

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting **Wednesday, 7th September, 2011**
Time **10.00 am**
Venue **Civic Offices, Merrial Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 2AG**
Contact **Julia Cleary**
 01782 742227

Cabinet

AGENDA

PART 1– OPEN AGENDA

- 1 MINUTES** **(Pages 1 - 6)**
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 July 2011.
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest from Members on items included in the agenda.
- 3 Financial and Performance Management Report to End of Quarter One (June) 2011** **(Pages 7 - 16)**
- 4 Locality Action Partnership (LAP) Review** **(Pages 17 - 70)**
- 5 Transformation Programme Update** **(Pages 71 - 86)**
- 6 Jubilee 2 Update** **(Pages 87 - 94)**
- 7 Jubilee 2 Health and Wellbeing Centre Fees and Charges** **(Pages 95 - 104)**
- 8 Future Management Options for Leisure Services** **(Pages 105 - 108)**
- 9 Bateswood Local Nature Reserve - Management Plan** **(Pages 109 - 126)**
- 10 Grants Review and Third Sector Commissioning** **(Pages 127 - 144)**
- 11 Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service** **(Pages 145 - 148)**
- 12 Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Task Group Recommendations** **(Pages 149 - 170)**
- 13 Asset Disposal of Land at Drayton Road** **(Pages 171 - 178)**
- 14 URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members: Councillors S Sweeney (Chairman), Studd (Vice-Chair), J Bannister, A Howells, N Jones and M Reddish

'Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training / development requirements from the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Committee Clerk at the close of the meeting'

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THE CABINET

20 July 2011

Present:- Councillor Sweeney in the Chair

Councillors Bannister, Howells, Jones, Reddish and Studd.

1. * **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 June 2011 be approved as a correct record.

2. * **SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2011-2013**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to a revised Procurement Strategy and Action Plan in line with the Council's current objectives and priorities and the continued aims and objectives of the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government and to support the identification of ongoing savings.

Resolved:- (a) That the revised Procurement Strategy 2011-2013 be approved.

(b) That the Action Plan (Section 7) of the revised Procurement Strategy 2011-2013 be approved.

(c) That the 'Procurement Reviews and Identification of Ongoing Savings Plans be approved.

3. * **NEWCASTLE TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM SCHEME (299/11)**

Pursuant to the above resolution a report was submitted detailing the results of the public consultation exercise on the above scheme and requesting a response to the representations made.

The proposals would reinforce the performance of the street market in the town centre, address the concerns of daytime traffic in Hassell Street and ensure that replacement 'fit for purpose' market stalls were procured.

Resolved:- (a) That Members approve the scheme in full for implementation including:

- (i) Introduction of a taxi rank and disabled parking and associated works at lower High Street in line with the general layout specified on Staffordshire County Council drawing number CDT6487-LH-R00-05
- (ii) Introduction of a taxi rank, changes to the layout of the disabled parking spaces, loading restrictions and associated works in the Ironmarket in line with the general layout specified on Staffordshire County Council.
- (iii) Revised access arrangements for Friars Street to facilitate 24-hour access to the Friars Street delivery area in line with the general layout

specified on Staffordshire County Council drawing number CDT6487/FS/R00/01.

- (iv) Introduction of new 10ft wide and 15ft deep market stalls into the market area in High Street in the general layout specified in drawing NTCPR/JK1.
- (v) Introduction of new market pitches in that section of Hassell Street between its junction with Market Lane and High Street.

(b) That a decision on the potential merger of the Wednesday and Thursday market be referred back for consideration at a future meeting of Cabinet after a further assessment of the business case has been completed by officers.

(c) That Staffordshire County Council be requested to obtain a price for the implementation of the Friars Street works with a view to the Borough Council contribution to this being funded from the Capital Programme Contingency Reserve.

4. * COLLECTION OF HOUSEHOLD BULKY WASTE

A report was submitted seeking approval to the contracting of the Council's bulky waste collection service to Furniture Mine by way of a contract let by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in 2010.

The benefits of this proposal were submitted and included the opportunity for joint working and cost saving to the Borough Council.

Resolved:- (a) That the contract for the collection of household bulky waste for Newcastle-under-Lyme be awarded to Furniture Mine by way of the contract already let by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

(b) That Furniture Mine start operations from 1 October 2011.

5. * CEMETERIES MEMORIAL SAFETY PROGRAMME 2011-2015

A report was submitted informing Members of the completion of the current cemeteries Memorial Safety Programme and seeking approval to a new five-year rolling programme together with the financial implications for the continued inspection and safety of all memorials within the Borough's cemeteries including the new facilities at Newcastle and Audley.

It was indicated that a sum of £70,000 had been included in the General Fund Capital Programme for the previous phase of the programme in 2005 of which £32,000 had been expended.

It was proposed that the underspending of £38,000 would be used to fund the new programme in years 1, 2, 3 and 4 (up to 2014/15) after which it was proposed to allocate a sum of £10,000 for the programme in year 5.

Resolved:- (a) That Cabinet reviews the completed Cemeteries Memorial Inspection and Safety Programme and considers a follow on rolling programme to re-inspect all memorials over a five year period.

(b) That the underspend from the 2005-10 programme be rolled forward to meet the costs of year 1-4 of the new 5 year programme and

that provision of £10,000 be made in the general fund capital programme for year 5 (2015/16).

(c) That long-term provision be made in the General Fund Revenue Programme to meet the cost of the inspection and safety programme from 2016/17 onwards.

6. * **NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME EQUESTRIAN STRATEGY**

A report was submitted seeking approval to the above Strategy and Action Plan and providing an update on the work of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Equestrian Forum. This would provide a framework for the future development of equestrian activities within the Borough.

Resolved:- That the Newcastle-under-Lyme Equestrian Strategy and Officer support to the Equestrian Forum be endorsed.

7. * **LYME VALLEY (NORTH) CYCLE ROUTE LINKS TO SCHOOL BID**

A report was submitted on a proposed project, led by the County Council, to create a cycle route in the Lyme Brook corridor and seeking approval to the scheme where it is located on Borough Council owned land.

It was indicated that the project would encourage walking and cycling in the Borough and would provide links to 3 local schools and increase opportunities for pupils to cycle to school.

Details of the proposed route of the cycleway were considered.

Resolved:- That the proposed scheme be approved.

8. * **JOINT HOUSING ALLOCATIONS REVIEW**

A report was submitted informing Members of a proposal within the Localism Bill to enable local authorities to review their housing allocations policies and outlining an approach to review the Borough's current policy.

It was indicated that the Localism Bill was not likely to gain Royal Assent until late 2011/early 2012 but as it would take more than a year to implement a review in line with the planned 12 month review following its implementation in June 2010.

Resolved:- That the consultation and review of the Joint Housing Allocations Policy be commenced in line with the 12 month review taking into account emerging issues within the Localism Bill.

9. * **AFFORDABLE RENT**

A report was submitted on proposals within the Affordable Housing HCA Framework to enable Registered Providers (developers who registered with the HCA) to either newly build or convert social housing re-lets into Affordable Rent and for Members to consider a proposed approach for consultation.

Details of the issues involved were submitted together with the Council's options in respect of affordable rents.

The preferred option was to allow Registered Providers to build new affordable rent homes and to enable partial conversions of existing social rented properties to affordable rents.

Resolved:- That consultation be commenced on the Council's preferred option as detailed above.

10. * **STRATEGIC TENANCY STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report in respect of proposals within the Localism Bill to place a duty on all local authorities to publish a Strategic Tenancy Strategy.

This strategy would set out broad objectives to be taken into consideration by all individual Social Landlords in the area regarding their own policies in the granting and re-issuing of tenancies. The strategy must be published within 12 months of the enactment of the Bill.

Resolved:- That the development and consultation of the Strategic Tenancy Strategy be commenced.

11. * **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

Members were informed that the CIL regime gave powers to local planning authorities to set a local levy which would pay for a wide range of infrastructure works when new development took place.

A Staffordshire CIL group had been established involving all local authorities in the County with a view to sharing knowledge and developing best practice processes particularly in relation to assessing viability and cross boundary infrastructure.

The matter had been considered at a recent meeting of the Planning Committee (Strategic) where it was recommended that the Cabinet resolve to agree to the Council taking the necessary steps to become a charging authority under the CIL Regulations 2010, as amended.

Resolved:- (a) That Cabinet receives the resolutions made by the Council's Planning Committee at its meeting on 19 July 2011.

(b) That approval be given to the Council taking the necessary steps to become a charging authority under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2011 as amended in accordance with the timetable set out in this report.

(c) That a further report be submitted for approval once a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule has been prepared for consultation.

12. * **HIGH SPEED RAIL – CONSULTATION AND POTENTIAL RESPONSE**

A report was submitted on a consultation exercise being undertaken by the Department of Transport on the government's proposals for High Speed Rail 2 and on a response by the Cabinet which was required by 29 July.

It was not yet known whether the Borough was directly affected by the proposals but it was considered appropriate for a response to be made as there were potential sub regional transport and regeneration consequences.

Details of the responses made to date by other local authorities in Staffordshire were submitted.

It was suggested that the economic model that supported the proposal was flawed as the problems of large urban areas such as North Staffordshire were ignored and in addition the service between Stoke-on-Trent and London could be reduced.

It was considered that the views of the County Council should be supported in opposing the HS2 proposals on the grounds that it would potentially harm, the country's economy, the environment and did not have a sound business case.

Resolved:- That the Portfolio holder for Regeneration and Planning be authorised to approve the submission of the Borough Council's former response by the close of the consultation period on 29 July 2011.

13. * **JUBILEE 2 - UPDATE**

A report was submitted updating Members on progress with the provision of the new health and wellbeing facilities.

It was indicated that the work was currently over 70% complete and arrangements would be made for all Members to view the works in progress.

Resolved:- That the progress in the delivery of Jubilee 2 be noted.

14. * **RETENDERING OF UTILITIES CONTRACT**

It was reported that the present utilities contracts for the supply of both gas and electricity were scheduled to expire on 30 September 2011 following completion of the current 3-year contracts.

Details of proposals to procure and source the Council's future gas and electricity supplies were submitted.

Resolved:- That Cabinet agrees to:-

- (i) adopt central government's preferred route to market utilising compliant 'Purchasing Consortia' frameworks;
- (ii) establish and agree a contract period of three years for the Council's utility supply contracts;
- (iii) ratify the decision to appoint Buying Solutions (Government Procurement Service) as the Council's preferred framework provider, thereby authorising them to purchase energy on behalf of the Council as follows:-
 - a spot-purchase arrangement to be effective from the period September 2011 to March 2012 and;

- purchasing within a framework contract from April 20112 for a period of 3 years, subject to annual review and with provision for a further 1 year extension by agreement between the parties.
- (iv) authorise officers to examine the potential options to achieve further efficiency savings and report back to Members, as appropriate;
- (v) that a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet on the effective management of the Automatic Meter Readings (AMR)

S J M SWEENEY
Chair

FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT TO END OF QUARTER ONE (JUNE) 2011

Submitted by: Head of Finance and Corporate Policy & Performance Manager

Portfolio: Customer Service and Transformation; Resources and Efficiency

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with the Financial and Performance Review for the 2011/12 First Quarter.

Recommendation

That Members note the contents of the report and recommend that the Council continues to monitor and scrutinise performance alongside finances.

Reasons

These monitoring reports provide information about the performance of individual council services, alongside financial information.

1. Background, Issues and Options

- 1.1 This report provides Members with a detailed update on how the Council has performed during the First Quarter of 2011/12 by presenting performance data set in a financial context.
- 1.2 The Council approved a General Fund Revenue Budget of £15,258,700 on 23 February 2011. The actual position compared to this budget is continuously monitored by managers in order to detect any significant variances of expenditure or income from the approved amounts contained in the budget. Regular reports are made available to members by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Efficiency informing them of the current position, highlighting any significant factors giving rise to variances.
- 1.3 A Capital Programme totalling £21,638,800, covering the two years 2010/11 to 2011/12, was approved at the same Council meeting. Of this total, £10,374,500 was estimated to be spent in 2011/12.
- 1.4 The council's continuing drive for improvement and performance enhancement inevitably puts pressure on the council's finances. As a result, the Council has a commitment to find efficiencies on an ongoing basis in order to meet its budgetary responsibilities. In addition the government stated that they wished to see no increase in Council Tax for 2011/12. To encourage local authorities to adopt this strategy, a new non-specific grant was announced, payable to those authorities which did not increase their council tax for 2011/12. It will be paid at a rate equivalent to a 2.5 per cent increase in the authority's 2010/11 basic amount of council tax multiplied by its council tax base. For Newcastle, has resulted in a grant of around £170,000 being paid.
- 1.5 This report also provides detailed analysis of performance in the first quarter, focusing on key performance indicators.
- 1.6 A summary of the overall picture is presented in section 5 of this report. This is a promising start, with the majority of targets currently met.

2. **Revenue Budget Position**

2.1 The overall position at 30 June shows an adverse variance of £48,000. At this point in the financial year, we would have expected to have spent approximately £1.905 million: we have actually spent £1.953 million. This is predominately due to sources of income such as land charges, planning fees, market stall rents and car park fees, continuing to yield less compared to what we would, in the past, have expected to receive up to 30 June. Because we anticipated economic problems would continue in 2011/12 an allowance of £200,000 was included in the budget to cover shortfalls.

3. **2010/11 Outturn**

3.1 The provisional outturn for 2010/11 subject to Audit is an adverse variance of £87,000. This is mainly due to the current economic situation resulting in a considerable loss of income. This outturn figure was minimised as a result of the Council taking the prudent decision to include £200,000 in the 2010/11 budget for potential loss of income together with an under spend on salaries due to a number of vacant posts.

3.2 Full details of last year's accounts were reported to the Audit and Risk Committee at their meeting on 28 July.

4. **Capital Programme Position**

4.1 Approval for the acquisition of the former Sainsbury's site (Ryecroft area, 10-16 Liverpool Road, Newcastle) together with other changes in respect of carried forwards means that the revised capital budget for 2011/12 is £16,282,400.

4.2 The Capital Programme contains a number of large value schemes, such as the former Sainsbury's site, the Health and Wellbeing Centre and Silverdale Community Centre facilities, where expenditure is not expected to be incurred to any extent until later in the year. Accordingly, only £1,565,200 was expected to be spent by 30 June. Actual expenditure at this date was £1,608,900, a variance of £43,700.

4.3 A number of capital projects have now been completed. Details of these are shown in the table below. In some cases, which are indicated, there may be a small amount still to be paid to finalise the contract, largely the paying over to the contractor of any monies retained to ensure satisfactory completion of the work.

Project	Estimated Cost	Actual Cost
	£'000s	£'000s
Audley Burial Facilities	256	238
<i>Funding: Capital Receipts</i> <i>*Retention payment outstanding*</i>	256	238
Knutton Footpath Link	37	37
<i>Funding: Grant</i>	37	37
Information at Work (Northgate)	64	64
<i>Funding: Reserves</i>	64	64

Homeworking Pilot	20	21
<i>Funding: Reserves</i>	20	21

5. **Investment Counterparties**

5.1 Investment counterparties with whom money is invested, as at 19 August 2011 are as follows (with the parent company shown in brackets, where applicable):

Santander
Nationwide Building Society
Halifax Bank of Scotland (*Lloyds Banking Group*)
Heritable Bank (*Landsbanki*)
Royal Bank of Scotland (*Royal Bank of Scotland Group*)

5.2 With regard to the Council's frozen investment in Heritable Bank, a further payment of £101,809 has recently been received from the Bank's Administrator. This brings the total amount repaid to some £1,514,500, which is around 60% of the total that was frozen. It is anticipated that 9 dividend will be paid in October. The Administrators have advised that they have recently reviewed the base case return to creditors and now predict that at least 90% of the £2,500,000 invested will be repaid.

6. **Performance**

6.1 The Corporate Performance ('dashboard') report is attached as Appendix 'A'.

6.2 The number of indicators is reduced to 24. This is in line with a longer term aim – to identify and focus on key measures that we consider to be of a cross cutting nature. These measures have been designed to relate to areas of work that have an impact on a number of the council's responsibilities.

6.3 The appendix comments on individual indicators where they raise an issue or where either a target has been met, or the direction of travel is not positive.

6.4 This report will also be submitted to the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

6.5 The proportion of indicators on target based on data at the time of compiling this report was 50%.

6.6 Positive performance can be seen in a range of services although it must be borne in mind that that the results later in the year can be different and that some services have seasonal factors.

6.7 There are a very small number of areas listed in this report which are not on target, though none causes concern at present. In all cases, the management of the service is aware of the issues and are taking steps to deal with the situation. Further updates will be provided for Members in future reports.

7. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

7.1 All of these indicators link to corporate priorities. They are ordered by portfolio as in the Corporate Plan.

8. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

8.1 The Council has a duty to set targets for performance of a range of functions and needs to monitor these closely.

9. **Equality Impact Implications**

9.1 There are no differential equality issues.

10. **Financial and Resource Implications**

10.1 Any positive variance for the full year on the General Fund Revenue Account will enable that amount to be transferred to reserves and will be available in future years for use as the Council considers appropriate. Conversely, if there is an adverse variance, the amount required to cover this will have to be met from reserves.

11. **Major Risks**

11.1 The current economic situation represents the greatest risk to the revenue budget, particularly with regard to the impact it may have upon income receivable in relation to services where customers may chose whether or not to use Council facilities, such as car parking and other areas directly affected by the economic downturn, such as land charges and planning applications. The situation will be monitored through the normal budget monitoring procedures.

11.2 The capital programme will require regular monitoring to identify any projects which are falling behind their planned completion dates. This will be carried out by the Capital Programme Review Group, which meets on a monthly basis together with quarterly reports to Cabinet.

11.3 The above represents a high level view of risk. There are detailed risk registers available if Members wish to see them.

12. **List of Appendices**

Appendix 'A' - Dashboard Indicators.

13. **Background Papers**

Working papers held by officers responsible for calculating indicators.

Cabinet Performance Monitoring Report 2011-12 Quarter 1

Overall position

50% of the indicators are now achieving or exceeding their target. There are 24 indicators and the result is good considering it is the first quarter and the data for 1 of the indicators is not due until Quarter 2 and 3 other indicators have incomplete information to comment on at this time.

Already performing well

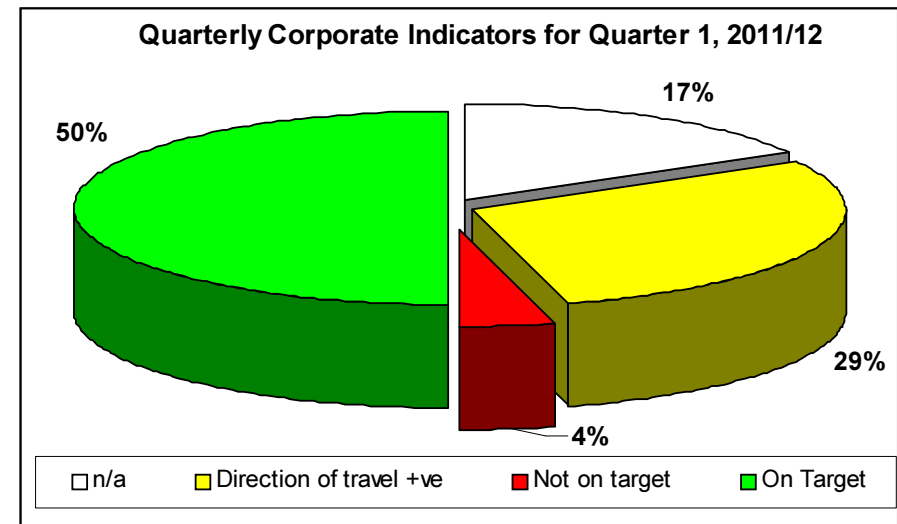
- CST1 % requests resolved at first point of contact
- CST2 % Unmet demand (number of calls not answered as a % of total call handling volume)
- CST3 % of Council Tax Collected
- RP1 % of investment portfolio (NBC owned) which is vacant.
- RP2 Number of cases where positive action was successful in preventing homelessness
- RP3 & 4 % of Major and Minor Planning Applications determined within time
- RE1 Number of days lost, per employee, to the Council through sickness
- ER2 % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
- ER4 % category A+ B food businesses inspections completed in time
- ER5 % of LAPC (Pollution) inspections carried out per annum from work plan

Areas for improvement






- ER6 % of licensed premises inspected per annum from work plan.
- CA1 Number of people accessing leisure and recreational facilities
- ER1 Residual household waste per household -yearly target 450kgs

Improvement already happening

- CST5 Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax new claims and change events
- RP5 % of Other Planning Applications determined within time
- RE2 Percentage of invoices paid on time (within 30 days)








Customer Service and Transformation

Ref	What did we measure?	Qtr 1 Actual	Qtr 1 Target	How did we do in Quarter 1?	Achieved Target
CST1	% requests resolved at first point of contact	94.22	70	Our performance is well above target and shows an accurate picture due to improved recording methods and exact figures available for resolving of requests at first point of contact.	
CST2	% Unmet demand (number of calls not answered as a % of total call handling volume)	4.9	10	This is well within target for the first quarter.	
CST3	Percentage of Council Tax Collected (Cumulative)	26.63	24.12	Performance above target.	
CST4	Percentage of NNDR collected	25.02	26.11	Performance marginally below target. Targets will need readjusting to take account of further changes to Small Business Rates Relief provisionally announced in the budget to come into effect for quarters 3 and 4 - awaiting enactment of regulations. General economic conditions remain depressed leading to difficult trading conditions for many businesses.	
CST5	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax new claims and change events	15.13	13	Benefit performance is still being affected by the backlog situation created by system conversion. The first quarter is always traditionally a period of heavy demand on the service due to new year Council Tax accounts and many claimants experiencing rent increases. Although below target over the quarter, performance had improved by June and was only 0.14 days below the cumulative target of 13 days. This also compares very favourably with the previous financial years first quarter actual, being slightly below 1 day longer but at a time when there were no backlog issues. It is anticipated that performance will improve during quarter 2.	



Regeneration & Planning


Portfolio Holder: Councillor Robin Studd

Ref	What did we measure?	Qtr 1 Actual	Qtr 1 Target	How did we do in Quarter 1?	Achieved Target
RP1	% of investment portfolio (NBC owned) which is vacant.	12.2	15	At the end of 2010/11 the result was 13.5% and our position has improved in the first quarter with less vacant properties in the borough.	
RP2	Number of cases where positive action was successful in preventing homelessness (from the P1E)	124	75	Performance has exceeded the target again this quarter.	
RP3	NI 157a Percentage of Major Planning Applications determined within time	85.7	75	The performance for major and minor planning applications have well exceeded the targets. For the category of "other" the performance for this quarter was marginally below the target and demonstrates that a relatively small number of decisions issued out of time (5 in total) can have an adverse affect when the target is set as high as it is. It is anticipated that performance will improve and the target will be met in future.	
RP4	NI 157b Percentage of Minor Planning Applications determined within time	97.4	85		
RP5	NI 157c Percentage of Other Planning Applications determined within time	93.9	95		

Resources & Efficiency





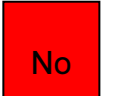
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ashley Howells

Ref	What did we measure?	Qtr 1 Actual	Qtr 1 Target	How did we do in Quarter 1?	Achieved Target
RE1	Average number of days lost, per employee, to the Council through sickness	1.47	1.78	For the first quarter the sickness absence remains within target.	
RE2	Percentage of invoices paid on time(within 30 days)	95.97	97	The percentage continues to remain high for this indicator.	

Page 14 E3	% projected variance against full year council budget	0.3%	No variance	Income budgets show adverse variances in areas affected by the economic recession. Provision has been made in the budget to cover this variation.	
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Environment and Recycling

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Marion Reddish

Ref	What did we measure?	Qtr 1 Actual	Qtr 1 Target	How did we do in Quarter 1?	Achieved Target
ER1	Residual household waste per household -yearly target 450kgs	114.54	112.5Kgs	This figure has not been audited yet but is expected to meet the target of 450kgs of waste collected by the end of year.	
ER2	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	52.60	52%	This figure has not been audited yet but exceeds the recycling rate target.	
ER3	% improvement in street and environment cleanliness			First tranche of inspections in progress and will be reported in quarter 2. NI195 is no longer required to be formally monitored and reported, however, this method of inspection is continuing as it provides a performance measure for street and environmental cleanliness which can be compared to other local authorities via the Keep Britain Tidy Network website.	n/a
	a) litter	n/a	9		
	b)detritus	n/a	9		
	c)graffiti	n/a	3		
	d) fly posting	n/a	1		
ER4	% category A+ B food businesses inspections completed in time.	100	100	The licensing section has suffered from a lack of resources this quarter but recruitment is now complete and inspections to commence on a regular basis as planned. A total of 10 inspections were completed out of a planned 27. It is anticipated that performance will return to the level set in the work plan during quarter 2.	
ER5	% of LAPC (Pollution) inspections carried out per annum from work plan.	100	100		
ER6	% of licensed premises inspected per annum from work plan.	37.04	100		

Culture and Active Communities




Portfolio Holder: Councillor James Bannister

Ref	What did we measure?	Qtr 1 Actual	Qtr 1 Target	How did we do in Quarter 1?	Achieved Target
CA1	Number of people accessing leisure and recreational facilities	119,893	135,000	These figures do not include the half term swimming figures for one school because they are not provided until the end of the school year. Another impact has been the downturn in bookings at Knutton Recreation Centre.	
CA2	Number of people visiting the museum	19154	15,750	This is an increase on the same period in 2010.	

Safer and Stronger Communities

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Stephen Sweeney

Ref	What did we measure?	Qtr 1 Actual	Qtr 1 Target	How did we do in Quarter 1?	Achieved Target
SSC1	Assault with injury	157	TBC	Targets not confirmed from the police yet due to a restructuring within Staffordshire Police Service. Violence with injury replaces "assault with injury" and the performance is better than last year's quarter 1 figure of 231. The result last year for Serious Acquisitive Crime was 222. Business crime statistics are not available at this time.	n/a
SSC2	Business crime	n/a	TBC		
SSC3	Serious acquisitive crime	224	TBC		

	Performance information not available at this time	n/a
	Performance is not on target but direction of travel is positive	
	Performance is not on target where targets have been set	
	Performance is on or above target.	

LOCALITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP (LAP) REVIEW

Submitted by: Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships – Mark Bailey

Portfolio: Safer and Stronger Communities

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

This report contains information and proposals relating to the Newcastle Partnership and Borough council review of Locality Action Partnerships. The full partnership report (Appendix A) outlines the background to the establishment of the LAPs; the progress made to date and identifies a set of options for future development. This report aims to gain support for the recommendations made and the ongoing development of Locality Action Partnerships

Recommendations

- (a) Cabinet to note the contents of the report and the full Newcastle Partnership Locality Action Partnership Review report The Story of ‘Our Place’**
- (b) Cabinet to agree the recommendations of the full report and the proposals contained in this report.**
- (c) Cabinet to identify opportunities within their portfolio area for links to be made with Locality Action Partnerships.**
- (d) Cabinet to suggest proposals or recommendations relating to strengthening the role of the elected member.**
- (e) Cabinet to note the comments made by the Active & Cohesive Scrutiny Committee on 22 August 2011 and follow up these comments as required**

Reasons

In September 2007, the Council adopted locality working as an approach to strengthen the connection between the work of the council, its councillors, its partners, and individual communities. Eleven individual localities have since been established and are at various stages of development. Locality working has been reviewed on a number of occasions since 2007. The review is part of the wider Borough Council transformation project. The proposals contained in this report aim to further develop Locality Action Partnerships and to firmly establish them as a structure for the emerging localism agenda.

1. Background

- 1.1 In September 2007 the Cabinet supported proposals to develop closer community working arrangements and connections through the development of locality working arrangements.
- 1.2 At the Cabinet meeting on 20 February 2008, Cabinet agreed proposals to strengthen the community leadership role of elected members with a view to that work assisting the development of Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs). Those proposals were to be considered by a cross party working group under the guidance of the Active & Cohesive Communities Scrutiny Committee. This work has not been completed and no recommendations have yet been made.

- 1.3 In October 2008, the Newcastle Partnership identified that to enable service providers to focus their efforts more closely on the varying needs of different communities that a new way of working would need to be developed. The partnership recognised its crucial role in bringing agencies and communities together to improve the local area and to ensure that decision making reflects the priorities of both, balanced with evidence based need and therefore established LAPs.
- 1.4 LAPs emerged from the previous Community Safety Locality Action Groups and utilised the principles of Neighbourhood Management (following on from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder). In addition they assisted in the delivery of the 2006 local government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' which set out the 'government's vision to create strong, prosperous communities and reshape public services around those who use them, through greater partnership working between local authorities and other agencies' (Local Government White Paper; Strong and Prosperous Communities, 2006, Department for Communities and Local Government, Crown Copyright 2006).
- 1.5 Recognition was given to the transferable practice from the NMP to the LAPs in a 2009 REGEN West Midlands prize where Newcastle was highly commended.
- 1.6 LAPs were set up to assist in providing effective joint working within localities, to enable more decisions to be made at a local level with the involvement of the residents and the communities that they affect. As a result, the LAPs were set the task of widening their remit to focus on different themes to meet the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 1.7 LAPs in Newcastle were supported and administered on behalf of the key partners and the community itself by a Locality Working Team (based in the Borough Council) up until February 2010, when a decision was made to review this support, resulting in the team being withdrawn from the service.
- 1.8 It was further determined by the Borough Council, in conjunction with partners, that LAPs and locality working be identified as one of the areas of work for the Newcastle Borough Council Transformation Programme in February 2010. Details of the processes underpinning the LAP review and those agencies, groups and individuals involved in the review can be found in the methodology sections connected to the full Newcastle Partnership report (see partnership report Appendices one and two)
- 1.9 Following on from this initial decision, in November 2010 the project manager for the LAPs project was identified as the Newcastle LSP Manager (who was, at the time, in the process of overseeing and developing a review of the Newcastle Partnership structures and governance arrangements). In December 2010, the Newcastle Partnership Executive Board agreed to the proposed Borough Partnership structure (see Appendix three of the full partnership report).
- 1.10 Since the new Partnership structure was agreed, progress has been made on the LAPs project. The LSP Manager (now called the Partnerships Manager) has completed a mapping exercise on the LAPs, looking at how each of them operates; which partners attend and at what level of the organisation attendees work at; the chairs and the role of the chairs; when and where the groups meet; and has also sought to identify the key issues for those people involved in the LAPs.
- 1.11 The review has involved a large number of people many of whom have similar ideas as to how the LAPs should progress, although there have been a number of proposals put forward that are the opinion of only a small number of those involved. It should be stated that some of the suggestions received may not be achievable either due to reductions in capacity

and/or insufficient resources. In addition, there remains a number of national reforms that are still to be established and clarified that may impact on the future development of locality working and therefore the LAPs may need to remain under constant review over the next 12-18 months.

- 1.12 The final report (Appendix A) details the information gathered and presents suggestions for future development. The Newcastle Partnership report has been presented to the Executive Management Team, Partnership Delivery Group, Locality Action Partnership chairs and to the Partnership Executive Board.

2. Issues

- 2.1 Nationally, locality working has been developed in different ways with the key aim of transferring some aspects of control currently exercised by local authorities and other public sector organisations to local communities and thereby effectively acknowledging the concept that 'one size doesn't fit all'. In Newcastle-under-Lyme, LAPs were initiated to give local people and communities more influence over how to improve their lives and a role in decision making and policy formulation, development and implementation. In addition, LAPs can assist in community engagement and empowerment and can play a major part in the achievement of improved community cohesion.
- 2.2 There are significant new drivers that underpin the future development of locality working. The Coalition Government's 'Programme for Government' outlines support for progress to be made by "people coming together to make life better and for distributing power and opportunity", (The Coalition; Our Programme for Government, <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/news/coalition-documents>). In addition the 'Big Society, Not Big Government' document discusses the plan to 'stimulate the creation and development of neighbourhood groups in every area' (Big Society, Not Big Government http://www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2010/03/Plans_announced_to_help_build_a_Big_Society.aspx).
- 2.3 The Newcastle Partnership has already made significant steps in the direction outlined above and the continued support for and development of the LAPs will move the Borough towards ensuring delivery against these national objectives and local priorities.
- 2.4 The review highlighted support for LAPs to continue with a number of suggestions made to ensure their ongoing development.
- 2.5 The Partnership Delivery Group meeting of 23 May 2011 confirmed the ongoing commitment to the development of LAPs.
- 2.6 The partnership review generated a wide acceptance that the LAPs are a good structure for the emerging agendas of Big Society and the Localism and Decentralisation Bill.
- 2.7 The Partnership report tables a number of recommendations to develop Locality Action Partnerships. The recommendations have been split into a number of smaller key subject areas:
 - (i) **Resources** – chairs, resident/community involvement, partners, councillors
 - (ii) **Communication** – Partner Communications, Social Media, Website, Newsletter.
 - (iii) **Community Pride** – Structured approach to Community Pride.
 - (iv) **Funding** – Current, Future, Applications, External funding, LAP support
 - (v) **General Function** – Definition, Constitution, Terms of Reference, Roles and Responsibilities, Action Planning, Governance, Branding, Community Engagement.

- 2.8 The issues of strengthening the community leadership role of elected members have been highlighted in previous committee reports and again have been raised during the LAP review. There are specific elected member development recommendations in the report which aim to address this issue.
- 2.9 Two of the areas consistently raised as highly important throughout the review are the support delivered by the current LAP Administration Assistant and the availability of LAP funding for small projects.
- 2.10 Of particular importance to Newcastle Borough Council, is the communication and links between individual departments of the council and Locality Action Partnerships. A mapping exercise by Heads of Service will assist in establishing a plan of action to engage officers of the borough council in the development of LAPs.
- 2.11 Further practical considerations include the following: -
- (i) There are a number of government policy and legislative changes yet to be finalised and implemented which will have an impact on the future development of Locality Action Partnerships;
 - (ii) There remain significant organisational reforms and restructures ongoing across the borough and county resulting in a reduction in capacity of the constituent public sector organisations involved;
 - (iii) Due to the number of people involved, there are a large number of opinions and suggestions to consider;
 - (iv) Increased financial constraints will play a key part;
 - (v) One size doesn't fit all – each locality has different personalities involved, local priorities and have developed at varying stages;
 - (vi) Community involvement – consideration needs to be given as to whether issues raised are for personal purposes or are more representative of the wider community; and
 - (vii) There is a tendency for communities to raise priorities on issues that are witnessed on a daily basis such as littering and dog fouling and generally do not consider wider issues such as health, employment and financial inclusion
- 2.12 Review of LAPs has been included on the Work Programme for 2011-12 of the Active and Cohesive Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Borough Council.
- 2.13 In light of this inclusion, the Scrutiny Committee considered 'The Story of Our Place' report at its meeting of 22 August 2011, as well as a covering report. In response the Committee raised a number of issues including: -
- Concerns about the future funding of the LAPs and the level of commitment from public sector organisations
 - Developing more effective links with Parish Councils and considering the respective roles of the LAPs and Parishes
 - How LAP meetings are recorded and how issues are communicated to the wider world
- 2.14 In considering the report and the review overall, the Active & Cohesive Communities Committee requested more time to go through the issues contained in the various documents and asked that Cabinet note this and allows more consideration to be made of the review process.

