

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting **Wednesday, 6th March, 2013**

Time **7.00 pm**

Venue **Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Merrial Street,
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2AG**

Contact **Nick Lamper
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Cabinet

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** **(Pages 1 - 6)**
Held on 6 February 2013, to be approved as a correct record.
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS** **(Pages 7 - 16)**
The appendices to the report contain exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of Part I of the Local Government Act 1972 and are therefore not for publication.
- 5 Telecoms Contracts Consolidation** **(Pages 17 - 22)**
- 6 LOCALISM ACT - COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE AND
COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID** **(Pages 23 - 64)**
The appendices to the report are available on the online version of the agenda for the meeting at:-

<http://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=118&MId=1597&Ver=4>
- 7 Apprenticeships** **(Pages 65 - 74)**
- 8 Affordable Housing Regeneration Partnership** **(Pages 75 - 80)**
- 9 Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 Progress Report - March
2013-2015** **(Pages 81 - 88)**
- 10 Newcastles of the World Alliance** **(Pages 89 - 94)**
- 11 Establishment of Cabinet Panel** **(Pages 95 - 96)**
- 12 Council Plan 2013-16** **(Pages 97 - 122)**

13 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members: Councillors Mrs Bates, Mrs Beech, Boden, Kearon, Snell, Stubbs and Williams

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 Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

CABINET

7.00 pm, Wednesday, 6 February, 2013

Present:- Councillor Gareth Snell – in the Chair

Councillors Mrs Bates, Mrs Beech, Boden, Kearon, Stubbs and Williams

In attendance:- John Sellgren (Chief Executive), Kelvin Turner (Executive Director, Resources and Support Services, Kneale Clifton (Executive Director, Regeneration and Development), Dave Adams (Executive Director, Operational Services), Paul Clisby (Head of Central Services), Nick Lamper (Senior Member Services Officer), Louise Stevenson (Scrutiny Officer), Janet Baddeley (Communications Team Leader) and Robin Wiles (Partnerships Officer (Community Development))

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January were approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. EMPLOYER SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING

Councillor Williams, portfolio holder for Stronger and Active Neighbourhoods, introduced a report outlining opportunities the council had to promote and develop an Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) scheme whilst recognising the opportunities the council already provided and supported. The report set out a planned pilot to explore these opportunities in the first instance in order to ascertain whether an ESV scheme would be workable for the council and its staff.

Councillor Boden noted that many employees already did some voluntary work outside working hours and the Leader thanked the officers who had undertaken work on proposal.

The Chief Executive advised that the North Staffordshire Volunteer Centre had confirmed at a meeting earlier in the week that they would be able to mobilise quickly.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That support be given to the establishment of an ESV pilot scheme for the council, following consultation with staff, followed by an initial open forum with employees and other interested parties on the concept of volunteering to gauge the level of interest in the organisation;
- (3) That, in the event of a pilot being set up, a review of this pilot be supported in order to ascertain whether a permanent ESV scheme should be set up in the council; and

- (4) That the proposal from North Staffordshire Volunteer Centre (NSVC) be endorsed, this being designed to support the development of an ESV pilot for the Borough Council.

4. PUBLIC SERVICES (SOCIAL VALUE) ACT 2012

Councillor Stubbs, portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management, introduced a report outlining the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, and what Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council needed to do in order to comply with the legislation.

The act required public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public service contracts, and for connected purposes. An action plan was appended to the report setting out the steps required to ensure compliance.

The Leader noted that the proposals would link in with the authority's aim to become a co-operative council.

Resolved: That the steps set out in the Action Plan submitted at Appendix B be approved.

5. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX 2013-14

Councillor Stubbs, portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management, introduced a report to enable Cabinet to recommend the 2013/14 General Fund Revenue Budget and the 2013/14 Capital Programme to the full council, meeting on 27 February 2013, following consideration of comments received from the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 24 January 2013 and the Scrutiny Café held on 17 January 2013.

Councillor Shenton, Chair of the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, reported on the success of the scrutiny meeting and café and noted that answers had been received to all questions raised by members. The Leader thanked those members who had been involved and engaged with the process.

Resolved:

- (1) That it be recommended to full council that the revised minimum balances requirement be £1,300,000, with the excess of £200,000 above the current levels being transferred to the Insurance Fund (£150,000) and the Renewals and Repairs Fund (£50,000);
- (2) That it be recommended to full council that £80,000 be transferred out of the Standards Fund into the MMI Provision;
- (3) That the 2013/14 General Fund Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme 2013/14 as detailed in the report to Cabinet dated 16 January 2013 be recommended to full council for approval; and
- (4) That the charges in respect of waiver permits be approved and added to the Scale of Fees and Charges.

6. PROCUREMENT OF CORPORATE MAIL SERVICES

The Leader and Councillor Stubbs, portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management, jointly introduced a report to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the tendering process for the provision of corporate mail services and to obtain approval

for the appointment of the successful contractor, subject to the satisfactory outcome of a pilot exercise.

Councillor Kearon enquired as to whether a move from Royal Mail would impact on employment at the company's local offices and was advised that the ultimate delivery responsibilities would still remain with the company.

Resolved: That a contract be issued to UK Mail (the successful provider) for a period of two years with the option to extend to August 2016, subject to the completion of the pilot exercise of up to six months duration, for the delivery of corporate mail services.

7. JOINT HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY - MINOR AMENDMENT

Councillor Boden, portfolio holder for Regeneration, Planning and Town Centres, introduced a report highlighting a request for an amendment to the Joint Housing Allocations Policy from Aspire Housing prior to the Policy launch in the New Year. The request had been made following recent investigations into the housing association's void performance, which had revealed that refusal rates were high and refusal reasons suggested that customers appeared to be bidding on properties without giving full consideration to whether they would actually be prepared to accept a tenancy for the property.

A range of options had been considered and these were set out in detail in the report.

It was proposed that the Joint Housing Allocations Policy be amended to permit applicants to place an unlimited number of bids on properties advertised each week under the NHA Options CBL scheme; however if an applicant made an unreasonable refusal of an offer or did not respond to an offer within the timescale on the offer notification, that their application would be suspended for six months.

It was noted that Councillors Boden and Williams had been appointed to the board of Aspire Housing as representatives of the council, and it was therefore unnecessary for them to declare interests in that regard.

Resolved: That the proposed amendment to the Joint Housing Allocations Policy as set out above be approved.

8. NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME CO-OPERATIVE STRATEGY 2013-2015

The Leader introduced a report providing the Cabinet with a draft of the Co-operative Strategy 2013-2015.

The Strategy had been developed in line with the other key council strategies on Economic Development, Health and Wellbeing, and Stronger and Safer Communities. It set out the details around the stated aim of the council to become a Co-operative Council, an ambition which was also reflected in the key priority on becoming a Co-operative Council within the Council Plan.

In addition to the recommendations set out in the report, the Leader proposed that the strategy be placed before the relevant scrutiny committee for its consideration and comment.

Resolved:

- (1) That the content of the strategy be noted;
- (2) That the content as submitted be endorsed;
- (3) That the strategy be circulated to partners and communities and further updates on its development be submitted at future Cabinet meetings; and
- (4) That the strategy be placed before the relevant scrutiny committee for its consideration and comment.

9. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT TO END OF QUARTER 3 (DECEMBER 2012)

Councillor Stubbs, portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management, introduced the Financial and Performance Management Report for the third quarter of 2012/13.

The other Cabinet members provided information in relation to the performance within their respective portfolios, with particular reference to areas of particularly strong performance or concern.

Resolved:

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted the monitoring and scrutiny of performance alongside finances be continued;
- (2) That the new style of the performance report be developed further for 2013-14 as detailed, in line with the Performance Management Framework Review and the Council Plan 2013-14 to 2015-16, the intention being to report performance information in a new format as the work is progressed;
- (3) That the comments raised at the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 January 2013 be noted.

10. SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR COUNCIL TELEPHONY

The Leader introduced a report seeking Cabinet approval for the renewal of the council's telephony support and maintenance contract directly with Mitel Networks; the manufacturer of the council's existing telephony system.

The report set out how Mitel had submitted the most economically advantageous quotation for the work, and noted that the council had built an excellent relationship with the company over a period of ten years. Details were provided of the evaluation of the three quotes submitted. The recommended course of action to award the contract to Mitel was in accordance with the council's constitution and the European Procurement Rules and UK Regulations.

Councillor Stubbs observed that the procurement process had been a robust one.

Resolved:

- (1) That Standing Orders relating to Contracts be waived on the grounds of 2b(v) which states 'goods and services are obtainable only from a limit numbers of persons or bodies'; and
- (2) That the support and maintenance contract be awarded to Mitel Networks (Mitel) with effect from 1 April 2013 for a period of three years.

11. **CHARGING FOR PRE-APPLICATION PLANNING ADVICE**

Councillor Boden, portfolio holder for Regeneration, Planning and Town Centres, introduced a report giving Cabinet the opportunity to decide whether or not the council should agree to introduce charging for planning advice, and the means by which this could be done.

The introduction of charges for pre-application advice was permitted under Section 93 of Local Government Act and a number of local authorities had already introduced charges for this purpose. Introduction of charges for pre-application planning advice would present an opportunity to recoup some of the costs associated with undertaking pre-application discussions with potential applicants for planning permission, and to offset some of the costs of the planning process. The report has been prepared in the context of a significant reduction in planning fee income, and a study, financed by the West Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Project, commissioned from the accountancy firm Deloitte, comparing the council's fees and charges with those made by a range of other local authorities. This work had identified some activities where no charge was currently made but could be, and the report to Cabinet on 16 January 2013 on the Scale of Fees and Charges had identified charging for pre-application advice as feasible for implementation in 2013/14, and advised that a report on this would be submitted to this meeting.

The introduction of charges had been supported by the Planning Committee at its meeting the previous evening.

A discussion ensued on the merits of the introduction of a charge in respect of householder development, as it was considered that a complete absence of advice without charge could potentially be detrimental to customers.

Resolved:

- (1) That, subject to (3) below, the provision of "free" informal written advice as to whether or not planning permission is required for development proposals, be discontinued;
- (2) That, subject to (3) below, the introduction of charging of fees for pre-application advice, as set out in the report be approved;
- (3) That, solely in relation to householder development, the provision of one half-hour meeting per case be allowed without charge, but a charge be levied in the event of any further meeting or if written confirmation of the advice given is sought; and
- (4) That the Head of Planning and Development be requested to report back after six months on the implementation of these changes, the feedback received and the impact of them.

12. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR GARETH SNELL
Chair

The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm.

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IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS

Submitted by: **Head of Revenues & Benefits**

Portfolio: **Finance and Budget Management**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

Purpose of the Report

To consider items deemed irrecoverable.

Recommendation

That the items detailed at Appendix B be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and be written off.

Reasons

For a variety of reasons, from time to time, it is considered that certain items are unable to be recovered from debtors. When this occurs, it is necessary to write off these balances from the appropriate Council account records.

1. Background

1.1 For a variety of reasons, following the issue of accounts for amounts due to the Council, it is considered the debt is no longer able to be collected. Normally, these reasons follow from the debtor having been subjected to insolvency proceedings or other legal processes in respect of their debts or even the death of a debtor. There is then no further redress to recover the outstanding amounts and it is necessary to write off the outstanding balances from the Council's records.

2. Collection Procedures

2.1 Collection procedures in respect of business rates and council tax are operated in accordance with legislative guidelines. Other debts are collected by a variety of schemes suitable to the type of account involved. Full details of these procedures are included at appendix (a) and are considered confidential due to their potential sensitivity. Open disclosure of this information may give potential defaulters an advantage in respect of when action is taken and therefore less incentive for them to pay in accordance with routine payment schedules.

3. Proposal

3.1 That the items listed at Appendix B be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and these balances be written off. Irrecoverable amounts are considered to be of a confidential nature and reports have historically been treated in this manner. This policy was last reviewed and endorsed by Cabinet in July 2008 and is common in the majority of local authorities and all other Staffordshire authorities. Further guidance obtained from the Local Government Association in May 2011 endorsed this methodology for dealing with irrecoverable items. It is used to ensure the principles of data protection are maintained. It would also obviously be inappropriate to disclose information for instance about deceased debtors, with the potential for causing further distress to bereaved family members. Where debts are in respect of commercial organisations, there is the potential in cases such as

administration that disclosure could jeopardise the potential recovery of the business in the long term. Items are only ever considered for write-off following robust adherence to the appropriate collection policy.

4. **Financial and Resource Implications**

4.1 The Council makes provision for unrecoverable sums and the amounts recommended for write-off are within the current budgeted bad debt provision.

5. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

5.1 23 July 2008

6. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A - Collection procedures

Appendix B - Irrecoverable items

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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TELECOMS CONTRACTS CONSOLIDATION

Submitted by: Executive Director, Resources & Support Services

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: Non specific

Purpose of the Report

To seek Cabinet approval to enter into a single consolidated contract for the supply of telephony and wide area network (telecoms) provision for a period of five years.

Recommendations

(a) That Standing Orders Relating to Contracts be waived on the grounds of 2b(vi) which states 'where for any other reason there would be no genuine competition'

(b) That British Telecom (BT) is awarded a consolidated contract for a period of five years

Reasons

- (a) Consolidating the contracts improves the Council's position in achieving best value through tendering for a full telecoms solution starting in four years' time, which will be more attractive in the open market.
- (b) Consolidation provides the opportunity to make savings on current contracts costs.
- (c) The recommendations accord with the approved ICT consolidation programme.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has an approved programme of ICT consolidation covering software and hardware. As part of this programme, in conjunction with the Council's Procurement Officer and legal team, ICT have been investigating the current contracts for the provision of telephony and wide area network (WAN)¹ services to the Council's buildings.
- 1.2 The Council's WAN provides network access to all Council sites, together with access to the internet. The Council's telecoms infrastructure has developed to meet the particular needs of each service over a period of time. As such, each connection has been procured through different means, attracting a different price over a different contract period. Currently, there are 8 individual telecoms contracts in place, each with different end dates starting with October 2013 through to December 2016, covering the Council's telephony and WAN requirements.

2. Issues

- 2.1 Small scale procurement for telecoms hardware and support over the years (i.e. small numbers of connections from one site to another) has restricted the Council in being able to attract a significant discount from providers due to insufficient volume. Typically, the

¹ The WAN is a network that covers a broad geographic area outside of the Council's own internal network. WANs are used to relay data and information to staff, suppliers, partners etc. at any geographical location. This allows the Council to effectively carry out its daily function regardless of location. An example of a WAN is the Internet.

larger/detailed the tender the more likely the Council will benefit from more economically advantageous procurement of services.

- 2.2 It is not possible for the Council to undertake a large procurement for provision of our entire telecoms infrastructure without significantly overrunning outside of contract periods with individual connections in order to synchronize a finish date, or by paying early terminations fees of approximately £25,000 to end contracts before their natural finish date.
- 2.3 The capacity of WAN connections has been calculated before sites have come on-line. In many cases the Council has under-capacity and sites suffer from slow connection issues whilst at other locations, links have been over specified and their capacity not fully utilised. Relocation of staff from one site to another has added a further complexity by adding to the capacity requirements at some sites which was not anticipated when the links were initially installed. This inflexible provision between sites means that problems are difficult to resolve and an overhaul of the Council's telecoms is required.
- 2.4 Whilst internally the Council's telephony provision can reroute calls automatically to any handset which is connected to the network, calls coming into the Council must still be routed via a traditional telephone exchange. The Council pays an additional premium to BT to operate a 1 hour diversion service for the main "717717" and "715500" numbers. This means that should these numbers be unavailable BT will temporarily move them to other numbers to ensure continuity of the telephony service. However, all other externally accessible numbers are not covered in this agreement. Diversion of these other numbers, if required, could take up to a week to complete. This is not effective for disaster recovery and does not provide the flexibility or resilience the Council needs.
- 2.5 A number of telecom service providers now offer the new SIP (Session Initiated Protocol) technology² for telephony. The advantages of SIP include:
 - Lower cost calls than traditional lines. With SIP the Council only pays for the capacity it needs and the usage it make of telephony.
 - Flexible numbering e.g. working from a Newcastle number regardless of the physical location.
 - Number portability which allows the Council to relocate offices or sites but keep existing numbers.
 - Site resilience; number flexibility that supports disaster recovery plans.
 - Supports system expansion; an additional number can be added to a SIP site at lower cost and less time that traditional means.

