members to make a final decision on these proposals, taking into account the outcome of the consultation.

Procurement - None

Disability Issues – The proposed policy changes set out in this report would impact on the financial assessment of people with a disability. However, the intention is to adopt the Department of Health’s Minimum Income Guarantee and bring DCC charging policy into line with national guidelines. The proposals in this report will ensure that the council treats all care users fairly and equitably in the financial assessment.

Legal Implications – People in receipt of non-residential services are required to have a financial assessment to calculate how much they can afford to contribute towards the services they receive. The assessment is a means test, is undertaken in line with statutory guidance and takes into account income, including welfare benefits, savings and assets that the person receives.

Allowances and disregards are included in the financial assessment, depending on individual circumstances.

The regulations governing the financial assessment are set out in SI No. 2672 – The Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014, which were updated in line with the Care Act 2014.

Within these regulations the Government has also set a minimum income guarantee and if income is below this level service users are not required to pay for their services. The minimum income guarantee is dependent on age and if the person has an underlying entitlement to Severe Disability Premium.



Non-residential Charging Policy

Changes to non-residential charging policy

Q1 Are you responding to this survey as:

- A recipient of non-residential services
- A carer of a person receiving non-residential services
- A carer/disabled person not receiving non-residential services
- An organisation
- Another respondent

If an organisation or another respondent, please specify.

Q2 As part of the council's financial challenges, we propose to follow the Department of Health national guidelines when assessing charges for new service users. From 1 April 2018 we propose to provide the Minimum Income Guarantee + 18.6%. Do you think that this proposal is fair or unfair? (please refer to the supporting information leaflet for more information)

- Fair Unfair Don't know

Q3 If we proceed with the proposal, how do you feel this could affect you or your organisation?

Q4 Do you have any further comments regarding these proposals, or alternative ways in which the savings can be made in non-residential care services?

About you

Our aim is to involve as many people as possible in local decision making and, as such, we would like to make sure everyone has the opportunity to become involved. If you could answer a few questions about yourself it will help us to monitor our performance. Your answers will be confidential and we will only use the information for this consultation.

These questions are entirely optional.

Q5 Are you:

Male

Female

Q6 What is your age?

Under 18

35-44

65-74

18-24

45-54

75-84

25-34

55-64

85+

Q7 Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? (This may include any long-standing illnesses, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day-to-day life. Long-standing means it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year.)

Yes

No

Q8 What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual/straight

Bisexual

Gay man

Other

Gay woman/lesbian

If other, please specify.

Q9 What is your religion or belief?

Christian

Muslim

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

None

Sikh

Other

If other, please specify.

Q10 What is your ethnicity?

White British

Arab or Middle Eastern

White non-British

Mixed Race

Asian or Asian British

Travelling Community

Black or Black British

Other

If other, please specify.

Changes to financial assessments for non-residential care services



Consultation from 23 October 2017 – 14 January 2018

Supporting Information

We are proposing changes from 1st April 2018 to the way in which those who will receive non-residential services are financially assessed. **Existing service users will not be affected by these proposals.**

Background

Non-residential services include a wide range of social care services which enable people to stay in their homes and include home care, day care and extra care services.

In line with national policy, Durham County Council charges for non-residential services if individuals have income over a certain amount. That amount is set by Government. To assess the contribution a person is required to pay towards the cost of their non-residential services a financial assessment is completed that takes into account a number of factors including a person's income and outgoings. Disability related expenditure is also taken into account. This could include additional money a person has to spend because of their disability (for example additional heating or laundry costs).

When the Care Act 2014 came into force on 1 April 2015 the Department of Health prescribed the minimum amount of income a person must be left with after paying for their care and support. Councils can allow people to keep more income than this amount if they wish. This amount is called the minimum income guarantee (MIG) The MIG allowances can be found in the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) 2014 regulations.

Currently Durham County Council applies the minimum income guarantee + 25% meaning service users are left with a basic income plus a 25% buffer over and above the minimum income guarantee.

What is being proposed?

For new applicants for non-residential care, we propose to change the allowance from MIG + 25% to a buffer that is equivalent to MIG + 18.6%. This is in line with Department of Health guidance

This approach of using the figures given in the Department of Health Guidance will bring us into line with a number of other authorities who are also making similar changes.

Whilst the proposal is for a reduction to the allowance, the proposed change would still allow new recipients of non-residential services to retain more than the minimum income guarantee to pay for their living costs. Moreover, the local authority will take account of people's circumstances and consider exercising its wider discretion in cases of financial hardship.

To have your say

You can have your say by visiting our website on <http://www.durham.gov.uk/consultation> and filling in our online survey.

You can also contact us for a paper version of the survey on 03000 268252 or email PSOServiceSupportTeam@durham.gov.uk. To assist with collating responses, please do not photocopy the paper version.

The closing date for comments is 14 January 2018

From: Lee Alexander
Email: lee.alexander@durham.gov.uk
Direct Line: 03000 268180
Fax: 0191 3898150
Your ref:
Our ref: LA/CB/DS



23 Oct 2017

Dear Colleague

Over the last six years the council has faced one of the greatest financial challenges in its history and will, by March 2018, have had to save more than £200 million. There is still a long way to go to reach savings of £250 million by 2022. The outlook remains challenging as government funding continues to reduce and demand for some services is rising.

It is against this backdrop of financial challenge that I am writing to inform you that the council is consulting on a proposal to change the Minimum Income Guarantee level that is used when assessing a service user's contribution towards the cost of their non-residential social care services. The consultation will run from 23 October 2017 to 14 January 2018.

The proposed changes will take into account the Department of Health guidance on applying a Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) and buffer that is equivalent to MIG + 18.6% when calculating a service users contribution towards the cost of their non-residential care services. Currently the figure that is used by Durham County Council is MIG + 25%. The proposed change would bring the Council's financial assessment in line with a number of other local authorities in the northern region. If the proposal is agreed, it will apply to new services users from 1 April 2018. **Existing service users will not be affected by these proposals.**

Further information is provided in the enclosed leaflet and on-line on our website www.durham.gov.uk.

You can let us know your views by filling in our survey on-line or by requesting a paper version of the questionnaire by contacting us on 03000 268252 or emailing

Adults and Health Services (AHS)

Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ

Main Telephone 03000 260000

Text messaging service: 07786027280 – please start your message with the word INFO

Jane Robinson, Director

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denise.scott@durham.gov.uk. To assist with collating responses, please do not photocopy the paper version. The closing date for comments is 14 January 2018.

If your organisation would like someone to attend one of your meetings or forums to discuss the consultation please contact by email or telephone and we will arrange to attend.

Following the end of the consultation, the results of the survey will be analysed and a report will be presented to Cabinet in March 2018 for a final decision to be made that takes into account the consultation responses.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Alexander', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lee Alexander
Head of Adult Care

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Appendix 3 - Durham County Council –Equality Impact Assessment Form

Durham County Council Equality Impact Assessment

NB: The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Durham County Council to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Assessing impact on equality and recording this is one of the key ways in which we can show due regard.

Section One: Description and Screening

Service/Team or Section	Adult Services
Lead Officer	Lee Alexander
Title	Review of Adult Social Care Charging
MFTP Reference (if relevant)	AHS 3.2
Cabinet Date (if relevant)	18 October 2017
Start Date	September 2017
Review Date	January 2018 March 2018

Subject of the Impact Assessment

Please give a brief description of the policy, proposal or practice as appropriate (a copy of the subject can be attached or insert a web-link):

This relates to a change to the Adult Social Care Charging policy. Proposals are to change the approach to calculating the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) that is part of the Adult Social Care Financial Assessment for charging.

Currently the policy is based on weekly DWP benefit rates PLUS 25%. It is proposed that the new policy is brought in line with DoH guidance, which changed in 2014 and which now equates to weekly benefit rates PLUS 18.6%.

Other Councils have already or are considering this approach (4 in the region have already moved to this position). Transitional arrangements will be used similar to those in other policy changes, where existing recipients will see no change in their current arrangements, but new clients, would be subject to the new rules from 01.04.18.

People in receipt of non-residential services are required to have a financial assessment (means tested) to calculate how much they can afford to contribute towards the services they receive. The financial assessment is undertaken by telephone (on a pre-arranged time and date), in order to ease the burden on service users in terms of completing a financial assessment form themselves, by qualified and trained assessment officers, who have access to care assessment undertaken by care and social work officers which identifies the individuals care needs and the care plan for how these needs will be met.

All financial assessments comply with the Government's Care Act Guidance which will ensure that no-one is asked to pay more than they can afford, in line with national guidelines. During this assessment a benefit maximisation check is also carried out for those who require it. It is not proposed to change the way in which financial assessments are carried out.

The assessment is means tested and takes into account income, including welfare benefits, savings and assets. We also make allowances and disregards in the financial assessment depending on individual circumstances. The Government has set a minimum income and if the assessment income is below this level service users are not required to pay for their services.

Prior to the financial assessment people will have had a care assessment with a social worker and their care needs will be identified and a care plan will be drawn up with the service user to identify how these needs will be met. When undertaking the care needs assessment social workers will ask the service user whether they have someone who helps them with their finances and whether they want or need them present at the point of undertaking the financial assessment.

If at any time during the course of a financial assessment it becomes clear that the service user is struggling to understand or answer the questions or their carer or family member is not present then the assessment is rearranged and potentially a home visit arranged to undertake the assessment.

Following a review of the remaining discretionary elements of the Councils Non-Residential Care charging policy, potential changes to the treatment of service users in receipt of non-residential services have been identified in the use of the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG).

When the Care Act 2014 came into force on 1 April 2015, the Department of Health prescribed the minimum amount of income a person must be left with after charging for care and support. However local councils can allow people to keep more income if they wish. This is referred to as the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). The MIG allowances can be found in the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) 2014 regulations.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance provides that 'There are differences in how income is treated in a care home and in all other settings. Charging a person in a care home is provided for in a consistent national framework. When charging a person in all other settings, a local authority has more discretion to enable it to take

account of local practices and innovations.’ (Care Act Statutory Guidance, Annex C, par 2).

Durham County Council currently use the weekly DWP benefit rates +25% as a mechanism by which service users can be left with a basic income plus a 25% buffer. The concept of using weekly benefit rate +25% was originally devised by Torbay Council and at the time recommended as best practice by the Department of Health (DH).

This puts DCC in a position where it is currently applying allowances that are 6.4% higher than those defined in DH guidance, which applies a buffer equivalent to weekly DWP benefit rates + 18.6%. This results in service users in Co Durham contributing less towards their care than if the allowances set out in the Department of Health’s circular were applied.

One area that DCC can use to mitigate any increase in charges is to take account of disability related expenses (DRE’s) of the allowances made in the financial assessment. Finance Officers can refer to the care plan when DRE’s are identified during the financial assessment.

A 12 week consultation is now complete and analysis of this is available in the evidence section below

This change to the charging policy is estimated to achieve around £800,000 in savings through additional adult social charging income if implemented in 2018/19.

Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. general public, staff, members, specific clients/service users):

- Service users, families and carers
- Social workers and finance staff
- Relevant disability charities and Community / voluntary groups.

Screening

Is there any actual or potential negative or positive impact on the following protected characteristics?

Protected Characteristic	Negative Impact Indicate: Y = Yes, N = No, ? = unsure	Positive Impact Indicate: Y = Yes, N = No, ? = unsure
Age	Y	N
Disability	Y	N
Marriage and civil partnership (workplace only)	N	N

Pregnancy and maternity	N	N
Race (ethnicity)	N	N
Religion or Belief	N	N
Sex (gender)	Y	N
Sexual orientation	N	N
Transgender	N	N

Please provide **brief** details of any potential to cause adverse impact. Record full details and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

The adverse effect will derive from the increase in care costs predominantly affecting older disabled women.

How will this policy/proposal/practice promote our commitment to our legal responsibilities under the public sector equality duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between people from different groups?

It is anticipated that this policy will implement consistency across all new service users post April 2018.

Evidence

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

Please **outline** your data sets and/or proposed evidence sources, highlight any gaps and say whether or not you propose to carry out consultation. Record greater detail and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

This saving relates to an increase in charging income in respect of adult social care provision by adopting the Department of Health's disregard known as minimum income guarantee (MIG).

There are currently 6,364 service users receiving a non-residential services.

The current caseload has been used as a proxy for future caseload in terms of this Equality Impact Assessment screening. Of the existing clients receiving this disregard the following demographic characteristics currently apply:

Age Group	Clients
18 – 24	312
25 - 64	2,161
65+	3,891

Client Group	Clients
--------------	---------

Older People	3,632
Learning Disabilities	1,535
Mental Health	394
Physical Disability	696
Other	107

Gender	Clients
Female	3,639
Male	2,701
Transsexual	less than 5
Blank	23

At this stage it is clear that the affected clients are more likely to be older and female and in need of some support with their daily living. It can be anticipated that future clients will form a similar age, gender and disability profile. Overall these groups are more likely to be adversely affected through the financial impacts of additional charging as a result of this policy change. These impacts are planned to be mitigated through specific support for clients.

There are 6,364 service users receiving non-residential care services. Of these 4,939 (77.6%) make a financial contribution towards their care costs based on a means tested financial assessment in line with national guidance and the DCC policy framework.

1,425 (22.4%) of all service users currently are on zero charge because they are already on minimum income i.e. no chargeable income.

1,990 (31.3%) of all service users, 40.3% of those who make a financial contribution towards the cost of their care, currently pay for the full cost of their non-residential care services.

The level of care being delivered to them is dependent on the assessed level of care needs, some will pay more if the level of their care increases. The amount a service user pays is dependent on the level of care they receive and their financial circumstances.

As the levels of service provided can vary on a weekly basis, making accurate projections is difficult. However, in view of the fact that just over 50% of those receiving a non-residential service would be unaffected it is projected that the increase in income from a policy change where adopting the figures published on an annual basis in the Department of Health Local Authority Circulars (DH LAC) rather than the weekly DWP rate +25% would be circa £800,000.

Support for Service Users

- Advice and support is always given to help service users to maximise their income and benefit entitlement where ever possible during the financial assessment. This is undertaken through joint work between the Financial Assessments Team and Welfare Rights, who also undertake the appeals.

- Care management and social work support will be available to clients if required. Should clients find that the charges are prohibitive and decline a service, and then a reassessment of the service user's care plan could be undertaken.
- An assessment of a client's disability related expenditure forms an integral part of the financial assessment and is explained to clients when the assessment is carried out. This allows the client to be confident that all their disability related expenditure has been taken into account and that the financial assessment process had been fair, balanced and tailored to their individual needs.
- Clients who are unhappy with the contribution they would be assessed to make would be offered a further review of their financial assessment on request through our fast track review process. The appeal would be considered by an independent officer and with the support of the Welfare Rights team. In line with general charging principles there is the potential to consider the waiving of charges in exceptional circumstances due to severe hardship.

Further Evidence

- Growing demand for social care services and demographic information as set out in the JSN
- As more clients are women, then the potential is for women to be more affected by any changes than men. (Source: SSID data).
- Most clients consulted will have some form of physical disability, mental health condition, or general frailty due to old age.

Consultation

- A 12 week consultation has been undertaken regarding changes to the charging policy. The consultation closed on 14 January 2018. There has been a total of 10 responses, one from a small organisation and 9 from individuals. The views expressed during the consultation were unanimous in the fact that the proposed changes were seen as being unfair. In comments they stated that people should not be charged for non-residential services, that changes would affect the poorest and that Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) was not taken into consideration. DRE is taken into account in financial assessments and the department has a legal obligation to charge for services. Individual financial assessments are undertaken and support is offered in individual circumstances.

Screening Summary

On the basis of this screening is there:	Confirm which refers (Y/N)
Evidence of actual or potential impact on some/all of the protected characteristics which will proceed to full assessment?	Y
No evidence of actual or potential impact on some/all of the protected characteristics?	N

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off: Lee Alexander	Date: September 2017 and January 2018
Service equality representative sign off: Research and equalities manager	Date: September 2017 and January 2018

Section Two: Data analysis and assessment of impact

Please provide details on impacts for people with different protected characteristics relevant to your screening findings. You need to decide if there is or likely to be a differential impact for some. Highlight the positives e.g. benefits for certain groups, advancing equality, as well as the negatives e.g. barriers for and/or exclusion of particular groups. Record the evidence you have used to support or explain your conclusions. Devise and record mitigating actions where necessary.

Protected Characteristic: Age										
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Record of evidence to support or explain your conclusions on impact.	What further action or mitigation is required?								
Existing clients are more likely to be older and female. It can be anticipated that future clients will form a similar age and gender profile. Overall these groups are more likely to be adversely affected through the financial impacts of additional charging as a result of this policy change.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Group</th> <th>Current Clients</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18 – 24</td> <td>312</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 - 64</td> <td>2,161</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65+</td> <td>3, 891</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Group	Current Clients	18 – 24	312	25 - 64	2,161	65+	3, 891	These impacts will be mitigated through the support to new clients including the use of DRE's.
Age Group	Current Clients									
18 – 24	312									
25 - 64	2,161									
65+	3, 891									

Protected Characteristic: Disability														
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?												
All clients will have had an assessment of their needs and will have a degree of disability in order to access services. All those people affected by this financial change will have a disability.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Group</th> <th>Current Clients</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Older People</td> <td>3,632</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Learning Disabilities</td> <td>1,535</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental Health</td> <td>394</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical Disability</td> <td>696</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Others</td> <td>107</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Group	Current Clients	Older People	3,632	Learning Disabilities	1,535	Mental Health	394	Physical Disability	696	Others	107	These impacts will be mitigated through the support to new clients. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required
Group	Current Clients													
Older People	3,632													
Learning Disabilities	1,535													
Mental Health	394													
Physical Disability	696													
Others	107													

Protected Characteristic: Marriage and civil partnership (workplace only)		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
N/A		

Protected Characteristic: Pregnancy and maternity

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
Insufficient evidence available to show whether or not impact is likely.		

Protected Characteristic: Race (ethnicity)		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to show whether or not impact is likely.		

Protected Characteristic: Religion or belief		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to show whether or not impact is likely.		

Protected Characteristic: Sex (gender)												
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?										
58% of clients affected are expected to be female based on the current client profile. On average they will likely see an increase in their charge.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Current Clients</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>3,639</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>2,701</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transsexual</td> <td>less than 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blank</td> <td>23</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Gender	Current Clients	Female	3,639	Male	2,701	Transsexual	less than 5	Blank	23	These impacts will be mitigated through the support to new clients.
Gender	Current Clients											
Female	3,639											
Male	2,701											
Transsexual	less than 5											
Blank	23											

Protected Characteristic: Sexual orientation		
What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is no evidence available to show whether or not impact is likely		

Protected Characteristic: Transgender
--

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
There is less than five transgender service user in receipt of services.	Transgender: less than five	These impacts will be mitigated through the support to new clients

Section Three: Conclusion and Review

Summary

Please provide a brief summary of your findings stating the main impacts, both positive and negative, across the protected characteristics.

The EIA does say that there are impacts of the change overall, (affected people are more likely to be older, female and obviously have some form of severe disability), but it also says that future clients are likely to be of a similar profile to existing clients. So it is unlikely that there is to be any disproportionate effects with respect to the protected characteristics by taking these transitional measures. Transitional arrangements have been used in other policy changes, where existing recipients will see no change in their current arrangements, but new clients, after a specific point in time, are subject to the new rules.

Will this promote positive relationships between different communities? If so how?

Action Plan

Action	Responsibility	Timescales for implementation	In which plan will the action appear?
12 week public consultation has been completed.	Lee Alexander	Oct 2017 – if agreed at Cabinet	
Report to Cabinet following the close of the public consultation	Lee Alexander	March 2018 for implementation of changes on 1 April 2018 if agreed by Cabinet	
Reasonable adjustments will be made for disability where required	Lee Alexander	1 April 2018 and ongoing	

Review

Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken? (Y/N)	N
When will this assessment be reviewed? Please also insert this date at the front of the template	January 2018

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off: Lee Alexander, Head of Adult Care	Date: September 2017 and January 2018
Service equality representative sign off: Research and equalities manager	Date: September 2017 and January 2018

Please return the completed form to your service equality representative and forward a copy to equalities@durham.gov.uk

Cabinet**14 March 2018**

Proposal to Change the Age Range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to Close Wingate Junior School as a Registered School on 31 August 2018

Key Decision CYP5/04/17

Report of Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services and Councillor Olwyn Gunn, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek Cabinet approval to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient places, and to ensure good outcomes for all children and young people in the local area.

Background

- 2 In December 2016, Cabinet approved its overarching strategy for school organisation and the pattern and provision of schools across County Durham. One of the principles underlying the strategy is where practicable to do so, to move towards a pattern of 'all through' primary schools rather than separate infant and junior schools. In November 2017, Cabinet also approved a strategic review of school provision in County Durham to ensure the financial sustainability of schools. The outcome of this review aims to ensure that County Durham has an appropriate mix and the right number of high performing, financially sustainable schools. One of the options to be utilised to meet this aim is the amalgamation of schools.
- 3 Officers within the Council believe that children and their families will benefit from continuity of education provision from age 4-11 in a single primary school, rather than two separate schools. The proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school is in accordance with the council's strategy of moving towards a model of all through primary schools instead of separate, Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools.
- 4 The proposal will result in a larger, more sustainable school running across the existing site of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools that can deliver education for the community of Wingate for the long term.

Consultation

- 5 Using delegated powers, the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services approved the start of consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a primary school and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018. The delegated decision report is included in Appendix 2.
- 6 A public consultation was undertaken between 13 November 2017 and 22 December 2017. This consultation included meetings with Governors and staff on 16, 21 and 22 November 2017 and an information sharing meeting for parents, pupils and the local community on 23 November 2017, so that their views could be shared with the Local Authority. Details of the consultation and a full summary of the consultation responses is included in the delegated decision report attached as Appendix 2.
- 7 When considering responses to the consultation, the council has referred to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance - "Statutory guidance for decision-makers deciding prescribed alteration and establishment and discontinuance proposals". This guidance states that the decision-maker (in this case the Local Authority) should consider the views of those affected by the proposal or who have an interest in it, including cross-LA border interests. The decision-maker should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead they should give the greatest weight to those responses from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by a proposal, especially parents of children at the affected school(s).
- 8 The responses to the consultation were received and considered by officers in the County Council. Of the 73 responses received, 38 were in support of the proposal and 35 were not in support of it. Some of the responses received that were not in support of the proposal felt that the proposal was a money saving exercise and that an amalgamation should not be considered until there was funding available for a new build. Others not in support of the proposal felt that links could be established between the two schools without an amalgamation and that some of the benefits of primary education that were stated in the consultation document were flawed. Some of the responses in support of the proposal were of the view that primary schools provide consistency that separate infant and junior schools do not and that this would be beneficial for pupils. Although there were mixed views about the proposal the council has been able to respond to concerns that were raised during the consultation period. A summary of the responses is provided in the delegated decision report dated 3 January 2018 which is included in Appendix 2.

Decision to Issue a Statutory Notice

- 9 After full consideration of all the responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services used delegated powers to agree to publish proposals to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018. The

proposed Primary School would run across the existing sites of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools. A statutory notice was therefore published on 11 January 2018 (attached as Appendix 3).

- 10 Once the proposal is published there follows a statutory 4 week representation period during which comments on the proposal can be made. These must be sent to the Local Authority. Any person can submit representations, which can be objections as well as expressions of support for the proposal. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal. Once the representation period has closed, a decision on the proposal must be made by the decision-maker (in this case the council's Cabinet) within 2 months i.e. by 4 April 2018.

Responses to the Proposal Published on 11 January 2018

The Statutory Notice Period

- 11 9 responses were received by the end of the 4 week statutory notice period. 8 of the 9 responses were received in the last 3 days of the statutory notice period and were submitted after a meeting of Wingate Parish Council that was held on 5 February 2018 specifically to discuss the proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools. All of the 8 responses, including a response from the Parish Council, stated that insufficient information had been provided during the consultation and consequently they were requesting that the proposal be held in abeyance until further information is provided. In particular the responses felt that insufficient information had been provided on how additional pupils from housing developments would be accommodated in the existing schools and what the impact of the proposed amalgamation would be on children and staff.
- 12 Officers had previously explained at the meetings held in the initial six week consultation the process for appointing staff to the proposed primary school and that the council had secured money from housing developers to expand school buildings in the future to respond to additional pupils from the housing developments in Wingate. There is no reason therefore for the proposed amalgamation to be held in abeyance for further information to be provided.
- 13 Furthermore the statutory guidance issued by the DfE states that the decision-maker (in this case the council's Cabinet) must make a decision within 2 months of the expiry date of the Statutory Public Notice i.e. by 4 April 2018. Holding the proposal in abeyance therefore would result in Cabinet not deciding the proposal by 4 April 2018.
14. The central theme of the proposal was seeking the views of establishing a single 'all through' Primary School rather than having separate Infant and Junior Schools. Issues such as housing, staffing structures and appointments, whilst related to the proposal are not key aspects. The focus of the proposal is to create a Primary School by amalgamating the current Wingate Infant and Junior Schools.

Decision-Making Process

Factors to be Considered by Cabinet

(a) Related Proposals

- 15 Any proposal that is 'related' to another proposal must be considered together. A proposal should be regarded as 'related' if its implementation (or non-implementation) would prevent or undermine the effective implementation of another proposal. Decisions for 'related' proposals should be compatible.
- 16 The proposal to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018 are 'related' therefore they must be considered together.

(b) Consideration of Consultation and Representation Period

- 17 Cabinet needs to be satisfied that the appropriate fair and open local consultation and representation period have been carried out and that the proposer (in this case the Local Authority) has given full consideration to all the responses received. If the proposer has failed to meet the statutory requirements, this proposal may be deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected. Consultation was carried out in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance.
- 18 Cabinet must consider all of the views submitted, including all support for, and objection to and comments on the proposal. Details of the consultation are included in paragraphs 5-8. The statutory notice published on 11 January 2018 and which expired on 8 February 2018 (the representation period) is attached as Appendix 3. Officers prepared the notice as set out in the regulations and complied with statutory requirements.
- 19 The report attached as Appendix 2 provides full details of the responses received during the consultation period from 13 November - 22 December 2017. In summary, 75 responses were received, 38 in support of the proposal and 35 not in support of the proposal.

Summary of Responses

- 20 The following information provides a summary of the 73 responses received to the consultation:
- Stakeholders felt that the proposal would be a positive change and benefit children's futures;
 - Stakeholders felt that the proposal would enable staff to liaise more easily with work and pupil issues;
 - Stakeholders felt that the proposal would lead to a more streamlined education;

- Stakeholders not in support of the proposal felt that it was a money saving exercise and that an amalgamation should not be considered until there was funding available for a new build;
- Stakeholders felt that an amalgamation would divide the community;
- Stakeholders felt that the distance between the two sites (0.3 miles) would mean that in reality they would still be viewed as separate schools and that it will be awkward and time consuming for staff and pupils to move between the two sites.

(c) Education Standards and Diversity of Provision

21 The council believes that educationally the proposal to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018 is in the best interests of pupils and their families. Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that Primary Schools (instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools) have many benefits for children including:

- (a) continuity and progress of learning between aged 4-11; this would also mean that families only apply for a place in Reception and no longer need to apply again at the end of Year 2;
- (b) unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and social development; this would mean that children had one consistent approach towards all aspects of their primary school life;
- (c) access to a curriculum planned and accessed across the whole primary range; this would enable staff to help children make progress from exactly where they left off at the end of the previous year, rather than cover learning which has already taken place.

22 Wingate Junior School was inspected and judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted in October 2014. Expectations of what pupils achieve at the school are high and the school is very well organised to enable pupils to learn effectively. Wingate Infant School was inspected and judged to be 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in September 2013. It was designated as a National Support School in March 2013 and a Teaching School in March 2014.

23 The proposal for a single primary school will build on those strengths and officers believe that learning and progress will be improved further if the two schools are amalgamated into a single primary school.

(d) Demand v Need

24 In assessing the demand for new school places, Cabinet should consider any projected increase in pupil population such as planned housing developments. There are two significant housing developments planned for Wingate that the council is aware of and contributions via section 106 agreements have been agreed with the developers to help provide additional teaching accommodation of up to 4 classrooms at Wingate in the future.

(e) Proposed Admission Arrangements

- 25 The proposed admission arrangements will be the same as those for all community and voluntary controlled schools in County Durham and these are compliant with the DfE's School Admission Code. The proposed number of pupils to be admitted to Reception of the proposed Primary School in September 2018 will be 51.

(f) National Curriculum

- 26 All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum unless they have secured an exemption for groups of pupils or the school community. The proposed Primary School will follow the National Curriculum.

(g) Equal Opportunities and Community Cohesion

- 27 Cabinet must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/Governing Bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity; and
- (c) foster good relations.

- 28 An equality impact assessment (part of Appendix 2) has been carried out on this proposal. There are no potential impacts in relation to age, gender, disability, sexual orientation or ethnicity for pupils and parents/carers. The current schools provide education for boys and girls aged between 4-11 years and the proposed Primary School will continue to provide education for boys and girls across the same age range.

(h) Travel and Accessibility

- 29 The proposed Primary School will be on the sites of the existing Wingate Infant and Junior Schools. Consequently there will be no increases to travel time.

(i) Funding

- 30 Cabinet must be satisfied that the necessary funding required to implement the proposal will be available. If the proposal is agreed, capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to change signage and upgrade IT systems. No other capital work will be required as a direct result of the proposal being agreed. The expansion of the school buildings to respond to the housing developments in Wingate will be required whether the proposed amalgamation is agreed or not. This will be funded by contributions from housing developers via Section 106 agreements and Basic Need Funding from DfE.

(j) School Premises and Playing Fields

- 31 Under the School Premises Regulations all schools are required to provide suitable outdoor space to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and for pupils to play outside safely. The sites of the existing Wingate Infant and Junior Schools have suitable outdoor spaces.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 32 Officers believe that proceeding with the proposal will enhance education provision in Wingate. Amalgamating Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into one Primary School will provide a more viable establishment for the long term and will provide educational benefits that separate Infant and Junior Schools do not.
- 33 In the view of the council, amalgamating Infant and Junior Schools is in the best interests of children and their families. Primary Schools have more opportunity, through daily contact, for those working within the school to work together in the best interests of the pupils. They benefit from the consistency that working under the leadership of one Head Teacher and one Governing Body brings. A single Primary School can reduce the potential for disruption, which some children experience, when they transfer from Infant to Junior School.
- 32 Cabinet is recommended to agree:
- (a) that the age range of Wingate Infant School should be changed from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a primary school across the existing sites of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools; and
 - (b) that Wingate Junior School should close as a registered school on 31 August 2018 but that the school buildings become part of the single primary school.

Background Papers

Appendix 2 - Delegated Decision Report
Appendix 3 - Statutory Notice

Contact: Sheila Palmerley

Tel: 03000 265 731

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to change signage and upgrade IT systems if the proposal is agreed.

Staffing

Staff from Wingate Infant and Junior School would be ring-fenced for posts in the single primary school.

Risk

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the opportunities of continuity of education in a single primary school are missed.

Equality and Diversity

The proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior School into an 'all through' single Primary School will bring about a more viable and sustainable establishment for the long term. Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that primary schools have many benefits for children, parents and staff. The focus on improved educational outcomes for children in 'all through' primary provision leads to smoother and more effective transition in their education. This is seen as a positive experience in a child's education and development and ensures that children who are protected under the Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty can maximise their potential. The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, their families and staff. It is not expected that pupils and their families will be adversely affected as amalgamation into a single 'all through' primary school will enhance provision in the area and will lead to a larger, more viable establishment for the long term that will bring about educational improvement and continue to provide equal access for all. An equality Impact Assessment is attached as part of Appendix 2.

Accommodation

The proposed primary school would be established using the existing accommodation in Wingate Infant and Junior Schools.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Human Rights

Will not be affected.

Consultation

Consultation was carried out in accordance with DfE Statutory guidance.

Procurement

Any capital works to the school will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

Covered in the body of the report.

REF No.

DECISION RECORD (Version August 2014)*Please complete all sections***DECISION MAKER**

Margaret Whellans
Corporate Director
Children and Young People's Services

**AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO
SCHEME OF DELEGATION/COMMITTEE
REPORT**

2. Table 5
Paragraph 1.4

SUBJECT

3. To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018.

DECISION

4. CYPS/04/17 – Proposed date for Cabinet – March 2018

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

5. Wingate.

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

6. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder and Local Member were consulted on 3rd January 2018.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

7. None.

**A NOTE OF DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE IN
RELATION TO THE ABOVE CONFLICT**

8. N/A.

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

9. Is the report exempt (Part B) – if so please specify the exemption paragraph and the reason for exemption applying the Public Interest Test

CONTACT PERSON

Sheila Palmerley

CONTACT No.

03000 265731

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

10 Margaret W. Whelan

DATE

11. 3/1/18

This form must be sent electronically to delegations@durham.gov.uk within 24 hours of the decision being made.

NOTES

1. The reference No. will be assigned by Democratic Services.
2. The relevant paragraph within the decision makers delegated powers should be identified.
3. A brief heading should be inserted.
4. Brief details of the decision should be inserted. This note must set out the substance of the decisions, options considered and the reasons for the chosen option. Take care not to divulge any commercially sensitive information. If it's a Key Decision insert the No.
5. List the electoral division/s that will be affected by the decision.
6. Set out the consultation you have undertaken with Cabinet portfolio holder and others.
7. See Guidance "Consultation with Portfolio Holder".
8. **See Guidance "Consultation with Portfolio Holder".**
9. Please refer to the Access to Information Requirements that came into force from 1 March 2006 and the internal guidance that has been issued in this respect.
10. Person authorised to make the decision. When sent to democratic services, this will be an electronic signature.
11. Enter the date the decision was made.

3 January 2018



Outcome of Consultation on a Proposal to Change the Age Range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a single Primary School and to close Wingate Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2018

Report of Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide details on the outcome of consultation which was undertaken between 13 November 2017 and 22 December 2017 proposing to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school in existing premises from 1 September 2018 and to seek approval to move to the next stage in the process which is to issue a statutory notice.

Background

- 2 In a report dated 22 September 2017 (attached as Appendix 2) the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services approved consultation could begin on a proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school in the existing premises.
- 3 The amalgamation would be achieved by changing the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from September 2018 to create a single primary school and by closing Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018. This would be the proposal on the statutory notice should permission be given to issue it.
- 4 Consultation documents (attached as Appendix 3) were distributed widely (distribution list attached as Appendix 4) and meetings were held between 16-23 November 2017 with the Governing Bodies and staff of both schools and parents and members of the local community at an Information Sharing meeting.

Issues raised at Consultation Meetings

- 5 At the meetings held between 16-23 November 2017 officers explained the reasons for the proposal and invited those present to express views and ask questions. The key issues discussed at the meetings can be summarised as follows:
 - Questions were asked as to why the proposed single primary school could not be in a new build so that the school would not have to run across two sites. Officers explained that it is everybody's aspiration for a new building but it is dependent on capital funding being available and that the council has to allocate funding to the highest priority projects.

Unfortunately, a new build is not able to be provided at this stage because the council does not have the funding available. However there are examples both nationally and in County Durham of primary schools running across two sites effectively and successfully.

