

**9 December 2015**

**Report from the Cabinet**



---

**Purpose of the Report**

To provide information to the Council on issues considered by the Cabinet on 21 October and 18 November 2015 to enable Members to ask related questions.

Members are asked to table any questions on items in this report by 2 pm on 8 December 2015 in order for them to be displayed on the screens in the Council Chamber.

**Contents**

**21 October**

- Item 1      Welfare Reform and Poverty Issues
- Item 2      Auckland Castle Update
- Item 3      Future DLI Museum Arrangments
- Item 4      Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2015-20
- Item 5      Public Health Update
- Item 6      The County Durham Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2015-18
- Item 7      Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project

**18 November**

- Item 8      Council Tax Base 2016/17 and Forecast Surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund as 31 March 2016 [Key Decision: CORP/R/15/03]
- Item 9      Review of Council Plan [Key Decision: CORP/A/03/15/01]

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Item 10 | Mid-Year Report for the Period to 30 September 2015 on Treasury Management Service  |
| Item 11 | Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2015/16 for General Fund, and Housing Revenue Account – Period to 30 September 2015 |
| Item 12 | Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014-15  |
| Item 13 | Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report  |
| Item 14 | Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy   |

**1. Welfare Reform and Poverty Issues**  
**Cabinet Portfolio Holders – Councillors Simon Henig, Alan Napier, Jane Brown, and Eddie Tomlinson**  
**Contact – Roger Goodes 03000 268050**

We have considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the government's welfare reform programme and sought approval to consult on a draft County Durham Poverty Action Plan to build a more comprehensive response to the changes to welfare and the wider poverty issues within the county.

The council has responded to welfare changes by working corporately and in partnership with a wide variety of stakeholders. A Poverty Action Steering Group was established to coordinate a broad programme of work. This has included a comprehensive communications and training programme for council staff, the use of Discretionary Housing Payments and the establishment of a Welfare Assistance Scheme. The Poverty Action Steering group has developed a draft Poverty Action Plan for County Durham which was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The draft Poverty Action Plan includes the following proposed actions:

- To raise awareness of poverty within the council and amongst our partners;
- To enable services and partners to understand poverty and work together to help address it;
- To establish ways of monitoring how people are affected by poverty; what other issues result from poverty; and what gaps in support exist that can be addressed within the resources available;
- To focus closely on child poverty, issues surrounding credit and debt, fuel poverty, the impact of further changes to welfare and benefits, and initiatives to help people into work.

Through consultation, all partners will be encouraged to comment and contribute to the development of the plan, as this will be fundamental to its successful delivery and achieving better outcomes for the residents of County Durham.

## **Decision**

We have:

- Noted the contents of the report and the progress being made by the Council and its partners in addressing welfare reform and the wider poverty issues in the county;
- Approved the draft Poverty Action Plan for County Durham for consultation with partners and stakeholders.

## **2. Auckland Castle Update Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Neil Foster Contact – Sarah Robson 03000 267332**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which provided an update on the development of Auckland Castle as a major heritage attraction for the County.

The report outlined the Trust's wider vision as 'to develop Bishop Auckland as a vibrant destination for local people and visitors alike, with Auckland Castle at its heart'.

There are a number of different projects being pursued by the Trust and the Council is working in partnership in the delivery of each of these. The projects were described in detail in the report and include the following:

- Restoration of Castle and Scotland Wing
- The Walled Garden
- The Welcome Building and Viewing Platform
- No. 10 Market Place and No. 42 Market Place
- Backhouse Gallery
- The Queens Head and Post Chaise Hotels
- Eleven Arches
- Binchester Roman Fort
- Historic England Urban Panel Visit

Overall, it is estimated by the Trust that these schemes will cost £93m to be delivered and will create:

- 200 FTE jobs and 500+ indirect jobs;
- 300 training opportunities;
- 800 volunteering opportunities.