3. **Options Considered**

3.1 Do Nothing

- 3.1.1 Await contract end dates or work with current providers to extend certain contracts to allow for them to expire at the same time.

The disadvantages of this approach are:

- Removes the capacity to reduce current costs
- Limits disaster recovery capabilities

² With SIP, calls travel over the Internet. Calls sent over the Internet are much cheaper than calls sent over traditional telephone lines. Because it is flexible, SIP provides the ability to combine communication services such as voice, instant messaging, video conferencing. Using SIP, telephony in effect becomes another web application.

- Does not take advantage of flexible new technology with the potential to reduce call costs in the future as part of a separate review.

3.2 Early Termination of Contracts and Re-Procurement

3.2.1 This option attracts early termination costs of approximately £25,000 to end the existing contracts. This would be followed by a full procurement for the entire wide area network and external telephony infrastructure.

3.3 Consolidate existing telecoms contracts and upgrade the current telecoms technology

3.3.1 This option involves entering into a five year contract with BT; our existing principal telephony and WAN provider. This new combined contract will replace all existing small contracts and put in place a single end date. This will simplify contract management and enable procurement of a full telecoms solution within the final year of the contract.

3.3.2 As the contract value would exceed Public Procurement thresholds, the Council would issue a Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency (VEAT) Notice to the European market.³ The notice advises the market place that the Council is making an award following a negotiated procedure without advertising the opportunity through the European Journal. Any potential suppliers may comment within a ten days standstill period following the announcement of "intention to award a contract". If during this period any alternative supplier lodges a genuine objection to the procurement for which they can substantiate their claim, the Council will cease the award process. ICT would then recommend that the Council undertake the option outlined in 3.2 and build in the costs of early termination to be covered by any potential new supplier.

3.3.3 This gives the Council the opportunity to bring to a close all 8 existing contracts, with different end dates whilst delivering savings, and offers the opportunity to tender in full during the life of the single consolidated contract

3.3.4 Approving this option will require the Council to waive Standing Orders Relating to Contracts on the grounds of 2b (vi). Although there are a number of telecoms suppliers in the market place, it is considered more advantageous to both the Council and suppliers to tender for a full telecoms contract due to the fact that any other supplier bid would need to absorb the cost of the early termination fees from the existing contracts to make a bid financially attractive to the Council.

3.3.5 This option incorporates the upgrading of the current telecoms to take advantage of SIP technology, for the reasons detailed in 2.5 above.

4. **Proposal**

4.1 Your officers in ICT, Procurement and Legal Services have worked together in presenting a proposal for Cabinet consideration. As a result, it is recommended that Option 3.3 be approved.

4.2 The execution of a new five year contract will require the authority to waive Standing Orders Relating to Contracts on the grounds of 2b(vi), as the contract value over the life of the contract is in excess of £50,000. It is advantageous to the Council (given the numbers and types of contracts in place), and potential suppliers to consolidate the telecoms contracts

³ A public body may use a VEAT notice when they have awarded a contract which has not been published in the OJEU, such as contracts using the Negotiated Procedure (without prior advertising).

initially and go to the market with a full tender for the procurement of all telecoms services within the final year of the contract.

- 4.3 The proposal will also involve a significant upgrade of the Council's existing infrastructure which will see the Council moving away from traditional telephone lines and physical reliance on telephone exchanges. Whilst the service to users and customers will not change the Council will reduce costs, build resilience and introduce essential flexibility for future deployment of telecoms services at any sites.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 The preferred solution has the following benefits:

- 5.1.1 The Council will not incur any early termination charges (£25,000) or have to over-run on contracts. This in effect means that should the Council seek to go out to open market at this time, potential suppliers submission would need to reflect both early termination costs and perceived savings, as highlighted by BT as part of their negotiated proposal, resulting in them having to identify a considerable discount for their solution to deliver value for money.

- 5.1.2 The introduction of SIP technology benefits the authority in terms of resilience, flexibility and disaster recovery.

- 5.1.3 The current supplier will cover all associated costs of modifying our internal telephone system to accept SIP telephony.

- 5.1.4 The supplier already maintains the majority of the Council's network links and will continue to keep the old links in a live state until acceptance testing and sign off has been achieved

- 5.1.5 The exercise will facilitate a much improved and much more attractive procurement package to be put in place during the final year of the contract to ensure the Council secures the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT).

- 5.1.6 The solution will consolidate a number of complex contracts into a single entity which is more manageable.

- 5.1.7 The issuing of a VEAT notice to the open market will automatically highlight any objections from any alternative suppliers. It will also identify if any organisation could realistically deliver a more advantageous package of development through the objection process.

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

- 6.1 The outcome supports becoming a cooperative council delivering high quality community driven services, through providing a telecoms solution that maintains, supports and improves sustainable communications between the community and the Council.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 The recommendation is made in accordance with the Council's internal rules set out in the Constitution and with the European Procurement Rules and the UK regulations. Advice has also been sought and agreed from Procurement and Legal Services in developing the proposal.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 No adverse impact has been identified as a result of delivering the recommendations.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

9.1 A full breakdown of the costs and savings are shown below:

	Year 1 2013/14	Year 2 2014/15	Year 3 2015/16	Year 4 2016/17	Year 5 2017/18
Current Revenue Costs	£71,457	£71,457	£71,457	£71,457	£71,457
Proposed New Costs:					
One off Capital	£24,956				
One off Revenue	£20,078				
Ongoing Revenue (One off and Ongoing Revenue Costs can be met from existing revenue budget in 2013/14)	£51,338	£51,338	£51,338	£51,338	£51,338
Total	£96,372				
Balance	(£24,956)	£20,119	£20,119	£20,119	£20,119
Savings	(£24,956)	(£4,837)	£15,282	£20,119	£20,119

9.2 The proposal requires one off capital investment of £24,956 in 2013/14 to finance the implementation and refresh of network equipment at the authority's sites, and is detailed in the ICT 'Invest to Save' submission. The additional cost of migrating the Council's internal telephone network to SIP connections is approximately £7,000. BT has agreed to meet the latter cost.

9.3 The one off revenue cost in 2013/14 will be incurred if the contract commences in April 2013. Should the contract commence later than this, the revenue cost will overlap into 2014/15 and the savings shown in 2014/15 decrease proportionately.

9.4 The on-going revenue costs cover the line rental and service charges associated with our telecoms connections provision. This does not include call costs, which are covered under a separate contract. Your officers will investigate future savings of these costs following implementation of SIP technology (see 9.4).

9.5 Savings over the life of the contract are approximately £55,000 over current contracts costs, commencing in year three of the contract, as detailed in the above table, with the potential to save more when ICT investigate call charges, programmed to take place in August 2014, to allow time for the installation and embedding of SIP beforehand.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 Risks have been identified associated with the consolidation of telecoms contracts in this way, which in summary are:

- Potential for challenge by the market when using a VEAT notice
- Restrictions in staying with the current telecoms solution:
 - Inability to provide full business continuity/disaster recovery telecoms
 - Inflexibility and increased cost should the council vacate its current premises in the future

10.2 A full Risk Log is available on request.

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

There are no sustainability and climate change implications arising from this report.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 The report is a key decision as defined in the Council's Constitution, as it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings which are significant and has been included in the Cabinet's Forward Plan for the period in which the meeting is to take place.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Strategic Review and Consolidation of ICT Systems - Cabinet, 20 June 2012

Agenda Item 6

LOCALISM ACT – COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE AND COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID

Submitted by: Business Improvement Manager/Partnerships Officer (Community Development)

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to outline what the Council needs to do in order to comply with the Community Right to Challenge and Community Right to Bid legislation. The report makes a number of proposals in order to enable the Council to meet its obligations under the legislation.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet agree to adopt the recommendations set out in section 3 and 5 of this report.
2. That Cabinet decide the preferred approach for receipt of 'Expressions of Interest' (EOI) as part of the community right to challenge - either:
 - 2.1 within set timescales set by the authority ((a) para 3.2) or
 - 2.2 as and when an EOI is received ((b) para 3.2)

Reasons

The need to respond to the requirements of the Localism Act which received Royal assent on the 15th November 2011 and was implemented in phases. The Community Right to Challenge was brought into force on the 27th June 2012 and the Community Right to Bid was brought into force on the 21st September 2012.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Localism Act received Royal Assent on the 15th November 2011 and the majority of the Act was introduced in phases. The Community Right to Challenge was brought into force on the 27th June 2012 and the Community Right to Bid was brought into force on the 21st September 2012.

2.0 Community Right to Challenge

Legislation

- 2.1 The Community Right to Challenge (CRTC) allows a relevant body to challenge a local authority by expressing an interest in running a service. A relevant body would comprise of:
 - 2.1.1 a Parish Council, but not limited to services or facilities within its area;
 - 2.1.2 a Voluntary Body – a body, other than a local authority, the activities of which are not carried on for a profit;
 - 2.1.3 a Community Body – a body, other than a local authority, which carries on activities primarily for the benefit of the community;

- 2.1.4 a body or trust established for charitable purposes;
- 2.1.5 two or more employees of the Authority, whether or not they have formed themselves into a body for this purpose; or
- 2.1.6 such other persons or bodies as may be specified by the Secretary of State by regulations. To date, no such regulations have been made.

Note that there is no requirement for a Voluntary or Community Body to have any local connection and any of these bodies can submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) in partnership with any other organisation, including a commercial organisation, or propose to sub-contract the work to a commercial organisation. Providing that this is done, there is no requirement for the relevant body to undertake the majority of, or any particular share of the work.

- 2.2 The Expression of Interest must relate to the provision of, or assisting in the provision of, a “relevant service”, which means any service which is currently provided by or on behalf of the Authority. An Expression of Interest can relate to services such as management and maintenance of playing fields or parks, refuse collection and re-cycling, running a leisure centre, or operation of off-street car parks, internal back office services. Equally, a team of authority staff might consider taking on a back office activity.
- 2.3 There are a number of excluded services exist as part of the CRTC and as such cannot be the subject of an expression of interest, for example a service which includes the exercise of a statutory power which cannot be delegated. So, the setting of Council Tax or the determination of a planning application is not legally capable of being undertaken by anyone other than a local authority, and so cannot be the subject of an expression of interest. A list of further services excluded from the CRTC can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.4 The Council may choose to publish specified periods during which expressions can be submitted in relation to a relevant service and if an expression is submitted outside of the period, the Council may refuse to consider the expression. However, if periods are not specified then expressions of interest may be submitted at any time.
- 2.5 An expression of interest must include specific information in order to initiate a challenge. Once an expression of interest is submitted the Council must determine if it accepts or rejects it and must do so within a set time frame. If the Council rejects an expression of interest it must publish the reasons for its decision. There are a number of grounds for rejection as set out in the Act, as attached at Appendix B.
- 2.6 The Council must specify the maximum period that it will take to notify the relevant body of its decision on an expression of interest and publish details of the specification on the website. The Council must also notify the person making the expression of interest of when they can expect to receive a decision. The notification must be in writing and must be completed within 30 days after the close of any period specified.
- 2.7 If the Council accepts an expression of interest then it must carry out a procurement exercise in which the body submitting the expression can bid alongside others. This means that the body who triggered the procurement exercise may not eventually be a provider of that service. The Council must specify minimum and maximum periods of time that must elapse between the date of its decision to accept an expression of interest and the date on which the procurement exercise will begin. The procurement process will also enable the authority to contrast and compare as part of an evaluation process, value for money from its own internal service delivery as part of any award process.

- 2.8 The Council can also accept an expression of interest with modifications and in doing so it must publish the reasons and carry out a procurement exercise. The option to accept with modification requires the body submitting the expression of interest to agree to the modification. This option is not aimed at enabling wholesale change to an expression of interest, but may enable minor changes to be made to enable the Council to accept it.
- 2.9 The carrying out of a procurement exercise should be appropriate to the nature and value of the contract. So in some cases the Council will have to follow the procedures for advertising, tendering and awarding contracts as set out in the relevant regulations.
- 2.10 It should be noted that the carrying out of a procurement exercise, may result in an outcome where an existing internal service is externalised.

3.0 What does the Council need to do?

Action Required:	Recommendations to Cabinet:
3.1 Develop and implement a process by which the Council can consider and determine any expressions of interest	That the process as outlined at Appendix C is approved.
3.2 Decide if there should be a specific time period for when expressions can be submitted	(a) That the Council either specifies a time period and Cabinet approves the process as outlined at Appendix D. or alternatively (b) accepts 'Expressions of Interest' as and when these arise.
3.3 Decide what information should be included in an expression of interest	The application form for recording expressions of interest as outlined at Appendix E is approved.
3.4 Nominate a key contact that expressions of interest should be submitted to and in what format	That the Business Improvement & Partnerships Officer is the key contact for receiving expressions of interest either through an online application form or paper version.
3.5 Appoint a person/group to accept or reject expressions of interest	The process as outlined at Appendix C.
3.6 Develop mechanisms and timescales for accepting, modifying or rejecting of expressions of interest and the time scale for determination	As outlined at Appendix D.
3.7 Develop a process with specific timescales for undertaking a procurement exercise	This will depend upon the nature of the service that is being challenged but the general process is outlined at Appendix D and follows the Councils existing procurement practices.

4.0 Community Right to Bid

Legislation

- 4.1 The Community Right to Bid (CRTB) is also referred to as the Assets of Community Value. The CRTB requires the Council to maintain a list of assets which are deemed to be of community value, as well as a list of unsuccessful nominations. The aspiration of the CRTB is that it will provide eligible groups with more time to develop their Business Plans and find the finance to buy key assets that are put up for sale.

- 4.2 The CRTB has three main parts:
- Nomination and listing of assets
 - The moratorium period
 - Appeals process

4.3 **Nomination and listing of assets**

The CRTB allows local community groups, voluntary organisations, and parish councils to identify land and buildings such as a local shop or community centre that provide an important service in their community and nominate these for inclusion on the asset of community value register maintained by NULBC. A full list of who can nominate an asset is set out at Appendix F. The asset has to be listed on the register for 5 years or removed if the asset is sold, deemed no longer to have community value or an appeal against the listing has been successful. Following nomination, NULBC has 8 weeks to make a judgement about whether the asset meets the regulations set out in the Act; this is listed at Appendix G. If the nominated asset meets the criteria, then NULBC must list it on a register (listed at Appendix K) informing all affected parties including the Parish or Town Council if appropriate and the relevant LAP. The asset must also be registered on the local land charges register.

4.4 **The Moratorium period**

Once an asset has been listed nothing further will happen until the owner decides to dispose of it, either through a freehold sale, or the grant or assignment of a qualifying lease (i.e. originally granted for at least twenty-five years). Unless an exemption applies, the owner will only be able to dispose of the asset after a specified window has expired. The first part of the window is a 6 week interim period, which will apply to all cases, and allow community interest groups to make a written request to be treated as a potential bidder. If a community group does make such a request during this 6 week period, and it is deemed a valid request, then the full 6 month moratorium will operate. During this period, the owner may investigate or negotiate sales but must not exchange contracts unless it is to the community interest group. If the owner does exchange contracts with someone other than a community group during this period, the sale will be invalid. After the moratorium period, either the 6 weeks if there has been no community interest, or the full 6 months, the owner is free to sell to whomever they choose.