- Concerns were expressed that the proposal was a cost saving exercise and would not be beneficial to children. Officers explained that a larger single primary school is usually more financially sustainable than separate infant and junior schools. Some evidence also suggests that primary schools (instead of separate infant and junior schools) have many benefits for children, parents and staff including continuity and progress of learning between ages 4 and 11; unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning; access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the whole primary range; tracking pupil progress is easier in a primary school than in separate infant and junior schools. Officers also explained that the proposal is not a money saving exercise as school funding is dedicated to schools and pupils. The amount of funding the council receives for funding schools is based on the number of pupils, not the number of schools and this is ring-fenced therefore there is no saving to the council.
- Questions were asked as to how the Head Teacher would be appointed and whether there would be any redundancies. Officers explained that a joint committee could be established comprising current Governors of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools. The first responsibility of the joint committee would be to appoint a Head Teacher designate to the proposed primary school. As there is currently one substantive Head Teacher only, the post of Head Teacher designate would be ring-fenced to that person. Once the Head Teacher designate is appointed, a proposed staffing structure would be produced for consultation with staff and Trade Unions. This is the role of the Head Teacher designate and joint committee, not the council and the structure proposed would need to meet the requirements of the proposed single primary school. In previous amalgamations there have been very few compulsory redundancies.
- Concerns were raised that as the substantive Head Teacher is the Head Teacher of two schools currently that person may not have the capacity to effectively lead the proposed single primary school across two sites. It was also felt that the working relationship between Wingate Infant and Junior Schools was improving and that more time should be given for it to develop further before amalgamating the two schools.
- Concerns were expressed that if Cabinet agreed to amalgamate the two schools in March 2018, it did not leave much time for the staffing structure to be agreed and appointments made in advance of September 2018.
- Concerns were raised as to how impartial Governors would be during the appointments process and it was stated that staff from Wingate Junior School felt undervalued.
- Questions were asked that if support staff were appointed to lower graded posts in the proposed primary school, would they receive any salary protection. Officers explained that salary protection only existed for teaching staff, not support staff in schools.

- Concerns were raised that the existing schools were not large enough to accommodate pupils from new housing developments and pupils would have to be transported to other schools. Officers explained that the council had an approved methodology for seeking financial contributions from housing developers for additional teaching accommodation if there was insufficient capacity in existing schools. The council had negotiated a contribution at Martindale Road that had recently been approved. The council was also negotiating a financial contribution for additional teaching accommodation at both Wingate Infant and Junior Schools in respect of a proposed development at Stewart Drive. There is no intention to transport children living in Wingate to primary schools in other villages
- Concerns were raised that there was nothing in the consultation document about class sizes, staff redundancies or how the proposal would improve education. Previously the community had been told that split site schools were not in the best interests of children. How will an amalgamation now benefit children if there are no resources for a new build. Officers explained that the aspirations would be for a new build but currently the council does not have the resources. However, there are some very high achieving split site schools both nationally and in County Durham.
- Comments were made that parents already have the option to send their children to a primary school but may have chosen the current schools as they prefer to send them to separate infant and junior schools.
- Comments were made that staff would be expected to take on more responsibility to help with the management of the proposed primary school as there will only be one Head Teacher across the two sites. This would have a negative impact on learning which would not be beneficial to children.
- Questions were asked about whether the proposed amalgamation would be agreed if everyone replied to say they were against it, and if it did go ahead how could an objection be made against the decision. Officers explained that the decision is not made on how many 'for' and 'against' responses are received. Respondents are encouraged to provide reasons as to why they either support or do not support a proposal so that Cabinet are aware of the views being expressed. All responses are made available for Cabinet to view. There is a statutory process relating to school re-organisation that Local Authorities must adhere to. If that process is not followed, objections could be made, but objections cannot be made merely because the decision is not what some people may have wished for.

Responses to the Consultation

- 6 Stakeholders were also invited to respond in a variety of ways e.g. written responses using the response form attached to the consultation document, letter, email, or completing the response form online via the council's website.
- 7
- 43 responded in writing using the response form, letters and email.
 - 30 responded using the online response form (DCC website).
 - 39 people attended the Information Sharing Evening at Wingate Community Centre.

- 14 Governors (7 from each school) attended the joint Governing Body meeting.
- 26 members of staff attended the staff meeting at Wingate Infant School.
- 22 members of staff attended the staff meeting at Wingate Junior School.

Summary of Responses

8 The following information provides a summary of the 73 responses received to the consultation in writing or using the online response form:

- 38 respondents support the proposal.
- 35 respondents do not support the proposal.
- Some comments received in the written responses were similar to those highlighted at the consultation meetings. A number of respondents viewed the proposal as positive as it will provide continuity for children and it will improve transition from Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2 which some parents felt has been an issue for the village.
- Some parents felt that the amalgamation would be a positive change and benefit children's futures.
- Some parents felt that the proposal would enable staff to liaise more easily with work and pupil issues.
- Some parents supported the proposal as it would lead to a more streamlined education.
- A number of respondents felt that the proposal was a money saving exercise and that an amalgamation should not be considered until there was funding available for a new build.
- A number of respondents expressed concerns that the likely Head Teacher could not commit sufficient time to ensure the proposed amalgamation was effectively implemented due to being a Head Teacher at more than one school. This would increase the pressure on other members of staff which in turn would reduce their time to effectively teach children.
- Parents expressed concern over possible changes to school uniform and opening and closing times.
- A number of respondents felt that links could be established between the two schools without an amalgamation.
- Some respondents felt that the distance between the two sites (0.3 miles) would mean that in reality they would still be viewed as separate schools and that it will be awkward and time consuming for staff and pupils to move between the two sites.
- Some respondents felt that an amalgamation would divide the community.
- Some respondents felt that the benefits of primary education that were stated in the consultation document were flawed arguments. For example, the two schools different approaches to education benefits those who find a more structured routine enhances their ability to learn. 'The unified leadership and management leading to a consistent approach' reason is flawed as the leader of the school would be working across four sites.

Analysis of Consultation Responses

- 9 Some of the responses received during the consultation supported the proposal. Respondents were of the opinion that primary schools provide consistency that separate infant and junior schools do not and that this would be beneficial for pupils. Some views expressed during the consultation also supported an amalgamation although they would prefer the primary school to be in a new building.
- 10 A number of respondents stated that the proposal was a money saving exercise rather than being beneficial to children and that the proposed amalgamation should only proceed if the primary school was in a new build.
- 11 A number of respondents were of the view that the amalgamation would divide the community, and that it would not bring about the educational benefits stated in the consultation document.

Recommendation and Reasons

- 11 Although there are mixed views about the proposal the council has been able to respond to concerns that were raised during the consultation period. After full consideration of all responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services is recommended to give approval for officers to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018, and to close Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to change signage and upgrade IT systems if the proposal is agreed.

Staffing

Staff from Wingate Infant and Junior School would be ring-fenced for posts in the single primary school.

Risk

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the opportunities of continuity of education in a single primary school are missed.

Equality and Diversity

The proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior School into an 'all through' single Primary School will bring about a more viable and sustainable establishment for the long term. Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that primary schools have many benefits for children, parents and staff. The focus on improved educational outcomes for children in 'all through' primary provision leads to smoother and more effective transition in their education. This is seen as a positive experience in a child's education and development and ensures that children who are protected under the Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty can maximise their potential. The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, their families and staff. It is not expected that pupils and their families will be adversely affected as amalgamation into a single 'all through' primary school will enhance provision in the area and will lead to a larger, more viable establishment for the long term that will bring about educational improvement and continue to provide equal access for all. An Equality Impact Assessment is included in Appendix 2.

Accommodation

The proposed primary school would be established using the existing accommodation in Wingate Infant and Junior Schools.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Human Rights

Will not be affected.

Consultation

Consultation has been carried out in accordance with DfE statutory guidance.

Procurement

Any capital works to the school will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

Covered in the body of the report.

REF No.

DECISION RECORD (Version August 2014)

Please complete all sections

DECISION MAKER

Margaret Whellans
Corporate Director
Children and Young People's Services

**AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO
SCHEME OF DELEGATION/COMMITTEE
REPORT**

2. Table 5
Paragraph 1.4

SUBJECT

3. To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services to agree that consultation be carried out on a proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior schools from 1st September 2018.

DECISION

4. **If Key Decision Insert No.**
Key Decision when Cabinet meets to decide on the proposal.

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

5. Wingate.

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

6. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder and Local Member were consulted on 12 September 2017.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

7. None.

**A NOTE OF DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE IN
RELATION TO THE ABOVE CONFLICT**

8. N/A.

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)
Yes
9. Is the report exempt (Part B) – if so please specify the exemption paragraph and the reason for exemption applying the Public Interest Test

CONTACT PERSON

Sheila Palmerley

CONTACT No.

03000 265731

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

10 Margaret W. Whellams

DATE

11. 26/9/17

This form must be sent electronically to delegations@durham.gov.uk within 24 hours of the decision being made.

NOTES

1. The reference No. will be assigned by Democratic Services.
2. The relevant paragraph within the decision makers delegated powers should be identified.
3. A brief heading should be inserted.
4. Brief details of the decision should be inserted. This note must set out the substance of the decisions, options considered and the reasons for the chosen option. Take care not to divulge any commercially sensitive information. If it's a Key Decision insert the No.
5. List the electoral division's that will be affected by the decision.
6. Set out the consultation you have undertaken with Cabinet portfolio holder and others.
7. See Guidance "Consultation with Portfolio Holder".
8. See Guidance "Consultation with Portfolio Holder".
9. Please refer to the Access to Information Requirements that came into force from 1 March 2006 and the internal guidance that has been issued in this respect.
10. Person authorised to make the decision. When sent to democratic services, this will be an electronic signature.
11. Enter the date the decision was made.

Delegated Decision

22 September 2017



Proposal to Amalgamate Wingate Infant and Wingate Junior Schools into a Single Primary School from 1 September 2018

Report of Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services to begin consultation on a proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school on the existing sites. This would be achieved by closing Wingate Junior School as a separate school (by name only) and extending the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 so that it becomes a primary school. The proposed single primary would retain the DfE number of the Infant School.

Background

- 2 In December 2016, Cabinet approved the council's overarching strategy for school organisation and the pattern and provision of schools across County Durham. One of the principles underlying the strategy is where practicable to do so, to move towards a pattern of 'all through' primary schools rather than separate Infant and Junior schools.
- 3 Wingate Infant and Junior Schools are located in the village of Wingate and are just under 500 metres apart. The Head Teacher of Wingate Junior School has retired and there is an Acting Headteacher in place until 31 December 2017.
- 4 The most recent Ofsted Inspections judged Wingate Infant School to be 'Outstanding' and Wingate Junior School as 'Good'. Ofsted commented that the Head Teacher of Wingate Infant School 'provides inspirational leadership and successfully drives continuous improvement, to which all school leaders, including governors are fully committed. This has ensured the school has consistently sustained high levels of performance'.
- 5 As the Headteacher of Wingate Infant School is the only substantive Headteacher across the two schools, she would be ringfenced for the post of Headteacher in the single Primary School. She is an enthusiastic and influential leader on the active group of schools in the Peterlee Teaching Alliance, involved in the delivery of training and support to other schools including carrying out peer reviews. Wingate Infant School was designated as a teaching school in 2014. She is also the Headteacher at St Joseph's RCVA Primary School in Blackhall which was inspected by Ofsted in March this year and was judged as 'Good'. This demonstrates that she has

experience of successfully managing a primary school and has already indicated her interest in becoming Headteacher of the proposed single primary school in Wingate.

Pupil Numbers

- 6 Wingate Infant School currently has 169 pupils on roll and Wingate Junior School has 190 on roll. Over the next 5 years the numbers at Wingate Infant School are expected to reduce to approximately 150 pupils and the pupil roll at Wingate Junior School is expected to increase to approximately 195. The Department for Education (DfE) is of the view that the minimum size of primary school to be financially viable is 420 pupils although the Council's view is that a primary school with 201 pupils should have sufficient funding to be viable. Amalgamating Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school would result in a school for 360 pupils thus making it a viable establishment for the long term.

The Benefits of Primary Education

- 7 Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that Primary Schools (instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools) have many benefits for children, parents and staff. Some of these include:
- Continuity and progress of learning between age 4 and 11;
 - Unified Leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning and social development;
 - Access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range;
 - Increased opportunities for professional development of staff, which should lead to improved outcomes for children;
 - School Inspectors will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single primary school rather than in separate schools.

The Process for Amalgamating Schools

- 8 Department for Education guidance (April 2016) "Making prescribed alterations to maintained schools" states that a statutory process must be followed.
- 9 The statutory process involves an initial consultation period with relevant stakeholders including parents, Governors, staff and the wider community. This would usually last for six weeks and it is advised that major school holidays are avoided when consulting.
- 10 The Local Member who is Chair of Governors at both schools has spoken to senior officers in the council and is supportive of the proposal to begin consultation on establishing a primary school.
- 11 If it was agreed, following consultation, that the LA wished to proceed with the proposal to establish a Primary School across the two existing sites, the next stage would be to publish a statutory public notice which would be valid for four weeks. Within two months of the expiry date of the public notice, the LA

would make the final decision on the proposal. The aim would be for Cabinet to make a decision at its meeting in March 2018. If this was not achieved, the proposal would need to be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.

- 12 Taking account of the statutory process to be followed, the most realistic date to implement the proposal to amalgamate the two schools into a single primary school, would be 1 September 2018. This would allow time for the statutory process to be completed and to appoint staff and Governors to the new school prior to it opening in September 2018.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 13 Officers believe that amalgamating Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single 'all through' primary school will enhance education provision in the area and will also lead to a larger, more sustainable establishment for the long term.
- 14 Creating a single primary school will enable a more efficient use of resources. The single primary school will only have the costs of one Head Teacher and one senior leadership team. A staffing structure will be established which will be appropriate for a 360 place primary school rather than separate Infant and Junior schools. This should enable efficiencies to be made, particularly in management and business support posts within the single school. There is also the potential for savings in various Service Level Agreements that currently are in place in both schools.
- 16 The Corporate Director, Children and Young people's Services is recommended:
- (a) to agree that consultation be carried out on a proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school on the existing sites from 1st September 2018.

Contact: Sheila Palmerley

Tel: 03000 265 731

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to change signage and upgrade IT systems if the proposal is agreed. Costs for this would be in the region of £30,000.

Staffing

Staff from Wingate Infant and Junior School would be ring-fenced for posts in the single primary school.

Risk

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the opportunities of continuity of education in a single primary school are missed.

Equality and Diversity

The proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior schools into an 'all through' single primary school will lead to a more viable and sustainable establishment for the long term. Evidence gathered over a number of years, shows that primary schools have many benefits for children, parents and staff. The focus on improved educational outcomes for children in 'all through' primary provision leads to smoother and more effective transition in their education. This is seen as a positive experience in a child's education and ensures that children who are protected under the Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty can maximise their potential. The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, their families and staff. It is not expected that pupils and their families will be adversely affected as amalgamation into a single 'all through' primary school will enhance education provision in the area and will lead to a larger, more sustainable establishment for the long term that will bring about educational improvement and continue to provide equal access for all. A new staffing structure will be established for the amalgamated school. This should enable efficiencies to be made, particularly in the management and business support posts within the single school. Change management processes will be followed to ensure fair treatment of any affected staff.

An Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 2.

Accommodation

The proposed primary school would be established using the existing accommodation in Wingate Infant and Junior Schools.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Human Rights

Will not be affected.

Consultation

Consultation will be carried out in accordance with DfE Statutory guidance.

Procurement

Any capital works to the school will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

Covered in the body of the report.

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Durham County Council Equality Impact Assessment

NB: The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Durham County Council to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Assessing impact on equality and recording this is one of the key ways in which we can show due regard.

Section One: Description and Screening

Service/Team or Section	Education, School Places & Admissions
Lead Officer	Sheila Palmerley
MTFP Reference (if relevant)	N/A
Cabinet Date (if relevant)	December 2017/January 2018
Start Date	September 2017
Review Date	December 2017/January 2018

Subject of the Impact Assessment

Please give a brief description of the policy, proposal or practice as appropriate (a copy of the subject can be attached or insert a web-link):
Proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into one Primary School on the existing sites from 1 September 2018. This would be achieved by changing the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4 – 7 to 4 – 11 from 1 September 2018 and by closing Wingate Junior School as a separate school (by name only) on 31 August 2018.

Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. general public, staff, members, specific clients/service users):
General Public, Governors, Staff, pupils attending Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, providers of Early Years Education, Elected Members, MPs, Neighbouring Schools, Trade Unions, Diocese, Department for Education, Community Groups, Parish Councils, Residents' Associations, AAP Board, DYPS/DCC Staff.

Screening

Is there any actual or potential negative or positive impact on the following protected characteristics?		
Protected Characteristic	Negative Impact Indicate: Y = Yes, N = No, ? = unsure	Positive Impact Indicate: Y = Yes, N = No, ? = unsure
Age	N	Y Children of Primary School age in Wingate will have wider educational opportunities if they are educated in a single school.
Disability	N	The school is accessible for staff and pupils with a disability.
Marriage and civic partnership (workplace only)	N	Staff needs will be met in the single school.
Pregnancy and maternity	N	Staff needs will be met in the single school.
Race (ethnicity)	N	The single school will meet the needs of all children and staff.
Religion or Belief	N	The single school will meet the needs of all children and staff.
Sex (gender)	N	This single school will meet the needs of all children and staff.
Sexual orientation	N	The single school will meet the needs of all children and staff.
Transgender	N	The single school will meet the needs of all children and staff.

Please provide brief details of any potential to cause adverse impact. Record full details and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, their families and staff. It is not expected that pupils and their families will be adversely affected. A new staffing structure will be established for the amalgamated school. This should enable efficiencies to be made, particularly in the management and business support posts within the single school. Change management processes will be followed to ensure fair treatment of any affected staff. There are currently 35 members of staff employed at Wingate Infant School. 31 are female and 4 are male. 10 of the staff are aged between 16-24; 3 between 25-34; 10 between 35-44; 6 between 45-54; 5 between 55-64 and 1 aged over 65.

There are currently 21 members of staff employed at Wingate Junior School. 17 are female and 4 are male. 2 of the staff are aged between 16-24; 3 between 25-34; 7 between 35-44; 3 between 45-54 and 6 aged between 55-64.

How will this policy/proposal practice promote our commitment to our legal responsibilities under the public sector equality duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between people from different groups?

Amalgamation of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single 'all through' primary school will enhance education provision in the areas and will lead to a larger, more sustainable establishment for the long term and that will bring about educational improvement and will continue to provide equal access for all. Furthermore, creating a single primary school, will enable more efficient use of resources with one headteacher and one senior leadership team and open up the potential for savings in various service level agreements currently in place for both schools.

A 6 week consultation is proposed from October 2017. Consultation documents will be distributed widely and meetings will be held with governors and Staff of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, parents, and members of the local community at an Information Sharing Evening. Stakeholders will be invited to respond in a variety of ways: written responses using the response form attached to the consultation document, letter, email or completing the response form online via the County Council's website. Alternative formats will be available on request.

73 responses were received to the consultation. 38 were in support of the proposal and 35 were not in support of the proposal. None of the responses stated that the proposal would have a negative impact on those children and adults who are protected under the Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty.

Evidence

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

Please outline your data sets and/or proposed evidence sources, highlight any gaps and say whether or not you propose to carry out consultation. Record greater detail and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

In September 2017, Wingate Infant School will have 167 pupils on roll and Wingate Junior School will have 182 pupils on roll. Over the next 5 years the numbers at Wingate Infant School are expected to reduce to approximately 150 pupils and the pupil roll at Wingate Junior School is expected to increase to approximately 198. The Department for Education (DFE) is of the view that the minimum size of a primary school to be financially viable is 420 pupils although the Council's view is that a primary school with 210 pupils should have sufficient funding to be viable. Amalgamating Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school would result in a school for 360 pupils thus making it a viable establishment for the long term.

Evidence shows that primary schools have many benefits for children, parents, and staff. The focus on improved educational outcomes for children in 'all through' primary school.

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off: <i>S. Palmerley</i>	Date: 22.02.18
Service equality representative sign off:	Date:

Please return this completed form to your service equality representative and forward a copy to equalities@durham.gov.uk



Proposal to Amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a Single Primary School on the existing sites from 1 September 2018



Introduction

Durham County Council recognises that the primary phase of education (age 0-11) is a critical part in developing children, as it is the foundation of future learning and growth. The council aims to move towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools where it is practicable to do so. All schools must be viable and sustainable for the long term as well as being able to respond to 'growth'.

The council realises that school reorganisation can be an area of concern as local communities often see a school as being at the heart of the community and sometimes cannot immediately agree with the need for change. Taking this into account, the council must continue to have a system of education which will continue to bring about the highest possible standards of education for the children of County Durham for the short, medium and long term and in some cases 'keeping things as they are' may not achieve that in this rapidly changing educational landscape.

In line with that strategic objective, the council is consulting on a proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into one Primary School (age 4-11) on the existing sites from 1 September 2018. The Department for Education (DfE) official school number for Wingate Infant School would be the school number for the proposed single primary school. Wingate Junior School would close as a registered school.

You may have some questions to ask. This document attempts to answer some of those questions and explains how you can let the County Council know what you think about the proposal.

1. Why is the Council proposing to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools?

The proposal reflects the work being done across County Durham to bring separate Infant and Junior schools together where appropriate and over time, to form primary schools so children can benefit from primary education in one school rather than changing schools at age 7. An amalgamation would lead to a larger and more viable school being established. If the proposal to amalgamate the two schools is approved, the Local Authority would work closely with staff and Governors of the schools to provide support with governance, finance, personnel and curriculum issues.

2. What are the benefits of primary education?

Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that Primary Schools (instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools) have many benefits for children, parents and staff. Some of these include:

- Continuity and progress of learning between ages 4 and 11; this would also mean that families only apply for a place for Reception and no longer need to apply again at the end of Year 2.
- Unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning and social development; this would mean that children had one consistent approach towards all aspects of their primary school life.

- Access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the whole primary range; this would enable staff to help children make progress from exactly where they left off at the end of the previous year rather than cover learning which has already taken place – continuity of learning and accurate measure of each child's progress would be easier.
- Increased opportunities for more professional development of staff which should lead to improved outcomes for children; staff would all know the children better and the school would be able to train all staff to meet their needs more effectively.
- Staff would be able to work together to train and learn from each other; capacity of the larger school would give more opportunities for accessing training.
- School inspectors and school leaders would be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single primary school rather than in separate schools.
- One school would enable staff to bring more of the village together.
- Children would not have the worry of moving to a new school when they are still young.
- Bringing the schools together would help all staff to continue to keep children safe and look after their well-being continuously from 4 to 11 years of age.

In summary, it is believed that Primary Schools have more opportunity, through daily contact, for those working within the school to work together in the best interest of the pupils. They benefit from the consistency that working under the leadership of one Head Teacher and one Governing Body brings. It is also recognised that transition between schools can interrupt and slow down children's progress therefore creating a primary school would build upon the existing good procedures in place at both schools currently.

3. Will both school sites remain open?

Although the proposal is to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools, there is no intention to discontinue the use of either site. If the proposal is agreed, the single amalgamated school would make use of the accommodation on both sites to enhance curriculum provision. The relative proximity of the two schools (0.3 miles apart) will ensure that senior leaders can be responsive to urgent matters that arise on either site.

4. Will the standard of education that the two schools currently provide be affected if they become one school?

Wingate Junior School was inspected and judged to be "Good" by Ofsted in October 2014. Expectations of what pupils achieve at the school are high and the school is very well organised to enable pupils to learn effectively. Wingate Infant School was inspected and judged to be 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in September 2013. It was designated as a National Support School in March 2013 and a Teaching School in March 2014. Peterlee Partnership Teaching School Alliance is currently led by Wingate Infant School.

The two schools already work together for the benefit of all pupils and will continue to do this whether or not the proposed amalgamation takes place. The council believes that learning and progress will be improved further if the two schools are amalgamated to become a single 'all through' primary school. It is therefore believed that the proposal will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided.

5. What other options have been considered for Primary education across Wingate?

- (a) The two schools could remain as they are now. However, the benefits of primary education which are indicated in section 2 of this document would not materialise.
- (b) The preferred option of the council is for a single primary school to run across the two existing sites.

6. Is it not possible to build a new school for all the primary age pupils in Wingate?

The council does not currently have sufficient funding to build a new primary school. If funding does become available in the future, a new build primary school could be considered.

7. How many pupils are there likely to be in the proposed single primary school?

There are currently 361 pupils on roll across the two schools. This is likely to remain the position in the short term. The council is aware of housing developments in the area that would lead to an additional 420 houses in Wingate. The school sites would be expanded when appropriate to meet this demand. This would be determined by the date when house building starts and how many houses are planned to be built per year.

8. What is the timescale for the process?

The table below sets out the expected timescales for the process.

Date	Stage
November/December 2017 (6 weeks)	Consultation All responses received by the closing date will be considered and included in a report for the council to consider and decide whether to take the proposal forward.
January/February 2018 (4 weeks)	Statutory Public Notice If the council decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices would be published in the local newspaper, posted on school gates and on the DCC website. These notices would provide an opportunity for comments or objections to be made.

Date	Stage
March 2018	Decision Making Durham County Council's Cabinet would consider responses to the statutory notice and make the final decision whether to agree the proposal or not.
March 2018 - September 2018	Preparation for the single school opening, if the proposal is approved. This includes establishing a Governing Body, appointing a Head Teacher, consulting on a proposed new staffing structure, deciding on opening and closing times, deciding on any changes to school uniform.
1 September 2018	Single school opens across existing sites.

9. How do you respond to this consultation?

We would like to hear what you think about the proposal. To help you do that we are holding an Information Sharing Evening on:

- **Thursday 23 November 2017 at 6.00 pm at Wingate Community Centre**

Officers from the County Council will be present to answer any questions you have and listen to your views.

You can respond in one of the following ways:

- (i) Send in the attached response form or write to: Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Young People's Services, Business Reply Service, Licence No DU63 (Freepost), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5BR by **22 December 2017**.
- (ii) Email your views to schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk or complete the response form online via the Current Consultation Section of the County Council's website www.durham.gov.uk by **22 December 2017**.

RESPONSE FORM

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE WINGATE INFANT AND WINGATE JUNIOR SCHOOLS INTO ONE PRIMARY SCHOOL ON EXISTING SITES FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2018

1. Please tick **one** box from the list below to let us know if you are responding to this consultation **mainly** as a:

Parent/Carer of a pupil(s) at

Wingate Infant School

Wingate Junior School

* Other School

*Please state which school:

OR a Pupil at

Wingate Infant School

Wingate Junior School

* Other School

*Please state which school:

OR a Governor/Member of Staff (circle to indicate which) at

Wingate Infant School

Wingate Junior School

* Other School

*Please state which school:

OR a

Resident

Councillor

Trade Union Representative

Parish/Town Council Representative

Community Group

Diocese

Neighbouring Authority

MP

Other (please state):

2. Looking at the information in this document do you support the proposal to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into one primary school on existing sites?

Yes No

3. Do you have any comments on this proposal including any impact the changes would have on you?

Please return this form by 22 December 2017 to:

Mr Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Young People's Services, Business Reply Service Licence No DU63 (Freepost), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5BR

(The information that you send may need to be passed to colleagues or shared with partners. It may also be published in a summary of responses received to this consultation but results will not contain your name or anything that could identify you. If you require an acknowledgement to your response, please provide details below.)

Name:

Address:

Signed: **Date:**

Appendix 4

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST
November 2017

School	Govs	Staff	Pupils	Total	How Delivered	Date Delivered
Wingate Nursery	N/A	15	30	60	AW ¹	13/11/17
Wingate Infant	11*	25	175	220	AW ¹	
Wingate Junior	11*	25	200	240	AW ¹	

Blackhall Primary		N/A			AW E-mail	13/11/17
Cassop Primary		N/A			AW E-mail	
Hesleden Primary		N/A			AW E-mail	
Hutton Henry CE Primary		N/A			AW E-mail	
St. Godric's RCVA Primary, Thornley		N/A			AW E-mail	
St. Joseph's RCVA Primary, Blackhall		N/A			AW E-mail	
St. Mary's RCVA Primary, Wingate		N/A			AW E-mail	
Thornley Primary		N/A			AW E-mail	
Wheatley Hill Primary		N/A			AW E-mail	

Wellfield Community School		N/A			AW E-mail	13/11/17
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*Governors consultation document posted (10/11/17). Govs emailed on 09/11/17 with details of GB consultation meeting
AW¹ – delivered by hand

**TOTAL number of hard copies of consultation documents distributed = 650
and also the consultation document was placed on the DCC website (13/11/17)**

Elected DCC Members	
Simon Henig, Olwyn Gunn, Leo Taylor	Emailed 13/11/17
MPs	
Phil Wilson MP phil.wilson.mp@parliament.uk	Emailed 13/11/17
INTERNAL	
CYPS SLT (Margaret Whellans, Phil Hodgson, Helen Fergusson, Carole Payne), Julian Wilson, Barry Piercy, Gerard Darby, School Places & Admissions Team, Julie Arnett, Joanne Walt, Paul Cooper, Linda Bailey, Chris Young, David Shirer, Adrian White, Sheila Palmerley, Sarah Armstrong, Jill Huntington, Janet Bennett, Kath Allison, David Grimes, Jennifer Morris, Vanessa Glover, Julie Cassidy, Anna Wills, Barbara Brown, Mark Kirkup, Donna Caterer, Zoey Ridley, Eve Rutherford, Simon Day, Angela Pearson	Emailed 13/11/17
RC and CE Diocese and DfE	
RC Diocese Director education@diocesehn.org.uk	Emailed 13/11/17
CE Diocese Director paul.rickeard@drmnnewcanglican.org	
DfE SchoolOrganisation.NOTIFICATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk	
Trade Unions	
gmb@durham.gov.uk (GMB) h.metcalf@unison.co.uk unison@durham.gov.uk (UNISON) mike.routledge@unitetheunion.com (UNITE) rc-northeast@mail.nasuwt.org.uk (NASUWT) john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk (ASCL) kiaraclegg@voicetheunion.org.uk (VOICE) p.lonsdale100@denehouse-pri.durham.sch.uk (NAHT) ken.smith@neu.org.uk (NEU – formerly ATL) secretary@durham.nut.org.uk (NEU – formerly NUT)	Emailed 13/11/17
Directors of CYPS of Neighbouring LAs	
Simon Marshall SUNDERLAND simon.marshall@sunderland.gov.uk	Emailed 13/11/17
Children's Centres (15 copies)	
Wingate Community Childcare Ltd , Wingate Children's Centre, Partridge Terrace, Wingate, TS28 5BD (55 Capacity)	Posted 13/11/17
Community Centres (10 each)	
Wingate Community Association , 55 Front Street, Wingate, TS28 5AA	AW¹ 13/11/17
Wingate & Station Town Family Centre , Partridge Terrace, Wingate, TS28 5BD posted	
Libraries (10 each)	
Wingate Library , Front Street, Wingate, County Durham, TS28 5AA (<i>left with Community Association as Library was closed</i>)	AW¹ 13/11/17
Parish Councils (JB passing on to Parish Councils/Community Groups in Wingate area)	
Jane Bellis jane.bellis@durham.gov.uk	E-Mail 13/11/17

FLYER/POSTER (advertising Information Sharing Evening)

Wingate Nursery/Wingate Community Childcare Ltd/Wingate & Station Town Family Centre
Lamppost outside of Wingate Nursery
Wingate Infant (window and gates)
Wingate Junior (window and gates)
Wingate Community Association
Wingate Library
Caradoc Practice
The Medical Centre
Bus Stop outside of Wedding Shop
McColl's Newsagents
Salon & Go
Wingate Stores Newsagents
Co-op

AW1
14/11/17



PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposal to change the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a Primary School and to close Wingate Junior School as a Registered School on 31 August 2018.

Notice is given in accordance with Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Durham County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Wingate Infant School (Community), Church Street, Wingate, TS28 5AQ and to close Wingate Junior School (Community), Wellfield House, Moor Lane, Wingate, TS28 5BA.

It is proposed to amalgamate Wingate Infant and Junior Schools into a single primary school across the existing sites of Wingate Infant and Junior Schools from 1 September 2018. This will be achieved by changing the age range of Wingate Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2018 to create a primary school from that date and by closing Wingate Junior School as a registered school on 31 August 2018.

The proposal reflects the work being done across County Durham to bring separate Infant and Junior Schools together where appropriate to form primary schools so children can benefit from primary education in one school rather than changing schools at age 7. Amalgamating the schools will lead to a larger and more viable education establishment to enhance education provision in the community of Wingate for the long term.

The current capacity of Wingate Infant School is for 155 pupils. The current capacity of Wingate Junior School is for 204 pupils. The capacity of the proposed primary school will be for 359 pupils. The proposed admission number for the proposed primary school will be 51.

At present Wingate Infant School is judged as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and Wingate Junior is judged as 'Good'. The council believes that amalgamating the two schools will lead to a model of education that benefits children and their families and the proposal will therefore not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in these schools.

All services from the existing schools for the local community will continue to be provided if the schools become a primary school.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Mr Graeme Plews, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Young People's Services, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ. It is also available on the County Council's website at www.durham.gov.uk/consultations.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Mr Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Young People's Services, Business Reply Service, Licence No. DU63 (Freepost), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5BR. Objections and comments can also be e-mailed to schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk.

Signed:

Margaret W. Whellans

Margaret Whellans
Corporate Director
Children and Young People's Services

Publication Date: 11 January 2018

Cabinet

14 March 2018



**Forecast of Revenue and Capital
Outturn 2017/18 – Period to 31
December 2017**

**Report of Corporate Management Team
John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources
Councillor Alan Napier, Portfolio Holder for Finance**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Cabinet with information on the:
 - (a) forecast revenue and capital outturn for 2017/18;
 - (b) forecast for the Council's Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund position at 31 March 2018;
 - (c) use of earmarked, cash limit and general reserves.
- 2 To seek approval of the budget adjustments and proposed sums outside of the cash limit.

Background

- 3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Council agreed the Medium Term Financial Plan, which incorporates the revenue and capital budgets for 2017/18, on 22 February 2017.
- 4 The Constitution also states that the Chief Finance Officer must report to Cabinet on the overall Council budget monitoring position on a quarterly basis.
- 5 This report provides an updated forecast of the revenue and capital outturn for 2017/18, based upon expenditure and income up to 31 December 2017.

Revenue Outturn Forecast – Based on Position to 31 December 2017

- 6 The table overleaf compares the forecast of outturn with the revised budget. Further detail is provided in Appendices 2 and 3.
- 7 The following adjustments have been made to the original budget agreed by Council on 22 February 2017:
 - (a) agreed budget transfers between Service Groupings;
 - (b) additions to budget for items outside the cash limit (for Cabinet consideration and recommended approval);

- (c) planned use of or contribution to Earmarked Reserves (please refer to Appendix 4).

Forecast of Revenue Outturn 2017/18

	Original Budget 2017/18	Budget - incorporating adjustments	Service Groupings Forecast of Outturn	Forecasted Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult and Health Services	151,581	132,942	130,185	-2,757
Children and Young People's Services	98,963	113,273	117,054	3,781
Regeneration and Local Services	126,024	129,444	128,566	-878
Resources	16,628	19,308	18,362	-946
Transformation and Partnerships	8,716	11,918	12,201	283
Cash Limit Position	401,912	406,885	406,368	-517
Contingencies	5,422	720	720	0
Corporate Costs	3,990	3,985	3,766	-219
NET COST OF SERVICES	411,324	411,590	410,854	-736
Capital charges	-57,113	-57,113	-57,113	0
Interest and Investment income	-1,700	-1,700	-3,308	-1,608
Interest payable and similar charges	38,108	39,812	39,562	-250
Levies	15,979	15,979	15,979	0
Net Expenditure	406,598	408,568	405,974	-2,594
Funded By:				
Council tax	-195,706	-195,706	-195,706	0
Use of earmarked reserves	-18,185	-19,142	-19,142	0
Estimated net surplus on Collection Fund	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	0
Start up Funding Assessment	-172,364	-172,364	-172,364	0
New Homes Bonus	-8,882	-8,882	-8,883	-1
New Homes Bonus - Re-imburement	-267	-267	-283	-16
Section 31 Grant	-5,875	-5,875	-6,738	-863
Education Services Grant	-1,500	-1,500	-1,516	-16
Forecast contribution to/from(-) Cash Limit Reserve	-819	168	685	517
Forecast contribution to/from (-) General Reserves	0	-2,000	973	2,973
TOTAL	0	0	0	0

Note: Negative figures in the variance column represent an underspend or overachievement of income

- 8 The table on the previous page identifies a forecast cash limit underspend of £0.517 million and a forecast net underspend / overachievement of core government grant on all other budgets of £2.973 million, totalling £3.490 million. This represents 0.7% of the net expenditure budget of £408.6 million.
- 9 Approval is being sought for the following sums to be funded from, or transferred to general contingencies. These sums are deemed to be outside of service grouping cash limits.