The Council has established a Development Team to support the Trust and help deliver their projects. The Development Team, which also includes representatives from English Heritage, has worked closely with the Trust and provided detailed advice and guidance to the Trust and their consultants on all of the schemes. In particular, there are specific areas where the Council is looking to provide further support for the Trust. These are a refresh of the Bishop Auckland Regeneration Masterplan and the provision of additional car parking spaces. The Council is now working with key partners to establish governance and project team arrangements to ensure that Bishop Auckland maximises the benefits from the significant investment by the Trust.

The first regeneration Masterplan for Bishop Auckland was approved by Cabinet in April 2012 and references the opportunities at Auckland Castle but predates the acquisition of the Castle by the Trust. The Council is reviewing and updating the document to take account of the significant change in circumstance at Auckland Castle, which was anticipated in the 2012 document, but was not clear at that point. The Council will be working with key partners, such as Historic England and the Trust, on the preparation of this document.

In January 2015 a set of Heads of Terms was agreed between the Trust and Durham County Council regarding the future management and maintenance of the North Bondgate car park. A period of public consultation showed that there was overwhelming support for the proposal to extend the car park.

The proposed cost of delivering the enlarged car park and improvements to the streetscape at North Bondgate is approximately £1,027,000. If the Council was to incur the £1.027m improvements works to enlarge the car park, the underlying cost to the Council after taking into account a contribution of up to £750,000 from Auckland Castle Trust would be circa £277,000. These costs can be met within the available £770,000 resources already allocated through the capital programme.

The land to the east of the former bus depot site is owned by Gentoo and is occupied by businesses with short term tenancies. In line with the heads of terms, the Council has sought to acquire a lease for this land to provide additional car parking. Other capital works are also proposed which include improvements from the car park to the market place. The report provided full details of the financial considerations and implications.

## **Decision**

We have:

- a) Welcomed the significant investment and the development work being undertaken by Auckland Castle Trust;
- b) Provided delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration to enter into legal agreement with Auckland Castle Trust over:

- i. the use of land at North Bondgate as a car park. The terms of the agreement will be compliant with Article 53 (culture and heritage conservation) of the General Block Exemption Regulation 2014; and,
  - ii. the surrender of the existing lease on Auckland Castle Park.
- c) Provided delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration to enter into legal agreement with Gentoo Developments regarding their land holding at North Bondgate;
- d) Provided delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration to enter into legal agreement with the Eleven Arches Trust over the sale or lease to provide highway access to the land;
- e) Noted the additional revenue cost of £30,730 by the Council which will be accommodated within existing budgets;
- f) Noted the capital commitment of £1,529,950 by the Council from its capital programme and that an additional capital funding of £186,950 will be required to fund the proposed works in the town centre;
- g) Acknowledged the recommendations of the Urban Panel report;
- h) Endorsed the partnership model of governance to ensure that the Town benefits from the significant investment by Auckland Castle Trust.

### **3. Future DLI Museum Arrangements**

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Neil Foster**  
**Contact – Steve Howell 03000 264577**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which presented a proposal for a new approach to the storage, display and access to the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) museum collections.

Whilst recognising the current financial environment, the report proposed an alternative approach to managing the collections with the following aims:

- To ensure the collection is stored safely and appropriately
- To facilitate as wide as possible access to the collection
- To maintain a broad educational programme

The proposal was developed in conjunction with the Board of Trustees of the former DLI Regiment who are the owners of the collection but place it under the care of Durham County Council through a Deed of Trust. Given the importance of the collection any available resources must be deployed effectively in storing, conserving and displaying it.

The report proposed to relocate the DLI collection to Sevenhills at Spennymoor, to a store that is secure, environmentally controlled and suitable for the size of the collection and its anticipated growth. Sevenhills would require some modifications to ensure it has the right racking, security and environmental conditions. This would predominantly allow for suitable and safe storage to be installed into two areas, allowing the collection to be safely stored and accessed within a controlled environment. Further internal adjustments at Sevenhills would enable a new collections study area to be provided for curators, conservators and volunteers to work on the collection, and a space for visitors and researchers to access and use the collection for study and education. The use of temporary loans and exhibitions would widen access to the collection. It would be the responsibility of the Museums, Heritage and Collections Manager to seek key partnerships and loans to curate temporary exhibitions to continue to display elements of the collection and expand its access to both the public and researchers alike.

