

26 February 2020

Report from the Cabinet



Purpose of the Report

To provide information to the Council on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meetings held on to enable Members to ask related questions.

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**1. Selective Licensing Scheme [Key Decision REAL/05/19]
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Kevin Shaw
Contacts – Geoff Paul 03000 266 223
Stuart Timmiss, 03000 267 334**

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which proposed a Selective Licensing Scheme (SLS) for privately rented homes in parts of County Durham. The scheme covers 64% of the private rented sector (PRS) in the county. As this is over 20%, it is a legislative requirement to obtain Government approval. Prior to the application being made to Government, the Council is required to consult on the proposals and take account of that consultation. The percentage of PRS covered would be subject to change as data continued to be analysed prior to consultation.

The County Durham Housing Strategy 2019 to 2024 has four objectives:

- (a) to provide housing advice, assistance and support for vulnerable people;
- (b) to improve access to housing;
- (c) to deliver homes to meet housing need and demand; and
- (d) to maintain and improve standards across County Durham's housing stock and the wider housing environment.

The fourth objective specifically included:

- raising standards in the PRS
- developing an approach to selective licencing
- addressing empty homes
- improving energy efficiency of properties and
- supporting and maintaining communities.

In County Durham the PRS is significant with a total of 56,232 properties representing 22.7% of the total homes in the county.

Whilst there are a number of good quality homes available in the PRS, the current market was dominated by smaller terraced properties offering two to three bedrooms. Much of the stock was older, thermally inefficient and in need of repair or refurbishment. Consequently, low demand in some communities existed. In addition, the lack of access to good quality housing was known to be a contributing factor to inequalities in health, educational attainment and disposable income (poverty).

There are many benefits linked to selective licencing including providing tenants with a greater choice of safe, good quality and well managed homes; and better community and cross tenure relations, reduced anti-social behaviour and help to stabilise and improve local neighbourhoods.

Management standards of PRS properties will improve through establishing clear minimum physical and management standards which can be controlled through the licencing framework. Proactive enforcement action will be taken against both unlicensed properties and/or where there are breaches to the licencing conditions. The SLS will make a significant contribution to a wider strategy of improving the county's towns and villages by improving both housing conditions and access to quality housing. Other initiatives including Registered Social Landlords (RSL) new development, Local Lettings Agency (LLA), Buy to Lease Scheme, Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The key elements of the SLS in Durham are:

- 36,119 properties covering 64% of the PRS stock meet the Government criteria and will be included in the scheme;
- licence designed to promote good landlord practice and be capable of being enforced;
- mandatory licence application for every PRS property within the defined scheme;
- landlords must pass a 'fit and proper person' test in advance of receiving a licence;
- appropriate staffing structure in place to support scheme administration, inspection and enforcement;
- property inspection regime in place;
- support for landlords to comply with the licence; and
- enforcement in cases where appropriate.

Under the Housing Act 2004 Part 3 (Selective Licencing of other Residential Accommodation), the Council can designate an area, or areas, within which the SLS will operate. All private landlords operating within the designated area are required to obtain a licence from the Council for each property which is rented out. The conditions of the licence ensure that the property is managed effectively, and tenants will have added protection against poor landlords. When applying, proposed licence holders will be required to prove that they are 'fit and proper persons' to hold a licence, and that they have satisfactory management arrangements in place including for dealing with anti-social behaviour.

There are areas within the county that do not form part of the proposal for selective licencing. At this point in time they do not meet the guidance criteria set out by the Secretary of State. Officers will monitor various datasets relating to these areas and, should any meet the criteria in the future, Cabinet will be asked to consider a separate application to the Secretary of State to extend the scheme in the county.

The report also provided details of the proposed scope of the scheme, the costs of licencing, the operational structure of the scheme, and, the proposed timetable.

Decision

We agreed to authorise:

- (a) the proposed areas to be designated within the SLS as detailed in the report;
- (b) the proposed licence fee of £390 to £590 (expected to be around £500);
- (c) the SLS service proposals outlined in the report;
- (d) to formally consult on these proposals over a 10-week period;
- (e) the commencement of work to prepare for the introduction of the SLS in advance of formal approval from the Secretary of State; and
- (f) to receive a further report detailing the results of the consultation exercise with a view to reviewing the proposals and submitting a formal application to the Secretary of State to set up a SLS in Durham.

2. Leisure Transformation [Key Decision REAL/11/19] Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Carl Marshall Contact – Nigel Dodds 03000 264 599

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which set out the case for change for the Council's leisure centre offer; which proposed an outline programme including building new leisure centre facilities, refreshing existing buildings and ultimately progressing towards an extensive new programme of activities and amenities to work towards improving health/wellbeing outcomes and creating a prosperous leisure economy for County Durham.

The report sought approval for an in-principle agreement to the approach and authority to move to the next stage of planning and implementation. The Council has, over the last 18 months, undertaken a review of its leisure centre provision with a view to transforming the offer within the wider context of the existing physical activity infrastructure embedded in local communities. The transformation will work towards creating a healthier population, providing a higher quality offer for residents and be more cost effective in its delivery through increased footfall and better meeting the needs of families in County Durham. A leading leisure transformation specialist (Alliance Leisure Services) has been contracted to work with the Council to maximise learning from other national sites of best practice and to provide independent scrutiny of the work required for County Durham to transform the offer to residents.

The work to date has identified the opportunity to maximise health gain and through a return on investment approach how to be more cost effective in delivery. Core areas of focus included:

- (a) the introduction of a range of new activities as well as building on existing ones to meet the diverse needs of families, across the life course, thus ensuring there is universal access for all as well as offering more targeted opportunities for the harder to reach segments of the population;
- (b) raising service standards and quality across the offer to maintain use for existing service users and significantly increase new service use.

Taking all of the learning above into account and in the context of the existing breadth of physical and sporting opportunities across County Durham, the report proposed that the leisure centre offer be transformed through five approaches to improvement, as set out below:

- (a) **Approach 1: Refreshing the existing offer:** This would take place in four of the existing leisure centres:

- Consett
- Newton Aycliffe
- Wolsingham
- Teesdale

Whilst Consett is a new centre and Newton Aycliffe has been recently refurbished, there are opportunities to refresh the offer and attract different and additional residents to access the opportunities available. Wolsingham would be transferred into Culture, Sport & Tourism management in September 2020 and will require some refresh work, whilst Teesdale would benefit from a refreshed 'look and feel' along with the introduction of the Thrive branding throughout the centre.