4.5 **Appeals process**

If the owner objects to their property being placed on the register, they have a right to an internal review by the Council and if following the review they are still dissatisfied they then have a right to appeal to an independent Tribunal. Also if the owner (unless the owner is a public sector agency) believes that they have incurred a loss or expense as a result of the delay caused by the moratorium period, they will be able to make a claim for compensation to the Council. The Council will be expected to meet any compensation and (reasonable) legal costs resulting from the appeals process. The Act states that the Listing and Appeals decisions should be taken by different Officers.

5.0 **What does the Council need to do?**

Action Required:	Recommendations to Cabinet:
Nominating and listing of assets 5.1 Determine a process to enable Parish/Town Councils, local community and voluntary groups and LAPs to nominate assets	To approve the proposed process which can be found at Appendix H and application form at Appendix I.
5.2 Establish an internal review process	To approve the proposed process which can

should the owner of the nominated asset disagree with the Council's decision that the nomination should be listed	be found at Appendix H.
Decision making 5.3 To determine in accordance with Government Regulations whether the asset can be included in a list of assets of community value	The criteria for inclusion are defined in the regulations, so it is essentially a judgement call if the asset is to go on the register or not. Business Improvement and Partnerships will consult with local ward councillors, the internal assets team and others as appropriate and make recommendations to a nominated member of EMT. The nominated member of EMT will then consult with ward councillors on the final decision.
5.4 The Council has to publish a list of both successful and unsuccessful nominations; the Council can either publish one single list or two separate lists. The Council also needs to decide on the frequency of the updates of the register	That the Council publish just one list which can be found at Appendix K, so people wishing to nominate an asset can see quite clearly what has been successfully added and what has been unsuccessful with the reasons for rejection. The list will be published on the Council's webpage's on a monthly basis.
5.5 Publish the list of assets that were unsuccessful including the reasons why the nomination was unsuccessful	As above.
5.6 Selling of assets and appeals process Set up and monitor a moratorium process so that when an asset from the list comes onto the market, community groups have time to register their intent to bid and raise the necessary capital, and prevent the owner from selling the asset during the moratorium period	This process can be found at Appendix J. Once Business Improvement and Partnerships have been informed of the intention to sell the asset, letters will need to be sent to the community group informing them of the proposals and also published around the neighbourhood. The register will be updated to show the intention to sell with the interim, full moratorium end dates and the end date of the protected period.
5.7 Operate a compensation scheme to compensate owners for loss or expense incurred as a result of listing and complying with any procedures of the scheme	The Council will be expected to meet any compensation and (reasonable) legal costs resulting from the appeals process.

6. **Issues**

- 6.1 There will be a need to raise awareness of the CRTC and CRTB considerations are being given to the following actions:
- 6.1.1 Inclusion of detailed information on the Councils website on the Localism Act with information on all rights,
 - 6.1.2 The drafting of a set of guides will be produced on the Localism Act for staff which will be promoted on the e-voice,
 - 6.1.3 A locality member's forum (possibly through the LAPs) to be held in each locality in February/March 2013 on the CRTB,
 - 6.1.4 Potential engagement with the West Midlands Community Council, Staffordshire Parish Council's Association linked to raising awareness and support within Parishes.

6.1.5 Potential engagement with the Newcastle Voluntary Sector Forum and the LAPs Chair's Group linked to awareness raising and support within the voluntary and community sector, and LAPs.

6.2 Encouraging voluntary participation in service provision under the CRTC: As set out above, once the statutory process is activated, there is no guarantee that the community or voluntary organisation which initiated the process will be successful in the procurement exercise. Indeed, such a local community or voluntary body will normally be at a considerable disadvantage by reason of its smaller size, limited track record of service provision and lack of funds for bid preparation. The formal procurement process also leads to a formality of service contract which may work against a genuine partnership for local service delivery.

If the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council wishes to encourage community involvement in service provision, it may be preferable to encourage direct negotiation with community and voluntary bodies instead of a formal procurement exercise. So, for example, the Authority has the ability to enter an agency arrangement with a Parish Council, or to grant a lease of local community facilities to such a community or voluntary body, and to enter a grant agreement, without having to undertake a competitive procurement. This will only be possible where the grant agreement does no more than cover costs, and where there is no developed commercial market for the services. It must still be satisfied that such an arrangement provides best value for the Authority, but such a voluntary arrangement can avoid the costs to the Authority and to bidders of a formal competitive procurement.

6.3 The acceptance of an expression of interest under the CRTC and subsequent procurement process will require the relevant service area to draft a specification/service outline and identify outcomes/service level expectations. Members of EMT have identified a potential skills shortfall and financial implication in this area that will need to be addressed.

7. Proposal

7.1 That the recommendation set out in sections 3 and 5 of this report are approved.

7.2 That Cabinet indicate the preferred option linked to paragraph 3.2 either:
(a) That the Council specifies a time period and Cabinet approves the process as outlined at Appendix D. or alternatively
(b) accepts 'Expressions of Interest' as and when these arise.

8. Reasons for Solution

8.1 To ensure that the Council meets its duties under the Community Right to Bid and Community Right to Challenge legislation.

9. Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities

9.1 The recommendations support the Council's corporate priorities.

9.2 The CRTC and CRTB and the approach adopted in their delivery, clearly supports the priority of becoming a co-operative council which delivers high quality, community driven, services, albeit an EOI under the CRTC may also result in the engagement of a wider supplier base.

10. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

10.1 The report and recommendations respond to requirements of The Localism Act 2011.

11. **Equality Impact Assessment**

11.1 Unless otherwise stated below this proposed decision is not considered to have any adverse implications to and is considered to comply with the Council's equal opportunities/diversity policies.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

9.1 The implementation of the actions linked to the recommendations will be financed using existing budgets.

9.2 There will be financial implications linked to the costs of preparing service outlines/specifications and subsequent evaluation and award as part of the CRTC, albeit at the time of drafting this report volumes of EOI cannot be predicted.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 If the Council fails to comply with legalisation it risks being considered as ineffective and may face enforcement action.

10.2 Risk assessments have been undertaken for both CRTC & CRTB and are available on request.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This report is classed as a key decision document as there are legal implications linked to non-compliance.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 There were no earlier Cabinet or Committee resolutions linked to this report.

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APPENDIX A

Excluded services (Community Right to Challenge)

A relevant service commissioned in conjunction with one or more health services:

1. By a relevant authority or by an NHS body under a partnership arrangement made in accordance with the NHS Bodies and Local Authorities Partnership Arrangements Regulations 2000, or

2. By a relevant authority and an NHS body or a Strategic Health Authority, acting jointly.

- A relevant service commissioned by an NHS body on behalf of a relevant authority.
- A relevant service commissioned or provided by a relevant authority in respect of a named person with complex individual health or social care needs.

The first two bullet points relate to services provided until 1 April 2014, in order to allow the NHS commissioners established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to become fully operational.

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APPENDIX B

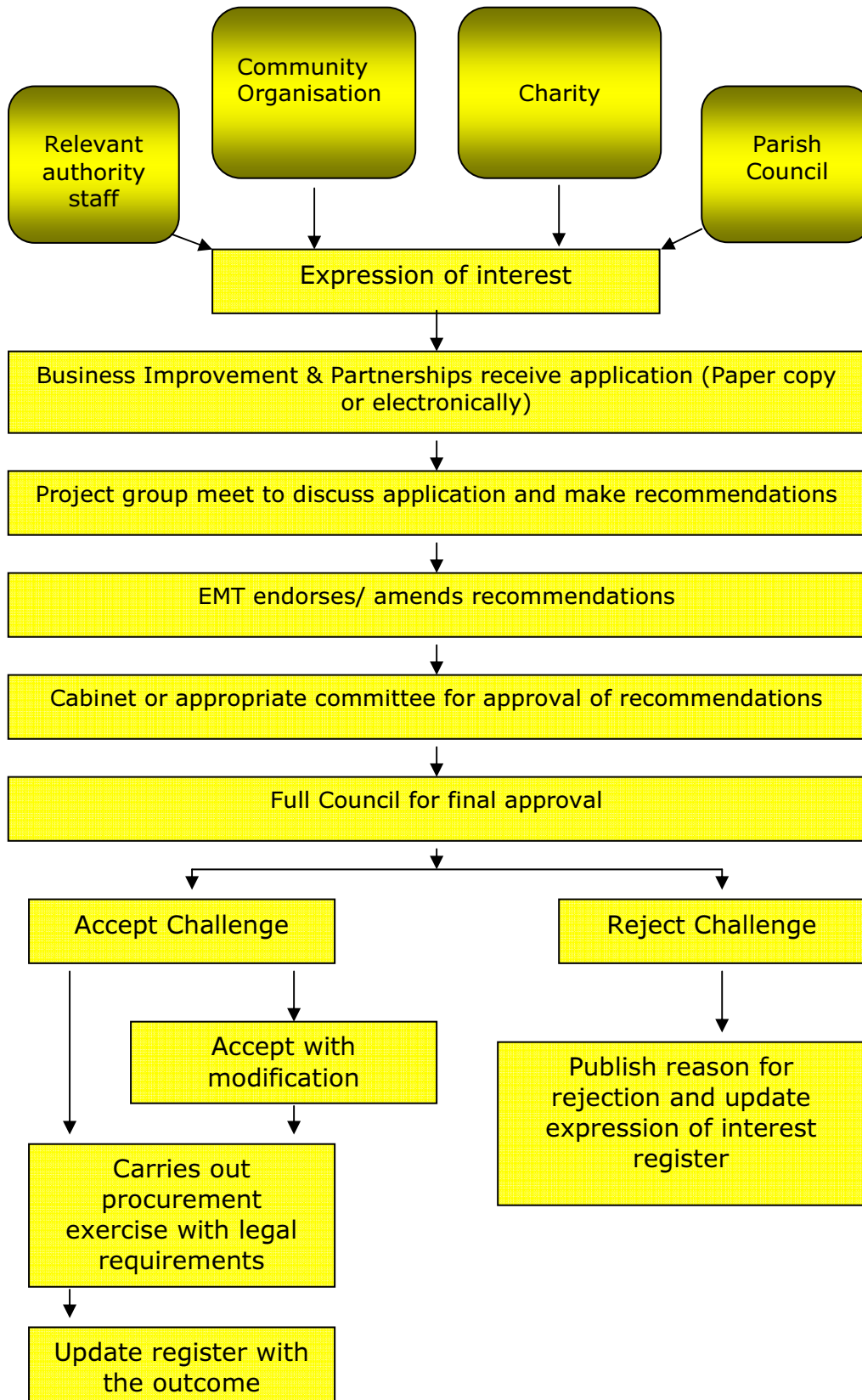
Refusing an expression of interest (Community Right to Challenge)

1. The expression of interest does not comply with any of the requirements specified in the Act or in regulations.
2. The relevant body provides information in the expression of interest which in the opinion of the relevant authority, is in a material particular inadequate or inaccurate.
3. The relevant authority considers, based on the information in the expression of interest, that the relevant body or, where applicable –
 - (a) Any member of the consortium of which it is a part, or
 - (b) Any sub-contractor referred to in the expression of interest is not suitable to provide or assist in providing the relevant service.
4. The expression of interest relates to a relevant service where a decision, evidenced in writing, has been taken by the relevant authority to stop providing that service.
5. The expression of interest relates to a relevant service –
 - (a) Provided, in whole or in part, by or on behalf of the relevant authority to persons who are also in receipt of a service provided or arranged by an NHS body which is integrated with the relevant service; and
 - (b) The continued integration of such services is, in the opinion of the relevant authority, critical to the well-being of those persons.
6. The relevant service is already the subject of a procurement exercise.
7. The relevant authority and a third party have entered into negotiations for provision of the service, which negotiations are at least in part conducted in writing.
8. The relevant authority has published its intention to consider the provision of the relevant service by a body that 2 or more specified employees of that authority propose to establish.
9. The relevant authority considers that the expression of interest is frivolous or vexatious.
10. The relevant authority considers that acceptance of the expression of interest is likely to lead to contravention of an enactment or other rule of law or a breach of statutory duty.

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APPENDIX C

Community Right to Challenge



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APPENDIX D

Community Right to Challenge Indicative Timetables

Set out below is the indicative timescale outlining the process for managing expressions of interest in Newcastle-under-Lyme:

Indicative timescale	Activity
March to April:	Window for submission of expressions of interest
May to July:	Assessment and analysis of expressions of interest by project group and EMT
September:	Cabinet report on expressions and recommended Decisions
	Approval by full Council

Assuming acceptance of the expression of interest:
Indicative timescale

Indicative timescale	Activity
October to March:	Preparation of tender documents. NB: The time taken will depend on the nature of the tender.
*Between January and April to September	Procurement process NB: this will begin after the preparation of tender documents has been completed, which could be before March.
October to February	Decision to award contract, TUPE, contract completion etc.
April	Go live

*The table above allows 3-6 months between determination of an expression of interest and the start of procurement, based on noncomplex procurement processes. It is intended that the minimum time between the acceptance of an expression of interest and the start of the procurement process would be 3 months (October to January). The maximum time would be 6 months (October to April).

More complex procurement (for example, in-house service takeover or competitive dialogue procedures) will be subject to a different timetable. Procurement in these circumstances would commence within 9 months of acceptance of an expression of interest and determination.

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APPENDIX E



Community Right to Challenge

Application form for submission by a relevant body

Community Right to Challenge

Expression of Interest

Please complete all parts of this application form as fully as possible. You are permitted to provide additional information to the form where you feel necessary.

Completed forms should be returned to simon.sowerby@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

PART A: ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

<p>Name of organisation or group submitting the expression of interest*</p> <p><small>*If your organisation has not as yet selected a name or chose to formally constitute, please complete this section with details of the individuals who are submitting this expression of interest and organisation type you will use.</small></p>	
<p>Company and/or charity or CIC registration number (if applicable):</p>	
<p>VAT registration number (if applicable):</p>	
<p>Name of lead person</p>	
<p>Registered address:</p>	
<p>Telephone number:</p>	
<p>Mobile number:</p>	
<p>Email address:</p>	
<p>Website:</p>	

Which category of relevant body is your organisation?	Please Tick
A voluntary or community body	
A body of persons or a trust which is established for charitable purposes only	
A parish council	
Two or more employees of the relevant authority	
Any other person or body specified by the Secretary of State in regulations	

Part B: Tell us about other parties involved

Are you part of a consortium?	Yes	No
Do you propose using any sub-contractors to deliver the service?	Yes	No

If you have answered yes, above, please provide details of any members of a consortium or sub contractors likely to deliver a significant proportion of any contract (if more than one, please list on a separate sheet):

Name of organisation	
Company or charity registration number (if applicable):	
VAT registration number (if applicable):	
Name of lead person	
Registered address:	
Telephone number:	
Mobile number:	
Email address:	
Website:	

PART C: Tell us about the Council service being challenged

Which Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council service does your challenge relate to?

NOTE: This section is for you to include all information you would like to share on the relevant service you wish to provide or assist in providing. Please provide as much detail here as possibly. If you are unsure of what a relevant service could be please see the Community Right to Challenge Statutory Guidance for further advice.
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/2168126.pdf>

Is this a relevant service	Yes	No
----------------------------	-----	----

What geographical area does your expression relate to?

All of Newcastle-under-Lyme?	Yes	No
------------------------------	-----	----

A specific area/locality of Newcastle-under-Lyme (please provide details)		
---	--	--

Does Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council currently contract out the relevant service?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

Please note that the council may reject your expression of interest based on defined grounds for rejection in the Localism Act 2011 with regard to the council having existing contracts or other service agreements in place.

PART D: Proposal for relevant service or services

Instructions: Please provide as much information as possible to explain your proposal to either provide or assist in providing one of the council's relevant services.