Service Grouping	Proposal	Amount
		£ million
Children and Young People's Services	Cost of schools' redundancies	0.543
Regeneration and Local Services	Business Durham Institute – University Decant and Return	-0.075
Regeneration and Local Services	Concessionary Fares	-0.147
Resources	Coroner's Service	0.008
Total		0.329

- 10 After adjusting the budgets as detailed above, the forecast outturn for Cash Limit Reserves and the General Reserve are summarised in the table below.

Type of Reserve	Opening Balance as at 1 April 2017	Budgeted use at 1 April 2017	Movement during 2017/18		2017/18 Forecast of Outturn
			Planned contribution to (-) or use of reserve	Contribution to (-) or use of reserve	
	£ million	£ million	£ million	£ million	£ million
Service Grouping Cash Limit					
Adult and Health Services	-5.512	0.000	-0.075	-2.757	-8.344
Children and Young People's Services	-3.309	0.819	-1.819	3.781	-0.528
Regeneration and Local Services	-6.231	0.000	1.149	-0.878	-5.960
Resources	-1.023	0.000	0.128	-0.946	-1.841
Transformation and Partnerships	-0.179	0.000	-0.370	0.283	-0.266
Total Cash Limit Reserve	-16.254	0.819	-0.987	-0.517	-16.939
General Reserve	-23.004	0.000	2.000	-2.973	-23.977

- 11 The forecasted Cash Limit and General Reserves position is a prudent one given the forecasted levels of savings the Council needs to make of £43.5 million over the period 2018/19 to 2021/22 with the delivery of further savings becoming ever more challenging to achieve.
- 12 The reasons for the major variances against the revised budgets are detailed below by each service grouping.

Adult and Health Services (AHS)

- 13 The 2017/18 updated projected outturn for AHS at 31 December 2017 is a cash limit underspend of £2.757 million, representing circa 2.1% of the total budget for AHS. This compares to the quarter 2 forecast of outturn position of a £2.634 million cash limit underspend.
- 14 The projected outturn takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit including redundancy costs which are met from the corporate reserve, capital accounting entries and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves.
- 15 The outturn is a managed position, reflecting the proactive management of activity by Heads of Service across AHS to remain within the cash limit and to prepare for 2018/19 MTFP savings requirements. The outturn position is accounted for as follows:
- (a) early achievement of a number of future years' MTFP savings from management and support service proposals across the Adult Care and related areas, together with the careful management and control of vacant posts and supplies and services budgets across the service, particularly in County Durham Care and Support Services, has created a net underspend for the year of £2.250 million;
 - (b) net spend on adult care packages is £0.408 million under budget. This area of spend is being closely monitored to assess the impact of demographic and procedural/operational changes, where significant MTFP savings have been taken over recent years. Within the adult care budgets there are overspends of £0.887 million on Learning Disability / Mental Health Services, offset by underspends on Older People Services of £1.295 million. A review of Learning Disabilities commissioning processes is currently underway to help to identify further opportunities to maximise value for money and reduce the overspending in this area;
 - (c) net expenditure in respect of Environment, Health and Consumer Protection (EHCP) services, is £99,000 under budget, resulting mainly from early achievement of future years' MTFP savings. A £0.150 million contribution to capital in respect of planned ICT system upgrade costs has been factored into the outturn projection;
 - (d) net expenditure on Public Health-related activity is in line with grant allocations.
- 16 In arriving at the forecast outturn position, a net £2.848 million relating to contributions to reserves has been excluded from the outturn. The major items being a contribution to the social care reserve (£2.766 million), use of the Council's MTFP Redundancy Reserve (£0.178 million), and a net contribution to the Public Health Reserve (£0.193 million).
- 17 Additional funds of £3.593 million have been assigned from contingencies in respect of backdated residential and nursing care fees due to be paid to independent sector providers for 2016/17 and 2017/18, following the completion of fee negotiations as part of the new contract.
- 18 Taking the projected outturn position into account, including the transfer to/from reserves in year, the estimated cash limit reserve to be carried forward for AHS is forecast to be £8.344 million.

Children and Young People's Services (CYPS)

- 19 The updated projected outturn position for CYPS, based on the position to 31 December 2017, is a cash limit overspend of £3.781 million for 2017/18. This represents a 3.6% overspend against the total budget for CYPS and compares to the previously forecast position at quarter 2 of a £3.911 million overspend.
- 20 The projected outturn takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit including redundancy costs which are met from the corporate reserve, capital accounting entries and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves. The outturn position is accounted for as follows:
- (a) Children's Services are forecasting a net overspend of £5.376 million. This is primarily related to costs associated with placements, both those who have a legal status of looked after and those young people in permanent placements that are financially supported by the Council.
- Young people looked after is a volatile and high cost area of activity and current external demographic demands are creating a strain on the service in terms of financial resource allocation. Work is actively being taken to try to address the placement mix, focusing on increasing the proportion of placements in high quality/ low cost in-house foster care by increasing the number of in-house fostering placements. The current Looked After Children (LAC) numbers and mix of placements when combined with non-LAC permanent placements is leading to an overspend of circa £4.91 million;
- (b) Education Services and Operational Support are forecasting a net underspend of £1.595 million. This underspend relates to the early achievement of MTFP savings, staff vacancies, reduced pension liabilities in year, a reduction in the previously forecast overspend on Home to School Transport expenditure, which was previously forecast to overspend by c£0.25 million, and one-off over recovery of income.
- 21 Whilst it was anticipated that LAC numbers and costs would have stabilised in the current year and that the budget would meet demand, having built c£2.735 million growth into the 2017/18 base, it is evident in the short term further additional financial support is required.
- 22 On 21 February 2018 Council agreed the 2018/19 budget as part of Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP(8)) 2018/19 to 2021/22. Budget growth of £4.993 million has been built into the CYPS budgets in 2018/19 to allow numbers of LAC to stabilise and to facilitate the timing issues linked to adjusting the placement mix to reduce future years' costs.
- 23 The additional £4.993 million provided in 2018/19 is offset by forecasts of reductions in LAC related costs in later years of circa £0.5 million in 2019/20 and again in 2020/21. This position will be reviewed as part of MTFP(9), with careful tracking of LAC numbers and placement mix across the coming year. This will inform whether it is financially sustainable to reduce this budget area in future years following the implementation of CYPS LAC placement efficiency plans.

- 24 Taking the projected outturn position into account, including the transfer to/from reserves in year, the estimated cash limit reserve to be carried forward for CYPs is forecast to be £0.528 million at the year end.

Regeneration and Local Services (REAL)

- 25 The updated forecast revenue outturn for 2017/18 is a cash limit underspend of £0.878 million, based on the position to 31 December 2017, after taking account of the forecast use of reserves and items outside the cash limit. This compares to the previous forecast underspend for 2017/18 of £0.983 million based on the position as at the end of 30 September 2017.
- 26 The forecast underspend reflects the proactive management of activity by Heads of Service across Regeneration and Local Services to remain within the cash limit. The main reasons accounting for the outturn position are as follows:
- (a) Direct Services is forecast to be £62,000 underspent to the year end. This is the net effect of early achievement of 2018/19 MTFP savings (£1.080 million) offset by an overspend of £0.590 million on waste disposal contracts, and one off contributions to capital expenditure of £0.430 million relating to Refuse and Recycling;
 - (b) Culture and Sport is forecast to overspend by £0.342 million, mainly due to; an overspend on Events and the Gala Theatre (£0.400 million), an overspend on Leisure Centres (£0.140 million), offset by savings on Libraries (£0.163 million), and staff vacancies (£40,000);
 - (c) Technical Services is predicted to be £22,000 underspent. Within this budget area there is an overspend of £1.3 million within Highway Services, due to additional policy led expenditure on highways maintenance, mainly in relation to Category 1 and 2 defects and footway maintenance. This overspend is however broadly offset by additional surpluses generated within Design Services (£0.400 million), and additional surpluses within Trading activities (£0.928 million).
 - (d) Business Support is forecast to be £0.143 million underspent due to savings on vacant posts and reductions in hours.
 - (e) Transport is forecast to be £0.101 million overspent, mainly due to additional costs of traffic management (£0.190 million), and increased premises costs relating to car parks and bus shelters (£70,000) that are offset by an underspend on bus and rail contracts (£0.140 million);
 - (f) Planning and Assets is predicted to be £0.661 million underspent, accounted for by increased planning fee income (£0.300 million), increased income from the asset disposal programme (£0.210 million) and savings from vacant posts and supplies (£0.150 million) across this service;
 - (g) Economic Development and Housing is predicted to be underspent by £0.207 million. Savings of approximately £0.404 million in Housing Solutions, Business Durham and Visit County Durham are partially offset by overspends in Economic Development associated with the Employability and Skills team (£0.187 million).

- 27 In arriving at the forecast outturn position, £0.339 million relating to contributions to and from reserves and cash limits have been excluded from the outturn. The major items being:
- (a) a £0.271 million draw down from the MTFP redundancy reserve;
 - (b) a net use of earmarked reserves of £0.193 million in respect of Repairs and Maintenance, Community Safety projects, Transport and Culture and Sport;
 - (c) a £43,000 draw down from the Winter Maintenance reserve;
 - (d) a £0.570 million contribution to reserves relating to Economic Development;
 - (e) a £89,000 contribution to reserves relating to Planning;
- 28 £0.222 million that had previously been treated as outside the cash limit relating to Transport (£0.147 million), and Economic Development (£75,000 million) is no longer required and this has been returned to contingencies.
- 29 Taking the projected outturn position into account, including items proposed to be treated as outside the cash limit, the forecasted cash limit reserve to be carried forward for Regeneration and Local Services is £5.960 million.

Resources

- 30 The 2017/18 updated forecast revenue outturn for Resources is a cash limit underspend of £0.946 million. This takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit such as redundancy costs which are met from corporate reserves and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves. The cash limit underspend forecast at quarter 2 was £0.759 million.
- 31 The Heads of Service across Resources continue to proactively manage activity to remain within the cash limit. The projected underbudget position is the net effect of the following items:
- (a) Corporate Finance and Commercial Services is forecast to be underbudget by £0.143 million, relating mainly to managed underspending in Occupational Health (£50,000) and against employees in Procurement (£48,000) and Health and Safety (£47,000) in advance of MTFP savings requirements in 2018/19.
 - (b) Finance and Transactional Services is forecast to be underbudget by £0.386 million, consisting of a managed position on vacancies in relation to the early achievement on 2018/19 MTFP savings and additional Financial Management SLA income (£88,000), offset in part by other minor variances.

- (c) Digital and Customer Services is forecasting to be underbudget by £0.151 million, consisting of an underspend on supplies and services (£0.150 million) in ICT Services and (£47,000) in Customer Services and on employee related expenditure (£0.216 million) in Customer Services and (£83,000) in ICT Services. This has been offset by funding two ICT capital schemes from revenue contributions in 2017/18 (£0.335 million) and a net reduction in income (£22,000) due to withdrawal from Service Level Agreements by a number of schools and also County Durham Housing Group. Additional (one-off) income from NEWCO in respect of telecoms has largely offset this shortfall in income in the current year.
- (d) Internal Audit, Risk and Corporate Fraud is forecast to be underbudget by £32,000, comprising a managed underspend of £20,000 on employees in Corporate Fraud, linked to the early achievement of MTFP savings for 2018/19, and an overachievement of income of £12,000.
- (e) Legal and Democratic Services is forecast to be underbudget by £0.228 million, which includes a £33,000 managed underspend on employees and £35,000 on supplies and services. There is a net over recovery of income (£88,000) after taking into account a reduction in Land Charges income (£0.137 million). This has been possible due to the receipt of (one-off) income from County Durham Housing Group (£51,000) and additional Government Grants. There are also a number of other minor variances in this service area.
- (f) Service Management is forecasting a minor £2,000 overbudget position, which is a minor variance against supplies and services. Central costs are forecast to be underbudget by £12,000.

32 The forecast cash limit outturn shows the position after some £26,000 of net contributions from reserves and cash limits have been applied to finance the following items:

- (a) £8,000 from contingencies to adjust the surplus from the Coroners Service budget;
- (b) £0.418 million from the Corporate MTFP Reserve to fund the cost of early retirements/voluntary redundancies;
- (c) £0.250 million to the ICT Reserve to finance ICT developments and additional costs of software licences;
- (d) £0.300 million contribution to the Revenues and Benefits Reserve to fund the reprocurement of the corporate software;
- (e) £47,000 from the Cash Limit Reserve to fund new software licences following the operating system upgrade required for release 20 of ResourceLink;
- (f) £34,000 from the Elections Reserve to fund County Council and Parliamentary elections;

- (g) £69,000 from the Welfare Rights Reserve to meet the costs of the Welfare Rights Service, which continues to be challenged by the ongoing impact of welfare reforms.

33 Taking the outturn position into account, including items outside the cash limit and transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the cash limit reserve to be carried forward for Resources is forecast to be £1.841 million.

Transformation and Partnerships (T&P)

34 The forecast revenue outturn for 2017/18 is a cash limit overspend £0.283 million for the year after taking account of the forecast use of reserves and items outside the cash limit. The cash limit overspend forecast at quarter 2 was £0.295 million.

35 The main reasons for the projected overspend are as follows:

- (a) The previously planned restructure of the former Assistant Chief Executives service grouping has been delayed following the unitisation of services into T&P. A larger restructure, incorporating both the 2017/18 and 2018/19 savings targets is now planned across the new T&P service grouping. This has resulted in a delay in achieving £0.379 million of the 2017/18 MTFP savings. The net overspend as a result of the savings delay is being covered by the use of managed underspends and the T&P cash limit reserve;
- (b) Partnerships and Community Engagement are forecast to be £0.156 million overbudget, primarily due to a managed overspend on employee costs;
- (c) Strategy is forecast to be £0.103 million underbudget, primarily due to a managed underspend on employee and supplies and services costs;
- (d) Communications and Information Management are forecast to be £0.112 million underbudget, primarily due to a managed underspend on employee related costs;
- (e) Transformation is forecast to be £37,000 underbudget as a result of a managed underspend on employee related costs.

36 In arriving at the forecast cash limit outturn position £11,683 relating to a net contribution from reserves and cash limits have been excluded from the outturn. These are :

- (a) £0.194 million from reserves in respect of early retirement / voluntary redundancy costs associated with MTFP savings;
- (b) £0.139 million contribution to reserves in respect of the remaining Youth Work Support Grant funding to be used by the Area Action Partnerships to support services for young people;
- (c) £43,500 contribution to the Cash Limit Reserve in respect of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board.

- 37 Taking the projected outturn position into account, including items proposed to be treated as outside the cash limit and a transfer of £7,279 from the Regeneration and Local Services cash limit reserve, the total cash limit reserve forecasted to be carried forward for T&P at 31 March 2018 is £0.266 million.

Corporate Costs / Contingencies

- 38 The forecast revenue outturn for 2017/18 for Resources – Centrally Administered Costs is a cash limit underspend of £0.219 million. This takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit such as the use of / contribution to earmarked reserves and compares with the previously forecast position of a £0.271 million underspend at quarter 2.
- 39 The forecast outturn position is accounted for by a net underbudget position on corporate subscriptions (£0.140 million), expenses associated with raising loans (£26,000), de-minimis capital receipts (£50,000); external audit fees (£17,000); payment card fees (£46,000); employees (£43,000) and additional expenditure on professional fees (£5,000). A contribution of £0.110 million was made to the Welfare Assistance Reserve in respect of the welfare reform agenda. MTFP savings are factored into these budget heads for 2018/19.
- 40 The Council has previously made a claim for overpaid output VAT to HMRC in respect of leisure income dating back to November 2010. The claim relates to all leisure services provided at leisure facilities operated by the Council since that date and is being made on the basis that leisure activity is a business activity which is now deemed to be exempt from VAT. To date the Council has been accounting for standard rated VAT on income received from its leisure facilities; the claim being made is to recover this amount of VAT paid to HMRC, plus interest.
- 41 HMRC has indicated that the claim is accepted but at this stage the timing and amount of the payment expected from HMRC is unknown. Any estimate of the sum to be recovered has not been included within this forecast of outturn due to the uncertainties at this stage.

Central Budgets

Interest Payable and Similar Charges - Capital Financing

- 42 Following a review of capital financing costs relating to re-profiling and forecast interest rates, there is a forecast underspend of £0.250 million.

Interest and Investment Income

- 43 The forecast at this stage is an overachievement of income of £1.608 million which is mainly due to higher than forecast level of returns on loan investments and council commercial activities. This includes a one-off dividend contribution of £0.868 million due from the equity shareholding in Newcastle International Airport. A higher target for this income budget has been included in MTFP(8).

Council Earmarked Reserves Forecast

- 44 Earmarked reserves are funds set aside for specific, known or predicted future expenditure. Appendix 4 details the Council and school earmarked reserves showing the opening balance at 1 April 2017, the forecast movement on reserves during the year and the forecast closing balance as at 31 March 2018.
- 45 A summary of the latest forecast of Council reserves (excluding school reserves) is shown below. The summary highlights that the total earmarked and cash limit reserves are forecast to reduce by £10.130 million in 2017/18, from £202.549 million to £192.419 million. This compares with a quarter 2 forecast of a reduction in reserves of £13.396 million. The movement in earmarked reserves is explained in the service grouping commentaries. This utilisation is to be expected as these funds are applied to the expenditure for which they were earmarked.

	Earmarked	Cash Limit	TOTAL
	£ million	£ million	£ million
Opening Earmarked Balances as at 1 April 2017	-186.295	-16.254	-202.549
Adjusted for forecasted increase (-) / use of Earmarked Reserves	10.815	-0.685	10.130
Forecasted Earmarked Reserve Balances as at 31 March 2018	-175.480	-16.939	-192.419

Schools

- 46 Maintained schools have delegated budgets and carry forward accumulated surpluses and deficits from one year to the next. At the end of quarter 2, the forecast balances at 31 March 2018 were for an overall net surplus balance £10.559 million to be carried forward to 2018/19.
- 47 Since quarter 2, schools have completed their mid-year budget reviews, with advice and support from the Schools Finance Team, Resources. Based on these reviews many schools have adjusted their forecasts and the forecast overall net surplus balance to be carried forward has now increased to £12.553 million.
- 48 A breakdown of the quarter 3 forecasts is shown below. The significance of balances above or below 2.5% of funding is that the Council views a balance of at least 2.5% as being appropriate in terms of the ability of schools to cope with unforeseen expenditure during the year.

	Schools forecasting a surplus balance above 2.5% of annual funding		Schools forecasting a surplus balance of less than 2.5% of annual funding		Schools forecasting a deficit balance		Total	
	No.	Forecast Balances £ million	No.	Forecast Balances £ million	No.	Forecast Balances £ million	No.	Forecast Balances £ million
Nursery	10	0.483	-	-	1	-0.010	11	0.473
Alternative Prov	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
Primary	162	12.627	31	0.310	6	-0.171	199	12.766
Secondary	5	1.733	6	0.993	4	-5.056	15	-2.330
Special	7	1.539	2	0.105	-	-	9	1.644
Total	184	16.382	40	1.408	11	-5.237	235	12.553

- 49 At quarter 2, eight schools were forecasting that they would have a deficit balance carried forward at 31 March 2018, totalling an estimated £5.106 million, one of which has now converted to an academy. The current position is that 11 schools are forecasting deficits totalling £5.237 million.
- 50 In setting the 2017/18 budgets 6 schools had been given permission to set deficit budgets by the Corporate Director of Resources:
- (a) The Sacriston Primary was due to convert to an academy in September and did convert. The deficit balance at the point of conversion was £36,000 and this has been charged to the earmarked reserve that was established to offset these costs;
 - (b) Aclet Close Nursery was planning on undertaking a re-structuring in the autumn to allow it to balance its budget. The school is still forecasting a deficit at the end of this year, but is planning to be in surplus by the end of 2018/19;
 - (c) Peterlee St Bede's was expected to progress discussions to join a Multi-Academy Trust in the year, but has not done so. The updated forecasts show that it will not have a deficit balance carried forward at 31 March, despite a significant in-year deficit in terms of its spending commitments vs its in year funding. This school is in significant financial difficulties and discussions are ongoing with the leadership of the school and the Diocese in terms of a long term solution to these issues as the forecasts for future years show that the school will not be able to balance its budgets and will accrue significant deficits which will accumulate in future years; and
 - (d) The Council was taking steps to address longer-term issues with the remaining three schools (Tanfield, Wolsingham and Wellfield secondary schools). Wellfield has seen an increase in pupil numbers and funding (an increase of 16 pupils and £0.410 million) and will be expected to set a balanced in-year budget for 2018/19. As part of the Review of Schools Provision, longer term solutions with regards to the financial position in terms of the accumulated deficit built up by Wellfield are being considered. Tanfield is expected to bring its budget back into balance over the next two to three years and solutions for the ongoing financial difficulties within Wolsingham are being developed as part of the Review of Schools Provision.
- 51 The other six schools with deficits are all either confident of clearing their deficit by the end of 2018/19 or are working towards doing so and will be confirming their position at budget-setting.
- 52 The Schools Finance Team, Resources continues to work with schools to support and provide advice about budget issues, and is currently reviewing budgets in preparation for budget-setting in spring 2018. Where there are concerns about a school's financial viability this is shared with the Education Service so that there is a joined-up approach to resolving these issues.
- 53 In recent years there has been a significant variation between the forecast outturn at quarter 3 that the school has forecast and the final outturn, usually around 35-40% of the quarter 3 forecast, representing around 2% of the original budget gross expenditure:

	Quarter 3 forecast of end-of-year balances £ million	Outturn balances £ million	Difference £ million	Difference as a % of Quarter 3 forecast	Original budget gross expenditure £ million	Difference as a % of original budget gross expenditure
2017/18	12.419	N/A	N/A	N/A	303.944	N/A
2016/17	13.793	19.432	5.639	40.9%	319.840	1.8%
2015/16	17.562	23.880	6.318	36.0%	317.678	2.0%
2014/15	17.672	24.098	6.426	36.4%	305.683	2.1%

54 If this pattern was to be repeated in 2017/18 the potential variation in terms of the outturn for 2017/18 would in the region of £4.5-6.0 million. There are a number of factors that contribute to the historic pattern of actual year end balances exceeding those forecast at quarter 3:

- (a) The mid-year budget reviews, which produce the forecasts that are included in the quarter 3 updates take place throughout the autumn term, starting in early September. The timing of reviews is dependent upon the date of the autumn term governing body meeting and can take place any time from early September to early December, meaning that some take place nearly six months before the end of the financial year;
- (b) The reviews look at the forecast outturn position, but also at the forecast budget for the coming financial year, so that schools can begin staff restructuring exercises as soon as possible where it is clear that the school will need to make savings in order to balance its budget for the coming year. Schools which need to make savings and those whose budget is marginal are prioritised for support over the remainder of the year. Where schools are forecast to be comfortably able to balance their budget for the coming year, (i.e. with a substantial balance to carry forward), then the forecast is unlikely to be reviewed until budget setting in the spring-term, unless spending patterns indicate that the school is getting into financial difficulties;
- (c) Schools may not have made final decisions about spending plans at the time of the review; those most likely to do so are those whose financial position is marginal and are forecast to be in deficit, either at the end of the current year or the following year. For other schools, where spending to date is significantly lower than the budgeted amount or historic spending patterns suggest that a budget line will be substantially underspent, they are challenged by finance support staff assisting in the review about whether the budget should be changed, but the final decision as to whether a change is instigated rests with the school.

Capital

Background

55 On 12 July 2017 Cabinet received a report which provided details of the final outturn position of the 2016/17 Capital Programme. This included details of budgets of £15.375 million that were reprofiled from 2016/17 to 2017/18. Adding these to the new 2017/18 capital allocations approved by Council on 22 February 2017 and the existing 2017/18 budget gives the original budget for 2017/18 that is shown in the table below.

56 The Council's Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) that closely monitors the capital programme has since considered further revisions to the capital programme, taking into account additional resources received by the Council and further requests for reprofiling as Service Management Teams continue to monitor and review their capital schemes.

Current Position

57 The following table summarises the latest capital budget alongside the original budget. The table also shows the forecast outturn for each service and the actual capital spend as at 31 December 2017.

Service Grouping	Original Budget 2017/18 as at May MOWG £ million	Revised Budget 2017/18 Quarter 2 £ million	Amendments recommended by MOWG £ million	Revised Budget 2017/18 Quarter 3 £ million	Projected Outturn 2017/18 £ million	Actual Spend to 31 December 2017 £ million
Adult and Health Services	318	0.320	0.006	0.326	0.326	0.094
Children and Young People's Services	28,765	28.988	-9.163	19.825	19.825	11.318
Regeneration and Local Services	84,257	88.789	-7.545	81.244	81.244	51.230
Resources	16,228	18.118	-11.810	6.308	6.308	4.404
Transformation and Partnerships	4,149	4.510	-0.830	3.680	3.680	1.307
Total	133,717	140.725	-29.342	111.383	111.383	68.352

58 Further to the revised quarter 2 2017/18 budget that was agreed by Cabinet on 15 November 2017 the MOWG has considered a number of variations to the capital programme which are a result of additions and reductions in resources received by the Council. The variations of note are as follows:

Additions

- (a) **REAL - Culture and Sport** – a budget increase of £0.477 million is proposed for the scheme to refurbish Bishop Auckland Town Hall. Of the total some £0.274 million will be funded from REAL reserves and the balance of £0.203 million will be self-financed from an annual contribution of £13,000 from the REAL revenue budget.
- (b) **REAL - Economic Development and Housing** - budget increases totalling £4.094 million are required for two schemes. In the autumn budget the Chancellor announced that additional funds of £42 million would be made available to fund the DFG costs of English authorities. The Council has been informed that its share of this allocation is £0.464 million and has written to the DCLG to accept the offer of additional funds.

In another scheme the Council is providing a short term repayable loan of £3.630 million to facilitate the completion of an office development at Durhamgate North in Spennymoor. The site contains partly completed office units following the insolvency of the previous developer ten years ago. The development will complement the existing Durhamgate development and there is potential for up to 500 jobs to be created at 10 office units. The loan will fund construction costs that are expected to be £0.900 million in 2017/18 and £2.730 million in 2018/19. The developer plans to refinance on completion of the development to repay the Council loan. Security across the land and development has been taken to reduce any risk associated with non repayment of the loan.

- (c) **Resources** – the budget has increased by £0.507 million for four projects. This includes £0.288 million for two ICT schemes - £0.240 million to improve schools internet security through new a web filtering system (funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve) and £48,000 towards the project to replace the Children's Services information system with the Servelec Synergy package. The Servelec Synergy scheme will generate revenue savings and is being funded from the ICT Trading Reserve. A budget increase of £89,000 for the upgrade of the Human Resources/Payroll System will be funded from the Resources Cash Limit Reserve. During the implementation of the Civica Pension system new modules that will improve the efficiency and functionality of the pension service have become available. The £0.130 million costs of implementing these modules will be initially met from the Council's revenue budget then recharged to the Pension Fund.

59 Budget managers continue to challenge and review the programming and phasing of works, which has resulted in the re-profiling of the following budgets in line with anticipated activity in 2017/18:

- (a) **CYPS** - The service has reviewed its budget and proposes the net reprofiling of £9.183 million from 2017/18 to 2018/19, of which £3.113 million relates to Building Schools for the Future (BSF) schemes, £1.242 million to work at Durham Sixth Form College, £0.563 million to unprogrammed Schools Capital Grant works and £0.510 million to the unprogrammed budget for schools devolved capital.

- (b) **REAL – Culture and Sport** - of the £1.748 million that is proposed for reprofiling the majority relates to the Peterlee Library/Leisure Centre co-location project (£1.026 million) and the Bishop Auckland Town Hall refurbishment project (£0.347 million).
- (c) **REAL – Direct Services** - budgets of £3.237 million have been reprofiled to later years. The start to the replacement Household Waste Recycling Centre at Stainton Grove has been delayed and accounts for £1 million of this. Other Strategic Waste Management schemes that have been subject to delay are the Joint Stocks Landfill Site Capping Works (£0.735 million, through a shortfall in availability of third party soil that is required for the works), Leachate Treatment at Coxhoe East Landfill (£0.500 million, where legal and procurement issues have arisen) and Leachate Control and Management at Chapmans Well Landfill (£0.180 million, as delays in Environment Agency agreement to the design mean procurement and construction windows for 2017/18 have been missed).
- (d) **REAL – Economic Development and Housing** - following a review of 2017/18 budgets it is proposed that £4.747 million is reprofiled into later years. The most significant is some £2.730 million of spend on the Durhamgate North office scheme which will be incurred in 2018/19, so needs to be reprofiled. Another significant amount (£0.774 million) concerns the remodelling of the Strategic Office Site at Green Lane Spennymoor, where work is now programmed to follow on from the completion of work at Crook Civic Centre.
- (e) **REAL- Planning and Assets** – net budgets totalling £1.509 million have been identified as requiring reprofiling, with the most significant being the demolitions at Aycliffe Young Peoples Centre (£0.664 million) and Wolsingham School and Community College (£0.487 million). In both cases bat presence on site has caused demolitions to be delayed. The net change includes £0.500 million brought forward from 2018/19 for the power and junction works at Forrest Park.
- (f) **REAL – Technical Services** - The service has reviewed its budget and reprofiled budget of £0.748 million into later years. This includes £0.208 million for the Street Lighting Energy Reduction Programme, £0.136 million for AAP-related traffic schemes and £0.131 million for Traffic and Community Engagement Schemes.
- (g) **Resources** – reprofiling totalling £12.317 million has been identified of which £10.031 million relates to the Digital Durham programme, to enable the development of the scheme from 2018/19.
- (h) **T&P** – there has been a reprofiling of budget of £0.803 million into 2018/19 to reflect the revised development expected for seven community building schemes.

Capital Financing

- 60 The following table summarises the recommended financing of the revised Capital Programme:

Financed By:	Original Budget 2017/18 £ million	Revised Budget 2017/18 - Quarter 2 £ million	Amendments recommended by MOWG £ million	Revised Budget 2017/18 - Quarter 3 £ million
Grants and Contributions	53.135	55.610	-1.913	53.697
Revenue and Reserves	3.000	4.241	1.079	5.320
Capital Receipts	17.700	17.832	-0.241	17.591
Borrowing	59.882	63.042	-28.267	34.775
Total	133.717	140.725	-29.342	111.383

Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Funds

Council Tax

- 61 Council Tax is charged for all residential dwellings in bandings agreed by the Valuation Office Agency, which is part of Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC). Exemptions, reliefs and discounts are awarded dependent upon the state of the property, its use and occupiers' personal circumstances.
- 62 The collection rate at 31 December 2017 was marginally below the profiled target of 84.82%, but is broadly in line with last year, being just 0.06 percentage points below the same position in 2016/17.
- 63 The in-year collection rates to the end of quarter three for the last three years, including the current year, are shown below:

Billing Year	Position at 31 December Each Year %
2017/18	84.70
2016/17	84.76
2015/16	84.47

- 64 The current overall collection rate for 2016/17 council tax liabilities is now 98.02% (compared to 96.69% at 31 March 2017), and for 2015/16 the rate is now 98.60% (compared to 96.32% at 31 March 2016). The Council continues to recover Council Tax from earlier years, and currently the collection rate for all years excluding the current year is 99.60% which is in line with our medium term financial plan forecasts.
- 65 The income shown in the Council Tax Collection Fund is the amount collectable from Council Tax payers over the long term, rather than the actual cash collected in the year the charges are raised. Likely bad debts are accounted for by maintaining a bad debt provision. The amount estimated to be collectable is estimated each year by reference to the actual council tax base for all domestic properties in the county (schedule of all properties, discounts and reliefs) with an allowance for non-collection.

- 66 In November, Cabinet approved the tax base for 2018/19 and in doing so reduced the provision for non-payment, from 1.5% to a prudent 1.0%. This increases the council tax base from 2018/19, generating c£1 million of additional Council tax income within MTFP(8) and reducing the likelihood of Collection Fund surpluses being generated in future years.
- 67 Due to changes in the number of properties (including new build and demolitions), eligibility of discounts and reliefs during the year, the actual amount collectable increases or decreases from the estimate on a dynamic day to day basis. In addition, adjustments for previous billing years take place during each accounting year. All of these adjustments result in the actual amounts collected always being different to the estimate.
- 68 Such differences at the end of each accounting year, after taking into account the calculated change required in the 'bad debt' provision, determine whether a surplus or deficit has arisen, which is then shared proportionately between the Council and its major preceptors, being Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 69 At 31 December 2017, the estimated outturn for the Council Tax Collection Fund is a surplus of £5.712 million as shown in the following table, which takes into account the undeclared surplus as at 31 March 2017. This compares with a previously forecast position of a £5.483 million surplus based on the position to 30 September 2017, which was used for budget setting. Durham County Council's share of this updated forecasted surplus is £4.820 million, £4.727 million of which has been utilised to support the 2018/19 budget.

	£ million
Net Bills issued during Accounting Year 2017/18	303.350
LCTRS and previous years CTB adjustments	-53.139
Calculated change in provision for bad debts required and write offs	-3.197
Net income receivable (a)	247.014
Precepts and Demands	
Durham County Council	195.707
Parish and Town Councils	11.851
Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner	22.952
County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority	13.243
Total Precepts and Demands (b)	243.753
Net Surplus / (-) Deficit for year (a) – (b)	3.261
Undeclared Surplus Brought Forward from 2016/17	2.451
Estimated Year end surplus	5.712

- 70 By 15 January each year, the estimated surplus/deficit on the Collection Fund Council Tax Account is notified to the two major preceptors for inclusion in the budget setting process for the following year as an additional income or expenditure item.
- 71 An estimated year end position on the Council Tax Collection Fund for 2017/18 was declared in the Tax Base Setting report to Cabinet in November 2017 and taken into account in the budget setting process for 2018/19. Any difference between this and the actual surplus at 31 March 2018 and the figures used in the 2018/19 budget setting process will be carried forward and taken into account in estimating the surplus/deficit for 2018/19, which will need to be taken into account for 2019/20 budget setting.
- 72 Over the past four years, the Council Tax provision for bad debts has been increasing steadily. This managed approach has been necessary to minimise the risk of the Council Tax Collection Fund moving into deficit whilst securing the robustness of the levels of provision held. The position has now been reached where maintaining the provision at a prudent level does not prevent the declaration of a surplus. This has been largely offset by reducing the provision for non-payment in the Council Tax Base setting process from 1.5% to 1.0% from 2018/19 onwards.