- (b) **Approach 2: Refurbishment / new installations:** Five of the current leisure centres are to be refurbished and / or change their programme to introduce new activities. The five being:

- Abbey
- Freemans Quay
- Louisa Centre
- Peterlee
- Spennymoor

These centres will require a range of works from the installation of new equipment to substantial refurbishment to accommodate new and/or additional activities.

(c) **Approach 3: The replacement of Leisure Centres facilities.** This would impact on three current sites:

- Woodhouse Close
- Chester-le-Street
- Seaham

The current layout, condition and location of these centres requires consideration regarding the replacement of these facilities to maximise health and wellbeing benefits for the population of County Durham and the economic vibrancy of the leisure offer. Health impact assessments (HIA) would be undertaken on each of the proposed new locations to determine the maximum health gain opportunities and to ensure the transformed leisure offer would be seen as adding value to the wider physical activity infrastructure.

(d) **Approach 4: Retain a leisure offer and create greater links with other services and the community:** Two leisure centres would benefit from this approach:

- Meadowfield
- Shildon

There are opportunities to either expand service offers within these buildings and develop closer links with the community. This would make the buildings more viable from a cost effectiveness perspective and increase footfall due to the co-location of services and greater community involvement.

(e) **Approach 5: A partnership development.** One leisure centre has the opportunity to become part of another organisation's infrastructure:

- Riverside

To work in partnership with Durham County Football Association and other key users would improve opportunities for the population to gain access to increased coaching opportunities and increase uptake in the use of facilities overall.

The report proposed a move to a single operating model for all indoor leisure centres. This would be via contract negotiation and expiry of:

- Competition Line income share contracts;
- 1Life leisure management contracts.

Three operating models were in place currently:

- direct Council management,

- Council management with an income share partner; and
- management via a contract

The move to a single model would require early termination of the income share agreements and insourcing of the leisure management contract.

In order to deliver the transformation a capital budget of up to £62.8 million would be required. The report recommended that the forecast additional income generated from this investment of £1.63 million is utilised to finance £38 million of the required borrowing. The remaining £24.8 million of capital investment would be funded from the MTFP (10) and MTFP (11) capital programmes. In addition, a one-off revenue budget would be required to terminate the Competition Line income share agreements. This investment is forecasted to generate an annual net saving. The report recommended that the one-off budget is funded from available surplus budget in 2020/21 with the forecast saving contributing to MTFP (10) savings. An additional 33.29 full time equivalent posts would also be created if this the total transformation project was delivered as proposed.

This is a major investment programme and there would be opportunities for community engagement within the next phases of the process to ensure residents and members get the chance to further shape the proposals. Further advanced feasibility work would be undertaken before actual transformation could begin.

Decision

We agreed in-principle to the overall programme of change for leisure centres, as set-out in the report:

- (i) noting that the detailed financial information and commercially sensitive information was provided in a corresponding exempt report;
- (ii) that Capital investment of £62.8 million is included in MTFP(10) and MTFP (11) capital bids with £38 million being funded on a self-financing basis. The remaining £24.8 million being financed from the broader capital programme;
- (iii) that a one-off revenue investment would be utilised to buy out the Competition Line income share agreements. This would be funded from available surplus budget in 2020/21 with the forecast saving being utilised to support MTFP(10);
- (iv) noting the VAT Partial Exemption impact of the programme;

- (v) that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services, and the Corporate Director of Resources, in consultation with the portfolio holders for Economic Regeneration and Deputy Leader and Finance, be given delegated powers to approve:
 - (i) the transformation works for all refurbishment and realigning of services once detailed capital and revenue implications of individual projects are known.
 - (ii) the negotiated early termination of the Competition Line UK income-share agreements.
- (vi) that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services and the Corporate Director of Resources would present a further report on new build options upon the completion of the advanced feasibility work, which would include the health impact assessment.

**3. Roads and Street Works Permit Scheme [Key Decision REAL/10/19]
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Brian Stephens
Contact – Brian Buckley 03000 268 097**

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which sought approval to implement the County Council of Durham Roads and Street Works Permit Scheme and to implement a new staffing structure.

In 2004 the Traffic Management Act (TMA) was introduced to tackle congestion and disruption on the highway network. The TMA provided local authorities with additional tools to coordinate street works including the power to introduce permit schemes as an alternative to the existing notice scheme detailed in the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA).

The primary benefits of a permit scheme are:

- (a) a reduction in both the number of highways works and their duration through proactive management of activities on the highway to minimise disruption to the travelling public;
- (b) an improvement in the quality and timeliness of information that is available to the public; and
- (c) more proactive and collaborative planning and working between all works promoters.

The anticipated reduction in disruption caused by street works would also support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions.

Unlike the notice scheme, permit schemes were optional. If a highway authority wished to introduce a permit scheme it could do so with an order made by the Council's Chief Executive. In July 2018, the Secretary of State for Transport sent a letter to the Chief Executives of all highway authorities not operating a permit scheme, including Durham County Council. It asked that they consider the introduction of a permit scheme by 31 March 2020. The letter also made Chief Executives aware that the Secretary of State for Transport had powers under Section 3(2) of the Traffic Management Act to direct an authority to introduce a permit scheme. Following receipt of the Secretary of State for Transport's letter in July 2018, the 11 north east authorities not currently operating a permit scheme, had met and adopted a collaborative approach to introducing permit schemes in each of their authorities.

To support all 11 north east authorities, Capita, a consultancy experienced in implementing permit schemes, were appointed to assist with the development and implementation of the scheme.

Development of the single permit scheme, which covered all highways maintained by the Council, was now complete with the scheme operation document 'The County Council of Durham Roads and Street Works Permit Scheme' having now completed its full three-month public statutory consultation. The consultation was sent to all statutory consultees, including the DfT permit schemes specialist, and was placed on the Council's website for the general public to view and comment.

This consultation completed on 7 November 2019. Comments made by consultees had been considered resulting in minor adjustments to the document. The final 'The County Council of Durham Roads and Street Works Permit Scheme' was available to view upon request.