Wherever possible please refer to key aspects of your organisation (e.g. type, category, approach, partners or consortia) to show how your proposal could better deliver the relevant service, how you feel the current service could change (e.g. staffing implication, transfers) and how it will meet the needs of its users. Please append any further information necessary to support your expression of interest.

Further information on eligible relevant services can be found in the Community Right to Challenge Statutory Guidance.

(<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/2168126.pdf>).

Please only tick one of the boxes below – making it clear if your organisation is seeking to deliver the relevant service or only assist in delivering a relevant service:		
Is your expression of interest to provide the relevant service: (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is your expression of interest to assist in providing the relevant service: (please tick)
Your Proposal:		
Is your organisation made up of two or more current employees of Newcastle-under-Lyme Council	Yes	No
If YES, please also explain fully how you have done or will engage with other employees of the Council who may be affected by your expression of interest.		

Social Benefits

Instructions: Please provide as much information as possible to confirm how your organisation and your proposal for the relevant service would increase social, economic or environmental well-being in Newcastle-under-Lyme over and above the needs of the users of the relevant service.

Please append any further information necessary to support your expression of interest.

Description of the social, economic and environmental benefits that will be provided as a result of your approach to the relevant service:

Your Response:

Evidence of how activities will primarily be for the benefit of the community*

*Please provide any further information that supports your organisation's approach to providing social benefits. If your organisation is incorporated please also provide information on how your Memorandum and/or Articles of Association support your intent.

PART E: Capability statement and experience:

Capability:

Instructions: Please provide as much information as possible to confirm how your organisation (and any partners) is able to either provide or assist in providing the relevant service or services. This should include information on any plans you may have to develop your organisation in preparation for a procurement exercise (e.g. if you have not chosen to constitute your organisation at the point of submitting an expression of interest). Please provide information to the council regarding your governance and decision making approaches, which may relate to your current or proposed Memorandum and/or Articles of Association. Please append any further information necessary to support your expression of interest.

Explanation of why your organisation is capable of providing the relevant service in the way you describe in Part C:

Your Response:

Organisation experience and expertise:

Instructions: Please provide as much information as possible to confirm how your organisation (and any partners) can use its experience or expertise to provide or assist in providing the relevant service or services. You can provide information here on any projects or contracts that your organisation or individuals in your organisation have been involved in.

Explanation of why your organisation has experience or expertise for the relevant service or services:

Your Response:

Key contract or project experience	1)
	2)
	3)

Staff Experience and Expertise:

Instructions: Please provide as much information as possible how staff employed to deliver your proposal are experienced or have expertise or qualifications to provide or assist in providing the relevant service or services. You can provide information here on any projects or contracts that your staff or individuals in your organisation have been involved in.

Please append any further information necessary to support your expression of interest, and please note that you are not restricted to providing three key contracts or project experiences.

Explanation of why your staff has experience or expertise for the relevant service or services:

Your Response:

Key contract or project experience	1)
	2)
	3)

Any relationship with the council:

Instructions: Please provide as much information to explain where your organisation, its staff, partners or your consortia may have a relationship with the council.

In this context, we ask that you confirm here if:

- you are an employee of the council, which directorate and in what role and such information for all those named as part of the organisation you propose to deliver relevant services, or
- if any person connected with you organisation (or any partners or staff) have an associated person who is employed by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council or has been employed by us in the last three years.

For the purposes of this question an 'associated person' is any person who is employed by, works for, or otherwise provides services on a full-time or part-time basis to or on behalf of the council (or associated body) whether under a permanent or fixed contract of employment with the council, through an agency contract with an employment agency or as a consultant or contractor through a contract for services with the council.

Please append any further information necessary to support your expression of interest.

Explanation of how your organisation relates to the Council currently:

Financial Information

Instructions: Please provide as much information as possible to confirm how your organisation plans to support the provision of the relevant service through its own financial status and resources, and any business planning that may be required to support your approach.

Please append any further information necessary to support your expression of interest, for example a business plan.

Description and detail of your organisations financial status, and approach to the financing of your organisation for providing the relevant service including how the organisation could offer value for money with added social benefits.

Your response:

Accounts:	1) Are you able to provide a copy of your organisation's audited accounts for the last two years?	Yes	No
	2) OR - Do you have an alternative means to show your organisations financial status and resources, if for example you have not traded for longer than a year or as yet? Please append if this is available.	Yes	No
Insurance:	Are you able to or willing to take any insurance to provide or assist to provide the relevant service? You will need to decide whether your approach requires insurances.	Yes	No
	If Yes, confirm which and why this may be important for the service in question. If No, please confirm why this is not possible:		

<p>Business Planning:</p>	<p>Are you able to provide a business plan for the period you wish to provide or support to provide the relevant service? If yes, please append.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
	<p>If No, please confirm why this is not possible using evidence and explanation referencing your proposals in this expression of interest:</p>		
<p>Surplus:</p>	<p>Please confirm that your organisation is not for profit in the sense that all surpluses are reinvested in the organisation or the community and state how you would demonstrate this in practice. You may wish to refer or provide your proposed Memorandum and/or Articles of Association.</p>		
	<p>Your Response:</p>		

Part F: Declaration:

I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted in this form and the associated documents are correct. I understand that the information will be used in the process to assess my organisation's approach to provide or assist in providing a relevant service, in the form of an expression of interest as described in s81 of the Localism Act 2011.

I am signing on behalf of my organisation. I understand that Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council as a Relevant Authority may reject this expression of interest if there is a failure to satisfactorily respond to information requests qualified as required for compliance, or if I provide false/misleading information.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sign: _____

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APPENDIX F

Who may nominate (Community Right to Bid):

Local authorities cannot list land on their own initiative – it must be nominated. For a local group to be able to nominate land it will have to demonstrate that its activities are wholly or partly concerned with the local authority area where the asset sits or with a neighbouring authority (an authority which shares a boundary with the authority in which the asset is located).

The voluntary or community bodies, which may make community nominations, are set out below:

- **Parish Councils** - This may be for an asset in its own area, or in the neighbouring parish council.
- **Neighbouring Parish Councils** - If the parish council borders an unparished area, then they may nominate an asset within the neighbouring district council or unitary council.
- **Unincorporated groups** - Nominations can be accepted from any unincorporated group with membership of at least 21 local people who appear on the electoral roll within the local authority, or a neighbouring local authority. This will for instance enable nomination by a local group formed to try to save an asset, but which has not yet reached the stage of acquiring a formal charitable or corporate structure.
- **Neighbourhood forums** - The procedure for becoming a neighbourhood forum is set out in s61F of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, added by the Localism Act 2011. There can only be one neighbourhood forum for an area.
- **Locality Action Partnerships** – This may be for an asset in its own area, or in a neighbouring LAP area.
- **Community interest groups with a local connection** - These must have one or more of the following structures, and evidence must be provided, including relevant registration numbers, of this status:
 - a) A charity
 - b) A community interest company
 - c) A company limited by guarantee that is non-profit distributing
 - d) An industrial and provident society that is non-profit distributing (these groups will be renamed as community benefit societies by the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies and Credit Unions Act 2010 when it comes into force)

In this context, non-profit distributing means that any surplus is not distributed to its members but is wholly or partly applied to the local authority area where the asset is based or to a neighbouring authority area.

APPENDIX G

Definition of an asset

A building or other land should be considered an asset of community value if:

- Its actual current use furthers the social wellbeing and interests of the local community, or a use in the recent past has done so; and
- That use is not an ancillary one; and
- For land in current community use it is realistic to think that there will continue to be a use which furthers social wellbeing and interests, or for land in community use in the recent past it is realistic to think that there will be community use within the next 5 years (in either case, whether or not that use is exactly the same as the present or past); and
- It does not fall within one of the exemptions which are in the regulations, e.g. residential premises and land held with them.

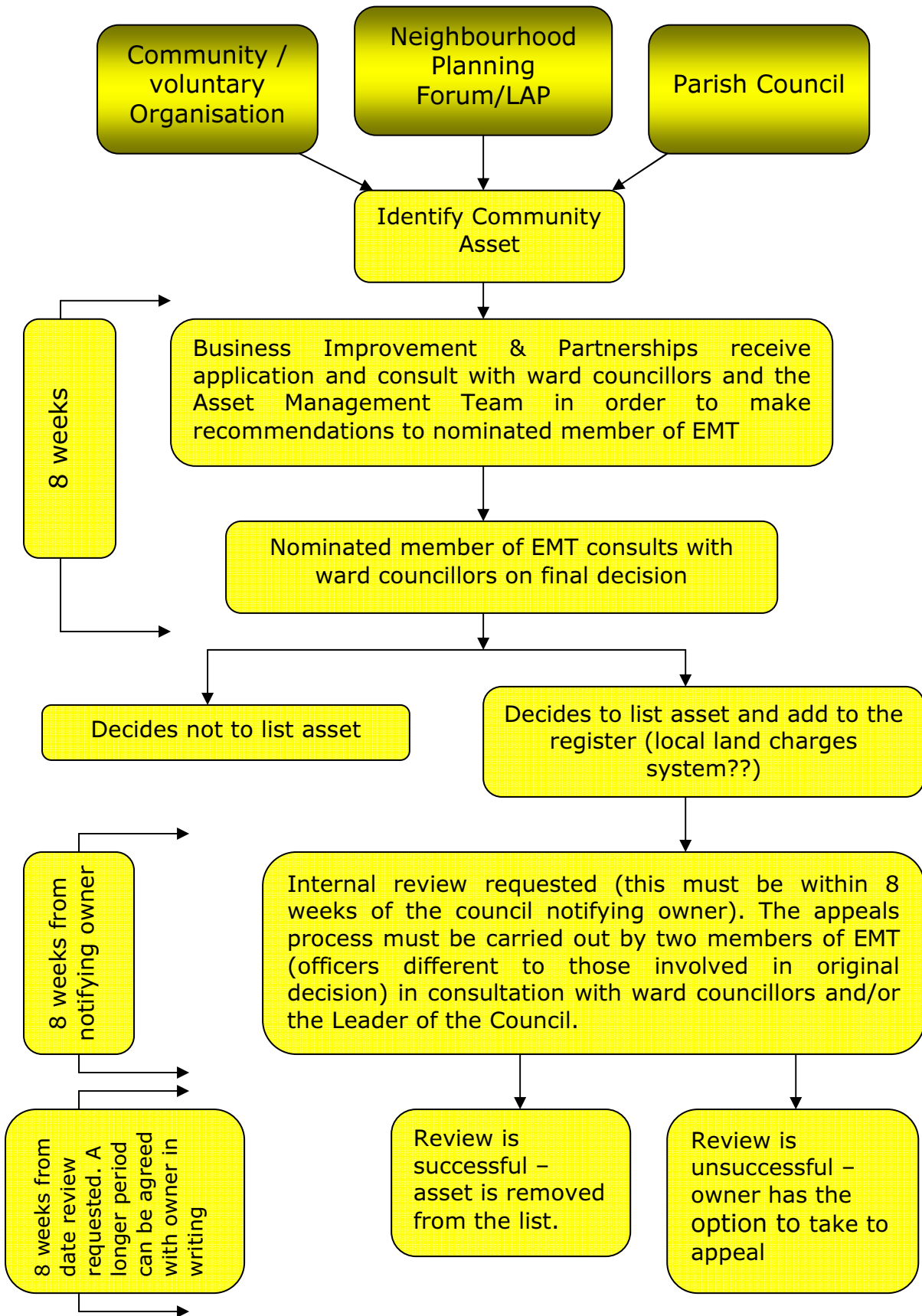
“Social interests” will be defined to include cultural, recreational, and sporting interests. With regard to “recent past”, our current view is that we will leave it to the local authority to decide, since “recent” might be viewed differently in different circumstances. For example, “recent” might be taken as a longer period for instance for land which was formerly used by the public until the MoD took it over for live ammunition practice, than for a derelict building. Ten or even twenty years might be considered recent for the former but not for the latter.

Land that can't be listed:

- A residence together with land connected with that residence.
- Land is connected with a residence, if:
 - (a) The land, and the residence, are owned by a single owner; and
 - (b) Every part of the land can be reached from the residence without having to cross land which is not owned by that single owner.
- Residence means a building used or partly used as a residence; A building is a residence if—
 - (i) It is normally used or partly used as a residence, but for any reason so much of it as is normally used as a residence is temporarily unoccupied;
 - (ii) It is let or partly let for use as a holiday dwelling;
 - (iii) It, or part of it, is a hotel or is otherwise principally used for letting or licensing accommodation to paying occupants; or
 - (iv) it is a house in multiple occupation as defined in section 77 of the Housing Act 2004(a); and (c) A building or other land is not a residence if—

- (i) It is land on which currently there are no residences but for which planning Permission or development consent has been granted for the construction of residences;
 - (ii) It is a building undergoing construction where there is planning permission or development consent for the completed building to be used as a residence, but construction is not yet complete; or
 - (iii) It was previously used as a residence but is in future to be used for a different purpose and planning permission or development consent for a change of use to that purpose has been granted.
- Operational land as defined in section 263 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(c).

APPENDIX H



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APPENDIX I

ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE - REGISTRATION FORM

1. Your details

a. Name

b. Address

_____ Postcode _____

Is this your home address, or the organisation's address? Yes / No

c. Contact number _____

d. Email address _____

e. Who are you representing? (*for example Parish Council/Community*

Group) _____

f. Please attach evidence that you have the authority of the group to make this nomination (for example minutes of a meeting where the decision is recorded)

2. Asset name

3. Brief description of the nominated land/building and proposed boundaries
(for example, age of asset or building, previous use and purpose, type of construction, timber frame, prefabricated concrete)

4. Asset address

Postcode _____

5. The name of current occupiers of the land

6. The name and current or last known address of all those holding a freehold or leasehold estate in the land

7. Nature of current/most recent use (please choose one category)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Health centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heritage
<input type="checkbox"/>	School	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green Space
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shop
<input type="checkbox"/>	Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theatre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Centre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town Hall
<input type="checkbox"/>	Day Care Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential Home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed Use
<input type="checkbox"/>	Offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religious building
<hr/> <p>Other (please state): _____</p>			

8. Current status of the building/land (please choose the most appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/>	In Community Use	<input type="checkbox"/>	In Public Ownership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Under Consultation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary Use
<input type="checkbox"/>	Empty Building	<input type="checkbox"/>	Empty Home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disused Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	Surplus Property
<input type="checkbox"/>	Available for sale/rent/transfer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Under threat of closure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Under Transfer		