Business Rates

- 73 2013/14 was the first year of the new Business Rates Retention Scheme whereby the Council has a vested budget interest and stake in the level of business rate yield, as income generated from Business Rates is now shared between Central Government (50%), Durham County Council (49%) and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority (1%). Therefore, it is not only the accuracy and timeliness of bills levied and collected that is monitored and audited, but the level of income anticipated for the year is important and new monitoring procedures have been devised for this purpose.
- 74 In 2017/18, following consultation, the Government implemented the first revaluation of Business Rates since April 2010.
- 75 The revaluation of the rateable values of all Business Properties was undertaken by the Valuation Office Agency, part of HM Revenues and Customs, and, along with national changes to Multipliers, Relief Thresholds and Transitional Arrangements came into effect from April 2017. The overall effect of the revaluation on the Collection Fund saw a decrease of an estimated £9.3 million in rates yield / liability when compared to 2016/17. The revaluation should be cost neutral to Durham County Council and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority, therefore compensation arrangements are to be made through adjustments to Section 31 grants and Top Ups for their shares of losses of income.

- 76 Bills raised, exemptions and reliefs awarded are examined together with local knowledge of anticipated changes in reliefs such as Mandatory Charitable Relief and Discretionary Rate Relief on a monthly basis to enable a comparison with the January 2017 estimate of 2017/18 Business Rates income that was used for budget setting purposes. At 31 December 2017, the estimated outturn for the Collection Fund Business Rates is a surplus of £6.179 million, as shown in the following table, which takes into account the undeclared surplus as at 31 March 2017 and compares to the previously forecast position of a £5.876 million surplus based on the position to 30 September 2017.

	£ Million
Net rate yield for 2017/18 including previous year adjustments	107.567
Estimate of changes due to appeals lodged and future appeals	-2.272
Estimated losses in Collection – Provision for Bad Debts and Write-offs	-1.150
Net income receivable (a)	104.145
Agreed allocated shares	
Central Government (50%)	49.646
Durham County Council (49%)	48.653
County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority (1%)	0.993
Cost of Collection Allowance and Renewable Energy (paid to Durham County Council)	0.684
Total fixed payments (b)	99.976
Net surplus for year (a) – (b)	4.160
Undeclared Surplus brought forward from 2016/17	2.010
Estimated year end Surplus	6.179

- 77 The estimated surplus of £6.179 million at 31 March 2018 is made up of the in-year estimated surplus and the undeclared surplus brought forward from 2016/17. Any surpluses or deficits at 31 March in any year are shared proportionately between Durham County Council, Central Government and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue, Durham County Council's share being 49%. Durham County Council's share of the estimated year end surplus will therefore be £3.028 million.
- 78 The payment profile on collection performance is changing due to more businesses opting to spread their payments over 12 months rather than ten. The major Business Rate Payers have all opted to take up this opportunity to re-profile their cash flow. However, robust collection procedures have enabled the setting of a challenging collection rate target of 83.04% at 31 December 2017, which has been exceeded.

- 79 The in-year collection rates in quarter three for the last three years, including the current year, are shown below:

Billing Year	Position at 31 December Each Year %
2017/18	83.52
2016/17	83.04
2015/16	82.95

- 80 In year performance to 31 December 2017 shows a collection rate of 83.52%, which is above the target by 0.48 percentage points. The current overall collection rate for 2016/17 business rate liabilities is now 99.02% (compared to 97.40% at 31 March 2017) and for 2015/16 business rate liabilities is now 99.49% (compared to 97.20% at 31 March 2016). The Council continues to recover Business Rates from earlier years and currently, the collection rate for all years excluding the current year is 99.33% which is line with our medium term financial plan forecasts.

Section 31 Grant - Small Business Rate Relief

- 81 Small Business Ratepayers with properties with rateable values under £15,000 will now benefit from relief on their rates payable. The Government has awarded local authorities a special 'Section 31' grant to cover their share of the shortfall in business rates that these small business ratepayers would have paid had the relief scheme not been in place.
- 82 Small Business Ratepayers with properties with rateable values up to £12,000 are now being granted full relief, and properties with rateable values between £12,000 and £15,000 have a tapered relief applied to them ranging from 100% down to 0%. The Government have made a commitment to refund local authorities for any retained rates foregone due to change of the threshold arrangements following the 2017/18 NNDR Revaluation, and this has been built into the forecast.
- 83 The Government has made a commitment to paying Section 31 grant for any additional Small Business Rate Relief in respect of business rates bills and adjustments thereof relating to the period commencing 1 April 2013. Any adjustments that relate to bills for years prior to this will be dealt with as part of the normal Rate Retention shares. At 31 December 2017, the gross Small Business Relief awarded against 2017/18 Business Rates bills and adjustments to 2016/17, 2015/16, 2014/15 and 2013/14 bills is £14.041 million, and the Council will receive £4.558 million in Section 31 Grant, including the capping adjustment and threshold change adjustments, in this regard.

Other Section 31 Grants

- 84 In the Autumn Statements of 2013, 2014 and 2015, additional Business Rate Reliefs have been announced for each following financial year for which Section 31 Grants would be payable. These included reliefs for properties empty from new, reoccupation of long-term empty properties and an additional relief for small shops. Durham County Council will be recompensed for any retained rates foregone because of reliefs given.

- 85 In the Autumn Statement 2016 and the Spring Budget 2017, following consultation on the 2017/18 NNDR revaluation, further additional Business Rate Relief Schemes were announced, on which Section 31 Grants would be payable from April 2017. These further relief schemes included Rural Rate Relief and Local Newspaper Reliefs in the Autumn Statement 2016, followed by Supporting Small Business, Local Discretionary Relief Scheme and Pub Relief in the Spring Budget 2017. Funding for these schemes has been provided through Section 31 grants.
- 86 Despite the delay in Government releasing details of these schemes, Cabinet approved the Council's Local Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme in July and the necessary software amendments have been made to enable all three schemes to be implemented. All businesses who have been identified as being eligible have had the relief applied, with the Local Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme being amended by Cabinet in February 2018 to ensure that the full value of funding available for this scheme is awarded to businesses in County Durham.
- 87 When assessing estimated outturn income from Business Rates, due regard must also be given on the effect that changes in estimated reliefs will have on the Section 31 grants. At 31 December 2017, the increase in Durham County Council's Section 31 Grants (including Small Business Rate Relief) was £0.863 million.
- 88 Whilst the increase in Section 31 grants is accounted for in 2017/18, the surplus on Business Rates retention is accounted for in 2018/19.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 89 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (a) note the Council's overall financial position for 2017/18;
 - (b) agree the proposed 'sums outside the cash limit' for approval;
 - (c) agree the revenue and capital budget adjustments;
 - (d) note the forecast use of Earmarked Reserves;
 - (e) note the forecast end of year position for the Cash Limit and General Reserves;
 - (f) note the position on the Capital Programme and the Collection Funds in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates.

Background Papers

- County Council – 22 February 2017 – Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2017/18.
- Cabinet – 12 July 2017 - 2016/17 Final Outturn for General Fund and Collection Fund.
- Cabinet – 13 September 2017 - Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2017/18 – Period to 30 June 2017.
- Cabinet – 15 November 2017 - Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2017/18 – Period to 30 September 2017.

Contact:	Jeff Garfoot	Tel: 03000 261946
	Paul Darby	Tel: 03000 261930

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance -

The report details the 2017/18 forecast of outturn position for Revenue and Capital and details the forecast movement on Reserves.

Staffing -

None

Risk -

The figures contained within this report have been extracted from the General Ledger, and have been scrutinised and supplemented with information supplied by the Service Management Teams and budget holders. The projected outturn has been produced taking into consideration spend to date, trend data and market intelligence, and includes an element of prudence. This, together with the information supplied by Service Management Teams and budget holders, helps to mitigate the risks associated with achievement of the forecast outturn position.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty -

None

Accommodation -

None

Crime and Disorder -

None

Human Rights -

None

Consultation -

None

Procurement -

None

Disability Issues -

None

Legal Implications -

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Council's Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements. This report shows the forecast spend against budgets agreed by Council in February 2017 in relation to the 2017/18 financial year. The forecasts contained within this report have been prepared in accordance with standard accounting policies and procedures.

Appendix 2: Revenue Summary 2017/18

	Original Budget 2017/18	Revised Budget	Proposed Budget Revisions	Cash Limit Reserve	Contribution to / Use of Earmarked Reserves	Budget - incorporating adjustments	Service Groupings Forecast of Outturn	Forecasted Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult and Health Services	151,581	132,348	3,443	0	-2,849	132,942	130,185	-2,757
Children and Young People's Services	98,963	115,841	464	0	-3,032	113,273	117,054	3,781
Regeneration and Local Services	126,024	129,722	-128	-18	-132	129,444	128,566	-878
Resources	16,628	19,296	-6	47	-29	19,308	18,362	-946
Transformation and Partnerships	8,716	11,768	139	-44	55	11,918	12,201	283
Cash Limit Position	401,912	408,975	3,912	-15	-5,987	406,885	406,368	-517
Contingencies	5,422	4,702	-3,982		0	720	720	0
Corporate Costs	3,990	4,095	0	0	-110	3,985	3,766	-219
NET COST OF SERVICES	411,324	417,772	-70	-15	-6,097	411,590	410,854	-736
Capital charges	-57,113	-57,113				-57,113	-57,113	0
Interest and Investment income	-1,700	-1,700				-1,700	-3,308	-1,608
Interest payable and similar charges	38,108	38,586	70	3	1,153	39,812	39,562	-250
Levies	15,979	15,979				15,979	15,979	0
Net Expenditure	406,598	413,524	0	-12	-4,944	408,568	405,974	-2,594
Funded By:								
Council tax	-195,706	-195,706				-195,706	-195,706	0
Use of earmarked reserves	-18,185	-24,086			4,944	-19,142	-19,142	0
Estimated net surplus on Collection Fund	-3,000	-3,000				-3,000	-3,000	0
Start up Funding Assessment	-172,364	-172,364				-172,364	-172,364	0
New Homes Bonus	-8,882	-8,882				-8,882	-8,883	-1
New Homes Bonus - Re-imbursement	-267	-267				-267	-283	-16
Section 31 Grant	-5,875	-5,875				-5,875	-6,738	-863
Education Services Grant	-1,500	-1,500				-1,500	-1,516	-16
Forecast contribution to/from(-) Cash Limit Reserve	-819	156		12		168	685	517
Forecast contribution to/from (-) General Reserves	0	-2,000				-2,000	973	2,973
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix 3: Revenue Summary by Expenditure / Income for the period ended 31 March 2018

	Original Budget 2017/18	Revised Budget	Proposed Budget Revisions	Agreed Budget	Service Groupings Forecast of Outturn	Corporate Costs	Sums Outside the Cash Limit	Cash Limit Reserve	Contribution to / Use of Earmarked Reserves	Revised Service Outturn	Forecasted Variance (including Corporate Costs)	Forecasted Variance - Corporate Costs
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employees	501,630	527,563	1,303	528,866	522,769	675	-628	23	-635	522,204	-6,662	-43
Premises	51,282	53,159	311	53,470	53,652	0	0	0	-37	53,615	145	0
Transport	41,578	40,985	-442	40,543	40,979	0	0	0	-75	40,904	361	0
Supplies & Services	117,755	122,315	3,176	125,491	125,067	1,149	112	-80	-80	126,168	677	-237
Agency & Contracted	321,720	322,402	4,851	327,253	340,177	2,280	183	54	930	343,624	16,371	0
Transfer Payments	208,855	217,934	225	218,159	217,587	0	0	0	0	217,587	-572	0
Central Costs	89,345	110,666	-20,988	89,678	89,953	110	0	0	2,836	92,899	3,221	110
DRF	710	1,014	91	1,105	1,736	0	0	0	0	1,736	631	0
Other	0	0	0	0	61	0	0	0	0	61	61	0
Capital Charges	57,113	57,113	0	57,113	57,113	0	0	0	0	57,113	0	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE	1,389,988	1,453,151	-11,473	1,441,678	1,449,094	4,214	-333	-3	2,939	1,455,911	14,233	-170
Income												
Government Grants	568,850	626,295	-17,349	608,946	609,639	249	-1	0	-358	609,529	-583	0
Other Grants and Contributions	75,964	74,522	695	75,217	80,465	0	-2	-38	-2,251	78,174	-2,957	0
Sales	9,308	8,039	-197	7,842	7,565	200	0	0	0	7,765	77	-50
Fees and Charges	107,513	110,457	52	110,509	111,724	-1	-1	0	2	111,724	-1,215	1
Rents	7,774	8,112	-3	8,109	8,455	0	0	0	0	8,455	-346	0
Recharges To Other Services	205,043	205,449	388	205,837	214,853	0	0	20	203	215,076	-9,239	0
Other	9,634	7,207	1,358	8,565	10,025	0	0	0	-754	9,271	-706	0
Total Income	984,086	1,040,081	-15,056	1,025,025	1,042,726	448	-4	-18	-3,158	1,039,994	-14,969	-49
NET EXPENDITURE	405,902	413,070	3,583	416,653	406,368	3,766	-329	15	6,097	415,917	-736	-219

Appendix 4: Earmarked Reserves Position as at 31 December 2017

	EARMARKED RESERVES AND CASH LIMIT RESERVES	SERVICE GROUPING	2016/17	USE OF	CONTRIBUTION	TRANSFERS	TOTAL	2017/18
			CLOSING BALANCE	RESERVES	TO RESERVES	BETWEEN RESERVES	MOVEMENT ON RESERVES	CLOSING BALANCE AS AT 31 DEC 2017
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1	T&P AAP/Members Reserve	T&P	-2,482	870	0	0	870	-1,612
2	T&P Grant Reserve	T&P	-1,172	86	-139	-60	-113	-1,285
3	T&P Operational Reserve	T&P	-890	156	-9	-147	0	-890
4	T&P Transformation Reserve	T&P	0	0	-2,000	0	-2,000	-2,000
5	Social Care Reserve	AHS	-6,337	411	-16,097	581	-15,105	-21,442
6	Public Health Reserve	AHS	-3,436	3,098	-885	4	2,217	-1,219
7	Env. Health and Consumer Protection Reserve	AHS	-708	62	-67	0	-5	-713
8	Children's Services Reserve	CYPS	-4,985	2,386	-588	1,819	3,617	-1,368
9	Education Reserve	CYPS	-10,230	1,153	-821	0	332	-9,898
10	Neighbourhoods AAP Reserve	REAL	-45	0	0	0	0	-45
11	Direct Services Reserve	REAL	-2,605	362	-684	0	-322	-2,927
12	Culture and Sport Reserve	REAL	-2,531	675	-164	0	511	-2,020
13	Strategic Waste Reserve	REAL	-136	0	0	136	136	0
14	Technical Services Reserve	REAL	-4,631	300	0	-102	198	-4,433
15	Business Growth Fund Reserve	REAL	-764	718	-749	0	-31	-795
16	Economic Development Reserve	REAL	-2,164	747	-25	0	722	-1,442
17	Planning Reserve	REAL	-1,516	309	-65	0	244	-1,272
18	North Pennines AONB Partnership Reserve	REAL	-328	0	0	0	0	-328
19	Employability and Training Reserve	REAL	-125	114	0	0	114	-11
20	REAL Match Fund Programme Reserve	REAL	-1,735	80	0	0	80	-1,655
21	Housing Regeneration Reserve	REAL	-1,091	71	0	0	71	-1,020
22	Housing Solutions Reserve	REAL	-1,327	133	-169	-100	-136	-1,463
23	Restructure Reserve	REAL	-114	0	0	0	0	-114
24	Transport Reserve	REAL	-207	0	0	0	0	-207
25	Funding and Programmes Management Reserve	REAL	-390	0	0	0	0	-390
26	Customer Services Reserve	Resources	-210	0	0	-136	-136	-346
27	Resources Corporate Reserve	Resources	-978	0	0	500	500	-478
28	Resources DWP Grant Reserve	Resources	-1,681	69	-235	-150	-316	-1,997
29	Resources System Development Reserve	Resources	-725	725	0	-500	225	-500
30	Resources Housing Benefit Subsidy Reserve	Resources	-433	0	0	0	0	-433
31	Resources Revenue and Benefits Reserve	Resources	-300	300	-200	-375	-275	-575
32	Resources Legal Expenses Reserve	Resources	-200	0	0	0	0	-200
33	Resources Legal Services Reserve	Resources	-154	0	0	0	0	-154
34	Resources Elections Reserve	Resources	-1,010	597	0	0	597	-413
35	Resources ICT Reserves	Resources	-959	421	-250	0	171	-788
36	Human Resources Reserve	Resources	-97	0	0	-310	-310	-407
37	Equal Pay Reserve	Corporate Fin	-20,140	306	0	203	509	-19,631
38	Insurance Reserve	Corporate Fin	-9,991	0	0	0	0	-9,991
39	Performance Reward Grant Reserve	Corporate Fin	-638	400	0	0	400	-238
40	MTFP Redundancy and Early Retirement Reserve	Corporate Fin	-12,822	3,871	0	0	3,871	-8,951
41	Office Accommodation Project Support Reserve	Corporate Fin	-77	0	0	0	0	-77
42	Budget Support Reserve	Corporate Fin	-42,622	12,622	0	0	12,622	-30,000
43	Office Accommodation Capital Reserve	Corporate Fin	-40,645	0	0	-677	-677	-41,322
44	Inspire Programme Reserve	Corporate Fin	-2,664	1,247	0	987	2,234	-430
	Total Earmarked Reserves		-186,295	32,289	-23,147	1,673	10,815	-175,480
	Cash Limit Reserves							
45	Adult and Health Services		-5,512	0	-2,757	-75	-2,832	-8,344
46	Children and Young People's Services		-3,309	819	3,781	-1,819	2,781	-528
47	Regeneration and Local Services		-6,231	535	-878	614	271	-5,960
48	Resources		-1,023	194	-946	-66	-818	-1,841
49	Transformation and Partnerships		-179	-43	283	-327	-87	-266
	Total Cash Limit Reserves		-16,254	1,505	-517	-1,673	-685	-16,939
	Total Council Reserves		-202,549	33,794	-23,664	0	10,130	-192,419
	Schools' Balances							
Sch 1	Schools' Revenue Balance	CYPS	-19,836	7,263	0	0	7,263	-12,573
Sch 2	DSG Reserve	CYPS	-11,159	1,066	0	0	1,066	-10,093
	Total Schools and DSG Reserve		-30,995	8,329	0	0	8,329	-22,666

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Cabinet

14 March 2018



**Update on the delivery of the
Medium Term Financial Plan 7**

Report of Corporate Management Team

**Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships
Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council and all Cabinet
collectively**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides an update on the progress made at the end of December 2017 on the delivery of the 2017/18 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP7).

Background

- 2 Cabinet has received regular updates on the progress made by the Council in delivering the financial targets within the MTFP since 2011/12.
- 3 Council agreed MTFP7 in February 2017 and for 2017/18 the savings target was just over £23 million. This forms part of the overall savings target for the period from 2011/12 to 2019/20 of around £250 million per annum.

Progress to date

- 4 Previous reports have described our robust approach to the delivery of savings, in which savings are delivered early where this is practical and not additionally detrimental to service delivery.
- 5 By the end of December 2017 over 94% of the savings target for MTFP7 had been met with just over £22 million of savings having been achieved. This is a significant achievement considering our total savings delivered since April 2011 is over £211 million per annum including public health savings and the identification of proposals for future savings is becoming increasingly challenging.
- 6 It is recognised however, that on occasions plans may need to change due to unforeseen circumstances which could delay when savings are made. However through the regular monitoring of our MTFP we are able to ensure delivery of saving through the prudent use of cash limits, ensuring we hit our overall savings targets and remain within budget limits.

Consultation

- 7 As members are aware consultation with the public and other stakeholders remains an important element in the MTFP programme. Whilst there were no consultations planned for this period for specific MTFP proposals, a wide-ranging consultation programme was carried out at AAP boards and forums, and several public events across the county in October and November 2017.

HR implications

- 8 We accepted 67 ER/VR applications as a result of the MTFP proposals during this period.
- 9 Since 2011 a total of 1,446 ER/VR applications have been accepted, 704 vacant posts deleted and 570 compulsory redundancies (CR) made.
- 10 Data relating to staff leaving through ER/VR during this single quarter showed that 93% were female and 7% were male, however, relatively few staff (28 people) left the authority over this period. So far this financial year, of the staff that have left the organisation through ER/VR as a result of MTFP proposals, 75% have been female and 25% male. This proportion of female leavers is higher than the overall organisational breakdown which shows around 64% of staff are female¹.
- 11 7% of leavers had not disclosed their ethnicity and the remaining 93% were white British. Regarding disability status 7% said they had a disability, 32% had no disability and 61% did not disclose their disability status.
- 12 In this quarter no one left the authority through a compulsory redundancy. However, of the staff that have left the organisation through compulsory redundancy as a result of MTFP proposals, 52% have been female and 48% male. This proportion of male leavers is higher than the overall organisational breakdown which shows around 36% of staff are male¹.
- 13 The Council continues to support employees affected by the MTFP savings plans and the total number of staff who have been redeployed is 442 since the process started.
- 14 At the end of December 2017 we had 128 open expressions of interest for ER/VR.

Equality Impact Assessments

- 15 Equality impact assessments (EIA) form a key part of the ongoing MTFP process. A number of initial screenings for new savings and updated EIAs for ongoing savings were provided to Cabinet ahead of the budget setting decision in February 2017. They are updated during the year to take account of consultation responses and additional evidence; the updates also include information on any mitigating actions.

¹ As at 31 March 2017

- 16 The impact assessments and action plans are considered during decision making processes, for example, updated EIAs are provided where Cabinet receive a report ahead of consultation and where a further report is received with any final recommendations.

Recommendations and reasons

- 17 Whilst the Government's austerity programme is due to continue for several more years, the Council continues to be in a strong financial position to meet the ongoing challenges, whilst recognising these are becoming increasingly challenging. Through the robust management process supporting the MTFP ensures we remain ahead of the savings target requirements and continue to minimise impact on frontline services wherever possible.
- 18 For MTFP7 the Council has already delivered over £22 million of the savings required (94%), and in total has now delivered over £211 million in savings since 2011.
- 19 Cabinet is recommended to:
- (a) note the contents of this report and progress made in delivering MTFP7.

Contact: Andy Palmer Tel: 03000 268551

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The delivery of the MTFP involves cumulative annual saving of approximately £250million over the period from 2011 to 2020 of which over £206 million has been delivered to date. This figure now also includes savings delivered in Public Health.

Staffing – Where the proposals affect staff, full consultation is undertaken and the trade unions consulted. Wherever possible, staff reductions are done through voluntary means. In addition, there has been a proactive management of vacancies to lessen the impact on staff and the Council has a redeployment process which continues to find alternative employment for a number of staff.

Risk – The delivery of the MTFP is highlighted as one of the Council's strategic risks and is monitored through the corporate risk management process. In addition, risks for individual proposals are being monitored through the work undertaken to deliver the proposal.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken for the original 4 year MTFP plan and additional screening was undertaken for proposals which have been identified for subsequent MTFPs, together with any other changes made to the original plan. In addition, for each proposal an EIA is undertaken as part of the decision-making before the proposal is implemented.

Accommodation – As proposals are planned the impact on accommodation is ascertained, with staff being consulted on any moves as part of the process. The loss of over 2,578 posts from the Authority will mean a requirement for less accommodation and the Office Accommodation Team has built this into the Office Accommodation Strategy.

Crime and Disorder – N/A.

Human Rights – N/A.

Consultation – A full consultation with a range of stakeholders was undertaken on the MTFP prior to its agreement and again in 2013. This exercise has been undertaken again in November 2017. In addition, where appropriate for individual proposals, internal and external consultation plans are developed so that consultation informs the decision making process.

Procurement – A number of the proposals involve the changing of existing contracts and this work is being taken forward through the Council's agreed procurement processes.

Disability Issues – Any disability impacts are being picked up through the Equality Impact Assessments undertaken.

Legal Implications – The legal implications of any decisions required are being considered as part of the delivery of the proposals.

Cabinet**14 March 2018****Quarter Three 2017/18
Performance Management Report**

Report of Corporate Management Team
Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships
Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present progress against the council's corporate performance framework by Altogether priority theme for the third quarter of the 2017/18 financial year.

Summary

- 2 Despite the ongoing financial pressures placed on the council, we continue to improve or maintain performance in some key areas. The employment rate has continued to improve and remains better than the regional rate. Youth unemployment has decreased although apprenticeship starts for 16 to 17 year olds was lower than last year. There is a continuing trend of more new homes completed and empty properties brought back into use. In relation to children's social care, the number of looked after children continues to show early indication that demand may be plateauing. In terms of adult social care, we continue to have low levels of delayed transfers of care from hospital, having the fourth lowest rate in the country. Anti-social behaviour continues to decrease and first time entrants to the youth justice system have been reducing over time. We continue to divert almost all of our waste from landfill and our street and environmental cleanliness is generally good.
- 3 Performance challenges and increasing needs or demand are similar to those previously reported at quarter two. Children's social care demand continues to be high with more children on a child protection plan, now the highest rate since first reported in 2014. Social worker caseload levels remain high and quality of casework files requires further improvement. Fewer children have been adopted from care or with foster placements and the use of external residential placements for looked after children has stabilised over the last year but remains high. Challenges are ongoing in relation to the health of the county, with the rate of mothers smoking at time of delivery and breastfeeding prevalence both worse than national levels. There are more overweight or obese adults compared nationally and regionally and almost one in four children are overweight or obese at reception, rising to more than one in three at year six. The rate of suicides in County Durham remains significantly higher than the national level and recorded crime continues to increase. Fly-tipping incidents show a further increase and ongoing improvement issues continue in the rate of employee appraisals and sickness absence levels. Processing

times of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests remain below the national target.

Performance Reporting Arrangements for 2017/18

- 4 Our performance reporting arrangements have been developed around a series of key performance questions aligned to the Altogether framework of six priority themes, and are designed to facilitate greater scrutiny of performance. The set of performance measures provides an indication to help answer these questions for those with corporate governance responsibilities. Development of performance reporting will continue throughout the year in particular to enhance reporting of qualitative aspects of performance as highlighted by the 2016 Ofsted inspection.
- 5 There are other areas of performance that are measured through more detailed monitoring across service groupings and if performance issues arise, these will be escalated for consideration by including them in the corporate report on an exception basis.
- 6 The performance indicators are still 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; and
 - (b) key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set for indicators which are long-term and/or which the council and its partners only partially influence.
- 7 This report sets out our key performance messages from data released this quarter. A visual summary per Altogether priority theme presents key data messages from the new performance framework showing the latest position in trends and how we compare with others. A comprehensive table of key performance questions and performance data is presented in Appendix 4. An explanation of symbols used and the groups we use to compare ourselves is in Appendix 2.
- 8 To support the complete indicator set, a guide is available which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources for the 2017/18 corporate indicator set. This is available to view and can be requested from the Corporate Planning and Performance Team at performance@durham.gov.uk.

Key Performance Messages from Data Released this Quarter

Altogether Wealthier

- 9 Most key wealthier measures are progressing well. The employment rate has continued to improve and remains better than the regional rate but below the national rate. For the last two quarters, full-time employment has increased and is now above regional and national levels. The number of 18 to 24 year olds claiming out of work benefits has decreased from the previous quarter and the same quarter last year. The proportion of 16 to 17 year olds in an apprenticeship in County Durham in September 2017 was lower than last year

but above the England average and in line with the North East average. Apprenticeships sustained for 15 months or more from Durham County Council schemes have increased since last year.

- 10 Successful council intervention on housing development continues with a higher number of both empty properties brought back into use and new homes completed than last year. The number of statutory homelessness preventions has increased since last year. Co-ordinated work continues with internal and external partners and agencies assisting those clients approaching the service with a general housing need.
- 11 The latest provisional figures indicate that the level of Gross Value Added (GVA) in County Durham was considerably lower than the England level and also lower than the North East level. However, GVA in the county has grown at a stronger rate than both the England overall and the North East overall since 2001.
- 12 Members will be aware that the government has recently released a document that models the 15-year impact on the economy of each region in the UK following Brexit. This forecast uses three scenarios: the UK staying in the single market, entering into a trade deal with the European Union or leaving the EU without a deal. These forecasts show that under each of these scenarios, the economy in the North East will be the region that is most adversely affected. The government has said that the analysis is preliminary and crucially does not measure the impact of the UK's preferred option of a bespoke trade agreement covering goods and services. The House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee has an ongoing inquiry into the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU and the role local authorities could play post-Brexit. This inquiry is timetabled to run up until the date of exit from the European Union in March 2019. The Council has identified potential adverse effects on the economy, safety and welfare and loss of European funding following the UK's exit from the European Union as an emerging risk. Whilst there is still uncertainty, about the impacts on the county, developments are being monitored and preliminary mitigations are being identified.

Altogether Better for Children and Young People

- 13 In line with Ofsted findings, work continues to improve children's services in Durham across four key areas: political and management oversight; management and staffing capacity; improving the quality of social work practice; and compliance with regulations.

Universal Services and Early Help

We continue to perform well across some key areas of universal services and early help but there are some areas for improvement. Final figures for 2016/17 educational attainment show mixed performance for children in County Durham across the four different key stages. Achievement at both Early Years Foundation Stage and A level has improved and is better than national and regional benchmarks. Key stage 2 achievement has improved and is better than national and in line with the region average.

Attainment 8 result (key stage 4) is in line with the regional average but below the national average and an area for improvement (see Appendix 8). At key stage 2 the achievement gap between Durham disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally is slightly worse than last year, however, is either in line with or better than the regional, national and statistical neighbour benchmarking data. At key stage 4, Durham's attainment gap is slightly worse than national data but better than the regional average.

- 14 Improvement continues with slightly more children aged 0 to 2 years in deprived areas (89.6%) registered with a children's centre and having sustained contact compared to last year (88%). In relation to child health, under 18 conceptions continue to reduce; they are now at the lowest level since recording began in 1998 but still remain significantly higher than in England.
- 15 Progress has been made with timeliness of education health and care plans (EHCPs) for children with special educational needs and disabilities however, this is not achieving target. Performance is impacted upon by the poor performance at quarter one, and will continue to do so throughout the reporting year as performance against this indicator is reported cumulatively. Data for the third quarter alone (October to December) has seen 95.1% of EHCPs completed in timescale, achieving the 90% target, demonstrating that the remedial measures put in place in the first quarter have been effective. Ofsted and the CQC inspected local area services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Durham in November 2017. Durham County Council and the CCG have been asked by the inspectorates to submit a plan of action on how they intend to improve services. Durham was one of 18 authorities with a similar result and the national position is shown in Appendix 9.
- 16 The key performance issue continuing from the last two quarters is the number of families benefiting from the Stronger Families Programme. The family intervention programme has a target to engage with 4,360 families and successfully turn them around¹ by March 2020. Up to January 2018, 30.3% (1,323) have been successfully turned around, however, the profiled target of 50.4% (2,197) has not been met. The funding continues to be split between upfront attachment fees (£1,000 per family), and payment-by-results (£800 per family) that is released once families are turned around. The annual attachment target for 2017/18 is to work with a total of 3,367 families by March 2018. As of the end of September 2017, the programme has worked with a total of 4,772 families; this currently exceeds the 2017/18 attachment target by 1,405 families. An action plan has been agreed and is being implemented to get performance on track.
- 17 New data released this quarter highlight two performance issues:

¹ Turned around is a national term and refers to families who have benefitted from successful interventions which aims to assist individuals in a family to achieve reductions in crime/antisocial behaviour, improve school attendance or move back into employment through the Stronger Families Programme.

- (a) Free school meal eligibility;
- (b) Childhood obesity.

- 18 The free school meal (FSM) eligibility and claim rate has been introduced as a child poverty proxy measure, reported for the first time this quarter. The percentage of pupils eligible for and claiming FSM is 20.2%, which remains the same as the previous academic year, is similar to regional but higher than national averages. The total number of Durham children taking their free school meal on 2017 census day was 10,751. This equates to a take up rate of 83% for the 2016/17 cohort of 12,959 pupils, which is similar to national and slightly below regional.
- 19 New childhood obesity figures have been released and almost one in four Durham children are overweight or obese at reception (aged four to five years), and it rises to more than one in three at year six (aged 10 to 11 years). Excess weight amongst both reception and year six children in Durham are higher than those nationally. A recent review of the Family Initiate Supporting Children's Health weight management programme identified the potential benefit of lowering the age range for delivery of the programme to school years 1 to 2 rather than in years 4 and 5. The council is working with partners in Early Years settings to promote healthy eating and good oral health and to engage these settings in the Sugar Smart Durham campaign.

Assessment and Safeguarding Services

- 20 Improvement has continued in the re-referral rate with 647 of 3,886 children in need referrals occurring within 12 months of the previous referral, equating to 16.6%. Performance has improved greatly on the same period last year (21%) and is lower than national, regional and statistical neighbour comparisons.
- 21 Progress has been made with regards to the timeliness of initial child protection conferences (ICPC)², but this is still a performance issue from the previous two quarters. Data for the third quarter alone has seen 79% of ICPCs taking place within 15 working days of the first strategy meeting, exceeding the target of 75%.
- 22 As at the 31 December 2017, there were 541 children subject to a child protection plan, which equates to a rate of 53.9 (per 10,000 under 18 population), the highest rate since first reporting in 2014 (see appendix 5, chart 3). Although Durham's rate remains lower than the North East it is higher than the national average. Child neglect³ represents the largest proportion (73% of children subject to a child protection plan as at December 2017 were the result of neglect).
- 23 There are continued performance issues that still need to be addressed and kept under greater scrutiny:

² An initial child protection conference (ICPC) must be convened following a Section 47 enquiry to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child who is suspected of, or likely to be, suffering significant harm.

³ This trend is in line with the national picture. For more details, see DfE [Characteristics of children in need: 2016-2017 England](#).

- (a) Social worker caseload levels;
- (b) Quality of assessment and casefiles.

- 24 Progress has been made with caseload levels per social worker, improving from the baseline of February 2016, when the Ofsted inspection took place; social workers with fewer than 20 cases have improved from 41% to 48%. Further progress is still required and the council continues to monitor staffing including vacancy levels and ratios of cases to social workers. The strategy to grow and nurture our own social workers is proving to be successful, with no shortage of newly qualified workers applying to the Social Work Academy. Although this is not a short term solution to social worker shortages, over the next few months, this will greatly reduce the vacancy level. Improvements in social worker caseloads are limited by increases in demand for services with 300 additional cases open compared to the same date in 2016. This equates to a caseload of 20 for an additional 15 social workers. The average number of cases children's social workers deal with at any one time in England has risen to nearly 18 (17.8 as of 30 September 2017) up from 16.1 the year before - an increase of 1.7 cases, according to Department of Education. However the figures should be viewed with caution. Information on social worker caseloads was first collected on a mandatory basis last year - but that differences in the way this year's data was measured means it is not comparable to previous years.
- 25 Between October and December 2017, 74 case file audits were undertaken within statutory children's social work teams. Of these, 40 (54%) were judged to be good or outstanding. This is an 11% point improvement from 43% last quarter. Further progress is required to achieve our target for at least 80% of audited cases by March 2018. It is anticipated that the recent Children's Services restructure will lead to further improvements with social work consultants having increased capacity to provide rigorous oversight and direction into cases to ensure quality. In addition, the quarter three audit of quality report will make clear recommendations for action for strategic, operational and team managers across the service in order to accelerate quality improvement now that the new structure is in place.
- 26 A performance issue that emerged this quarter is the completion rate for single assessments, which has slightly decreased from 83.3% completed within 45 working days last year to 79.2% this period. Data for the third quarter alone has seen 72.2% of single assessments completed within 45 working days. Performance is lower than the latest available national and regional benchmarking data. It should be noted that 87% were completed within 50 working days, highlighting many do not significantly go over the 45 working day timeframe. An analysis has identified significant variance within the performance of individual teams and managers are robustly monitoring performance to bring them within the 45 day timescale.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers

- 27 At December 2017, the council had corporate parenting responsibility for 249 young people (aged 17 to 21) who had left care. This is a particularly vulnerable cohort of young people. The wide range of support the council

offers is good, with figures showing more care leavers in County Durham are in suitable accommodation and in employment or training (EET) compared to both North East and national counterparts.