It was anticipated that the permit scheme would make a surplus of £150,523 in year one followed by a surplus of £241,323 in each subsequent year. If the anticipated surplus is generated it was proposed that it be used to fund any necessary future adjustments to the permit scheme staffing structure or other future operational costs. If there remained a surplus from permit fees, appropriate adjustments would be made to the fee structure in order to operate a cost neutral service in future financial years.

Our approval of the introduction of the permit scheme necessitates the implementation of a new staffing structure in readiness for commencement by 31 March 2020.

Decision

We approved the Permit Scheme and the implementation of a new staffing structure as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

**4. High Needs Block Funding for SEND and Inclusion Support
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Olwyn Gunn and Councillor
Alan Napier
Contact – Karin Laybourne 03000 268 042**

We considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services and the Corporate Director of Resources which provided an update on spend and pressures on the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and inclusion support services for children and young people. The report included an update on progress with work underway to make the HNB more sustainable and an overview on findings from a three-month public consultation on proposals for reviewing key areas of work that were considered by Cabinet in July 2019.

There were enduring pressures on the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which provided funding for SEND and inclusion support services for children and young people. A combination of ongoing austerity across the public sector, implementation of the SEND Reforms (2014) which had increased support to cover children and young people from birth up to 25 years of age, and changing customer needs which were becoming more complex, meaning that there were insufficient resources to support children and young people with SEND and inclusion needs. This position was being replicated in other local authorities and the Council had continued to feedback to the Government on spending pressures and requested additional government funding for these services and local schools.

The current forecast meant that expenditure would likely to exceed the High Needs DSG allocation by £9.3 million in 2019/2020 (19% higher than the HNB grant). The Government had confirmed a significant increase in HNB grant for County Durham of £8.4 million for 2020/2021 and in view of this the forecast HNB overspend for 2020/2021 was around £2 million. There was a growing deficit in the DSG account due to overspends on the HNB in recent years. The Department for Education (DfE) now required a report from any local authority that had a cumulative DSG deficit of more than 1% at the end of the financial year. For Durham this equated to £3.9 million. The latest forecast of the overall DSG deficit position at the end of the year was £4.4 million (£6.4 million relating to the HNB minus £2 million of other non-HNB reserves). This meant that the authority would need to produce a recovery plan for submission to the DfE.

Despite the increase in Government HNB funding available for 2020/2021, forecasts show there remained insufficient resources to support predicted HNB expenditure in future years, and to bring the HNB deficit back into balance. To address this a five-year financial strategy is was proposed to continue work on the HNB sustainability plan following the recent consultation period. This sought to reduce spending on HNB activity by around £1.5 million per year; try and ensure spending is kept to within the HNB resources available each year in future years; and recover the HNB deficit by the end of 2024/2025.

Key elements of the sustainability plan work related to the following areas which were subject to consultation after the last report to Cabinet in July 2019:

- Centrally Managed Services
- Special Schools
- Top up Funding
- Targeted Funding
- Post 16 Funding
- Funding support to Partnerships of Schools
- Joint commissioning of therapies
- Joint commissioning of equipment, aids and adaptations
- Alternative Provision (AP) and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

Following Cabinet approval on 10 July 2019, the Council publicly consulted on outline proposals for the above areas of review, over three months between 17 July and 17 October 2019. The majority of respondents to the consultation were in favour of the Council adopting the following overall commitments and all but one of the proposals associated with the nine areas of review listed above:

- (a) To collectively support an education system within County Durham where inclusion of children and young people in their local schools is the norm, giving parents and carers confidence that their children's needs will be understood and met.
- (b) To offer a range of specialist learning provisions for some young people who have a high level of needs.
- (c) To make every effort to use all of the resources available to young people effectively and efficiently and to maintain spending within funding limits wherever possible.

While the Government has made additional High Needs Block funding available in 2020/2021, financial modelling has shown that this will be insufficient to cover the current overspend position and bring the accumulated HNB deficit back into balance. Therefore, in reviewing the key areas of service provision the Council will aim to achieve savings of circa £1.5 million per year over each of the next five years commencing from 2020/2021, while continuing to ensure that the right support was provided for children and young people across the County who have higher needs.

A report on progress made against the delivery of the work programme and proposed financial strategy would be reported back to Cabinet in Summer 2020.

Decision

We noted:

- (a) the updated forecast outturn position for HNB spend in 2019/20 along with the assumptions and forecast position for 2020/21 and beyond;
- (b) the representations of the Durham Schools Forum and the outcomes of consultation with all schools on options for reducing spending pressures on the HNB;
- (c) the findings of the public consultation which took place between 17 July and 17 October 2019 on the “HNB Funding for SEND and Inclusion Support”; and

We have agreed and supported:

- (d) the proposed five-year financial strategy for 2020/21- 2024/25 outlined in the report;
- (e) the development of a financial recovery plan, to be submitted to the DfE for approval, setting out how the Council plans to bring the DSG account back into balance by 2024/25;
- (f) the proposals for developing key areas of work outlined in the report to be progressed in accordance with the findings of the public consultation; and
- (g) that the SEND and Inclusion Board (SIRB) oversee the implementation of the work programme to deliver the proposed changes and report the progress to Cabinet in summer 2020.

5. Local Lettings Agency Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Kevin Shaw Contact – Marion Rucker 07384 247 366

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which provided an update on the Local Lettings Agency (LLA).

In July 2019, we approved the establishment of an LLA for County Durham to help meet housing need. Firm proposals on the specific delivery model to be used, were to be outlined in a further report. We also delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services to lease properties from landlords on an individual basis for use in discharging the Council’s duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

This further report to Cabinet detailed the proposed structure and governance of the LLA and recommended applying to Homes England for Registered Provider status, to allow the LLA to meet housing need.

Decision

- i. We approved the establishment of the LLA as a company limited by guarantee as proposed in this report and noted that the LLA will apply to Homes England for Registered Provider status.
 - ii. We delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services to enter into ancillary agreements as necessary to give full effect to the terms of the report.
- 6. County Durham Enhanced Engagement with Children and Young People**
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Olwyn Gunn
Contacts – Richard Crane 03000 265 731
Gordon Elliott 03000 263 604

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which sought agreement to implement a number of recommendations to enhance how the Council engaged with children and young people.

The council used a range of participation and engagement mechanisms to understand the voice of the child. The report provided information on further work carried out to enhance engagement with children and young people, including the development of a County Durham Youth Council and representation at the UK Youth Parliament.