Other (please state): _____

9. Please explain briefly why you think it is an asset of community value

10. Does this building/land have a deadline for proposals?

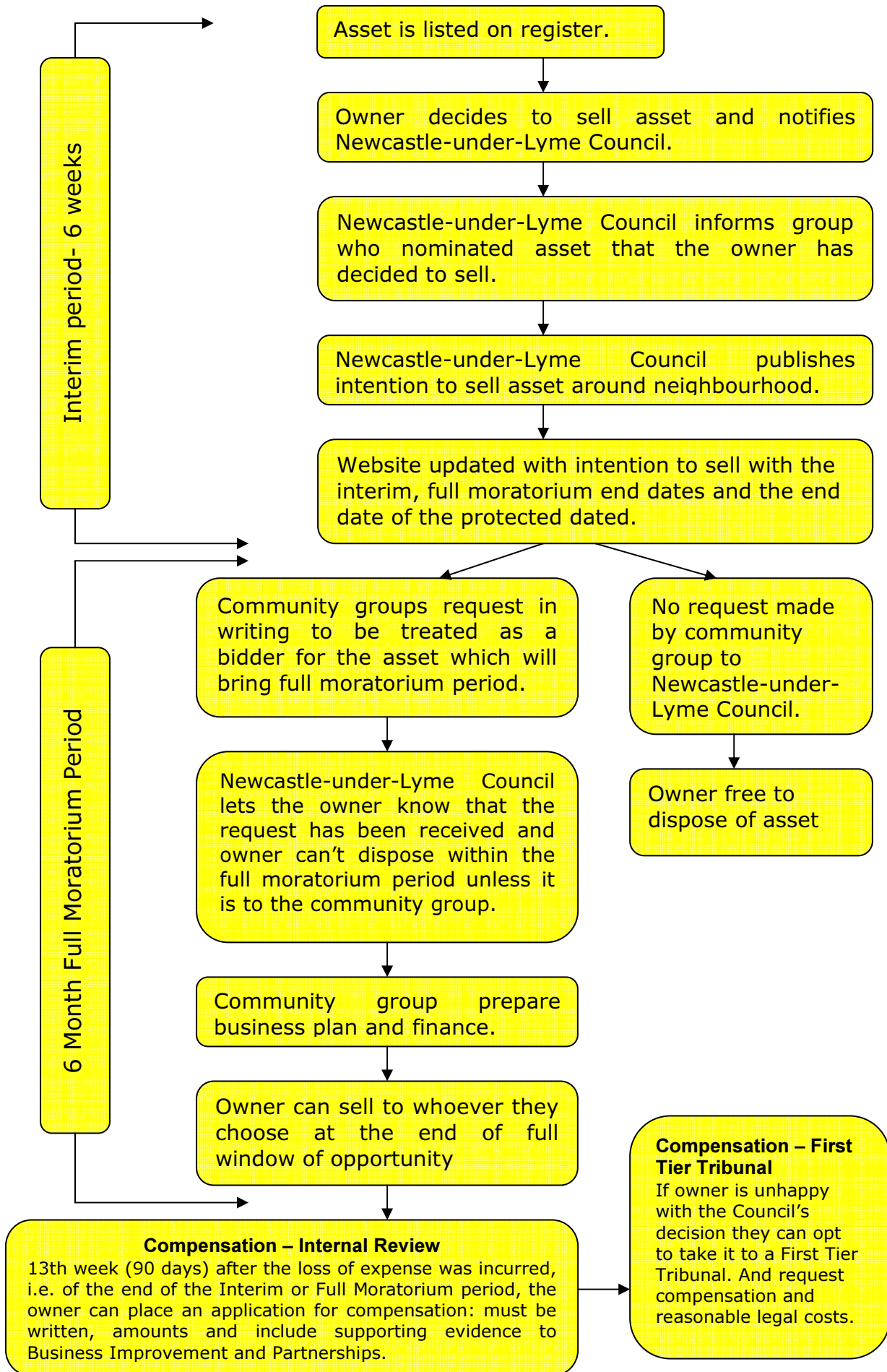
11. A photograph of the asset or any boundary drawings would be ideal to support the registration, so please attached to this form.

Signature _____

Print Name _____ **Date** _____



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Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Property Code	Property Name	Previous Name	Name/No.	Address 1	Address 2	Locality	Postal Town	County	Postcode	Parish	Ward	LAP Area	Operational Status	NULBC Legal Interest	Property Type	Property Use	Property Site Area (m2)	Grid Ref E	Grid Ref N	Date Application Received
														FREEHOLD						
														FREEHOLD						
														LEASEHOLD						
														LICENSEE						
														LICENSEE						

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APPRENTICESHIPS

Submitted by: Executive Director Resources and Support Services

Portfolio: Finance and Budget Management

Ward(s) affected: Not Applicable

Purpose of the Report

To obtain approval for a proposal for the council to establish a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme with both public and private sector partner organisations.

Recommendation

That a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme be established as set out in this report to enable the employment of local young people and contribute to the economic regeneration of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Reasons

To help support the worklessness agenda by increasing the number of employment opportunities for young local people to enable them to gain valuable work experience and a meaningful qualification as well as earning a wage.

1. Background

- 1.1 In previous years the council has employed up to 8 apprentices and work placements with funding support from the Future Jobs Fund which is no longer available. The apprenticeship budget had previously been reduced and the council currently employs a total of 4 apprentices across Streetscene (2), Garage Workshop and ICT.
- 1.2 The council's current workforce age and grade profile indicates an under representation of younger and/or less qualified or experienced employees. Currently only 4.3% of our employees are aged 25 or under. This compares with the Newcastle area in which 16-24 year old people constitute 13.5% of the working age population. Over the last three years the council's recruitment activities have been very limited due to the need to deliver significant savings and the Council's approach to managing vacancies and using redeployment to avoid compulsory redundancies as part of the savings process. This has impacted on the council's current employee profile. It is therefore necessary for the council to consider initiatives that promote the recruitment of young employees who can be developed to meet the Council's current and future talent needs.
- 1.3 Unemployment rates for younger people not in education are consistently high. 2011 saw high unemployment rates for 18 to 20 year olds since comparable records began in 1992: 36% of economically active 16-17 year olds who were out of school were unable to find a job. 67% of economically active 18-20 year olds who were out of school were unable to find a job.
- 1.4 Innovative ways are needed to increase the number of employment opportunities for young local people to enable them to gain valuable paid work experience and a meaningful qualification and this is why a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme is being considered. The apprenticeship scheme also addresses one of the Local Enterprise Partnership's key

priorities this is priority 6, 'ensuring the skills and training of our workforce meet business needs by encouraging the take up of apprentices across businesses in our local area'.

- 1.5 It is proposed to run a shared scheme working with various local public and private sector partners. The intention is to provide a number of apprenticeships working within the council and across participating organisations on a shared basis.
- 1.6 The Council would administer and coordinate the shared scheme and employ the apprentices on a fixed term contract. The apprentices would gain valuable work experience by working with two or more partner organisations for a set period of time during their apprenticeship. The Council would need to ensure that it only works with partners who are able to provide opportunities that are beneficial to the individual, so that they gain structured work experience that is focussed to meet the framework of their chosen career path and qualification.
- 1.7 The council will be responsible for monitoring the apprentice's progress during their work placements. Each apprentice will be given a clear development and work experience plan that is aligned to their qualification and training programme. This should ensure that they are able to apply what they have learnt in to the workplace.
- 1.8 This approach will allow the apprentice to gain a wider range of relevant experience and skills through sharing on the job experiences from different employers and improve their career prospects. It will also benefit existing employees by increasing their skills level through knowledge transfer from partner organisations.
- 1.9 The scheme will help pool together resources and share the burden and responsibilities of training apprentices with partners who may not have the time or resources to take an apprentice on for the full duration of an apprenticeship. In this approach no single organisation bears the total costs of financing the apprenticeship as the main financial contribution is towards the apprentices wage (plus the management fee) whilst they are working at the partner organisation during a work placement.
- 1.10 Services that have been identified to offer apprentices suitable work experience are within the following areas, which would also need to be available in the partner organisations:
 - Customer Service
 - Business Administration
 - Finance
 - Sports and Leisure
 - Parks
 - Grounds Maintenance
 - Streetscene
 - ICT
 - Garage Workshop
 - Warehousing/ Fork Lift

The benefits of the Scheme include:

- increases cooperative and partnership working;
- gives trainees a more varied work experience and hopefully increase further career opportunities;
- options of various partners to work with;
- choice of the most suitable training provider;
- ability to offer more apprenticeships by working cooperatively with partners;
- provides employment opportunities within the borough; and

- opportunity for the council to develop and be part of a high profile shared apprenticeship scheme.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The council needs to ensure there is an adequate supply of partners to host the apprentices. To date the following organisations have expressed an interest in participating in the Scheme:

Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Glendale, Croppers Grounds Maintenance, Stoke College, Newcastle College, Reaseheath College, Nuffield Health and M Club.

Further discussions are taking place with other potential partners.

- 2.2 Discussions have taken place with JET (Jobs Enterprise & Training) who will assist with the initial selection of potential apprentices to ensure their suitability.
- 2.3 It is essential that the individuals recruited on to the scheme are capable of completing an apprenticeship and are willing to work and to learn in their chosen career path.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 **Option 1** (recommended)

Council's Shared Partnership Scheme as outlined above

Option 2

3rd Party Provider

- 3.2 The council joins a 3rd party Shared Apprentice Scheme taking in to consideration the following differences:

- Apprentices are recruited through the 3rd party preferred training provider;
- The 3rd party may only use one training provider;
- The 3rd party provider decides which partners to work with; and
- The 3rd party provider charge an additional management fee to the partner organisations.

Potential benefits of this option:

- The 3rd party provider is the formal employer and would co-ordinate the overall programme; and
- Reduces administration burden of employing apprentices directly.

Potential disadvantages:

- Limits range of Training Providers which may not deliver meaningful learning outcomes;
- Not being part of the recruitment process may not select the right candidate for the scheme;
- Increase in numbers not completing the programme;
- Increase the costs by paying a management fee;
- Due to increased costs may limit number of apprenticeships offered;
- Potential reduction in Partners participating in the scheme; and
- May limit the range of placements offered.

4. **Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The initiative compliments the Sustainable Community Strategy in providing and improving economic wellbeing. It also addresses the council's priority a 'Borough of Opportunity'.

5. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

5.1 The National Minimum Wage which increases the wages depending on the apprentices' age after the first year of an apprenticeship.

6. **Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 The council working in partnership with JET will ensure that the selection process is fair and does not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, religion or belief, ethnic origin, age, marital status, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, or sexual orientation.

7. **Financial and Resource Implications**

7.1 Provision has been made in the 2013/14 budget of £40,000 to help finance the scheme.

7.2 At this stage it is difficult to ascertain whether or not the full budget would be needed as this depends on the number of partners joining the shared scheme, the council securing funding and the number of apprentices recruited.

7.3 The possibility is being explored of gaining government funding of between £1,500 up to £2,275 per apprentice which goes towards the salary bill.

7.4 Partner organisations would be invoiced for the duration of the placement and charged a management fee of approximately 20%. The management fee would need to cover administration, holiday pay, tax, employers national insurance and pension contributions. The % charged would be higher where apprentices opted to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

7.5 Management of the Scheme will be undertaken by staff in the Human Resources team from within the existing resources.

8. **Major Risks**

8.1 Not enough partners join the Scheme.

8.2 Not enough suitable candidates are selected to join the Scheme.

9. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

Not applicable.

10. **Key Decision Information**

Not applicable.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Cabinet Meeting - 18 July 2012.

12. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Apprenticeships Shared Partnership Scheme 2012/13

13. **Background Papers**

None

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Apprenticeships Shared Partnership Scheme 2012/13



Introduction

Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council is committed to help support the worklessness agenda by increasing the number of employment opportunities for young local people to enable them to gain valuable work experience and a qualification as well as earning a wage within North Staffordshire.

A shared apprenticeship scheme is where more than one employer will work with the apprentice to ensure their work experience meets the framework requirements. This approach offers a wide range of relevant work experience and skills through sharing on the job experiences from different employers which should help improve their career prospects. The scheme will allow the trainee to benefit from the breadth and depth of work experience offered. It will also benefit existing employees by increasing their skills level through knowledge transfer.

The council believe a shared scheme working with our partners will help to pool together our resources and share the burden and responsibilities of training apprentices who may not have the time or resources to take an apprentice on for the duration of the programme. In this approach no single organisation bears the total costs of financing the apprenticeship as the only financial contribution is towards the apprentices wage (plus the management fee) whilst they are working at the partner organisation during a work placement.

How the scheme works

Potential career paths for apprentices are as follows:

- Customer Service
- Business Administration
- Finance
- Sports and Leisure
- Parks
- Grounds Maintenance
- Streetscene
- ICT
- Garage Workshop
- Warehousing/ Fork Lift

Due to the varying requirements of each partner organisation, individual consultation will be required to design a fit-for-purpose scheme which complements and adds value. The council will be happy to set up individual sessions to understand the individual partner needs and implementation challenges.

The council would administer and coordinate the shared scheme and employ the apprentices, working with appropriate partners to ensure the apprentices work experience meets the framework requirements. However, we understand that some hosting organisations may not be able to meet the full requirements of the framework and therefore we will need to be flexible by working with the other partners to ensure the needs are met.

The partner organisations would agree how many apprentices we would be able to employ. A programme would need to be agreed with the partners to host/rotate the apprentices for a set period of time giving the organisations the benefit of utilising the apprentice to greatest effect. This option takes contracted workflow and projects into account and minimises the risk of each partner by alleviating their requirement to commit for a full 12 month period.

The council will agree with partners an apprentice wage and terms to be applied over the duration of the apprenticeship which will be in line with the apprenticeship rate of pay currently set at £2.65 per hour for the

first year, rising to the national minimum wage if the apprentice is aged 19 or over and having completed 12 months service.

The apprentices will work 37 hours per week and will be entitled to 21 days annual leave plus statutory holidays (pro rata). The working pattern will be Monday to Friday with start/finish times to be agreed by the partner organisation. Lunch breaks are also to be agreed by the individual partners.

The duration of the placement will be agreed and will be no less than a 3 month period with each partner organisation.

Apprentices will be employed on a fixed term contract for a period of between one to two years depending on their career/ qualification choice.

The council would make the decision which training providers to work with for example Newcastle, Stoke or Reaseheath Colleges or use a combination of providers to ensure the trainees gain the most suitable training for their chosen subject area.

Benefits of a shared scheme

The benefits of the scheme:

- would increase collaborative and partnership working;
- give apprentices a more varied work experience;
- increase further career opportunities;
- increase the opportunity to gain permanent employment once completed the programme;
- ability to offer more apprenticeships;
- providing employment opportunities within the borough; and
- opportunity to develop and be part of a high profile shared apprenticeship scheme.

The partner agreement

The participating partners will be asked to sign a Partnership Shared Apprenticeship Agreement which will include the following:

- duration of the apprenticeship;
- the council's obligations;
- partner responsibilities;
- apprentice responsibilities;
- partners agree to provide practical on-the-job training;
- obligation to inform the council of any suitable permanent vacancies irrespective of whether or not the apprentice is currently working at the partner organisation;
- agree to allow the apprentice up to 1 days study leave per week as part of the 37 hours per week to attend college;
- agree to allow the apprentice to attend apprentice meetings and in-house training; and
- agree to be responsible for the health & safety and welfare of the apprentices.

What the council will offer as the employer

The council will offer the following services:

- a clear competency based recruitment process to employ the most suitable apprentices;
- prepare job descriptions and person specifications;
- advertise vacancies and manage the process;
- employment responsibility for the apprentices;

- designated point of contact; and
- provide a development plan as part of the apprentices training.

The apprentice will be placed on a 6 month probation period, at the end of this period; subject to satisfactory performance the apprentice's employment on the scheme will be confirmed.

Costs

The council will invoice the partner organisations for the duration of placements which will be made up of; the agreed weekly wage and a management fee of approximately 20%. The management fee covers administration, holiday pay and employer national insurance. The % will be approximately 30% where apprentices opt to join the Local Government Pension Scheme and employers pension contributions are then payable.

Job Vacancies

All apprentices taking part in the scheme are entitled to apply for any vacancies at the participating partner organisations. The partners agree to send the council all suitable vacancies to advertise internally.

Sarah Taylor
Human Resources Manager
Tel: 01782 742261
Email: sarah.taylor@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

AFFORDABLE HOUSING REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP

Submitted by: Neale Clifton

Portfolio: Planning, Regeneration & Town Centres

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

Significant physical, social and economic regeneration has been undertaken over many years in the borough, including most recently the housing led Renew programme. Whilst these programmes have delivered many successes there are areas which could be improved further and it is appropriate that the Council considers partnerships and priority areas for future development, particularly in light of growing housing need against the backdrop of a sharp decline in the availability of external funding.