- 28 There were 791 looked after children (LAC) at the end of December 2017 in County Durham. There are early signs that the number of looked after children has plateaued following a steady increase, with numbers over the last five quarters remaining close to 800 (see appendix 5, chart 2). The rate of children looked after per 10,000 (0 to 17 years) population remains significantly higher than the national average but below the average rate for the North East.
- 29 The final 2016/17 educational attainment figures for looked after children confirm the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at key stage 2 is higher than that achieved nationally and regionally. There were 38 looked after children in the 2016/17 year 6 cohort, of whom 63% had an identified special educational need and disability. The Virtual School establishes individual targets for each child and for the cohort group. The average Attainment 8 score of looked after children was 22.1. There is no comparative data available at present.
- 30 A performance issue highlighted in previous quarters where good progress has been made is child health assessments. More looked after children in County Durham have had health assessments (90.2%), the highest performance since 2014/15. It is now better than the national average and in line with the regional average.
- 31 Two key performance issues highlighted previously and require continued scrutiny are:
- (a) Adoption from care and foster placements;
 - (b) External residential accommodation for looked after children.
- 32 Between April and September 2017, 27 children were adopted from care (13.5%), compared with 39 children (21.5%) in the same period last year. Levels are lower than the most recent national, regional and statistical neighbour benchmarking data. The service is focusing on increasing the number of approved foster carers and adopters. A recent radio campaign successfully generated interest, although actual approved numbers will not be evidenced for six to nine months. Work is also ongoing with the Corporate Parenting Panel to develop a digital marketing campaign and involve elected members in promoting the foster care role. A smaller project to look at regional adopter recruitment, linking with charities such as Barnardo's is ongoing. At 8 December, there were 28 children waiting for adoption. Work is focused on ensuring that this cohort of children are matched to their permanent families as quickly as possible. An audit to sample a number of cases where plans for adoption were not approved by the court is scheduled in early 2018. In relation to foster placements, at 31 December 2017, 82.8% of looked after children were fostered (656 children), less than last year's equivalent period (83.9%), although this relates to fewer children (651). This

includes fostering by friends, family, in house foster carers, and independent fostering agencies.

- 33 Continued focus is placed on the use of external residential placements for looked after children (LAC), including LAC in residential care and residential schools, rising from 18 (2.3% of placements) last year to 30 (3.8% of placements) at 31 December 2017, although the use of these placements has stabilised over the last year. A Placement Efficiency Plan is in place that sets out targets for each type of placement for the next five quarters. A detailed action plan will oversee progression and will allow for the monitoring of efficiencies, savings and meeting identified targets.

Altogether Healthier

- 34 Across health measures, positive progress has been made including 1,315 smoking quitters between April and September 2017, exceeding the contracted target. Participation in sport and physical activity in County Durham is higher than the national average and most North East authorities (Active Lives Survey), although there has been a slight drop compared to last year, mainly due to the change in the definition of activity, which now excludes gardening. In terms of adult social care, we continue to have low levels of delayed transfers of care from hospital, which are better than the same period last year and national and regional averages. In November 2017, Durham had the fourth lowest rate in the country. More people have achieved their desired outcomes from the adult safeguarding process and there has been a slight improvement in the percentage of those in receipt of social care services receiving an assessment or review every 12 months. Further improvement is still required and this is being looked at in detail to better understand the issues and identify possible solutions.
- 35 Two ongoing performance challenges this quarter are:
- (a) Breastfeeding prevalence;
 - (b) Mothers smoking at time of delivery.
- 36 Breastfeeding prevalence has decreased slightly this quarter compared to the same period last year. Despite the evidence of the benefits of prolonged exclusive and partial breastfeeding to the infant's health and development, England has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in Europe, with some areas of County Durham recorded as having the lowest breastfeeding rates in England. The reasons for this are multifaceted and include influence of society and social and cultural norms (see appendix 5, chart 7).
- 37 Mothers smoking at time of delivery has increased and is significantly higher than national and regional rates. Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield (DDES) Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has the highest rate in the North East and is sixth highest of all CCGs in England. The incentive scheme, which began in April 2017 offering shopping vouchers to women who quit smoking whilst pregnant, continues to be monitored. In County Durham, 126 pregnant women setting a quit date with the service between April and September 2017, of which 78 women quit (self-reported). This equates to

62% quitting, which is an improvement (57%) from the same period in 2016/17. A total of 615 referrals were made to the Stop Smoking Service (SSS) and 408 appointments attended by pregnant women. Healthwatch County Durham (HWCD) has undertaken engagement and research to help North Durham and DDES CCGs understand experiences of smoking during pregnancy. This research indicated that women do generally understand the risks to themselves and their babies and had sufficient information and support to stop smoking. In addition to those who quit through the SSS there will be a number of women who quit as a result of midwife intervention and self-quitters without SSS support.

- 38 New data released this quarter highlight two performance issues:
- (a) Suicide rate;
 - (b) Excess weight in adults.
- 39 Although the rate of suicides in County Durham during 2014-16 has improved compared to 2013-15 and the rate is the lowest it has been since 2007-09, it is still higher than the North East and significantly higher than England (although the gap is closing). County Durham is ranked 127th of 149 local authorities (low is good) and 5th of the 12 North East local authorities. This is an improvement given that County Durham has been second only to Middlesbrough over the last few years. The North East has the highest suicide rate of all English regions. Of the 174 suicides in County Durham in 2014-16, 130 were males and 44 females. The male suicide rate (19.2) remains higher than females (6.2) as it is nationally. County Durham's male suicide rate is significantly higher than the male England average (15.3) whilst County Durham's female rate (6.2) is slightly above England (4.8). A scrutiny review of Suicide Rates and Mental Health and Wellbeing in County Durham is being undertaken and has completed its evidence gathering and a further meeting of the review group will be held to identify key findings and recommendations for inclusion within the review report.
- 40 The proportion of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese is above national and North East averages. Durham County Council is one of four local authorities who are working on Public Health England's three year programme, delivered by Leeds Beckett University, to develop a whole system approach to tackle obesity. A number of goals have been identified and agreed with partners, which includes work to tackle sugar consumption.
- 41 As reported at quarter one, the CQC are undertaking a programme of local system reviews of health and social care in 20 local authority areas. Identification of these areas is principally based on a dashboard of six key metrics from across the sector where health and social care work most closely together, and assesses local areas against their statistical nearest neighbours (CIPFA) and nationally. Reviews have already commenced in the initial twelve challenged local authority areas and a further eight local authorities have now been identified for review. Durham is not one of the local authorities identified for review as we are performing well on the majority of the six metrics (see appendix 7) and the combined national ranking (based on the same six key indicators), where we rank 16 out of 152 (low is good).

Altogether Safer

- 42 Positive progress is evident across some key safer measures. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) continues to decrease, with fewer incidents reported to the council and police although perceptions of the police and council dealing with concerns of ASB has decreased from the same period last year. The proportion of alcohol related anti-social behaviour has increased slightly although the number of incidents has reduced by 15.6%. The number of first time entrants to the youth justice system (aged 10 -17 years) has fallen and remains better than target. Child sexual exploitation referrals have increased since the same period the previous year.
- 43 Three ongoing issues to highlight this quarter are:
- (a) Crime rate;
 - (b) Road safety;
 - (c) Successful completions of drug and alcohol treatment.
- 44 A key issue that continues this quarter relates to the level of recorded crime. Crime figures show a significant increase in the number of recorded crimes compared with the same period last year. April to December 2017 has seen a 46.3% increase from the same period last year with the number of recorded crimes rising from 25,407 to 37,167. Durham’s recorded crime rate is 73 (per 1,000 population), higher than the rate of 49.2 for the same period last year. All 43 police forces have shown an increase and at October, Durham Constabulary had the highest rate of increase. The majority of the increase in police recorded crime was due to changes in recording practice in order that the police are compliant with the national crime-recording standard, increased confidence in people reporting incidents and an actual increase in crime. The table below shows theft offences have increased by 21.1% on the same period in the previous year. 41 of 43 police forces also showed an increase and at October, Durham showed the third highest rate of increase of theft offences. The proportion of violent crime that is alcohol related has decreased slightly but the number of incidents has increased. Victim based crime increased by 40% for the year from December 2016 to December 2017, with sexual offences and violence against the person crimes increasing the most (see table below).

Increase in Crime by category December 2016 – December 2017 (year to date)	
Crime Category	Increase
Victim Based	+40%
Sexual Offences	+73%
Violence against the person	+65%
Serious offences	+60%
Robbery	+48%
Criminal Damage and Arson	+31%
Theft offences	+21%

- 45 Nationally, figures released from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that the number of crimes recorded annually in England and Wales was 5.3 million, rising by 14% for the twelve months until September 2017. Nationally, the number of violent crimes and sex offences recorded by the police has risen sharply with knife crime and robbery also increasing in the twelve months to September 2017 compared with the previous year.
- 46 The number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents has increased by 31% during January to September 2017 compared to the same period last year. The number of fatalities has actually decreased but the proportion who have been seriously injured has increased significantly. The introduction of a new national electronic system for recording road traffic collisions has changed the way casualty severity is ranked, increasing the number reported by an average of 20%. Analysis is being undertaken of the seriously injured and the results will be available shortly.
- 47 Successful completions of those in drug and alcohol treatment have increased compared to the same period in the previous year. They do however remain below target. It is extremely encouraging to note that successful completions for opiate users are in line with national averages. Positive trends have been evident for alcohol and opiates but non opiates have dipped in the last couple of months (see appendix 5, charts 9-11). The council have recently commissioned a new drug and alcohol recovery service in County Durham with Developing Initiatives for Support in the Community (DISC), which was launched on 1 February 2018. This service will move to a community outreach provision involving use of local assets such as pharmacies and community buildings.
- Altogether Greener**
- 48 We continue to have good levels of street and environmental cleanliness across the county with low levels of litter, detritus and dog fouling. We have taken home the title of 'campaign of the year' at environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy's Network Awards 2018 for Operation Spruce Up, our programme to 'clean up and 'green up' the county's town and villages.
- 49 Fly-tipping incidents have seen a 2% increase on last quarter (135 more incidents) (see appendix 5, chart 5). The greatest increase in incidents has been tyres, which rose 43% (23 more incidents) and other household waste, rising 8% (62 more incidents). Enforcement action has seen more CCTV cameras deployed and incidents caught on camera as well as an increase in stop and search operations and over £8,000 awarded in fines. Nationally, fly-tipping incidents handled by councils across England rose 7% on last year, the fourth year in a row that incidents increased.
- 50 96.7% of our municipal waste has been diverted from landfill, although our household reuse, recycling and composting rate has remained static since 2015/16 and is below the national average.

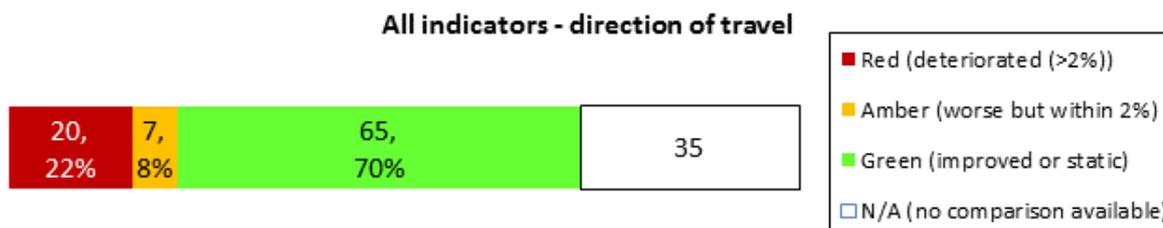
Altogether Better Council

- 51 In relation to customer contact, we continue to see an increase in customers using the self-serve portal to transact and there is a direct correlation with the reduction in contact via the email channel (see appendix 5, chart 6). There was a small increase in telephony contact as a result of the launch of the Garden Waste Scheme for 2018 and changes to bin collection days in the Newton Aycliffe area. There has also been a slight increase overall in footfall in our Customer Access Points (CAPs) which is mainly due to an increase in waste permit requests, Lumiere ticketing requests and Universal Credit digital assistance.
- 52 Universal Credit (UC) full service rollout commenced in October in Peterlee and Seaham and from December in Bishop Auckland, Crook, Stanley and Consett areas. All of our libraries and CAPs continue to offer free internet access, which residents can use to submit and update their claim form. There is also additional support in the CAPs if customers require help with the claim process. Between full service rollout in these areas and 31 December 2017 we have had 474 customers who contacted us specifically about UC. 217 customers were telephone enquiries and 257 were presentations at CAPs and libraries. Following the announcements made late last year the remaining areas in Durham, those falling within the areas covered by the JobCentres in Chester-le-Street, Durham, Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor, will not see the UC full service introduced until June 2018.
- 53 Overall sickness absence has worsened compared to last quarter, increasing from 10.51 days lost per full time equivalent (excluding schools) in the rolling year to September 2017 to 10.7 days in 2017. However, this is within the target of 11.2 and sickness remains lower than two years ago. The proportion of sickness that is long term (more than 20 days) has decreased from 73% to 69%. The council is committed to managing the attendance levels of its workforce and ensuring support is available to enable individuals to manage their health and wellbeing wherever possible.
- 54 The percentage of staff who had an appraisal has worsened from 88.6% to 85.8%, and remains below target. All Heads of Service receive a monthly summary (MyView Alert) of employees in their service area who have not had appropriate appraisal activity in the rolling year period so that appraisal performance can be actively managed from a senior level. The development of HR analytics via Business Intelligence reporting tool provides senior managers (Tier 1-4 managers) with access to real time information and prompts to complete appraisals before they fall due.
- 55 An issue identified last quarter that needs to be addressed is the response rate of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests. Although performance has improved from 70% at quarter two (previously reported as 65% which was a misstatement) to 71% at quarter three, it has missed the national target of 90% (see appendix 5, chart 8). An in depth review of the whole FOI process has been completed and a

number of improvements implemented which include streamlining the process and consideration of options to replace the recording system.

Overall Performance of the Council

Key Performance



56 In quarter three, 78% (72) of our key performance indicators improved or maintained performance and 22% (20) deteriorated compared to 12 months earlier. 87% (64) of Council Plan actions have been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline. 14% (10) of actions slipped. In the majority of cases work has been rescheduled and timescales reset as reflected in the recommendations at paragraph 60.

57 Information and data to support the complete indicator set is provided at Appendix 4. A full copy of the exceptions, deletions, amendments and additions to council and service planning actions is available on request from performance@durham.gov.uk.

Risk Management

58 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects. Appendix 3 summarises key risks in delivering the ambitions for each priority theme and how we are managing them.

Key Data Messages by Altogether Theme

59 The next section provides a summary per Altogether theme of key data messages. The format of the Altogether themes provides a snap shot overview aimed to ensure that key performance messages are easy to identify⁴. The Altogether themes are supplemented by information and data relating to the complete indicator set, provided at Appendix 4.

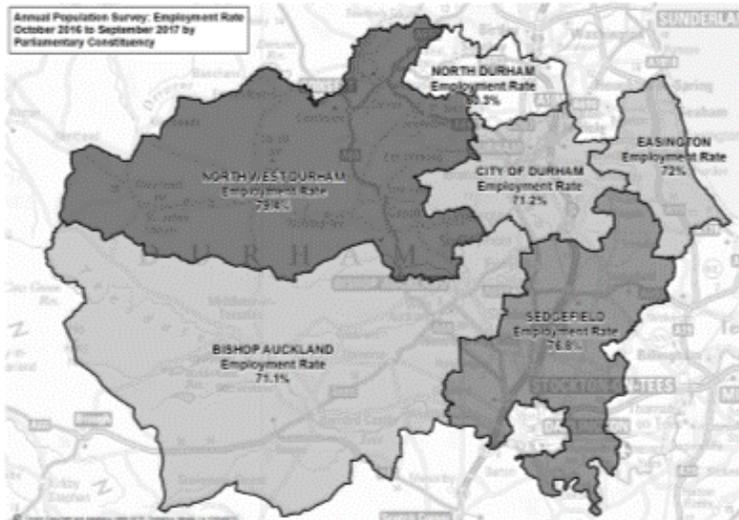
⁴ Images designed by Freepik from Flaticon, Homelessness Outreach Service by Hawaii Open Data US, Houses by Laurene Smith FR, the nounproject.

Altogether Wealthier

Job prospects

Employment (Oct 2016 - Sep 2017)

71.7% working age population defined as in employment in County Durham (232,800 people). More than same quarter last year (69.5%) and North East (70.4%) but below England and Wales (74.6%)



77.4% of employed residents in the county work in private sector. More than North East (75.2%) but below England & Wales (79%) rate

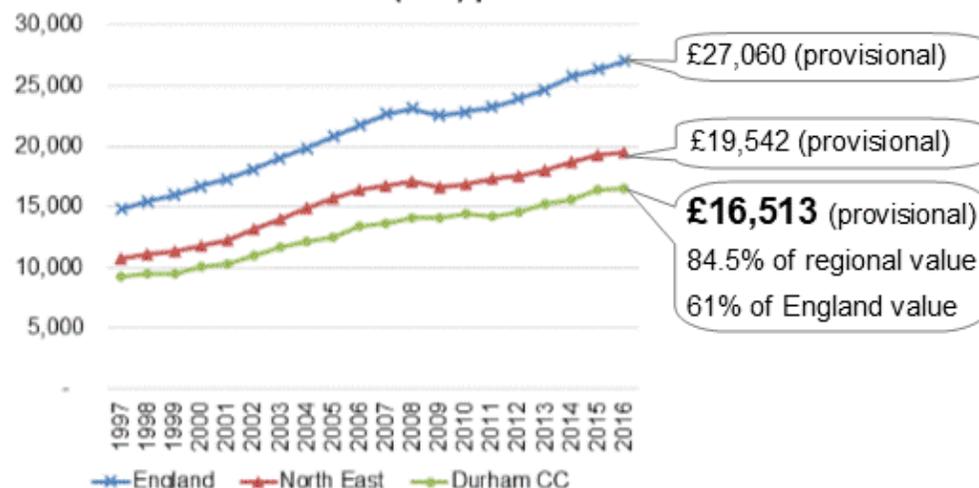
75.2% of employed residents in the county work full-time. More than North East (73.1%) and England & Wales (74.7%) rates.

Young people	Durham	England	North East
18-24 year olds who are out of work and claiming either Universal Credit or Jobseeker's Allowance (at Dec 2017)	4% (2,045 people)	2.6%	4.7%
16-17 year olds in an apprenticeship (at Sep 2017)	5.1%	3.5%	5.2%

912 apprenticeships through Durham County Council schemes sustained for 15 months or more (at Dec 2017), which equates to 85% of all apprenticeship starts through these schemes

Business

Gross Values Added (GVA) per head



In 2016, GVA per person in County Durham was £16,513, considerably lower than England (£27,060) and lower than the North East (£19,542). However, GVA in the county has grown by 59.8% since 2001, better than the England overall (56.6%) and the region (58.7%).

Housing and regeneration

- 153** empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention (Apr– Dec 2017). More than target (90) & last year (94).
- 1,101** net new homes completed (Apr– Dec 2017). More than last year (932).
- 359** clients for whom homelessness was prevented (Oct - Dec 2017).
- More than last year (251).



Altogether Better for Children and Young People

Early Help and Universal Services

Achieving Aspiration			
Educational Attainment (Final)	Durham 2016/17 (2015/16)	North East 2016/17	National 2016/17
Early years achieving good level of development	72% (69%) ✓	70.7%	70.7%
Key Stage 2 Reading Writing Maths achieving expected standard	65% (59%) ✓	65%	62%
KS2 attainment gap (final)	-17 (-16) ✓	-17	-19
Average attainment 8 Key Stage 4 (GCSE)	44.6 (NA)* ✗	44.6	46.4
KS4 attainment gap (final)	-13.1 (NA)* ✓	-14.8	-12.8
A Level average point score (final)	32.3 (31.9) ✓	30.6	30.9

*due to methodology change

Ofsted Schools judged outstanding or good

91% Primary **65%* Secondary**

*11 out of 31 schools judged as Requires Improvement or Inadequate (2 more than last year and 1 more than last quarter). 6 LA maintained schools and 5 academies (As of Dec 2017).

Child Poverty Proxy measure

Free School Meals

2016/17 ac yr

20.2% of Durham pupils are eligible for and claim free school meals. Similar to regional but higher than national average

Not in Education, Employment or Training

4.6% of 16-17 year olds in Durham are not in education, employment or training, higher than national (2.4%) and North East (3.8) averages

Health

Child Obesity

Reception - 24.1%



1 in 4 children are overweight or obese

Less than North East (24.5%) but more than national average (22.6%)

Year 6 - 37.7%



1 in 3 children are overweight or obese

More than North East (37.3%) and national average (34.2%)

Under 18 Conception rate (Oct 2015 — Sep 2016) 

22.4 per 1,000 female population (181 conceptions), fewer than last year (26.1 and 218 conceptions) and lowest since 1998, but still significantly more than England (19.3).

Teenage Pregnancy

Relationship Education

Targeted Intervention

Early Help support

Sustained contact with Children's Centre






89.6% of Durham 0-2 year olds in the top 30% IMD* having sustained contact, more than last year (88%) (Oct 2016/ Sep 2017)

*Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010

1,323 families

have been successfully turned around* at Jan 2018 (30.3% of phase 2 overall total of 4,360 families by March 2020), above both the regional (15.7%) and national average (13.2%), but not achieved the target of 50.4% (2197families).

Stronger Families Programme

*Turned around is a national terms and refers to families who have benefitted from successful interventions which aims to assist individuals in a family to achieve reductions in crime/antisocial behaviour, improve school attendance or move back into employment through the Stronger Families Programme.



Altogether Better for Children and Young People

Assessment and Safeguarding

Safeguarding

(Apr - Dec 2016) (Apr - Dec 2017)

Child's Journey

3,886 Children in need referrals (CiN), more than last year (3723)

2,648 Single Assessments, more than last year (2,466)

541 Children with a child protection plan (CPP) (As of Dec 2017) more than last year (406)

CPP rate = 53.9 per 10,000 lower than North East average (60.5) but higher than England average (43.3)

Our response

Statutory referrals processed in one working day

72.1%

84.6%

CiN referrals occurred within 12 months of previous referral

21%

16.6%

Single assessments completed in 45 days

83.3%

79.2%

Number of Children by Level of Need

Level 4 (Statutory cases)
LAC, CPP

Level 3 **Level 3/2**

Case open to

Children in Need

Families

One Point Service

higher

lower

Level of Need

As of Dec 2016 (4,839*)

3,307

406

1,126*

As of Sep 2017 (6,022)

3,473

492

2,058

As of Dec 2017 (6,001)

3,562

366

2,073

* 2016 One Point data not comparable due to the data transfer to new system

Social Work Practice

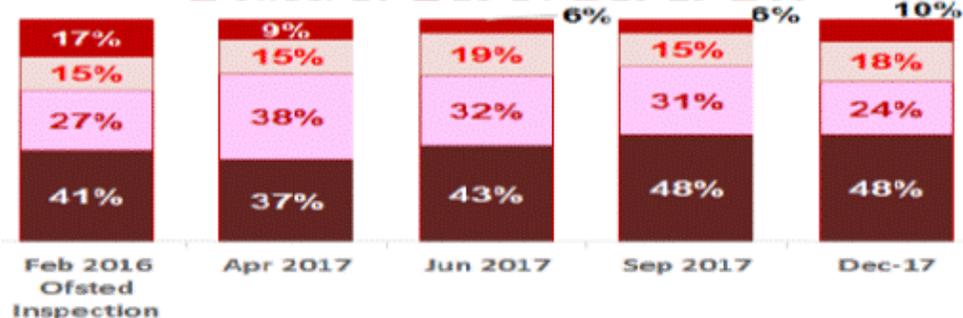
Social Worker Caseload (Feb 2016 - Dec 2017)

- A target caseload is 20 per social worker (but depend on nature of cases)
- Caseload levels have improved

% of Staff* by WTE Caseload Range

Target caseload is 20 per social worker

■ Under 20 ■ 20-24 ■ 25-29 ■ 30+



*All Agency Staff and Students assumed to be 1.0 WTE. Team Managers, Social Work Consultants, ASYE's, and Students Social Workers have been excluded from the WTE of Staff and any cases they hold have also been excluded.

Statutory casefile quality: Good or above

Performance improved this quarter but target of 80% not met



Altogether Better for Children and Young People

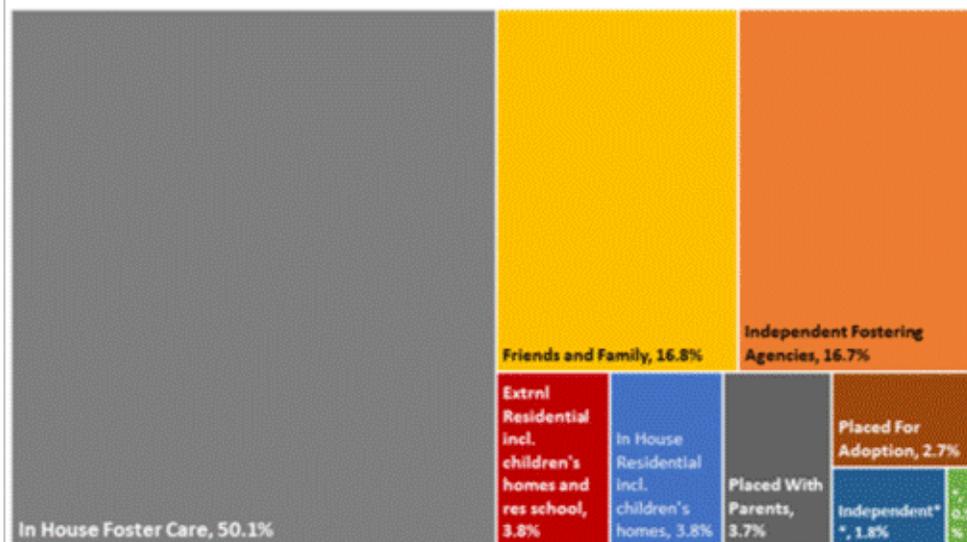
Looked after Children

Safeguarding (31 Dec 2017)



- **791** children currently looked after (LAC). The number of LAC over the last five quarters has plateaued, remaining close to 800.
- **1.7%** decrease in LAC rate from 80.6 per 10,000 children (Sep 2017) to 78.9. In the last quarters the rates were within the range 78.3 to 80.8.
- **249** care leavers are also receiving support

Looked after children placements as at 26 Jan 2018



*secure incl. Youth offenders institutions and prisons

**Independent Living incl. supported lodgings

Social Work Practice

- **656** LAC (82.8%) who are in a foster placement, compared to 651 (83.9%) last year—As at Dec 2017
- **30** LAC (3.8%) have external residential placements, compared to 18 (2.3%) last year—As at Dec 2017
- **27** children (13.5%) adopted of those leaving care (Apr - Sep 2017), compared to 39 (21.5% - Apr - Sep 2016)
- **28** children are waiting for adoption (Dec 2017).

Achieving Aspiration

Educational Attainment (final) of Looked after Children

Achieving expected standard in Reading, Writing, Maths (KS2)

Durham
35%

N.E.
27%

National
25%

Average Attainment 8 Score (GCSE)

Durham
22.1

N.E.
TBC

National
TBC

Care leavers aged 17-21

	Durham	North East	England
In suitable accommodation	88.8% (Apr-Dec 2017)	86% (2015/16 ac yr)	84% (2015/16 ac yr)
Employment or training (EET)	63.5% (Apr-Dec 2017)	50% (2015/16 ac yr)	52% (2015/16 ac yr)

Health of looked after children

	Durham	North East	England
A dental health check	95% (Apr-Dec 2017)	83% (2016/17)	83% (2016/17)
Health assessments	90.2% (Apr-Dec 2017)	91% (2016/17)	89% (2016/17)

Altogether Healthier

Health of our residents

Mothers smoking at time of delivery July - Sep 2017



Smoking quitters - April - September 2017



Sport England Active Lives Survey - May 2016 - May 2017

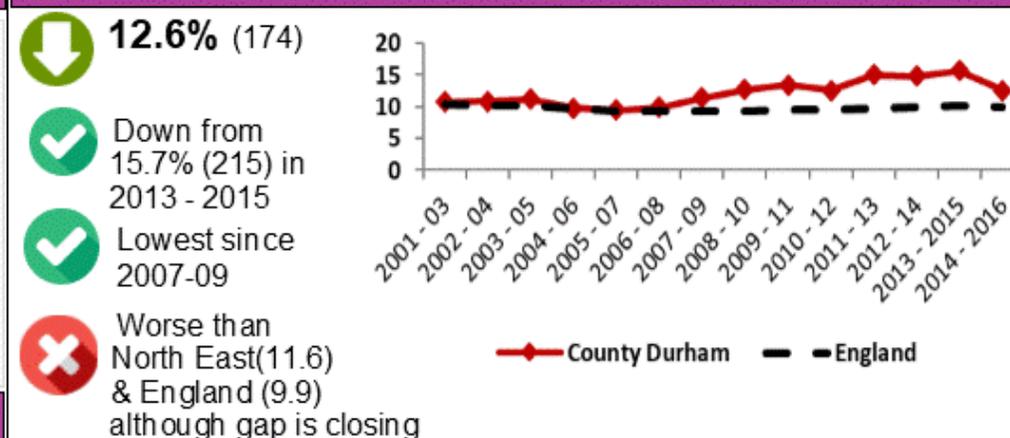
Participation in Sport and Physical activity	Durham 2015/16	Durham 2016/17	National 2016/17
Inactive: less than 30 mins per week	25.4%	24.5%	25.6%
Active - 150 + mins per week	62.2%	60.9%	60.6%

Excess Weight in Adults - (2015 - 2016)



Health of our residents

Suicide rates per 100,000 population 2014 - 2016

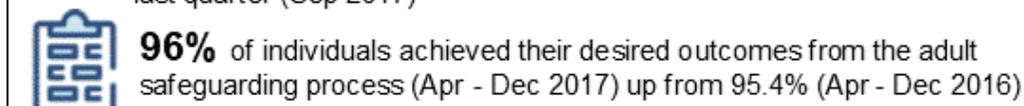
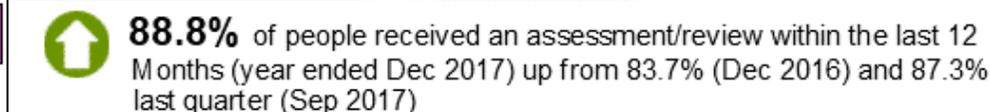


Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 -8 weeks



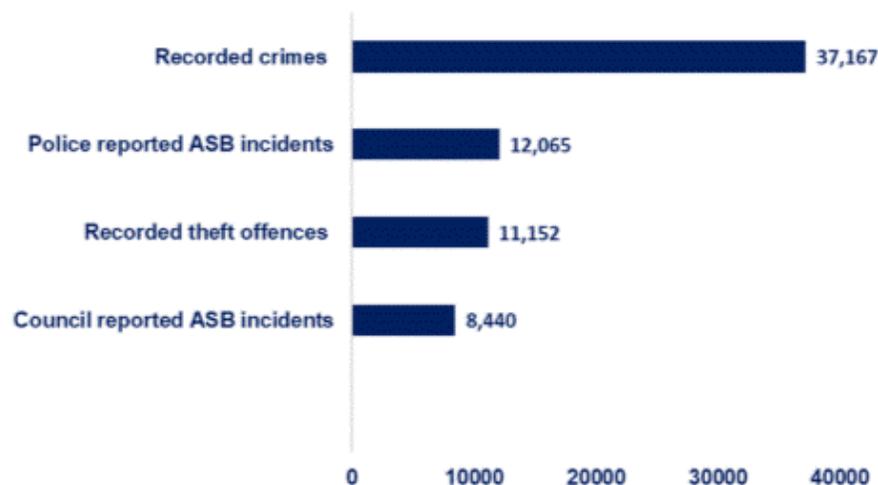
Adult Social Care

Daily Delayed transfers of care beds per 100,000 population - November



Altogether Safer

Crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB)



15.6% reduction in police reported and 18.9% reduction in council reported anti-social behaviour incidents since same period last year



89 First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System, less than the Q3 profiled target of 187.5 and a decrease from Q3 last year



Recorded crime has increased by 46.3% compared to the same period in 2016/17. This is partially due to changes in recording practices.



Nationally, all 43 police forces have also shown an increase in recorded crime and at October 17 Durham had the highest rate of increase.



Recorded theft offences have increased by 21.2% compared to the same period in 2016/17.



41 of 43 police forces showed an increase in recorded theft offences and at October 2017 Durham showed the 3rd highest rate of increase of all.



55.1% - (Jan - Sep 2017) People's perceptions of Police and council dealing with concerns of ASB and crime. Similar to most similar group average of 55.6%

Reducing misuse of drugs and alcohol

Successful completions for alcohol and drugs - July 2016 - Jun 2017 (with representations up to December 2017)

	Successful completions	England	Target
Alcohol	30.3% (342 people)	38.6%	38.6%
Opiates	6.8% (103 people)	6.7%	7.9%
Non-opiates	27.6% (199 people)	36.8%	45.5%

% of violent crime that is alcohol related Apr - Dec 2017



% Police reported ASB incidents that are alcohol related Apr - Dec 2017



Tackling abuse of vulnerable people



191 child sexual exploitation referrals between Jan - Dec 2017. Higher than the 168 reported in the same period last year.