Decision

We agreed:

- (a) that DCC officers run annual elections to appoint Children and Young People representatives to a new County Durham Youth Council (CDYC) with CDYC electing two members to the UK Youth parliament;
- (b) to set up a County Durham Youth Council Implementation Fund to support children and young people focused project delivery;
- (c) to support the recruitment of an Engagement Officer, to be employed on a permanent basis from April 2020, to support the County Durham Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament representatives;

- (d) in principle to the development of a countywide awards programme to begin in Summer 2020 and for marketing and communications relating to the enhanced suite of engagement mechanisms proposed in the report.

7. WASPI Concessionary Travel Scheme
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Carl Marshall
Contact – Adrian White 03000 267 455

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services on the introduction of a discretionary travel concession to assist women who had been most impacted by the Government's State Pension Age (SPA) changes.

Government changes to the state pension age had resulted in women born between December 1953 and November 1954 seeing their state pension age increase by 18 months, and, were considered to have suffered the greatest financial hardship as a result of the pension changes. The report proposed the introduction of a discretionary travel scheme for those women most impacted by the changes to the state pension age.

Decision

We approved the introduction of a local concessionary travel scheme from 1 March 2020 for those women born between December 1953 and 5 November 1954 who had not already reached state pension age.

8. Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny committee's review of Durham County Council's proposed allotment policy
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Carl Marshall
Contacts – Ann Whitton 03000 268 143
Diane Close 03000 268 141

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which presented the key findings and recommendations of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review which focussed on Durham County Council's proposed allotment policy.

The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ESC OSC) agreed in July 2017 to undertake a scrutiny review looking at Durham County Council's (DCC) proposed future allotment policy. The following terms of reference were agreed by the committee on 6 October 2017:

- (a) Examine and understand DCC's current allotment service and policy;

- (b) Examine and comment on DCC's future allotment policy including the proposed countywide tenancy agreement and consider the possible implications of introduction;
- (c) Consider the proposed options for the further devolved management of DCC's allotment estate to Town and Parish Councils where applicable or self-managed allotment associations;
- (d) Consider options for DCC's future management of non-allotment plots currently included in DCC's allotment portfolio;
- (e) Consider and compare DCC's proposed allotment policy with allotment policies implemented by other local authorities.
- (f) Comment on the proposed consultation arrangements for the policy.

The review group gathered evidence from officers, the Northern Region Allotment Association and Town and Parish Council representatives. The group also had the opportunity to speak to allotment tenants and relevant DCC members when they visited allotment sites at Gilesgate, Sherburn, Bowburn, West Cornforth and Langley Moor.

The review report contained eight recommendations that related to the conclusions below.

- (a) Subject to further close work with tenants a transition period for the removal of large animals no longer permitted in the proposed policy and tenancy agreement from DCC allotment sites;
- (b) Ensuring that animals housed on DCC allotment sites have the required welfare documentation including passports, licenses and microchipping;
- (c) Ensuring that the future management of DCC's allotment portfolio sites is the responsibility of one service team;
- (d) The future of allotment sites not used for purpose being determined by a review group of DCC officers with the future of each site determined on a site by site basis;
- (e) The opportunity to establish area allotment associations;
- (f) DCC entering into discussions with Town and Parish Councils to determine whether they are interested in managing DCC allotment sites in the future;

- (g) Recognising the contribution made by co-workers to the cultivation of a plot by acknowledging previous years of commitment while not registered;
- (h) Actively encouraging co-workers to register their interest in a particular allotment plot;
- (i) The feasibility of providing smaller sized allotment plots if there is demand;
- (j) The possibility of undertaking a rental review.

The service had provided a response to the review's conclusions and recommendations which were included in the report.

Decision

We noted the recommendations contained in the review report:

Recommendation 1

- (i) That in relation to the requirements of the proposed policy and tenancy agreement concerning the housing of large animals no longer permitted on allotment plots, the five-year period identified in the proposed transition arrangements should apply. In addition, that DCC ensures animals currently housed on DCC allotment plots have the required welfare documentation.

Recommendation 2

- (ii) That the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services ensures that all DCC directly managed allotment sites in the county are managed by one DCC service team.

Recommendation 3

- (iii) That the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services establishes a review group to undertake a complete review of Allotment sites not used for purpose and that the review group:
 - Considers each site on an individual basis;
 - Undertakes site based consultation meetings;
 - Considers whether tenancy agreements on retained sites are transferred to match the purpose for which the plot is used e.g. garage use;
 - Ensures that the sale of sites is handled under the Land Disposal Policy subject to Ministry of Housing,

Communities and Local Government approval where the site is a statutory allotment.

Recommendation 4

- (iv) That the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services establishes area allotment associations where appropriate to take over day to day management and control.

Recommendation 5

- (v) That the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services undertakes discussions with Town and Parish Councils that have expressed an interest in taking over the management of allotment sites. Should any Town and Parish Council wish to take over the management of any current DCC allotment site then advice and support should be provided by DCC for an agreed period.

Recommendation 6

- (vi) That DCC, subject to legal advice, reconsiders the process for the allocation of plots to co-workers within the proposed policy by acknowledging their previous contributions whilst not registered. In addition, DCC needs to actively publicise the need for co-workers to register.

Recommendation 7

- (vii) That DCC, should there be demand, consider the feasibility of providing smaller sized allotment plots where appropriate.

Recommendation 8

- (viii) That DCC considers undertaking a rental review of all DCC allotment sites, however, as part of this review recognition is given to the health and wellbeing benefits associated with the cultivation of allotment plots. Should the rental review determine an increase in rent per allotment plot and that increase is significant, then DCC should introduce this increase via annual incremental increases.
- (b) agreed that the review report be shared with the County Durham Environment Partnership;
 - (c) That a review of the progress made against the recommendations will be undertaken six months after the report is considered by Cabinet.

9. Humanitarian Support in County Durham
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Angela Surtees
Contact – Gordon Elliott 03000 263 604

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services which provided an update on County Durham's support for vulnerable refugees and sought approval to participate in the UK's global resettlement programme, following the conclusion of current resettlement schemes in 2020.

In 2015 County Durham pledged to support the UK's commitment to assist some of the world's most vulnerable refugees. County Durham welcomed its first refugee arrivals in 2016 and, since then, the county has supported 259 individuals in 56 family groups over eight separate phases. The programme is on track to deliver Cabinet's commitment to support between 250 and 300 vulnerable refugees by the conclusion of current resettlement programmes in 2020.