Recommendations

- (a) That Cabinet considers the proposed Partnership approach proposed with Aspire Housing and authorises officers to prepare and execute a Partnership Agreement in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder based on the principles outlined.**
- (b) That an appropriate Governance Structure is established including the Leader of the Council and/or Portfolio Holder and appropriate Senior Officers.**
- (c) That the Partnership commits to a jointly funded feasibility appraisal and that the Council's contribution is met from the existing strategic housing service budget.**
- (d) That the Partnership Board be authorised to finalise the Partnership Agreement and to commission the Feasibility Study.**

Reasons

As a Strategic Housing Authority the Council has a duty to provide housing to meet the needs of our residents and in line with housing and economic development priorities it is appropriate for the Council to consider ways to regenerate key areas of the borough. This report outlines a partnership approach to delivering physical regeneration in conjunction with Aspire Housing. It is appropriate that Cabinet considers the outlined partnership approach and gives direction to officers as to how the Council may wish to develop the approach.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has a strategic enabling role to ensure that housing is provided to meet the needs of local people. Evidence demonstrates that there continues to be a significant need to provide affordable housing in the borough (by reviewing both the current Housing Register and Housing Market Assessment data). For a variety of reasons it is anticipated that this need may become more acute for certain households (e.g. an increasing elderly population; changes arising from Welfare Reform legislation; an imbalance in the type and size of the current affordable housing stock; the ongoing impact of the global economic recession, particularly upon first time buyers, etc.).
- 1.2 Through this strategic enabling role the Council works with relevant partner agencies to influence the development of housing, particularly the provision of affordable housing. The Council has an adopted Local Investment Plan (LIP) which was produced with the support of

local Registered Providers (formerly known as Housing Associations) to meet the requirements of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Of course, as a matter of principle, the Council welcomes discussions with any provider about the potential scope to bring forward appropriate schemes to deliver the ambitions of the LIP.

- 1.3 Aspire Housing is the main affordable housing provider in the Borough, with significant experience of over the past decade delivering housing led regeneration initiatives. Aspire also owns several significant sites in key former coalfield communities that have been the subject of past regeneration programmes; in particular, in locations such as Knutton/Cross Heath and Chesterton/Crackley. The council owns land and/or property in those neighbourhoods too and has experience of enabling physical regeneration projects through the use of powers in Planning, Strategic Housing and in the Assets function.
- 1.4 This reports sets out options for the Council and Aspire Housing to support the delivery of affordable housing and potentially other community facilities that could aid regeneration on sites where both partners have existing land ownership and are in line with the LIP.

2. **Issues**

2.1 **Partnership working principles and objectives**

The Council and Aspire Housing have a shared ambition to deliver affordable housing and other community assets in Newcastle to meet the needs of our local residents. It is therefore appropriate that both parties seek to work together on a more formalised basis in order to support the delivery of affordable housing. In so doing it would be important to establish agreed principles/objectives at the outset and the following has emerged from discussions between the parties:

- To ensure that affordable housing is delivered within short to medium term timescales, utilising land in key regeneration areas.
- To deliver tenure diversification and a mix of housing type/tenure to meet the housing needs of the local community.
- To improve the sustainability of key neighbourhoods through the provision of new housing and facilities for the community.
- To continue the delivery of physical, social and economic regeneration, including the completion of schemes started under the Renew programme.
- To benefit from the enabling role of the council through alignment of the Council's resources including strategic housing and planning.
- To maximise training and skills development in line with the Social Value Act, primarily through engagement with PM Training.
- To provide employment opportunities for local contractors and sub-contractors.
- To utilise the HCA's OJEU-compliant DPP to secure the most appropriate development partners.
- To work with other partner agencies such as Staffordshire County Council (where there are land ownership opportunities and links regarding community contributions) and Stoke on Trent City Council (as the accountable body for Renew for outstanding permission requirements).
- To maximise the use of each other's staff capacity and expertise by working towards common objectives.
- To achieve best value and leverage from the combined physical assets and human resources of the partners to deliver agreed schemes.

It is envisaged that the partners will sign a Partnership Agreement which will clearly outline the approach to ensuring that each party's interests and expected returns/risks are understood from the outset, based upon the broad principles set out above.

2.2 **Governance Structure**

Clearly there is a need to establish a governance structure which involves both the Council and Aspire Housing. At this stage officers are of the opinion that, in order for the Partnership to deliver effectively, it would be necessary to establish a Partnership Board including the Leader of the Council and/or relevant Portfolio Holder; this will enable the Council to hold regular meetings with Aspire to review progress and to give direction to officers. In order to implement the views of Cabinet and the proposed Partnership Board it is proposed to form a steering group comprising key senior officers from the Council and appropriate representatives of Aspire. As the Partnership evolves it may be necessary to consider and agree upon some form of delegation scheme for decision making; equally the governance structure might need to be modified from time to time to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose (albeit based around the principles cited above).

2.3 **Project Feasibility and Timescales**

One of the benefits of developing a modest sized partnership with a focus on the regeneration of specific sites of mutual interest in the Borough should be that schemes can be developed effectively and importantly are deliverable. In order to provide early momentum it is recommended that the Partnership commits to a jointly funded feasibility appraisal and that the Council's contribution is met from existing funding within the strategic housing research budget.

Subject to Cabinet views it is proposed that the Partnership Agreement is developed over the next month on the basis of the principles set out and this is then followed by commissioning the feasibility study which could report in the summer of this year. If the partnership proves viable it is reasonable to assume that a development partner could have been procured by the last quarter of 2013/14.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 In simple terms the council has three options: (i) the Council could take no pro-active action to achieve the stated housing and regeneration objectives other than to deploy its enabling role; (ii) the council could consider developing new regeneration schemes in isolation of other partners or; (iii) a partnership approach could be considered.

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

- 4.1 Throughout the Renew programme a partnership approach was taken whereby the Borough Council worked with Stoke on Trent City Council and other partner agencies, particularly Aspire and other housing providers, to develop and implement housing-led regeneration schemes to address housing need. This approach demonstrated that additional capacity, resources and skills could be combined across partner agencies to deliver schemes effectively. As the main affordable housing provider in the borough who own land in key regeneration sites Aspire Housing is a key potential partner. In particular both Aspire Housing and the council have significant land holdings in important regeneration locations and it is appropriate to work with Aspire Housing to consider regenerating and redeveloping these areas because of the mutuality of interest.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**
- 5.1 The delivery of housing and regeneration contributes to the corporate priorities of Creating a Cleaner, Safer and Sustainable Borough and a Borough of Opportunity.
6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**
- 6.1 There is no legal or statutory requirement for the Council to take a partnership approach; neither is there any barrier to prevent it provided procurement legislation is adhered to. The Council could consider working alone however the partnership approach seeks to deliver schemes in the most resource-efficient and effective manner. Should the partnership approach be approved then it is recommended that a legal agreement is developed to specify each partner's intentions. Should the partnership at a future date, and subject to future Cabinet reports, agree to specific schemes then there will be a requirement to secure appropriate development partners/contractors through a suitably competitive or OJEU-compliant process and, in due course, to enter into legally binding contracts. At this stage the proposed approach is for the two parties to jointly procure a development partner from the HCA's OJEU-compliant framework.
7. **Equality Impact Assessment**
- 7.1 The priorities of housing and regeneration are outlined in the adopted Housing Strategy, upon which an EIA has been completed.
8. **Financial and Resource Implications**
- 8.1 The recommended course of action seeks to develop a partnership approach based on the principles set out above which will then lead onto the Partnership undertaking a feasibility study. It is recommended that this cost will be met equally between Aspire Housing and the Council (probably about £20k in total). This cost would be met from within the existing strategic housing service budgets.
- 8.2 Should the feasibility assessment demonstrate that there are viable regeneration schemes then further reports will be made to outline the options including opportunities, risks and financial implications. At the development of the options stage consideration will need to be given to funding requirements including any Council funding (which could involve the contribution of land or property in lieu of capital funding) and the potential to secure external funding from partners such as the Homes and Communities Agency.
9. **Major Risks**
- 9.1 A project-specific risk assessment will be undertaken to identify risks in relation to the partnership overall and for specific sites as the feasibility studies are developed.
10. **Key Decision Information**
- 10.1 The proposed partnership will cover more than one ward.
11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**
- None.
12. **List of Appendices**
- None

13. **Background Papers**

- 13.1 There is a range of Government / HCA guidance and reports that encourage Local Authorities to facilitate growth through utilisation of land assets.

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HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 1995 PROGRESS REPORT MARCH 2013 – 2015

Submitted by: Housing Manager, Mike O'Connor

Portfolio: Environment and Recycling

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To seek Cabinet approval for submission of any energy report return to Government in accordance with the requirements of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995.

Recommendations

To approve the overall HECA Progress Report and to authorise officers in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder to make any minor amendments prior to submitting the report to the Secretary of State by the 31st March 2013.

Reasons

The HECA was enacted in 1995 and placed a responsibility on local authorities, who were deemed as Energy Authorities, to publish a report setting out actions to improve energy efficiency within residential properties. It is appropriate to consider the draft report and associated resource requirements.

1. Background

- 1.1 Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council published a series of HECA reports, the most recent being in 2008. Thereafter, for a period from 2008 to 2012, no reports were produced, as Central Government gave local authorities an exemption from the requirement of producing and publishing annual reports.
- 1.2 In 2012, the Government requested that the annual report be produced and be submitted to the Secretary of State by the 31st March 2013 and every two years subsequently. The reinstatement of the requirement to produce annual reports was driven by the recent policy of Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation.
- 1.3 A guidance document has been produced by Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) with recommendation as to what should be included within the HECA Report. This guidance document recommends that authorities should consider how they will use Government initiatives including Green Deal, the Energy Company Obligation and Renewable Heat Incentives to improve energy efficiency of residential properties.

2. Issues

- 2.1 DECC have provided a template for the report and this has been used to produce the council's HECA report.
- 2.2 The HECA Progress Report 2013-2015 details the following projects and activities that the Borough Council will undertake and facilitate in the forthcoming years:

Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation [ECO]

There are 3 options available to local authority as to how they should approach Green Deal Promoter, Partnership or Provider. Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages. Officers recommend that the council ought to adopt the partnership approach. It is expected that this will ensure that the funding will remain within the area and local businesses will be involved in delivering the installations.

In particular officers are looking to take a partnership approach to Green Deal and ECO, working with Stoke on Trent City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council to establish an agency, which will secure ECO funding and manage Green Deal across the North Staffordshire region and into parts of Cheshire.

We will undertake preparatory work in an attempt to mitigate potential barriers to Green Deal, such as addressing any potential planning issues, which may impede the installation of external Green Deal and ECO measures.

Feed in Tariffs scheme and Renewable Heat Premium Payment

The Borough Council does not hold residential housing stock. Nevertheless we have installed solar PV arrays to some of our buildings, which will act as an exemplar to the community.

There are approximately 9,500 social rented properties within the Borough. We will work with the Registered Social Landlords and facilitate the installation of energy measures within the Borough. Aspire Housing, the largest RSL within the Borough have recently installed solar PV arrays to 400 properties saving an estimated £100 per year in electricity costs for each household.

Advice to Developers on Energy Efficiency on reducing carbon emissions

Newcastle under Lyme is part of a Staffordshire wide consortium, which will formulate guidance on Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy.

Minimum standards in the private rental sector

We will continue to enforce Housing and Health Rating System contained within the Housing Act 1984 to reduce the effects of excess cold on occupants. We will also encourage high standards through the North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme which promotes high energy efficiency standards in private rented housing stock.

Reduction of Energy Costs

Newcastle under Lyme recognise the potential benefits of the collective switching scheme for the residents of Newcastle under Lyme and will be working with "People's Power", who were successful in their bid to DECC to deliver the scheme within the Borough. Although, the scheme is open to all residents, there will be a specific focus in engaging vulnerable residents and tenants, who are otherwise, disengaged from seeking the best price for energy. It is anticipated that this will have a positive impact on alleviating fuel poverty within the Borough.

3. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- 3.1 The energy efficiency agenda and activity contained within the HECA Progress Report will contribute specifically to the corporate priority of creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough.

3.2 Furthermore, the energy efficiency agenda and activity will support local objectives / delivery plans including the priorities set out Newcastle under Lyme Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Strategy 2010-2015, the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy, the Housing Strategy 2011-15 and Private Sector Renewal programmes.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

4.1 The HECA was enacted in 1995 and placed a responsibility on local authorities, who were deemed as Energy Authorities to publish a report setting out actions to improve energy efficiency within residential properties which has to be submitted to the Secretary of State by the 31st March 2013 and every two years subsequently.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

5.1 The HECA is not intended to be a new policy document rather it aims to record and detail the energy efficiency related activities that have taken place or will take place. The activities referenced in the HECA have been primarily been formulated by departments of Central Government.

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

6.1 The production of the HECA Progress Report for 2013 has been completed within existing resources. However, it must be borne in mind that the actions contained within the HECA Progress Report, particularly those that are linked to the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation will have resource implications. The Housing Capital Programme allocated £60,000 to this area of work.

7. **Major Risks**

7.1 If the Council fails to submit the HECA Progress Report the Council won't meet its statutory duty as set out in the Home Energy Conservation Act. By considering the main aspects of the draft report at Cabinet and authorising officer to submit the report in consultation with the Portfolio Holder there will be an opportunity to incorporate amendments discussed at Cabinet by the submission deadline.

8. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

8.1 The HECA Progress Report will have a positive impact on sustainability and Climate Change.

9. **Key Decision Information**

9.1 This report covers all wards.

10. **List of Appendices**

10.1 Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 Progress Report March 2013 – 2015

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Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 Progress Report March 2013 - 2015

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
i) LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES	<p>The Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Strategy 2011 – 2016 has the objective of <i>‘reducing carbon dioxide emissions from domestic dwellings and commercial premises by promoting energy efficiency.’</i></p> <p>The Government has set a target of cutting carbon by 80% by 2050 nationally, the council will use its leadership role to encourage and lead by example to ensure that residents businesses and organisations are able to make their own contribution.</p> <p>The performance on carbon emissions and fuel poverty is 2.3 tonnes of CO2 per capita and 21.6% of households are fuel poor [data from DECC Fuel Poverty Statistics 2010]. The number of fuel poor households is 5.2% more than the national average.</p> <p>.We will aim to reduce fuel poverty within the Borough by promoting initiatives and supporting key programmes, such as Green Deal, ECO and income maximisation projects. This will take account of the revised approach to measuring fuel poverty and an alternative definition of fuel poverty expected from the Government later this year following the review it commissioned led by Professor John Hills.</p> <p>The Council is a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration and intends to commit to the Local Government Association initiative “Climate Local”.</p>	<p>2016</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2013</p>
MEASURES WE ARE TAKING TO RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS OF OUR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION		

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
Green Deal and ECO	<p>There are a 3 approaches local authorities might choose to adopt in engaging with the Green Deal: Promoter, Partnership or Provider. Each of these options have advantages and disadvantages. However, the position that Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council wishes to take is the partnership approach. This will help ensure that the funding will remain within the area and local businesses will be involved in delivering the installations</p> <p>The council are working with Stoke on Trent City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council to establish an agency to deliver a one stop shop approach that will; provide focussed marketing and promotion, secure ECO funding and manage Green Deal/Eco measures across the North Staffordshire region and Cheshire.</p> <p>Internally the council will undertake preparatory work to remove potential barriers to Green Deal by developing a local approach to address any potential planning issues so that green deal applicants can be fully aware of any planning implications associated with installing particular measures.</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2013</p>
Feed in Tariffs scheme	<p>The Borough Council does not hold residential housing stock. It has however, installed solar PV arrays to it's leisure centre which acts as an exemplar to the community.</p> <p>There are approximately 9,500 social rented properties within the Borough. We will work with the Registered Social Landlords and facilitate the installation of energy measures within the Borough. Aspire Housing, the largest RSL within the Borough have recently installed solar PV arrays to 400 properties saving an estimated £100 per year in electricity costs for each household.</p>	2014
Renewable Heat Premium Payment	Aspire Housing was successful in securing funds from the Social Landlords elements of the Renewable Heat Premium Payment to install 57 air source heat pumps to their off gas housing stock. A further round of funding will be available, which they will seek to access for additional off-gas properties.	2013
Zero Carbon Homes	To ensure all new built homes are zero carbon by 2016 we as part of a Staffordshire wide consortium of local authorities will formulate guidance on Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy. The guidance will provide information, to building contractors particularly those that are building extensions to ensure they develop efficient buildings,,	2014
EPCs	We will continue to ensure that landlords, agents and those selling or letting their homes	Ongoing