Safe environment - Road Safety

Period	Total KSI	Children	Fatalities
Comparison	+31%*	+14%	-27%
Jan - Sep 2017	161	16	11
Jan - Sep 2016	123	14	15

* this is due to changes in the recording system

Altogether Greener

Clean and attractive environment

Refuse and recycling

Oct 2016 - Sep 2017



96.7% municipal waste diverted from landfill, in line with target (95%)



39.3% household waste re-used, recycled or composted. The level has remained static since 2015/16 and below national average



Officer Working Group is working on a review of single use plastics by the council and partners which will be overseen by Scrutiny



Northumbrian Water is working in partnership with City to Sea and its Refill campaign to reduce plastic waste across the north east of England. Launched in Durham in December 2017, the Refill campaign aims to promote free tap water Refill stations in cafes, bars and restaurants. The campaign extended to the rest of the north east in early 2018

Collection and disposal of waste

Environmental cleanliness

Good levels of environmental cleanliness continue in County Durham (Aug to Nov 2017)



5.2% litter, an increase from last reported (3.6%)



10.7% detritus, a reduction from last reported (12.1%)



0.4% dog fouling, a reduction from last reported (0.7%)



Operation Spruce Up, the campaign to 'clean up' and 'green up' front streets in local communities has taken home the title of 'campaign of the year' at environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy's Network Awards 2018 and has been shortlisted in environment services LG Chronicle award

Fly-tipping

2017

2% increase in fly-tipping incidents recorded compared to last quarter

7,940 incidents recorded, 135 more than last quarter (7,805)

43% increase in tyres compare to same period last year (23 more incidents)

8% increase in other household waste compared to same period last year (62 more incidents)

Actions to date: 2017/18

Cameras deployed to	20 incidents caught on CCTV
18 stop and search operations	18 duty of care warning letters 9 fixed penalty notices issued
1,198 further investigations	9 prosecutions £8,122 awarded in fines, compensation, costs and surcharges

Altogether Better Council

Our services to customers and the public

Customer Services - 2017:



45 seconds to answer a call on average and 5% calls abandoned



We continue to see an increase in customers using the self-serve portal to transact and a direct correlation with the reduction of contact via the email channel



There has been a slight increase overall in our footfall in our Customer Access Points (CAPs), this is mainly due to an increase in waste permit requests, Universal Credit digital assistance and Lumiere ticketing requests



TELEPHONE
955,969
↑
+7%



E-MAIL
59,317
↓
-7%



WEB FORMS
80,131
↑
+11%



FACE-TO-FACE
154,104
↑
+1.3%



SOCIAL MEDIA
2,156
↑
+54%

DOT from previous quarter
% change

Universal Credit—18 October—31 December 2017



- 18 October 2017 - full service rollout commenced in Peterlee and Seaham
- 13 December 2017 - full service rollout commenced in Bishop Auckland, Crook, Stanley and Consett
- June 2018 - full service rollout expected in Chester-le-Street, Durham, Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor

Since rollout commenced there have been:



217 telephone enquiries



257 customers who presented at CAPs and libraries (Peterlee & Bishop Auckland)



- 270 customers were given general advice
- 129 individuals were assisted with making their online claim
- 43 change of circumstances for housing benefit were dealt with
- 24 customers were advised on information relating to the services of the DWP
- 4 people were provided with advice on debt management
- 4 individuals were signposted to foodbanks

Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests—October—December 2017



71% of responses were sent to applicants within 20 working days (target 90%)



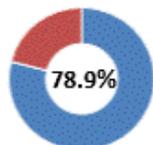
In depth review into the whole FOI process has been completed and a number of improvements implemented which should improve future performance

Looking after our people

Employee Wellbeing: (2017 excluding schools)



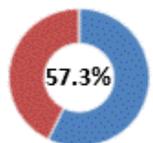
Overall sickness absence per full time equivalent has again worsened slightly since last quarter (10.51 to 10.7 days (2017 rolling year data))



More employees having 5 working days or less sickness than last year (77.9%)



Target of 11.2 days achieved and sickness remains lower than two years ago



More posts with no sickness absence than last year (52.6%)

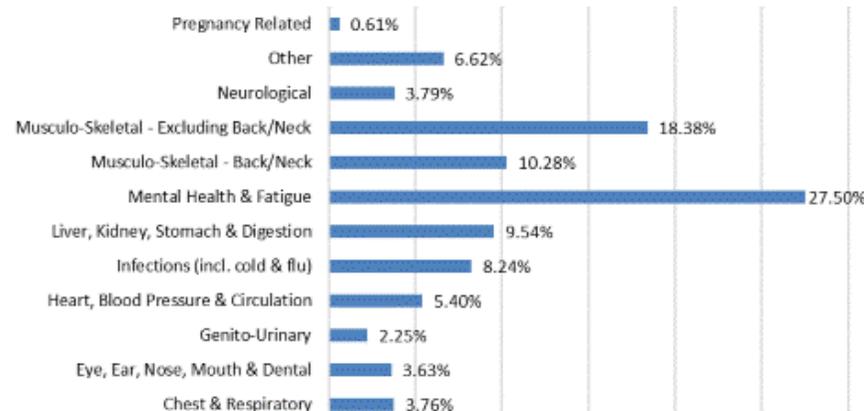
% of staff performance appraisals completed (2017 excluding schools)



85.8% appraisals completed - worse than previous quarter (88.6%) and remaining below target (92%)

% of sickness absence (excluding schools)		
short/medium/long term sickness	Jul—Sep 2017	Oct—Dec 2017
Short Term = 0 - 7.5 days	13.1%	17.3%
Medium Term = 7.5 - 20 days	13.7%	14.1%
Long Term = 20 days +	73.2%	68.6%

% type sickness occurring (Oct - Dec 2017)



Managing our resources for residents and customers

Finance: (April – December 2017)

Council Tax Collected



84.7% council tax collected (target 84.82%)



4.64% increase in gross payments received (£9,506,667 increase) compared to Q3 2016/17.



Business Rates Collected



83.52% business rates collected (target 83.04)



Business rates charges have been impacted by the 2017 revaluation and subsequent changes to relief thresholds, plus changes to the rating multiplier i.e. the percentage of rateable value charged.



47.1% of all business rates accounts in Durham qualify for small business rates relief following changes which have resulted in the number of businesses qualifying for relief increasing by 2,266 to 7,275 accounts

Recommendations and reasons

60 Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) consider and comment on the council's performance at quarter three;
- (b) agree the changes to the Council Plan outlined below:

Altogether Wealthier

- (i) The timescale for the adoption of the County Durham Plan has been revised from November 2018 to December 2020. The new timescales have been detailed in the Cabinet report agreed last November.
- (ii) Supporting the development of the North East Local Transport Plan and leading on the development of the associated County Durham supporting strategies has been delayed from March 2018 until December 2018. A full public consultation is due to take place during mid-2018 after the local elections and all the comments will be incorporated into a final version for Members' approval and publication by December 2018.
- (iii) A review of Durham Town Hall to develop a new operating model to improve the visitor experience and maximise the revenue streams has been delayed further from March 2018 to March 2019. A start up meeting has taken place but the project has been delayed as resources have been redirected toward the leisure and library transformation.

Altogether Greener

- (iv) The commission of a leachate treatment system at Coxhoe East landfill site; incorporating the Environment Agency's requirements, meeting Natural England's requirements and meeting planning conditions has been delayed further from November 2017 to December 2020. Resulting from discussions with the key stakeholders it has become apparent that due to the challenges around managing the Great Crested Newt population on site the project will take at least two years to complete with a further year to fully commission and sign it off.

Altogether Better Council

- (v) The assessment of cemetery provision in order to develop a countywide cemetery policy has been delayed further from December 2017 to December 2018. A cemetery policy is already in place but identification of land in order to do the assets work has proved difficult.
- (vi) The review and adoption of the Customer First Strategy has been further delayed from April 2018 to July 2018. The draft strategy is currently going through consultation with key stakeholders within the Council before consideration by the Digital Customer Board.
- (vii) The provision of support to organisations interested in the Ask programme including the first commitment to library transfer has been delayed from March 2018. A revised date has not yet been agreed but timetable for transformation of the service, including

consideration of asset transfer model, will be agreed in April 2018.

- (viii) There have been delays in the corporate and partnership planning arrangements including a second whole partnership event to identify opportunities to enhance outcomes through effective joint working across the County Durham Partnership (from November 2017 to November 2018) and the streamlining of the corporate planning arrangements including Council Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy (from October 2017 to March 2019) due to other priorities.

Contact: Jenny Haworth Tel: 03000 268071

- Appendix 1: Implications
- Appendix 2: Report Key
- Appendix 3: Risk Management
- Appendix 4: Summary of key performance indicators
- Appendix 5: Volume measures
- Appendix 6: Secondary Schools Require Improvement and Inadequate
- Appendix 7: Health and Social Care – Key Metrics
- Appendix 8: Average Attainment 8 score
- Appendix 9: SEND Inspection Outcomes

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 Performance Indicators (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: Report key

Performance Indicators:

Direction of travel/benchmarking

Same or better than comparable period/comparator group

GREEN

Worse than comparable period / comparator group (within 2% tolerance)

AMBER

Worse than comparable period / comparator group (greater than 2%)

RED

Performance against target

Meeting/Exceeding target

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

Performance >2% behind target

- ✓ Performance is good or better than comparable period/benchmark
- ✗ Performance is poor or worse than comparable period/benchmark
- ↔ Performance has remained static or is in line with comparable period/benchmark

National Benchmarking

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, for example educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

North East Benchmarking

The North East figure is the average performance from the authorities within the North East region, i.e. County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland, The number of authorities also varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils.

Nearest Neighbour Benchmarking:

The nearest neighbour model was developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), one of the professional accountancy bodies in the UK. CIPFA has produced a list of 15 local authorities which Durham is statistically close to when you look at a number of characteristics. The 15 authorities that are in the nearest statistical neighbours group for Durham using the CIPFA model are: Barnsley, Wakefield, Doncaster, Rotherham, Wigan, Kirklees, St Helens, Calderdale, Dudley, Northumberland, Tameside, Sheffield, Gateshead, Stockton-On-Tees and Stoke-on-Trent.

We also use other neighbour groups to compare our performance. More detail of these can be requested from the Corporate Planning and Performance Team at performance@durham.gov.uk.

Appendix 3: Risk Management

Risk Management

- 1 The strategic risks identified as potential barriers to successfully achieving our objectives are listed against each Altogether theme. These risks have been identified using the following criteria:
 - (a) Net impact is critical, and the net likelihood is highly probable, probable or possible.
 - (b) Net impact is major, and the net likelihood is highly probable or probable.
 - (c) Net impact is moderate, and the net likelihood is highly probable.

- 2 At 31 December 2017, there were 23 risks on the corporate strategic risk register, the same number as at 30 September 2017. During quarter three, no risks were added and none were removed. The following matrix categorises the strategic risks according to their net risk evaluation as at 31 December 2017. To highlight changes in each category during the last quarter, the number of risks as at 30 September 2017 is shown in brackets.

Corporate Risk Heat Map

Impact					
Critical	1 (1)		4 (4)		1 (1)
Major		4 (4)	3 (3)		
Moderate			9 (9)	1 (1)	
Minor					
Insignificant					
Likelihood	Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Probable	Highly Probable

Key risks 

- 3 At a corporate strategic level, key risks to the council, with their respective net risk evaluations shown in brackets, are:
 - (a) If there was to be slippage in the delivery of the agreed MTFP savings projects, this will require further savings to be made from other areas, which may result in further service reductions and job losses (Critical / Possible);
 - (b) Ongoing Government funding cuts which now extend to at least 2019/20 will continue to have an increasing major impact on all Council services (Critical / Highly Probable);
 - (c) Failure to protect child from death or serious harm (where service failure is a factor or issue) (Critical / Possible);
 - (d) A service failure of Adult Safeguarding leads to death or serious harm to a service user (Critical / Possible);
 - (e) Major Interruption to IT Service Delivery (Critical / Possible).

- 4 The implementation of additional mitigation on a number of risks has enabled the Council to improve performance, decision-making and governance, and this is detailed in the relevant sections of the report.
- (a) **Altogether Wealthier:** There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.
 - (b) **Altogether Better for Children and Young People:** Failure to protect a child from death or serious harm (where service failure is a factor or issue). Management consider it possible that this risk could occur which, in addition to the severe impacts on children, will result in serious damage to the council's reputation and to relationships with its safeguarding partners. To mitigate the risk, actions are taken forward from Serious Case Reviews and reported to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Lessons learned are fed into training for front line staff and regular staff supervision takes place. This risk is long term and procedures are reviewed regularly (Critical / Possible).
 - (c) **Altogether Healthier:** There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.
 - (d) **Altogether Safer:** Service failure of Adult Safeguarding leads to death or serious harm to a service user. Management consider it possible that this risk could occur which, in addition to the severe impacts on service users, will result in serious damage to the council's reputation and to relationships with its safeguarding partners. As the statutory body, the multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board has a business plan in place for taking forward actions to safeguard vulnerable adults including a comprehensive training programme for staff and regular supervision takes place. This risk is long term and procedures are reviewed regularly (Critical / Possible).
 - (e) **Altogether Greener:** There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.
 - (f) **Altogether Better Council:**
 - i. 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 (Critical / Possible).
 - ii. Ongoing Government funding cuts which now extend to at least 2019/20 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 (Critical / Highly Probable).

- iii. Major Interruption to IT Service Delivery. Corporate Management Team has approved a project to provide improved ICT resilience for the council's main data centre. Design works to improve infrastructure and reduce the risk have now be completed and it is anticipated that work on site will commence in March 2018. (Critical / Possible).

Appendix 4: Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure	Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered		
Altogether Wealthier												
1. Do residents have good job prospects?												
1	REDPI 40	Proportion of the working age population defined as in employment	71.7	Oct 2016 - Sep 2107	Tracker	69.5	GREEN	74.6	RED	70.4*	GREEN	Oct 2016 - Sep 2017
2	REDPI 88	Per capita household disposable income (£) [1] [2]	15,496	2015	Tracker	15,246	GREEN	19,447	RED	16,197*	RED	2015
3	REDPI 62	Number of apprenticeships started through Durham County Council schemes [3]	222	2016/17	200	74	GREEN					
4	REDPI 105	Number of apprenticeships from Durham County Council schemes sustained at least 15 months	912	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	710	GREEN					
5	REDPI 92	Number of gross potential jobs created or safeguarded as a result of Business Durham activity [4]	186	Jul - Sep 2017	NA	500	NA					
6	CYPS 1	Percentage of 16 to 17 year olds in an apprenticeship	5.1	As at Sep 2017	Tracker	5.7	RED	3.5	GREEN	5.2*	AMBER	As at Sep 2017

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
7	REDPI 7a	Number of 18 to 24 year olds who are out of work and claiming either Universal Credit or Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)	2,045	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	2,075	GREEN					
8	REDPI 8b	Proportion of all Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants that have claimed for one year or more	37.10	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	31.10	NA [5]					
2. Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing												
9	REDPI 30	Number of empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention	153	Apr - Dec 2017	90	94	GREEN					
10	REDPI 10b	Number of net homes completed	1,101	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	932	GREEN					
11	REDPI 36a	Number of clients who have accessed the Housing Solutions Service and for whom homelessness has been prevented	359	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	251	GREEN					
12	REDPI 10ai	Number of affordable homes delivered [4] [6]	322	2016/17	200	262	GREEN					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure	Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered		
3. Is County Durham a good place to do business?												
13	REDPI 87	Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita in County Durham (£) [1] [2]	16,513	2016 provisional	Tracker	16,362	GREEN	27,060	RED	19,542*	RED	2016 provisional
14	REDPI 89	Number of registered businesses in County Durham	16,585	2015/16	Tracker	16,400	GREEN					
4. Is it easy to travel around the county?												
15	NS06a	Percentage of A roads where maintenance is recommended (scanner survey)	3	2016/17	Tracker	4	GREEN	3	GREEN	3*	GREEN	2015/16
16	NS06bc	Percentage of B and C roads where maintenance is recommended (scanner survey)	3	2016/17	Tracker	4	GREEN	6	GREEN	6*	GREEN	2015/16
17	NS06d	Percentage of unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended (scanner survey)	20	2016/17	Tracker	20	GREEN	17	RED	14*	RED	2015/16
18	NS07	Highways maintenance backlog (£millions)	191.7	2016	Tracker	181	NA					
5. How well does tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?												
19	REDPI 100	Number of visitors to County Durham (million)	19.3	2016	Tracker	18.7	GREEN					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
20	REDPI 101	Number of jobs supported by the visitor economy	11,158	2016	Tracker	10,961	GREEN					
21	REDPI 102	Amount (£ million) generated by the visitor economy	806	2016	Tracker	778	GREEN					
Altogether Better for Children and Young People												
1. Are children, young people and families in receipt of universal services appropriately supported?												
22	CYPS 24	Average attainment 8 score/score for LA (all pupils at the end of key stage 4 in state-funded mainstream and special schools and academies - replacing GCSE attainment) [7]	44.6	2016/17 ac yr (final)	Tracker	NA	NA	44.2	GREEN	44.3*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr (final)
23	CYPS 27	Average point score per A level entry of state-funded school students	32.3	2016/17 ac yr (final)	Tracker	31.9	GREEN	30.9	GREEN	30.6*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr (final)
24	CYPS 28	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (at KS2)	65.0	2016/17 ac yr (final)	Tracker	59.0	GREEN	62.0	GREEN	65*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr (final)
25	CYPS 2	Percentage of 16 to 17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) [8]	4.6	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	4.1	RED	2.4	RED	3.8*	RED	Oct - Dec 2017

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure	Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered	
26	CYPS 25	Gap between the average Attainment 8 score of Durham disadvantaged pupils and the average Attainment 8 score of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally (at KS4) [7]	-13.1	2016/17 ac yr (final)	Tracker	NA	NA	-12.8	RED	-14.8*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr (final)
27	CYPS 26	Percentage of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development	72	2016/17 ac yr (final)	64.0	69.0	GREEN	70.7	GREEN	70.7*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr (final)
28	CYPS 29	Gap between the percentage of Durham disadvantaged pupils and the percentage of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally who achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (at KS2)	-17	2016/17 ac yr (final)	Tracker	-16.0	GREEN	-19	GREEN	-17*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr (final)
29	CYPS 30	Ofsted percentage of primary pupils in good or better schools	91	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	92	AMBER	91	GREEN	91*	GREEN	As at Dec 2017
30	CYPS 31	Ofsted percentage of secondary pupils in good or better schools	65	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	60	GREEN	80	RED	65*	GREEN	As at Dec 2017

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
31	CYPS 32	Exclusion from school of All Durham children - percentage of children with at least one fixed exclusion	1.77	2016/17 ac yr	Tracker	2.0	GREEN	2.11	GREEN	2.01*	GREEN	2015/16 ac yr
32	CYPS 38	Percentage of all school pupils eligible for and claiming Free School Meals (FSM) - Child Poverty Proxy	20.2	2016/17 ac yr	Tracker	20.2	GREEN	14.7	RED	19.9*	AMBER	2016/17 ac yr
33	AHS1	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 17	22.4	Oct 2015 - Sep 2016	Tracker	26.1	GREEN	19.3	RED	25.2*	GREEN	Oct 2015 - Sep 2016
34	AHS2	Proportion of five year old children free from dental decay	64.9	2014/15	Tracker	New indicator	NA	75.2	RED	72*	RED	2014/15
35	AHS3	Alcohol specific hospital admissions for under 18's (rate per 100,000)	67.5	2013/14 - 2015/16	Tracker	72.8	GREEN	37.4	RED	66.9*	AMBER	2013/14 - 2015/16
36	AHS4	Young people aged 10-24 admitted to hospital as a result of self-harm	489.4	2011/12 - 2013/14	Tracker	504.8	GREEN	367.3	RED	532.2*	GREEN	England - 2011/12 - 2013/14 NE - 2010/11 - 2012/13
37	AHS5	Percentage of children aged 4 to 5 years classified as overweight or obese	24.1	2016/17 ac yr	Tracker	24.3	GREEN	22.6	RED	24.5*	GREEN	2016/17 ac yr
38	ASH6	Percentage of children aged 10 to 11 years classified as overweight or obese	37.7	2016/17 ac yr	Tracker	37.0	AMBER	34.2	RED	37.3*	AMBER	2016/17 ac yr

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
39	CYPS 33	Percentage of Education Health and Care Plans completed in the statutory 20 week time period	78.8	2017	90.0	88.0	RED	58.6	GREEN	73.4*	GREEN	2016
2. Are children, young people and families in receipt of Early Help services appropriately supported?												
40	CYPS 22	Percentage of successful interventions (families turned around) via the Stronger Families Programme (Phase 2)	30.3	Sep 2014 - Jan 2018	50.4	13	GREEN	13.2	GREEN	15.7*	GREEN	Sep 2014 - Mar 2017
41	CYPS 23	Percentage of children aged 0-2 years in the top 30% IMD registered with a Children's Centre and having sustained contact	89.6	Oct 2016 - Sep 2017	60	88	GREEN					
3. Are children and young people in receipt of social work services appropriately supported and safeguarded?												
42	CYPS 14	Percentage of First Contact & EDT enquiries processed within 1 working day	84.6	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	72.1	GREEN					
43	CYPS 15	Percentage of statutory children in need referrals received which occurred within 12 months of a previous referral	16.6	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	21.0	GREEN	21.9	GREEN	20.1*	GREEN	2016/17

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
44	CYPS 16	Percentage of statutory single assessments completed within 45 working days	79.2	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	83.3	RED	83.1	RED	82.9*	RED	2016/17
45	CYPS 17	Rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 population aged under 18	53.9	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	45.1	NA	43.3		60.5*		As at Mar 2017
46	CYPS 18a	Rate of children in need (proxy) per 10,000 population aged under 18 (L4 open cases ONLY)	355.2	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	329.9	NA	337.7		441.5*		2015/16
47	CYPS 18b	Level 2/3 cases open to One Point Service - Rate per 10,000 population aged under 18	36.5	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	40.5	NA					
48	CYPS 18c	Level 3 cases open to Families First Teams - Rate per 10,000 population aged under 18	206.7	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	112.3	NA					
49	CYPS 19	Percentage of strategy meetings initiated which led to an initial child protection conference being held within 15 working days	67.0	Apr - Dec 2017	75.0	74.0	RED	77	RED	86*	RED	2016/17

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
50	CYPS 20	Percentage of Social Workers with fewer than 20 case	48.0	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	43.0	GREEN					
51	CYPS 21	Percentage of Case File Audits which are rated as good or better	54.0	Apr - Dec 2017	80.0	New indicator	NA					
4. Are we being a good corporate parent for Looked After Children?												
52	CYPS 3	Rate of looked after children per 10,000 population aged under 18	78.9	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	78.3	NA	62		92*		As at Mar 2017
53	CYPS 4	Percentage of children adopted from care (as % of total children leaving care)	13.5	Apr - Sep 2017	15.0	21.5	RED	14	RED	14*	RED	2016/17
54	CYPS 5	Percentage of LAC who are in a foster placement	82.8	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	83.9	AMBER					
55	CYPS 6	Percentage of independent residential placement	3.8	As at Dec 2017	Tracker	2.3	RED					
56	CYPS 7	Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more who had a dental check	95.0	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	93.4	GREEN	83	GREEN	83*	GREEN	2016/17

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
57	CYPS 8	Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more who have had the required number of health assessments	90.2	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	86.2	GREEN	89	GREEN	91*	AMBER	2016/17
58	CYPS 9	Emotional and behavioural health of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more (SDQ)	16.0	2016/17	Tracker	14.9	RED	14	RED	14.5*	RED	2015/16
59	CYPS 10	Average Attainment 8 score of Looked After Children [7]	22.1	2016/17 ac yr (final figure)	Tracker	NA	NA	NA		NA		2015/16 ac yr
60	CYPS 11	Percentage of LAC achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (at KS2)	35.0	2016/17 ac yr (final)	Tracker	44.0	RED	25	GREEN	27*	GREEN	2015/16 ac yr
61	CYPS 12	Percentage of care leavers aged 17-21 in education, employment or training (EET)	63.5	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	63.1	GREEN	52	GREEN	50*	GREEN	2015/16 ac yr
62	CYPS 13	Percentage of care leavers aged 17-21 in suitable accommodation	88.8	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	91.1	RED	84	GREEN	86*	GREEN	2015/16 ac yr

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure	Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered		
Altogether Healthier												
1. Are our services improving the health of our residents?												
63	AHS 12	Percentage of mothers smoking at time of delivery	17.8	Jul - Sep 17	15.9	16.8	RED	11	RED	16.2*	RED	Jul - Sep 17
64	AHS 13	Four week smoking quitters per 100,000 smoking population	1,741	Apr - Sep 2017	1,462	1,399	GREEN					
65	AHS7	Male life expectancy at birth (years) [2]	78.1	2013-2015	Tracker	78.0	GREEN	79.5	AMBER	77.9*	GREEN	2013-2015
66	AHS8	Female life expectancy at birth (years) [2]	81.2	2013-2015	Tracker	81.3	AMBER	83.1	RED	81.6*	AMBER	2013-2015
67	AHS9	Healthy life expectancy at birth [Female]	57	2013-2015	Tracker	New indicator	NA	64.1	RED	60.1*	RED	2013-2015
68	AHS 10	Healthy life expectancy at birth [Male]	58	2013 - 2015	Tracker	New indicator	NA	63.4	RED	59.6*	RED	2013-2015
69	AHS 14	Excess weight in adults (Proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese)	67.5	2015/16	Tracker	New indicator	NA	61.3	RED	66.3*	AMBER	2015/16
70	AHS 11	Suicide rate (deaths from suicide and injury of undetermined intent) per 100,000 population	12.6	2014 - 2016	Tracker	15.7	GREEN	9.9	RED	11.6*	RED	2014 - 2016
71	AHS 38	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth	29.1	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	29.8	RED	42.8	Not comparable	33.3*	Not comparable	Jul - Sep 2017

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered	
72	AHS 40	Estimated smoking prevalence of persons aged 18 and over	17.9	2016	Tracker	19.0	GREEN	15.5	RED	17.2*	RED	2016	
73	AHS 41	Self-reported wellbeing - people with a low happiness score	11.5	2015/16	Tracker	New indicator	NA	8.8	RED	10.2*	RED	2015/16	
74	NS21	Participation in Sport and Physical Activity: active	60.9	May 2016 - May 2017	Tracker	62.2	RED	60.6	GREEN			May 2016 - May 2017	
75	NS22	Participation in Sport and Physical Activity: inactive	24.5	May 2016 - May 2017	Tracker	25.4	GREEN	25.6	GREEN			May 2016 - May 2017	
2. Are people needing adult social care supported to live safe, healthy and independent lives?													
76	AHS 18	Adults aged 65+ per 100,000 population admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care	521.6	Apr - Dec 2017		553.6	549.3	GREEN	628.2	Not comparable	843*	Not comparable	2015/16
77	AHS 20	Proportion of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation services	89.5	Mar - Sep 2017		85.9	87.9	GREEN	82.7	Not comparable	85.5*	Not comparable	2015/16
78	AHS 16	Percentage of individuals who achieved their desired outcomes from the adult safeguarding process	96	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker		95.4	GREEN					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
79	AHS 17	Percentage of service users receiving an Assessment or Review within the last 12 months	88.8	2017	Tracker	83.7	GREEN					
80	AHS 21	Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support	63.6	2016/17	Tracker	New indicator	NA	64.4	Not comparable	67.2*	Not comparable	2015/16
81	AHS 22	Overall satisfaction of carers with the support and services they receive	43.3	2016/17	Tracker	New indicator	NA	41.2	Not comparable	49.3*	Not comparable	2014/15
82	AHS 19	Daily Delayed transfers of care beds, all per hospital per 100,000 population age 18+	2.6	At November 2017	Tracker	3.6	GREEN	11.9	GREEN		GREEN	At November 2017
83	AHS 23	The proportion of adult social care service users who report they have enough choice over the care and support services they receive	73.1	2016/17	Tracker	New indicator	NA	67.6	GREEN	NA		2016/17
Altogether Safer							AS	AS		AS	AS	AS
1. How effective are we at tackling crime and disorder?											AS	AS
84	CYPS 35	First time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10 to 17 (per 100,000 population of 10 to 17 year olds) [2]	207	Apr - Sep 2017		270	GREEN	357	Not comparable	413**	Not comparable	2015/16

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
85	AHS 24	Overall crime rate (per 1,000 population) [2]	73	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	49.2	RED	49.23	RED	50.62**	RED	Apr - Oct 17
86	AHS 25	Rate of theft offences (per 1,000 population) [2]	21.9	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	17.7	RED	19.36	Not comparable	18.15**	Not comparable	Apr - Oct 17
87	AHS 26	Proportion of all offenders (adults and young people) who re-offend in a 12 month period	33	Apr 2015 - Mar 2016	Tracker	New indicator	RED	29.5	RED	35.9*	GREEN	Apr 2015 - Mar 2016
88	CYPS 36	Proven re-offending by young people (who offend) in a 12 month period (%)	46.4	Apr 2015 - Mar 2016	Tracker	New indicator	RED	42.2	RED	50*	GREEN	Apr 2015 - Mar 2016
2. How effective are at tackling Anti-Social Behaviour?												
89	AHS 27	Dealing with concerns of ASB and crime issues by the local council and police [1] [2] [9]	55.1	Jan - Sep 2017	Tracker	61.3	RED			55.6**	AMBER	Jan - Sep 2017
90	AHS 28a	Number of police reported incidents of anti-social behaviour [2]	12,065	Apr -Dec 2017	Tracker	14,301	GREEN					
91	AHS 28b	Number of council reported incidents of anti-social behaviour	8,440	April - Dec 2017	Tracker	10,406	GREEN					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure	Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered		
3. How well do we reduce misuse of drugs and alcohol?												
92	AHS 31	Percentage of successful completions of those in alcohol treatment	30.3	Jul 2016 - Jun 2017 with rep to Dec 2017	38.6	28.1	GREEN	38.6	RED	30.8*	Not comparable	England Jul 2016 - Jun 2017 with rep to Dec 2017 NE: 2016
93	AHS 32	Percentage of successful completions of those in drug treatment - opiates	6.8	Jul 2016 - Jun 2017 with rep to Dec 2017	7.9	5.7	GREEN	6.7	GREEN	5.2*	Not comparable	England: Jul 2016 - Jun 2017 with rep to Dec 2017 NE: 2016
94	AHS 33	Percentage of successful completions of those in drug treatment - non-opiates	27.6	Jul 2016 - Jun 2017 with rep to Dec 2017	45.4	26.3	GREEN	36.8	RED	27.4*	Not comparable	England: Jul 2016 - Jun 2017 with rep to Dec 2017 NE:2016
95	AHS 29	Percentage of anti-social behaviour incidents that are alcohol related	16.1	April - Dec 2017	Tracker	15.6	RED					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
96	AHS 34a	Percentage of secondary school pupils who drink alcohol (Most Weekends / Every Day)	13.0	2017 survey (snapshot Jan - Apr 2017)	Tracker	13.3	GREEN					
97	AHS 34b	Percentage of Secondary School pupils who have taken any illegal drugs, including cannabis or NPS (formerly known as legal highs)	5.9	2017 survey (snapshot Jan - Apr 2017)	Tracker	New indicator	NA					
98	AHS 30	Percentage of violent crime that is alcohol related	25.0	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	25.7	GREEN					
99	AHS 36	Alcohol seizures	632	Apr - Dec 2017	Tracker	1088	NA					
4. How well do we tackle abuse of vulnerable people, including domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation?												
100	AHS 35	Building resilience to terrorism (self assessment). Scored on level 1 (low) to 5 (high)	3	2016/17	Tracker	3	GREEN					
101	CYPS 34	Number of child sexual exploitation referrals [2]	191	2017	Tracker	168	NA					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure	Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered	
5. How do we keep our environment safe, including roads and waterways?							AS	AS	AS	AS	AS
102	REDPI 44	Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	161	Jan - Sep 2017	Tracker	123	RED				
		Number of fatalities	11			15			NA		
		Number of seriously injured	150			108			NA		
103	REDPI 45	Number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	16	Jan - Sep 2017	Tracker	14	RED				
		Number of fatalities	0			0			NA		
		Number of seriously injured	16			14			NA		
Altogether Greener											
1. How clean and tidy is my local environment?											
104	NS 14a	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed (LEQSPRO survey) as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level	5.22	Aug - Nov 2017	Tracker	5.33	GREEN	10	GREEN	2014/15	

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
105	NS 14b	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed (LEQSPRO survey) as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level	10.72	Aug - Nov 2017	Tracker	10.55	AMBER	27	GREEN			2014/15
106	NS 14c	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of dog fouling that fall below an acceptable level	0.44	Aug - Nov 2017	Tracker	1.11	GREEN	7	GREEN			2014/15
2 Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?												
107	REDPI 46	Percentage reduction in CO ₂ emissions in County Durham (by 40% by 2020 and 55% by March 2031)	49.9	2015	Tracker	48.00	GREEN					
108	REDPI 48	Percentage change in CO ₂ emissions from local authority operations	-14	2016/17	Tracker	-6.00	GREEN					
3. How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?												
109	NS10	Percentage of municipal waste diverted from landfill	96.7	Oct 2016 - Sep 2017	95.0	95.2	GREEN					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
110	NS19	Percentage of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted	39.3	Oct 2016 - Sep 2017	Tracker	39.3	GREEN	43.0	RED	35.3*	GREEN	2015/16
111	NS15	Number of fly-tipping incidents	7,940	2017	Tracker	8,100	GREEN					
Altogether Better Council												
1. How well do we look after our people?												
112	RES/011	Percentage of performance appraisals completed in current post in rolling year period (excluding schools)	85.81	2017	92.00	88.08	RED					
113	RES/LPI/012a	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services excluding school staff	10.70	2017	11.20	10.69	AMBER					
114	RES/052	Percentage of posts with no absence in rolling year (excluding schools)	57.26	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	52.62	GREEN					
115	RES/019a	% of sickness absence which is short term	17.29	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	19.52	NA					
116	RES/019b	% of sickness absence which is medium term	14.14	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	15.39	NA					
117	RES/019c	% of sickness absence which is long term	68.57	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	65.09	NA					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
118	RES/053	Percentage of employees having five days or less sickness per 12 month rolling period	78.94	Oct - Dec 2017	Tracker	77.94	NA					
2. Are our resources being managed for the best possible outcomes for residents and customers?												
119	RES/002	Percentage of council tax collected in-year	84.70	Apr - Dec 2017	84.82	84.76	AMBER	97.20	Not comparable	95.8*	Not comparable	2016/17
120	RES/003	Percentage of business rates collected in-year	83.52	Apr - Dec 2017	83.04	83.04	GREEN	98.20	Not comparable	98.13*	Not comparable	2016/17
3. How good are our services to customers and the public?												
121	NS26	Average time taken to answer a telephone call (seconds) [2]	45	2017	Tracker	44	RED					
122	NS20	Percentage of abandoned calls	5	2017	Tracker	6	GREEN					
123	NS 43a	Number of customer contacts - face to face	154,104	2017	Tracker	182,213	NA					
124	NS 43b	Number of customer contacts -telephone	955,969	2017	Tracker	982,660	NA					
125	NS 43c	Number of customer contacts - web forms	80,131	2017	Tracker	68,842	NA					
126	NS 43d	Number of customer contacts - emails	59,317	2017	Tracker	69,271	NA					

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	Performance compared to National figure		Performance compared to *North East or **Nearest statistical neighbour figure		Period covered
127	NS 43e	Number of customer contacts - social media	2,156	2017	Tracker	2,395	NA					

[\[1\] Previous period data amended /refreshed](#)

[\[2\] Data 12 months earlier amended/refreshed](#)

[\[3\] Funding required to continue the programme has not been secured](#)

[\[4\] Target is an annual target](#)

[\[5\] Since August 2015 out of work claimants who are single with no dependants will be claiming Universal Credit. Information on long term claimants is not available therefore this PI no longer represents all long term out of work claimants.](#)

[\[6\] Latest data amended /refreshed](#)

[\[7\] Due to a change in methodology, 2016/17 Ac Yr data cannot be compared to the previous academic year.](#)

[\[8\] The high number of school leavers whose status is 'not known' impacts significantly on this indicator](#)

[\[9\] A confidence interval applies to the survey results](#)