Pledges under the UK's key resettlement schemes for vulnerable refugees are scheduled to conclude in 2020. In summer 2019 the government announced its commitment to a long-term programme for refugee resettlement, consolidating key programmes into a global resettlement scheme from April 2020. County Durham's participation in a refugee resettlement programme, following the conclusion of existing resettlement schemes in 2020, would demonstrate the council's commitment to contribute to the UK's humanitarian assistance effort in a way which offers genuine support to vulnerable individuals and families in line with local circumstances.

Decision

We noted progress on County Durham's commitment to assist between 250 and 300 individuals under the Vulnerable Persons' and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Programmes; and

- (a) agreed to participate in the UK's new global refugee resettlement programme over the next four years following conclusion of the current resettlement scheme in 2020, proportionate with the county's share of the national population, subject to:
 - (i) the government confirming future funding arrangements in line with the current programme; and

- (ii) ongoing monitoring continues to demonstrate that the programme to resettle refugees can be effectively delivered in the county.
- (b) agreed that in the event of the programme not being able to be effectively delivered, the Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Social Inclusion and key partners, be delegated to determine whether the level of involvement should reduce or cease.

**10. Health Protection Assurance Annual Report 2018-19
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Lucy Hovvels
Contact – Amanda Healy 03000 264 323**

We considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services and Director of Public Health which provided an update to Cabinet on health protection assurance arrangements in County Durham from the implementation of the health protection action plan, which is overseen by the Health Protection Assurance and Development Group (HPADG).

In County Durham, new health protection assurance arrangements were established in August 2018 following a cross-organisational event. The HPADG was subsequently convened and oversees the implementation of a local health protection action plan. HPADG meets quarterly and seeks assurance on five main strands of health protection activity, in addition to data and communications which are threaded throughout:

- Screening programmes
- Immunisation programmes
- Outbreaks and communicable diseases
- Strategic regulation interventions
- Preparedness and response to incidents and emergencies

The report outlined the key achievements overseen by HPADG to date.

Areas for future development included:

- Improving uptake of certain vaccinations including shingles and pneumococcal
- Ensuring equitable coverage and uptake of screening and immunisations programmes
- Taking account of a national review of adult screening programmes, and a forthcoming national immunisations strategy
- Development of a sexual health strategy for County Durham
- Ensuring health protection and public health related emergency preparedness is assured during organisational change

Decision

We noted:

- (a) the content of the report;
- (b) that local performance continued to be higher than England and regional averages and above target for most screening and immunisation programmes;
- (c) that the report provided broad assurance that effective processes were in place for each of the key strands of health protection activity;
- (d) that the DPH was seeking further assurance in relation to flu immunisation and the outcome of a national review of screening, and;

We supported further identification and response to emerging health protection priorities.

- 11. Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2020/21 [Key Decision: CORP/R/19/01]
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Alan Napier
Contacts – Jeff Garfoot 03000 261 946, Gordon Elliott 03000 263 604
Jenny Haworth 03000 268 014**

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided comprehensive financial information to enable Cabinet to agree the 2020/21 balanced revenue budget, details of significant investments in key front line services, an outline Medium Term Financial Plan MTFP(10) 2020/21 to 2023/24, and, a fully funded capital programme.

For 2020/21, the provisional settlement had provided some additional financial resources. However, there was no certainty of future funding levels beyond 2020/21. The council had managed its finances extremely effectively since 2010 and was therefore in a position to begin to provide additional investment in key front-line services in 2020/21. The MTFP had been modelled assuming these investments continue into 2021/22, although they would be subject to review pending the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) later this year. The report set out details of additional front-line spending through the council's revenue investment programme, totalling £31 million across 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.

The County Durham investments set out in the report covered a range of services that were important to local communities and would supplement and build on the front-line resources that the council had been able to maintain despite the challenging austerity agenda faced since 2010.

Significant additional investment in highways was set out totalling £5 million which would be concentrated on maintaining local roads and repairing potholes. Additional investment of £1 million was being provided for a pilot scheme to increase the availability of social housing whilst significant additional resources were being provided across local communities to enhance neighbourhood cleanliness and safety through the introduction of new teams to resolve local issues relating to cleanliness of local areas and residents' safety and assurance. This additional investment, totalling £5 million, included the provision of eleven more community wardens across the County.

The council's approach to tackling climate change would be supported through additional investment totalling £3 million which would assist in leveraging in additional national funding and would provide a platform for attracting further local investment from partners and other agencies. This additional funding would build on the council's ongoing resource commitments set out in the climate change plans that had been considered by Cabinet and Council.

The Council had recently announced a significant £63 million capital investment in its leisure provision. Further additional investment in sport and leisure totalling £2 million was included in this MTFP. Further investment would also be set aside for invest to save opportunities within leisure provision which would generate on-going savings in future years.

The council had continued to support those most in need, despite the impact of austerity. Additional investment was set out in the MTFP totalling £3 million to help tackle poverty. This included maintaining funding for the welfare assistance and discretionary housing payment schemes - which those most in need rely on, whilst also investing in support for the long term unemployed to help them into work. Further investment would also be made in supporting activities with food during school holidays and supporting investment in foodbanks where required.

The council had also invested significantly in supporting Children's services as demand had continued to rise with cost pressures far exceeding available government funding. Additional investment totalling £2 million was being made across a number of areas to help develop best practice with a focus on providing the best possible care for vulnerable children, and a number of initiatives aimed at improving efficiency and helping those who needed crucial services in the most appropriate way.

MTFP investments would be supplemented with a further £10 million allocation to the council's County Durham Towns and Villages Reserve, which brought the total value of this reserve to £20 million and was available for local investment. Furthermore, a series of one-off investments totalling £1.9 million were being made in Adults services across a range of areas designed to improve services for some of our most vulnerable residents, as well as investment in improving efficiency across the service.

The additional funding provided in the 2020/21 provisional settlement had to be viewed against a background of almost ten years of austerity and unfunded cost pressures. The financial outlook for the council would continue to be extremely uncertain until the CSR was concluded for 2021/22 financial year – however details of the outcome of the spending review were not likely to be known until December 2020 which continued to make accurate medium term financial planning extremely difficult.