3. **Options Considered**

3.1 **Option A – no change**

- (i) This option will not strengthen or develop the service delivery link to LAPs

3.2 **Option B – Agree to the proposals contained in this report and the LAP Review**

- (i) Attached to this option is the caveat that future policy and legislation may have a direct impact on the development of LAPs.
- (ii) This option will assist in strengthening the community leadership role of elected members.
- (iii) Option B will ensure a level of consistency to the LAPs, however is flexible enough to allow the locality concept that 'one size doesn't fit all'.
- (iv) Finally this option will strengthen and develop the LAPs to be in an improved position to delivery elements of Big Society and the proposed Localism and Decentralisation Bill due to be enacted in November 2010.

4. **Proposal**

4.1 It is proposed that Informal Cabinet agree to the recommendations in this and the Newcastle Partnership Locality Action Partnership review report.

4.2 It is also proposed that Informal Cabinet make note of the recommendations relating to the role of the elected member and any specific proposals that may be relevant to their portfolio area.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

5.1 Locality Working has operated in different guises over a number of years and LAPs have been under various review processes since 2007. The current review links into developing policy, strategy and legislation and therefore the recommendations are integral to the ongoing development of LAPs, to ensure delivery against the emerging agendas. Additionally, LAPs are part of the transformation programme and as such have already been highlighted for development.

5.2 The recommendations have been identified through detailed consultation with partners, LAP chairs, elected members and the community and attempt to meet a broad range of requirements.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

6.1 Locality Action Partnerships were initially developed to deliver local solutions to both Corporate and Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. It is proposed that the LAPs continue to focus on local priorities and deliver against the local Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

7.1 None at present although the review has established a widely acknowledged opinion that LAPs are a good structure for the emerging agenda. There may be future implications based around the proposed Localism and Decentralisation Bill and other statutory duties.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment of the review has been completed and is available. The review has not raised any specific issues relating to equality, however, the recommendations in the partnership report have areas of work that have potential relevance to equality and they will be identified and impact assessed.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 Locality Action Partnerships were allocated £5,000 each to develop local solutions to issues with the community. Funding was identified as a priority area as part of the review and therefore will need consideration. A separate paper relating to this issue is being submitted by the Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships.
- 9.2 The review has a number of recommendations that require officer time both from the Business Improvement and Partnerships team and other departments across the borough council. Current administration support to the LAPs is provided by a LAP Administration Assistant who's Fixed Term Contract is due to end in March 2012. This is currently being investigated by the Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships and therefore may be a future decision item.

10. **Major Risks**

- 10.1 The GRACE risk assessment for Locality Action Partnerships is currently being reviewed and is being linked with the wider Newcastle Partnership risks. Two areas of potential future risk are the emerging gaps in Big Society and the delivery against the proposed Localism and Decentralisation Bill.

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

- 11.1 As one of the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, where possible issues are identified by individual Locality Action Partnerships relating to sustainability and climate change and the work is subsequently linked to the Newcastle Partnership Sustainable Development group.

12. **Key Decision Information**

- 12.1 This item is included in the forward plan.

13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

5 Sept 2007 – Partnership & Neighbourhood Working
20 February 2008 – Ward Councillors and community leadership
17 February 2010 – Developing Locality Working

14. **List of Appendices**

- 14.1 Appendix A – Full Newcastle Partnership Locality Action Partnership Review – 'The Story of our place' including: Appendix One – Methodology, Appendix Two – List of interviewees and attendees at LAP Review, Appendix Three – Newcastle Partnership Structure, Appendix Four – LAP Review Transformation Programme Action Plan, Appendix Five – Generic Terms of Reference, Appendix Six – Individual LAP Details – Attendees, Projects, Chair and Appendix Seven – Feedback from Two Review Sessions



The Story of 'Our Place'

A review of Locality Action Partnerships, in the Borough



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Summary

The Newcastle Partnership engages with 11 Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) across the Borough to offer potential opportunities for residents and communities to get involved in activities, engagement and decision-making in their area. LAPs represent the Partnership's established infrastructure for the delivery of locality working and offer communities enhanced and focused access to a range of partners in order to address and deliver against local priorities. This report outlines the background to the establishment of the LAPs, the progress made by the LAPs to date and identifies a set of options for future development. The proposed recommendations have been established following a series of interviews with current LAP chairs, key stakeholders, attendance at meetings of the Newcastle Partnership Delivery Group and a further two engagement sessions with LAP attendees. Consideration has also been given to a range of new policy and legislative drivers, including the Localism and Decentralisation Bill and the development of the 'Big Society' to name but two.

DRAFT

Introduction

Locality working has been in place across the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme for a number of years and has existed in a series of different guises.

The Borough has benefited from major targeted interventions in the past including the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) in Newcastle Western Urban Villages and Chesterton, the Knutton and Cross Heath Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, RENEW (covering North Staffordshire as a whole) and its successor, the North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership (NSRP). Engagement with the community has been a significant element of each of these programmes and has formed the basis for the development of the current system of Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs).

Nationally, locality working has been developed in different ways with the key aim of transferring some aspects of control currently exercised by local authorities and other public sector organisations to local communities and thereby effectively acknowledging the concept that 'one size doesn't fit all'. In Newcastle-under-Lyme, LAPs were initiated to give local people and communities more influence over how to improve their lives and a role in decision making and policy formulation, development and implementation. In addition, LAPs can assist in community engagement and empowerment and can play a major part in the achievement of improved community cohesion.

The LAPs in Newcastle were supported and administered on behalf of the key partners and the community itself by a Locality Working Team (based in the Borough Council) up until February 2010, when a decision was made to review this support, resulting in the team being withdrawn from the service. It was further determined by the Borough Council, in conjunction with partners, that LAPs and locality working be identified as one of the areas of work for the Newcastle Borough Council Transformation Programme in February 2010. Details of the processes underpinning the LAP review and those agencies, groups and individuals involved in the review can be found in the methodology sections connected to this report (see Appendices one and two)

Following on from this initial decision, in November 2010 the project manager for the LAPs project was identified as the Newcastle LSP Manager (who was, at the time, in the process of overseeing and developing a review of the Newcastle Partnership structures and governance arrangements). In December 2010, the Newcastle Partnership Executive Board agreed to the proposed Borough Partnership structure (see Appendix three of this report).

This agreed structure proposal identified that a 'Joining Big Society' group would be the appropriate Partnership group to monitor the engagement opportunities through the LAPs structure. The proposal further suggested that the LAPs continue to report to the Joint Operations Group (JOG) to deal with 'Safer' issues and that the chairs continue to meet to share good practice and communicate common issues. Overall accountability for the LAPs under the revised Partnership structure for the Borough is now held with the Partnership Delivery Group (PDG) and the Partnership Executive Board (PEB). It is likely that there will be future reviews and changes to the Partnership structure when more detail is released on the Health and Policing reforms and other key policies currently under development by national government.

Since the new Partnership structure was agreed, progress has been made on the LAPs project. The LSP Manager (now called the Partnerships Manager) has completed a mapping exercise on the LAPs, looking at how each of them operates; which partners attend

and at what level of the organisation attendees work at; the chairs and the role of the chairs; when and where the groups meet; and has also sought to identify the key issues for those people involved in the LAPs. The review has involved a large number of people many of whom have similar ideas as to how the LAPs should progress, although there have been a number of proposals put forward that are the opinion of only a small number of those involved. It should be stated that some of the suggestions received may not be achievable either due to reductions in capacity and/or insufficient resources. In addition, there remains a number of national reforms that are still to be established and clarified that may impact on the future development of locality working and therefore the LAPs may need to remain under constant review over the next 12-18 months. The following report details the information gathered and presents suggestions for future development.

The background information to this report will look into the initial set up of the LAPs and the key drivers at the time of their establishment and the progress made to date by the LAPs. The Partnerships Manager has developed an action plan to track progress of the review (see Appendix Four) and recommendations have been developed based on opinions raised during interviews with LAP chairs, other key stakeholders, partnership meetings and feedback and two sessions with the wider LAP attendees. The report takes into consideration the background and set up of LAPs, recent national policy changes and legislative drivers, an evaluation of the current position including a set of interviews and sessions with those involved in locality working, an assessment of the key resources needed and includes a set of recommendations for future development.

There are significant new drivers that underpin the future development of locality working. The Coalition Government's 'Programme for Government' outlines support for progress to be made by "people coming together to make life better and for distributing power and opportunity", (The Coalition; Our Programme for Government, <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/news/coalition-documents>). In addition the 'Big Society, Not Big Government' document discusses the plan to 'stimulate the creation and development of neighbourhood groups in every area' (Big Society, Not Big Government http://www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2010/03/Plans_announced_to_help_build_a_Big_Society.aspx). The Newcastle Partnership has already made significant steps in this direction and the continued support for and development of the LAPs will move the Borough towards ensuring delivery against these national objectives and local priorities.

Further practical considerations include the following: -

- There are a number of government policy and legislative changes yet to be finalised and implemented which will have an impact on the future development of Locality Action Partnerships;
- There remain significant organisational reforms and restructures ongoing across the borough and county resulting in a reduction in capacity of the constituent public sector organisations involved;
- Due to the number of people involved, there are a large number of opinions and suggestions to consider;
- Increased financial constraints will play a key part;
- One size doesn't fit all – each locality has different personalities involved, local priorities and have developed at varying stages;
- Community involvement – consideration needs to be given as to whether issues raised are for personal purposes or are more representative of the wider community; and

- There is a tendency for communities to raise priorities on issues that are witnessed on a daily basis such as littering and dog fouling and generally do not consider wider issues such as health, employment and financial inclusion

Background

Locality Action Groups covering police boundaries and with a community safety focus were active in Newcastle for a number of years prior to the end of the Knutton Cross Heath Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder. In October 2008, the Newcastle Partnership identified that to enable service providers to focus their efforts more closely on the varying needs of different communities that a new way of working would need to be developed. The partnership recognised its crucial role in bringing agencies & communities together to improve the local area and to ensure that decision making reflects the priorities of both, balanced with evidence based need.

Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) emerged from the previous Community Safety Locality Action Groups and utilised the principles of Neighbourhood Management (following on from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder). In addition they assisted in the delivery of the 2006 local government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' which set out the 'government's vision to create strong, prosperous communities and reshape public services around those who use them, through greater partnership working between local authorities and other agencies' (Local Government White Paper; Strong and Prosperous Communities, 2006, Department for Communities and Local Government, Crown Copyright 2006) Recognition was given to the transferable practice from the NMP to the LAPs in a 2009 REGEN West Midlands prize where Newcastle was highly commended. The LAPs were set up to assist in providing effective joint working within localities, to enable more decisions to be made at a local level with the involvement of the residents and the communities that they affect. As a result, the LAPs were set the task of widening their remit to focus on different themes to meet the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

One of the more successful interventions developed initially by the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder and subsequently locality working is Project House (Charity No. 06757866) in Knutton and Cross Heath. Project House seeks to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in the area and has progressed significantly, receiving Big Lottery Funding and more recently has been chosen by the local Sainsbury's as their local charity for the year.

Locality Action Partnerships were established with the following key aims:

- Establish local priorities via intelligence led;planning;
- Enable residents to influence, challenge and be involved in service delivery;
- Engage elected members with their communities and partners;
- Improve communications;
- Enable service providers to engage at a local level and to work together to meet local need;
- Give a voice in each locality to identify and fix issues;
- Strengthen community understanding and awareness; and
- Reduce inequalities, enabling funding and staff to be utilised more effectively and efficiently

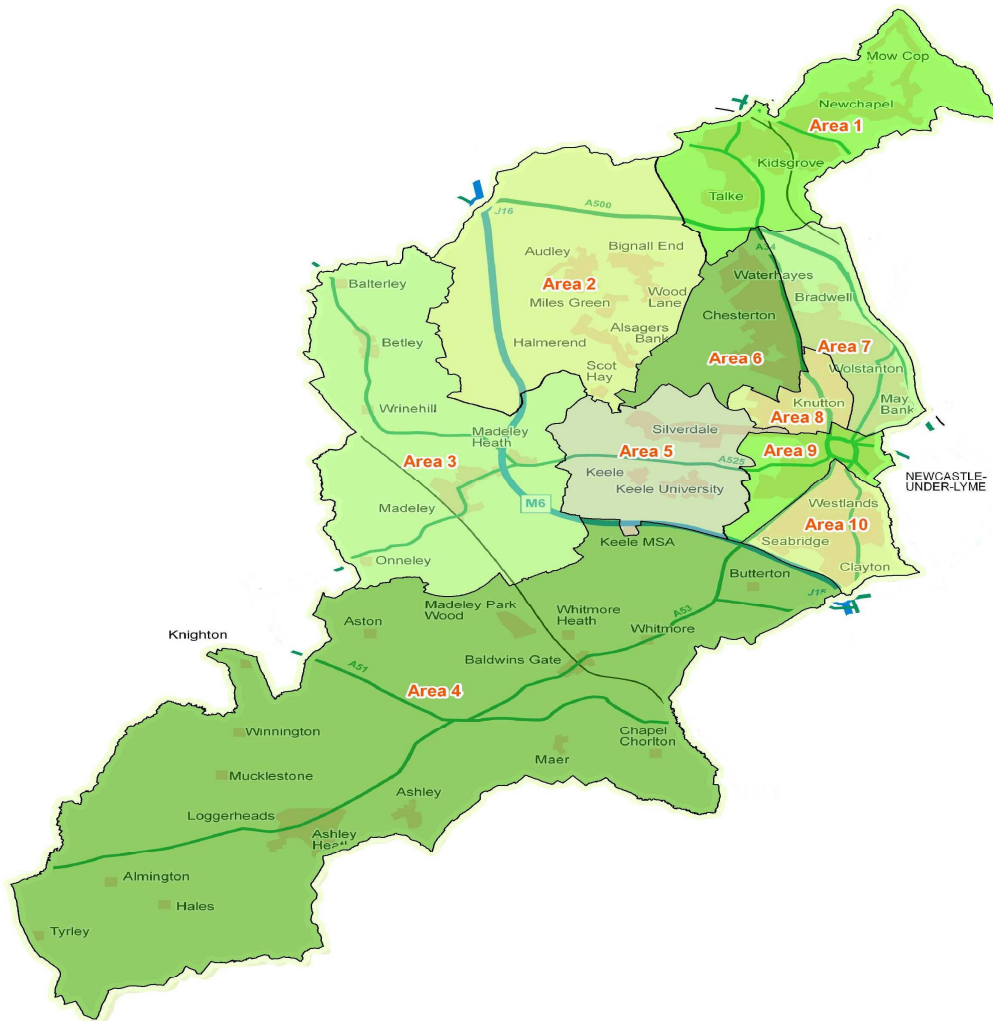
LAPs are in operation in 10 areas of the Borough (there are 11 Locality Action Partnership groups in total due to there being two LAPs in the Kidsgrove/Butt Lane area) and attendees include Borough Councillors, County Councillors, Parish Councillors, Town Councillors, relevant officers from both Borough and County Councils, local community groups, residents, community and voluntary organisations, Aspire, Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and other relevant partners, as well as members of the public.

At the time of being set up the LAPs were supported by a locality support team and area profiles were developed for each of the groups to target evidence based need and subsequently action plans were developed by the groups to address the identified priorities. These priorities linked to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The 10 areas involved in the scheme are shown on the attached map below. Each of the LAP groups was allocated £5,000 to spend on activities that aimed to deliver projects against the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. In addition the Locality Action Partnerships were allocated a Community Safety budget (Basic Command Unit and Safer and Stronger Communities Fund). In February 2010 it was determined that locality working should be one of the projects of the Newcastle Borough Council transformation programme and needed to be supported differently and reviewed. The transformation of LAPs also identified that Councillors roles in locality working needed to be clearly defined, developed and communicated.

The review has established overwhelming support for the work to continue and to develop further. Progress made since February 2009 can in the main be attributed to willing volunteers and an ongoing commitment to addressing local need.

The following map and list identifies the LAP areas.



Areas

- 1 – (Two LAPs) Kidsgrove, Butt Lane, Newchapel, Ravenscliffe and Talke
- 2 – Audley, Bignall End and Halmer End
- 3 – Balterley, Betley, Wrinehill and Madeley
- 4 – Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Loggerheads, Maer and Whitmore
- 5 – Keele, Silverdale and Parksit
- 6 – Chesterton and Holditch
- 7 – Wolstanton, May Bank, Bradwell and Porthill
- 8 – Knutton and Cross Heath

9 – Poolfields, Town and Thistleberry

10 – Clayton, Seabridge and Westlands

Understanding Local Need and Translation into Priorities – Key Local Drivers

The vision for Newcastle-under-Lyme is set out within the current Sustainable Community Strategy, 2008-2020. The strategy identifies the important issues that need to be addressed in order to enhance the quality of life of local communities and it is this vision which provides the framework for the LAPs to operate within.

At the heart of the Sustainable Community Strategy is the desire of partners to reduce inequalities by creating strong, safe and attractive communities and providing a structure that enables sustainable economic growth for the borough as a whole. It also seeks to focus on offering opportunities for people to improve their quality of life and to empower them to be a key part of continuous positive impacts.

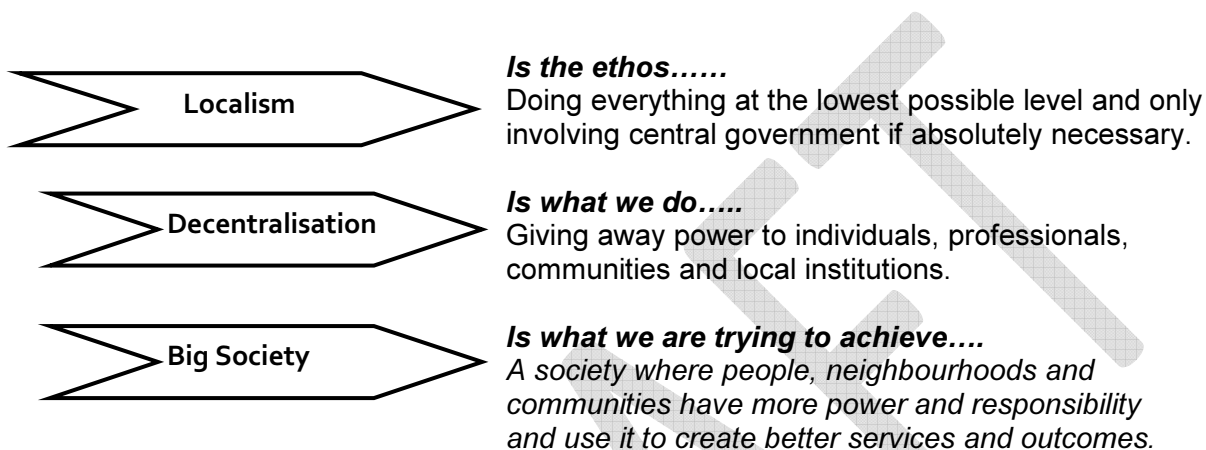
The Newcastle-under-Lyme Sustainable Community Strategy sets out 21 shared partnership priorities for the borough, developed through community consultation, evidence based need and organisational priorities. The 21 priorities are currently under review, in an attempt to reduce to five key strategic priorities to reflect a reduction in capacity and the need to focus on the most important issues and those that will have the biggest impact to enhance the quality of life of local communities in Newcastle.

New National Drivers

In addition to the local drivers at play here, there are a number of key national drivers that support the development of locality working across the borough, some of which have been referenced already by this paper.

The key concepts underpinning the national approach to locality working include the relationship localism, decentralisation and the 'Big Society'.

The following diagram illustrates this relationship: -



There is recognition by the government that elements of the Big Society are already being carried out in some areas, but it also recognises that this work can be unevenly distributed as some people still feel disempowered and disengaged.

Big Society should be a partnership in local areas based upon and centred on needs of the community. It is envisaged that LAPs will be central to the delivery of this relationship, aided by the drive to deliver against the vision set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Decentralisation and Localism Bill

National Government has sought to encapsulate the approaches outlined above in legislation. Most notably, this is being developed through the Decentralisation and Localism Bill, which is currently going through Parliament. It is argued that decentralisation is not confined to any single department of government and the intention is that the agenda will work across government departments. This is also essentially the picture with regards to localism.

The 'Essential Guide' to the bill explains the two vital roles envisaged for local authorities in developing these concepts further. Local authorities, under the proposals being put forward, will be the beneficiaries of decentralisation as power is passed to them by central government and they will also have a vital role in passing that power to communities and individuals.

The Localism and Decentralisation Bill provides the legislative foundation for changing and implementing a shift of power from central government to local communities and the guide produced identifies six actions to change from 'Big Government' to 'Big Society'. These are:-

- (1) Lift the burden of bureaucracy.
- (2) Empower communities to do things their way
- (3) Increase local control of public finance.
- (4) Diversify the supply of public services.
- (5) Open up government to public scrutiny
- (6) Strengthen accountability to local people.

The concept is about devolving power and responsibility to the most local level possible. These changes will have an impact on a number of departments within the Borough Council, in particular within planning. In addition, many of these changes will affect the work of individual partners and the wider partnership. Locality working can provide the local authority with the structure to implement the Localism Bill and to develop the 'Big Society' and it is therefore essential that these are considered within the transformation programme planning.

Locality Working – Other Areas

Nationally and locally, locality working has developed at different rates and levels. Many areas have set up neighbourhood forums to address local issues and some areas have benefited from funding to do this.

Across Staffordshire, locality working varies significantly between the district and boroughs. The closest match to Newcastle is South Staffordshire's localities which align with parish council boundaries and operate similarly to Newcastle's initial set up including data profiles to identify local need, action plans and then partnership intervention. Tamworth has opted for targeting their top four areas of greatest need in terms of deprivation. Stafford has a small number of multi-agency hubs, again targeting areas of greatest need and Cannock are currently piloting a total place approach in a ward area. The main reason for developing so differently is the original recognition that 'one size doesn't fit all'.

Locality Working in Newcastle - Current Perspective and Feedback

In outlining the existing position in Newcastle with regard to locality working, a number of key areas can be identified. This section provides this information, together with references to feedback from the review work carried out so far, where relevant.

Remit

LAPs were originally developed with the key aim of bringing service providers to the community to identify and to address local issues that came under the priorities contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Generic terms of reference (ToR) (Appendix Five) have been developed for the LAPs, although some LAPs have used these as a template to develop their own ToR. Each of the LAPs have been mapped in terms of their current chair, meeting frequency, attendees and the projects developed to date (see Appendix Six for a summary of this information). It is felt generally that these terms of reference need to be re-visited.

Process

The initial intention was to develop data profiles for each locality, these alongside community information would form the basis for the LAP plans. Subsequent to this planning should be the relevant intervention alongside a reporting mechanism back to the community.

Up until February 2010 the LAPs were developing fairly consistently, since then each has developed at different rates. Most no longer develop action plans as they do not receive data profiles and there is not a resource to keep these up to date. Chesterton and Butt Lane LAPs have both been mentioned on a number of occasions as areas of good practice, but this is undoubtedly an area of work which needs to be addressed further to ensure consistent approaches across all LAPs.

Frequency of Meetings

The frequency of meetings is between 4 - 8 weekly and the meetings are chaired by a variety of community representatives, Councillors and partners. There is also a LAP chairs group that meets every 6 – 8 weeks. These timeframes are generally acceptable to all concerned.

What do the LAPs do? (also see Appendix Six)

The LAPs mainly carry out operational activity - where an issue is identified, the groups work together to look at interventions to address the issues. Interventions can include: Community Pride events, community clear-ups, community safety days linked to other events including electric blanket testing, assistive technology awareness raising, Pensions Service information sessions, financial inclusion/debt advice, Community events, projects around young people's positive activities, Christmas card from your LAP (raising awareness of LAP and asking for priorities for the area), Community payback schemes linked to a project in the LAP area, and intergenerational projects (Cohesion related). As outlined earlier, the results of these interventions are reported back to the LAPs and should be based on plans established by the LAPs and based on evidence and area profiling. It is clear that consistency of approach across all LAPs is a potential issue here.

Who do they report to?

At the Newcastle Partnership Executive Board held on 9 December 2010 the proposed 2011 structure (also attached), was approved with minor amendments. It is envisaged that LAPs report into these structures as appropriate.

Review Findings and Suggestions

As already mentioned, there is support for LAPs to continue with the acknowledgement that further development is needed. LAPs have generally developed well and have empowered communities to be involved more directly in the management of their local area.

There is a consensus amongst those consulted as part of the review that the role of the LAP chair is important and it appears that those LAPs developing well are those that have an enthusiastic and skilled chair or support. There are areas that have highlighted some concern with partner engagement and attendance, but on the whole there is a general satisfaction with the meetings. There is an acknowledgement that some of the LAPs perform better than others with some struggling to identify projects and progress issues raised.

It is clear that the LAPs are a good structure for an emerging agenda and this was recognised by a number of partners. Initial misunderstandings with parishes in the main appear to have been cleared up now and there are good examples of parishes working with the LAPs and also together as parish councils.

Partners and chairs felt that there needed to be additional elements of capacity building included in their development, particularly around the engagement of communities/residents associations and other third sector organisations. It was acknowledged that the role of Village Agents worked well in the rural areas where they operate. Some chairs expressed an interest in developing to take on the role of delivering allocated services for partners. There was a clear request to use what is already there rather than set something new up. The Trading Standards Watchdogs were highlighted as a potential resource along with others. A defined membership for the LAPs is considered essential for them to develop effectively and active membership should be clear for each LAP.

Partnership Delivery Group

The Partnership Delivery Group met 23 May 2011 and outlined their ongoing commitment to the development of Locality Action Partnerships (attendance at this meeting was extended to Aspire and Newcastle Community and Voluntary Service). At the meeting it was also agreed to retain the current LAP boundaries recognising the different layers of boundaries across the borough and an acceptance that relationships have been built up across these areas and partners did not want to see these fractured through a review of lines on the map.

Resources

Chairs

Training was highlighted by both a number of chairs, partners and at the sessions held. Initial ideas were basic training on how to effectively chair meetings as part of the LAP process including putting together an action plan from priorities identified and I.T. skills including developing social media. A number of chairs requested lists of resident/community groups that they could approach for involvement in the Locality Action Partnerships. Some chairs have already started this work and have visited groups to present on the work of the LAP.

It was felt by some that each LAP should have a clear action plan or structured programme of what they wanted to achieve over a 12-month period, but to leave some capacity in order to include issues that get raised over the year. Many felt that this should include references to the role of the chair, but acknowledged that they may need support from officers with this.

Chairs were happy to accept that not all partners needed to be at every meeting, although they did feel that there should be a level of consistency and a 'core group' including residents, Councillors, NBC staff, Police and Aspire. For other organisations they felt empowered to invite as necessary for individual projects. In addition it was felt that links could be made with local students and volunteers to support work in the area.

The role of chair was identified as the key area for development and that where LAPs work well, there is a chair with the right skills to progress the work of the LAP. Chairs need to fully understand the work of the LAP and be in a position to effectively chair a meeting and delegate tasks as appropriate. In addition, continuity of the chair was considered crucial and a review of the length of service for a chair was required.

Resident/Community Involvement

The majority of those consulted would like more residents to be involved in the LAPs, with the slight caveat however, that they would be concerned if the meetings became too big. They acknowledge that in some areas there needs to be a more representative community attendance.

One issue is that when some residents do engage then it is to raise issues that are relatively minor or only relevant to a small part of the community or even individual issues rather than the issues of the wider community. Suggestions have been raised that where residents do not want to be part of the solution to a wider issue and only want to report individual or minor issues, 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting should be allocated where the wider community can bring their issues and the membership of the LAP then discuss and identify possible options and then report back.

Additional suggestions included that issues could be raised through a variety of methods including Councillors facilitating communication between the community and the LAPs and also a range of social media methods of reporting were raised as options. It was felt that the option should be given to individual residents associations and community groups for them to identify possible engagement methods and that this could be facilitated in part by Newcastle Community and Voluntary Services. Consultation with the wider partnership resulted in the agreement that LAPs need to ensure that they engage with the wider community. In particular younger and older residents across the borough were highlighted and LAPs must use the established mechanisms already in place to facilitate this (schools councils, local democracy week and 50+ forum).

It was felt that there was potential with the right support that more services could be delivered by the community on behalf of local authority/partners and that LAPs could be a key part of developing this.

Partners

Generally partner attendance was commended with some minor issues mainly being inconsistency in some areas. Gaps in bodies attending the LAPs were felt to be voluntary sector groups who may have specific projects in the locality. NHS/PCTs (or in the future GPs) and also involvement from the private sector in the form of local businesses/private landlords were also felt to be missing from the groups. It was suggested by the wider partnership, that relationships with local businesses needed to be developed. In a small number of localities there was involvement from schools in the relevant catchment area and other LAPs felt there would be benefit if this could be replicated in other areas. Additionally, concern was raised that there is currently no younger age groups involved in the LAPs and a suggestion of engaging with the school councils on their priorities would be of benefit. Interviewees raised concerns about the communication between departments and organisations and were of the opinion that more could be done to improve this.

Conversations took place on how LAPs could look at need and priorities wider than community safety and dog fouling and littering. Chairs in particular outlined some areas where this already takes place, however, and other areas discussed the need for data that was easy to interpret for this to happen more effectively.

Improved links between full council/Cabinet and the LAPs came up as a suggestion and this could also assist in complementing the role of the Elected Member on the LAPs as it would

be the expectation of a Councillor to fulfil this role of linking between formal council meetings and LAPs.

Partner support and a clear commitment was felt necessary and the request was made not to raise the expectations of the community if there was not a clear commitment to LAPs from organisations. Partners felt that through the development of the constitution, that the fundamental link between the Partnership and LAPs needed to be established to clearly identify the strategic to local relationship. Additional partner support in some localities including the potential for staff to be allocated to LAPs is required and other resources including funding need to be examined carefully. It was also determined that officers attending on behalf of their partner organisation should have clear designated responsibility to make decisions in order to progress identified projects.

Councillors

As communities themselves and as representatives of their communities, the role of Councillors was identified as integral to the future development of LAPs. Many, including a number of elected members agreed that it was important that councillors facilitated engagement between the community and the LAPs and back again. It was also suggested that the Councillors could facilitate regular brief feedback from full council meetings to ensure a consistent information flow to the communities.

A number of councillors agreed that training would assist them including training identified for chairs. In addition, awareness raising of the workings of partner organisations and a potential 'peer support' programme from their individual political parties (although they acknowledged that LAPs must remain non-political) was seen as potentially beneficial.

It has been suggested that Councillors could step into the role of chair, particularly where it is identified that a LAP is not working or progressing well. As previously suggested, elected members can also provide effective feedback about developments in the borough and county councils.

Initial teething problems in the parished areas appear to have been rectified and positive working relationships were now developed with the LAPs and between each other, particularly on common issues. This was seen as very positive by consultees.

Communication

Nearly all involved in the review discussed the need to promote more about the LAPs and what they do and achieve. It was considered important to 're-launch' locality working and ensure consistent reporting about the work in the communities. A Newcastle Partnership 'you said, we did' approach was mentioned on a number of occasions. It was also felt essential to develop alternative mechanisms for reporting issues into the LAPs where residents might not want to take part in formal meetings. A range of methods were suggested including partner newsletters and a 'partnership newsletter', an increased use of social media and more use of the Newcastle Partnership website, Facebook and Twitter. A suggestion was raised that a piece of work with Newcastle College or Keele/Staffordshire University to develop available social media could be progressed including awareness raising of the potential dangers of using social media. Possible future use of applications ('Apps') was also offered as a potential area of future development. Chairs discussed the use of a list of available resources relevant to the locality including key contacts for each organisation.

Community Pride

General impressions were that these events are essential to locality working and should take place more frequently, with more structure and relevant to local need/priority. They should also continue to offer opportunities of work in the community to and take advantage of the work provided by the Community Payback team.

Funding

All felt that some funding was important to enable the LAPs to support small projects that met the priorities, were agreed by the group and had a big impact on the locality. It was recognised where the LAPs had delivered a project that these should be branded as such to ensure that the community were aware of the work of the Partnership.

All agreed that the administrative support provided by the LAPs Administrative Assistant was key to the LAPs continuing function. Many chairs acknowledged that the support provided was more than solely administrative.

Chairs agreed that LAP funding is essential, including a simple application process and were positive that decisions were made by consensus of the group. There was concern raised that the LAPs would be in danger of becoming talking shops without the funding pot. Some LAPs expressed an interest in developing in the future to be constituted and holding a bank account, however, others felt that they would not want to take the LAP to that level. Further investigation into funding across the Partnership was felt necessary including pooling budgets, community based budgets and participatory budgeting opportunities.

Additionally, chairs explained that they would find it useful to receive a regular newsletter on funding that is available for them to apply for. The wider partnership agreed that LAPs ideally should hold their own bank accounts which would open up the range of funding opportunities that they could individually apply for – including 'Community Well-being fund'.

General Function

Most felt that the LAPs structure is good and consistent across the borough and felt that identification/definition of localism, guidance, clear roles and responsibilities for residents, partners and councillors were important.

The following areas, however, were raised as suggestions to improve the general function of the LAPs: -

- Defined roles and responsibilities including who has voting rights;
- Definition of a LAP;
- Clearly planned/timed agenda;
- Branding with own stationery;
- Formal constitution, defining the strategic – local link (not all were in agreement);
- Updated Terms of Reference with clear guidance on the role of the chair and how they should be nominated;
- Reward schemes;
- Action plans including key projects and identification of priorities and what achievements they would like; and
- Assistance in understanding and some assistance from partners with drilling down data to a neighbourhood level, where this was requested by a LAP chair

Suggestions were offered for LAPs to be given a 'menu of options' to deliver over the 12-month period, possibly choosing three projects from a prescribed list. This would ensure some delivery at least by the LAP and would leave capacity for them to deliver additional identified projects.

Some of the chairs felt that the LAPs were under-utilised and offered use of the LAPs by partner organisations. They suggested the potential to set tasks for the LAPs to achieve. Others intimated that there were insufficient actions to identify where there was lack of progress, no clear process where this had been recognised and all too often actions weren't owned by any individual/partner organisation in particular.