Appendix 5: Volume Measures

Chart 1. Children in need referrals within 12 months of previous referral

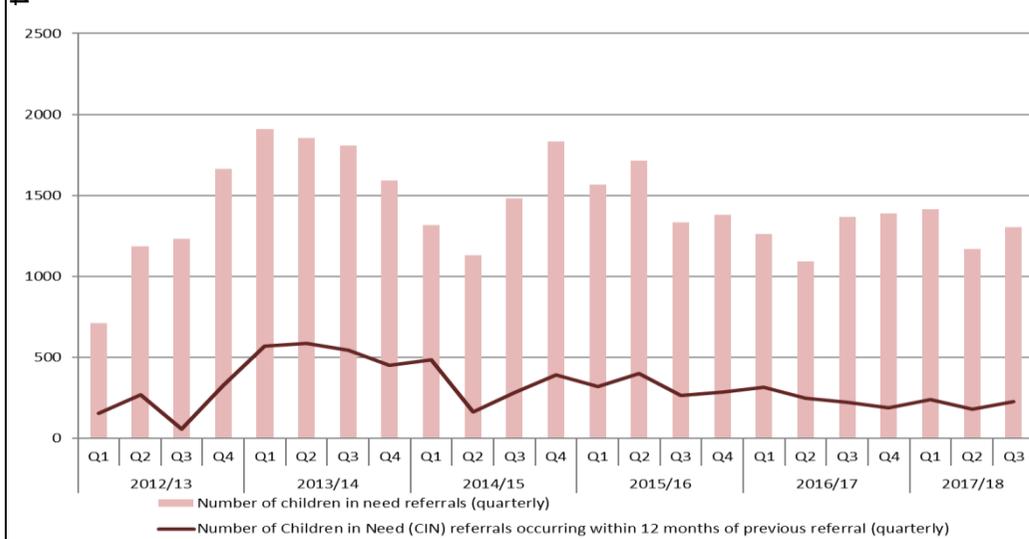


Chart 2. Looked after children cases

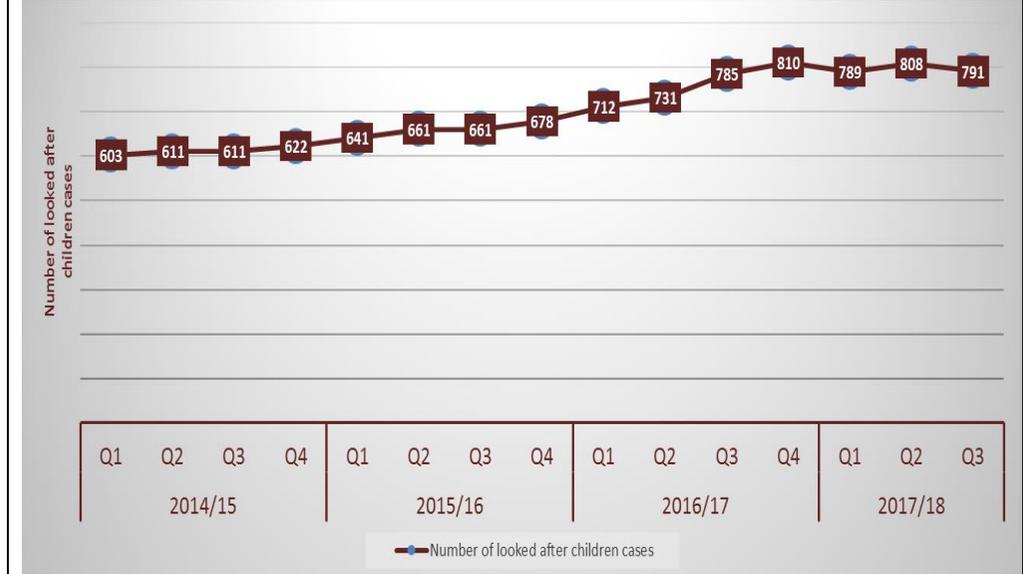


Chart 3. Children with a child protection plan

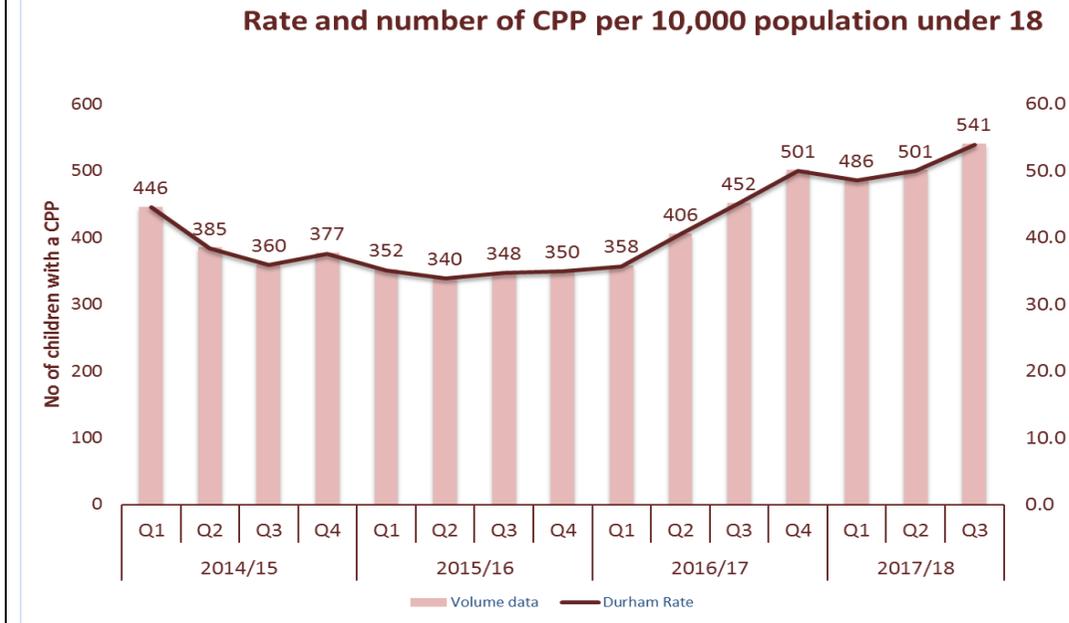


Chart 4. First Contact Volume and Process Rate

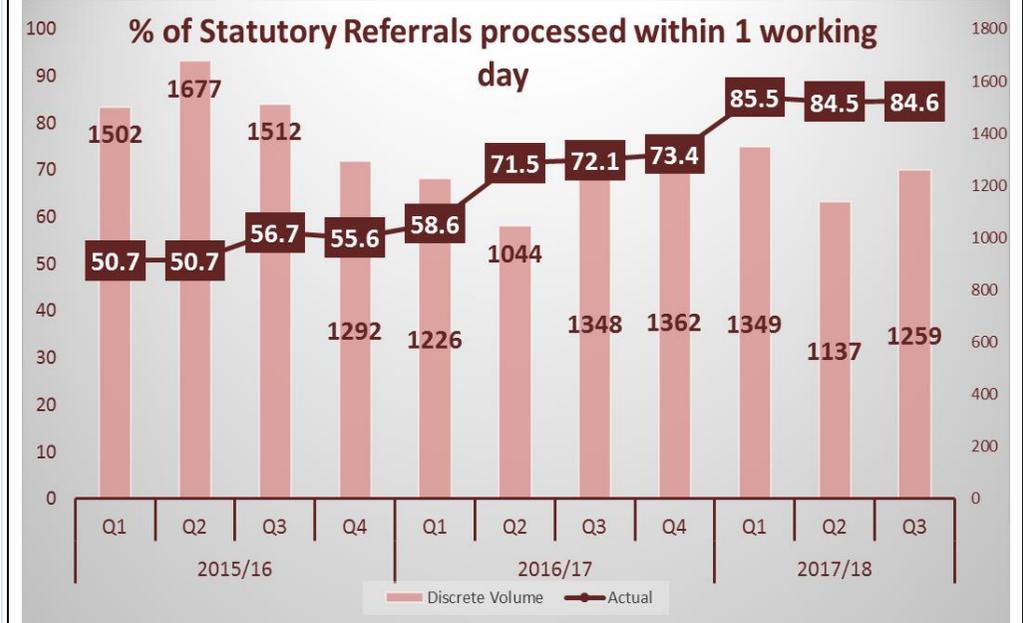


Chart 5. Fly-tipping incidents

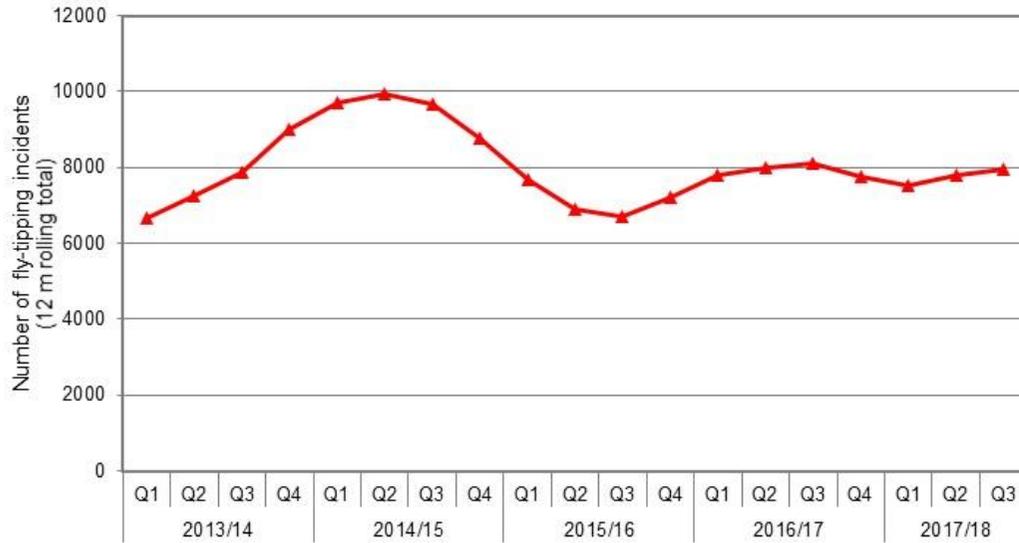


Chart 6. Customer contacts

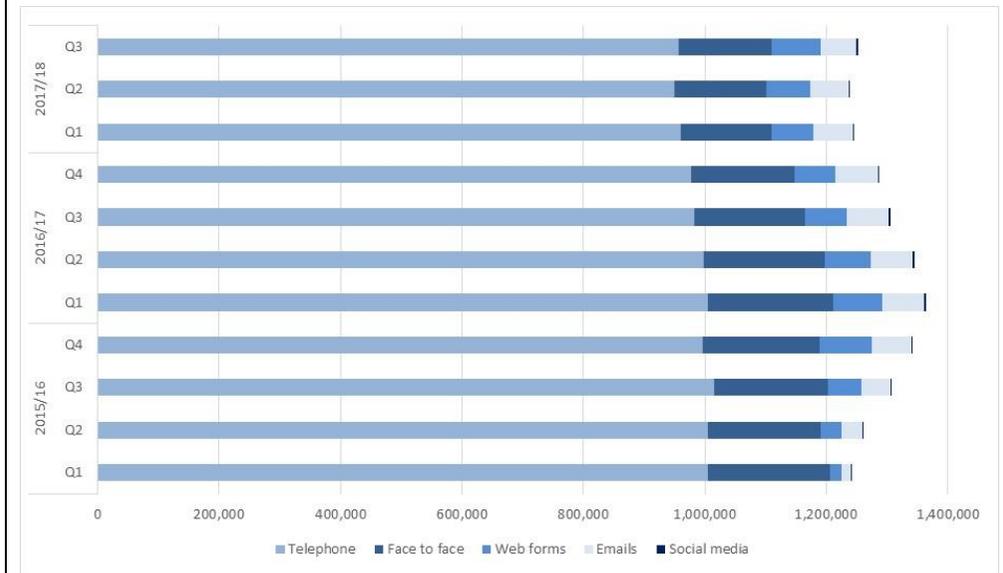


Chart 7. Breastfeeding Prevalence in County Durham

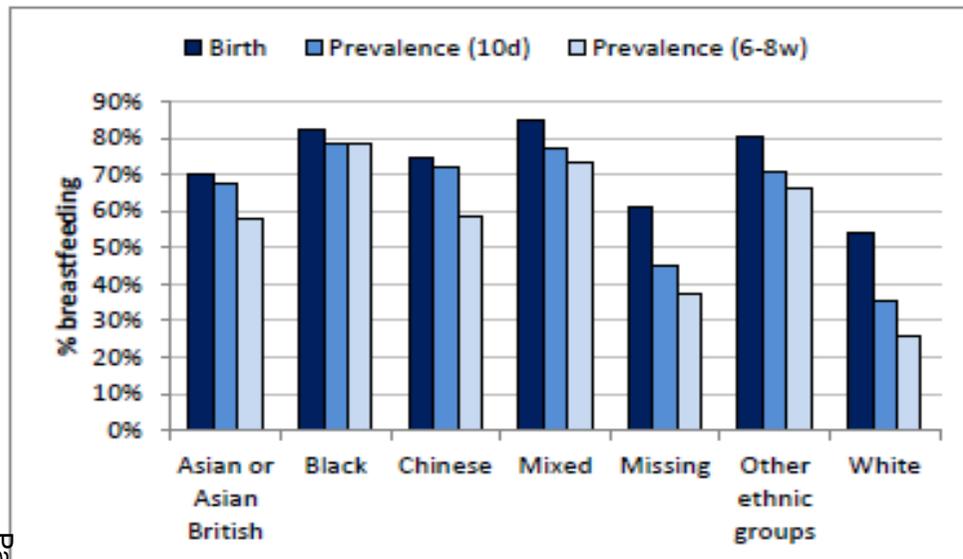


Chart 8. Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations requests

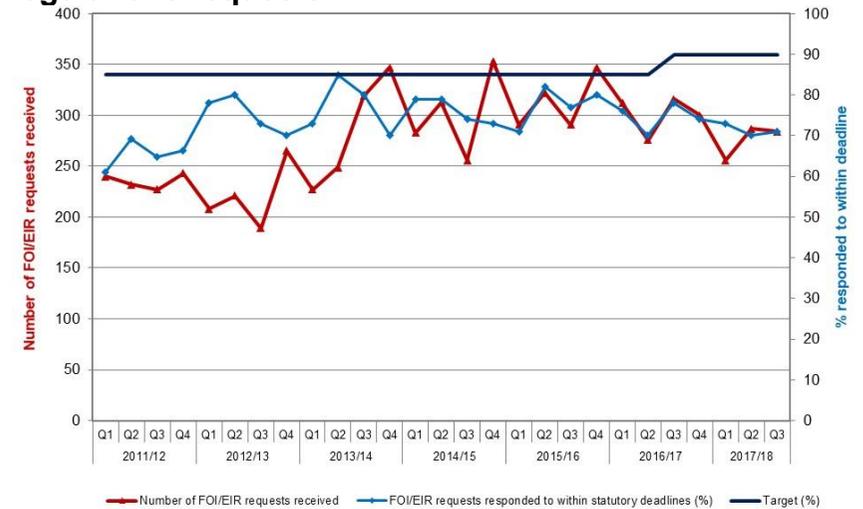


Chart 9.

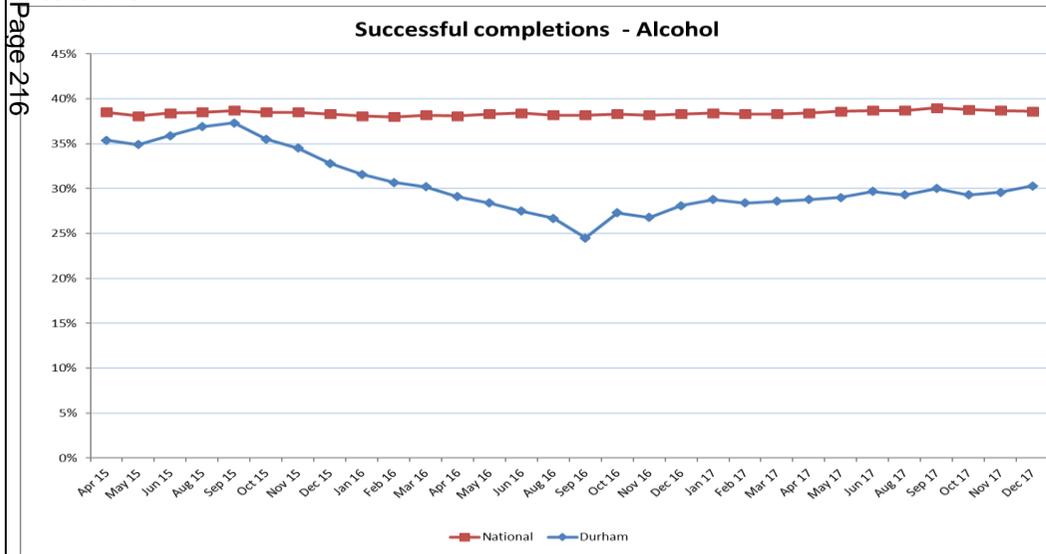


Chart 10.

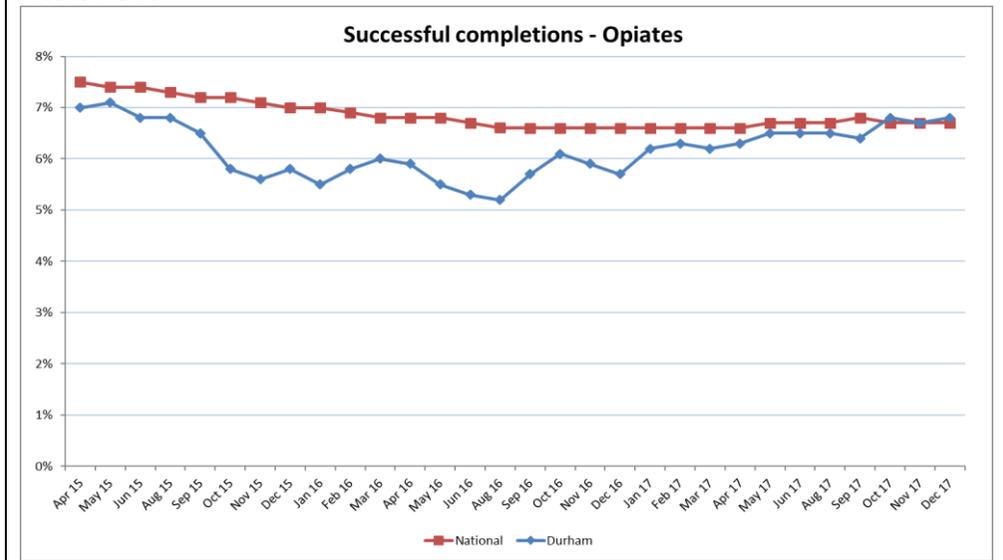
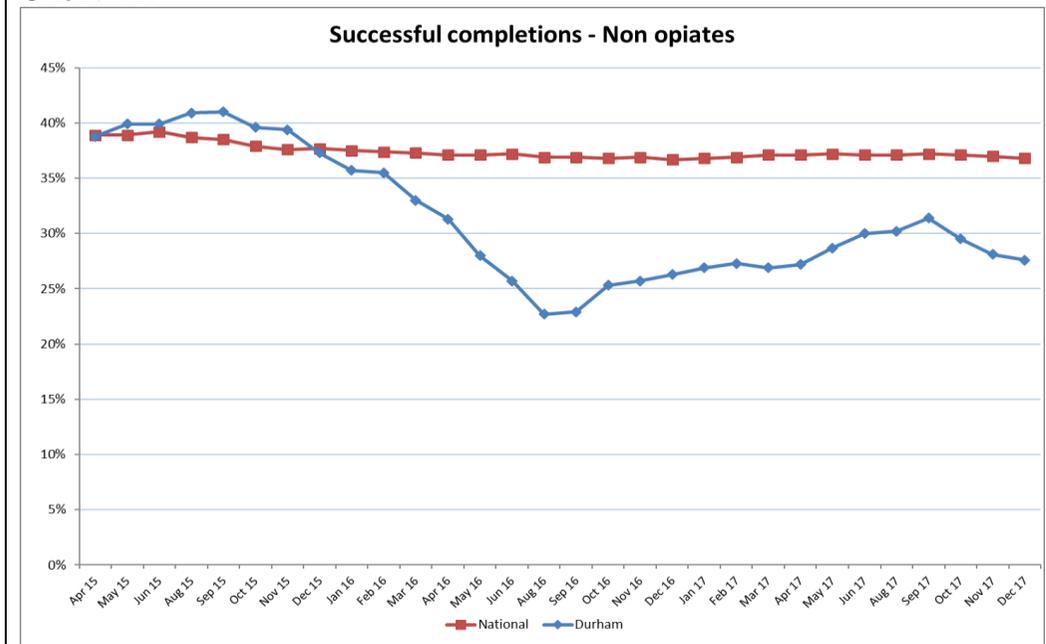
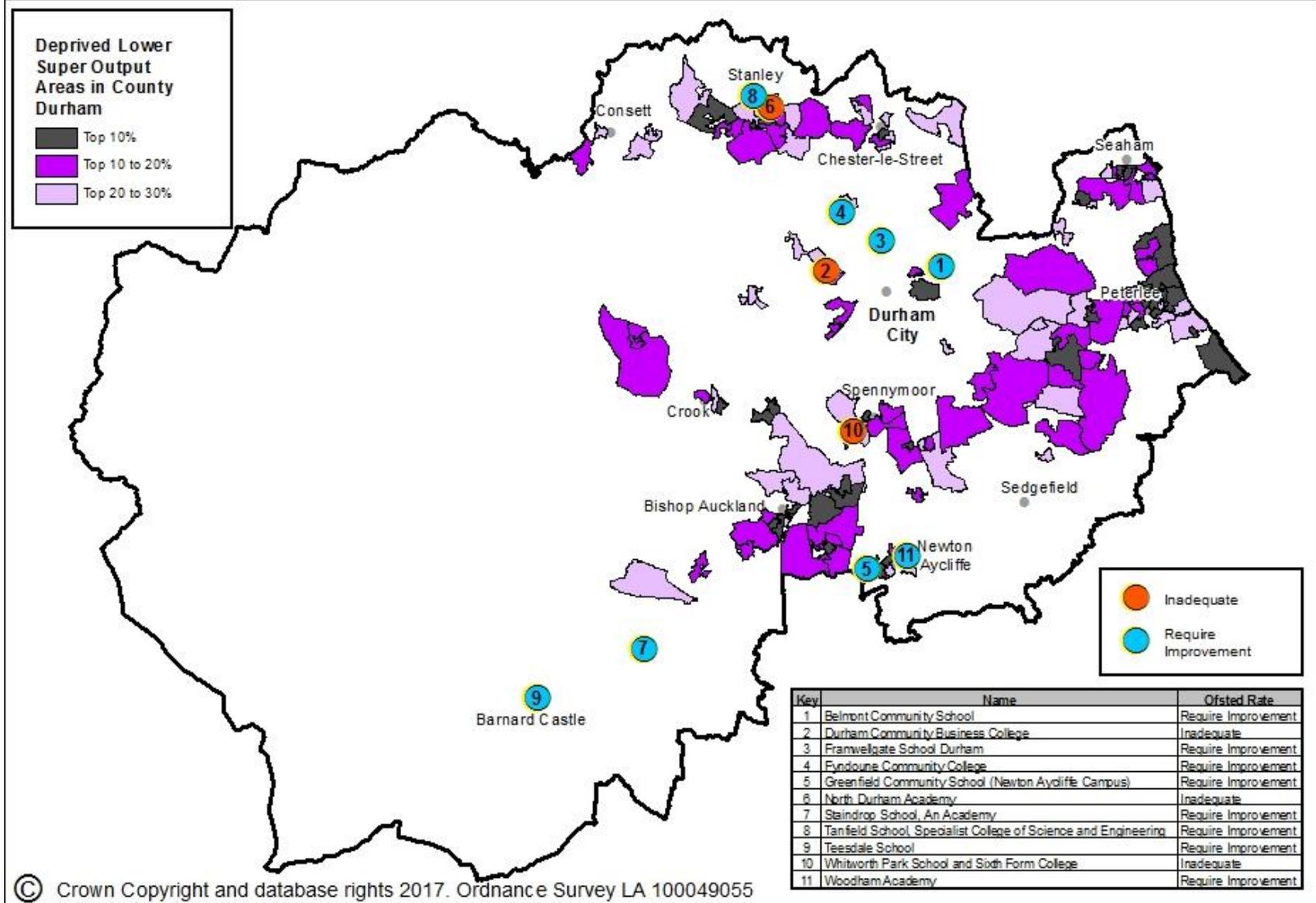


Chart 11.



Appendix 6: Secondary Schools Require Improvement and Inadequate



Ofsted ratings are as of 31 December 2017

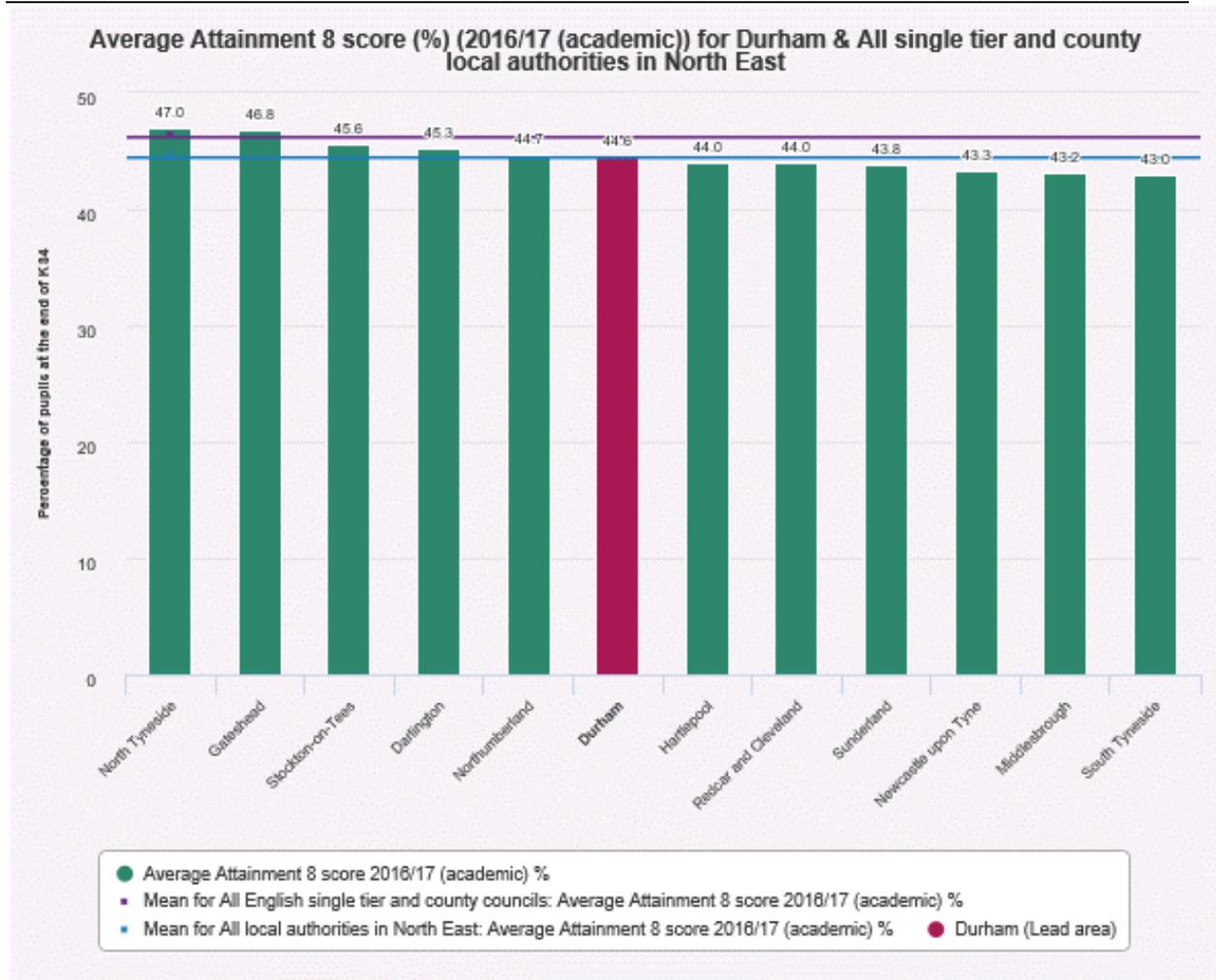
Appendix 7: Health and Social Care – Key Metrics

The CQC are undertaking a programme of local system reviews of health and social care in 20 local authority areas. Identification of these areas is principally based on a dashboard of six key metrics from across the sector where health and social care work most closely together, and assesses local areas against their statistical nearest neighbours (CIPFA) and nationally. Reviews have already commenced in the initial twelve challenged local authority areas and a further eight local authorities have now been identified for review. Durham is not one of the local authorities identified for review as we are performing well on the majority of the six metrics (see appendix 7) and the combined national ranking (based on the same six key indicators), where we rank 16 out of 152 (low is good).

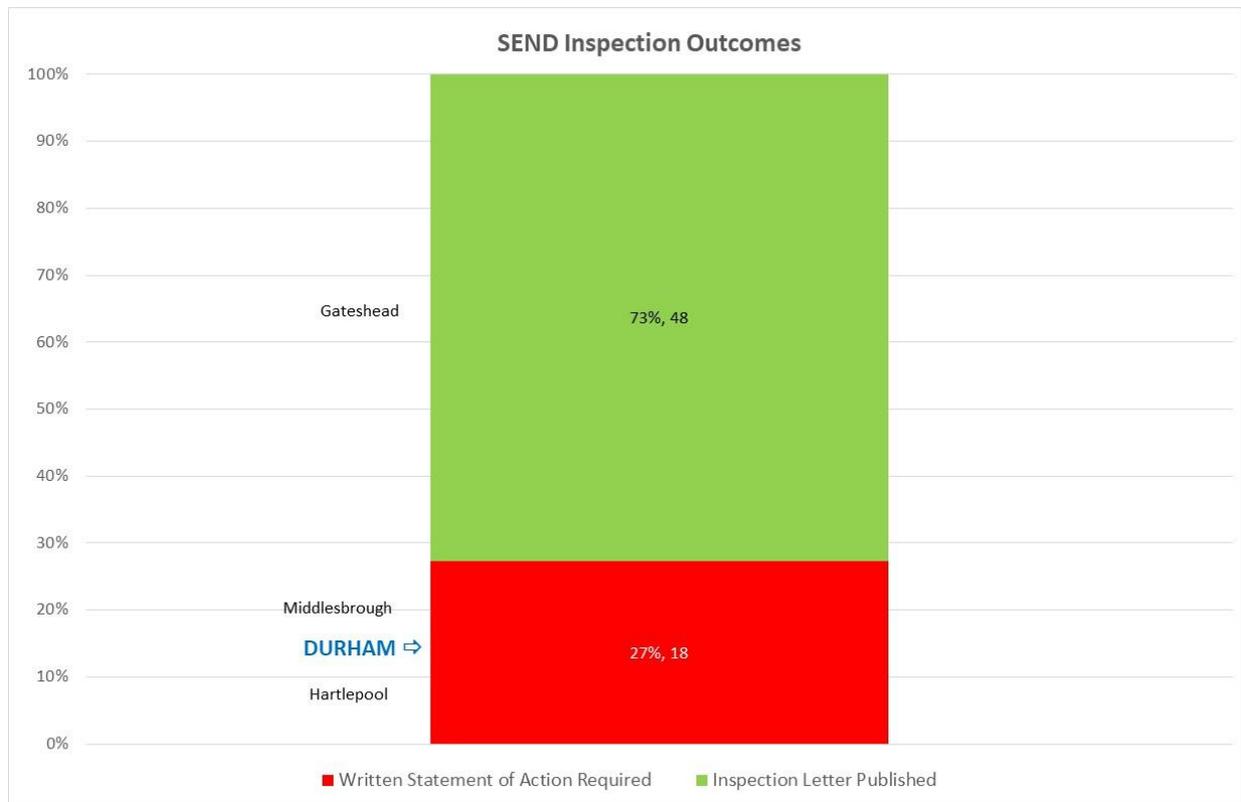
Metric	National Rank (out of 152)	Nearest Neighbour rank (out of 16)
Emergency Admissions (65+) per 100,000 65+ population	75	5
90th percentile of length of stay for emergency admissions (65+)	23	6
TOTAL Delayed Days per day per 100,000 18+ population	5	3
Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services *	41	4
Proportion of older people (65 and over) who are discharged from hospital who receive reablement/rehabilitation services	43	5
Proportion of discharges (following emergency admissions) which occur at the weekend	118	10

*based on 2016/17 data. Latest data in the index.

Appendix 8: Average Attainment 8 score



Appendix 9: SEND Inspection Outcomes



Cabinet**14 March 2018****County Durham Partnership Update**

Report of Corporate Management Team**Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships****Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council****Councillor Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To update Cabinet on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including the board, the five thematic partnerships and all area action partnerships (AAPs). The report also includes updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the county.

Summary

- 2 The County Durham Partnership continues to lead on and address key strategic issues. The Board has discussed a number of key issues including the Aykley Heads development and subsequent development of the History Centre at Mount Oswald and County Hall relocation as well as the winter pressures facing the NHS, nationally and locally.
- 3 The Prioritising Prevention agenda remains a key area of work with progress made in identifying the key areas of focus following detailed work from the identified workstreams and national support from the Local Government Association.
- 4 The report features updates from all AAPs under the five thematic areas of priority with examples including a continued focus on mitigating the effects of social isolation as well as supporting children and young people particularly through projects regarding mental health and wellbeing. It also covers activity from across the broader partnership networks including the recent VCS conference and successful funding secured for those people leaving the armed forces who may need accommodation.

Key Partnership Activity and Developments

- 5 The **County Durham Partnership Board** has met twice since the last update report. December's meeting had two main items: Recommendations from the Prioritising Prevention Steering Group's work and the Family Intervention Programme (FIP), led by Housing. Both presentations led to interesting discussion with recommendations agreed for taking the Prevention work forward. This is covered in full later in the report. The FIP programme works with people who have been identified as the most challenging, who face multiple problems and risk factors specifically homelessness and anti-social behaviour. It works through the implementation of a whole family assessment which results in a whole family plan that draws on the expertise of a range of service providers.

- 6 The January Board discussed the proposed Aykley Heads development, following on from Cabinet's approval at their January meeting. The Board were very interested in the proposals and how they will be developed over the next few years, as well as the council's move from the current County Hall site. The Board will continue to request updates on this development as it progresses.
- 7 The Board had requested an update from CCGs on winter pressures and how local health facilities have coped, linked to media coverage on NHS pressures nationally. It heard that whilst there have been pressures, there are pressures throughout the year which are managed through a series of frameworks and online systems. Measures put in place from December include additional funding, taken from the statutory contingency fund held by CCGs, 70 extra beds and the Street Triage approach in partnership with Durham Constabulary and the Office of the Police, Crime and Victim's Commissioner. The presentation highlighted that this had been managed relatively well and a full 'wash-up' session will take place in early spring.
- 8 The **CDP Forum** in February was focused on two main items: Durham History Centre and the new Social Inclusion Fund. The History Centre proposals are linked to the Aykley Heads development due to the need to rehouse the five miles of archives that are currently stored in County Hall. These documents, some dating back over 900 years, are proposed to be moved which will offer further opportunity for them to be accessible to the public. Following a consultation with the public and through AAPs, Cabinet will make a decision on this proposal.
- 9 All 14 AAPs will benefit from additional funding via the improved Better Care Fund over a three year period. This is ringfenced to tackle social inclusion issues in older people and the Forum was part of the consultation on proposed criteria as to how the funding should be allocated. This will be implemented from April.
- 10 A Countywide Voluntary and Community Sector Conference, organised by Durham Community Action, brought together over 100 delegates from the **Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)** together with public and private sector partners to 'find common ground' in dealing with the complex issues faced by the VCS. The conference provided the opportunity to discuss challenges, share experiences and learn about the solutions that organisations have been testing in County Durham and beyond. Keynote speeches, including from the Corporate Director for Adult and Health Services, emphasised the positive impacts collaborative working is having by combining resources to move partnership working from 'good to great.' There were also a series of spotlight sessions providing information on commissioning, advice, finance and social investment, the voluntary and community sector alliance, volunteering and health and wellbeing. The conference stimulated discussion about how to harness insight across a broad spectrum of expertise in order to design better community services for County Durham. It also demonstrated a desire to develop some new approaches to tackling complex problems in closer partnerships. Further discussions are scheduled to take place with the council's commissioners to take this work forward.
- 11 Working with **Faith Communities** continues to offer fresh opportunities for collaboration. Over 30 participants from different churches and faith groups across the **East Durham AAP** area came together to share their experiences of the links between faith and wellbeing and reflect on what they are doing locally. A key aim was to facilitate better engagement between faith groups and the AAP. A considerable number of church and faith group initiatives were reported across all age groups addressing local concerns. As a result of the workshop the potential for future collaboration between churches and with the AAP has been identified.

