

**29 March 2012**

**Council Plan 2012-2016- Refresh of the  
Work Programme for the Economy and  
Enterprise Scrutiny Committee**

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**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Members with information contained within the Council Plan 2012 - 2016, relevant to the work of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This allows the opportunity for Members to refresh the Committee's Work Programme to reflect the five objectives and subsequent actions identified within the Council Plan for the Council's Altogether Wealthier priority theme.

**Background**

2. The current Overview and Scrutiny Committees Work Programmes focus on the priority areas identified within the context of the Council Plan, Cabinet's Forward Plan of decisions, Sustainable Community Strategy, Partnership plans and strategies, performance and budgetary control data and changes in Government legislation.
3. In relation to the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members will recall that the Work Programme was refreshed at the Committee meeting held on the 2 June 2011, ensuring that areas of focus were in line with current and forthcoming priorities within the Committee's remit. Further areas of focus for the Committee have been added throughout 2011/12 to reflect changing Government policy and at the request of Members.

**Council Plan 2012- 2016**

4. The Council Plan is the overarching high level plan for the County Council, which covers a four year period and is updated on an annual basis. The plan sets out how the Council will consider the corporate priorities for improvement and the key actions the Authority will take in delivering the long term goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy (2010-2030) and the Council's own change agenda. Attached as Appendix 2 is the Altogether Wealthier section of the Council Plan for Members' consideration.
5. Within the Council's Altogether Wealthier priority theme, the focus is on creating a vibrant economy and putting regeneration and economic development at the heart of all our plans. In comparison with the region and nationally, County Durham's economy is underperforming.

6. To help address this issue of the underperforming County Durham economy the Council has identified 6 objectives (an additional objective included from 2011-2014 Council Plan) which are set out in the Regeneration Statement together with outcomes to achieve the overarching objectives. They are set out below. The outcomes are the same as those included in 2011-14 Council Plan.
- Thriving Durham City
    - Improve retail business and residential offer in Durham City and its immediate locality (W1)
    - Strengthened cultural and tourism Offer for Durham City and the County (W2)
  - Vibrant and successful towns
    - Increase vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach (W3)
  - Competitive and successful people
    - Increase numbers of people in employment with a focus on young people (W4)
    - Improve employability and skills (W5)
  - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities
    - Improve the housing offer, narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities (W6)
    - Improve equality of access to employment and services (W7)
  - A top location for business
    - Increased business growth in key growth sectors (W8)
    - Increased business start ups (W9)
  - A growth driven spatial planning framework for County Durham.
7. Over the next four years, the Council will strive to deliver a step change in the economy of County Durham by focusing on the actions required to achieve the above objectives.
8. The Council Plan contains a series of High Level Action Plans detailing the work which needs to be undertaken by the Authority in order to deliver the actions identified above, see Appendix 2 (copy attached).

### **Current Work Programme**

9. During 2011-12, the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring, in depth Scrutiny Reviews, systematic six monthly reviews of progress against recommendations and overview presentations in relation to the following areas:

**\* Denotes inline with Council Plan 2012-2016.**

## **In depth Scrutiny Reviews**

- \*
  - Increasing the employment opportunities for young people (18-24 years) in County Durham (Objective – Competitive and successful people - Action – Increased numbers of people in employment with a focus on young people).

## **Systematic Review**

- \*
  - Employability Review 2010 – Review of recommendations (Objective – Competitive and successful people – Action – Improve employability and Skills)
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  - Durham City Homes – Review of Recommendations – (Objective – sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Action – Improve the housing offer, narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \*
  - Increasing the employment opportunities for young people (18-24 years) in County Durham (Objective – Competitive and successful people – Action – Increased numbers of people in employment with a focus on young people).

## **Areas of Overview Activity**

- \*
  - County Durham Economic Assessment - (covers all Objectives and actions)
- \*
  - Master Plans for County Durham - (Objective - Vibrant and successful towns - Action - Increase vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach).
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  - Transit 15 - (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Action - Improve equality of access to employment and services).
- \*
  - Planning Implications of the Localism Act – (Objectives – Vibrant and successful towns – A growth driven spatial planning framework for County Durham - Action - Increase the vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach).
- \*
  - The County Durham Plan - (Objectives - Vibrant and successful towns – A growth driven spatial planning framework for County Durham - Action - Increase the vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach) - Ongoing.
- \*
  - Implication of reductions to regeneration funding in County Durham (Local Growth White paper) - (Objective - Vibrant and successful towns - a top location for business - Action - Increase the vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach - Increase business growth in key growth sectors and increase business start-ups).

- \* ● Implications of Government policy in relation to employment support (Objective – competitive and successful people – Action – increased numbers of people in employment with a focus on young people).
- \* ● Durham Key Options - Choice Base Lettings (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Action - Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Housing Solutions - (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Action - Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Empty Homes Strategy - (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Action - Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Stock Options Appraisal – (Objective – sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Action – Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and equalities gap between communities) Ongoing.
- \* ● Performance monitoring of Durham City Homes and the 2 ALMO's - (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Action - Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Family Intervention Project (ASB) - (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Action - Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Overview of Welfare Reform by Jobcentre Plus – (Objective – competitive and successful people – Action – Improve employability and skills).
- \* ● Overview of the work of the County Durham Economic Partnership – (covers all objectives and actions).
- \* ● Overview of the Review of Business Support Services – (Objective – a top location for business – Action – Increased business growth and increased business start-ups).
- \* ● Update on Digital Durham Programme – (Objectives – competitive and successful people – A top location for business – Actions – improve employability and skills – Increased business start ups – increased business growth in key growth sectors).
- \* ● .Update on the LEP – (Objective – A top location for business – Action – Increased business growth in key growth sectors – Increased business start ups).