In this respect, the report proposed that a loan to Durham University, covering the remainder of the World War 1 commemoration period is entered into. This would result in the loan of part of the collection to be displayed at Palace Green Library within the city centre.

The approach detailed in the report has the opportunity to reach a much wider audience than could be hoped for at the current fixed DLI museum location. The proposals have a number of financial implications of both a revenue and capital nature which were detailed in the report. A detailed project plan will be developed to manage the appropriate consultation and potential implementation implications of the report, including staffing implications.

## **Decision**

We have agreed:

- To the closure of the DLI museum building and movement of the collection into new storage at Sevenhills.
- That the first loan from the collection is made to Durham University and agreements to facilitate the future loan(s) are put in place.
- That Capital provision is identified for the fit-out of Sevenhills storage and for the capital grant allocation for the initial first object loan as set out in the report.
- That the Trustees of the former Durham Light Infantry are formally notified and Durham County Council continues to work with them as the project progresses.
- That wider communications with stakeholders and staff consultation is commenced and an appropriate communications plan developed.

**4. Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2015-20**  
**Cabinet Portfolio Holders – Councillors Lucy Hovvels and Joy Allen**  
**Contact – Kirsty Wilkinson 03000 265445**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which presented the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for 2015 – 2020. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2015-20 was developed by Durham County Council Public Health team on behalf of the Safe Durham Partnership. The draft strategy has gone through extensive consultation and amendments have been made to incorporate feedback received from stakeholders. The draft strategy was attached to the report at Appendix 2 and the vision of the strategy is:

*To change the drinking culture in County Durham to reduce the harm caused by alcohol to individuals, families and communities while ensuring that adults who choose to drink alcohol are able to enjoy it responsibly.*

Key objectives which are aligned to the Altogether themes of the County Durham Partnership underpin the strategic vision. Implementation plans will be developed and regularly monitored by the Alcohol Harm Reduction Group.

**Decision**

We have endorsed the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2015-20.

**5. Public Health Update**  
**Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Lucy Hovvels**  
**Contact – Anna Lynch 03000 268146**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which provided an update on national, regional and local public health developments and the delivery of the Public Health Pledge which was signed by the Council in February 2014.

The implementation of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred a number of former public health responsibilities to Durham County Council from 1 April 2013 together with a ring fenced public health grant, the Director of Public Health role and associated public health staff to enable the council to discharge the new statutory duties. A three year public health contract review and procurement programme was developed in 2013 following the transfer of the services to the Council. The public health transformation programme includes a shift to closer working with communities in County Durham. This is being progressed by partnership working with Area Action Partnerships. A member of the public health team is aligned with each Area Action Partnership to provide support in the delivery of health related programmes. In addition, public health staff have developed a number of strategies to improve health in collaboration with a range of partner organisations.

## **Decision**

We have:

- Noted the contents of the report
- Agreed to receive annual updates in relation to the transformation of the Public Health Service.

### **6. The County Durham Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2015-18 Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Neil Foster Contact – Victoria Lloyd-Gent 03000 265311**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which sought approval of the third Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a statutory duty on the County Council to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and to keep it under review. The ROWIP enables Highway Authorities to create a more modern access and rights of way network. Durham County Council has created a plan, Walk, Cycle, Ride, which contributes to wider agendas including the environment, physical activity, health, social inclusion and sustainable travel. The Plan contains a 3 year Implementation Plan which will be used to create annual work programmes.

The Draft ROWIP3 was developed in conjunction with the County Durham Local Access Forum and was available for a 4 week consultation on the County Council website and was emailed to an extensive list of stakeholders. The draft was reported to the Corporate Consultation Group which has supported this process. 24 responses to the consultation were received, and, appropriate suggestions and comments received were incorporated. The Plan's vision is 'to deliver an access network fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' through six objectives as follows:

- Improve access infrastructure
- Contribute to a prosperous economy
- Promote good health
- Promote a high quality environment
- Influence travel choices
- Inspire active, confident and responsible communities

An annual work programme will be created and progress will be monitored against the action plan. The County Durham Local Access Forum will continue to act as an independent critical friend to assess progress against the Implementation Plan through regular updates and reports.