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
	are aware of their legal obligation to provide and make available Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs).	
Minimum standards in the private rental sector	We will continue to enforce the Housing and Health Rating System contained within the Housing Act 2004 to reduce the effects of excess cold upon occupants by requiring repairs and insulation measures by notice if necessary. We will also encourage high standards through the North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme which requires high energy efficiency standards in dwellings let within the scheme.	Ongoing
Smart meters	The major national roll out of smart meters will start in 2014 with the aim of all households receiving them by 2019. We will work with energy companies who are delivering ECO, Green Deal and other assistance to seek for them to provide at nil cost to residents smart meters whilst they undertake the improvement works to their homes.	2014
Reduction of Energy Costs	Newcastle under Lyme recognise the potential benefits of a collective switching scheme for the residents of the borough and will be working with the People's Power, who were successful in their funding to DECC to deliver a scheme within the Borough. Although, the scheme is open to all residents, there will be a specific focus in engaging vulnerable residents and tenants, who are otherwise, disengaged from seeking the best price for energy. It is anticipated that this will have a positive impact on the alleviating fuel poverty within the Borough.	2013
iii) MEASURES WE PROPOSE TO COST EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS IN RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION BY USING AREA BASED/STREET BY STREET ROLL OUT.		
	<p>The following super output areas have been identified within Newcastle under Lyme as being eligible for Carbon Savings Community Obligation (CSCO):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcastle-under-Lyme 010B: Lower Milehouse, Cross Heath • Newcastle-under-Lyme 010C Saints Estate Knutton & Silverdale • Newcastle-under-Lyme 007B Audley Road/Crackley Chesterton • Newcastle-under-Lyme 003D Butt Lane • Newcastle-under-Lyme 002C Kidsgrove <p>The CSCO is also applied to households in rural areas who are deemed to be in the Affordable Warmth Group.</p> <p>It proposed that area based energy efficiency retrofit schemes approach will be delivered within these areas, and measures will be installed in a large number of these properties.</p> <p>The Council will identify those lower super output areas which have high numbers of fuel</p>	Ongoing

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
	poverty households, particularly those in the private sector. These residents are more likely to require energy efficiency measures than those living in social housing where due to previous programmes measures have already been installed. These will become priority areas for the promotion and delivery of measures to be funded by the Affordable Warmth Target and the Carbon Emission Reduction Target of ECO.	
iv) TIME FRAME FOR DELIVERY AND NATIONAL AND LOCAL PARTNERS		
	<p>We are looking to take a partnership approach to Green Deal and ECO, working with Stoke on Trent City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council to establish an agency, which will secure ECO funding and manage Green Deal across the North Staffordshire region and Cheshire.</p> <p>We will establish a forum of local partners, consisting of Registered Social Landlords, Revival Home Improvement Agency, Beat the Cold which will meet on a quarterly basis to explore and co-ordinate the opportunities presented by the ECO, Green Deal and other initiatives.</p>	2013

SIGNED OFF BY:

POSITION:

Chief Executive

NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD ALLIANCE

Submitted by: Neale Clifton, Executive Director, Regeneration and Development

Portfolio: Cross-cutting but predominantly Planning, Regeneration and Town Centres

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report:

To establish whether Members wish to continue participating in the 'Newcastles of the World' Alliance, specifically with the following aims:

- a) To further develop business, educational and cultural links with other Newcastles around the world;
- b) To work in partnership with Newcastle-upon-Tyne and other members of the Alliance to progress an Alliance website and investment of officer time into further developing tourism links;
- c) To support the establishment of an Alliance secretariat and to prioritise officer resources in order to ensure that the council is a credible partner;
- d) To commit 'in principle' to attend the next World Conference in 2014 and to prioritise officer resources from January 2014 to prepare for the event to maximise the outcomes and;
- e) To support the Mayoress and work with Keele University, Newcastle College, Staffordshire County Council and local schools to develop the Youth aspects of the Alliance (including education).

Decision required:

Do members wish, in principle, to continue participating in the Newcastles of the World Alliance? If so:

Recommendations:

- a) That the council endorses the overall priority themes of the draft Development Plan and agrees to ongoing participation in the Alliance, including a preparedness to contribute up to £2,500 p.a. towards secretarial costs met from the existing budget.
- b) That the council commits to working with appropriate partners to improve global business, educational and cultural links to other Newcastles.
- c) That the council actively supports the development of an Alliance website, including developing tourism and media links to promote 'good news' stories about the Borough.
- d) That the council agrees, in principle, to attend the 2014 summit, subject to consideration as part of the budget-setting process in 2014/15.
- e) That the council agrees to support partners in developing the youth aspect of the Alliance.
- f) That officers be authorised to engage with the current secretariat on the basis set out in this report and to report back to members on progress with the Alliance or when key decisions are required.
- g) That the matter be referred to the Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their comments.

Reasons

The Newcastle of the World Alliance offers potential to develop effective global business, educational and cultural links for the benefit of the borough's various communities of interest. If the council considers that the Alliance provides a mechanism to achieve such benefits it will be important to ensure that the level of resources required represents good value for money.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Council has been a member of the 'Newcastles of the World' partnership since 1998 and has attended the biennial summit on most occasions since. Previous Cabinet reports have highlighted the potential benefits of the Alliance and discussed the setting up of a joint website and maximising links between the participating towns.
- 1.2. Prior to the 2012 summit, very little practical action has taken place to establish tangible benefits from the participants' involvement, other than the biennial gathering which has tended to focus upon cultural, educational and tourism issues. However, Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council, a relative newcomer and host to the 2012 summit, has kick-started a re-energisation of the Alliance in response to the "Joint Declaration" that was signed at the end of that event (see Appendix). In the immediate short-term Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council has provided a secretariat role. Also a website has been established (www.newcastlesoftheworld.com), a newsletter has been produced containing good news stories from members of the Alliance and a Facebook page has been created.

2. Issues

- 2.1. 'Newcastles of the World is an alliance of towns and cities that share the name Newcastle. The main aim of the Alliance is to share, enjoy and promote interest in their varied heritage, environment and culture, in particular creating educational opportunity and economic benefit for the people of the respective Newcastles. Newcastle-upon Tyne City Council has prepared a draft development plan which seeks to deliver a series of specific outcomes to further these aims.
- 2.2. The key extracts from the draft "Development plan" are as follows:
 - 2.2.1. Involve all or some of the Newcastles in the one or more of seven main areas of joint working, possibly identifying a lead Newcastle for each area and selecting one or two projects to tackle.
 - 2.2.1.1. **Tourism** - To develop a common Newcastles tourism brand that can be promoted to the citizens of our towns, cities and surrounding areas
 - 2.2.1.2. **Supporting good governance** in our municipalities
 - 2.2.1.3. **Business and economic development** - Identifying key business sectors where there is opportunity to collaborate and trade
 - 2.2.1.4. **Education and Young People** - encouraging our young people to develop contacts with each other, to help them have a better understanding of the world.
 - 2.2.1.5. **Culture and Heritage** – building contacts between our museums and galleries, artists and arts groups, participating in global heritage research projects, etc.
 - 2.2.1.6. **Sport** - International visits and tours, competitions and tournaments, best practice ideas for widening participation and encouraging healthy lifestyles

2.2.1.7. **The environment/sustainability** - Sharing experience and skills in best environmental practice in our municipalities, Involving our young people in conservation projects

2.2.2. The draft development plan indicates minimum recommended requirements to underpin success in delivering the aims of the Alliance as follows:

2.2.2.1. A good quality **website**, regularly updated, and supported by other social media – (in place but needs to be promoted more and the functionality improved)

2.2.2.2. A regular **newsletter** that can be shared widely by each Newcastle

2.2.2.3. Regular **contact between the political leadership** to track, progress and support the commitments that have been made.

2.2.2.4. A **contact person** in each Newcastle who is identified as responsible for regular communications and links, and whose work is endorsed and supported by the political leadership.

2.2.2.5. A Newcastle of the World **central coordinator** to link the leaders and contacts, and to oversee the work of the alliance.

2.2.2.6. Champions, or **lead members**, for each major initiative or project.

2.2.2.7. Regular **funds** that can be drawn upon to support activity.

2.2.2.8. A forward **programme** for the **hosting** of future summits.

2.2.3. The draft development plan goes on to review the following options for project/programme co-ordination, development and funding:

2.2.3.1. A paid-for secretariat (full or part-time) of at least one person to oversee and coordinate the work of the alliance at each summit and between summits.

2.2.3.2. A volunteer (from any of the Newcastles) to act as permanent coordinator.

2.2.3.3. Rotation of the secretariat on the basis of the hosting programme.

2.2.3.4. A mix of the above.

2.2.3.5. Funding options for a full-time secretariat – each Newcastle to pay an annual subscription,

2.2.3.5.1. A flat rate based on population band

2.2.3.5.2. A sliding scale, say £25 for every 1000 population

2.2.3.5.3. Combination of the two, e.g. flat rate of £1000 and £10 per 1000 population

2.3. In view of the above the borough council must now determine whether it wishes to continue participating in this Alliance taking account of the potential outcomes and the resource implications, set in the context of the Council Plan, Service Strategies and Plans and associated revenue budgets.

2.3.1. The Development Plan's anticipated outcomes in relation to 'Tourism', 'Business and Economic development' and 'Education and Young People' would support a number of objectives in the council's Economic Development Strategy, particularly those related to

‘strengthening the business base’, ‘transforming ambition’ and ‘transforming perceptions’.

- 2.3.2. The Development Plan supports the Council Plan priorities and outcomes, in particular that local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth (Borough of Opportunity); levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased (Healthy and Active Community); Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates. Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough and utilising public and community resources (A co-operative council).
- 2.4. Bearing in mind this is a two tier authority, education links ideally need the support of the County Council (ideally along with local H&FE providers), if they are to move forward significantly. Tourism in the Borough is carried out with support from the county-wide Destination Management Partnership. So if the Council wishes to support the Alliance then it is most appropriate to channel delivery of Tourism and Education links via the DMP and County Council-led education networks where possible.
- 2.5. With regard to business opportunities the Council could exploit the scope to promote inward investment opportunities by providing links into the Inward Investment service for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. Realistically the promotion of trading activities would be best handled via links into the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the UK Trade and Investment body. This is likely to require, by agreement, some re-alignment of current service arrangements from these organisations.
- 2.6. Clearly with all areas of work there is a decision as to what level of resources are invested and this usually takes into consideration the likely outcome and benefits. Historically the Council has not allocated significant resources to the Alliance (there has been a modest revenue budget earmarked and there has been very little ‘in-kind’ officer time dedicated to the Alliance’s work). A significant part of the work undertaken in this last year has been undertaken directly by the Mayor and Mayoress with limited officer support.
- 2.7. Whilst further investment in the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership may generate greater returns for tourism, relatively low level support, such as the linking of the Council website to a Newcastle’s website and submitting press releases to the newsletter will highlight tourism and education opportunities between the areas. The Newcastle’s Alliance offers a unique basis for education and learning particularly for younger children that could link to core areas of the national curriculum. As indicated earlier, the County Council’s input in this regard would be vitally important if sustainable links are to be forged.
- 2.8. It is acknowledged that, if the Alliance is to become more formalised with the aim of delivering clear outcomes, then there should be a core resource to call upon. By having a secretariat not only would there be clear accountability for delivering the bi-annual summit event but the range of activities listed in the draft Development Plan have greater likelihood of being delivered. In turn this helps the council to demonstrate what is being delivered for the benefit of its local community. Your officers consider that the option of establishing a full-time secretariat is not justifiable at this stage. In the event that a formal shared secretariat is preferred (i.e. if there is no prospect of securing a volunteer or host country secretariat) then a contribution of £2,500 p.a. to enable the establishment of a part-time secretariat is considered both reasonable and appropriate and can be funded from the existing budgetary provision.
3. **Options Considered**
- 3.1. Ceasing membership altogether – having been a member since its inception, and with no other ‘twinning’ arrangements in place, it may seem a waste of past resources to cease membership altogether, particularly in the light of the recent re-energisation of the Alliance following the 2012 summit. Nevertheless the council should satisfy itself that the draft development plan ambitions are

aligned with the council's agreed priorities and that involvement with this Alliance represents good value for money.

- 3.2. Passive support (no input other than attending biennial summits) – this is not a viable option. If the council is not prepared to support the development of the Alliance it would not be a credible partner in the eyes of the other participating countries.
- 3.3. Active support (web links, educational links, etc) – recommended option to maximise the benefits of the re-energisation of the Alliance and fully explore potential educational and tourism links.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 That the council endorses the overall priority themes of the draft Development Plan and agrees to ongoing participation in the Alliance, including a preparedness to contribute up to £2,500 p.a. towards secretarial costs met from the existing budget.
- 4.2 That the council commits to working with appropriate partners to improve global business, educational and cultural links to other Newcastles.
- 4.3 That the council actively supports the development of an Alliance website, including developing tourism and media links to promote 'good news' stories about the Borough.
- 4.4 That the council agrees, in principle, to attend the 2014 summit, subject to consideration as part of the budget-setting process in 2014/15.
- 4.5 That the council agrees to support partners in developing the youth aspect of the alliance.
- 4.6 That officers be authorised to engage with the current secretariat on the basis set out in this report and to report back to members on progress with the Alliance or when key decisions are required.
- 4.7 That the matter be referred to the Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their comments.

5. Reasons for Preferred Solution

- 5.1. The Newcastles of the World Alliance offers potential to develop effective global business, educational and cultural links for the benefit of the borough's various communities of interest. If the council considers that the Alliance provides a mechanism to achieve such benefits it will be important to ensure that the level of resources required is both available and represents good value for money.

6. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- 6.1. Outcomes from these actions will impact the 'Borough of Opportunity' corporate priority, in terms of tourism, quality of life and educational opportunities.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 7.1. There is no statutory requirement to carry out these recommendations.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.1. An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out but the recommendations will help to engender a better understanding of the world at large, particularly for younger people through links with schools.

9. Financial and Resource Implications

- 9.1. If the Council is serious about being part of the Newcastle's World Alliance then it will be necessary for resources to be allocated as part of the budget setting process. The draft Development Plan highlights the potential level of expectation regarding core funding to maintain core services through a secretariat; this could amount to £10,000 p.a. for this council if the full-time secretariat

option were to be pursued. A part-time secretariat would cost about £2,500 p.a. Of course the volunteer option would require no contribution whilst the rolling secretariat option would only require funding on those occasions when the council may offer to host a summit.

9.2. In terms of involvement with the bi-annual Conference the main costs comprise the delegate fee of about £700 along with the cost of transport (in most cases likely to involve flights). Looking forward if the Council attended the next Alliance conference this level of cost should be budgeted for in addition to the annual subscription referred to above. It would therefore be appropriate to identify the number of attendees and allocate an appropriate budget (historically the official delegation has comprised the Mayor, Leader or Portfolio Holder and a senior officer). It should be noted that the expenses incurred in 2012 were minimal as the event was hosted by Newcastle upon Tyne City Council whereby the Mayor and Mayoress represented the council's interests unaccompanied by any other members or officers.

9.3. At present there is budgetary provision of £3,000 in the council's base revenue budget. There would be a modest in-kind cost of providing ongoing officer support which would be achieved by re-prioritising the work programme of the Regeneration team.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 There are no major risk implications other than potential reputational damage. The latter should be mitigated by having a clear business plan with outcomes that are aligned with the council's key priorities.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 There is no key decision arising in this case.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 Minutes 664 (2002), 1117 (2003) and 818 (2007) refer

13. **List of Appendices**

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 Draft development Plan including Joint Declaration from the 2012 summit (available on request).