The Fair Funding Review, originally scheduled for implementation from April 2020 alongside a move to 75% Business Rates Retention (BRR) had been delayed until at least 2021/22. There was no certainty in terms of the quantum of funding available to local government from 2021/22 onwards nor how funding would be apportioned between authorities. It was clear that there are significant risks to the council's funding depending on the principles that are agreed for fair funding distribution and how the move to 75% BRR was implemented. The council was likely to face further cost pressures in the future which historically had not been fully funded by government in areas such as social care.

Indications from the ongoing Fair Funding Review discussions are that the government was still considering the adoption of the Advisory Council for Resource Allocation (ACRA) methodology for apportioning Public Health Grant. This was a significant financial risk with the council losing more Public Health funding than any other authority in the country - a forecast loss of £18 million (circa 35%). The ACRA formula results in a significant shift in Public Health funding from deprived areas to more affluent areas. Concerns over the future distribution of Adults funding are also emerging.

It was likely that any variance in government grant allocations, at this stage, arising from the Fair Funding Review would be implemented across a five-year transition period, although this would not be clarified until final decisions were made on the implementation of the review outcomes. Given the extent of risk associated with the loss of public health funding, assumed losses of government funding arising from the Fair Funding Review had been included in MTFP(10) planning assumptions.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 20 December 2019 and confirmed an increase in the Social Care Grant for 2020/21 of £12.830 million from £4.820 million to £17.650 million. The settlement indicated that the Social Care Grant funding would be available to local authorities in the future although the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has confirmed that the allocation methodology for this funding beyond 2020/21 could not be confirmed at this stage.

In addition, it was announced that local authorities with social care responsibilities would be able to increase council tax by up to 2% in 2020/21 as an 'Adult Social Care Precept'. This is in addition to the 2% referendum limit for

council tax and results in a maximum council tax increase before a referendum would be required of 3.99%.

The government recognised the significant budget pressures local authorities were facing in the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (HNDSG) budget which provided support to children with special needs. Additional funding of £8.664 million had been provided for 2020/21 which would help meet current overspend in this budget area but would not cover the pressure in 2020/2021. The government confirmed that the General Fund can no longer support the HNDSG. If on-going additional funding was not identified beyond 2020/21 by government, the council would be forced to consider service changes to ensure expenditure is managed within available funding.

The settlement confirmed that the government intended to continue to reimburse authorities experiencing negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG). The total national reimbursement was £153 million. Negative RSG occurs where government funding cuts reach a point where some local authorities, who have relatively high tax bases, no longer receive any RSG. Ordinarily these authorities would have their business rate tariff increased which ensured that all authorities experienced a similar reduction or increase in Core Spending Power (CSP). However, the government was proposing to view negative RSG in isolation to CSP and make an adjustment to ensure negative RSG did not occur – which would result in additional resources for those authorities.

For those authorities still in receipt of RSG, of which Durham is one, the settlement also confirmed that there would be no reduction in this grant for the first time since 2009/10. A 1.63% inflationary uplift would be applied to the council's current RSG of £27.620 million providing a £0.450 million increase. In addition, the last tranche of the Improved Better Care Fund of £4.0 million is to be retained in 2020/21, however unlike the social care grant, there is no reference to this funding being continued beyond 2020/21.

Whilst the financial settlement for the council had improved for 2020/21, a clear focus remained to realise improvements in efficiency and to deliver value for money savings. Savings of £6.2 million approved in MTFP(9) continued across the MTFP(10) period alongside an additional £9.5 million savings identified for MTFP(10). This provided £15.7 million of budget support across MTFP(10) with £8 million of the sum available in 2020/21.

With this in mind consideration had been given to a range of short term priority investments for 2020/21 which would utilise additional funding available to the council. Additional investments were set out which would provide additional funding for climate change priorities, highways and housing, reducing poverty and inequality as well as investing in children's and library services. In addition, there would be additional investment in front line neighbourhoods' services, in adult services and in culture and sport. In total these investments amounted to over £22 million in 2020/21 and required £2.7 million to be allocated from the

Budget Support Reserve (BSR) and £1.9 million from the Adult and Health Services Cash Limit.

Although additional funding was available for 2020/21 the council still expected to face significant budget pressures across the MTFP(10) period, particularly in social care services. At this stage, taking account of the risks associated with the Fair Funding Review, it was forecast that additional savings of £32 million would be required across MTFP(10) with increases in business rates and council tax not expected to keep up with the scale of budget pressures faced.

The council would continue to plan on the basis of a requirement to identify future savings to ensure future years' budgets can be balanced.

In total the £15.7 million of savings proposed for MTFP(10) period resulted in the council having saved £250 million since 2011/12. The forecast £32 million shortfall across the MTFP(10) period would result in total savings of up to 2023/24 of £282 million.

During the significant period of austerity, the authority had continued to prioritise investment in the capital programme. MTFP(10) had a further significant investment in the capital programme with additional schemes approved of £104 million taking the forecast investment from 2019/20 to 2023/24 to £444 million. The main additional investment in MTFP(10) related to the Leisure Review where additional investment in MTFP(10) of £26.0 million was included and would increase to a forecast £62.8 million in MTFP(11).

The council's MTFP strategy since 2010/11 had been to protect front line services as far as possible and the 2020/21 proposals were in line with this strategy both in terms of savings being realised and additional investment. The report summarised how the main proposals were in line with the council's overall strategy and had been shaped by residents' and stakeholders' views with a high-level analysis of the equalities impact.

Detailed savings proposals were included in the report for the MTFP(10) period and were shown at Appendix 5 of the report.

In the setting of council tax levels for 2020/21, careful consideration had been given to the significant future financial pressures facing the Council and the lack of information in relation to future financial settlements. The government had confirmed that the Council Tax referendum limit for 2020/21 would be 2%. The council also had the option to increase Council Tax by an additional 2% for an adult social care precept in 2020/21 with the government-published Core Spending Power figures assuming all authorities utilise the ability to increase council tax by the maximum possible sum.

After considering the impact on the council's budget and Council Tax payers, this report recommends a 1.99% increase in the Council's Band D Council Tax in 2020/21 which is below the 2% referendum limit. In addition, the report

recommended a 2% increase to the Adult Social Care precept. The total increase would generate additional Council Tax income of £8.8 million per annum. The total increase would result in a Band D increase of £1.22 a week and an increase of 81 pence a week for the majority of Council Tax payers in County Durham, who lived in the lowest value properties (Band A).