## **Decision**

We have approved the final Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP2) 2015-2018.

**7. Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project**  
**Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Brian Stephens**  
**Contact – John Reed 03000 267454**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which updated Cabinet on the Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project.

Cabinet approved the business case for this 6 year “invest to save” project on 12 December 2012. The project involved:

- Retrofitting of existing street lights with more energy efficient LED street lights;
- Removal of street lights not required by the Street Lighting Policy where it is safe to do so; and
- De-illumination of signs where permitted under Department for Transport regulations.

The Street Lighting Policy which facilitated the removal of street lights was approved by Cabinet on 20 November 2013 following extensive public consultation. In that report it was stated that an annual update would be provided detailing performance and advising of any revisions to the scope of the project.

Street Lighting Retrofits commenced in June 2013 and have been undertaken across the County. Progress is well ahead of schedule and works have been accelerated. The Council’s policy is only to remove street lights that are not required by the Street Lighting Policy where it is safe to do so. Of the removal schemes that have progressed, some have met with opposition during the consultation and officers have attended meetings to discuss the concerns raised. The Council has offered Town and Parish Councils a service level agreement to retain street lights in their areas on a fully funded basis where they have expressed concerns about their removal.

The de-illumination of signs is progressing ahead of schedule. The retrofit of bollards, pedestrian crossing and traffic signals have not progressed due to the detailed design process identifying that additional works are required and the extra cost of these works means that these retrofits no longer meet the ‘invest to save’ criteria.

The report noted that actual energy and carbon reduction achieved is very close to the business case target and the project is making a major contribution to the Council’s target of reducing its carbon emissions by 40%.

The new energy efficient LED street lights are a significant change from the old street lights that they replace and the new energy efficient LED street lights have generally been well received by the public. Only a small number of street lighting removals have been completed to date. In addition to the Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project, the Council has a significant programme of replacing life expired columns.

## Decision

We have noted the content of the report and agreed to accept a further update in 12 months.

- 8. Council Tax Base 2016/17 and Forecast Surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund as 31 March 2016**  
**[Key Decision: CORP/R/15/03]**  
**Deputy Leader of the Council – Councillor Alan Napier**  
**Contact – Paul Darby 03000 261930**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources regarding the Council's Council Tax Base 2016/17 for all domestic properties liable to pay Council tax and reported on the estimated collection fund surplus as at 31 March 2016.

The Council Tax Base is a measure of the County Council's 'taxable capacity' for the purpose of setting its Council Tax. Legislation requires the Council to set out the formula for that calculation and that the tax base is formally approved by Cabinet. On 15 July 2015 Cabinet resolved to recommend to Council continuation of the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) into 2016/17. The scheme will be kept under continuous review with a further decision to be considered by Cabinet in the summer of 2016. As the billing authority, the Council is required, on an annual basis, by 15 January, to make a declaration of the estimated Collection Fund outturn position, and identify and apportion any surplus or deficit anticipated for the following financial year between the principal precepting authorities making a precept on the Fund so that they can factor this into the budget setting processes. Quarterly updates are reported as part of the budgetary control reports to Cabinet and over the last few years the Council has declared a balanced position on the Collection Fund.

At October 2015 there were 239,806 dwellings registered for Council Tax. Some of these properties are exempt from council tax. Empty properties no longer receive discount neither do second homes nor long term empty properties. Empty properties for more than two years are charged a 50% premium. The number of dwellings will be adjusted to reflect these discounts and exemptions. The council tax levied varies between the different bands according to proportions laid down in legislation. In determining the Council Tax Base for 2016/17, two further issues must be factored into the calculation:

- Forecast reductions in the tax base as a result of the LCTRS which is a discount rather than a benefit payment and therefore reduces the tax base; and
- Provision for non-collection of council tax due to bad debts that need to be written off.

Taking into account the forecast collection rate and factoring in the adjustments to the Band D Equivalent properties as a result of the LCTRS next year, the Band D Equivalent Tax Base is forecasted to be 133,892.4 in

2016/17, which compares to the current 2015/16 tax base figure for the County of 130,493.0 – an increase of 3,399.4 (2.61%). The council tax base for the County Council will be used by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority to set their council tax precepts for 2016/17, which will be included in the council tax bills sent to every council tax payer in the County.