For community engagement and reporting of issues, suggestions were made that part of the meetings could be open to report issues and the remainder closed to get on with business. An additional possibility could be the use of walkabouts to gather issues. All were in agreement that the LAPs need to progress to look at issues that met wider needs in particular health and employment were raised as potential priorities. All asked that partners appreciate that 'one size doesn't fit all' and to allow each LAP to develop at their own pace and provide support where necessary. As LAPs covered the whole of the borough, it was felt important that they be used as the 'initial' point of contact for any engagement/activity in the area, this offered a 'central' point where information could be held about ongoing projects and work in the area.

Timing of meetings was highlighted as a barrier in some areas although steps had been made to attempt to mitigate against this.

All chairs agreed that the LAP chairs group was important and worked well for sharing best practice and picking up ideas. It also provides a forum for suggestions/options to be given to chairs, although some agreed that it required more structure. Some felt it may be useful to observe how other LAPs operate across the borough. There is the potential for this group to be responsible for raising issues that need to be reported to the Partnership Delivery Group including where there is inconsistent attendance that is causing concern or where there are significant barriers to progress.

There were a number of areas highlighted as key to the continuation and development of LAPs, however, those that were consistently raised were the support provided by the LAPs Administrative Assistant and a relatively small pot of funding to deliver projects in the locality. Finally partner and elected member commitment and support were also highlighted as essential.

Table of Recommendations

Priority Area	Key Subject Areas		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RESOURCE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairs • Community/Residents • Partners • Councillors 		
Action	Milestones	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Chairs – Develop a ‘training offer’ for chairs.	Determine with chairs training required (Effective chairing/delegating, I.T. Skills, developing social media) Develop programme of training. Identify chairs. Deliver training.	Partnership Manager - Business Improvement and Partnerships and NBC Human Resources	TBC – When actions approved.
2. Chairs – Compile database of community and resident groups for each area for LAP chairs to be aware of and contact.	Letter to be sent via NCVS/Aspire to Resident and Community Groups. Database to be compiled.	Partnership Manager - Business Improvement and Partnerships and Newcastle Community and Voluntary Support	
3. Community/Residents – To encourage and improve resident involvement with the LAPs	Letter above to invite residents and local businesses to nominate a representative to attend LAP. LAP chairs to continue to address this locally with support from Business Improvement and Partnerships Team. Ensure wider engagement across the	Partnership Manager Business Improvement and Partnerships (draft on behalf of LAP chair) LAP Chairs	

	relevant LAP area through schools councils, community groups and other forums such as Aspire Community panels.		
4. Partners – Develop a core membership and reporting mechanism to the Partnership Delivery Group where there is consistent non-attendance/barriers.	Chairs to manage locally initially Draft reporting mechanism Sign up by PDG PDG investigate allocating staff to lead on localities. PDG to ensure officers attending have delegated responsibility. Pilot reporting Establish link between Newcastle Partnership and LAPs (Strategic to Local).	Partnership Manager and LAP Admin - Business Improvement and Partnerships and LAP Chairs group	
5. Partners – Engage health sector in LAPs	To be established as policy and legislation is developed. Partnership Delivery Group monitor Engage Healthwatch with LAPs (LiNK)	Partnership Delivery Group and Business Improvement and Partnerships	
6. Partners – Engage school councils with LAPs	Schools information provided to LAP chairs Letter to school councils from chairs inviting them to raise issues for the LAPs	Business Improvement and Partnerships – Partnership Officers and LAP chairs.	
7. Partners – Improve communication and links with LAPs internally.	Pilot a mapping exercise within Newcastle Borough Council to engage departments and improve links with LAPs	Partnership Manager Business Improvement and Partnerships and Executive Management Team.	

<p>8. Partners - Provide data profiles to LAPs</p>	<p>Develop template with LAP chairs. Partners to establish information/data that can be included. Provide support and guidance to LAP chairs on understanding data. Determine frequency of data.</p>	<p>Partnership Delivery Group sign up and allocate officers.</p>	
<p>9. Councillors – Develop programme of training</p>	<p>Determine with Councillors training required (Effective chairing/delegating, I.T. Skills, developing social media – blogs, Facebook, Twitter) Develop programme of training. Deliver training.</p>	<p>Business Improvement and Partnerships, NBC Human Resources and Member Services.</p>	
<p>10. Councillors – Raise awareness and the benefits of LAPs for community engagement with Councillors and secure sign-up from party leaders.</p>	<p>Develop induction process from best practice models Work with member services to include locality working in day to day thinking. Develop peer mentoring programme. Include feedback from full council on LAP agenda. Include Councillor attendance as part of the Partnership/LAP constitution Establish mechanism for Councillors to step in where a</p>	<p>Partnership Manager - Business Improvement and Partnerships, NBC Human Resources and Member Services. Cabinet and Executive Management Team</p>	

	LAP isn't progressing. EMT to determine best approach with party leaders		
In an ideal world: Partners allocate a 'nominated officer' to assist chairs to provide a level of consistency across the borough			
Priority Area	Key Subject Areas		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMMUNICATION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner Communications Social Media Website Newsletter 		
Action	Milestones	Responsibility/Reporting	Time Frame
11. Partner Communications – Improve use of partner communications to promote LAPs	<p>Map current communications available including community newsletters.</p> <p>Investigate increased use of Reporter for promoting the work of the LAP.</p> <p>Investigate bringing partnership communications together – Newcastle Partnership communication.</p> <p>Develop handbook for chairs including communications and key contacts.</p>	NBC Business Improvement and Partnerships and Communications. Partnership Delivery Group/Executive Management Team and LAP Chairs.	
12. Social Media – Improve use of social media in relation to LAPs.	Encourage use of Partnership Facebook and Twitter.	Partnership Manager Business Improvement and	

	Engage with Newcastle College/Keele University to investigate project to develop social media for LAPs including 'App for your LAP' Raise awareness of the dangers of using social media.	Partnerships and Newcastle College/Keele University.	
13. Website – Increase use of Newcastle Partnership Website	Presentation to LAP chairs on the tools of the website. Encourage Partners to include links from their web pages to the Partnership website. Promote Partnership website. Continue to develop web tools	Partnership Manager – Business Improvement and Partnerships	
14. Partnership Newsletter – Include promotion of LAPs in the Newsletter	Include projects and progress of all LAPs in the Partnership Newsletter. Use partnership networks to disseminate newsletter. Pilot a 'true' Partnership Newsletter – 'You said, we did' style.	Business Improvement and Partnerships – Partnership Delivery Group.	
In an ideal world: Partnership communications – A Partnerships newsletter and reporting tool - Communities hear once from all partners and can report issues directly to LAPs			

Priority Area	Key Subject Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMMUNITY PRIDE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish programme of Pride Events Encourage use of Partnership website to advertise 'other partner and partnership events' Encourage LAPs to lead on the development of Pride/Partnership Events

Action	Milestones	Responsibility/Reporting	Time Frame
15. Community Pride Events	<p>Identify group to lead – suggest Joining Big Society group</p> <p>Establish a commitment to deliver x amount of pride events in a 12-month period (minimum number to be identified).</p> <p>Identify localities and engage with LAPs</p> <p>Identify partners based on local need.</p> <p>Develop programme.</p> <p>Develop consistent advertising and reporting of events.</p> <p>Market events.</p>	Partnership Delivery Group – Joining Big Society Group	
16. Newcastle Partnership Website	<p>To establish if partners can have administrator rights to the website or to establish a resource where events are to be added to the website.</p> <p>Partners to encourage and promote use of Partnership website throughout their organisations.</p>	Business Improvement and Partnerships and Joining Big Society Group	
17. Encourage LAPs to lead on Pride/Partnership Events	<p>Produce ‘a guide to’ putting on a community event (Where LAPs are willing to take ownership without a partnership lead)</p> <p>Raise and promote through LAP</p>	Business Improvement and Partnerships – Partnerships Officer	

	chairs group.		
In an ideal world: Project lead for the Partnership to co-ordinate partnership projects.			

Priority Area	Key Subject Areas		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FUNDING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current funding Future funding Application for LAP funding process/criteria External funding LAP Support 		
Action	Milestones	Responsibility/Reporting	Time Frame
18. Current Funding – Monitor use and expenditure of current LAP funding	<p>Ensure applications meet current criteria.</p> <p>Encourage localities with an underspend to highlight potential projects.</p> <p>Investigate setting up bank accounts for LAPs (pilot with a LAP)</p>	Business Improvement and Partnerships	
19. Future Funding – Negotiate and Establish options for future funding.	<p>Investigate potential funding with NBC for next financial year.</p> <p>Negotiate with Partnership Delivery Group potential funding options including pooling local budgets into community based budgets.</p> <p>Explore external funding.</p>	<p>Executive Management Team/Partnership Delivery Group.</p> <p>Business Improvement and Partnerships – Partnerships Officer</p>	

20. Application for LAP funding process/criteria – Review current process/criteria to ensure fit for purpose.	Review current process to ensure fit for purpose Make minor amendments to application form.	Business Improvement and Partnerships	
21. External funding – Develop mechanisms to disseminate funding information.	Develop a Newcastle Partnership funding newsletter	Business Improvement and Partnerships – Partnerships Officer	
22. LAP Support – Investigate options to maintain and continue funding for LAP administrative support.	Investigate with partners, options for future funding of the LAP support – administrations	Partnership Delivery Group	
In an ideal world: A Partnership pot of funding – pooled funding and resources.			

Priority Area	Key Subject Areas		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GENERAL FUNCTION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition of a LAP Constitution Terms of Reference Roles and Responsibilities Action planning 'Step-in' mechanism (LAPs struggling to progress) Branding Reward Scheme Community Engagement 		
Action	Milestones	Responsibility/Reporting	Time Frame
23. Review Basic Function of LAP	Develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition of a LAP and localism. Constitution of the Partnership including the 	Business Improvement and Partnerships with sign off from Partnership Delivery Group, Partnership Executive Board and LAP Chairs.	

	<p>establishment of the fundamental link between Newcastle Partnership and LAPs (LAPs as branches forming the constitution – therefore not individually constituted)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic Terms of Reference – with defined membership. • Roles and Responsibilities – including review of length of service for chairs • Process for action planning • ‘Step-in’ mechanism 		
24. Branding – linked to Newcastle Partnership	<p>Work with those LAPs who currently don't have a brand to develop one.</p> <p>Assist in the production of a small amount of branded stationery – future supplies will need to be budgeted for.</p>	Business Improvement and Partnerships and relevant LAP Chairs	
25. Reward Scheme	<p>Work with LAP chairs to develop a Reward/Flag Scheme for locality working.</p>	Business Improvement and Partnerships and LAP Chairs	
26. Community Engagement	<p>Develop a brief Partnership Engagement Strategy with LAPs as the ‘hub’.</p>	Partnership Manager – Business Improvement and Partnerships.	

	<p>Communicate strategy. Partners sign up to the strategy and promote LAPs in all work undertaken relevant to localities. Partners agree to LAPs being the 'initial' point of contact for community engagement – taking responsibility for communicating this through their organisation.</p>	<p>Joining Big Society Group Partnership Delivery Group</p>	
<p>In an ideal world: Allocated Partnership resource to the general function of each LAP.</p>			

Priority Area	Key Subject Areas		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POTENTIAL FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and Legislation changes 		
Action	Milestones	Responsibility/Reporting	Time Frame
27. Healthwatch	Negotiate the use of LAPs through the development of Healthwatch.	Partnership Manager, Business Improvement and Partnerships and Staffordshire LINK	
28. Community Organisers	Monitor the development of Community Organisers through Locality and identify opportunities to engage.	Partnership Officer, Business Improvement and Partnerships, Chief Officer, Newcastle Community and Voluntary Support and	

		Joining Big Society Group	
29. Neighbourhood Planning	Monitor development of neighbourhood planning and the link with locality working	Partnership Manager, Business Improvement and Partnerships and NBC Planning Policy	
30. Community Infrastructure Levy	Monitor the potential to link the CIL with Locality Action Partnerships.	Partnership Manager, Business Improvement and Partnerships and NBC Planning Policy	
31. Localism- Right to Buy/Challenge	Observe the development of the Localism Bill and identify those areas that are key to the development of LAPs	Partnership Manager – Business Improvement and Partnerships	
32. Health Reforms	Monitor opportunities to engage localities in any potential developments around the health agenda – GP Commissioning, Health Improvement, Awareness raising.	Partnership Manager, Business Improvement and Partnerships	
In an ideal world: A period of known stability – however major reforms have the aim of transferring power back into the community which is one of the main drivers of locality working.			

Barriers

A number of barriers have previously been highlighted in the introduction section looking at practical considerations and these will continue to be the major factors affecting the development and delivery of the LAPs. The biggest issue remains that many organisations are in a period of significant uncertainty and major reform which will continue to impact on this programme for a period of time.

Conclusions

LAPs are one of the projects identified within the Newcastle Borough Council Transformation Programme and rely on both Borough Council and partner contribution to function and develop.

LAPs continue to function and they vary in how they operate and deliver and need to be constantly reviewed in order to link with new policy and legislation, in particular the Localism and Decentralisation Bill.

The Newcastle Partnership has approved its new structure and has therefore identified governance and accountability arrangements for the LAPs. A dual mapping and review of the LAPs from the context of the Borough Council and the Newcastle Partnership has identified a set of options for future development. The options contained in this report should form the basis for ongoing change and development of Locality Action Partnerships and require sign-up from the key partners involved.

The review has highlighted that the LAPs have developed, albeit at their own pace, and generally to local need and capacity. It is extremely important to recognise that in Newcastle, a significant amount of the development can be attributed to enthusiasm and a willingness of volunteers to give their time to support locality working and it is therefore difficult to impose change on many of the groups. It remains important for partners to work closely with LAPs to support the work rather than 'insist' on action.

There will need to be 'a' level of consistency across the LAPs which this review can provide, however, due to the number of people involved, varying needs and the different personalities, it is likely that the 'one size doesn't fit all' will be a concept that will be followed throughout their development, and following locality working principles, one that must be followed for localism to be true to its' form.

LAPs offer the opportunity to empower the communities that they are part of and continue to be in a position to engage service providers at a local level with councillors and residents to deliver services that meet local need. Continued support from partners is key to the future development of LAPs and locality working is essential in supporting the transfer of power to communities.

Appendix One – Methodology

The review of Locality Action Partnerships has involved a number of stages.

The Newcastle Partnership Manager has reviewed a number of key policy and legislative drivers and current documentation relating to LAPs. Following on from this, partners from the Community Safety Partnership have been sent questionnaires to complete, a number of face to face interviews have taken place with chairs and partners. The Newcastle Partnership Delivery Group have been consulted and have debated a number of options and finally two sessions have provided the opportunity for LAP attendees/community/residents groups to be involved in the review.

(1) Questionnaire to Partners

The Community Safety Partnership were sent a template and requested to respond to the following questions:

- What works?
- What doesn't?
- What needs to change?
- What needs to stay the same?
- Their governance?
- Their role in delivering partnership and individual organisation objectives?

(2) One to One interviews

Newcastle Partnership Manager met with 18 representatives of Locality Action Partnerships either chairs or partners, asking similar questions to those above and expanding on these. Many issues raised were relevant to individual LAPs however many of the issues raised were consistent across all LAPs.

(3) Newcastle Partnership Delivery Group

The Partnership Delivery Group met on 23 May 2011 to discuss a range of issues relating to locality action partnerships including boundaries, definition of a LAP, commitment to LAPs, a structured approach to Community Pride and future developments. All partners outlined a clear commitment to LAPs and a recognition that there remained a significant amount of capacity building required. Additionally partners agreed to continue with the current LAP boundaries, acknowledging the relationships developed to date and an acceptance that it was unlikely that any of the boundaries would ever align.

(4) Wider LAP involvement – Two Sessions – Orme Centre

Two sessions were held on 6 June 2011 to engage wider LAP attendees, residents associations and other community groups in the review process. Invites were sent to all LAP attendees, Aspire and Newcastle Community and Voluntary Support to disseminate to resident and community groups. The sessions utilised the 'World Cafe' tool where attendees were free to discuss the key issues and note them on the paper covering the tables, following the first set of discussions each table was asked to nominate a 'Travel Agent' who stayed on the table and the others were allocated 'traveller' roles and were asked to move to different tables to generate different conversations. The findings can be viewed on Appendix Seven.

Appendix Two - List of Interviewees

Name	LAP Involvement	Organisation
Cllr. John Cooper	Chair East Newcastle LAP	Newcastle Borough Council
Lilian Barker	Chair Greater Chesterton LAP	Resident, Chair Chesterton Communities Forum and Chesterton One Stop Shop
Cllr. Kyle Robinson	Chair Butt Lane LAP	Newcastle Borough Council
Cllr. Kyle Taylor	Chair Kidsgrove LAP	Newcastle Borough Council
Sandra Hicks	Chair Clayton, Seabridge and Westlands LAP	Resident
David Loades	Chair Newcastle Rural LAP	Resident
Cllr. Derek Huckfield	Chair Silverdale, Keele and Parkside LAP	Newcastle Borough Council
Cllr. Dylis Cornes	Chair Audley LAP	Newcastle Borough Council
Shirley Torrens	Chair Knutton Cross Heath LAP	
Ann Spilsbury	Chair Madeley and Betley LAP	Resident
Doug Morris	Chair Town, Thistleberry and Poolfields LAP	Chamber of Trade and Enterprise
Phil Maskery	Staffordshire Parish Councils Association	
Rebecca Bryant	Partner	Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
Neil Hulme, Pete Owen and Steve Lovatt	Partner	Staffordshire Police
Gail Edwards	Partner	Staffordshire County Council
Tim Edwards	Partner	Aspire Group

**List of attendees at the LAP Review – Two Sessions
Afternoon – 2-4pm**

Cllr. Frank Chapman
 Cllr. Stephen Sweeney
 Samantha Goode
 Mark Jones
 Darren Green
 Chris Taylor
 Elena Whale
 Cllr. John Cooper
 Cllr. Marion Reddish
 Cllr. Gill Heesom
 Rebecca Bryant
 Ann Spilsbury
 Mavis Brown
 Cllr. John Williams
 Viv Evans
 Cllr. Julie Cooper
 Roger Craig
 Steve Lovatt

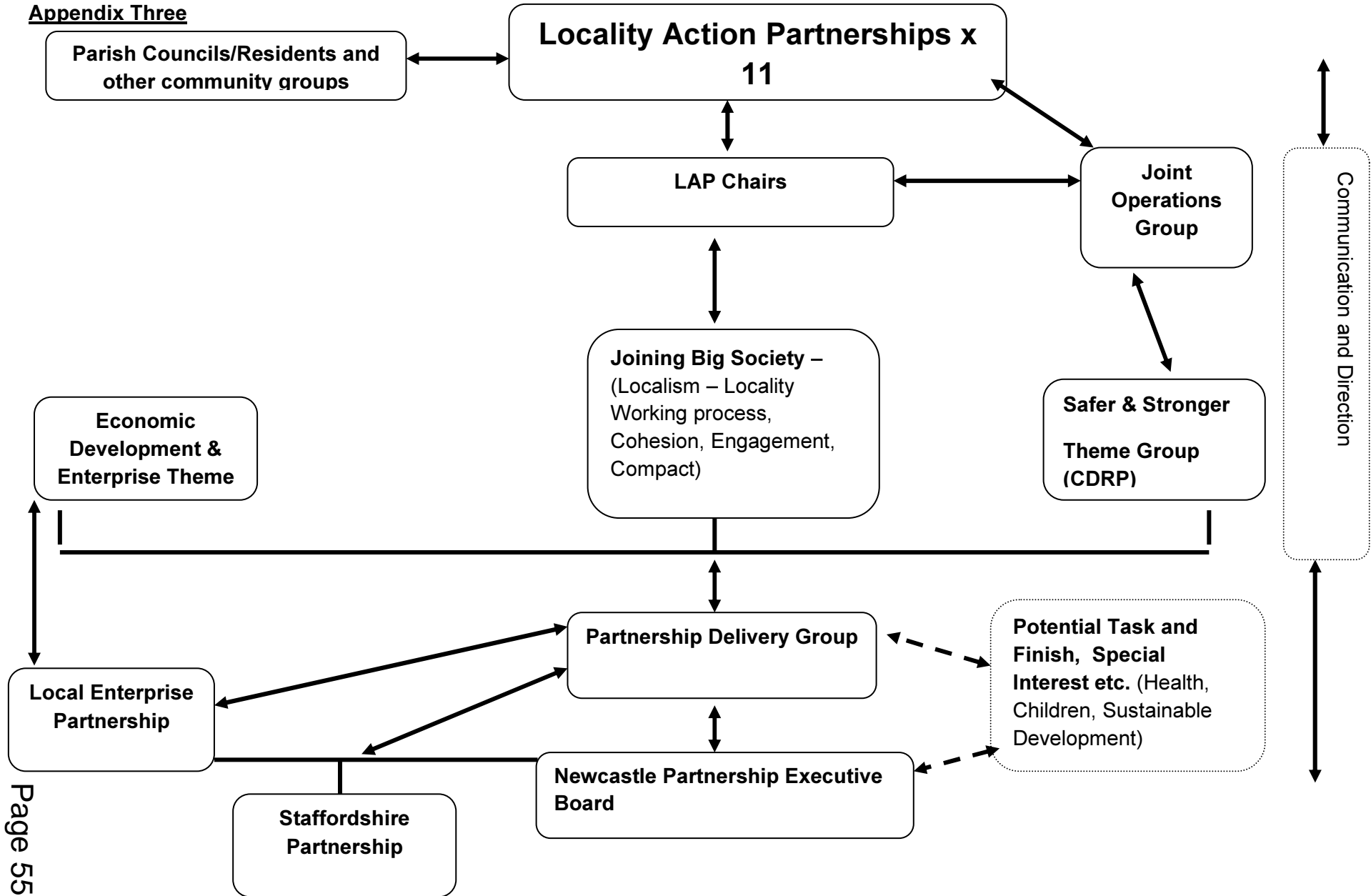
Robert Roche

Evening Session – 6-8pm

Mrs J Lancaster
Natasha Moody
Cllr. John Taylor
Cllr. David Allport

DRAFT

Appendix Three



Action Number		Action	Detail	Timescale	Lead Officer	Others involved	Partnership/Borough Council
1)		Dec 10	Develop PID	Update Newcastle Borough Council PID to reflect planned programme.	Jan-11	Naomi Chesters	Jane Sheldon Borough Council
2)		Dec 10	Executive Management Team - Initial Paper	Initial paper to EMT to highlight the aims, current arrangements and potential areas for development.	Dec-10	Naomi Chesters	Mark Bailey/EMT Borough Council
3)		Dec 10	Partnership Delivery Group - Initial Discussion	Agree Commitment to locality working and Locality Action Partnerships.	Dec-10	Naomi Chesters	PDG Partnership
4)		Dec 10	Interview - LAP Chairs	Undertake range of interviews with current Chairs of theme groups.	Jan/Feb 11	Naomi Chesters	Chairs Partnership
5)		Dec 10	Interview - Partners	Undertake range of interviews with key partners including: Staffordshire Parish Councils Association, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Staffordshire Police, Aspire, Staffordshire County Council	Feb/Mar 11	Naomi Chesters	Partners Partnership
6)		Dec 10	Update paper to Executive Management Team	Paper to EMT to update on progress made.	Mar-11	Naomi Chesters	Mark Bailey/EMT Borough Council
7)		Mar 11	Partnership Delivery Group - Extra-ordinary Meeting	The Partnership Delivery Group held on 4 March 2011 agreed to hold an extra-ordinary meeting during May 11 to confirm commitment and next steps for Locality Action Partnerships.	May-11	Naomi Chesters	PDG Partnership
8)		Mar 11	Wider consultation	Following the Active & Cohesive Communities Scrutiny Committee - an action has been raised to engage the wider Locality Action Partnership attendees in the review process - A half day workshop to take place to engage the wider attendees has been requested and added as an action.	Apr-11	Naomi Chesters	LAP Attendees/Irene Lee Partnership
9)		Dec 10	Executive Management Team - Final Report	Final report to be written and delivered to EMT highlighting the process, agreements made and next steps	May-11	Naomi Chesters	Mark Bailey/EMT Borough Council
10)		Mar 11	Partnership Executive Board	Wider partnership to agree next steps based on previous agreements by EMT and PDG. Partnership Priorities will also be determined at this meeting - following community consultation.	Jun/Jul 11	Naomi Chesters	Wider Partnership Executive Partnership



Appendix Five

Terms of Reference for 'Locality Action Partnerships'

Introduction:

The terms of reference sets down how the group operates.

The group is responsible for approving and amending the terms of reference (TOR).

It is the group's duty to ensure that these TOR are adhered to. It is the group's responsibility to report its action to the responsible bodies via the group chair person. The monitoring and evaluation of all projects undertaken by the group will be the collective responsibility of all members to provide information to be delivered to the partner agencies by the project group chairperson.

A copy of the TOR will be available to all existing and future members of the Locality Action Partnership.

Name of the Group:

The Group will be known as the Locality Action Partnership.

Locality Working and Community Planning are direct and practical ways of engaging communities in the decision-making processes that affect them. It connects partnerships and forums enabling a clear route for community priorities to influence the development of service provision, strategy and develop action relevant to need.

Area:

The terms of reference of the group encompasses the area of the Borough of Newcastle.

Wider aims of locality working areas:

To improve the quality of life of residents through the following areas of work amongst others:

- *Health development*
- *Cleaner, greener, safer*
- *Economic and enterprise development*
- *Environmental development*
- *Bringing communities together*
- *Raised aspirations and local satisfaction e.g. education, training and Life Long Learning.*
- *Cultural activities*

This will be achieved through community engagement and community cohesion along with delivery against national indicators applicable to the Borough of Newcastle as agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership and in line with the Staffordshire Local Area Agreement.

Method of operation of the Locality Action Partnership:

The Locality Action Partnership is charged with the responsibility of ensuring the delivery of targets as contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy. Such objectives can be achieved in the following manner.

- By analysis of available data provided by the Local Strategic Partnership and community consultation where necessary.
- Develop Locality Action Plans
- Establish performance management protocol for action plans
- By undertaking a problem solving approach.
- To empower the community in the decision making processes
- Provide opportunities for local people to be part of and influence the action planning process.
- To raise the awareness of need of the locality area
- To promote a positive image of the locality in a proactive manner

Relation of the Locality Action Partnership to the :-

Newcastle Safer Communities Partnership

- To under take activities as identified by the Joint Operation Group
- To provide project updates as required by the Joint Operation Group
- To identify cross cutting themes that may impact on other theme areas.
- To promote good working relationships between partners and other Locality Action Partnerships

Local Strategic Partnership:

- To deliver the community engagement strategy
- To provide quarterly exception reports from action plans when necessary LSP
- To focus service delivery in line with local and national indicators as agreed by the LSP
- Ensure structured links with other LSP theme groups as necessary

Code of Conduct for Locality Group Members:

A Locality Group member shall: -

- Be meticulous about declaring conflicts of interest.
- Treat Locality Action Partnership papers and knowledge gained at meetings confidentially.
- At times there will be a requirement for a closed section of the meeting to take place to discuss confidential or tactical deployment of resources. This will be at the discretion of the Chair and will involve relevant service providers.
- Before the minutes of meetings are circulated to attendees, they should be checked for confidentiality by the Chair of the meeting.

Locality Action Partnership Meetings:

The frequency of the meeting is the responsibility of the chair person having consulted with Locality Action Partnership members, bearing in mind the necessity of progress returns for both the LSP and the Safer Community Partnership and other LSP themes where necessary.

- There will be a minimum of 4 meetings per year with a recommended meeting cycle of every four weeks.
- The Locality Action Partnership chairperson may at their discretion form task and finish groups.
- Where ever possible group members will send apologies and nominate a deputy to attend if they cannot.
- Agenda items must be supplied to the chair person 10 working days prior to a meeting (alternatively they can be supplied to the locality administration officer. (Irene Lee 01782 742569 or email Irene.lee@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk.)
- All decisions will be taken by a simple majority whilst respecting the primacy of individual agencies. A minimum of 5 members of the group constitute a quorum.
- The maximum length of a meeting should be two hours unless it is agreed in advance that more time will be required and it is to all members' convenience.
- Every meeting should have a positive action.

Locality Action Partnership Membership (to be determined by each group):

Nominated Representatives from the LSP, CDRP and other themes

Community Representatives

Third Sector

Community & Learning Partnerships

Elected Members – Borough Council, County Council, Parish Council and Town Council (It is expected that representatives from town and parish councils will be nominated to attend the Locality Action Partnership for their area)

Professionals and specialist services as and when required

Terms of Reference for 'Locality Action Partnerships' Supplement

Role of LAP Chairs:

- LAP members to decide on appropriate chair for the group through a democratic voting process. (Nominations to be provided to the secretary prior to the voting LAP meeting)
- Voting - each Agency has 1 vote.
- It is recommended that all LAPs appoint a vice chair.
- Duration of Chair ship to be 1 year.
- To lead and be responsible for the development of the group in line with the widening remit of Locality working and action plan.
- To sign off reports produced by the Community Support Officer to the CDRP and LSP as and when required.
- To be impartial in the decision making processes of the group
- To oversee, to be accountable and responsible with the membership of the group for the LAG budget allocation.
- All chairs to undertake appropriate induction training.
- Chairs and group members to follow LAP meeting protocol (In the process of being developed)

Appendix Six

Audley LAP

Meets bi-monthly in Durber Close Meeting Rooms Audley.

Chaired by Mrs J Lancaster

Staffordshire Police:	PC and/or PCSO representation
FARS	Kelvin Chell
NBC	Joanne Morris, Rob Jones, Irene Lee,
Aspire	Louise Conneely
Others	Cllr Cornes C&LP, Residents

Projects/Progress: Community Park initiative, Community Safety day including electric blanket testing, Community Safety Calendars. Aspire/LAP and School are working together to get Miners Memorial moved to a prominent position in Church Street. Community Payback scheme working in the area. Firm link made with Parish Council. Vice Chair of Parish Council now attending LAP Meetings and PC Minutes are now available to LAP members.

Butt Lane LAP

Met bi-monthly during 2009 - 3 meetings in 2010. Chaired by Cllr Robinson.

Meets during the day@ 4.30 pm. Venues alternate between Butt Lane/Talke

Staffordshire Police	PCSO Colin Stepney and Sarah Rhodes
NBC	Mark Jones, Irene Lee,
Aspire	Sharon Plant
Others	Cllr Burgess and Cllr Robinson Residents, School, British Waterways

Projects/Progress: Chair has signed up to Greener Communities Programme run by Eon. Events organised for residents in area where Carbon Footprint identified, Advice on reducing bills and insulation will be given Low energy light bulbs and power downs will be given out. Clough Hall School pupils will be involved this initiative. Slacken Lane is being looked at to become Nature Reserve, Staffs Wildlife, Cllr Robinson and volunteers have undertaken planting in this area. Community Warden involved in project to paint the wall between Kidsgrove FC and the park to improve the appearance of the area and restore some pride in the area. It is intended to use the community payback scheme to deliver the painting while having local residents involved in clearing back vegetation. Christmas cards handed out asking residents to identify the top priority in their locality. Painting project, Road Safety initiative and additional dog fouling signs purchased.

Clayton LAP

Generally meets monthly, Chaired by Sandra Hicks (resident). Usually meets at 1.30 pm in Civic Offices but has met in the evening and meetings have been held in Clayton. Meetings now moved to be held in the locality and rotate between afternoon and evening

Staffordshire Police	PCSO representation
FARS	Alison Thomas
NBC	Jo Morris, Stan Beard, Irene Lee,
Aspire	Lee Flacket, Gary Cartlidge

Others Cllrs Sweeney, Heames,
Residents

Project/Progress - Christmas Party held for vulnerable/isolated residents including article in the Reporter. Community Pride Event to be organised later in the year. First Aid training in schools delivered. Inconsistent Councillor Attendance at this Group, meetings have been moved around to attempt to improve this. Group have commented on varying attendance of other partners at this group. ASB a consistent issue and the intervention relating to this doesn't always filter through. Burglaries theft and damage to vehicles is occurring but this information is not being flagged up at meetings. Councillors are asking for action to be taken but not attending meetings. It has proved difficult to get this Group to move away from Crime and Disorder issues so a Community Pride Event is to take place to focus Group on other issues that are in the area.

Eastern Newcastle LAP

Meets bi-monthly. Chaired by Cllr John Cooper. Meetings held in Bradwell, Wolstanton and May Bank.

Staffordshire Police Sgt Hughes and Karina Bates, Adam Evans, Dave Howell,
Maxine Shropshire

FARS T Casey

NBC Jo Morris, Stan Beard, Paul Lawson, Alan Finney, Lyndon
Ryder, Irene Lee,
Aspire Andrea Beale, Emma Williams

Others Cllrs: Simon Tagg, John Tagg, John Cooper, Julie Cooper, T
Hambleton, S Hambleton, Burke, Matthews, Woolley,
Huckfield, Bannister, Olszewski
ASDA, C&LP, local Church, Schools, Staffs FA, JET and
residents

Projects/Progress: Task and Finish Group has been set up to tackle problems with 'Boy Racers' at old MFI site. Burglaries a problem in area at present so Community Warden to be involved in fitting shed alarms. Chair and Vice Chair re-elected for another 1 year term. Meetings well attended with a mix of Cllrs and residents. Community Pride events have taken place including Illegal money lending team and financial inclusion advice (targeted). Thermometer Cards issued highlighting a number of organisations and the importance of keeping the right temperature in the home for health and wellbeing, energy and cost saving.

Chesterton LAP

Meets monthly- Chaired by Lilian Barker. Meeting held in Holy Trinity Church Hall Chesterton.

Staffordshire Police Sgt Hughes, Rob Morgan, Stephen Chawner-Brown, Paul
Rooney, Gareth Jenner

FARS Simon Joynson, Kelvin Chell

NBC Mark Jones, Alex Phillips, Kev Byrne, Scott Baron.

Aspire Darren Green, Louise Robinson, Natalie Snell,

Others Cllrs Johnson, S Simpson, Boden, Cllr Huckfield,

Cornes (SCC), C&LP, Salvation Army, FEI/JET, Youth Service, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, CVS and residents

Projects/Progress:

X Box sessions are very popular and football sessions held at CCSC well attended. Christmas Fair was a great success. One Stop Shop has been opened 10 years this year so celebrations are planned. Road Shows to be held in summer and residents feedback to be address through Community Pride Event.

Greater Chesterton LAP Action Plan is firmly in place. Road Shows will be revisited during June and July 2011. All Partners engaged with LAP. Police have distributed purse bells.

Kidsgrove LAP

Meets bi-monthly, Chair is Cllr. Kyle Taylor. Meetings held in Kidsgrove Town Hall.