Despite this very challenging financial period, the scale and sustained level of government spending cuts and the impact on the council's finances, this report included some very positive outcomes for the people of County Durham including:

- (a) significant one-off investment in a broad range of priority front line services;
- (b) continued support to protect working age households in receipt of low incomes through the continuation of the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme where they will continue to be entitled to up to 100% relief against their Council Tax payments;
- (c) ongoing work with health partners to ensure health and social care funds are maximised for the benefit of vulnerable people through the services we provide;
- (d) significant investment in capital expenditure including investment in leisure provision, in our town centres and infrastructure, including new transport schemes and maintenance of our highways and pavements. In total, additional capital investment of £103.6 million is recommended in this report.

As outlined in previous MTFP reports, equality impact assessments were summarised to inform the consultation and subsequent decision making. Workforce implications arising from proposals for 2020/21 savings had been analysed.

Decision

We resolved to recommend to Full Council:

(a) 2020/21 Revenue Budget

- (i) approve the identified base budget pressures included in paragraph 81 of the report;
- (ii) approve the short term investments included in paragraph 88 and detailed in Appendix 4 of the report;
- (iii) approve the savings plans detailed in Appendix 5 of the report;

- (iv) approve a 1.99% 2020/21 Council Tax increase and a further 2% increase which relates to the Adult Social Care precept, totalling 3.99%;
- (v) approve the 2020/21 Net Budget Requirement of £430.059 million.

(b) MTFP(10)

- (i) agree the forecast MTFP(10) financial position;
- (ii) set aside sufficient sums in Earmarked Reserves as is considered prudent. The Corporate Director of Resources should continue to be authorised to establish such reserves as required to review them for both adequacy and purpose on a regular basis reporting appropriately to the Cabinet Portfolio Member for Finance and to Cabinet;
- (iii) aim to maintain General Reserve in the medium term between 5% and 7.5% of the Net Budget Requirement which in cash terms is up to £32 million;
- (iv) note the transfer of £10 million of earmarked reserves into the Town and Villages Reserve.

(c) Capital Budget

- (i) approve the revised 2019/20 Capital Budget of £117.574 million and the 2020/21 Capital Budget of £199.043 million;
- (ii) approve the Capital Strategy at Appendix 10 of the report;
- (iii) approve the additional capital schemes detailed at Appendix 11 of the report. These schemes will be financed from additional capital grants, from one off revenue funding and from prudential borrowing;
- (iv) note the option for the council to utilise capital receipts to finance severance costs utilising the new flexibilities in this regard. The utilisation of such flexibility will require the approval of Cabinet;
- (v) approve the MTFP(10) Capital Budget of £443.562 million for 2019/20 to 2022/23 as detailed in Table 15 of the report.

(d) Savings Proposals

- (i) note the approach taken by service groupings to achieve the required savings.

(e) Equality Impact Assessment

- (i) consider the equality impacts identified and mitigating actions at paragraphs 162 to 212 and in Appendix 12 to the report;
- (ii) note the programme of future work to ensure full impact assessments are available where appropriate at the point of decision, once all necessary consultations have been completed;
- (iii) note the ongoing work to assess cumulative impacts over the MTFP(10) period which is regularly reported to Cabinet.

(f) Pay Policy

- (i) approve the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix 13 of the report.

(g) Risk Assessment

- (i) note the risks to be managed over the MTFP(10) period.

(h) Dedicated Schools Grant

- (i) note the position on the Dedicated Schools Grant and the need to submit a recovery plan to the DfE by 30 June 2020 in relation to the deficit on the High Needs DSG reserve account;
- (ii) approve the formula set out in Table 18 above and authorise the Corporate Director of Resources to approve any amendments required following review by the DfE.

(i) Discretionary Rate Relief

- (i) note the changes to the council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy, as set out in the report, and agree the revised policy as attached at Appendix 14 of the report.

(j) Prudential Code, Treasury Management and Property Investment

- (i) agree the Prudential Indications and Limits for 2020/21 – 2023/24 contained within Appendix 15 of the report, including the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator;
- (ii) agree the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement contained within Appendix 15 which sets out the council's policy on MRP;
- (iii) agree the Treasury Management Strategy and the Treasury Prudential Indicators contained within Appendix 15 of the report;
- (iv) agree the Cash Investment Strategy 2020/21 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 15 of the report including the detailed criteria);
- (v) approve the Property Investment Strategy at Appendix 16 of the report.

**12. School Admission Arrangements Academic Year 2021/22 [Key Decision: CYPs/03/2019]
Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Olwyn Gunn
Contact – Graeme Plews 03000 265 777**

We considered a report of the Corporate Director Children and Young People's Services which sought approval for the proposed admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria from Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2021/22 academic year.

All admission authorities must agree admission arrangements annually. However, if there are no changes proposed, they only need to be consulted on at least every 7 years. The current admission arrangements were consulted on between 1 October to 31 December 2018. There were no changes proposed to the current admission arrangements that required public consultation, other than that some schools have a proposed reduction in their admission number due a change in the net capacity or for the purposes of more efficient and effective curriculum delivery. The proposed admission number for each Community and Voluntary Controlled School was detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

Decision

We approved the admission numbers as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report and the admission arrangements as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

13. Climate Change Emergency Response Plan
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Carl Marshall
Contacts – Oliver Sherratt 03000 269 259
Steve Bhowmick Tel: 03000 267122
Maggie Bosanquet Tel: 03000 265549

We considered a report of the Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which detailed the findings of widespread consultation with residents, community groups, schools, businesses and Council staff on the emerging plans to reduce carbon in all Council activities and across the county as a whole. The report presented a costed two year action plan, which incorporated the findings from the consultation, provided an additional £3 million funding over two years (second year is subject to the Government's financial settlement) to support a total programme of £13.2 million of schemes to reduce Council emissions, and a countywide programme in excess of £50 million inclusive of external grants (secured and bid).

On 20 February 2019 the County Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and set ambitious targets to reduce its own carbon emissions by 60% by 2030 (from a 2008/9 baseline) and to investigate what further actions are necessary to make County Durham carbon neutral by 2050 (from a 1990 baseline).