The Town and Parish Councils and the Charter Trust for the City of Durham, council tax bases were detailed in the report and will be used to calculate the parish and town councils and the Charter Trust for the City of Durham precepts in 2016/17. These will also be added to the council tax bills and sent to every council tax payer in the respective Town and Parish Council areas.

The Council must determine and declare the estimated surplus or deficit on its Collection Fund at 31 March each year by 15 January. As highlighted in the quarter 2 forecast of outturn report (based on the position to 30 September 2015) the Council Tax Collection Fund is forecast to achieve a surplus of £7.031m at 31 March 2016 and therefore the Council will be declaring a surplus for budget setting purposes and needs to apportion this between the major precepting bodies. The estimated surplus for council tax will be shared between the County Council, the Fire Authority and Durham Police and Crime Commissioner in proportion to the 2016/17 demands / precepts on the Fund. The report provided details as to how the £7.031m will be allocated.

Police, Fire and local town and parish councils were notified of their indicative Council Tax Bases earlier this summer and the Fire Authority and Durham Police and Crime Commissioner were notified that they will receive a share of an anticipated surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund. Subject to Cabinet consideration of this report, the tax bases will be confirmed. Town and Parish Councils will be requested to submit their precept requests by 29 January 2016 to enable these to be incorporated into the 2016/17 Budget and Council tax setting reports to Cabinet and Council in February 2016. The Fire Authority and Durham Police and Crime Commissioner will be notified of their share of the estimated surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund to enable them to factor this into their budget setting for 2016/17.

In continuing with the current LCTRS next year, members have committed to a full review of the Scheme in early summer of 2016. This review will draw on experiences elsewhere and the impact of the wider welfare reforms in County Durham during the period 2013/14 to 2015/16 and put forward options for consideration by Cabinet in July/September next year, with a view to consultation on any changes for 2017/18 being in the Autumn of 2016 and a report being presented to Cabinet on the outcome by December 2016. The 2017/18 LCTRS scheme will need to be endorsed by Council before 31 January 2017.

## **Decision**

We have:

- Approved the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2016/17 for the County, which has been calculated to be 133,892.4 Band D equivalent properties;
- Approved the declaration of a surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund at 31 March 2016 of £7.031m, to be distributed to the Council; the County Durham Fire and Rescue Authority; and the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner in accordance with Council Tax regulations.

### **9. Review of Council Plan [Key Decision: CORP/A/03/15/01] Leader of the Council – Councillor Simon Henig Contact – Jenny Haworth 03000 268071**

We have considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented the draft Council Plan for approval. The Council Plan details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), together with its own improvement agenda. The Council Plan covers a three year timeframe in line with the council's Medium Term Financial Plan and sets out how corporate priorities will be delivered and the key actions which will be taken to support the longer term goals set out in the SCS. This year it is proposed that the existing three year Council Plan is updated and rolled forward a year, with a more fundamental review to take place next year, in line with a refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The proposed changes to the Council Plan outcomes were attached to the report at Appendix 1. The changes to the Altogether themes were summarised in the report. There are no proposed changes to the Altogether Better for Children and Young People and Altogether Healthier frameworks.

## **Decision**

We have:

- Agreed the approach to rolling forward the current Council Plan;
- Approved the changes proposed to the Council Plan outcomes framework as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report
- Noted the proposed more fundamental review of the SCS and Council Plan next year;
- Noted the comments raised at the Members' seminars outlined in Appendix 2 of the report.

**10. Mid-Year Report for the Period to 30 September 2015 on  
Treasury Management Service  
Deputy Leader of the Council – Councillor Alan Napier  
Contact – Jeff Garfoot 03000 261946**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources. The regulatory framework of treasury management requires the Council to receive a mid year treasury review, in addition to the forward looking annual treasury strategy and backward looking performance against the previous strategy. The report also incorporates the needs of the 'Prudential Code', which can be regarded as being best operational practice, to ensure adequate monitoring of capital expenditure plans and the Council's prudential indicators (PIs). The treasury strategy and PIs were previously reported to Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18 on 25 February 2015. The purpose of the report also supports the objective in the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Communities and Local Government Investment Guidance. These state that Members should receive and scrutinise the treasury management service.