Staffordshire Police	Sgt Rich Moors, Dave Woodward, Damien Wright, Nikki Daniels, Caroline Stevens
FARS	None
NBC	Alex Phillips, Graham Williams, Michelle Bailey, Mark Jones, Irene Lee.
Aspire	Sharon Plant
Others	Cllrs Morrey, Maxfield, Bowyer, Roberts, Taylor, Robinson, Locke, Youth Service, JET, C&LP, Town Council, residents and residents groups

Project/Progress: Cllr Kyle Taylor has been appointed as Chair and Cllr G Locke as Vice Chair. CCTV Camera has been installed and linked into Tesco system. Better Lighting needs to be addressed. Action Plan has been refreshed. Expansion of Membership and own Logo to be implemented. Mulit-sports sessions arranged and funded by the LAP.

Knutton and Cross Heath LAP

Meets monthly. Chaired by Shirley Torrens. Meetings held alternatively in Knutton and Cross Heath.

Staffordshire Police	PCSOs Keely Bryan, Sue Holt
FARS	Simon Joynson
NBC	Lyndon Ryder, Paul Lawson, Peter Stepien, Jo Morris, Irene Lee, Robin Wiles.
Aspire	Ingrid Pearce, Maxine Hopson,
Others	Cllrs Gill Williams, John Williams, Nixon, Snell, Children's Centre, Youth Service, CAB, Coalfields Regeneration Trust, County, C&LP, CVS, local Churches, Newcastle Countryside Project, residents and residents groups

Projects/Progress: ASB hotspots remain but funded has been agreed to tackle this issue. Newsletter to be produced quarterly and printed by Council. Discussions have taken place about possibility of holding a Community Pride Event. Community is coming together and there is less of a divide between the areas. Agencies are not always present at meetings.

Residents Re-united is going from strength to strength. A number of successful events have been organised for residents to enjoy. Computers for All has been funded which provides access to computers and training for the wider community at Ramsey Road. Fishing mentoring project funded to engage young people in positive activities. Christmas toy appeal, tree planting and Big Green Day have all been funded and supported by the LAP.

Madeley LAP

Meets Bi Monthly. Chaired by Ann Spilsbury, Resident FARS. Meets at Madeley High School.

Staffordshire Police	Rob Dolman, Neil Coward, PC Bridgett, PC Bountford, PcsO Cartwright.
FARS	S Snape, A Topham, P Griffin, S Durber, L Urwin.
NBC	Jo Morris, Irene Lee,
Aspire	Carol Yearsley,
Others	Cllr Morris, Cllr Beckett, Parish Council, High School, Primary School, C&LP, Connexions, residents, Village Agent.

Projects/Progress: Ann Spilsbury has been appointed as the new Chair. The Parish Council and LAP are working in Partnership. Police have been involved in purchasing and distributing security equipment, A gap in youth provision for the under 12's has been identified. The Communication Network has been improved and volunteers will be trained to help in search Operations. Communities Awards Evening to be organised to recognise Volunteers. OWL scheme is being promoted. Youth Bus has visited area to find out what youths want that is not already provided. Permission to use Rural Roundabout to take youths outside the area has been obtained. Group to look at project to help search for missing people. Funding has been provided to tree safety initiative in Betley, purchase of Defibrillators for the First Response team and provision of a community angling club.

Newcastle Rural LAP

Meets bi-monthly, Chaired by David Loades (resident and now Councillor). Meetings take place in each PC Area in turn.

Staffordshire Police	PC Bridgett, Rich Moores, Neil Coward, PcsOs Colin Hodgkinson, Jon Cartwright.
FARS	Harry Roberts, Rich Williams
NBC	Stan Beard, Irene Lee.
Aspire	Carol Yearsley
Others	Cllrs Howells, Tomkins (NBC) Cllr Chapman (SCC), Parish Councils: Maer & Aston, Chorlton, Loggerheads, and Whitmore Community First Responders, C&LP, Baldwins Gate Primary, Hugo Meynell Primary, Residents.

Projects/Progress: Newcastle Rural- Maer Parish Council and Loggerheads have bought their own Grit spreaders to put grit on rural roads that are not gritted by Staffordshire County Council. Work Club is now held at the One Stop Shop. A Lifestyle Project to be launched in March to share skills i.e. decorating and carpentry or skills to complete financial applications. A Dignity in Care scheme to be introduced to engage elderly and lonely. A Letter is to be sent out to attendees to expand membership. Membership of the Group needs to be expanded with representatives from different organisations that operate in the area i.e. Befrienders. Lifestyle Project is ongoing. Parish Councils have been spoken to about the Locality Action Partnership and there has been positive feedback. Project regarding ASB to be undertaken. It does exist in area but residents do not always report it. Some progress has been made on Highway issues. Whitmore Village development has received funding from the LAP and a consultation on road safety has taken place relating to the junction on the A51/A53.

Town Centre LAP

Meets monthly, chair is Doug Morris, Chamber of Trade and Enterprise. Meetings are held at the Civic Offices.

Staffordshire Police	Steve Lovatt, Insp Neil Hulme, Sgt Mark Speedman, Pc Roger Craig Pcs0 Laura Drayton,
FARS	Kelvin Chell
NBC	Trevor Smith, Mark Jones, Stan Beard, Elaine Burgess, Alan Finney, Irene Lee, Rob Avann, Michelle Bailey,
Aspire	Jennifer Welsh, Kelly Colclough
Others	Cllrs Reddish and Jones Chamber of Trade, Civic Society, County Council, McDonalds, Salvation Army, Market Traders Association, Residents and Residents groups.

Projects/Progress:

The Group have looked at how it operates and what it can do. Consultation exercise is being undertaken by Aspire in the Poolfields area. Town Centre benefit from activity from various partners and the wider partnership and therefore the LAP can free up some of their time to focus on Poolfields and Thistleberry. This work is yet to be progressed.

Silverdale LAP

Meets monthly. Chaired by Cllr D Huckfield, recent change to Cllr. George Cairns. Meetings are held in Silverdale Library

Staffordshire Police	Inspector Neil Hulme, PC, Nick Sheehan, Pcs0's Richard Taderek Sue Durber
NBC	Lyndon Ryder, Mark Jones, Paul Lawson, Irene Lee.
Aspire	Carol Yearsley.
Others	Cllrs Huckfield, Braithwaite, Nixon, Cairns, Simon Tagg, Naylon, Cairns, Studd, Snell

Keele Parish Council, Silverdale Parish Council, Post Office, Elim Church, Methodist Church, Silverdale Primary School, CRT, Sanctuary Housing Association, Local Doctor's Surgery, Staffs Wildlife Trust, Youth Service, residents and residents groups

Projects/Progress: Christmas event isolated elderly in area was very successful. Traffic Action Day to be held to address growing problems with HGV's coming through village. Litter picks arranged and Community Payback to help restore Racecourse Pathway. Representatives from all 3 areas now attend this meeting. Health Event requested. Funding provided for alarms, property marking equipment, Green Flag award, Boxing Day meal, lighting to prevent vandalism on community property and replacement of community notice boards.

Appendix Seven – Results of Two Sessions on 6 June 2011

Table 1

Chair skills

- Delegation
- Control of Meetings
- Time Keeping
- Creditability
- Get hands dirty

Must have Admin Support to assist progress

- NBC Staff
- Aspire

E Bulletins, Blogs and online forums.

Not as many Community Representatives as we need (Group View).
Stats are provided but not enough clarity as to what they mean.

Funding Streams booklet to support applications for external funding.
Who owns the actions?

Chair Training

Information to lead to contacts for subject area

- LAP Level operation
- Work/feedback
- Funding
- Share Work
- IT Skills
- Training
- Social networking
- School/Doctors/PTA, Governors/Staffs

Public Relations-'You said- We did'- Evaluation Strategy

Not enough Task and Finish Groups

More specific action plans-not too many at the same time

Capital v Revenue funding-able to allocate as and when.

- Missing Groups/Members
- Local Businesses
- Education/Schools
- Health
- Group View

Some exceptions if unable to attend send information or written reports and signposting.

Source of information and support

Filter to use partnership website/newsletters

Table 2

Local Issues

- Lack of Community Engagement
- Set up Residents Associations
- Friday night Town Centre Drinking

Market the LAPs

Facebook, networks. Localised info (hard copy)

Education

- Draw on skills of establishment/Students
- Need better links

LAPs need to be serviced by County Council

Observe other LAPs

Why no PCT involvement-Ivory Towers/Confidentiality

Prescribed Menu-pick 3 from 12 use funding for chosen issues

Better Communication but more action

Widen the membership of LAPs Doctors/ Businesses

Fragmentations of LAPs i.e. different areas have different needs and resources.

Difference between urban and rural LAPs.

Where do Parish Council and Residents Associations fit in?

There needs to be a link to avoid duplication.

If no PC than LAP needs to pull together other members to address Community issues.

Housing-Social Landlords, Absentee Private Landlords.

ASB –Communication from LAP

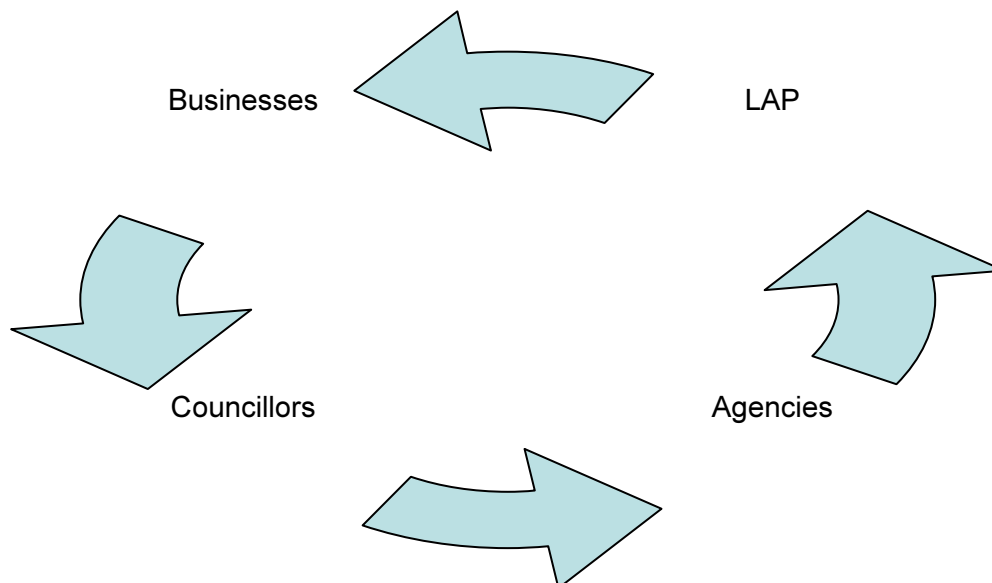


Table 3

Involvement of young people-Volunteering Ops
Keele Uni /College- to provide support for LAPs

Relationship between LAPs and Town Council needs Clarity
How to link with Schools-PTA/PTFA, Parents Representatives and Governors.

Payback Scheme.

You said –we did-Honesty best policy.
Partnership communal newsletter –trial project.

Newsletter – more local-Police/Fire/County share some pages.

Should be relevant to specific areas.

Card leaving-Information drop.
Shops A34 safer shopping-ownership-ownership of footpath

Laps –Individual aims/Objectives to engage monitoring, evaluation and success.
Borough wide Targets in comparison to other areas.
Celebrate individual LAP successes to encourage engagement to encourage positive group.
Good strong Chair person skills and members tasked with outcomes.
College/FE attendees to engage further.
Residents missing
Community panels duplication
Greater participation by members and members need to work.
Chairpersons Blog-better use of IT/Facebook-website tweets
Use council local members on email.
Members from C&LP, Education etc, need more local people, residents as members use IT
to link more people in. More Young People, Schools etc. Use student skills, College and
Keele UNI to support LAPs with IT skills.

Table 4

What is right in an area – can it be mapped as good practice on other areas? More investments required to put things right rather than expand good practice.

Chairs should have a focus on the whole area not just their street- training should be available.

Realistic wish list – some issues will never be resolved.

Communication between residents groups and LAPs –relationship between Parish/LAPs sometimes very good sometimes poor.

Identifying level of expert needed to help with an issue-accountability for results.

- Lack of Resident involvement
- Publicity needed
- LAP Roadshow

Admin support – essential communication (co-ordinating role-very useful)

There is no County Council involvement at the moment-in some cases there is no Councillor involvement.

- **Some District Councillors would never go to a LAP.**

Should have employment issues a regular Agenda item. Question Health involvement- not sure what issues are.

Timings of meetings-evenings

Inviting expert advice when issue warrants.

Need information/Stats i.e. Health to identify issues.

Specialist one off overview sessions/Talks.

Very good involvement from Police, Aspire, Streetscene.

Identifying level of expert needed to help with an issue-accountability for results.

LAP Review – Evening Session 6 June 2011

Chairs Training

Don't raise expectations of Communities if you can't deliver outcomes.

Make sure we are aware of what other partners are doing- to avoid duplication.
Also be aware of what major agencies are planning because of the impact that they may have e.g. major building work could cause road closures.

Parish Councils in some areas look on LAPs as a threat.

Agenda's should be carefully planned to address local issues.
Partnership Team often do not promote themselves enough- often devices are provided but they are not badged up as a partnership initiative.

Make use of Schools Moodle systems for consultation exercises.
State clearly expectations of members of LAP's because some people cannot.

Councillors most important as links from Council to Council workers to communities can put pressure on to make things happen.

TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMMES UPDATE

Submitted by: Head of Business Improvement & Partnerships

Portfolios: Customer Services and Transformation
Resources and Efficiency

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To provide an update for members on the various elements of the Newcastle under Lyme BC (NBC) Transformation Programmes.

Recommendation

It is recommended that: -

- Cabinet notes the report contents;
- Cabinet agrees to receive further updates in its role as a key element of the Council's Strategic Programme Board, alongside the Executive Management Team (EMT);
- Cabinet makes suggestions for further inclusion in any of the change programmes set out in the report in terms of projects or areas for further examination; and
- Cabinet instructs the Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships, as the Programme's Manager, to continue to provide these updates as the officer responsible corporately for programme and project management for the Council and also instructs the Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships to make any necessary updates as outlined in the previous recommendation

Reasons

To ensure Members are updated on the major programmes of transformation projects aimed to secure efficient, effective and modernised services across the Council.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 In February 2010 Cabinet, supported by EMT, approved the initial development of a Transformation Programme for the Council with a view to delivering and further developing the Programme within and beyond the next three financial years.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the Programme and supplements previous reports to Cabinet in June and September 2010, and also in March 2011. Further updates were also provided to the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee in September 2010 and March 2011.
- 1.3 This latest report covers: -
 - Updates on the Transformation Programme itself, including changes to the Programme's structure and the development of further change programmes;
 - Further updates on the projects which make up the Transformation and other change

- programmes currently being developed by the Authority, and
 - Outline of next steps for Members to consider beyond the scope and lifespan of these programmes, where relevant
- 1.4 Members will recall that the initial development of the Transformation Programme included a series of 'gateway' reviews by Cabinet/EMT (the Strategic Programme Board). Each of the constituent projects which made up the Transformation Programme were examined at critical stages so as to provide assurance that: -
- the original business cases retained value
 - each project aligned with corporate priorities,
 - each project was progressing successfully to delivery.
- 1.5 Following the completion of the gateway review process in July 2010 and since then, the list of projects which made up the final Transformation Programme was further divided into those having the necessary infrastructure in place to be delivered immediately and those which require further development prior to delivery. As a result, some projects have now been removed from the Transformation Programme, as they have either been included with other projects or programmes or have now been completed.
- 1.6 The Council has updated its programme management since July 2010, and these updates are included in this report. (see Appendix A).
- 1.7 The Transformation Programme originally had a set of key aims which it was designed to deliver. These were:
- Delivering efficiency savings;
 - Developing new ways of working (leading potentially to cultural change);
 - Improving performance; and
 - Improving customer service
- 1.8 These remain the focus of the Transformation Programme and also TWWW and TBC explained below.
- 1.9 Building on the aims of the Transformation Programme, the projects covered by the Programme were divided into a number of categories of activity: -
- Reviewing the Council's accommodation needs
 - Delivering cashable and non-cashable efficiencies
 - Improving performance through a range of service changes
 - Achieving environmental improvements
 - Achieving improved customer service
- 1.10 In order to build on these achievements, the Council's Cabinet asked the then-newly appointed Chief Executive (in January 2011) to re-structure the Transformation Programme in order to focus on those projects which are seen as integral to establishing a 'critical path' for delivering change across the organisation as a whole and also delivering against the key aims set out above of the Transformation Programme.
- 1.11 The structure now consists of 3 parts:-
- The Transformation Programme (TP)
 - The Way We Work Programme (TWWW)
 - The Business of the Council (TBC)

- 1.12 The TWWW Programme and covers the following projects (previously in the original Transformation Programme): -
- Review of Council accommodation
 - Home working
 - Flexible working
 - Electronic Document/Record Management System (EDRMS)
- 1.13 The ambition of the TWWW Programme was to deliver the aims set out by the Transformation Programme by achieving 'step change' in the projects listed above.
- 1.14 Concerning the TBC, the Cabinet has now requested the Chief Executive to examine the democratic workings of the Council in order to ensure that these continue to be both fit for purpose and also are efficient and represent value for money. A number of projects are currently being developed along these lines and the newly-developed TBC Programme will also feature existing projects that were formerly a part of the Transformation Programme – the Committee Administration project and the Locality Action Partnership (LAP) Review.
- 1.15 Each of the three ongoing NBC transformation programmes has the Head of Business Improvement & Partnerships (formerly Performance and Transformation) as Programme Manager. The Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships also acts as the corporate lead responsible for programme and project management for the Council.

2. The Council's Transformation Programmes – Update on Activity

- 2.1 As already covered by this report, there are three change and transformation programmes ongoing within the Council. These are: -
- Transformation Programme (TP)
 - The Way We Work Programme (TWWW)
 - The Business of the Council (TBC)
- 2.2 Members have received updates on a number of the projects which form part of these transformation programmes in previous reports. This report does not seek to repeat this information, but provide further updates on individual projects.
- 2.3 It should be noted that Appendix A sets out the detailed status of each individual project.
- 2.4 In terms of the TP, the following 'live' and ongoing projects are currently cover: -
- Time and attendance management system – the system is now in place in a number of service areas and locations. Work is ongoing to roll out to the depot in July 2011
 - Staff Recognition and Reward Scheme – the scheme is currently being reviewed, based on the lessons learnt from the project previously and the award ceremony held in November 2010
 - Town Centre Partnerships – the ultimate aim of the project is to create a Business Improvement District (BID) for the town centre in Newcastle. In order to do this, a shadow company needs to be created, and this process is ongoing. Other aspects of the project are being developed and delivered around event organisation and profile raising
 - Customer Relationship Management (CRM) – funding and other aspects of the process of purchasing a new CRM system are being examined and further updates will be provided when more details are available through organisations such as

Staffs Connects

- Customer Insight – work is ongoing with Staffordshire County Council to procure data across the county which will assist in the development of services based on customer/citizen profile and lifestyle information
- Web Services – examining the potential for channel shift where possible and enhancing the availability of services through the web
- Customer Services Standards – review ongoing, with a view to introducing improvements in key service areas

2.3 In addition to these ongoing projects, Members will recall that there have been a number of other projects that have been included at various stages of the Programme since its inception. These have been covered in more detail in previous reports to Cabinet.

2.4 Since the last report to Cabinet on the Programme in March 2011, the following project has been delivered: -

- Health and Safety Management Software – a new system (Target 100) has now been procured and implemented. Staff have now been trained in use of the new system. The processes covered by the system are now working well across the organisation.

2.5 The projects which form part of the TWWW Programme (following the restructure instigated by cabinet in January 2011) have seen developments in the following areas:

- Accommodation Review – a series of studies have been completed to establish the Council's accommodation needs in terms of its buildings. As a result of this work and negotiations with key partners (Police, Staffordshire CC and NHS North Staffordshire amongst others) discussions are now ongoing for some or all of these organisations to move into the Civic Offices with the concurrent benefits for partnership working and additional income for the Borough Council.
- Home working – a pathfinder was completed in April 2011, which examined the logistical issues in terms of encouraging and enabling staff to work from home. The pathfinder looked at areas such as equipment needs, infrastructure issues and other matters. The results of the pathfinder was the creation and development of a scheme for homeworking in the authority. This scheme was supported by the Employees Consultative Committee in June 2011 and work is ongoing to roll out the process across the organisation. It is envisaged that more homeworkers may ease the pressures on council buildings, although the scheme is not compulsory. Different options are also being examined around providing hotdesking facilities for council staff in the future.
- Mobile working – a number of potential areas which could benefit from mobile (or flexible) working are currently being examined, such as inspection tasks. In addition, technological options and solutions are also being examined to see if they match with the requirements of the council in the long-term.
- EDRMS(Electronic Document/Record Management System) – a number of further developments have been seen as part of the project, including securing the appropriate software to support the change to electronic storage of documents and records across the Council's services and the storage of this information. Work is also ongoing in terms of the needs of each service area in this respect.

2.6 The third area of change is TBC. This Programme is focused on those areas which cover the democracy and constitution of the council and also how the authority engages with its communities and other key stakeholders.

2.7 This Programme is very much a work in progress, but does contain two projects which were formerly part of the original Transformation Programme. In terms of updates these include the following: -

- Locality Action Partnership (LAP) Review – this project has now completed a report on the LAPs, their remit and function and purpose. This was presented to the Borough Council's Cabinet in September 2011, following consideration by all aspects of the Borough's partnership structures. Work on implementing the recommendations set out in the report will begin from September 2011 onwards
- Committee Management System – this refers to the project designed to procure and deliver the Modern.Gov software system into the Council. Since the last update to Cabinet, training has been provided to key officers in the council; tests have been done on the system and the system has also been populated. It is likely that the new system will go 'live' before the end of 2011.

2.8 It is expected that the Programme will include a range of additional projects, although some of these are not yet live. The list is currently as follows: -

- Review of the Council's constitution – building on work already done by various groups and by Members and officers
- Scrutiny – taking forward the recommendations arrived at by the peer review earlier this year
- Member training and development – to be considered alongside a Member working group and to include the provision of ICT to elected Members
- Member support – the provision of support to elected Members from officers and also via ICT
- Allowances – review of the level and detail of allowances to elected Members
- Reports – how reports are provided and organised
- Mayoralty – to review the provision of support for the Mayor and the Mayor's office

2.9 This section represents a full update of transformation and change activity currently ongoing in the Council. It should be noted, however, that this is not a static list and other projects and areas of focus can be added to these programmes at any time.

3. **Next Steps**

3.1 As previously reported and set out for Members, regular reports (on a quarterly basis unless otherwise requested) will continue to come to Cabinet, enabling Members to continue to take an overall, strategic view and to review progress. Members can then be assured that projects are progressing towards delivery and that any further issues arising which need a strategic steer are identified.

3.2 Work will progress on delivery of the Programmes set out in this report under the auspices of Cabinet and EMT as the Council's Strategic Programme Board and regular meetings will take place with project managers in order to progress delivery of individual projects – carried out by the Programme Manager.

3.3 A number of projects have further developed project plans, including establishing detailed roles and responsibilities for each project and for the Programmes as a whole and these will continue to be reviewed and developed.

3.4 Again, as before, Members may now wish to consider the next steps in relation to how the Council deals with the change and transformation agendas in moving forward. Members will note that the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) indicates that the

financial picture remains challenging and the focus of ongoing change will be on identifying and securing efficiency savings and also increasingly focusing on how the organisation responds to the challenges of the localism agenda and continues to deliver quality services to its citizens.

3.5 In addressing the developing approaches to change, the Council will seek to address a variety of key areas including:

- the organisation's culture;
- the way the organisation organises its service areas;
- identifying ways to improve the processes used by the Council in delivering its services
- improving outcomes for the Borough as a whole.

3.6 It is envisaged that this work will be taken forward by Cabinet/EMT as the Strategic Programme Board for the authority through the development of a clear structure of programme and project management aimed at delivering positive change for the organisation over the next 2-3 financial years.

4. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

4.1 These were identified and included in all the original Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) considered by Cabinet/EMT at the business justification stage between April-July 2010. They have been further considered as part of the Programme development set out in this report.

4.2 The PIDs and other key project documentation continues to be reviewed and developed into project and programme plans since initial approval by Cabinet/EMT and have – in most cases – been developed into more detailed project plans within the wider Programmes.

5 **Legal and Statutory Implications**

5.1 These have been considered in relation to each individual project.

6. **Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 The Programmes will be able to support the Council's work on equalities. There are no specific impacts arising from this report.

7. **Financial and Resource Implications**

7.1 Projects will be developed within existing resources where possible and others will be scoped in detail as required.

8. **Major Risks**

8.1 The overall programme risks will be assessed and mitigated. Projects within the programmes will be risk assessed to the appropriate level of detail.

9. **Key Decision Information**

9.1 None, but will apply to certain individual projects.

10. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

10.1 On 15 September 2010 and 22 March 2011, Cabinet resolved to note the report and agree to further updates on the Transformation Programme.

11. **List of Appendices**

Appendix 'A' – Transformation Programme/TWWW Programme/TBC Programme updates.

12. **Background Papers**

None.

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Transformation Programme - Projects – Ongoing							
No.	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies Interfaces	Status – September 2011
1	Web Services - improved access and information	Increasing the numbers of transactional services available via the internet and encourage 'channel shift' and integrated service delivery. Improve the quality, clarity, timeliness and range of information to customers on the web.	Cllr Nigel Jones	John Sellgren	Phil Jones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Management System • TWWW Sub-Programme • Mobile Working • Accommodation Review • Customer Insight 	Continual and steady progress is being made on the transformation of the Council's website. Now moving towards undertaking channel shift where possible. Four areas of focus are Revenues & Benefits; Recycling & Waste; Leisure & Cultural Service and the Home Page. Work is progressing, but some hold ups due to heavy pressure on resources and some technological issues. Working with Customer Services & ICT (through the use of Customer Insight) to establish benchmarking for existing customer contact.

Transformation Programme - Projects – Ongoing							
No.	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies Interfaces	Status – September 2011
2	Customer Insight	Better informed service delivery linked to customer needs. Further develop and utilise detailed socio-economic and geographic data to better focus information and service ability on all sections of the community (social Inclusion).	Cllr Nigel Jones	Kelvin Turner	Jeanette Hilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web Services • TWWW Sub-Programme 	Work ongoing with Staffs Connects currently procuring customer insight data Staffordshire-wide which will enhance our current Borough data. Given notice to Experian in anticipation of this. Training in the use of customer insight data continues.
3	Time & Attendance Management System	Modernise time recording systems to improve efficiency.	Cllr Ashley Howells	Kelvin Turner	Sarah Taylor/Audrey Clowes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Working • Mobile Working 	On schedule. Completed the Civic Offices & some remote sites. Started the roll out at the depot during July 2011.
4	Staff recognition and reward scheme	To introduce the scheme to encourage, recognise and reward specific good performance by staff (not PRP).	Cllr Ashley Howells	Kelvin Turner	Sarah Taylor		Currently reviewing the scheme.

Transformation Programme - Projects – Ongoing							
No.	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies Interfaces	Status – September 2011
5	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Development /Service Integration	Evaluate options for future CRM to deliver one customer record, 'tell us once' capability and with all service software systems integrated or linked. Implementation of optimum solution sought.	Cllr Ashley Howells/Cllr Nigel Jones	Kelvin Turner	Jeanette Hilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile working • Home working • ICT review 	Final implementation date dependent on funding position and links with Staffs Connects. Considering alternatives and partnership opportunities. Update report to EMT on options to be considered is being worked on.
6	Customer Service Standards Roll-out	Improving our service standards to a consistent level across all service areas to ensure a positive, speedy and customer friendly response/excellent service.	Cllr Nigel Jones	Kelvin Turner	Jeanette Hilton		Roll out in Revenues and Benefits in the first instance.

Transformation Programme - Projects – Ongoing							
No.	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies Interfaces	Status – September 2011
7	Town Centre Partnerships	To examine the case for establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) in the town centre to provide additional resources/capacity to secure enhanced services (including the provision of marketing) and to improve the viability of Newcastle Town Centre for the benefit of both the businesses and residents.	Cllr Robin Studd	Neale Clifton	Trudi Barnard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locality Action Partnerships 	Pre-Board (for the Town Centre Partnership) established in January 2011. No company set yet (as required by the BID process) with slippage on this from original date of April 2011 (mainly due to lack of capacity from all partners). Group is still establishing its Terms of Reference etc and also establishing its remit. Work is ongoing re: establishment of a company limited by guarantee- Oct 2011 is now a more realistic completion date. Events Sub-Group has been set up to seek to increase footfall and raise profile of the Town Centre. Communications being arranged between NBC and the TCP.

The Way We Work Programme - Projects ongoing							
No.	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies/ Interfaces	Status – September 2011
8	Home Working	Arranging for a significant number of staff to be able to work remotely with home as their base with hot desking available as needed.	Cllr Ashley Howells	Kelvin Turner	Richard Durrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation Review Mobile Working EDRMS ICT review 	Scheme consulted on, piloted and agreed with Employees Consultative Committee. Rolling out the processes developed as part of the pilot, and seeking to develop hotdesking facilities.
9	Mobile Working	Providing some front line staff and managers with the appropriate mobile technology to work efficiently and effectively in the field. Hot desking facilities where appropriate and clear links with home working projects.	Cllr Ashley Howells/Cllr Nigel Jones	Dave Adams	Julie Ray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation Review Home Working CRM EDRMS LAPs Review 	Opportunities for service area pilots being reviewed. Links with technological solutions adopted by authority, which are currently being reviewed.
10	Electronic Document/Record Management System (EDRMS)	Review and development of prioritised, corporate approach to document imaging. Impact on storage requirements and links to home and mobile working.	Cllr Ashley Howells/Cllr Nigel Jones	Kelvin Turner	Rose Bloor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile Working Home Working Accommodation Review 	Work ongoing to develop schedule following production of policy relating to record retention and disposal. Upgrades of existing software underway.

The Way We Work Programme - Projects ongoing							
No.	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies/ Interfaces	Status – September 2011
11	Review of the Council's Accommodation	Review of the Council's buildings and facilities with a view to developing an analysis which seeks to utilise the space more effectively and potentially create the opportunity for other organisations to use these buildings in exchange for additional rental income.	Cllr Ashley Howells/Cllr Nigel Jones	Neale Clifton	Jeff Hamnett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDRMS • Home working • Flexible Working 	<p>Negotiations ongoing with potential tenants and agreements being developed on use of the Civic Offices by Police, Staffordshire CC and NHS. Now agreed lease with the NHS, who will move into the Civic Offices in September 2011. Also agreed Heads of Terms with the Police and Staffordshire County Council. Target dates of January 2012 for Police to move in and July 2012 for County Council to move in. Work underway on office moves within the Council, and analysis ongoing in terms of capacity of other operational buildings to house partner organisations.</p>

The Business of the Council - Projects ongoing							
No	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies/ Interfaces	Status – September 2011
12	Committee Management System	To provide an effective committee management system to ensure an effective and efficient approach to committee management.	Cllr Ashley Howells/Cllr Nigel Jones	John Sellgren	Paul Clisby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web Services • Customer Insight 	Training sessions held and more planned, where required. Residents and other stakeholders now able to start an e-petition online. The system has now been populated and draft agendas have been used to test the system. Likely to become 'live' before the end of the year (2011).

The Business of the Council - Projects ongoing							
No	Project	Description	Portfolio Holder	Executive Sponsor	Project Manager	Interdependencies/ Interfaces	Status – September 2011
13	Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs)	To provide effective support and development for elected members, in growing LAPs to ensure community ideas and views, supported by data come together to support the Partnership in delivering the priorities listed within the Sustainable Community Strategy and NBC Corporate Plan.	Cllr Stephen Sweeney	John Sellgren	Mark Bailey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Working • BID 	Report now developed and presented to Cabinet (September 2011); Partnership Delivery Group (June 2011) and Partnership Executive Board (July 2011). New arrangements to be implemented before the end of 2011.

JUBILEE 2 UPDATE

Submitted by: Executive Director - Regeneration & Development

Portfolio: Regeneration and Planning/Culture and Active Communities

Ward(s) affected: All (particularly Town)

Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with information about progress relating to the development of the Jubilee 2 centre since your last meeting and to facilitate associated decisions.

Recommendations

- (a) That the progress in delivery of the 'Jubilee 2' centre is noted.
- (b) The Cabinet endorse Officers recommendations that the Council enters into a Licence Agreement with the preferred Cafeteria operator for the Jubilee 2 centre.
- (c) That the Council enters into a contract with Staffordshire County Council to procure the Section 278 Highways Works in relation to the Jubilee 2 development in accordance with the project plan.

Reasons

To facilitate the decision-making and delivery processes regarding the provision of leisure facilities in the Jubilee 2 centre for the residents of the Borough and achieve the Council's aspirations of delivering the project before the end of 2011.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 On 20 July 2011 Cabinet noted the progress made on the development of the Jubilee 2 centre. Given the significance of the project Members requested that a monthly update report should be provided to Cabinet and this is the latest such report.

2. **Issues/Progress Update**

- 2.1 The capital build phase of the Jubilee 2 centre is now seventy five percent complete, with the contractor entering into their forty seventh week on site out a contractual period of sixty two weeks.
- 2.2 The programme for completion of the building remains in line with the Council's aspirations of opening Jubilee 2 to the general public in January 2012, with the anticipated capital cost of the project remaining within the budget envelope of £10.5 million.
- 2.3 As part of Morgan Sindall's obligations to the Council, they continue to monitor the use of local labour on site. Your Officers are pleased to report that in the last month over half of labour came from within a thirty minute drive time of the site, which is a creditable achievement given the specialist nature of some trades.
- 2.4 Since your last meeting the following works have been undertaken as part of the construction process:-

- Tiling has now commenced on the first floor and in the training pool;
- The feature brickwork panel on school street has been completed;
- The zinc cladding works to the second floor are nearing completion;
- Internal walls on the first and second floor are nearing completion.

2.5 At the time of writing this report the procurement procedures for the operator of the cafeteria and vending machines for the centre were about to conclude. Given the significance of this appointment the procurement procedure has followed best practice guidelines. In order to comply with the latter this opportunity was advertised nationally. The selection criteria for the appointment were based upon best practice and the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (M.E.A.T.) selection criteria were applied to evaluate quality and price. In this instance the ratio between Quality and Price was 60% Quality and 40% Price. A detailed breakdown of the shortlisted companies will be provided for your consideration at your meeting, where your Officers will recommend the preferred Cafeteria Operator for your endorsement. The award of contract will be subject to the statutory ten day standstill period. It should be noted that the rental income that will be received from the preferred operator is in line with the previously agreed business plan for the Jubilee 2 centre.