- \* • Overview of statistical bias report produced by Sheffield Hallam University – (Objective – Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Actions – Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and gap between communities – Improve inequality of access to employment and services).
- \* • Impact of public sector cuts on the County Durham Economy - (Covers all objectives and actions).

### **Budgetary and performance monitoring**

- \* • Quarterly budgetary and performance monitoring for RED Service Group.

10. The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny has also considered the following cross cutting items:

- \* • Fuel poverty (Objective – Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Action – Improve the housing offer, narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* • County Durham Plan – (Objectives – vibrant and successful towns – A growth driven spatial planning framework for County Durham – Action – Increase vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach).
- \* • Library Consultation – (Objective – Vibrant and successful towns – Action - Increase vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach).
- \* • Empty Homes Strategy - (Objective – Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Action – Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities)including Empty Homes Update on multi – disciplinary teams.
- \* • Digital Durham - (Objective – Competitive and successful people – Actions – Increased numbers of people in employment with a focus on young people – Improve employability).

11. In addition the current work programme for the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee identifies the following areas for future consideration:

- \* • County Durham Financial Inclusion Strategy Action Plan (Objective - Competitive and Successful People - Action - Improve Employability and Skills).

- \* ● Affordable Homes Strategy – (Objective – Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Action – Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Overview of Homelessness – (Objective – Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities – Action – Improve the housing offer narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Overview of Adult learning Strategy 2011- 2013 – (Objective - Competitive and successful people – Action - Improve employability and skills – Increased numbers of people in employment with a focus on young people).
- \* ● Overview of geographical profiles at AAP level – (Objective - Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities - Actions – Improve equality of access to employment and services – Improve the housing offer, narrowing the deprivation and inequalities gap between communities).
- \* ● Refresh of the Regeneration Strategy – (Objective – Vibrant and successful towns – Action – Increase vitality of main settlements through a whole town approach).
- \* ● Tourism within County Durham – (Objective – Thriving Durham City – Action – Strengthen cultural and tourism offer for Durham City and the County).

### **Gaps within current Work Programme**

12. Having considered the Altogether Wealthier section of the Council Plan for 2012 - 2016 there are no actions identified which are not covered within the current Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme:

### **Cross Cutting Themes**

13. Identified below is a cross cutting issue which cuts across the Altogether Wealthier, Altogether Better for Children and Young People, Altogether Greener, Altogether Healthier, Altogether Safer and Altogether Better Council themes of the Council Plan for 2012-2016:

<b>Altogether</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Link to Altogether Wealthier</b>
Children and Young People	Children and Young people realise and maximise their potential.	C1 Children and young people are supported to achieve and attain to prepare them for adulthood.  C2 A range of positive activities are available for children and young people.	Competitive and successful people.
Greener	Enhance, conserve and promote Durham's built environment	G6 Reduced number of vacant and derelict buildings.  G7 Enhanced and accessible historic environment and heritage	Vibrant and successful towns.  A growth driven spatial planning framework for County Durham.
Healthier	Enable adults with social care needs to live independently	H12 Improve independence and rehabilitation.	Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities
Better Council	Engage effectively with our communities and Partners	ABC 11 Engage and communicate effectively with communities and stakeholders.	Competitive and Successful people.
Safer	Reduce anti-social behaviour.	S1 Increase Public Confidence	Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities.

### **Next Steps**

14. The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the appropriate section from the Council Plan, Appendix 2 (copy attached) to inform the Committee's Work Programme for 2012 - 2014, reflecting on the current work programme detailed in paragraphs 9 and 11 above.

15. Members will receive a further report at the next Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirming/agreeing the Committee's Work Programme for 2012-2014 based on today's discussion and agreement.

### **Recommendations**

16. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the information contained in Appendix 2 (copy attached).
17. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee refresh the work programme for 2012-2014 by discussing and considering those actions identified, under 'Altogether Wealthier' priority theme of the Council Plan 2012-2016 Appendix 2 (copy attached).
18. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee at it's meeting on the 6 July 2012, receive a further report detailing the Committee's Work Programme for 2012 - 2014.



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## **Appendix 1**

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### **Finance**

The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next 3 years. The Medium Term Financial Plan aligns revenue and capital investment to priorities within the Council Plan.

### **Staffing**

The Council's strategies are be aligned to achievement of the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

### **Risk**

Consideration of risk is a key element in the corporate and service planning framework with both the Council Plan and Service Plans containing sections on risk.

### **Equality and diversity**

Individual equality impact assessments have been prepared for the Council Plan and for each savings proposal within the Plan. The cumulative impact of all savings proposals in total has also been presented to Council and will be updated as savings proposals are further developed. In addition a full impact assessment has been undertaken for the draft Council Plan. The actions in the Council Plan include specific issues relating to equality and aim to improve the equality of life for those with protected characteristics. The Plan has been influenced by consultation and monitoring to include equality issues. There is no evidence of negative impact for particular groups.

### **Accommodation**

The Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan is aligned to the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

### **Crime and disorder**

The Altogether Safer section of the Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions to tackling crime and disorder.

### **Human rights**

None

### **Consultation**

Council and partnership priorities have been developed following an analysis of available consultation data including an extensive consultation programme carried out as part of the development of the interim Sustainable Community Strategy and this has been reaffirmed by subsequent consultation on the budget and through the Residents' Survey. Results have been taken into account in developing our resourcing decisions.

### **Procurement**

None

### **Disability**

None

### **Legal Implications**

None