The County Council had deposited £7m across various Icelandic banks which all went into administration in 2008. In total up to 30 September, the Council had recovered £7.036m against the original £7m and the report recommended that the matter be closed.

**Decision**

We have:

- Noted the contents of the mid-year review report and agreed to report further to Full Council
- Agreed that no further reporting on the Icelandic Bank Deposit is required on the basis that the full £7m at risk has been recovered.

**11. Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2015/16 for General Fund, and Housing Revenue Account – Period to 30 September 2015  
Deputy Leader of the Council – Councillor Alan Napier  
Contact – Jeff Garfoot 03000 261946**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources which provided a forecast of 2015/16 revenue and capital outturn, based on the period to 30 September 2015 for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The report also included the forecasts for the Council Tax Collection Fund and Business Rates Collection Fund. The report updated the position presented to Cabinet on 16 September 2015 that showed the forecasted revenue and capital outturn based on expenditure and income up to 30 June 2015 and incorporated the recommended changes to cash limits within Service Groupings agreed at that time, providing updates to these

forecasts and revised forecast balances on general and earmarked reserves at 31 March 2016.

## **Revenue**

The following adjustments have been made to the Original Budget that was agreed by Full Council in February 2015:

- (i) agreed budget transfers between Service Groupings;
- (ii) additions to budget for items outside the cash limit (for Cabinet consideration and recommended approval);
- (iii) planned use of or contribution to Earmarked Reserves (detailed in Appendix 4 of the report).

## **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

On 13 April 2015, the Council transferred its housing stock of 18,500 dwellings to the County Durham Housing Group Ltd. Consent was received from the Secretary of State to close down the HRA any time from 30 April 2015 onwards as the Council is no longer a social housing landlord and not required to maintain a ring-fenced HRA. There were some residual transactions still taking place reflecting the relatively short period of activity in 2015/16 and also costs associated with delivering stock transfer in April which have been met from available income and reserves. All transactions are now complete and the HRA will now be closed.

## **Capital**

The General Fund (GF) capital budget for 2015/16 was set at £148.480m by Council on 25 February 2015. Re-profiling from the 2014/15 capital programme outturn into 2015/16, amounting to £18.736m was reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2015 and was included in the Quarter 1 Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn Report to Cabinet 16 September 2015. The Council's Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) that closely monitors the capital programme has since recommended approval to Cabinet of further revisions to the capital programme, taking into account additional resources received by the authority and further requests for re-profiling as Service Management Teams continue to monitor and review their capital schemes.

## **Decision**

We have:

- Noted the projected change in the Council's overall financial position for 2015/16.
- Agreed the proposed 'sums outside the cash limit' for approval.
- Agreed the revenue and capital budget adjustments.

- Noted the creation of the Budget Support Reserve and the transfer of available reserves into Office Accommodation Capital Reserve.
- Noted the transfer of £10m from Cash Limit reserves to replenish the MTFP ER/VR reserve
- Noted the forecast use of Earmarked Reserves.
- Noted the forecast end of year position for the Cash Limit and General Reserves.
- Noted the position on the Capital Programme and the Collection Funds in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates.
- Noted the closure of the Housing Revenue Account.

**12. Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014-15**  
**Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Ossie Johnson**  
**Contact – Peter Appleton 03000 267388**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director Children and Adults Services which presented Cabinet with the Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014-15. Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. It is independently chaired and consists of senior representatives of all the principal stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in Durham.

Its statutory objectives are to:

- coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes

Working Together (2015) requires each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. It also requires that the Annual Report be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Durham LSCB Annual Report 2014/15 sets out the work of multi-agency partners to ensure effective arrangements are in place to safeguard and protect vulnerable children and young people from abuse and neglect.