2.6 Members will be aware that as part of the centre's development the County Council Highways Department required improvements to the surrounding highways. In summary this included the provision of two bus shelters, a pedestrian crossing point on School Street, the reinstatement of the footways around the site, and the provision of disabled car parking bays. On the Councils behalf the County Council has benchmarked the costs of these works and it is proposed that these works should be undertaken by Enterprise as part of the County Council's Framework Agreement. The cost to the council of undertaking these works will be up to £127,075 (which incorporates a fifteen per cent contingency) and will be met from the project's £10.5 million budget.

3 **Proposal**

- 3.1 That Cabinet note the progress on project delivery (in accordance with the Project Plan).
- 3.2 The Cabinet endorse Officers recommendations that the Council enters into a Licence Agreement with the preferred Cafeteria operator for Jubilee 2.
- 3.3 That the Council enters into a contract with Staffordshire County Council to procure the Section 278 Highway works in relation to Jubilee 2 in accordance with the project plan.

4. **Reasons for the Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 To enable key decisions to be made in accordance with the project plan and to maintain the required momentum to deliver the development of Jubilee 2 for the residents of the Borough by the end of 2011.

5. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 5.1 It should be noted that expenditure incurred for this project to date is in line with budgetary projections. With regard to the specific proposals in this report the procurement of the highway works will be met from within the construction budget whilst the procurement of the cafeteria operator is in line with the previously-agreed business plan.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 The provision of accessible leisure facilities contributes to the delivery of the Council's

Strategic Priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. There will be a positive impact on those relating to health improvement, quality of life, and support for disadvantaged communities, community safety and broader regeneration objectives for the town centre. In particular it is anticipated that Jubilee 2 will assist the Council/Partners in achieving positive health outcomes thereby reducing health inequalities.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 The Council has powers, under the Local Government Act 2000, to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Borough's residents. The Council has general powers to provide recreational facilities whilst Planning Policy Guidance ensures that adequate resources are allocated for sport and recreation through the statutory framework of the core planning strategy and development plan documents. On a more specific note clearly it is vitally important that the Council follows relevant procurement procedures.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1 The proposed Centre will be designed as an inclusive facility that will seek to optimise access from all sections of the community. The project will be subject to a full equalities impact assessment. The proposed inclusion of a "Changing Places" toilet will enhance the experience of using the facilities by disabled users and their carers as well as supporting wider town centre activities.

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 A full risk assessment/log for the project has been completed in conjunction with the Council's Corporate Risk Manager and continues to be subjected to regular review. The latest version of this document is attached at Appendix 'A'.

10. **Key Decision Information**

- 10.1 The costs of undertaking the Section 278 Highway works will be met from the project's £10.5 million budget with expenditure to date being in line with budgetary projections.
- 10.2 That the licence fee being offered by the Council's preferred cafeteria operator is in line the with the previously agreed business plan for Jubilee2.

11. **Previous Cabinet Decisions**

Cabinet 22 October 2008
Cabinet 26 March 2009
Cabinet 13 May 2009
Cabinet 29 July 2009
Cabinet 9 September 2009
Cabinet 21 October 2009
Cabinet 14 December 2009
Cabinet 13 January 2010
Cabinet 17 February 2010
Cabinet 24 March 2010
Cabinet 2 June 2010
Cabinet 28 July 2010
Cabinet 15 September 2010
Cabinet 2 November 2010
Cabinet 15 December 2010

Cabinet 9 February 2011
Cabinet 17 March 2011
Cabinet 8 June 2011
Cabinet 20 July 2011

12. **List of Appendices**

Appendix 'A' – Risk Register.

Risk Assessment Jubilee2

as at 25/08/11

Risk Identified	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Measure	Final Impact	Final Likelihood	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
Risk Count: 14											
Jubilee2											
Failure to obtain planning permission to build	Project failure or significant amendment needed to project. Difficulty in providing up to date facilities in old buildings. Reputational damage.	2	2	5	Feasibility study completed	2	1	2	Provide list of conditions attached to the planning application	Houldsworth, Chris	31/12/11
					Draft business case completed				Discharge of the conditions in conjunction with the contractors and the design team		
					Benefit card completed						
					Liase with planning team and planning policy provision						
					Sign off stage D drawings by steering group						
					Environmental Agency consulted with						
					Liasion with Statutory bodies i.e.Sport England, before final planning application						
					Consultation taken place with SPCG, community and stakeholders						
					Continuous liaison with highways authority						
					Design team appointed						
					Urban Vision engaged as part of the design process						
					Sign off stage D drawings by steering group						
					Equalities Impact Assessment Completed						
					Planning application granted March 2010 subject to legal agreement and conditions						
					Action Plan completed in respect of conditions identified in the planning process						
Failure to develop the project plan for smooth transfer of activities from the two existing sites to the new site	Loss of revenue. Loss of customer satisfaction. Loss of customers. Service doesn't meet customer expectations and requirements.	3	2	6	Fully inclusive steering group established	1	2	4			
					Draft business case completed						
					Ongoing consultation with members, partners and staff						
					Construction Project plan identified						
					Benefit card completed						
					Communication sub-group meets fortnightly						
					Communication plan in place						
					Equalities Impact Assessment Completed						
					Report sumerizing consultation exercise prepared						
					Marketing strategy developed						

Risk Identified	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Measure	Final Impact	Final Likelihood	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
nder process is subject to challenge	Challenge by an unsuccessful tenderer. Possible financial implications. Delay in project to meet key milestones. Reputation damage. Legal implications. Adverse publicity.	3	2	6	Procurement officer in place Audit representation on steering group Corporate Risk & Insurance Manager on steering group Dedicated project manager Legal representative on steering group Procurement process in place in Newcastle Borough Council Compliant tendering process and evaluation criteria Publication of evaluation criteria and effective feedback to unsuccessful candidates at both PQQ and tendering stages Undertake a tender clarification in meetings with prospective tenderers at each stage of the process PCT bid to the strategic health authority for 2010/11 resources including a second tranche of £0.5 million	2	1	2			
Failure to realise value of at least £m from disposal of existing sites	Lack of capital receipts to the Authority. Ongoing security measures needed. Damage to reputation. Revenue implications. Potential impact on the long term business model. Poor public image.	3	2	6	Internal officer expertise	3	2	6	To clarify the disposal strategy for the two sites with a view to generate the requisite capital receipt	Hamnett, Jeff	30/06/12
Failure to provide resources to enable marketing plan for project to be delivered	Financial implications to the centre upon opening - membership targets may not be met, facilities underused. Reputation damage - from failure to tackle the health & wellbeing of the borough	2	2	5	Two qualified marketing and sales officers in post Marketing strategy developed	2	1	2	Head of Communications and Head of Leisure & Cultural Services to consider further marketing issues	Jones, Phil (Head of Communications)	30/09/11
Failure to complete the highways work	Reputation damage Cost over-run Project delay	2	3	8	All consultants aware of obligations due in tender specification Action Plan completed in respect of conditions identified in the planning process Continuous liaison with highways authority Contracts signed and sealed in respect of consultants Dedicated project manager Develop a brief & costing in respect of the technical infrastructure	2	1	2	Gain approval for revised scheme from LPA & SCC Engage contractor to complete works	Arnott, Andy (Leisure Strategy Manager) Arnott, Andy (Leisure Strategy Manager)	30/09/11 30/09/11

Risk Identified	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Measure	Final Impact	Final Likelihood	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
Jubilee2					Monthly site meetings arranged with contractor Arboriculturist consultation taken place						
Cafe facility	Reputation damage Financial implications Failure of project delivery	2	3	8	Provision of vending machines Specification written and issued for the cafe tender Tentative responses received from local and national providers showing interest	2	1	2	Formally appoint the cafe provider Revisit the internal operating model	Arnott, Andy (Leisure Strategy Manager) Arnott, Andy (Leisure Strategy Manager)	30/09/11 31/10/11
Failure to ensure quality of work	Bad workmanship Increase in potential claims Fabric of building compromised Reputation damage Financial implications	3	2	6	Competent Design Team Appointed Design team meets weekly and undertakes a complimentary meeting with client on monthly basis Facility layout designed to accommodate needs Weekly inspections take place by officer of the council	2	1	2	Arrange QS stages for completed work to be approved/signed off	Kenyon, John	31/12/11
Costs of project are exceeded or insufficient capital funds available	Shortfall of funding. Reduced specification. Downsizing of facility. Reputation damage. Loss of confidence with stakeholders. Partners exit project.	3	3	9	Scoping procurement and delivery options Ongoing monitoring of the contract and contingency budget Bonds and insurance for all contractors and consultants obtained Governance arrangements approved by Cabinet	1	1	1			
Failure to identify correct technical infrastructure regarding phones, computers etc	Lack of ICT support. Failure to operate the business sufficiently. Failure in communications. Lack of resilience. Financial implications. Business continuity. Reputation damage.	2	2	5	ICT attendance on steering group Develop a brief & costing in respect of the technical infrastructure Technical Infrastructure identified Project plan for infrastructure and ICT developed On-going dialogue with IT & Morgan Sindall	1	1	1			
Failure to meet key milestones within the project	Increased capital cost to the authority in respect of penalties from contractor/consultants/specialists. Potential revenue implications in terms of extending current leisure facility agreements. Reputation damage. Loss of customer goodwill. Revenue estimates not achieved.	3	2	6	Dedicated project manager Steering group and project board Key milestones identified in the project plan Cabinet member sits on steering group Governance arrangements approved by Cabinet Design team appointed Design team meets weekly and undertakes a complimentary meeting with client on monthly basis Contractor programme	2	1	2			

Risk Count: 14

Risk Identified	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Measure	Final Impact	Final Likelihood	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
Failure to secure external funding from other bodies	Increased capital contribution by the council.	3	3	9	External funding opportunities have been identified Land Registry documentation received for land First stage with Sport England funding application successful Further funding through the 2012 Legacy Fund identified Potential funding through European Development Regional Fund identified Application submitted to Sports England sustainability community fund to secure £200,000 Further request made to Sport England seeking additional £0.5 million	2	1	2	Ensure that NBC recovers funding money from Sport England on a monthly basis in line with the contractors programme	Arnott, Andy (Leisure Strategy Manager)	31/12/13
Failure to ensure reporting of project costs at each Steering Group/Project Board	Financial implications. Lack of budget control. Project overspend. Reduced quality of structure to accommodate overspend.	2	2	5	Internal officer expertise Consultants engaged Head of Finance on Steering Group Governance arrangements approved by Cabinet Steering group and project board Sign off procedures/separation of duties & responsibilities for payments formulated Monthly financial report to steering group Agree reporting format of financial info to project board	1	1	1			
Contractor's risk log is inadequate for successful delivery of project	Failure to deliver the project on time	3	2	6	Contractor programme Dedicated project manager Key milestones identified in the project plan Experienced contractor appointed Risk log produced by contractor Monthly site meetings arranged with contractor	3	1	3	Target dates need to be provided on contractor's action log	Arnott, Andy (Leisure Strategy Manager)	31/08/11

Risk Count: 14

JUBILEE 2 HEALTH AND WELLBEING CENTRE FEES AND CHARGES

Submitted by: Executive Director – Operational Services, Dave Adams

Portfolio: Culture and Active Communities

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To agree the fees and charges and car parking arrangements for the new Jubilee 2 Health and Wellbeing Centre

Recommendations

Cabinet are recommended to approve the proposed fees and charges and car parking arrangements for Jubilee 2 (attached at Appendix A).

Reasons

The fees and charges and car parking arrangements are proposed in order to achieve the approved business plan for Jubilee 2.

1. Background

- 1.1 Jubilee 2 is scheduled for completion on 2 December 2011. The building will be commissioned and become operational throughout December 2011 with the official opening weekend planned for 7 January 2012 to be supported by former Olympic swimmer Nick Gillingham and former Olympic athlete Dave Moorcroft.
- 1.2 The Appendix to this report sets out the proposed fees and charges for the Centre for the planned activity programmes.
- 1.3 The Centres main sports facilities are an aquatics centre comprising of an 8 lane 25m competition swimming pool and a 12m x 10m training pool with a moveable floor submersible to a depth of 1.5m; a climbing centre providing a 14m high climbing wall with abseil point, 4m bouldering wall and a traverse wall; a health and fitness centre offering a 97 station gym, activity zone and a multipurpose room that can be split into two studios by a sliding acoustic wall. There is an aqua sauna containing sauna, steam, foot spas, feature showers (ice and monsoon) and treatment room. These facilities are supported by quality changing and ancillary accommodation, including a café, the operation of which is subject to competitive tender.
- 1.4 The main car park for the centre will be the School Street car park, with Windsor Street and King Street providing the two nearest alternatives. Free parking operates on these car parks on Sundays; otherwise the charges apply between the hours of 8am and 9pm but parking is available 24 hours a day. The following table illustrates the current (2011/12) parking charges. The centre is also located within easy walking distance of Newcastle Bus Station.

School Street (Zone B)	
Up to 1 hour	0.90
Up to 2 hours	1.75
Up to 3 hours	2.65
Up to 4 hours	4.00
4 hours to 24 hours	5.00
Season Ticket - per quarter	220.00
Windsor Street (Zone B)	
Up to 1 hour	0.90
Up to 2 hours	2.00
Season Ticket - half hour after close of Hassell Street School, per annum)	2.25
King Street (Zone C)	
Up to 1 hour	0.65
Up to 2 hours	1.25
Up to 3 hours	1.80
3 hours to 24 hours	3.00
Season Ticket - per quarter	130.00

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The centre will operate both membership and pay and play fees and charges, offering differential pricing at off peak times and for juniors and concessionary users. The proposed charges are detailed at Appendix 'A'.
- 2.2 It is proposed to still offer a membership at the current fees where a 6 month contract is entered into. This contract has been agreed with legal services.
- 2.3 Since the procurement of the recently installed leisure management system, the service has access to much greater and timelier management information and this is being used to proactively manage usage and performance. One of the first benefits has been an improvement to the gym membership (both direct debit and pay and play), Activ8 (leisure card) scheme and junior jets registration scheme. These have now been brought together under one card – The Lyme Card – which forms the first distinction for leisure centre customers in terms of fees and charges in so much as there are financial benefits in registering as a regular user for a Lyme Card.
- 2.4 The Lyme Card is issued to anybody who registers as a regular user and the information on the status of the card holder in terms of what facilities they are eligible to access and their account details are held on the management system.
- 2.5 Examples detailed in the Appendix illustrate how the card will work:
- 2.6 The car parking charges (above) are paid currently by customers using Jubilee Pool who travel by car and wish to use the car parks, although on street restrictions lift at 6pm and some customers choose to use the pay and display car parks later in the evening for free parking in the belief that enforcement is rare at this time. It is estimated that around 300,000 visits a year will be made to Jubilee 2 by car.
- 2.7 Customers at Knutton Recreation Centre, park for free and there are indications that despite the good public transport links, paying for parking may deter their use of J2.

2.8 Members are asked, therefore, to consider suitable car parking arrangements for J2 as follows in section 3. Alongside these proposals, an audit of town centre car parking usage and availability is being undertaken, which will take into account the expected future demand for car parking from users of J2.

3. **Options Considered**

3.1 Centre usage prices have been benchmarked with both the private sector and neighbouring local authorities and the charges selected are aimed to achieve good value for money for residents and market penetration.

3.2 A number of options were considered in relation to car parking. Through these considerations it emerged that arrangements should be put in place that were equitable to other businesses in the town centre as well as Jubilee 2. Details of car parking provision are shown in the appendix to this report.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

5.1 The fees and charges and car parking arrangements are proposed in order to achieve the approved business plan for J2.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

6.1 The pricing structure in this proposal has been designed to promote participation in sport and healthy and active lifestyles by all members of the community.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

7.1 There are no legal or statutory implications of this report.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

8.1 The pricing structure in this proposal has been designed to achieve the Council's equality duties and uses off peak and differential pricing to attract juniors and concessionary users and thereby encouraging equity and opportunities for all.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

9.1 The attendance and projected net income from each income centre are summarised below:

Income centre	Attendance	Income (£)
Climbing	11,590	65,004
Rentals	24,288	40,214
Health & Fitness	265,561	594,073
Wet side	205,287	363,271
Secondary	-	43,126
Total	506,707	1,105,688

9.2 The charging structure, pricing and programmes proposed are designed to achieve the income targets and usage assumptions as set out in the business plan for J2. These will be closely monitored once the centre is open to identify any emerging variances from these assumptions.

10. **Major Risks**

- 10.1 Risk implications have been managed by benchmarking fees and charges and applying market intelligence, particularly in terms of industry norm costs, in the preparation of the business plan.

It is acknowledged that the usage assumptions set out in the business plan are liable to fluctuate as they are influenced by a range of external factors such as the local economic situation and competitor facilities. A range of marketing and promotional programmes will be deployed to raise awareness of the centre and encourage usage as well as ongoing monitoring of competitor facilities to ensure J2 remains good value for money within that market.

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

- 11.1 The fees and charges proposed in this report are designed to have a positive influence on the climate impact of increased participation in sport and active lifestyles

12. **Key Decision Information**

- 12.1 This is a key decision and is included on the Council's Forward Plan.

13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

None

14. **List of Appendices**

Appendix 'A' - Jubilee 2 Health and Well Being Centre Proposed Fees and Charges.

15. **Background Papers**

Planned activity programmes

Jubilee 2 Health and Wellbeing Centre Proposed Fees and Charges

Membership Charges (Includes gym, swim, classes, climbing and aqua sauna)	
Joining Fee	£20.00 (includes inductions)
Off Peak (Mon – Fri from 6.30am to 5pm and week ends) 6 month minimum contract	£19.00 p.c.m. direct debit £209 full year (Receive 1 month free when paid up front)
Peak (Mon – Fri from 6.30am to 11pm all Sat 8am to 8pm Sun 8am to 10pm) 6 month minimum contract	£26.50 p.c.m £291.50 full year (Receive 1 month free when paid up front)
No contract	£32.00 p.c.m. Peak £24.00 p.c.m. Off Peak
Corporate Membership (Minimum of 5)	£25.00 p.c.m. Peak £18.00 p.c.m. Off Peak

Swimming		
	Standard	Lyme Card ¹
Registration	n/a	Free
Entry Fees		
Adult	£4.00	*£3.60 * Included for full paying members
Junior/ Concession ²	£2.20	£2.00
Children 3 years and under	Free	n/a
Family Swimming ³ :		
1 Adult + 1 child	£5.90	n/a
1 Adult + 2 children	£8.00	n/a
1 Adult + 3 children	£10.10	n/a
Spectators	£1.00	Free
Pre Pay Buy 10 get one free	n/a	Adults £36.00 Juniors/ Concession £20.00

Family swimming charges have been brought in line with the Child Admissions Policy, where one adult can supervise up to three children. The following table illustrates how the discount will be applied and demonstrates that the for Lyme Card holders the individual admission charges are the cheapest means of admission.

¹ The Lyme Card gives a 10% discount on standard fees and charges.

² The Lyme Card Junior/ Concession Price are 50% of the Adult full price.

³ 5% discount

APPENDIX A

Adults	Children	Standard		Lyme Card
		Full	Discount 5%	Full
1	1	6.20	5.90	5.60
1	2	8.40	8.00	7.60
1	3	10.60	10.10	9.60
2 NB no discount for 2 nd adult	1	10.20	9.90	9.20
2	2	12.40	11.80	11.20
2	3	14.60	13.90	13.20
2	4	16.80	16.00	15.20
2	5	19.00	18.10	17.20
2	6	21.20	20.20	19.20

The Lyme card also gives the opportunity to purchase sessions in advance and therefore it is proposed to reward customer loyalty by offering an additional free swim when 10 swims are purchased on block.

Swimming Instruction		
	Standard	Lyme Card
Swimming Lessons		
Adult per 30 minutes	£8.00	£8.00
Junior/60+ per 30 minutes	£5.00	£5.00
Courses		
Rookie Lifeguards per 2 hr session	£5.00	£5.00
Other Courses	Cost + 25%	Cost + 25%
Classes* * included for full members		
Aquagym	£5.00	£4.50/ £3.60 Concession
Aquafit	£5.00	£4.50/ £3.60 Concession
Private Lessons		
1:1 per 30 minutes	£20.00	£20.00
Additional person	£8.00	£8.00
Swimming Pool Hire		
Main Pool per lane per hr	£13.00	n/a
Training Pool per hr	£42.50	n/a
Additional Staff Member	£20.00	n/a
Large Inflatable	£35.00	n/a
Small Inflatable	£20.00	n/a

APPENDIX A

For admission to the gym the following charges are proposed:

Gym		
	Standard	Lyme Card
Registration/Induction Adult Junior/ Concession		*£10.00 *fee refundable against membership
Entry Fees Adult Junior/ Concession	n/a n/a	*£4.50 £3.40 * Included for full paying members
Pre Pay Buy 10 get one free	n/a	Adult £45.00 Junior/ Concession £34.00

Studios		
	Standard	Lyme Card
Hire Activity Zone Studio 1 Studio 2 Multi Activity Space	£15.00 £20.00 £20.00 £40.00	n/a n/a n/a n/a
Classes* * Included for full paying members Adult Junior/ Concession	£5.00 £4.00	£4.50 £3.60
Pre Pay Buy 10 get one free	n/a	Adult £45.00 Junior/ Concession £36.00

Aqua Sauna (includes access to swimming pool)		
	Standard	Lyme Card
Adult	£10.00	*£9.00 * Included for full paying members
Concession (over 16)	£5.60	£5.00

APPENDIX A

Climbing - Uninstructed Climbing Fees		
	Standard	Lyme Card
Registration		
Adult	n/a	£10.00
Junior/ Concession	n/a	£6.00
Entry Fees		
Adult	Day Visitor £10.00	£4.50
Junior/ Concession	Day Visitor £6.00	£3.00
Adult Belay Only	£5.00	£2.50
Group Adult (min. 4 people)	£8.00	£4.00
Group Junior (min 4 people)	£5.00	£2.50
Pre Pay		
30 Day Pass	n/a	£35.00 Adult/ £20.00 Junior
12 Session Pass (pay for 10)	n/a	£45.00 Adult/ £30.00 Junior
Equipment Hire		
Belay (device & ground anchor)	£1.00	£1.00
Shoes	£3.00	£3.00
Harness	£2.00	£2.00
Climbing – Instructed Activities		
Have-a-go Auto Belay Session		
1 Person (15 minutes)	£5.00	£5.00
2 sharing (15 minutes)	£8.00	£8.00
Have-a-go Abseil Session		
Per descent	£1.00	£1.00
Instructed Sessions		
Taster Session (1hour Age 7+)	£8.00	
Climb Lyme Start (90 min adult introduction to climbing)	£12.00	
Climb Lyme Club (2 hours Age 16+)	£16.00	
Climb Lyme Fit (1 hour work out class)	n/a	£4.50
Parties		
Up to 6	£60.00	£60.00
Up to 12	£120.00	£120.00
Up to 18	£180.00	£180.00
Instructed Groups		
Up to 8	£76.00	£76.00
Up to 16	£152.00	£152.00
Up to 24	£228.00	£228.00

APPENDIX A

Junior Clubs Limestones (Age 4 – 7) J2 Climb Team (Age 7+) R:Rock (Age 14+)		Single visit £9.50 Per half term £8.00 per session x relevant no. weeks
Courses Beginners (2 x 2 hours) Intermediate (2 x 2 hours) Learn to Lead (2 x 2 hours) Workshops (1 x 1 hour) Site Specific Training and Assessment	£60.00 £60.00 £60.00 £30.00 £95.00	£60.00 £60.00 £60.00 £30.00 £95.00
Private Instruction 1:1 Per additional person (maximum 8)	£20.00 £8.00	£20.00 £8.00

Car Parking
<p>Free parking on the King Street Car Park, School Street Car Park and Windsor Street car park before 8.00 am</p> <p>Free parking on the King Street Car Park, School Street Car Park and Windsor Street Car park after 6 pm.</p> <p>Free parking on the King Street Car park all day Saturdays.</p> <p>Free parking on the King Street Car Park, School Street Car Park and Windsor Street Car park all day Sundays.</p> <p>Free on street car parking on School Street after 6.00 pm.</p> <p>At all other times outside of the above times, standard car parking charges to apply.</p>

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FUTURE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR LEISURE SERVICES

Submitted by: Executive Director – Operational Services

Portfolio: Culture and Active Communities

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To update Cabinet on the work of the Leisure Trust Steering Group.

Recommendations

(a) To note the work of the Leisure Trust Steering Group and, in view of the uncertain business case and financial implications, agree not to progress at this point in time establishing a Trust to operate all or part of the Council's Leisure and Cultural Services.

(b) To receive a further report once the financial implications of the business case are clearer.

Reasons

In-house operation is the most tax efficient for the Council for this financial year.

Further clarification surrounding pending changes to the local government pension scheme means that the outline business case cannot be sufficiently developed to effectively inform the Council's financial strategy.

1. Background

1.1 On 17 February 2010 Cabinet approved that a Task and Finish Group should be established chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Active Communities to consider the implications and options for the establishment of a Trust to manage all or part of the Council's leisure and cultural services. These arrangements have the potential to save the Council a reasonable sum each year by avoiding national non-domestic rates (NNDR) and certain VAT liabilities, as well as developing leisure and cultural activities across the Borough.

1.2 This group has now concluded the first stage in this review. One of the main outcomes of the review has been the completion of an options appraisal. This has been subject to internal and external challenge and been informed by specialist legal, pensions and VAT advice. This totals £10,785 and was met from the professional fees for the Jubilee 2 project.

2. Issues

2.1 Leisure & Cultural Services is responsible for the following functions which could form part of a trust:

- Jubilee 2
- Kidsgrove Sports Centres
- Sports and Events
- Football Development (Including Roe Lane Playing fields)

- Westlands Sports Ground
- Museum and Art Gallery
- Arts Development
- Community Centres

- 2.2 Leisure and Cultural Services has recently restructured into three business units: Culture and Arts; Leisure Strategy; and Sport and Active Lifestyles. The staffing structure for Sport and Active Lifestyles has been specifically implemented to improve operational performance and achieve the business plan for Jubilee 2, with business development support coming from Leisure Strategy. Consequently since the establishment of the Task and Finish Group there is renewed confidence in the in-house operation. In addition the refocused structure has created the time and space for strategic plans to be developed that will continue to address the future leisure and cultural facility needs of the Borough, building on the £10m investment in Jubilee 2.
- 2.3 Whilst at this stage there appear to be clear financial advantages in moving to a Trust in terms of NNDR and VAT savings the process itself is technically complex and open to third party challenge as the process is subject to EU procurement rules.
- 2.4 One of the more complex issues relates to the actuarial strain placed on the Council's employers contributions to the Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) as a result of the transference of a sizeable proportion of its workforce, even if the Trust is successful in gaining "admitted body" status. Put simply, if the size and demographic structure of the Council's workforce changes as a result of a transfer and this has a detrimental effect on the LGPS, the Council will be required to compensate the scheme. The latter has the potential to significantly counteract the potential savings referred to above. With the current uncertainty around pension reform, further clarification is being sought by the County Council's Pensions Team which challenges the advice and therefore the costs that we have been given to date.
- 2.5 In addition, the completed options appraisal is unable to recommend a clear course of action without further work being commissioned in the form of a soft market test. The soft market testing exercise is for the purpose of gathering expressions of interest and ideas for the management contract(s). It will take time to organise that could detract the service from preparations to commission and open Jubilee 2. Clearly it will be vitally important to achieve an efficient transition from the existing two centres to the operation of the new Jubilee 2 centre, particularly in view of the relatively ambitious business plan.
- 2.6 Of course any soft market testing would require resourcing (with an estimated budget of £10,000) so that specialist advice can be sought where deemed necessary. It is also anticipated that it will be well subscribed given the likely interest of the market in Jubilee 2. If undertaken, whilst it would not be our intention for this to constitute a procurement process, organisations could challenge us on this, particularly if they felt they had committed significant resources to the exercise. There is a risk therefore that we could be forced into a position of having to undertake a full procurement exercise before Members have the opportunity to fully consider all the implications.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 An options appraisal has now been completed and full consideration has been given to the following Management Options:
- Remain in-house
 - Establish a new Local Trust

- Establish a Hybrid Trust with a private sector operator.
- Establish a new Trust with a neighbouring authority
- Partner with an existing Trust

3.2 Each of the above management vehicles were scored against a set criteria of:

- Reducing revenues costs and maximising capital
- Staffing implications
- Retaining Influence over the service
- Improvements for service users
- Increased participation and social marketing

3.3 A brief summary of the benefits and disadvantages are summarised in the following table:

Potential advantages/ disadvantages	NNDR and Tax Savings	Increased access to capital	Savings in central charges	Increased Management Capacity	Set-up costs	Transfer of risk	Community involvement
New Trust	Yes	Limited	Some	No	High	Some	Yes
In-house	No	No	No	No	None	No	Limited
Hybrid Trust	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Medium	Yes	Some
New Cross Boundary Trust	Yes	Limited	Some	Some	High	Some	Yes
Existing Trust	Yes	Some	Yes	Yes	Medium	Yes	Yes

3.4 Whilst all trust options offer reduced revenue costs (achieved through NNDR and VAT savings) and the potential to access external capital grants is more likely to apply to any Trust arrangement, the analysis does not conclusively identify any single option as being more favourable than the others.

4. **Proposal**

4.1 It is proposed that the work of the Task and Finish Group be noted and the work programme be suspended to enable the service to concentrate on the commissioning and opening of Jubilee 2 and/or until such time as more accurate information is available in relation to the LGPS and Members may wish to re-examine the issue in the context of the Council's medium term financial strategy. Additionally members may find it helpful to assess the position with the benefit of a full year's operating accounts of the Jubilee 2 Centre.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

5.1 As detailed in paragraph 4.1 above.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

6.1 The services are of a cross cutting nature but particularly contribute to corporate success through their impact on health and wellbeing.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

7.1 There are no legal or statutory implications arising from this report.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

8.1 The services have developed a good reputation in reflecting the diversity of the community in

its users.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

9.1 It is expected that the operation of Jubilee 2 will achieve a revenue budget efficiency of £350k in the first full financial year (following closure of the two existing centres). Additionally the previously-prepared Business Plan for the Centre anticipates year-on-year growth over the first five years thereby further reducing the Council's operating subsidy. Whilst officers are reviewing and refreshing the Business Plan to ensure that it remains realistic it is vitally important that the initial savings are delivered in 2012/13 as forecast in the approved MTFS.

9.2 As indicated above the establishment of a Leisure Trust – to operate the services referred to above – has the potential to achieve significant cashable savings (could be as much as a net £100k, taking account of set-up costs). At face value this may be considered attractive, particularly in light of the Council's MTFS. However there remains considerable uncertainty about the LGPS issues (see below).

9.3 Meetings with the County Council pensions section initially identified an additional cost of about £65k in increased employers contributions if all Leisure and Cultural Services staff were to transfer to the Trust. Since this figure was calculated there have been two further developments that are likely to have an effect on this figure. Firstly there have been changes in staffing within the service and secondly the County Council's Pensions Section has challenged and is seeking to clarify the principles on which the Actuaries calculated the figure. Whilst the change in relation to staffing is likely to reduce the costs the County Council advise that the latter would be likely to increase the costs, but are unable at this stage to quantify it.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 A Risk Assessment has been undertaken for this project by the working group. The Risk Log is available for inspection.

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

None

12. **Key Decision Information**

12.1 The proposal does not involve significant expenditure or savings at this stage. It does however impact on all Wards and is included in the Forward Plan.

13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

17 February 2010

14. **List of Appendices**

None

15. **Background Papers**

Options Appraisal

Scoring Matrix

Risk Log

Agendas, minutes and papers from the Leisure Trust Steering Group.

BATESWOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE – MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted by: Head of Operations – Roger Tait

Portfolio: Culture and Active Communities

Ward(s) affected: Halmerend

Purpose of the Report

- To report a petition presented by a ward member on behalf of local residents requesting the Council to allow angling on the pool at Bateswood Local Nature Reserve, Halmerend.
- To consider undertaking consultation on the principle of including additional site-based recreational activities within the review and update of the Management Plan for Bateswood Local Nature Reserve.
- To consider adopting ethical fishing guidelines for use on Borough Council controlled fishing areas.

Recommendations

(a) That the petition be received.

(b) That the principle of allowing angling and additional bridle route provision in Bateswood Local Nature Reserve be subject to consultation with local residents and appropriate stakeholders and appropriate agreements to manage angling on the pool and equestrian access to the site be prepared.

(c) That a further report on the outcome of the consultation be brought back to an appropriate Cabinet meeting for consideration

(d) That the draft “Ethical Fishing Guidelines” which have been proposed in relation to the pool at Bateswood and other angling facilities in the Council’s control are approved for consultation with appropriate stakeholders

Reasons

- To ensure that Bateswood Local Nature Reserve is managed in such a way as to offer people special opportunities to study, enjoy and learn about nature.
- To ensure that other identified community recreational needs in the locality are met and managed to coexist with the educational and nature conservation uses of the site.

1. Background

1.1 The Council declared the 54 hectares of public open space at Bateswood in Halmerend as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) on 17 December 2002 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

1.2 A 5 year management plan for the site, which was prepared as part of the declaration process, was intended to guide the management of the site from 2002 to 2007 and was designed to offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature, or simply enjoy it.

- 1.3 Two local voluntary community groups have been actively involved in assisting the Council in managing the site for this purpose and have been involved with stewarding the site both prior to its declaration and up to the present day.
- 1.4 The land is a 54 hectare, reclaimed, former open cast site adjacent to the rural settlement of Halmerend, which provides informal recreational opportunities for local residents as well as the educational and nature conservation value related to its declaration as a Local Nature Reserve. It is leased to the Council on a long term lease from the Coal Industry Support and Welfare Organisation (CISWO). It generally comprises of a large pool, areas of open grassland, mixed age woodland and a network of footpaths including a designated bridleway which crosses the site from north to south. A plan of the site will be on display at your meeting.
- 1.5 The Council also leases an adjacent site from CISWO, known locally as Clogger's Pool, and improved this site in the late 1990s to provide a fishing pool for local residents. At this time the Council did not wish to allow fishing on the large pool in Bateswood as it was feared that angling may conflict with the development and use of the pool for breeding waterfowl and other wildlife purposes. Therefore, the alternative angling facility was provided nearby.
- 1.6 Bateswood received investment in 2007 with grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve access through car parking provision, the creation of a circular path network and interpretation facilities to inform and educate people on the nature conservation value of the site. At the time Cabinet approved the scheme, it was also resolved to investigate the provision of equestrian facilities in the Borough. It was subsequently resolved to undertake a feasibility study for additional bridle route provision in Bateswood.
- 1.7 The site is popular and well used by local people and visitors from further afield, with a range of recreational activities enjoyed by various sections of the community.