The Climate Change Emergency declaration required a report to be delivered within six months, setting out how those targets might be delivered. A report was presented to Council on 17 July 2019 which detailed a wide range of work areas from renewable energy, to more efficient buildings, fleet and transportation as well as carbon offset initiatives such as tree planting. Whilst it was agreed that much of the existing work should of course continue, such as a new solar farm at Tanfield Lea and electric vehicle charging infrastructure schemes, it was also resolved that the outline future plans should be subject to widespread consultation, as delivery of many of these schemes requires a collective approach.

Consultation was undertaken between 19 September and 31 October 2019. Over a thousand responses were received ranging from a simple questionnaire return to more comprehensive responses. Young people were also engaged with workshops held in 31 primary schools and 7 secondary schools.

The large volume of responses received indicated a strong interest in the issue of climate change, and the details revealed support for the Council's overall approach. Priorities identified for the Council include reducing the need for travel, more renewable energy, existing buildings to be energy efficient, and new buildings to be as low carbon as possible. Priorities countywide include tree planting, reducing waste, more renewable energy, walking and cycling. It is clear from the responses that there is considerable appetite for partnership

working, especially with utility companies. Several responses requested the Council consider even more ambitious targets.

Arising from the consultation responses a two-year costed action plan had been developed. This was attached to the report at Appendix 2. It included £3 million additional support for new projects (in addition to existing commitments, European funded and invest to save projects). The second year of this (2021/22) is contingent on a financial settlement from Government equivalent or more than that in 2020/21. It described over 100 individual projects, many of them carbon costed so that their contribution to the targets can be identified. It will be regularly reviewed and updated as new initiatives and opportunities emerge.

For the Council a range of specific projects are identified. These include:

- LED lighting replacements for 17,000 streetlights, Gala theatre and a number of Council owned buildings, including schools;
- a commitment to further reduce the carbon footprint of the new headquarters by building on the energy efficiency measures already in place, and, subject to planning approval, installation of solar panels. Furthermore, the feasibility of offsetting the remaining carbon footprint will be explored which would include an independently audited process;
- a move to greater numbers of electric vehicles including the Council's 26 pool cars. The first two electric vehicles for our service fleet were introduced to operations in January 2020.

Consultation feedback revealed a strong interest in improving the natural environment, reduced waste and increased use of renewables. Measures included in this report include:

- a substantial programme of tree planting supported by successful schemes such as the £820,000 Woodland Revival and £1 million Urban Tree Challenge Fund, as well as new schemes such as a commitment to plant 10,000 trees in each Area Action Partnership area. In total this would be an estimated 358,000 trees, on top of the estimated 953,142 from 2000 to date;
- continued support for business, through the Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP), and development of proposals for District heating networks in Durham City;
- a £500,000 Community Investment Fund to financially assist community groups to reduce their carbon impact through energy efficiency, and renewables. Where possible, this budget will be

“evergreen” loan, with financial savings being reutilised to invest in more schemes.

The Council (measured in 2018/19) has already reduced its carbon footprint by 47% from 2008/9 levels. Whilst 2019/20 performance is unknown at present, it is anticipated to reduce still further, and the measures contained in this report, supported by extra investment would provide a further 6,638 carbon tonnes annual reduction or 5.5% overall. This has allowed progress to be “ahead of the curve” and therefore an even more ambitious target of 80% reduction by 2030 had been proposed for consideration.

Whilst the countywide 2050 carbon neutral target looked daunting, it was felt that there had already been sufficient progress, including nationally with the continued decarbonisation of the national grid for the first staged target outlined to Council on 17 July 2019 to be raised from 55% to 60% by 2020. The achievement of this target would not be known until August 2022. The appointment of an elected Member Climate Change Champion, the recent establishment of a new Service Grouping and recruitment of a Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods and Climate Change provided an opportunity for strong corporate leadership to ensure all Council services could fulfil their potential in working towards Members’ commitments to substantial carbon reductions. Alongside the specific projects, the plans proposed a cultural change of increased “carbon consciousness”.

Decision

We have:

- (a) noted the considerable consultation feedback from residents, staff, community groups, schools and businesses regarding the emerging climate change plans outlined to Council in July 2019;
- (b) approved the Climate Change Emergency Action Plan (2020-2022) set out in the report which builds on the feedback and details in excess of 100 projects, funded from a variety of sources including £3 million additional funding;
- (c) noted that in the light of recent projects, future investment and updated forecasts, raise the Council target for carbon reductions from 60% to 80% by 2030 (from a 2008/9 baseline) and the countywide target from 55% to 60% by 2020 (reported in 2022);
- (d) requested the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review performance against plan, where appropriate making recommendations for revision of future targets.

**14. Indices of Deprivation 2019 Summary for County Durham
Cabinet Portfolio Holder– Councillor Angela Surtees
Contact – Michael Fleming 03000 267 664**

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided key messages and selected analyses for County Durham from the recently released Index of Deprivation 2019 (ID2019).

The English Indices of Deprivation measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas, in England. Summaries are also produced for Local Authorities.

Whilst the indices are produced using national datasets to a fixed methodology there are some potential issues for this release which should be taken into consideration.

The introduction of Universal Credit (UC) indicators in the Employment and Income domains of ID2019 may have had some effect on individual and local authority area scores and subsequent rankings. The time period for these indicators was 2015/16, prior to roll out of UC in County Durham and many other local authorities. Given that the rollout of UC only applied to those who had a change of circumstances, numbers locally are likely to be low during the time period in question, and therefore the impact is anticipated to be low. We will continue to monitor this situation. County Durham, and small areas within, have experienced significant changes to both score and rank within the crime domain. This may be accounted for by a combination of i) extending the data period from one year to two years and ii) changes/improvements to crime recording by Durham Constabulary over this time period. Initial analysis of Durham Constabulary data showed increased levels of recorded crime across most crime categories which can be attributed to these changes in recording. The experience of County Durham is mirrored in Darlington, which supported this theory. Further work should be undertaken to fully investigate this.

Decision

We have:

- a) noted the content of the report, and to ensure future policies, strategies, plans and funding bids contain the latest information and analyses relating to deprivation in County Durham;
- b) authorised the report to progress to Partnership Boards for information and update and to be disseminated further as appropriate; and

c) noted that this content and further analyses relating to deprivation will be publicly available via the Deprivation theme on [Durham Insight](#).