The report describes the work undertaken against the 2014-15 priorities and sets out the future priorities for 2015-16. The report provides an overview of

the performance monitoring framework and quality assurance plan as well as providing a brief summary of safeguarding privately fostered children, the use of restraint in secure centres, Serious Case Reviews, Child Death Reviews and the single and multi-agency training provision.

The LSCB has reviewed its vision, which has been agreed as: 'Every child and young person in County Durham feels safe and grows up safe from harm'.

The Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board has agreed the following priorities for 2015/16:

- To reduce Child Sexual Exploitation
- Improve Early Help
- Reduce neglect (contributory factors are domestic abuse; alcohol misuse; substance misuse; parental mental health)
- Reduce self-harm and improving young people's self-esteem
- Increase the voice of the Child
- Ensure that each agency is accountable for delivery of its own safeguarding responsibilities

Alongside the identified priorities above the LSCB has highlighted areas of work for 2015/16. The LSCB priorities above and areas of work are supported by a detailed LSCB Business Plan outlining the actions to be undertaken in 2015/16. The Durham LSCB Annual Report 2014/15 was agreed at the LSCB Board Meeting on the 15th October 2015.

## **Decision**

We have endorsed the Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014/15.

### **13. Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Lucy Hovvels Contact – Lee Alexander 03000 268180**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which provided information on the current position of the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board and outlined achievements during the year 2014/15.

A number of specific areas were covered by the Annual Report as follows:

- Safeguarding in its current context.
- Achievements during the year 2014 /15 from the Board's subgroups.
- The Strategic Plan for 2016/18.
- Perspectives of the partners.
- Key data on safeguarding activity in County Durham.

Much of the work of the Board in 2014/15 has focussed on preparing for the implementation of the Care Act in April 2015 which requires local authorities to set up a Safeguarding Adults Board. The Act requires the Safeguarding Adults Board to fulfil three core duties:

- To publish a strategic plan for each financial year
- To publish an annual report
- To conduct any Safeguarding Adults Review in accordance with Section 44 of the Act

## **Decision**

We have approved the contents of the Annual Report.

### **14. Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Brian Stephens Contact – Joanne Waller 03000 260924**

We have considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which considered, in the light of the formal public consultation, the revised draft Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy (CLIS) dated September 2015.

In April 2000, a statutory regime for the regulation of contaminated land was implemented, under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It imposes a statutory duty on each local authority to strategically inspect the land within its area for the purpose of identifying land which could be defined as 'contaminated land'. Contaminated Land for the purposes of Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 is defined as 'any land which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land that: -

- Significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused; or
- Significant pollution of controlled waters is being caused, or there is a significant possibility of such pollution being caused.

Under the provisions of Part 2A local authorities are also obliged to produce a written CLIS outlining how they intend to fulfil their inspection duties.

Contaminated land new statutory guidance, issued by Defra and released in April 2012, brought several changes to the regime. The main changes contained within the guidance and reflected in the 2015 Strategy are: -

- The introduction of risk categorisation of sites inspected under Part 2A and their allocation into one of four categories.
- The principle that normal levels of contaminants such as those caused by common human activities as opposed to former industrial uses

should not be considered to cause land to qualify as contaminated land, unless there is a particular reason to consider otherwise.

- Changes to the reporting of sites assessed under Part 2A.

The 2015 CLIS sets out the proposals for identifying, inspecting and assessing contaminated land within the Durham County Council area between 2015 and 2020, taking into account the statutory guidance and the Council Plan, ensuring an attractive local living environment, and contributing to tackling global environmental challenges ('Altogether Greener').

Consultations were held between 6 July 2015 and 31 August 2015. The consultation revealed overall strong support of the CLIS. Suggestions / comments made by the Environment Agency have been considered and some changes were made in light of their feedback along with some additional alterations.

None of the changes have altered the original draft priority actions or aims of the CLIS. The main changes were detailed in the report.

The revised CLIS supports compliance with the Council's statutory duty under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide a written CLIS detailing how to inspect the county to identify contaminated land. It has taken into account the responses of the interested parties.

## **Decision**

We have approved the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy.

**Councillor S Henig**  
**Leader of the County Council**

1 December 2015