The site is not staffed by the Council although it is patrolled on a regular basis by the Park Ranger Service and maintained on a mainly reactive basis by Streetscene. It is informally monitored by the local community volunteer groups who are active on the site, with issues being reported to the Operations Service. There are currently no byelaws which govern the site.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The management plan for the site initially covered the period from 2002 up to 2007 and the management principles contained in the plan have been continuing since 2007 to the present day. However, a review and update of the management plan has now been carried out to reflect habitat development and any proposed additional recreational uses of the site. Your officers have been working with Newcastle Countryside Project, who prepared the original plan, to re-survey the site and evaluate its biodiversity value and assess proposed changes to the plan. The survey also considered whether existing and potential additional recreational uses would have an impact on the biodiversity value of the site. The findings have been incorporated into a draft review and update of the Management Plan which was completed in April 2011. A copy is available on request. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has also been consulted on the review of the plan and has provided advice and guidance to your officers and to the local community volunteer groups who are involved in managing the site.
- 2.2 In terms of other recreational uses, Bateswood Local Nature Reserve is generally used responsibly by visitors and is not perceived to suffer an unusually high incidence of misuse, criminal or anti-social behaviour, although these problems do exist to degrees. Due to its large size, open access and isolated rural location, from time to time it does experience

issues with vandalism, unauthorised vehicle access, alcohol consumption, motorcycle access and unauthorised camping and campfires. These issues are currently dealt with where possible through the Council's standard management procedures and through joint working with other partners.

- 2.3 In general, the initial conclusions of the biodiversity survey suggest that the biodiversity value of the site overall is no less than it was when the original management plan was prepared. The site has developed and changed slightly with a decrease in the numbers of some species and an increase in others, due to changing habitats. For example, the natural succession to woodland of some of the grassland habitats. The review and update of the management plan considers and addresses these issues.
- 2.4 The current recreational use of the site includes activities such as small scale illicit angling, horse riding, both on and off the designated bridle route, walking, running, cycling, nature watching and dog walking.

The review of the Management Plan suggests that although angling can cause various problems for nature conservation, some limited use of the pool for angling could be acceptable subject to a robust agreement with anglers to control issues such as access, fish stocking and marginal habitat management. Likewise, the provision of additional equestrian access to the site which is designated and directed away from sensitive areas could be considered subject to riders adhering to the routes provided.

Dog walking where dogs are under control and on the designated paths does not appear to cause any adverse impact on biodiversity value. However, there is a risk that dogs off the lead can have a negative impact on ground nesting birds. It would be difficult to formally manage equestrian access and dog walking as the site is not staffed and these activities could not be controlled by a permit system or lease agreement as could be the case with angling. Therefore, reliance would be placed on riders and dog walkers using the site responsibly and in accordance with any areas which were designated and notices which were erected.

- 2.5 The Council has received requests from angling and equestrian groups requesting the use of Bateswood for these recreational activities. A petition was presented by a local ward member on 31 October 2008, signed by 186 petitioners from the locality requesting that the Council consider the use of the pool at Bateswood for fishing. A request was also received from a member of the Council on behalf of equestrian groups seeking the creation of an additional circular bridle route around the site.

A copy of the petition, in relation to angling, will be on display at your meeting.

- 2.6 A feasibility study in relation to the potential to create an additional circular bridleway has been undertaken. It appears that it would be feasible to establish a circular route around the site, separated from the more sensitive nature conservation areas, at a cost of between £55,000 - £83,000, dependent on which route is developed.

Progression of this initiative would be subject to sourcing funding to implement the scheme and then, if funding is secured, consultation with residents and appropriate stakeholders.

There is no source of funding currently available and no current capacity within work programmes to progress this project at present. Therefore, it is not considered expedient to initiate a public consultation exercise on bridleway proposals until and unless it becomes likely that funds could be found.

With regard to the request to allow angling on the site, it appears that it would be possible to

accommodate angling on a controlled section of the pool to minimise the risk of potential conflict with the use of the remainder of the pool for nature conservation purposes. If such a scheme was to proceed, it would be desirable to provide accessible fishing platforms, linked to the previously constructed accessible footpath network, in order to accommodate the needs of disabled anglers. It is estimated that the cost of installing the platforms would be between £5,000 to £10,000. There is no source of funding currently available. However, assistance could be made available to an appropriate angling club to seek grant assistance for the platforms.

If angling is to be progressed for Bateswood, it is considered appropriate to develop ethical fishing guidelines to govern the activity at this site, and other angling facilities controlled by the Borough Council. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that animal welfare issues are addressed in a manner consistent with available best practice. Your officers have researched guidance available from the relevant agencies including the Environment Agency and drafted proposed Ethical Fishing Guidelines for Borough Council controlled angling facilities. A copy of the draft guidelines is attached to this report. It is proposed that the draft is approved for consultation with relevant stakeholders; including local angling clubs and that a report on the outcome of the consultation is prepared for consideration at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

- 2.7 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has produced a model set of byelaws which could be applied to Local Nature Reserves if deemed appropriate by the landowner and site manager. A local community representative has requested that byelaws be made for Bateswood Local Nature Reserve.

However, as the site is not staffed by the Borough Council, effective monitoring and enforcement of byelaws would be very difficult without committing significant additional staffing resources.

In addition to this, other legislation exists which gives the Police, the Council and other partners, powers to tackle criminal behaviour on public land. This legislation includes the Public Order Act of 1986 which criminalises threatening or intimidating words (including writing and signs) and behaviour, Anti Social Behaviour Orders under the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998, anti litter laws under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and offences under the Criminal Damage Act 1971 including Arson. The Police also have powers in relation to the confiscation of alcohol under the confiscation of alcohol (young persons) Act 1997. There are also civil powers of land ownership.

The police have been consulted regarding the incidence and severity of crime and anti-social behaviour on Bateswood Local Nature Reserve and their preferred methodology for tackling issues. The police confirm that they can use powers in relation to alcohol seizure and Section 27 Notices and that they are not aware of current problems at the site. They are carrying out joint patrols with the Council's Senior Rangers and are of the view that this has helped to reduce recent issues with anti-social behaviour by young people. There is a presence of local volunteers on the site who liaise with Council officers regarding misuse. If this presence was augmented by other community groups such as an angling club, it may assist in deterring misuse and assist in the monitoring and reporting role. It is therefore not proposed to consider making byelaws for the site at this stage, but to continue with partners to monitor the use of the site.

- 2.8 Natural England, in its publication "Local Nature Reserves in England: A guide to their selection and declaration" refers to Schedule 11 (12) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which describes a "nature reserve" as
- Land managed solely for a conservation purpose, or

- Land managed not only for a conservation purpose but also for a recreational purpose, if the management of the land for the recreational purpose does not compromise its management for the conservation purpose.

Therefore it is feasible for the site to accommodate both conservation and recreation uses if managed sensitively.

A local community group who assist with the management of the site has indicated to the Council that they wish to apply to Natural England to declare the site as a National Nature Reserve. However the guidance from Natural England states that in order to potentially achieve this status, the site should be a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or be considered nationally important to nature conservation. Neither of these criteria currently applies to Bateswood Local Nature Reserve.

- 2.9 In conclusion, it appears that there is the potential to develop additional recreational use of the site at Bateswood Local Nature Reserve without causing significant adverse impact on its conservation or biodiversity value. The development of additional recreational activities will need to be carefully designed and co-ordinated with the review of the management plan to ensure any potential for conflict between uses is minimised. Consultation with residents and stakeholders will be key to this process, as will a robust agreement with an angling club to control the use of the pool and responsible use of the site by riders and dog walkers.

3. **Options Considered**

3.1 **Maintain the status quo**

This will not enable the Local Nature Reserve to be managed in response to its developing habitat and will not respond to community requests to consider additional recreational use of the site.

3.2 **Do not permit additional recreational use of the site**

This will not respond to community requests to consider additional recreational use of the site, some of which are already taking place in an uncontrolled manner presently and causing tensions between user groups.

3.3 **Permit, regularise and control additional recreational use of the site**

This will allow the site to continue to be managed to offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature, or simply enjoy it and ensure that other identified community recreational needs are met and managed to co-exist with its educational and nature conservation uses.

4. **Proposal**

- That the petition be received.
- That the principle of allowing angling and additional bridle route provision in Bateswood Local Nature Reserve is subject to consultation with local residents and appropriate stakeholders and appropriate agreements to manage angling on the pool and equestrian access to the site be prepared.
- That a further report on the outcome of the consultation be brought back to an appropriate Cabinet meeting for consideration

- That the draft “Ethical Fishing Guidelines” which have been proposed in relation to the pool at Bateswood and other angling facilities in the Council’s control are approved for consultation with appropriate stakeholders

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 To ensure that Bateswood Local Nature Reserve is managed for its designated purpose, which is to offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.
- 5.2 To ensure that the community are consulted on any future change to the management of the site such as whether identified community recreational needs in the locality can be met and managed to co-exist with the educational and nature conservation uses of the site.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 Creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough.
- 6.2 Creating a healthy and active community.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 The Council is empowered to provide recreational facilities by a number of statutes relating to open space, public health, miscellaneous provisions and well-being. The Council is required by statute to consider the effect of any decision on crime and disorder.
- 7.2 Bateswood Local Nature Reserve has been declared as a Local Nature Reserve under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 It is considered that a positive differential impact will accrue from providing additional recreational opportunities at the site.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 There are no immediate direct capital or revenue implications arising from this report.
- 9.2 There would be a capital cost relating to the creation of additional bridleway access to the site which is currently estimated at between £55,000 - £83,000, dependent on which option is progressed. There would also be an estimated capital cost of between £5,000 - £10,000 to provide accessible fishing platforms to accommodate the needs of disabled anglers and associated signs if angling is to take place on the pool. This is subject to the sourcing of funding to meet the costs and then consultation with stakeholders. A detailed report on financial implications relating to bridleway access and angling will be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet if a potential source of funding can be identified.
- 9.3 There will be a requirement for staff resources to carry out consultation with stakeholders, to draft appropriate agreements and to liaise with community groups over the management of the site. It is proposed that this resource requirement is absorbed into the work programmes of the Landscape Development Section and Community Team in the Operations Service. Support from other service areas such as Legal, Property, Communications and Performance and Transformation will also be required.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 The major risks associated with this report are:

- Conflict and tensions between community user groups regarding the use of the site
- Pressure on the Council from community groups with differing views regarding the use of the site
- Potential loss of support from community groups involved in the management of the site
- Adverse public reaction
- Reputational damage
- Pressure on staff resources in managing the consultation process

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 The report will not result in significant savings or expenditure for the Council. It impacts directly on two wards and has been included in the Formal Plan.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Cabinet	18 December 2002	Resolution No. 759
Cabinet		Resolution No. 118
Cabinet	13 September 2006	Resolution No. 366

13. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Draft Ethical Fishing Guidelines

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Ethical Fishing Guidelines

DRAFT for consultation



For Angling Facilities Controlled by
Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council

July 2011

**Stephen Middlehurst
Community Manager
Operational Services**

Introduction to the Draft Guidelines

This report has been prepared to examine current angling activity on facilities controlled by the Borough Council. It reviews which pools are leased to clubs, how many clubs are operating, what rules are applied to fishing club members and how are they enforced.

Current Position with Borough Council Controlled Angling Facilities

❖ Bathpool Park.

Blood Pool
Leg of Mutton Pool
Farm Pool
Reservoir Pool

Let to Kidsgrove and District Angling Society.

❖ Birchenwood Countryside Park.

Fanny Pool

Let to Mow Cop District Angling Club

❖ Bateswood Local Nature Reserve.

Cloggers Pool

❖ Boggs Wood, Keele Golf Course.

Boggs Pool

Formerly let to Silverdale Angling Club.

❖ Oaklands Park Pools, Porthill

Let to S.J.Hancock

❖ Madeley Pool, Madeley.

Newly formed club organised by Madeley Parish Council.

Most of the clubs above have general rules intended to govern the behaviour of club members and include some examples of good practice in relation to ethical fishing. However, there is a need to draw up an over-arching set of ethical fishing guidelines which can be consistently applied to all Borough Council controlled angling facilities and which can be applied in conjunction with individual club rules.

Background Information

In order to determine current good practice research has been undertaken into various documents which have been developed by relevant stakeholders including the Environment Agency, RSPCA, National Angling Alliance and others. The documents have been reviewed to compile a draft set of ethical fishing guidelines in relation to the support of improved methods of fishing, nature conservation, animal welfare and codes of conduct. The following are a selection of the documents reviewed:

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency regulates angling through legislation and byelaws to ensure that fishing is carried out in ways that are sustainable and to protect fish stocks for future generations of anglers.

Medway Report on Shooting and Angling (1976 -1979)

Chaired by Lord Medway the enquiry was sponsored by the RSPCA as a result of pressure from its membership to formulate definitive policies towards shooting and angling.

The enquiry comprised a number of leading scientist and two representatives from the fishing and shooting organisations. The terms of reference were “To enquire into practises relating to shooting and angling in the United Kingdom whether for the purpose of control, sport or feed which may involve cruelty, and to make recommendations as may appear appropriate in relation to such practises”

The main findings of the report in respect of fish, was that they are capable of suffering. This merely confirmed what many involved in animal welfare had suspected for some time: that fish feel pain.

Animal Welfare Bill 2004

As fish are vertebrates they fall into the definition of “animal” It had been argued by the committee of investigation that both recreational and commercial fishing activities contravened the cruelty offence. Defra said that they felt the Draft Bill would not interfere with normal fishing activities but stated that they intended to include a specific fishing exemption into the actual Bill although an over rider was written into the Bill which does not allow anglers a *cart blanche* to inflict unnecessary suffering in the pursuit of this activity and as such recommends a code of conduct be developed and adopted.

National Angling Alliance Code of Conduct for Coarse Angling

This document was prepared by the “The Specialist Anglers Alliance” (SAA) For the National Angling Alliance (NAA), and endorsed by the Environment Agency

This report was produced with the help of the:

- Anglers Conservation Association

- Angling Trades Association
- National Convention for the Welfare of Swans and Wildlife
- National Federation of Anglers
- RSPCA
- Specialist Anglers Alliance

The report covers all aspects of fishing and shooting and the welfare of the surrounding environment. It is divided into the following headings:

- **Care of the Environment** - the use of nylon lines, litter left by anglers, the positioning of “swims” (angling pegs and area fished within the pool/lake) and the relationship to the lake/pool bank side and the existing wildlife within. The relationship between conservation sites, and those designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and how these should be managed as fishing areas.
- **Good Hygiene** rules required for fishing sites, which should include toilet provisions and include information leaflets to all members so that they can report directly pollution occurrences within rivers and lakes and pools to the respective agency.
- **General Behaviour** not only for fishermen, but the parking of vehicles, use of bright lights, the use of bank sticks, umbrellas and other associated furniture.
- **General Safety**, in respect of casting out lines, wading into pools and lakes, overhead power lines, fishing from a boat, and lakes which are iced over.
- **Tackle, Rigs and Bait**, this covers use of equipment, like poles, the number of rods in use, the laws relating to night fishing, what type of bait is suitable for various types of pools/lakes and what bait is detrimental to the fish and the environment.
- **Fish Handling**, how fish should be netted, how hooks should be removed, how to return fish back into the pool/lake, the use of keepnets, keesacks and landing nets and the byelaws relating to their usage.
- **Movement of Fishing Stock**, from one pool/lake to another.

The Environment Agency (angling and wildlife section) produced a short paper from the National Angling Alliance Code of Conduct for Coarse Angling; this report was titled (Enjoy Fishing - Follow the Golden Rules) and this has formed the basis of the proposed Ethical Fishing Guidelines for Newcastle Borough Council controlled angling facilities.

Comparison with Other Local Authorities

Reviewing other local authority angling arrangements revealed that most Council's have a policy or code of practice in place. Most of the good codes of practices related to one or more of the reports mentioned above (Medway Report, Environment Agency Golden Rules of Fishing). It is clear that those authorities who managed angling effectively had adopted a code of practice which had been

developed and agreed in consultation with anglers and clubs who used the authorities' pools and lakes.

The Wider Effects of Good Fishing Management

An extract from “The Way Forward for Angling” written by the Environment Agency in 2001

Good fisheries management brings much wider benefits to the water environment. Anglers are a powerful voice in the drive for improving fisheries and their associated habitats, and angling also brings important benefits to the economy, particularly in rural areas, and to people's quality of life.

Angling should be accessible to all, including the young, the old and the disabled; it provides a unique opportunity for people to enjoy the natural environment in a quiet and unobtrusive way; in turn bringing tremendous social benefits in terms of people's sense of well being.

For these benefits to be realised it is important that angling is carried out in a way that is sustainable in terms of fish stocks and the wider environment. The Agency regulates angling through legislation and byelaws to ensure that fishing is carried out in ways that are sustainable and to protect our fish stocks for future generations of anglers. However, there are many other aspects of angling that are best improved through encouragement and education.

The Agency is keen to work in partnership with others to promote angling and therefore welcomed the opportunity to join with the Specialist Anglers' Alliance (SAA) in the production of the revised Code of Conduct.

All anglers should read the information on their rod licences and should be aware of the laws and byelaws that apply to them when fishing. The code is designed to complement the existing legislative framework and provides a commonsense guide to values and behaviour to which anglers should aspire.

The Environment Agency categorically supports the sport of angling, and through co-operation and collaboration with other interested parties is wholly committed to provide the nation with better fish stocks, better fisheries and better angling.

Proposed Ethical Fishing Guidelines for Newcastle Borough Council Controlled Angling Facilities

The Council will require anglers using its angling facilities to adopt the following rules based on information from the Medway Report, the National Angling Alliance Code of Practice, and the Environment Agency Golden Rules of Fishing:

Angling benefits our environment in many ways. If you spend hours by the water, you learn to appreciate the natural world. This often leads to an interest in protecting it. But the places you fish are important for wildlife too. Inexperience or a little carelessness with your gear can easily harm wildlife – and the good image of angling.

Litter from angling

Always take your litter and equipment away with you. Discarded nylon line is really dangerous for birds and animals. Take your line home. Either burn it or cut it into short lengths before disposing of it carefully.

Breakages and snagging

Rigs may get caught in bank side vegetation, branches or other underwater snags. If you can, remove caught rigs immediately. But don't put yourself at risk.

If you can't recover a caught rig, or if you lose terminal tackle, tell the club bailiffs or the fishery owner. They can arrange to remove it.

Use tackle that is the right size for the fish you are planning to catch.

Swim choice

Choose your swim with care. Avoid snagging bank side trees, vegetation and obstructions in the water.

Make sure you don't damage the vegetation at the water's edge.

Be careful not to disturb nesting birds.

Try to avoid places where people feed waterfowl. If birds expect food, they are more likely to get tangled up in your equipment. Take extra care if you have to fish in such places.

Unattended rods

Once you have set up your equipment for angling, always stay with your rods. It is illegal to leave setup rods unattended.

Birds or animals could try to eat the bait on the hooks and hurt themselves. They could also become entangled in the line.

Once you have set up your equipment for angling, always stay with your rods.

If you need to leave your swim, stop angling, gather together all your lines and secure the hooks to the rod. Remove bait from the hooks.

Rigs

Try to lose as little line as possible in the event of snagging. If you can, use a hook length with a lower breaking strain line than the reel line. If you use reel line straight through to the hook, make sure it has a weaker link. And make sure that leger links have a lower breaking strain. Remember that weaknesses occur at the knots where line is joined, where it is tied to swivels etc, and where shot are pinched onto the line. This is true for all types of rig.

Check your reel line regularly for signs of wear and damage. Remove any damaged

line and dispose of it carefully.

Replace your reel line regularly.

Bolt rigs

It's OK to use bolt rigs or fixed leads. But ensure that the Leger weight can slip free in the event of snagging or tangling. And make sure that a fish or bird will not end up dragging a leger around if the line breaks.

Hooks

Where possible, use barbless hooks or reduced barb hooks. Birds can free themselves more easily from these hooks. And rescuers will also find them easier to remove.

Weights

Lead weights are illegal in most sizes. Non-toxic weights are widely available and should be used whenever possible. You may use lead weights that are 0.06 grams (No. 8 shot) or less, or more than 28.35 grams (1oz).

While fishing

Beware of birds swimming into your line or picking up surface baits.

Submerge rod tips if you are legering using bite alarms. Keep lines under surface to avoid waterfowl. If weed growth is light, it may be possible to use backleads to keep the line below the water's surface.

Always watch your rod when you're legering with quivertips or other visual bite indicators. You may be able to keep the rod tip under, or close to, the water's surface. If this is not possible, only retrieve the line when there's no risk of birds swimming across it.

Retrieve your line if you're float fishing and birds seem likely to swim through it. Remember that a wagger float with the line 'buried' still presents a risk – it will be only just below the surface.

Take great care when fishing with surface bait such as bread or 'floaters'. These may attract waterfowl.

Sometimes you can avoid the problem by anchoring the bait with a back-lead. This allows you to submerge the bait below the surface when a bird approaches.

But remember that swans can easily reach food a metre below the surface and that other birds often dive for food.

If your floating baits are attracting too much attention from the birds, move away or choose a different fishing method.

Help new anglers

If you see beginners using unsuitable tackle, why not help them? You might also help to make a lifelong angler by improving their catches. **If the worse happens...**if a swan. Or other large bird or animal is caught in your line, cut the line immediately. Never hold onto the line, as this may cause severe injury and will increase distress. Report the incident as soon as possible to the Swan Sanctuary. Call their hotline on 01932 240790. You can also visit their website at www.theswansanctuary.org.uk Free small birds immediately. If treatment is required, hold comfortably in a small box or other dark space.

Consider the welfare of fish

The use of double and treble hooks should be avoided especially when the intention is to return the fish alive to the water.

Fish that have swallowed the hook and those intended for food should be killed humanely before any attempt is made to unhook them.

To assist in removing hooks all anglers should possess suitable disgorgers appropriate to the size, and species of fish they are likely to catch.

The use of barbless hooks is likely to cause less injury to the fish's mouth and, being easier to remove, reduce the amount of handling required.

If keep nets are used, fish should be confined for the shortest possible time, to reduce the risk of injury.

Great care should be taken when handling fish to minimise damage to the thin protective layer of skin and mucus covering the scales. Damage to this layer will increase the chance of infection and reduce the ability of the fish to survive.

Prolonged playing of fish, especially those destined to be returned to the water and the use of ultra-fine tackle, which necessitates such playing, should be avoided.

Fish, which are to be killed following capture, should be dispatched as quickly as possible. Anglers should know how to kill a fish humanely.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the Borough Council seeks to adopt the above Ethical Fishing Guidelines which have been adapted from current legislation and established good practice. Consultation on the draft Ethical Fishing Guidelines should be undertaken with relevant stakeholders, including existing local angling clubs, and the draft guidelines should be reviewed to take into account representations received.

The Guidelines should be applied to all pools/lakes within the control of the Borough Council and should be incorporated into the respective leases of these facilities where they are leased to a club or other third party.

Educational and awareness raising presentations should be organised to promote

the Ethical Fishing Guidelines to existing angling clubs, schools and other interested parties and explain the benefits of adhering to them.

A communications strategy should be drawn up to assist in the launch and dissemination of the Guidelines.

The Guidelines should be reviewed periodically to take into account legislative and other changes which may need to be incorporated to keep them up to date and relevant.

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GRANTS REVIEW AND THIRD SECTOR COMMISSIONING.

Submitted by: Robin Wiles, Community Regeneration Officer and Simon Sowerby, Procurement Officer

Portfolio: Culture & Active Communities

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on progress with the Grants Review and the revised Third Sector Commissioning framework.

Recommendations

- (a) That Members note the initial recommendations of the Grants Review.**
- (b) That Members provide comments on the initial recommendations of the Grants Review.**
- (c) That Members note the revised Third Sector Commissioning Framework.**
- (d) That Members approve the revised Third Sector Commissioning Framework.**

Reasons

The Council provides funding, from its own budgets, for the voluntary & community sector, both through Commissioning and grants; a review of processes to try and improve efficiency for the Council, whilst providing support to voluntary & community groups is necessary.

1. Background

- 1.1 A review of grants was requested by the Council's Active and Cohesive Overview and Scrutiny Committee (the Committee) and by the previous Portfolio Holder for Resources.
- 1.2 The Review will only look at grants that are funded from the Council's own budgets for voluntary and community organisations (VCOs), and the relationship between grants and Third Sector Commissioning.
- 1.3 The Review will make recommendations in respect of the processes of administering grants to achieve greater efficiency, better use of limited resources, and clear lines of accountability, with a view to any changes being implemented for 2012/13. The Review will not look at the budgets for grants.
- 1.4 The Third Sector Commissioning Framework commenced in 2009/10, with the first contracts being awarded as from 1 April 2009. Any new contracts would commence from 1 April 2012.
- 1.5 In the previous municipal year, the Active & Cohesive Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Third Sector Commissioning Framework and made a number of recommendations to the Cabinet, which had been agreed (minute 624/10 refers). The following resolution was agreed at the meeting held on 1 November 2010:-

- That the Committee undertake a review of the processes for awarding small grants in the context of the Third Sector Commissioning Framework and the financial challenges faced by the Council.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The expenditure on grant funding for VCOs for 2010/11 was £225,803.16
- 2.2 The expenditure for Third Sector Commissioning from 2009 to 2012 was £635,860.00, averaging out as £211,953.33 per annum.
- 2.3 With these levels of expenditure, it is essential that the Council ensures that it gets value for money, whilst also providing a sufficient level of financial support to VCOs operating in the Borough.
- 2.4 The Government's recent consultation document "Best value: new draft statutory guidance" (DCLG, April 2011) states clearly that there is an expectation that:-
- "authorities should consider overall value, including environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision." and
 - "Authorities should be sensitive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations (honouring the commitments set out in local Compacts¹) and small businesses. Authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate cuts."
- 2.5 The current system of grants, with 8 different schemes each with its own processes and people involved, can be confusing – a need for better information, co-ordination and accountability is apparent.
- 2.6 The current system of grants does mean that those responsible for managing the different schemes have specialist knowledge, experience and understanding of the specific type of grant concerned, for example:-
- 16 Locally Based Bodies² involved in managing Community Chest.
 - Cultural Grants being managed by the Council's Culture & Arts Managers, and Homelessness Grants by the Council's Housing Strategy service.
- 2.7 There is therefore a need for better co-ordination of, and clearer accountability for, grants whilst retaining specialist knowledge.
- 2.8 Voluntary and community sector partners are aware that the Grants Review is taking place, with the Newcastle Voluntary Sector Forum expressing support for the general objective of the review.

¹ The Council is signed up to the Staffordshire Compact.

² Ashley & Loggerheads Parish Council; Audley Rural Parish Council; Betley, Balterley & Wrinehill Parish Council; Chapel & Hill Chorlton Parish Council; Chesterton Community Forum; Clayton Community Centre; Harriet Higgins Community Centre; Keele Parish Council; Kidsgrove Town Council; Madeley Parish Council; Maer & Aston Parish Council; Marsh Hall Community Centre; Ramsey Road Community Centre; Silverdale Parish Council; Whitmore Parish Council; Wye Road Community Centre.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 Please see the recommendations contained in the Grants Review Preliminary Report.
- 3.2 The Grants Review Preliminary Report was presented to the Active and Cohesive Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 22 August 2011. A summary of the decisions of that Committee is included in the Grants Review Preliminary Report.

4. **Proposal**

- 4.1 The recommendations contained in the Grants Review Preliminary Report, and the decisions thereof of the Active and Cohesive Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting of 22 August 2011 are considered.
- 4.2 Dialogue with voluntary and community sector partners is continued with the aim of gaining their support for changes that are approved.
- 4.3 Discussions with the Sports Council, as an external body (albeit administered and largely funded by the Borough Council) to take place since to establish their views on the observations/findings of the Grants Review, and seek their support for the changes that are approved, and any changes to their constitution that may be required thereof.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 The voluntary and community sector play an indispensable role in helping the Borough Council and Newcastle Partnership deliver positive changes for residents and communities of Newcastle – it is therefore important that funding the Council provides for the sector is managed with the right combination of efficiency and use of specialist knowledge and experience to target funding appropriately.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 The voluntary and community sector in, and working in Newcastle covers a diverse range of organisations, both in terms of types and size of organisations – everything from the small informal community group working to improve their neighbourhood to voluntary organisations with paid staff that provide professional services – and in terms of the nature of their activities. Grants to these organisations will, therefore, have a positive impact on all priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy and on the first 3 of the Council's corporate priorities.
- 6.2 Efficiently managed grants schemes that help to fund activities and projects that make a difference will help towards the fourth of the Council's corporate priorities.
- 6.3 Proposals in the Grants Review Preliminary Report will provide a more consistent evaluation and monitoring of grants issued.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 The Council is required to take into account all relevant matters, and not take into account irrelevant matters, and to otherwise behave reasonably. Failure to do so may lead to legal challenge.

7.2 The Best Value Statutory Guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government issued in June 2011 advised that Local Authorities do not, in response to public spending cuts, disproportionately cut funding to voluntary and community groups.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

8.1 Equality Impact Assessment completed.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

9.1 The Grants Review does not look at the budgets for grants or Third Sector Commissioning. There are, therefore, no direct cost implications

9.2 The role of grants co-ordinator identified in the Grants Review's recommendations will be absorbed by an existing post. There are, therefore, no employment costs involved.

9.3 A more efficiently managed and co-ordinated grants system will provide better value for money by increasing the likelihood that grants go to the right organisations, and through improved monitoring.

9.4 A more efficiently managed and co-ordinated grants system will improve the information and advice that the Council provides to voluntary and community organisation on other sources of funding.

9.5 A more efficiently managed and co-ordinated grants system will enhance the capability of voluntary and community organisations to deliver better quality services.

9.6 The diverse range of voluntary & community organisations that work in the Borough who can, potentially, access Grant funding from the Council, provide services and activities that help to meet priorities of both the Council and of Newcastle Partnership across the board.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 Risk Assessment completed.

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

11.1 Grant funding is accessible to voluntary and community organisations that carry out activities that have a positive impact on climate change. Examples of grants that have been given where that applies are available.

12. **Key Decision Information**

12.1 The report is not on a Key Decision as defined in the Council's Constitution.

12.2 The report is included in the Cabinet's Forward Plan.

13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Cabinet, 624/10.

Cabinet, 195b/11.

Active & Cohesive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 379/11.

Active & Cohesive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 653/11.

14. **List of Appendices**

14.1 Appendix 'A' - Grants Review Report 1 (including appendices – see 15.1).

15. **Background Papers**

15.1 Background papers to accompany the Grants Review Report 1 (see 14.1) are available from the Community Regeneration Officer on ext. 2493 or robin.wiles@newcastle-staffpartnership.org.uk

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REVIEW OF GRANT FUNDING FROM NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL, 2011/12

PRELIMINARY REPORT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A review of grants, in the context of Third Sector Commissioning, was requested by the Council's Active and Cohesive Overview & Scrutiny Committee (the Committee) and by the previous Portfolio Holder for Resources.
- 1.2 The Review will make recommendations in respect of the processes of administering grants to achieve greater efficiency, better use of limited resources, and clear lines of accountability, with a view to any changes being implemented for 2012/13. The Review will not look at the budgets for grants.

2. Grants Covered by Review

- 2.1 The Review will only look at grants that are funded from the Council's own budgets for voluntary and community organisations (VCOs).
- 2.2 The Grants that will be covered in the Review are:-
- Community Centres.
 - Community Chest.
 - Cultural Grants.
 - Green Grants.
 - Homelessness Grants.
 - Small Grants.
 - Theatres, public entertainment and arts grant.
- 2.3 Sports Council grants to VCOs¹ will also be taken into consideration, but with the Sports Council being an external body – albeit one that is largely funded and administered by the Council – they are under no obligation to abide by recommendation approved by the Council.
- 2.4 The Grants that are not covered by the Review are:-
- Grants to individuals or properties, e.g. home improvement grants
 - Grants to businesses.
 - Grants that the Council administers from external funding.

3. Context of the Review

¹ Approximately 25% of Sports Council grants for 2010/11 went to VCOs.

- 3.1 A broadly positive partnership operates between the Council and the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) in the Borough as a result of (amongst others):-
- The development of the Third Sector Commissioning Framework in partnership with the VCS – recognised nationally (as was Tamworth Borough Council) for good practice.
 - Commitment by the Council to the local Compact.
 - Joint working through Newcastle Partnership.

This, however, has not permeated through to all elements of both the Council nor of the VCS.

- 3.2 The Government's "Big Society" idea promotes heavily the role of the VCS in delivering services and providing an active civic society.
- 3.3 However, government cuts in public spending puts pressure on Local Authority and other public sector budgets for the commissioning of services from, and the provision of grant funding for, the VCS.
- 3.4 The Best Value Statutory Guidance document recently out for consultation (13 April 2011 to 14 June 2011) from the Department of Communities and Local Government made it very clear that Government did not expect Local Authorities to make disproportionate cuts in their budgets for the funding of the VCS.² The Government has also affirmed its commitment to the principles of the Compact.
- 3.5 The Council would hope to be in a position to ensure that reductions in the Council's funding from central government do not have a disproportionate affect the Council's funding of, and support for, VCOs working in the Borough.
- 3.6 The Council received a significant increase in the number of Freedom of Information requests about grants issued during 2010/11.

4. Key Issues With Current Grants Processes

- 4.1 There are different processes by which the various grants are administered and approved (of the 7 grant schemes listed in 2.2, there are 5 different decision-making processes) – this can be confusing to communities, applicants, partners, and to Council officers and members.
- 4.2 With a variety of decision-making processes for the various grant schemes, accountability (for the use of public money) may be less clear than would be desirable.
- 4.3 Monitoring of grants is inconsistent, and (over-)dependant on the willingness of recipients to return monitoring forms. Penalties for non-return of monitoring forms are generally limited to barring future applications.

² See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/bestvalueconsult>

- 4.4 There are different officers who lead on the various grants, with no single point of contact or co-ordination. Some co-ordination does take place in practice, but on an informal basis.
- 4.5 The maximum levels of grants that can be awarded are not necessarily consistent with the level (£5,000) at which commissioning comes into play. Two examples illustrate this:-
- (i) Commissioning currently applies for funding of £7,500 and above – Small Grants and Homelessness Grants have a maximum grant of £5,000, whilst Cultural Grants have a maximum level of £1,500.
 - (ii) Commissioning currently applies for funding of £7,500 and above, yet the Theatres, public entertainment and arts grant of £97,620 does not go through the Commissioning process.
- 4.6 Information and advice on Council grant schemes can be inconsistent and will vary considerably depending on whom an enquirer contacts and/or on where they look on the Council website.
- 4.7 For those grant schemes that have a specialist focus, it is beneficial to have officers with the necessary specialist knowledge and experience to manage those schemes. It is, therefore, intended to retain the current system, but with a reinforced co-ordinating role (see 5.2).