- 12 The latest breakfast seminar bringing together elected Members, officers, partners and faith communities in a roundtable conversation considered some of the impacts of the introduction of Universal Credit in County Durham as well as some of the positive outcomes of effective partnership working which is helping to mitigate some of the worst effects.
- 13 Members of the County Durham Faiths Network have contributed to the Council's Holocaust Memorial Day exhibition. Reflecting on the theme 'The Power of Words' and responding to the Holocaust and subsequent genocides, short written contributions have been made by members of different faith and belief groups either living, working or worshipping in County Durham.
- 14 Our support for the **Armed Forces Community** continues with the establishment of the Armed Forces Outreach Service - a local authority partnership. Two ex-forces personnel are now embedded within the Housing Solutions Team to act as a first point of contact for former members of the armed forces of any age, or their immediate family, to provide advice and support on housing, employment and other welfare needs. Referrals to the service can be made directly or through the referral pathway provided by the Advice in County Durham Partnership. The service will be closely monitored to ascertain particular trends.
- 15 **Chester-le-Street and District AAP** has been working with SHAID who run St. Peters Court in Sacriston to support a £15,000 capital grant to double the size of the facility for ex-service personnel to gain essential support services and transition to more independent living. Work has started on the expansion which will create an additional 16 bed facility and is due to be completed in March 2018.

Prevention at Scale

- 16 As highlighted in paragraph three, the CDP board agreed in early 2017 that Prioritising Prevention should be an area of focus for all partners and established a steering group to investigate how the work of all partner organisations and thematic partnerships is contributing to this area of work. In doing so, the objectives were to have:
 - (a) Reduced demand;
 - (b) Increased healthy life expectancy;
 - (c) Reduced costs/savings across public services;
 - (d) Driven improvement;
 - (e) Happier, healthier communities.
- 17 The membership is taken from all public sector organisations as well as the voluntary sector and business representatives. The group developed a number of aims in order to achieve the above, these included:
 - (a) Identifying and agreeing three or four areas to be the focus of prevention work;
 - (b) Facilitating and coordinating implementation of good practice;
 - (c) Streamlining activities and removing barriers;
 - (d) Driving collaboration, co-production and a solution focused approach;
 - (e) Promoting a better use of resources to achieve budget reductions;

- (f) Overseeing and coordinating the work of time-limited task and finish groups, each with clear scope, leadership, time frame and reporting arrangements.
- 18 Alongside this, Durham was successfully awarded one of 15 national pilot areas for the LGA Prevention at Scale offer. This provides 20 days of a support manager and expert advice and support to a local area to deliver at scale a preventative approach for a particular area of specific focus which will result in a significant change in health outcomes for local people.
- 19 The Prevention Steering Group has met regularly and has progressed its three workstreams of Building on best practice; Maximising funding and Preventing demand for services. A number of areas have been identified to be implemented and progressed further with a presentation to the CDP Board on 15 December highlighting a number of recommendations, all of which were agreed. These include:
- (a) The LGA Prevention at Scale work focussing on Mental Health with further work to be carried out to identify the specific element to take forward;
 - (b) Developing an annual showcase event sharing best practice projects (the details of this and the interface with the Big Tent will need to be worked through);
 - (c) Projects demonstrating extended reach (for example through Area Action Partnerships);
 - (d) Promoting funding packages to support communities to become more resilient and sustainable with an aim of more funding coming to the county to pilot or try new innovative ideas
 - (e) Rollout of Make Every Contact Count training – this will equip front line workers to develop a conversation with residents about their own health, wellbeing, social connectedness and support communities to help themselves more.
 - (f) Further connectivity across the Community Mentor Network – to ensure that best practice and information is shared across a network of people who work across communities.
- 20 Dr Ann Hoskins and Kay Burkett, LGA representatives have both offered valuable advice and support to date with the first priority being to further focus down on the specific area of focus of Mental Health, with their advice being to utilise the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan.
- 21 The Plan identifies five key areas of focus:
- (a) Children and Young People;
 - (b) Suicide Prevention;
 - (c) Crisis Care Concordat;
 - (d) Dementia
 - (e) Adults, Health and Wellbeing.
- 22 At a joint meeting of the Prevention Steering Group and the Mental Health Partnership Board, a sub group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, in January, it was agreed that the area of focus would be Suicide Prevention with workforce and reducing stigma and discrimination as key areas to be addressed. This work will be taken forward through a series of task and finish groups with progress reported

back to the CDP Board and this update report. It is important that all parts of the partnership are involved in identifying and achieving outcomes and this will include working with businesses through the Economic Partnership as well as engaging with children and young people through schools and out of school activities.

Altogether wealthier

- 23 The **County Durham Economic Partnership Board** was held on 17 October at Lanchester Wines, Annfield Plain. Lanchester Wines is an excellent example of a thriving and expanding locally grown business. Operating in the global bottling business alongside national niche products the company is currently employing over 300 people with an ambition to employ 500. The owner was keen to emphasise Durham as a great place to do business with plenty of opportunities, to support his business growth, including access to renewable energy technology. Of note in discussions was Lanchester Wines biggest ongoing challenge of access to a skilled labour force. Innovative approaches from them included establishing their own fork lift qualification and training programme.
- 24 The main focus of the meeting was to look at management of the EU Structural Funds programme but also to consider the wider investment programme for economic development in County Durham. This includes almost £3billion of investment received and planned across the County for the next 10 years. The board noted that County Durham continues to be open for businesses and the added value that partnership working is bringing from across private and public investments. The economic partnership board recognised the importance of continuing to build our pipeline of investment aligned to continue shaping of our strategic direction. It was also noted that this process would align well to supporting the shaping of the Local Plan preferred options for the summer of 2018.
- 25 In late November 2017, the Government published its Industrial Strategy which aims to create better, higher-paying jobs with investments in skills, industries and infrastructure, and has a long-term focus on improved productivity.
- 26 The strategy includes the four cross-cutting 'Grand Challenges' of artificial intelligence, clean growth, future mobility, and ageing society. It outlines four initial 'Sector Deals' for the life sciences, construction, artificial intelligence, and automotive sectors, with other sector deals in development. The strategy confirms that 2018 will be celebrated as the 'Year of Engineering' with the aim of raising the profile of the engineering sector and engineering professions to 7 to 16 year olds as well as teachers and parents.
- 27 The strategy is supported by a number of funding pots and commits to publishing plans soon for getting one million more disabled people into employment within the next 10 years. The government has committed to establishing an Industrial Strategy Council to commission research and monitor the implementation of the strategy and measure its outcomes. In addition, Mayoral Combined Authorities or Local Enterprise Partnerships will be required to prepare 'Local Industrial Strategies' for their areas.
- 28 This year's Future Business Magnates (FBM) competition was launched on 3 November. FBM is an annual competition designed to inspire enterprise skills among schoolchildren in year eight from across County Durham. The theme for this year's competition is Smart County Durham, which will challenge the teams to devise a smart solution to a problem they have identified in the region. Pupils will present their finished concept to the judges and winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in June 2018.

- 29 Influential names from the business world, including Bignall Group, Ebac, Hydram, Waterstons, CA Group, Robertsons Construction, Hodgson Sayers and Thorn Lighting, are partnering the 18 school teams from across the county to provide mentoring and support.
- 30 AAPs continue to work with people within their communities to mitigate against the impacts of welfare reform and other financial issues that people may face. This is across all age groups and often working with young people can impact on the financial management of parents. **Spennymoor AAP** has funded the Durham Savers Project, alongside the council's regeneration team, which support residents, young people and their families in through the employment of a Project Officer. They have engaged with local firms and schools to raise the financial awareness and capability of young people, by establishing a savings 'Bank' within the school, and salary savings schemes with local firms. This would then be used as a vehicle to engage parents, guardians, and school staff in financial issues and education, and discussions on the negative impact that poor financial management can have on their lives.
- 31 Progress continues to be steady across the project. Activity across the area has led to five schools commit to the project. A new collection point for the area was established at Spennymoor Youth Centre in January. It is anticipated that the volunteer training will begin shortly for the scheme.
- 32 Alongside this, membership of the credit union in the Spennymoor AAP area has increased to 160 members with the current members savings have risen to £52,942. Members borrowing in the area has increased to £144,080.
- 33 The growth of the membership of the NEfirst credit union has reached 13,300 and the proposed merger of the two credit unions should create further opportunities. A new payday loan platform for the credit union completed its pilot phase and has been launched in Durham via the DCC and AAP Facebook pages in December 2017.
- 34 **4Together AAP** has allocated its £10,000 welfare reform funding to a project supporting people with Personal Independence Payment and Employment Support allowance on a 1:1 basis for those in special circumstantial need. The project is provided by the LADDER Centre in Ferryhill who have supported 107 clients. The majority of these clients have required multiple appointments to deal with their complex benefit issues. To date, notification has been received of benefits awards to the value of £104,389 per year/£364,440 across the term of the award to clients of service.
- 35 **Weardale AAP** has funded a Rural Advice Worker for one day per week since April 2017 and to date they have secured over £45,000 of external funding. They are utilising a person centred model to address initial difficulties including trust and confidence before being able to address specific issues raised by those individuals engaging with the project.
- 36 Communication and awareness raising via flyers, press releases, face to face meetings with community members and giving talks as well as 'being visible' have helped to build up the client group.
- 37 As featured in previous update reports, a number of AAPs have supported the Wheels to Work project and this is now expanding to cover the **3 Towns Partnership, Mid Durham and Bishop Auckland Shildon (BASH) AAP** areas.
- 38 The project seeks to offer the loan of a scooter for a fixed period of time (usually 6 months) so that individuals for whom transport is a barrier to employment, can take

up an offer of paid work, apprenticeship or sustain employment where it may be otherwise at risk. It is open to people aged 16 and over, the majority of clients to date are in their 20s and 30s many with young families.

- 39 Individual participants in the scheme receive an initial assessment to: verify their offer of paid employment; agree a travel plan; confirm willingness to pay an agreed hire rate for the scooter; arrange for the participant to undertake the Compulsory Basic Training Course.
- 40 Participants receive a crash helmet and other outdoor safety clothing including over trousers, jacket, protective gloves and a bike lock. Scooter hire includes regular servicing and maintenance of vehicles as well as 24 hour break down recovery. Case studies from other areas of County Durham highlight that working and indeed passing a CBT test and using a scooter is making significant differences to peoples mental health, self-confidence and levels of stress, increasing time with family and quality of life, flexibility and availability for work thereby increasing hours of work and pay, social networking opportunities thus reducing social isolation.
- 41 **Chester-le-Street AAP** has recently started a constructive dialogue with the Refuse Café who are locating in the town's Front Street. This project takes potential food waste from various supermarkets and uses that to cook meals on a 'pay as you can' basis. The people behind the new venture are part of the AAPs Welfare Reform and Employability Task Group who are working with local partners such as Job Centre Plus to ensure clients are aware of the café and the various supports services that will be run from this location for residents. The AAP will consider a project proposal in spring aimed at supporting a number of training opportunities within the café.
- 42 Linked to the continued regeneration of the City Centre, **Durham AAP** continues to run a City Centre task group. This brings together partners to look at issues relating to development in the city centre area, including economic regeneration activities. Durham City Business Improvement District (BID) recently received support from the AAP to host the Durham City Nativity, which included camels and other animals. This event brought a number of people into the centre of Durham at a time when numbers may have been low. The group is also looking at Durham City's Neighbourhood plan and is also looking at how Durham Town Hall can become more accessible to the public and tourists. This group also covers issues linked to the Greener and Safer agendas.

Altogether better for children and young people

- 43 The **Children and Families Partnership** supports children, young people and families to achieve the best possible outcomes. The Partnership has a focussed set of priorities to maximise its impact:
- (a) Reducing Child Poverty
 - (b) Building Resilience
 - (c) Best Start in Life
- 44 In early 2017 the Student Voice Survey gathered the views of over 9,000 primary and secondary school pupils on issues such as teaching, safety, careers and health. The surveys highlighted some positive messages such as almost all (99%) of primary school pupils saying that their school teaches them to stay safe online and three quarters of secondary school pupils saying that school is important to them. The survey highlighted some issues which students are concerned about such as being more likely to be bullied, feeling safe and careers information.

Students' responses also highlighted some areas of concern for organisations such as alcohol and drug use, lack of physical activity and the impacts of living in deprivation.

- 45 Schools have been given their individual results to address key issues and to use as an evidence base to assist future planning. A countywide action plan is in development to coordinate an approach to the issues across organisations and support schools to make improvements.
- 46 Linked to this, **East Durham Rural Corridor (EDRC) AAP's** Young People's Wellbeing project supports the mental health and emotional wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people within the AAP area who are facing the following issues:
- (a) Caring for others
 - (b) Bullying and social isolation
 - (c) Bereavement and loss
 - (d) Family and relationship breakdown
- 47 A trained counsellor will lead the following activities across the AAP area:
- (a) Provide early help for vulnerable young people through individual therapeutic support and group sessions around key issues such as caring, bullying, bereavement and relationship breakdowns.
 - (b) Manage a student on clinical placement from The Institute for Arts in Therapy and Education (IATE) who will support vulnerable young people through art psychotherapy.
 - (c) Recruit, train and manage two peer mentors who will provide peer support for other vulnerable young people to ensure they feel listened to and supported.
 - (d) Work in partnership with schools, social and health services and other local organisations to develop and embed a 'Young Peoples Wellbeing Pledge' to raise awareness, support early identification of vulnerable young people and signpost them to appropriate services.
 - (e) Recruit, train and manage two volunteers who will support the delivery of the Young Peoples Wellbeing Project.
- 48 The Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge is an England-wide event where organisations open their doors to children and young people to listen to their views and get them involved in decision making. The Children and Families Partnership was awarded a Gold Commendation, the highest level of recognition by the Children's Commissioner for England, for the events which took place in 2016/17.
- 49 A programme of work was implemented to get children and young people involved in decision making throughout the year. Progress was made in developing the ways organisations engage with children and young people, improvements were made to the choice of products available in food banks, intergenerational projects and young people made valuable links with local businesses and the voluntary and community sector to each increase their understanding of the needs of the other and how organisations can better engage with children and young people.
- 50 The 2017/18 Takeover Challenge was launched on 24 November and approximately 200 young people have so far taken part in a range of activities. They were able to see what it was like to 'take over' key roles and share their thoughts. Children benefit from having their views heard, having fun and being

inspired, and partners get a fresh, unique and creative perspective on important issues.

- 51 The internet provides a vast supply of information on every topic but it is sometimes difficult for children and young people to navigate the myriad of websites available and they need to be signposted to information and support available in their local area. Partners have come together to support Just Simply Ask, a website which is aimed specifically at children and young people in County Durham.
- 52 The website has been designed by a team of young people to not only signpost to reliable sources of important information but to be a fun, interesting and informative social media site where young people can share and explore ideas and issues that matter to them. The website will help young people to find local groups they might want to join, where they can get discounts or where they can get advice on relationships, sport or drugs and alcohol. Professionals are being asked to provide live online 'Ask the Expert' chat sessions where they will discuss topics with young people such as apprenticeships, mental health, bullying or sexual health.
- 53 The Children and Families Partnership has gained reaccreditation for the Young Carers Charter for 2018-20. The Charter is awarded to schools, communities and organisations that demonstrate a commitment to consider the individual needs of children and young people who have a caring responsibility in the work that they do.
- 54 The Partnership's Investing in Children Membership Award has also been renewed and presented as a result of the partnership demonstrating ongoing dialogue with children and young people which results in change.
- 55 **EDRC** and Durham Cathedral are working together on a project to engage children and young people more closely with their communities through a programme of activities undertaken during the school day. Children and young people examine and learn about the wildlife, habitats, animal and plant life that lives around their schools, understand how habitats can be improved to encourage more wildlife to flourish and undertake activities to put what they have learnt into practice. Children and young people will be encouraged to develop their understanding of the local community and develop a sense of place through creative learning, culminating in a piece of collective art produced by the whole class. This project will bring the community closer together by engaging with different schools across the AAP area using the overarching theme of Armistice, the First World War and the impact on the local community. As at quarter 2, the progress on the milestones is that all schools have been contacted, and 1 school has booked all sessions.
- 56 The Children and Families Partnership has signed up to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Promise to improve education, health, leisure and sport respite opportunities, transport, employment and information for young people with SEND.
- 57 The Promise was developed by the eXtreme Group which is recognised as a representative voice for children and young people with SEND living in County Durham. The group works together to identify how services can make positive changes based on the experiences of children and young people with SEND. They developed the Children and Young People's SEND Promise by sharing their views and identifying key themes that they would like to see prioritised.
- 58 The Children and Families Partnership have agreed to uphold more than 25 individual promises set out in the Promise charter including:
- (a) Promising to provide a high standard of education that is fun and engaging in a safe learning environment, and to support children and young people to become more

independent by providing training for them to travel on their own to their education and leisure activities

- (b) Promising to fully involve and prepare children and young people during the transition from children and young people's health care services to adult health care services
- (c) Promising to provide an accessible work environment inclusive to young people with SEND
- (d) Promising that within any service, we will listen to the voices of children and young people ensuring services continue to make improvements based on their experiences.

59 As highlighted in a previous report, it has been highlighted nationally and locally that an increasing number of young people are buying and drinking energy drinks. It has also been noted that many parents and carers were seeking advice around energy drinks. After discussing at task groups, the **3 Towns Partnership** approached **Bishop and Shildon (BASH) AAP** to see if they could link in with the work being carried out in their area. The project was led by LifeLine, supported and funded by BASH AAP, with support from partners including Health Express, creating the HYPER leaflet along with other resources. The leaflets raise awareness and provide information about Energy Drinks and give schools access to a resource that provides advice and guidance for families.

60 10,000 leaflets have been printed for the 3 Towns area, 8800 leaflets have been distributed so far to every child and young person in all of our schools across the 3 towns and leaflets have also been made available in community venues such as GP Surgeries, Libraries, Sports Centres, and Community Centres.

61 **Durham AAP's** Children and Young People task group meets regularly to look at the relevant issues and consider project ideas. Support has already been given to County Durham Guides to support improvements to their building and Durham City Centre's Duke of Edinburgh's scheme has received funding through the 'Youth Fund'. The recent Up to you event also supported projects working with disabled young people, young people living with Autism and youth work in the Laurel Avenue. A number of other projects are currently going through the approval process.

Altogether healthier

62 The **Health and Wellbeing Board** supports people to achieve their optimum health and wellbeing by helping people to be able to help themselves and others. The vision of the Board is to 'improve the health and wellbeing of the population of County Durham and reduce health inequalities'.

63 In January 2017 the Health and Wellbeing Board agreed the County Durham Oral Health Strategy. In line with the intentions set out in the strategy, options for water fluoridation are being explored.

- (a) Oral health is important for general health and wellbeing. Poor oral health can affect someone's ability to eat, speak, smile and socialise normally, for example due to pain or social embarrassment. Statistics reveal health inequalities in County Durham where 61% of children in Woodhouse Close have had experience of tooth decay, compared to only 6% in Chester-le-Street South. National statistics show that water fluoridation significantly reduces tooth decay, particularly in ethnic minority and deprived communities, and Public Health England recommends water fluoridation as a safe and effective measure.

- (b) A number of options have been considered to ensure that the initiative would benefit as many residents and provide the best value for money possible. In November 2017 the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board agreed to progress the preferred option to the next stage of the process.
 - (c) The simplest and most economic method of fluoridating the water supply of all County Durham residents would involve water treatment works that supply water to some properties within Sunderland and South Tyneside Council boundaries. If these local authorities agree then a technical appraisal of the engineering requirements and associated costs will progress, allowing partners to come to an agreement which can be submitted to the secretary of state and begin the process which will be taken forward by a joint committee and include a full public consultation.
- 64 Macmillan Joining the Dots County Durham is a partnership project between Durham County Council and Macmillan Cancer Support, which has been in place since November 2015. The project aims to make sure people affected by cancer receive early and continuing support from the point of diagnosis. The project was established to develop a new “social model” of support which will make sure that all people affected by cancer in County Durham have the opportunity to receive early support for their individual needs, from income and housing to housework or emotional support.
- 65 A public consultation on the proposed support model for the service took place between September and November 2017. The model includes an assessment of each person’s wide ranging needs and level of support required, ensuring that people access the services and their needs are met, and peer support from other people who have been affected by cancer. A key worker to coordinate the support would be based in the local community and the referral centre would be open on evenings and weekends. The final proposal and implementation plan is being progressed through the appropriate governance arrangements.
- 66 The number of people living with dementia in Durham and the UK is set to increase significantly and many of these people are not registered as having dementia with their GP. The County Durham Dementia Action Alliance is working to increase the number of Dementia Friendly Communities, promote existing support services and improve residents’ awareness and knowledge of dementia with a view to improve earlier diagnosis.
- 67 Area Action Partnerships and the Alzheimer’s Society have been working with Durham County Council’s Spatial Policy and Assets Management Teams to explore the needs of residents affected by dementia and ensure that these needs are taken into consideration in design and development decisions. This includes strengthening emerging planning policies to ensure people with dementia are actively engaged in local communities. So far there are plans to resurface footpaths, provide new seating and signage and assess access arrangements so that people with dementia can feel confident to get out in their local area.
- 68 Good housing and well planned neighbourhoods can have benefits for the wider community beyond people with dementia, including older people and families with young children. The positive and wide ranging discussions from these workshops and comments from the Alzheimer’s Society will be considered in terms of future planning applications and the County Durham Plan. Officers have looked at where these principles can be expanded to adapt practice in other areas such as transport.

- 69 This has been championed by several AAPs with **East Durham** leading the way, closely followed by **Mid Durham, Chester-le-Street, Derwent Valley and Stanley**. Work in East Durham has seen Dalton Park come forward and will commence in the New Year to make their shops, food outlets and cinemas dementia friendly. Three Housing Associations (County Durham Housing Group, Karbon and NorthStar) have linked in with the four previously mentioned AAPs to put in place a two year DFC Coordinator to support local communities to implement DFC across their geographical patches.
- 70 A key issue for all 14 AAPs and the Thematic Partnerships, especially the Health and Wellbeing Board, is social isolation. From April 2018 each AAP will manage a Social Isolation Fund which will support community led initiatives to meet local needs and impact upon County and AAP priorities as they relate to improving outcomes for older and younger people who are socially isolated. It will focus on encouraging participation in activities and projects that provide opportunities for those residents that are affected by social isolation and enable them to contribute positively to their local communities. Each AAP will receive £25,000 for the next three years, which has been allocated through the improved Better Care Fund to enable local preventative measures.
- 71 As an example of how this may be used locally, Age UK County Durham in partnership with **Mid Durham AAP** have used their allocation of social isolation funding in an attempt to lever in funding from the Social Action Fund (managed by the Lottery and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport). A 'place based' intergenerational programme that will seek to bring residents of all ages together to examine such issues as physical, social and welfare wellbeing has been chosen by Durham County Council to be their 'flagship project. Only one project from each local authority can be entered with 20 projects from around the country being chosen for the first phase of this Funds programme. It has the potential to be a 7 year programme with £500,000 of funding available. Details of this will be announced in March.
- 72 The Social Resource Centre in the **EDRC AAP** is also supporting people who may become socially isolated, specifically linked to welfare reform. This project aims to improve the quality of life for people aged 60+ by supporting them into building friendships and attending activities and appointments. The aim was to accomplish this by providing transport solutions for older, older disabled people or people experiencing poverty due to welfare reforms, to access activities/ appointments and ensuring safe access. As at quarter two, the target of ten people being engaged in voluntary work was exceeded with a total of 20 people engaged.
- 73 **Weardale AAP** has taken a different approach to tackling social isolation as a result of the loss of a colleague from an environmental background to illness. A pilot project has been developed with the aim of knitting a forest. Working with the Forestry Commission, community groups, libraries and any interested parties, a pattern for knitting a Christmas tree decoration was developed. The trees were displayed and donations offered, with over £700 raised. The Forestry Commission will be supporting the planting of new indigenous trees by friends and family. In terms of community engagement, numerous groups became involved stating, that meeting new people with something to focus on, give them a reason for leaving the house.
- 74 **Stanley AAP** is to fund and support the reintroduction of the Stanley Car Scheme delivered by Supportive Ltd in 2018. The project uses locally based volunteer drivers and their vehicles to provide a door-to-door service helping the transport

needs of vulnerable and socially isolated people of all ages. People contribute to the cost of the transport depending on the length of the journey.

- 75 The service aims to prevent social isolation for the passengers and to help them achieve a better quality of life. Feedback from 83 year old service user: “I would go mad if I sat in my house looking at the four walls. The Transport Scheme has changed my life. I knew there was activities on out there but wouldn’t be able to manage if it wasn’t for this. Now I have something to look forward to. I use it nearly every week and sometimes more often.”
- 76 A Group of volunteers from **Stanley AAP’s** Supporting Stanley Task Group that focuses on the AAP’s Health and Wellbeing and Older People priorities have come together to form a new Movers and Shakers in Stanley Group, MASS for short! The aim of the group is to improve the health and wellbeing of Stanley residents by providing light physical activity in a relaxed environment, giving hands on support in helping manage weight loss, nutritional advice and healthy cooking demonstrations.
- 77 The initial pilot will see Wellbeing for Life taking a lead on deliver and supporting the new Group’s Volunteers to eventually manage and run the Group themselves. Along with Stanley AAP the Group have also received invaluable support from SHAID and Mental Health North East.
- 78 **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP)**, in partnership with Woodham Village Community Association, is one of the first AAPs to deliver a Public Access Defibrillator Units and Cardiac Arrest Awareness Training project.
- 79 Neighbourhood Budget Funding was used towards the purchase of six Defibrillator Units to be used in the GAMP area. These comprise of four 24-hour public access units - housed in external secure cabinets. All units are in place around the community. A dedicated training unit has been used to deliver Cardiac Awareness training as part of the project.
- 80 Training for 198 people has now been completed. The last phase of training sessions planned for County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service and the North East Ambulance service is being organised to take place across various venues.

Altogether safer

- 81 The **Safe Durham Partnership Board** works collaboratively to improve community safety across County Durham. The vision of the Board is for a county ‘where every adult and child will be, and will feel, safe.’
- 82 To support its drive for continuous improvement the Safe Durham Partnership Board asked the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a Peer Review of the Partnership in September 2017. A team of peers led by the LGA worked as ‘critical friends’ or ‘trusted advisors’ to support the Safe Durham Partnership in reflecting on and improving practice by providing an external view on progress.
- 83 They used discussions, observations, workshops, focus groups and visits to community projects to gain an understanding as to whether the Safe Durham Partnership is working effectively to make a difference for frontline staff and the public. This included consideration of involvement with communities, focus on preventative work and progressing the partnership’s priorities.
- 84 The peer team highlighted a number of key strengths including effective multi-agency problem solving, strong relationships between partners, innovation, internal challenge and openness to change. The relationship between the Safe Durham Partnership and Safer Stronger Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee was

identified as a strength. Area Action Partnerships were identified as a key asset with strong, consistent and ongoing relationships with communities.

- 85 The Safe Durham Partnership Board has used the feedback to identify areas to improve the partnership. Organisations will co-ordinate community safety key messages to the public and ensure consistent messages are delivered across the Safe Durham Partnership. The Partnership will engage more with communities to encourage individuals and third parties to report incidents of Hate Crime so that any trends or areas of concern can be highlighted and actions put in place to address the issues. People are encouraged to report tensions in communities to give authorities an understanding of the impact that conflict may have on our local communities and help them to shape the response.
- 86 In January 2017 a new approach was introduced to build the confidence of professionals working with children and young people in reporting and raising concerns on areas of risk that share common factors and where offending behaviour share common traits. Exploitation, Grooming and Radicalisation awareness-raising brings together staff working across different thematic areas to demonstrate the similarity between grooming and radicalisation. It highlights common behaviours shared by victims of grooming and radicalisation and common methods used by offenders. It highlights the way in which mobile technology is used to target children and young people and raises awareness of how it is possible to use knowledge from the sessions to prevent risky behaviours and recognise when a child may already be at risk. Sessions were held in January, May and October 2017, with over 800 people attending these seminars.
- 87 The Durham and Darlington Victims and Witnesses Group (VWG) works in partnership to ensure victims and witnesses receive end to end, co-ordinated care and support that enables them to cope and recover from their experience and participate in Criminal Justice Processes. The group is improving support and communications with the overall aim of ensuring victims are fully supported through the criminal justice process and are able to give their best evidence as required.
- 88 A successful bid to the Home Office Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Service Transformation Fund County Durham and Darlington for £310,000 will fund a multi-agency intervention which aims to tackle those non-high risk perpetrators identified within the significant volume of calls to the police and referrals to children's social care. The project will provide a range of interventions which aims to stop the abusive behaviour. As well as working with individuals to support them to change their behaviour, the intervention will raise awareness of the unacceptability of domestic abuse.
- 89 Harbour Support Services have been awarded regional funding from the Big Lottery to roll out The Recovery Programme. This will provide long term support for women and girls affected by domestic abuse to sustain positive change in their lives. Women will be offered an extended service once they leave the existing core Harbour Services. Three years of funding was secured which will provide specialist workers, weekly survivor groups, ongoing access to 1:1 support and development of the peer mentoring service.
- 90 Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is conducting a review into cybercrime and preventing young people from being engaged or remaining in cybercrime activity. The scope of this work will focus on victims of cyber crime as well as offenders. So far the review has involved working with young people to increase their awareness of what cybercrime activity is and help them to divert their digital skills into more appropriate channels.

- 91 **Teesdale and Stanley AAPs** are the latest to support older vulnerable residents through the 'Beat the Scammers' initiative.
- 92 The project is being delivered by Age UK County Durham and aims to prevent older people becoming victims of telephone fraud. Age UK County Durham are currently working with partner organisations to give older people the confidence to protect themselves against fraudulent callers. A key part of the project is the installation of Call Blocker Units in their homes.
- 93 As part of the project Age UK County Durham has recruited and trained volunteers to support the project through giving presentations to older people across the community about how to deal with cold telephone calls (both recorded and live). The volunteers demonstrate how people can protect themselves from being a victim of scam calls, promote free services such as the Telephone and Mail Preference Services and raise awareness of how technology such as 'call blockers' work.
- 94 All participants receive a 'Beat the Scammers Information Pack' with key messages. Participants complete a feedback form which will enable Age UK to confidentially identify those who are eligible for a call blocker from the project.
- 95 **Bishop Auckland and Shildon (BASH) AAP** is funding a project aimed at children and young people called Chrysalis. This supports children, young people and their families who are survivors of domestic abuse. The project takes a complete approach in supporting the family to develop better relationships and coping strategies to recover from the traumatic experience of living in an abusive home.

Altogether greener

- 96 The last **County Durham Environment Partnership Board** was held on 5 December. With Oliver Sherratt, Head of Direct Services now confirmed as Chair of the partnership, the board was keen to review the strategic priorities going forward. Building on excellent partner participation at the board, including Durham Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency and Durham Community Action, the board agreed the Environment Partnership priorities (which include, Place, Low Carbon, Communities and Natural Environment). Actions will now be developed alongside these with wider considerations for sub groups.
- 97 The Board was also keen to review our local priorities alongside the Local Nature Partnership (North East Nature Partnership, NENP) but also hear about funding opportunities and working together to deliver them. The board agreed better integrated priorities with the NENP to add value for funding and delivery opportunities with regional partners. The board also discussed the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy and possible high level interventions which we agreed would be key environmental factors for Reducing Health Inequalities by addressing the social determinants of Health.
- 98 The 28th annual Environment Awards were held on the 23 November and were once again an outstanding success. This year saw 53 entries to the awards from all areas of County Durham. Judges had a very difficult task and in the end shortlisted 33 entries. Of these entries, 12 were given the award of Category Winner and 21 were Highly Commended. Once again, there was a wide range of excellent projects, which highlighted the commitment of individuals, and groups who give up their time to make County Durham a better place for people to live and visit. Volunteers from all over the county are working hard, dedicating their time to improve their local environment. The board recognised these awards as a unique opportunity to celebrate their fantastic achievements and discussed developments

for next year. Winners are referenced in the winter edition of the Environment Partnership newsletter.

- 99 The board also discussed the success of Durham County Council's environmental programme, 'Operation Spruce Up' which recently won the 'Campaign of the Year' at environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy's Network Awards 2018. The board noted the positive feedback this programme had received since its launch in November 2016. Twelve areas across the county have now benefited from a 'spruce up' involving jet washing; painting; gully cleaning; shrub planting; highways re-marking and much more. Children at Ferryhill Primary School, took part in a poster competition to encourage people to keep the village clean and tidy. Spruce Up is now taking place in Coundon.
- 100 **Derwent Valley Partnership (DVP)** will award Environment Improvement grants in early spring 2018 enabling communities who were successful in their applications to enhance their local environment, village or neighbourhood. The funding was for 'capital' items so groups were encouraged to think of 'feature' or 'statement' items they felt would enhance a more general environmental improvement scheme. Groups also signed up for the RHS Its Your Neighbourhood awards as part of the grant conditions. This model is an enhancement for the DVP area to the current County-wide Environment Grant operated through civic pride.
- 101 Local communities in the AAP area this spring are being encouraged to sign up to the 'clean and tidy Derwent Valley' awards to help encourage people to care more for their neighbourhoods and villages in which they live. Awards for the efforts made by volunteers will take place locally in the autumn, having been judged in the summer 2018.
- 102 Working with Teesdale Community Resources, **Teesdale Area Partnership (TAP)** is helping to develop a natural woodland site within Barnard Castle. Deepdale Wood is an ancient natural woodland, which has been continuously wooded for over 400 years. The site is valuable natural habitat for local wildlife. In order to encourage local wildlife and maintain the woodland, as a community resource, TAP funding has been used to improve access to the site and provide funding towards a programme that will recruit and train local people in woodland management skills. In addition, TAP funding has also been provided to install interpretation boards and construct a new footbridge. To date the project has recruited and trained 11 local volunteers.
- 103 **East Durham AAP** has funded a range of environmental projects in recent months:
- Interpretation panels to be installed at Easington Local nature reserve and Castle Eden Dene which look to cure pollution in the tributary and its catchment streams;
 - Greenscape provided some youth trips to support young people taking part in the John Muir award in environmental education and skills;
 - Deneside saw an access gate Walton Avenue to prevent flytipping on the old pit site;
 - A Community allotment at Seaview Primary School as well as Station Road allotments in Horden benefitted from local neighbourhood budgets.

Recommendations and reasons

- 104 It is recommended that Cabinet note the report.

Contact: Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer

Tel: 03000 263591

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - Area and Neighbourhood budgets are utilised and delivered through the 14 AAPs and ensure the Council (and AAPs) receive improved information on the outputs achieved through use of locality budgets.

Staffing - None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - The actions set out in this report aim to ensure equality and diversity issues are embedded within the working practice of AAPs.

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - Altogether safer is the responsibility of the Safe Durham Partnership.

Human Rights - None

Consultation - The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners. The recommendations in the report are based on extensive consultation with AAP partners.

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications – None

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