5. Actions/Improvements That Will Be, Or Can Be, implemented Without Further Approval Needed

- 5.1 There are a number of improvements to procedures and information that can be implemented without needing approval, including:-
- Standard basic grants information to be produced in a range of formats – this has already been produced.
 - Grants information on the Council website to be improved and located on a “Grants and funding” page. Forms for all grants to downloadable with download notifications for all.
 - Facility for applications to be made online to be set up.
 - A general enquiry e-mail address to be set up, e.g. grantsinformation@newcastle-staffpartnership.org.uk
 - A standard template grants application form to be produced, with additional sections for specific grants.
- 5.2 The post of Partnership Officer (Community Development) within the restructured Business Improvement and Partnerships Service (as from September 2011) includes within its main roles a co-ordinating function in respect of grant funding.
- 5.3 The Contracts Register, that includes information about Third Sector commissioned services, has been amended to include Grants. This means

that basic information about grants that have been issued will be available in one place.

6. Outsourcing the Management of Grants

- 6.1 The Council received an approach from the Staffordshire Community Foundation (SCF)³ in February 2011 seeking to offer their services to manage the Council's grant schemes⁴. This approach was unsolicited.
- 6.2 An initial reply informed SCF that their approach would be considered as part of the Grants Review.
- 6.3 In considering the approach from SCF, consideration needs to be given to:-
- Costs of outsourcing.
 - Potential loss of control.
 - Accountability for grants decisions, and the current role of the Grants Assessment Panel, and the potential dilution of this.
- 6.4 At the present time, no Local Authority in Staffordshire (including Stoke-on-Trent) has outsourced the management of their grants.
- 6.5 Any decision in respect of the approach from SCF should also apply in principle to any future approach from other organisations.

7. Specific Grants – Community Centres

- 7.1 A core grant of £400.00 is given to 15 Community Centres across the Borough – this covers the Community Centres that were previously managed directly by the Council.
- 7.2 The scheme has a budget of £4,200.00 for 2011/12.

8. Specific Grants – Community Chest

- 8.1 Community Chest is managed, by the Partnerships Team, in partnership with 16 “Locally Based Bodies” – Parish/Town Councils and Community Centre/Forum Management Committees.
- 8.2 Recommendations from the Locally Based Bodies are subject to a verification process by the Borough Council.
- 8.3 The Grants Assessment Panel oversees the scheme and, in certain situations applications will be referred to the Panel for decision.

³ See <http://www.staffsfoundation.org.uk/>

⁴ Outsourcing would not apply to Sports Council funding.

8.4 There is a broad consensus from all involved that the role of the Locally Based Bodies is fundamental to the successful operation of Community Chest, and to maintaining the local connection.

8.5 It is therefore recommended that the basic set-up of Community Chest is retained.

9. Specific Grants – Cultural Grants

9.1 Cultural Grants, with a maximum limit of £1,500.00, is managed by Leisure and Cultural Services.

9.2 Grant decisions are the responsibility of the Grants Assessment Panel.

9.3 No significant changes are identified.

10. Specific Grants – Green Grants

10.1 Green Grants, with a maximum limit of £250.00, is managed by Operational Services of the Council, with decisions made by Officers.

10.2 The budget for Green Grants was under spent for 2010/11.

10.3 Green Grants currently operate separately from the other grant schemes.

10.4 It is therefore recommended that Green Grants are brought within the remit of the Grants Assessment Panel, with the decision-making process remaining as currently, but with reports presented to the Panel. Panel to be asked to review the upper limit.

11. Specific Grants – Homelessness Grants

11.1 Grants are made available to VCOs that help to meet the actions identified in the Homelessness Strategy's Action Plan. The scheme is managed by the Housing Strategy team.

11.2 There is an overall budget of c£45,000 per annum which covers both services commissioned and grant funding. The budget for grants will vary from year to year dependant on the value of commissioned services.

11.3 Grant decisions are the responsibility of the Grants Assessment Panel.

11.4 No significant changes are identified.

12. Specific Grants – Small Grants

12.1 Small Grants provide a generic fund providing grants of up to £5,000.00, and is managed by the Partnerships Team.

12.2 Grant decisions are the responsibility of the Grants Assessment Panel.

12.3 With a budget of £22,000.00, there is concern that the upper limit of £5,000.00 is both unrealistic and misleading. For 2010/11, the average grant (with the same budget) was just under £2,000.00.

12.4 The Grants Assessment Panel have proposed the lowering of the upper limit to £2,500.00. It is recommended that this proposal is approved.

13. Specific Grants – Sports Council

13.1 The Sports Council is an autonomous body, both funded and administered by the Borough Council – any recommendation from the Grants Review would not be binding on the Sports Council.

13.2 Sports Council awards grants to individuals and schools as well as to VCOs; for 2010/11, about 25% of Sports Council grants went to VCOs; a proportion which may vary from year to year.

13.3 Sports Council can fund the purchase of sporting equipment, but not the running costs of sporting organisations. Sporting equipment can also be funded by Borough Council grant schemes, and there is a risk that this will confuse potential applicants.

13.4 Improvements in the information provided about grants (see 5.1), and the new responsibilities for the Partnerships Officer (Community Development (see 5.2) should help to better signpost applicants to the right fund for their project.

13.5 It is recommended that the Sports Council be asked to review their constitution in the light of the Grants Review's observations and findings, and that a formal relationship between the Sports Council and the Grants Assessment Panel, including representation and reporting between the 2 bodies, be established.

14. Specific Grants - Theatres, Public Entertainment and the Arts

14.1 The Theatres, Public Entertainment & the Arts grant is, in practice, a grant to the New Vic Theatre (and maybe should be referred to as such). Please see Appendix 5.

14.2. The level of the grant at £97,620.00 for 2010/11 is considerably higher than the level of any other grant the Council provides, and is at a level that would normally go through a commissioning process.

14.3 There is an argument that the New Vic should be treated as an exception because of its significance for the national profile of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

14.4 There is also an argument that the New Vic funding is vital since it acts as a magnet for other funding. There are, however, other VCOs that could – with some legitimacy – present the same argument for receiving special treatment when it comes to funding.

- 14.5 There are 4 options as to how this funding is dealt with that need consideration:-
- (i) No change - it may be appropriate that it is Full Council determine the level of financial support provided to the New Vic given the nature and sensitivities of the issues listed above.
 - (ii) The funding goes through the Third Sector Commissioning Framework. Given the fairly unique nature of the New Vic, it is questionable as to whether there is any other Third Sector theatre organisation that could compete, at least for the bulk of the commission.
 - (iii) The level of financial support provided to the New Vic continues to be determined by Full Council, but with the funding subject to a Service Level Agreement to be monitored by the Third Sector Commissioning Board.
 - (iv) Financial support to the New Vic is taken out of the grants/commissioning equation and is considered as core funding within the main Council budget.

15. Third Sector Commissioning

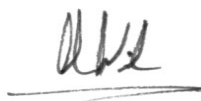
- 15.1 Funding to VCOs through grants and through commissioning are intrinsically linked; changes to either will have an impact on the other.
- 15.2 The Third Sector Commissioning Framework was approved in December 2008, with the first commissions starting on 1 April 2009⁵. The remaining commissions will end on 31 March 2012.
- 15.3 The Third Sector Commissioning Framework has also been used by the Borough Council for commissioning services using external funding.
- 15.4 Third Sector Commissioning Framework has been cited nationally as good practice (along with Tamworth Borough Council).
- 15.5 The distinction between funding through commissioning and through grants, and the respective benefits thereof, may not be fully understood by all concerned. There are officers of the Authority who can provide information and training if required.
- 15.6 At the time of writing this report, no decision has been made as to the budget from Third Sector Commissioning from 2012/13 onwards.
- 15.7 It has to be noted that any significant reduction in the budget available for Third Sector Commissioning risks placing greater demand and pressure on the grants budget if that is not increased commensurately, and risks

⁵ 11 agencies commissioned 2009/10; 9 in 2010/11; 7 in 2011/12.

breaching both the Government's expectation outlined in the Best Value Guidance (see 3.4), and the Council's commitment to the sector (see 3.5).

16. Recommendations

- 16.1 The actions to be implemented, as listed in 5.1, are noted.
- 16.2 The approach from the Staffordshire Community Foundation to manage the Council's grants is considered in the light of the issues highlighted in 6.3. It should be noted that any outsourcing of the management of grants would render the main purpose of the Grants Review superfluous.
- 16.3 The role of the impending Partnership Officer (Community Development) post in co-ordinating Council grants is noted.
- 16.4 The budget for Community Centre grants is reviewed.
- 16.5 The management of Community Chest, and the involvement of Locally Based Bodies, to continue, with the Grants Assessment Panel authorised to agree any changes.
- 16.6 The Council's administration of Community Chest, Cultural Grants, Green Grants, Homelessness Grants and Small Grants to remain as at present, but with the Partnership Officer (Community Development) post taking on a co-ordinating role.
- 16.7 Green Grants to be reported to the Grants Assessment Panel.
- 16.8 The upper limit for a Small Grant to be reduced to £2,500.00.
- 16.9 A formal relationship between the Sports Council and the Grants Assessment Panel, including representation and reporting between the 2 bodies, is established (contingent on agreement by the Sports Council).
- 16.10 The Grants Assessment Panel to be given limited authority to move money between grant budgets that fall within it's remit, during the final quarter of the financial year when the following apply:-
- The amount being moved is no more than the maximum level of grant that applies to the grant scheme from which it is being moved.
 - There are sufficient funds left in the budget for the grant scheme from which money is moved after all applications to that scheme have been considered, and there are insufficient funds left in the budget for the grant scheme to which money is moved to fund valid applications to that scheme at the level that the Grants Assessment Panel would wish to award.
- 16.11 The mechanism for funding of the New Vic theatre is reviewed by the Council in line with the options listed in 14.5.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RW', is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a signature separator.

Robin Wiles,
Community Regeneration Officer,
Newcastle Partnership.

22 July 2011/26 July 2011/2 August 2011/10 August 2011/11 August 2011/
23 August 2011.

**DECISIONS FROM ACTIVE AND COHESIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETING - MONDAY 22 AUGUST 2011**

RECOMMENDATION.	DECISION.
16.1 The actions to be implemented, as listed in 5.1, are noted.	Agreed.
16.2 The approach from the Staffordshire Community Foundation to manage the Council's grants is considered in the light of the issues highlighted in 6.3. It should be noted that any outsourcing of the management of grants would render the main purpose of the Grants Review superfluous.	Unanimous vote to reject approach from SCF.
16.3 The role of the impending Partnership Officer (Community Development) post in co-ordinating Council grants is noted.	Agreed.
16.4 The budget for Community Centre grants is reviewed.	Agreed.
16.5 The management of Community Chest, and the involvement of Locally Based Bodies, to continue, with the Grants Assessment Panel authorised to agree any changes.	Agreed.
16.6 The Council's administration of Community Chest, Cultural Grants, Green Grants, Homelessness Grants and Small Grants to remain as at present, but with the Partnership Officer (Community Development) post taking on a co-ordinating role.	Agreed.
16.7 Green Grants to be reported to the Grants Assessment Panel.	Agreed.
16.8 The upper limit for a Small Grant to be reduced to £2,500.00.	Agreed.
16.9 A formal relationship between the Sports Council and the Grants Assessment Panel, including representation and reporting between the 2 bodies, is established (contingent on agreement by the Sports Council).	Agreed, subject to Sports Council's approval.
<p>16.10 The Grants Assessment Panel to be given limited authority to move money between grant budgets that fall within it's remit, during the final quarter of the financial year when the following apply:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount being moved is no more than the maximum level of grant that applies to the grant scheme from which it is being moved. <p>There are sufficient funds left in the budget for the grant scheme from which money is moved after all applications to that scheme have been considered, and there are insufficient funds left in the budget for the grant scheme to which money is moved to fund valid applications to that scheme at the level that the Grants Assessment Panel</p>	Agreed.

RECOMMENDATION.	DECISION.
would wish to award.	
<p>16.11 The mechanism for funding of the New Vic theatre is reviewed by the Council in line with the options listed in 14.5.</p> <p>(i) No change - it may be appropriate that it is Full Council determine the level of financial support provided to the New Vic given the nature and sensitivities of the issues listed above.</p> <p>(ii) The funding goes through the Third Sector Commissioning Framework. Given the fairly unique nature of the New Vic, it is questionable as to whether there is any other Third Sector theatre organisation that could compete, at least for the bulk of the commission.</p> <p>(iii) The level of financial support provided to the New Vic continues to be determined by Full Council, but with the funding subject to a Service Level Agreement to be monitored by the Third Sector Commissioning Board.</p> <p>(iv) Financial support to the New Vic is taken out of the grants/commissioning equation and is considered as core funding within the main Council budget.</p>	<p>General agreement that:-</p> <p>- Full Council continue to determine level of funding.</p> <p>- Funding to be subject to Service Level Agreement, with quarterly monitoring reports and payment on result.</p>

LIST OF APPENDICES (available upon request)

- 1) Summary document.
- 2) Notes of internal meeting, 20.5.11.
- 3) Funding document for LAPs.
- 4) SCF letter & reply.
- 5) New Vic information.

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ROUGH SLEEPER'S OUTREACH SERVICE

Submitted by: Caroline Abel

Portfolio: Regeneration and Planning

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To request for Cabinet to support the re-provision of the Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service from April 2012 and reserve future years third sector commissioning funding for a three year period.

Recommendation

To jointly commission a future service with Stoke on Trent City Council to combine both Council's resources and develop a service which meets the needs of both authority areas whilst maximising efficiencies.

Reasons

The provision of a Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service has been the main force behind keeping the numbers of rough sleepers on the streets of Newcastle at low levels.

For a number of years both authorities have separately commissioned a Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service. Both authorities' contracts are due to end in March 2012, therefore creating an opportunity to jointly commission a single service in April 2012.

1. Background

- 1.1 Rough Sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness. It is a fundamental issue for society and can impact upon housing, community safety, health and the well being of individuals.
- 1.2 In November 2008, the Government announced its 'No One Left Out' Rough Sleeping Strategy which signalled the Government's intention to work with partner agencies to end rough sleeping in England.
- 1.3 For many years, the Council has tackled the issue of rough sleeping in Newcastle by funding a Rough Sleeper's Street Outreach Service. This service works with rough sleepers to get them off the street, into hostel accommodation and linked into social care and other support services. This service has helped to keep the number of people actually sleeping rough in Newcastle very low. The current service and service provider has been given 'rough sleeper champion' status by the CLG and is recognised nationally as best practice for successfully addressing the issues of rough sleeping.
- 1.4 The severe weather emergency protocol is also delivered as part of the service. This is where arrangements are made between agencies to ensure that when the temperatures fall below zero degrees for three consecutive nights, people in Newcastle are not at risk of dying on the streets due to the cold weather and have access to safe shelter.
- 1.5 The Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service is currently funded via the Council's Third Sector Commissioning process. Prior to the Third Sector Commissioning process it was funded by the Council, through its voluntary grants for voluntary organisations.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The current service is in its final year of a three year contract and is due to end in March 2012. The cost of the service during the 2011/2012 financial year is £14765.
- 2.2 A very similar service is also provided in Stoke on Trent but on a larger scale. The services have always worked well together and complemented each other. Officers from both authorities are in agreement that this service could easily be commissioned through one process and delivered through one contract. Stoke on Trent Council has approached the Borough to enquire whether we would like to joint commission any future service provision using Stoke's commissioning process as both current contracts are due to expire in March 2012.
- 2.3 In order ensure continuation of this valuable service between the end of the current contract and the commencement of a future contract, plus the opportunity to joint commission with our partner authority, Officers are keen to start work on the re-commissioning process straight away.
- 2.4 At present Officers have not been advised on what funding, if any will be made available for commissioning from April 2012 and would need confirmation of funding availability in order to work with Stoke to re-commission this service.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 For Council to continue to fund this service and agree to embark on a joint commissioning process with Stoke on Trent City Council.
- 3.2 For Council to continue to commission this service via the borough's Third Sector Commissioning Process.
- 3.3 For Council not to commission a future Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service in Newcastle.

4. **Proposal and Reasons for this Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 To embark on a joint commissioning process with Stoke on Trent City Council to combine both Council's resources and develop a service which meets the needs of both authority areas whilst maximising efficiencies.
- 4.2 The Council's approach has been informed by the following:
 - Discussions are ongoing between the Council's Procurement Officer to ensure that Stoke's commissioning process is as open and transparent as the Borough's own process.
 - The two authorities have individually funded a rough sleepers outreach service for many years, historically these services have always been delivered by the same service provider who has a wealth of expertise in managing this client group. Also no other organisation tendered for the service during the last commissioning processes for both authorities.
 - It has always been clear that due to economies of scale the delivery of the Stoke service has enabled the Newcastle contract costs to remain low. It would be questionable as to whether a provider would be able to offer to same level of service for a similar amount in Newcastle if there was not the Stoke contract also in operation or provided by a different service provider.

- Due to the economic climate and organisations in the area are evolving, both Newcastle and Stoke anticipate that when this service is re-tendered there will be more competition than in previous years. By jointly commissioning the Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service, it means we are able to influence service provision and identify any further savings that could be made as part of the new service, rather than re-commissioning our service alone which could result in being more expensive if the authorities chose different providers.
- The majority of the hostel accommodation accessed via the Rough Sleeper's Team is based in Stoke as Newcastle does not have its own hostels. Having a joint contract will go some way towards overcoming any issues that may arise around local connection priorities as proposed in the fourth coming Localism Bill.
- The loss of the service would have a detrimental impact upon the borough in many ways. Firstly if there was not a Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service operating in the borough, the prevalence of rough sleeping may increase and incidents of rough sleeping may become more visible throughout the borough and more difficult to tackle.
- Secondly, addressing the causative factors behind rough sleeping and assisting individuals who are sleeping rough to reach their full potential requires a specialised and focused approach. Without the specialist service it would be inevitable that further demands would be placed upon the Council's main homelessness service (Newcastle housing Advice) which is not set up to deal with the intensive needs of addressing rough sleeping.
- Finally, without a rough sleepers outreach service the Council would have to develop additional services to meet the rough sleeper severe weather provision requirements. This would like lead to an increase in temporary accommodation costs.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

5.1 The service contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- **Creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable borough**
The service has had a positive impact upon community cohesion, working closely with the police and other agencies they offer support to rough sleepers getting them off the street and minimising the potential for anti social behaviour.
- **Creating a borough of opportunity**
By its assertive outreach work the service provides support and assistance to improving the life chances of people who are sleeping rough.
- **Creating a healthy and active community**
By linking rough sleepers into services, this promotes health and independence.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 **Homelessness Act 2002**

The Act includes the requirement for Local Authorities to formulate reviews and strategies in order to tackle and prevent homelessness.

6.2 **Housing Act 1996**

The Act includes the duty of the Local Authority to provide advisory services and assistance to voluntary organisations in respect of homelessness.

6.3 **Local Government Act 2000**

The Act gives Local Authorities the power to do anything likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of the area.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 A full equality and impact assessment is included in the commissioning process.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 The current service has cost £14,765 to deliver in 2011-2012, by entering into a joint commissioning process with Stoke City Council there would need to be a similar amount to be committed by the Borough Council for the next three years.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 By not commissioning a Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service could impact on the delivery and costs of other services in the borough and could result in the Council having to spend more money than the current service value addressing the future issues of rough sleeping in Newcastle, especially during the winter period.

10. **Key Decision Information**

10.1 The provision of a Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service has been the main force behind keeping the numbers of rough sleepers on the streets of Newcastle at low levels.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

None.

12. **List of Appendices**

None.

13. **Background Papers**

None.

CABINET RESPONSE TO A SCRUTINY TASK GROUP'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE NEWCASTLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Submitted by: Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Planning

Portfolio: Regeneration and Planning

Ward(s) affected: All wards

Purpose of the Report

To enable Cabinet members to consider and respond to a report and recommendations of a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group that was set up to review plans for the disposal and development of surplus Council-owned land (seven particular sites).

Recommendations

- (a) That the Newcastle Development Programme (NDP) Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, and all those involved in supporting the review process, be thanked for their report and recommendations in respect of this matter.**
- (b) That it be confirmed that no further decision be taken at this stage regarding disposal of the seven NDP sites.**
- (c) That the appropriateness of development, in land-use planning terms, of the seven NDP sites along with all other surplus non-operational land belonging to the Council, be reviewed as part of the forthcoming Site Allocations Development Plan Document process.**
- (d) That future versions of the Council's Asset Management Strategy incorporate an annual planned disposals programme, as appropriate, supported by:
 - (i) appropriate site specific technical information;**
 - (ii) a clear process for effective community and stakeholder consultation along with a summary report of the outcome of any related public consultation activities regarding individual sites and;**
 - (iii) clear evidence of alignment with the Council's financial capital planning process.****
- (e) That officers be instructed to undertake an annual review of the progress made with implementation of the North Staffs Green Spaces Strategy and the associated action plan.**
- (f) That Members note the information regarding the ongoing transformation programme, particularly in relation to The Way We Work Programme and the Business of the Council programme.**
- (g) That the annual Member Training and Development programme be reviewed and revised, as may be necessary, to incorporate training relating to both Asset Management and strategic policy making.**

Reasons

- To enable Cabinet to respond to the report and recommendations of the NDP Scrutiny Group.
- To enable improvements to be made to key decision-making procedures within the Council including greater clarity around consultation procedures and improved links between key

1. **Background**

- 1.1 On 24 March 2010 Cabinet approved an Asset Management Strategy for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13 and requested that a further report on a disposal programme be prepared for a future Cabinet meeting.
- 1.2 On 28 July 2010 Council resolved to support proposals for the release and disposal of surplus parcels of land at a number of locations throughout the borough.
- 1.3 On 15 December 2010 Cabinet received a report outlining progress with the programme of land disposals and resolutions were passed for the disposal of a further 3 sites.
- 1.4 In response to public concerns about the programme (known as the Newcastle Development Programme – NDP) full Council resolved at its meeting on 23 February 2011 to refer the processes which had been put in place in relation to the operation of the NDP for scrutiny.
- 1.5 A report regarding the NDP was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 4 March 2011, and they resolved to establish a Task and Finish Group to undertake the review.
- 1.6 On 20 April 2011 the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group met to agree the scope of the review, its methodology and a timetable for its completion.
- 1.7 During the Scrutiny process presentations on matters pertaining to Planning Policy, Asset Management and Financial Strategy, Housing Need and Green Space Strategy formed the key evidence base. Members of the Scrutiny Group visited all seven sites and representatives of local residents groups took the opportunity to make representations about both the general programme and site-specific considerations. Additionally members of the group received a range of written representations and were provided with key policy documents.
- 1.8 Having considered the evidence, the Task and Finish Group produced a report that was endorsed at their final meeting on 20 July 2011, and asked full Council to refer eleven recommendations to Cabinet for its consideration and decision. At the Council meeting on 27 July 2011 members agreed to this request. All members were provided with a copy of the Group's report as part of the agenda for the Council meeting but the conclusion and recommendations are reproduced at Appendix 'A' for ease of reference.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The main task for Cabinet is to consider the report and recommendations of the NDP Scrutiny Task and Finish Group and to decide the most appropriate response(s).
- 2.2 Before reviewing the report it is important for Cabinet to re-state the rationale for the NDP which can be broadly summarised as follows:
 - (i) it accords with the Council's Asset and Management Strategy, particularly in relation to the disposal of surplus land/property and the reduction of unnecessary estate management and maintenance costs.
 - (ii) it would facilitate housing-led regeneration of communities to meet housing needs at a time when external regeneration funding has diminished significantly.
 - (iii) it would generate capital receipts to support the Council's future capital programme.

- 2.3 Notably the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group accept the rationale for the NDP but they raise a number of concerns which are articulated in the conclusions and recommendations sections of the report. In summary these concerns focus around the following points:
- (a) the value of green spaces within communities;
 - (b) transparency of decision-making;
 - (c) the process of identifying sites for disposal (including clear criteria/information);
 - (d) the need for greater clarity about the processes for decision-making in respect of asset disposal and;
 - (e) the method and timing of public consultation.
- 2.4 Your officers consider that the eleven recommendations of the Group can be most effectively addressed by focussing on the above points, as set out below and Cabinet agrees.
- 2.5 Green Spaces
- 2.5.1 Inevitably there has been a great deal of focus upon the key policy document - the North Staffordshire Green Spaces Strategy – the Task Group’s main concern appears to centre upon the importance to the communities of amenity open space/semi-natural areas. Whilst the Task Group acknowledges that the Strategy document demonstrates an approach to meeting recognised standards for the provision and maintenance of open space and play facilities they feel that it fails to address their concern. Also they consider that the associated consultation processes should have been more extensive in order that the value of amenity open spaces within communities could have been recognised.
- 2.5.2 In responding to these points (and specifically recommendation 2) Cabinet considers that it is vitally important to understand the national and local context for producing the Strategy. The main external driver is national government policy – Planning Policy Guidance No. 17 (“Planning of Open Space, Sport and Recreation”) which was issued in 2002. This policy document advises that Local Authorities should “undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open spaces, sports and recreational facilities”, in order to facilitate effective planning of provision to maintain and/or enhance people’s quality of life.
- 2.5.3 Members will recall that the North Staffordshire Green Spaces Strategy (NSGSS) was jointly commissioned by this Council and Stoke City Council). This sits under the framework set by the adopted Joint Core Spatial Strategy and was prepared in accordance with the approach promoted in PPG17. The strategy was adopted after consultation in December 2009 and is a 15 year plan which sets the strategic framework and direction for delivering community green space need. The strategy’s action plan will deliver locally-agreed standards for green space provision within the existing quantity of functional and publicly accessible green space which exists (a total of 750 hectares) leaving a surplus of about 18 hectares (43 acres). Over the strategy’s lifetime it is anticipated that it will have to be adapted to meet changing community and stakeholder needs – it is sufficiently flexible to enable this. Whilst, fundamentally, it remains the view of Cabinet that the Strategy must continue to ensure the provision of an effective and accessible strategic green spaces network that meets community needs, it must be understood that the Strategy’s purpose does not extend to offering protection for individual green spaces within communities.
- 2.5.4 Nevertheless the Council is about to commence preparation of the Site Allocation Development Plan Document – in accordance with Government requirements, having prepared and adopted a Core Spatial Strategy – that will seek to balance the demands of different land uses, including open space provision, as part of a comprehensive approach to spatial planning. The key point being that the perceived value to communities of amenity open spaces/semi-natural land can be most appropriately judged within both the planning

policy framework and in the determination of individual planning applications.

- 2.5.5 In view of the above it is considered neither appropriate nor necessary to undertake a full review of the NSGSS at this stage. However, an annual review of progress of the strategy and its Action Plan in the light of any significant changes in local circumstances as well as any national or legislative changes, would be appropriate. Logically any such review would be undertaken after the end of each financial year (to accord with work planning cycles) with the finding reported to Cabinet by the end of Quarter 1 (i.e. around June/July).

2.6 Transparency of decision-making

- 2.6.1 The communities within which the NDP sites are located expressed strong views about the lack of transparency in the decision making processes and the Scrutiny Group has responded to this concern by making a number of recommendations relating to public consultation in the future land disposal situations (see section 2.9)
- 2.6.2 To a large extent the public perception, reflected in the Scrutiny Group's report, relates to the fact that the two key reports (to Council on 28 July 2010 and to Cabinet on 15 December 2010) were presented as confidential reports. Whilst this was justifiable on the grounds that the reports contained information of a commercially sensitive nature, Cabinet is committed to promoting public confidence in the manner that the Council operates.
- 2.6.3 To that end it is important to highlight ongoing cultural transformation and organisational change. Several years ago the Council embarked on a journey of improvement, striving to be excellent in all that it does. The current position in this regard is reflected in a report elsewhere on your agenda (entitled "Transformation Programme update"). While the NDP Scrutiny process was taking place, the Council undertook a Peer Review of its Scrutiny arrangements. Changes are likely to be implemented that will encourage greater influence of Scrutiny upon the Cabinet's decision-making, thereby improving the quality of decisions.

2.7 Identification of sites for disposal

- 2.7.1 The Scrutiny Group expressed concerns about the approach to selecting the seven sites for disposal. In summary they felt that members had insufficient technical information about the sites and neither did they have any clarity around the liability of or risks associated with, disposal of the sites.
- 2.7.2 It is acknowledged that the main criteria used to judge the suitability of the sites was a relatively simple policy matrix that sought to identify preferred sites based upon alignment with key policies. Whilst officers had undertaken some desktop analysis of technical considerations (such as ground conditions) to inform the site selection process, this information was not included in either of the two key reports.
- 2.7.3 The Scrutiny Group has made a specific recommendation seeking detailed site-specific technical assessments prior to any 'in-principle' land disposal decision in the future. The kind of matters that they have recommended is largely the same as those which officers addressed in respect of the seven NDP sites.
- 2.7.4 Therefore, subject to any particularly sensitive information, it is considered that this recommendation can be broadly accepted and the next version of the Asset Management Strategy could specify the preferred range of information.

2.8 Asset Disposal Strategy

- 2.8.1 In summary the Scrutiny Group is recommending a more comprehensive options analysis of

all available Council-owned land/property, supported by detailed assessments of the sites' viability. Additionally they are recommending that such viability assessments should frame a sustainable asset disposal strategy prior to submission of sites into the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

2.8.2 Crucially the scrutiny process has identified the need for a more comprehensive and planned approach to asset disposals. Whilst there will, inevitably, be a need to respond to opportunistic/ad-hoc disposal requests, there is merit in establishing an annual disposal programme (as part of the annual preparation of the Asset Management Strategy) that links more explicitly to corporate capital programme requirements.

2.8.3 The main point of detail in this regard relates to the Task Group's recommendations relating to the inclusion of detailed viability assessment information as part of the decision-making process. Cabinet considers that a summary level viability analysis will suffice in the majority of cases to achieve the objectives of this kind of programme. It is considered that literal and rigid adherence to the Task Group's recommendations would result in unnecessary and inappropriate expenditure.

2.9 Public/stakeholder consultation

2.9.1 In order to strengthen the confidence of the public and other key stakeholders in the processes relating to the disposal and development of Council-owned land the Scrutiny Group felt that there needed to be greater clarity about the approach and timing of public consultation.

2.9.2 The main issues to address in this regard are:

- The need to define and agree public/stakeholder consultation processes in relation to the Council's responsibilities as both local planning authority and land owner and;
- The timing of any public/stakeholder consultation processes.

2.9.3 For town planning purposes (both in policy making and in the processing of planning applications) there are clear and well documented consultation processes. The Site Allocations DPD (which the Council is about to start) will be submitted to an independent Planning Inspector who will have to satisfy him / herself that sound consultation arrangements are in place.

2.9.4 With regard to the Council's approach to this matter when acting as land owner there is no consistent or documented procedure. It will be important in the future to develop a clear process that clarifies the points at which the public can engage formally in the decision-making chain of events. At this stage an indicative decision-making flowchart has been prepared highlighting the main opportunities for community engagement (see Appendices B(i) and B(ii)). It is envisaged that the next version of the Asset Management Strategy would include a clear procedure in this regard.

2.10 Other recommendations

2.10.1 The only other recommendations not covered above relate to housing targets and member training.

2.10.2 Housing Targets

In summary the Task Group is recommending that there is clarity and ongoing monitoring of housing targets in terms of the quantum, location and tenure. Cabinet is satisfied that these matters are addressed in the following ways:

- The existing Core Spatial Strategy identifies the quantum and broad locational criteria as well as general guidance on sequencing. This Strategy has been prepared in accordance with national government guidance and reviewed by an independent Planning Inspector prior to formal adoption;
- The Council's Annual Monitoring Report reviews progress against the Core Strategy targets (the Council is under a statutory duty to produce this report);
- The forthcoming Site Allocations Development Plan Document will clarify at a more locally relevant level the specific locations or the main development sites and;
- The current and future versions of the Council's Housing Strategy will continue to provide clarity around the needs for social and affordable housing.

2.10.3 Consequently there is no further specific action required in respect of this recommendation.

2.10.4 Member training

The Group's recommendations in this regard seek to improve the awareness and understanding that Members have in relation to both asset management (specifically land disposals) and the alignment of strategic policy documents. These matters can and should be addressed through the ongoing Member Training and Development programme

3. **Proposals**

3.1 In view of the above, Cabinet consider that there is an overriding need to ensure that statutory and/or formal processes should be reviewed and utilised in order to address the Scrutiny Group's concerns. In this regard there are three key functions within the Council:

- town planning;
- asset management and;
- financial capital planning

3.2 Town Planning - Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)

3.2.1 Members will be aware that the Council, as local planning authority, has committed itself to the preparation of the above document beginning in the autumn of this year. It will form part of the statutory planning policy framework and will "nest" under the adopted Core Spatial Strategy. It is important to stress the point that the Planning System operates in the wider public interest and seeks to facilitate delivery of sustainable development. In the context of the Borough's housing and economic growth the Core Strategy has set a target to achieve the delivery of 5,700 new dwellings by the year 2026, mostly focussed within the urban areas of Newcastle and Kidsgrove.

3.2.2 The Site Allocations DPD will be prepared by the Council in accordance with national government guidance and will, ultimately, be the subject of a public examination process conducted by an independent Planning Inspector. The document will be the subject of considerable public and stakeholder consultation and engagement during its preparation.

3.2.3 The Site Allocations DPD will enable a balanced and objective review of land uses at a neighbourhood level, taking account of both strategic policy drivers and local considerations.

3.2.4 Consequently officers consider that this process will enable open and transparent consideration of the appropriateness of developing surplus non-operational Council-owned land alongside land/property put forward by other land owners (including other public bodies – such as the County Council – and private land owners).

3.2.5 Finally it is noteworthy, when considering the Council's duties as local planning authority, that it will not be possible to achieve the Core Strategy's housing target without developing some Borough Council land. If insufficient housing land were available the only option would be to increase site densities or to locate development within or beyond the Green Belt (thereby causing significant conflict with both the Core Strategy and national policy). Therefore, in view of the Council's other responsibilities described in this report, it is vitally important that the any surplus Council-owned land is available for consideration in the DPD's preparation.

3.3 Strategic Asset Management

3.3.1 The Scrutiny process has accepted that the buying and selling of land/property is a normal part of Council business. Successive governments have encouraged Local Authorities to manage their estate efficiently, consistent with the objective of making best use of resources. With direct relevance to the NDP programme, Councils (and other public bodies) have been encouraged to dispose of surplus land for the kind of reasons that underpin Cabinet's rationale (see para. 2.2).

3.3.2 It is acknowledged that, whilst the Council's strategic approach to Asset Management has improved in recent years, based upon national best practice guidance from the Audit Commission, there is scope for further improvement, specifically relating to the approach to land disposals.

3.3.3 The Scrutiny process has demonstrated the necessity for a more comprehensive and transparent approach to decision-making. Previous versions of the Strategy have described the approach to the disposal of surplus land and this would appear to be acceptable in relation to ad-hoc or opportunistic land sales. However, it is clear that, if the Council is to embark upon a more planned approach to asset disposal (consistent with government policy) then the document could (and should) be improved by setting this out when it is refreshed annually.

3.3.4 There will be two key issues for Members to balance:-

- (a) Public/Stakeholders consultation and;
- (b) The need for appropriate technical supporting information.

(a) Public Consultation

As stated elsewhere in this report it is important to allow the statutory town planning processes to establish the appropriateness of development on Council-owned land alongside other private and publicly-owned land. In so doing it enables the land use considerations to be tested prior to any disposal decision being made. In turn this means that any public consultation relating to land disposal can be focussed on more site-specific technical considerations. An indicative decision-making flow chart is attached at Appendix B demonstrating a number of opportunities for local people to engage in the process.

(b) Technical Assessment

It is evident that a degree of desktop analysis had been undertaken in respect of the seven NDP sites as well as some criteria-based assessment of their suitability for development. However, not all of this information was incorporated in the two key decision-making reports in a form that demonstrated the necessary clarity.

3.3.5 In future it is considered that any disposal proposals in the Asset Management Strategy could, and should, include desktop analysis addressing the kind of matters referred to in the

Scrutiny Group's report.

3.3.6 In some circumstances it may be evident that further technical information is required to better understand financial viability but for 'value-for-money' reasons it would be inappropriate to commission detailed surveys/studies in all cases.

3.4 Finance Capital Planning

3.4.1 It is acknowledged that the Council has been in the fortuitous position for some time of having available funds to support the Council's capital programme requirements. These funds have been available through a combination of the following:-

- Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) of housing stock;
- Right to Buy receipts;
- Disposal of surplus Council-owned land;
- Interest derived from investments;
- External funding (including regeneration, European and Lottery) and;
- Government grants.

The majority of the above funding streams have either been exhausted or are unlikely to be available for the foreseeable future.

3.4.2 Therefore it is both necessary and appropriate that the Council establishes more robust Asset Management planning to align with corporate priorities and planning (including capital financial planning).

3.4.3 In short it is intended that, in future years, there will need to be greater clarity around the requirements to generate capital funds from the disposal of surplus land, consistent with Government guidance and the Council's own assessment of the requirement for capital receipts to support its capital programme.

3.5 Summary

3.5.1 As indicated above the broad rationale for the Newcastle Development Programme was found to be sound by the Scrutiny Task Group. However it is evident from the Task Group's report and recommendations that there is both a need and scope for improving the processes and procedures relating to the planned disposal of surplus land.

3.5.2 The recommendations below seek to reflect a balanced and pragmatic response to the Scrutiny Task Group's work in the context of the related functions and duties of the Council:-

- (a) That the Newcastle Development Programme (NDP) Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, and all those involved in supporting the review process, be thanked for their report and recommendations in respect of this matter.
- (b) That it be confirmed that no further decision be taken at this stage regarding disposal of the seven NDP sites. (Addresses Scrutiny recommendation 10).
- (c) That the appropriateness of development, in land use planning terms, of the seven NDP sites along with all other surplus non-operational land belonging to the Council, be reviewed as part of the forthcoming Site Allocations Development Plan Document process. (Addresses Scrutiny recommendations 4, 6 and 10).
- (d) That future versions of the Council's Asset Management Strategy incorporate an

annual planned disposals programme, as appropriate, supported by:

- (i) appropriate site specific technical information;
- (ii) a clear process for effective community and stakeholder consultation along with a summary report of the outcome of any related public consultation activities regarding individual sites and;
- (iii) clear evidence of alignment with the Council's financial capital planning process.

(Addresses Scrutiny recommendations 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10).

- (e) That officers be instructed to undertake an annual review of the progress made with implementation of the North Staffs Green Spaces Strategy and the associated action plan. (Addresses Scrutiny recommendation 2).
- (f) That members note the information regarding the ongoing transformation programme, particularly in relation to The Way We Work Programme and the Business of the Council programme. (Addresses Scrutiny concerns about transparency in decision-making rather than any direct recommendation).
- (g) That the annual Member Training and Development programme be reviewed and revised, as may be necessary, to incorporate training relating to both Asset Management and strategic policy making. (Addresses Scrutiny recommendation 11).

NB. There is no recommendation that directly responds to the Scrutiny Task Group's first recommendation; Cabinet is satisfied that the statutory town planning system and processes address this point satisfactorily given the existence of:

- An adopted Core Spatial Strategy which has clear targets for the quantum and broad location of future housing;
- A statutory annual monitoring report procedure to Government;
- An approved Housing Strategy and;
- A forthcoming Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

4 Reasons for Proposals

- 4.1 The main reason for the proposals is to respond to the NDP Scrutiny Task Group's report and recommendations.
- 4.2 In responding to the Scrutiny report the recommended proposals seek to improve key decision-making procedures relating to future land disposal whilst acknowledging that such actions are, and must continue to be, a part of the strategic and day to day operation of the Council's business.

5. Outcomes linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 The substantive issue of disposing of surplus Council-owned land/property has significant implications around the Council's objectives relating to Regeneration and Planning matters as well as the stated objectives relating to the efficient use of resources. In particular the anticipated outcomes of delivering an effective Development Programme are:

- the regeneration of communities through the delivery of housing to meet identified needs,
- to generate capital receipts that can be used to fund the corporate capital programme and;

- to reduce unnecessary expenditure on the management and maintenance of surplus land.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Council is under a statutory duty to make best use of its resources and to achieve value for money – the NDP is consistent with these obligations. More particularly S. 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 places an obligation on the Council to achieve “best consideration” when it is considering disposal of land. Additionally the Council has statutory town planning, housing and asset management responsibilities; having an effective programme of surplus land disposal should facilitate the discharge of such responsibilities.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 In the longer term the potential nature of any site-specific development has the potential to have a different impact insofar as it may help to bring forward affordable housing for vulnerable households. Also the Scrutiny process has produced some learning about the ways in which the Council consults with disadvantage groups and individuals.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 Clearly there are both strategic and practical financial implications arising from the report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Group.
- 8.2 It is noteworthy that the Task Group acknowledges the rationale for a programme of surplus land disposal in order to finance future capital projects. The recommendations seek to ensure greater alignment between corporate planning processes to achieve this outcome.
- 8.3 The other notable feature relates to recommendations seeking the production of technical and other information relating to future land disposals prior to any decision being made in principle. The recommendations above endeavour to balance the need for Members to have access to appropriate technical information whilst avoiding commissioning potentially abortive and costly studies/surveys (i.e. any such information should be proportionate).

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 The most significant risk lies in any decision that would either seek to press on without due regard to the Scrutiny Group’s work or to cease all land disposal activity in the foreseeable future. The above recommendations endeavour to respond to the Scrutiny report in a manner which acknowledges that the buying and selling of land is a normal part of the Council’s functions.

10. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

- 10.1 At this stage there are no direct implications in this regard. However the Site Allocations DPD process will judge, in due course, the necessity for disposing of any surplus Council-owned land to facilitate the evolution of a balanced and sustainable community in the Borough.

11. **Key Decision Information**

- 11.1 This item has been listed in the Forward Plan and constitutes a key decision within the meaning of the Council’s constitution.

12. **Earlier Cabinet Committee Resolutions**

28 March 2010 – Cabinet (minute 853/10)
28 July 2010 Council (minute XX/YY)
15 December 2010 – Cabinet (minute XX/ZZ)
March 2011 - Council (minute AA/BB)
20 July 2011 - Scrutiny Task and finish Group (minute DD/EE)

13. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – NDP Scrutiny Group report July 2011; conclusions and recommendations.
Appendix B(i) & B(ii) Indicative decision-making process relating to future surplus land disposals.

14. **Background Papers**

Report and recommendations of the NDP Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

A REPORT OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

NEWCASTLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

July 2011

VERSION 1.0 22nd July 2011

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This Task and Finish Group endorses the rational offered by the Council that that through the disposal of greenfield sites it aims to:-
- Provide a range of housing to meet local needs
 - Enable further regeneration within the borough
 - Generate capital funding for future investments
- 5.2 This Task and Finish Group accepts the rational offered by the Council that it has a duty to dispose of surplus assets and that it is legally entitled to do this as landowner. The Council is required to achieve “best consideration” and may only dispose of assets subject to fulfilling any statutory requirements that apply.
- 5.3 This Task and Finish Group accepts that funding generated from such disposals is then reinvested in Council Services and capital projects.

- 5.4 This Task and Finish Group accepts the rationale offered by the Council that the strategic decision to minimise building in the rural areas and exclude development in the green belt will result in the development of more viable urban greenfield sites as the supply of brownfield sites diminishes.
- 5.5 This Task and Finish Group accepts that there is a large amount of green space in Newcastle but believes that semi-natural areas or amenity greenfield sites need to be given more significance and value and that closer scrutiny of the disposal of green space is required before such action is taken with more consideration given to the surrounding infrastructure and wider community. It is important to the borough's urban areas that existing green corridors and greenfield sites are kept intact for the wellbeing of residents and communities, who see them as amenity land for their use and benefit. If the Council does not identify or take into account the development of greenfield sites there is a risk that there will be piecemeal development that may destroy the open aspect of the borough as well as alienating its residents.
- 5.6 The Task and Finish Group accepts the evidence from Sally Orton Chairman of West Midlands Parks Forum and Head of Service Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council that the Green Space Strategy meets recognised standards. However it is the opinion of this Group that in a borough such as ours that more extensive consultation should have taken place which would have developed more awareness of community feeling towards green space issues. The Strategy should be updated and regularly monitored to reflect community feeling towards amenity green spaces together with changes in social and economic influences which place greater value on the location and accessibility of local amenity green spaces. For example transportation costs are becoming a barrier to accessing parks and other facilities outside of immediate neighbourhoods.
- 5.7 The Task and Finish Group believes that because the press and public were excluded from Cabinet and Council meetings when these sites were discussed this has led to public concerns about transparency and the motivations for the decisions taken. From the public's point of view it appeared that the full Council had determined the matter and that any consultation following was of limited value.
- 5.8 The way in which the seven sites were included in the Newcastle Development Programme decision making process was flawed because full Council took the decision to proceed with the proposed disposals without requesting officers to produce a detailed report on the viability of the disposals and the potential risks associated with the process. The Council decided to proceed with the proposed disposal of the Talke Street on the grounds that it was surplus to requirements. Notwithstanding that the SHLAA is a guide to development in the borough it described the site as a valuable green area in October 2010. The Council needs to ensure that it is being consistent across its strategy working.

- 5.9 There is a clear distinction between the need for the Council to have a capital planning process which identifies surplus assets for disposal and/or alternative sources of funding such as grants or borrowing to fund Council's Capital Programme and its role as a strategic planning authority in which it is also a significant landowner. The Council therefore needs to clarify roles and responsibilities for making decisions in respect of the disposal of assets. A clear and transparent process is needed that is understood by Councillors, Officers and residents.
- 5.10 The approach to the consultation process regarding the disposal of the sites was flawed. Firstly no consultation took place before the decision was made. Secondly to begin consultation six months after a decision has been made was too long and it is the view of this Task and Finish Group that the consultation that did take place was ineffective and the Council failed in its objective of engaging local communities in how the sites might be developed.
- 5.11 It is therefore a challenge to the Council to meet the requirements of national and local strategies in respect of planning, housing and open spaces through the sale of greenfield sites given the extent of the financial and operational difficulties confronting the Council and the depth of public opposition to the sale of greenfield sites to support and stimulate economic growth and redevelopment.
- 5.12 Members must therefore be given a full range of alternative options that include not just greenfield sites or brownfield sites but all buildings and property that the Council might dispose of. The Council should develop a disposal strategy and separate programme that takes in greenfield sites, brownfield sites and buildings and property. In doing so the Strategy must set out the process for assessing the potential implications of such disposals. This will enable Members to take informed and reasoned decisions and ensure that any disposals, whether they be greenfield sites, brownfield sites or buildings and property are done so in a sustainable manner that will protect and enhance the quality of rural and urban areas of the Borough.
- 5.13 An Asset Disposal Strategy must make it clear to the public and members the process followed by the Council in determining sites for disposal.

6. Recommendations

The recommendations of The Task and Finish Group are set out below.

The Task and Finish Group support the aims and objectives of the Council to

- Provide a range of housing to meet local needs
- Enable further regeneration within the borough
- Generate capital funding for future investments

The Task and Finish Group accepts that the council has a duty to manage assets prudently and to dispose of those which are surplus whilst achieving 'best consideration'

However the Task and Finish Group believe that the Newcastle Development Programme and the processes associated with it need to be reviewed. The reasons for this are:-

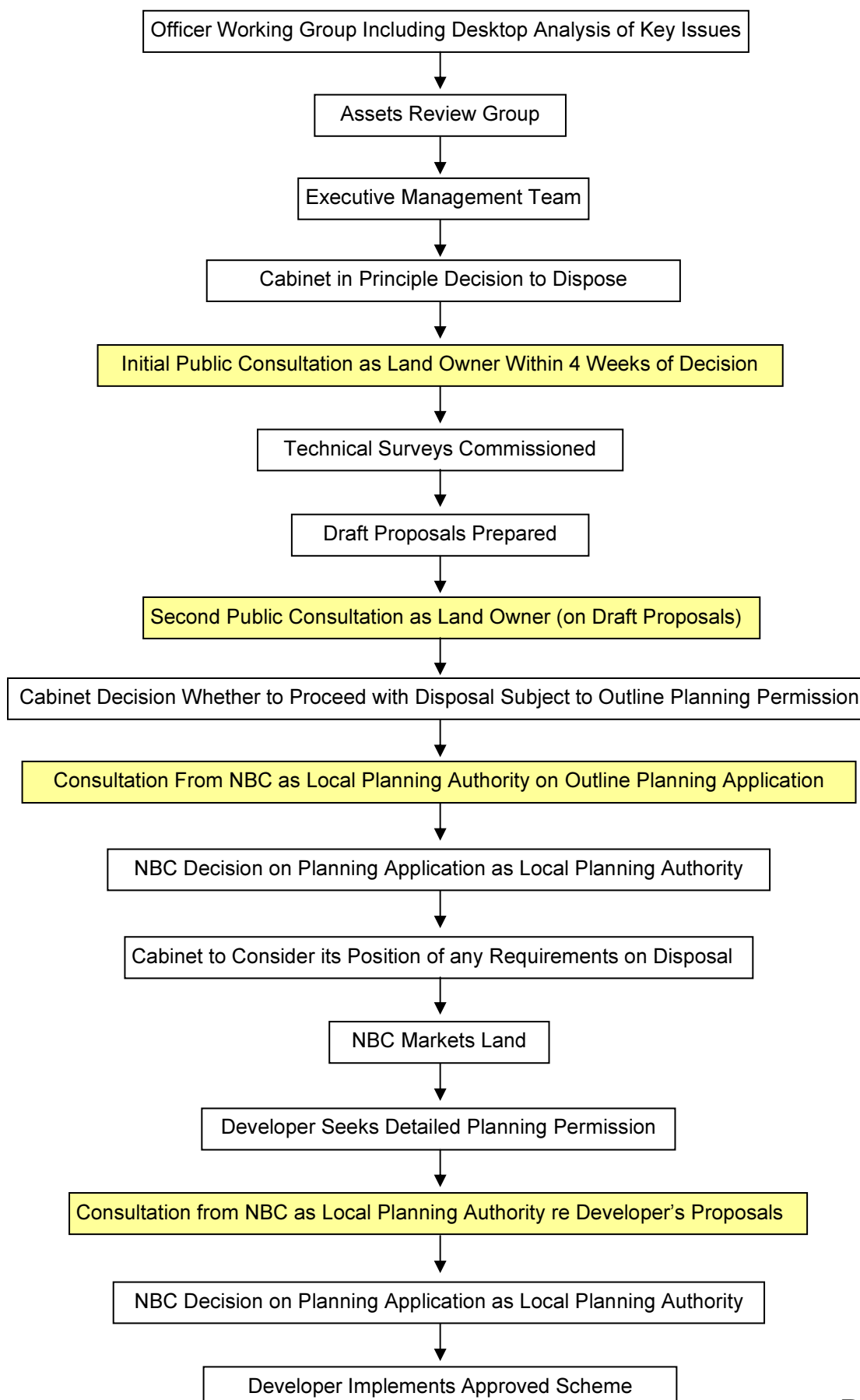
- i) The reports approved by full Council in July 2010 and Cabinet in December 2010 appeared to lack sufficient information for sound and informed decisions to be made.
- ii) Members did not take the opportunity to refer the reports back for further scrutiny and risk assessment of their implications until February 2011.
- iii) The Councils strategic reports in this matter appear contradictory and therefore misinformed local communities.
- iv) The Council appeared to take no action to inform residents or other parties until after the decision to move forward had been taken and as a consequence the communication stream was ineffective.
- v) The Council has not given sufficient evidence that the key factors considered for the selection of the seven sites chosen for the Newcastle Development Programme were followed or applied.

The Task and Finish Group therefore recommends that Council ask the Cabinet to:-

1. Clarify and continue to monitor what housing is required in the borough, both aspirational and social, and identify numbers of units and timescales to bring them forward.
2. Review and keep up to date the Green Space Strategy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and in particular reviews the community value and location of amenity green spaces such as the seven sites identified for disposal with a view to protecting the quality of rural and urban areas of the borough.

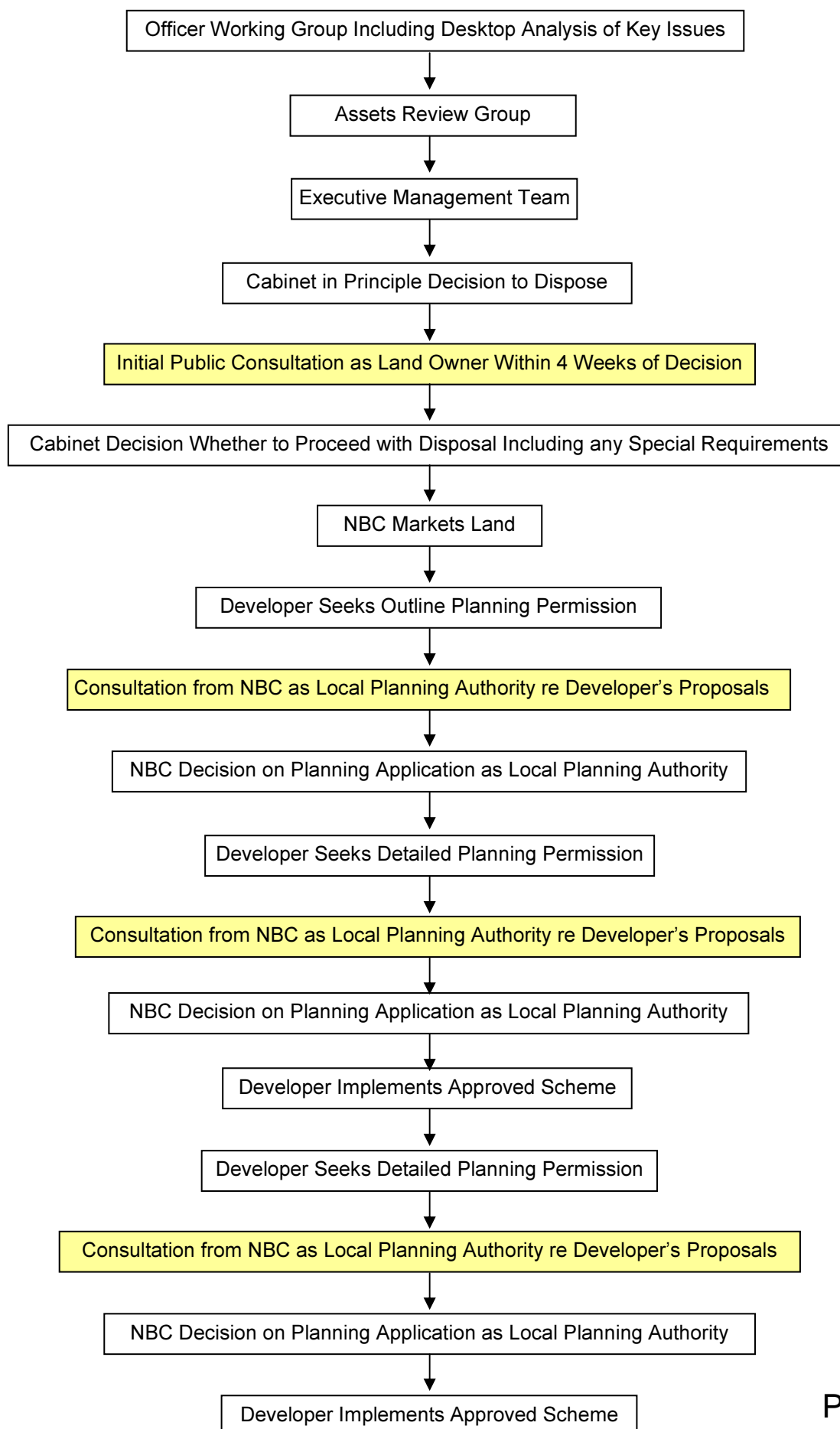
3. Produce for approval by full Council a sustainable asset disposal strategy and programme for the Councils greenfield land, brownfield land, buildings and property based on detailed assessments of the viability of the sites proposed.
4. Agree that having adopted a sustainable asset disposal strategy that the Council as a landowner submits its proposals for inclusion in the SHLAA before any decision of Cabinet on the proposed disposal of a site for redevelopment.
5. Agree that for each proposed disposal a detailed assessment of the site will be prepared for Cabinet by Executive Management Team involving matters such as ownership, covenants, contaminated land, wildlife and infrastructure will be prepared before the Cabinet agrees in public to an 'in principle decision' to possibly dispose.
6. Agree that where an 'in principle decision' is made that a robust public consultation process is undertaken with not only residents immediately adjacent to the site but those from the wider neighbourhood and that such a consultation process will include the opportunity to examine in detail the potential nature and development of the site.
7. Agree that the Cabinet then receive a further report on the outcome of the public consultation process before making a final decision on the disposal prior to asking officers to submit any planning applications
8. Submit a report to full Council on the form and extent that such a public consultation process would take so that that the process for community engagement and involvement in the disposal of assets can be approved by all Members.
9. Accept that the Council failed to properly consult on the disposal of the seven sites and failed to properly consider the validity of each of the seven sites, or to seek this information from officers before taking the decision.
10. Agree that In the light of the reasons given by the Task and Finish Group for a review of the Newcastle Development Programme the proposed disposal of the seven sites should not be progressed until the above recommendations have been taken into consideration and the Council has adopted an asset disposal strategy and the Council has had the opportunity to review all Council owned land and property assets.
11. Ensure that the Member Training and Development Programme provides Councillors with adequate knowledge and skills to be able to make decisions around land and asset disposals and cross strategy decisions.

Indicative Decision-Making Process Relating to Surplus Land Disposals
cases where the Council seek planning permission prior to disposal



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Indicative Decision-Making Process Relating to Surplus Land Disposals
cases where the Council do not seek planning permission prior to disposal



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PROPOSED DISPOSAL – LAND (0.297 HA/0.73 ACRES APPROX), SITUATED MARKET DRAYTON ROAD, LOGGERHEADS, NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME

Submitted by: Executive Director – Regeneration and Development

Portfolio: Regeneration and Planning

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To seek authority for the freehold sale of 0.297 hectares (0.73 Acres) of Borough Council owned land situated off Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads to facilitate the development of a community fire station as part of the Staffordshire-wide improvement programme of such facilities.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

(a) approves the release of the property which is required by Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Authority (SFRS) for the construction a new community fire station subject to the granting of planning permission; and

(b) approves the provisionally agreed sale terms.

Reasons

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) need to provide a new fire station, (being a replacement for the exiting fire station located in Ashley) and they have identified this land as the most suitable development site in the area to meet their operational requirements. Your officers are satisfied that the disposal is in the public interest and that market value will be obtained.

1. Background

1.1 The Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has undertaken a strategic review of the operational premises that support the delivery of its services and is in the process of rolling out a programme of new and improved premises (through a Private Finance Initiative programme) to better meet modern-day requirements, including community/partner use of such properties. Members will be aware of emerging facilities elsewhere in the Borough (notably the recently-completed new station at Knutton Lane) and the proposal before you relates to the provision of improved facilities to meet the needs of the rural community in this part of the Borough (to replace the outdated facility located at Ashley).

1.2 Following 'sequential testing' of alternative option sites, this land and location has been identified by SFRS as the most suitable for replacement of the current Ashley site. A request has therefore been received from Property Consultants, who act on behalf of the SFRS, to purchase the Borough Council's freehold interest in the land which will provide a site of about 0.297 Ha (0.73 acres). It is the SFRS's intention to use this land for the development of a new community fire station.

1.3 For Members' information, as part of the site selection, assessment, and community consultation process SFRS has undertaken the following;

- Local media press release, an electronic newsletter, distribution of posters to local shops businesses, inclusion on their Service website and leaflet distribution.
- Contact, meeting and discussions regarding the proposed site with Ward Councillors on 19 July 2011.
- A visit to Loggerheads on 25 July at the Community Information Shop with whom there is on-going dialogue (with Loggerheads Parish Council's appointed spokesperson).
- Public Events were held on the afternoon and evening 26 July 2011
- Issues raised at Public Events will be put onto SFRS website and will inform the precise nature and use of the facility..
- Future consultation and engagement is planned but dates are yet to be confirmed.

- 1.4 The subject land, which is identified edged red on the attached plan, (see Appendix A) is part of a larger area, which extends in total to approx 4.98Ha (12.32 Acres) All of this land, (areas edged red and blue on the plan) is currently subject to a Farm Business tenancy. Should approval be given to the disposal of the subject land to SFRS it will be necessary to complete a new tenancy agreement which will exclude the area of land which they have requested.
- 1.5 Negotiations have taken place and SFRS has provisionally agreed to pay the market value for the Borough Council's freehold interest, subject to contract, a satisfactory planning permission and the results of a ground investigation survey. Should the results of the latter survey demonstrate the existence of abnormal development costs, then these, once agreed, will be deducted from the sale price.
- 1.6 The SFRS have advised that their PFI timetable means that it is essential for them to have certainty in respect of the availability of the subject land by October 2011..

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 In its capacity as owner of land/property the Council should keep under review the potential for disposal in accordance with the approach set out in the current Asset Management Strategy. In this instance the Council is being asked by a public sector partner organisation (i.e. the SFRS) to facilitate the roll-out of an improvement programme to their operational premises as described above.
- 2.2 The salient extract from the Council's Asset Management Strategy is as follows:

Para 6.2 Criteria for recommending disposal

Land and property identified as potentially surplus will be recommended for disposal if it satisfies one or more of the following criteria (see paragraph 4.4.2).

In disrepair, and not capable of renovation at reasonable cost;

No alternate occupancy or usage viable including community occupancy (reference Quirk report);

Condition of land/property is a cause of complaint and/or breaches statute or Health and Safety requirements

The property does NOT support the Corporate Plan or;

Value, through disposal or, development agreement, will produce significant receipt to help fund the Corporate Plan

- 2.3 In this instance your officers are satisfied that retaining the land would serve no purpose in terms of Corporate Plan objectives and the disposal would generate a significant receipt (at best consideration), that would support the Council's capital programme requirements.

Additionally the disposal would help to achieve the Council's community safety objectives by facilitating the improvement of SFRS' operational facilities.

- 2.4 The next issue relates to community consultation/engagement. The Council recognises that the disposal of any Council-owned land or property must be undertaken with due regard to the views of local residents (outwith any public consultation undertaken by the Council as a local planning authority). In this instance, given that the Council is responding to a request from a prospective purchaser the responsibility for public consultation properly rests with the SFRS as the intended developer of the site. In this regard the activity undertaken to date is summarised at paragraph 1.3 and your officers are satisfied with the steps taken, along with a clear commitment for further community engagement to shape the precise nature and use of the facility.
- 2.5 The other issue relates to the potential displacement of the current tenant who operates a small-scale agricultural business on the site. Your officers feel confident that the latter business could continue to operate effectively on the balance of the wider site area thereby enabling retention of a small-scale local business.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 A disposal of the subject land at market value to a partner organisation that will provide the Council with a capital receipt and contribute towards delivery of its corporate priorities.
- 3.2 Associated with the latter, a reduction in the size of the current tenant's demise from 4.98 Ha to 4.68Ha (i.e. by the area requested by SFRS) and granting him a new tenancy of the balance of the wider site will enable his business to continue whilst at the same time allowing land to be released for the development of a new community fire station.
- 3.3 To refuse the Fire Authority's request, the consequence of which would mean the loss of an opportunity to deliver a new community fire station for the benefit of the local community.

4. **Proposal**

- 4.1 Your officers are satisfied that a freehold disposal of the area requested by SFRS at market value, for the development purposes summarised above, represents good value for money and would contribute positively to the community's well-being.
- 4.2 Submission of a detailed planning application is imminent and of course, it will be determined on its merits (i.e. this disposal decision does not prejudice the outcome).

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 The proposed disposal will contribute to the Council's success in enabling improved service delivery through partnership working whilst achieving good value for money. Additionally the planned development of a community fire station would contribute positively to the Council's community safety objectives.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 The disposal will enable the provision of modern, purpose-designed, accommodation for the SFRS that will contribute to the Council's priority relating to Safer and Stronger Communities whilst providing the Council with a capital receipt that can be used to deliver its corporate priorities. Also it will assist a partner organisation in the delivery of its own strategic objectives.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 The disposal of the subject land must accord with the provisions of specific legislation relating to the disposal of public land (including the requirement to achieve 'best consideration'), whilst taking account of the general powers of well-being conferred by the Local Government Act 2000.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 Upon completion of the sale of this land the Council will obtain a significant capital receipt (that represents market value) whilst there will be a small loss of rental income from the present tenant. The said receipt will support the Council's capital programme.

10. **Major Risks**

- 10.1 Failure of the SFRS to secure a suitable site (to meet their locational and v.f.m. criteria) will jeopardise the provision of a new, modern, fire station facility to serve this part of the Borough. In turn, this would have potentially adverse consequences for community safety.

11. **Key Decision Information**

None

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

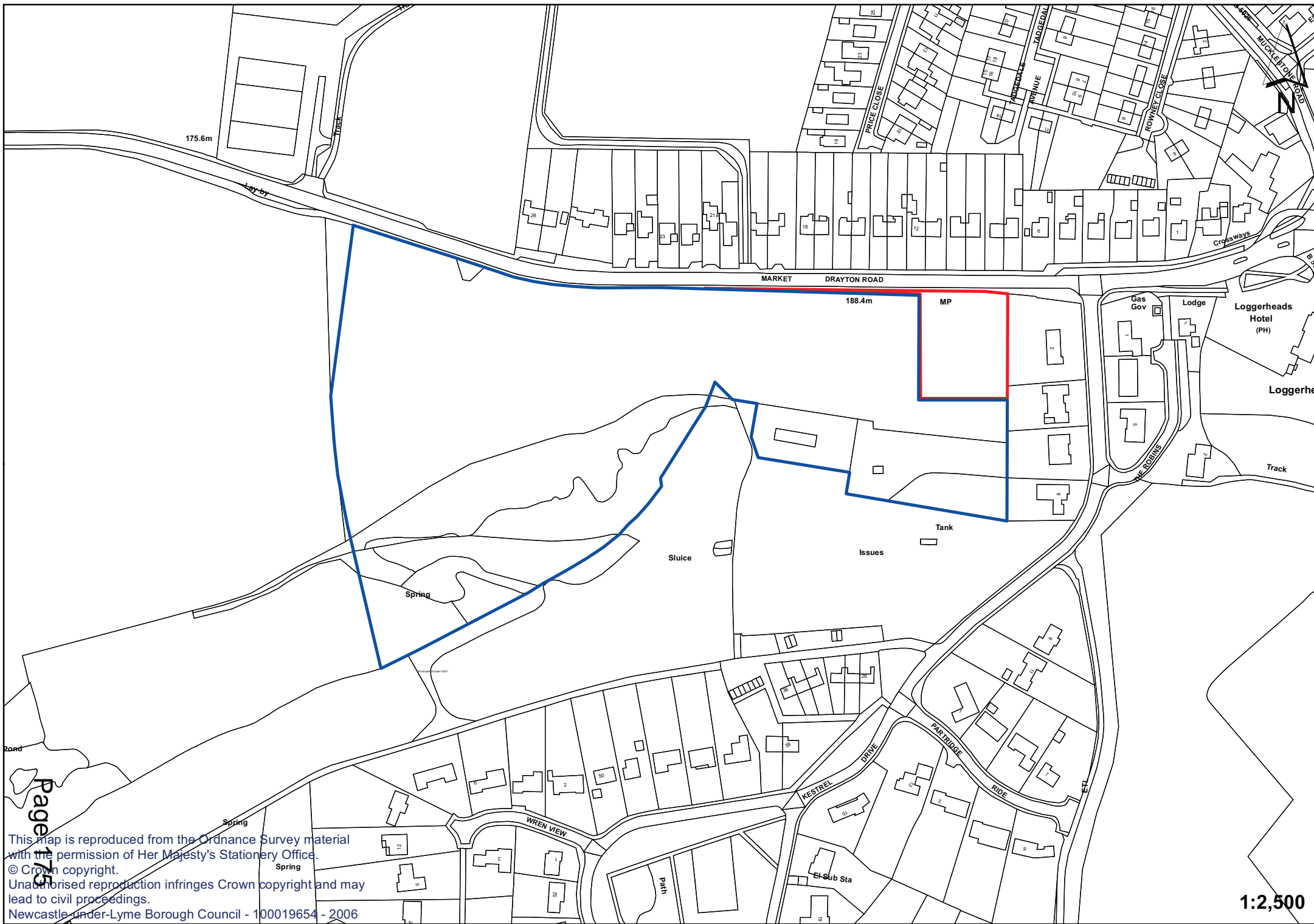
None

13. **List of Appendices**

Appendix 'A' - Site plan showing subject land in context of wider land parcel.

14. **Background Papers**

NBC's Asset Management Strategy 2011/12 to 2012/13
Confidential briefing note containing relevant but commercially sensitive information.



175.6m

MARKET DRAYTON ROAD

188.4m

MP

Spring

Sluice

Issues

Tank

Gas Gov

Lodge

Loggerheads Hotel (PH)

Loggerhe

Track

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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