ESTABLISHMENT OF CABINET PANEL

Submitted by: Executive Director (Resources and Support Services)

Portfolio: Finance and Budget Management

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To establish a cross-party Cabinet Panel to make recommendations to Cabinet in respect of expenditure from the Revenue Investment Fund and the Budget Support Fund in respect of funding “Invest to Save” schemes.

Recommendations

- (a) That a Revenue Investment and Budget Support Cabinet Panel be established with a membership of seven appointed on the basis of political proportionality (Labour 4; Conservative 2; Liberal Democrat 1).**
- (b) That the portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management be appointed to chair the panel.**
- (c) That the group leaders be requested to make nominations for membership of the panel from their respective groups in accordance with (a) above.**
- (d) That the Panel make recommendations to Cabinet in respect of proposed expenditure.**

Reasons

There is a need to establish a mechanism for considering proposals for funding from the Revenue Investment Fund and Budget Support Fund to support key policy priorities and “invest to save” projects.

1. Background

- 1.1 In setting its budget for 2013/14, the Council has approved the establishment of a Revenue Investment Fund as a resource to fund activities which support the Council's key policy priorities. Further, it has approved the use of funds drawn from the Council's Budget Support Fund to deliver “invest to save” projects which will incur short term revenue expenditure in order to deliver longer term financial efficiency savings. It is intended that the fund would be replenished as the first call on cashed savings and sustained to fund an ongoing programme of “invest to save” efficiencies.

2. Issues

- 2.1 There is a need to establish a responsive, efficient and accountable mechanism for considering proposals for funding from the Revenue Investment Fund and Budget Support Fund. The favoured approach is an inclusive one with the establishment of a cross-party Cabinet panel as detailed in the proposals section below.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 To establish a Cabinet Panel to make recommendations in respect of the Revenue Investment Fund and the Budget Support Fund. The Panel will consist of seven members with places being allocated in accordance with the political proportionality of the Council. The Group Leaders will be asked to make nominations for Members to serve on the Panel.

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

- 4.1 The funding of key policy priorities and invest to save projects will contribute to all the council's priorities as set out in the Council Plan;
- A clean, safe and sustainable Borough.
 - A Borough of opportunity.
 - A healthy and active community.
 - Becoming a co-operative council which delivers high quality, community-driven services.

5. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 5.1 The Local Government Act 2000 and the Constitution empowers the Executive to make these arrangements.

6. **Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no differential impacts in this report.

7. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 Full council on 27 February 2013 established a Revenue Investment Fund of £100k as part of the overall budget proposals. Depending upon the Council's future budget position, further contributions to the fund may be made in the following years.
- 7.2 Council also approved the use of the Budget Support Fund to initially finance "Invest to save" projects. It was agreed that viable proposals could be financed from the Budget Support Fund with the fund being "repaid" out of the revenue budget as resulting savings arise. Once the fund has been repaid the full amount it originally financed in respect of a particular proposal, the savings will be retained within the revenue budget, thereby providing an ongoing benefit.
- 7.3 Officer support to the Panel will be provided by the Finance team and the Business Improvement and Partnerships Section.

8. **Major Risks**

- 8.1 A full risk assessment in respect of the council's budget for 2013/14 was included as part of the budget report to full council on 27 February 2013.

9. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Council 27 February 2013 – Revenue and Capital Budgets and Council Tax 2013/14.

COUNCIL PLAN 2013/14 TO 2015/16

Submitted by: Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To consider the proposed new Council Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16

Recommendations

- **That Members note this report and the draft copy of the Council Plan for 2013/14-2015/16 (Appended)**
- **That Members approve the adoption of the Council Plan for 2013/14 to 2015/16**

Reasons

The Council Plan underpins the whole planning structure of the Authority and should be the document which clearly informs the organisation and acts as the major driver behind any budget proposals, longer-term strategic plans and also the service planning process. By monitoring of the plan the council is able to evidence its impact over time against the planned outcomes and identify areas of improvement.

1. Background and issues

- 1.1 A new style Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16 was proposed which replaces the Corporate Plan document due to be refreshed at this time. The council took the opportunity to develop the plan to reflect some of the changes in our political and economic environment and the work undertaken in the Performance Management Framework Review. The plan has two sections and is attached in its entirety at appendix *. The second section details the measures and activities in order to monitor progress of the plan.
- 1.2 The plan sets out the new vision for the Council: To create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe.
- 1.3 The priorities proposed set out in the plan are proposed as:
 - A clean, safe and sustainable borough,
 - A borough of opportunity,
 - A healthy and active community and
 - Becoming a co-operative council delivering high quality, community-driven services
- 1.4 The adopted approach for the new plan was to be outcome-focused but ensuring strong links to the four priorities
- 1.5 As well as forming the basis for corporate, strategic and service planning, the proposed Council Plan also plays a significant role in the development of the Council's budget over the period covered by the Plan, as it sets out the priority areas and the desired outcomes for the organisation against which budget decisions can be made as part of the process of putting the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) together.

2 Development of the Council Plan and the additional Monitoring Section

- 2.1 Officers have developed the new Council Plan, its content and layout, taking in to consideration the findings and information from the work undertaken earlier this year in the Performance Management Framework Review. To ensure the document reflects the overall ambition of the council over the next three years, the following was necessary:
- a review of the plan structure;
 - involve stakeholders in the process
 - review the vision of the council;
 - review the four key priorities to be relevant and meaningful;
 - review and challenge the outcomes ensuring they are linked to the priorities;
 - ensure the strategies of the council are linked to the plan;
 - acknowledge any drivers for change which impact on the content and reflect the developments;
 - workshops and one-to-one meetings with officers held to determine monitoring activities and measures.
- 2.2 The Plan renews the existing vision for the Council, with the new vision expressed as “to create a Borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe”.
- 2.2 The Plan articulates a change from the previous priority of “transforming our council to achieve excellence” by a new priority “becoming a co-operative council delivering high quality, community driven services”.
- 2.3 The Plan also details a new set of seventeen outcomes and the accompanying measures and activities to measure and monitor the impact upon these desired outcomes.

3 Consultation and other influences

- 3.1 The vision, priorities and outcomes have been considered through various meetings and workshops undertaken in the Performance Management Framework Review and further work to complete the second section, the monitoring of the outcomes, was undertaken in planned workshops in September.
- 3.2 Ongoing consultation administered and analysed by the Borough Council Communications Section in 2011/12 and 2012/13 has been used in the development of the plan. Also services undertake satisfaction surveys in-house on a regular basis to inform the management of service delivery.
- 3.3 Demographic and other “profile” data, and changes observed that suggest trends, are covered in the section of the plan entitled “drivers for change”. These drivers can be summarised as:
- Our area and its people;
 - The Welfare Reform Act;
 - The Localism Act;
 - Our local strategies;
 - Performance Management Review;
 - Making good use of public money.
 - The Way We Work;

4. **Options, Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 Effective strategic planning benefits from a single document outlining issues and assumptions and stating the general direction for the organisation in question - the attached draft Council Plan is designed to achieve this for the future development of Newcastle under Lyme B.C.
- 4.2 The Council Plan should be the document which clearly informs the council and should act as the major driver behind any budget proposals, longer-term strategic plans and also the service planning process.
- 4.3 Members are asked to consider the Plan and this covering report.
- 4.4 In considering the Plan/report, Members can: -
- **Option 1: Accept the new style Council Plan and its contents as provided**
(This is the recommended option, albeit with further modifications and additions to be made as required by Cabinet)
 - **Option 2: Request significant further changes to the Plan**
(This is also recommended, although Members should be aware that this will delay the process of publishing the Plan and will also have an effect potentially on other related processes such as service planning for 2013/14 onwards)

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

- 5.1 This document identifies the corporate priorities of the Authority aligned to those of the Sustainable Community Strategy, linked to expected outcomes.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

Officers have drafted this plan in line with current codes and legislation.

7. **Equality impact**

There are no differential impacts in this report.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The plans in this report are to be considered against the overall Budget Strategy of the Council.

9. **Major risks**

- 9.1 The plans in this report are to be considered against the overall Risk Strategy of the Council. This is done as part of the Service and Financial Planning process.

10. **Key Decision information**

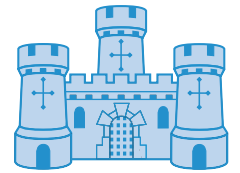
- 10.1 This report is in the Forward Plan.

11. **List of Appendices**

Draft Corporate Plan

12. **Background Papers**

Working papers held by officer in Council Plan 2013/14 files



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan

2013 -14 to 2015 -16



Message

from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Gareth Snell



**Councillor
Gareth Snell**

Leader of the Council

The Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan serves as the basis for everything we do as a council. The services we provide to our residents and the way we go about improving the borough are all determined by this plan and is empowered by the mandate the current administration has from the people of the borough.

With bold and ambitious plans to make the borough the best it can be, the plan sets out what we hope to achieve over the next 3 years and how we are going to turn a plan into reality.

Councils continue to have their funding cut by Government and legislative changes to the responsibilities of local councils means there will be some tough decisions ahead in the near future. This plan demonstrates our commitment to protecting vital public services and addressing the needs of local people while keeping Council Tax as low as possible during these difficult times.

Overall this plan is everyone's plan. The outcomes and priorities are derived from the mandate the Labour Party received at the ballot box and reflect the promises we made to everyone. However, this plan is a living document and we want to encourage local people to help shape our borough by improving opportunities to get involved and have a real say in the decisions that affect their lives.

To ensure the success of the council and delivery of our Council Plan, we want to make it easier for everyone to find out about their council, talk to their councillors, help develop their local services, and help us tackle the issues that are really important to you.

***. . . using
resources well
to provide good
public services***

***. . . targeting
support for
those who need
it most***

***. . . local people
involved and
having a say***

Welcome

from the Chief Executive

We want to make the borough a better place to live, work and invest.

Our Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan sets out how the council will seek to achieve this over the next three years.

In these challenging economic times it is important that we use resources prudently and effectively. In producing this plan we have reviewed the way we do things and considered what is important for the borough.

Our plan focuses on doing those things which will deliver our priorities and ensure that we continue to deliver high quality services for our customers.



John Sellgren
Chief Executive

This Council Plan takes account of several drivers for change:-

- **Our area and its people**
- **The Welfare Reform Act**
- **Localism Act**
- **Our Local strategies**
- **Performance Management review**
- **The Way We Work**
- **Making good use of public money**



Our vision

.... is to create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe



We want Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a borough in which people are proud to live, work, visit and do business. Moreover, we want the borough council to be an open, honest and transparent organisation which is accountable to local people and which, through co-operation with partners, will work together to improve where we all live. By trying to deliver better services, focused on the needs of local people, we aim to create a council which is responsive and in touch with the people it serves.

A borough of opportunity

We will work with our partners to maximise investment and encourage enterprise and employment - generating activities that will create opportunities for improving the wealth, prosperity and housing choices of our residents.

A healthy and active community

We will work with partners to make sure residents and visitors are able to access a range of facilities and support activities that will enable them to improve their health and quality of life.

“ safer place to live, work and visit with long-term crime rates falling over the last few years ”

Becoming a co-operative council which delivers high quality, community-driven, services.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is working towards being a co-operative council which means we are working together with our residents, partners and local organisations to collectively deliver the best we can using the resources we have.

Priorities

A clean, safe and sustainable borough

We will improve the environment so that everyone can enjoy our safe, sustainable and healthy borough.



**“ Newcastle
is a
co-operative
council ”**

**What is a
co-operative council?**

We are working to:-

- Bring more public services together so that people get what they need at the right place and the right time.
- Encourage more involvement from local people and our staff in the planning and delivery of services.
- Support our communities better and encourage people to do more to help their own communities.

Whilst we still face budget cuts, the council is making sure local people are more involved in reducing our costs and challenging what we spend.

We are involving the community and business leaders in developing our future plans, drawing on the skills and expertise that exists in the borough.

**Working with our
communities**

The Newcastle Partnership works with 11 Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) across the borough in offering 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.



**. . . projects
taking place
in partnership
with the
community**

**. . . LAPs
or 'Friends of'
groups**

**. . . collaborative
working with
our strategic
partners**

**. . . partnerships
and commissioning
arrangements
with the
third sector**



Drivers for change

We have many things to consider when delivering a service to residents.

Our area and its people

Recently released figures from the 2011 Census tell us that Newcastle's population has grown by 1.5 per cent since 2001 and there are now an estimated 123,900 residents in the borough.

Our population is ageing, with about 14 per cent more residents aged over 60 than in 2001. The biggest increase has been amongst people aged over 85 and this is expected to grow further in the coming years. This increasing old-age dependency ratio will have wide ranging implications on the economy of the borough.

Newcastle-under-Lyme continues to become more diverse, estimates suggesting that around five per cent of residents are from BME communities, compared with around two per cent at the time of the 2001 Census.

Our borough is becoming a safer place to live, work and visit, with long-term crime rates falling over the last few years. Reports of anti-social behaviour have also been falling steadily over the past four years.

Residents are happy with Newcastle-under-Lyme as a place to live but in some areas the fear of crime remains a concern despite falling crime rates.

The economic downturn has meant that there has been a seven per cent reduction in the number of jobs in the borough between 2006-2010, meaning that there are now around 3,200 fewer jobs.

Despite this, the rate of unemployment is not particularly high when compared to the national picture. However, long-term worklessness and benefit dependency due to ill-health remains a problem.

Business start up rates in Newcastle are relatively low, but survival rates for those that do get off the ground are relatively good.

“ Residents are happy with Newcastle as a place to live ”

The Welfare Reform Act

The Act provides for the introduction of a Universal Credit to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from April 2013.

This is the Government's proposals for reforming welfare to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and tackle administrative complexity. Besides introducing Universal Credit and related measures, the Bill makes other significant changes to the benefits system.





Localism Act

The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament in December 2010 and shifts power from central government into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

Localism isn't simply about giving power back to local government but to individuals, neighbourhoods, professionals and communities as well as local councils and other local institutions - close to the people who are affected by the decisions.

The Localism Bill includes five key measures that underpin the Government's approach to decentralisation:-

- **Community Rights**

New community rights will ensure that community organisations have the Right to Challenge by expressing an interest in the running of a local authority service. Communities can also bid to take over land and buildings that are important to them through the Right to Bid.

- **Neighbourhood Planning**

New rights will allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans.

- **Housing**

This will mean that more decisions are taken locally, allowing councils to decide how best to help their homeless people, improve their housing allocations and give direction to providers on the type of tenancies suitable to better meet local housing needs.

- **General power of competence**

Councils will be able to take action and get on with things they think will benefit their local area. The new power will give councils the freedom to work together to improve services, drive down costs and enhance their local area.

- **Empowering cities and other local areas**

The Act enables the transfer of public functions to local authorities in order to improve local accountability or promote economic growth.





Local Strategies

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has three main strategies linked to its priorities:-

- Economic Development Strategy
- Stronger and Safer Communities Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

These strategies show how the council is planning to work with partners and other organisations to improve and develop local communities to deliver our vision for the borough.



The Way We Work (TWWW)

This project was established in January 2011 and stemmed from the council's Transformation Programme. Our aim was to focus resources and energy on four key projects in order to achieve efficiencies:-

- Review the way the council uses its accommodation/offices.
- Home working.
- Flexible working.
- Electronic document and records management system.

Examples of areas of work within these projects included:-

- ❑ Expand home working opportunities for staff to deliver more efficiencies.
- ❑ Improving mobile working by giving officers in the field access to the right technology.
- ❑ Improving our Civic Hub to make public services more accessible and joined up.
- ❑ Reducing paper by scanning documents and using/storing them electronically.
- ❑ Becoming more energy efficient.

Work undertaken beneath the TWWW heading is now being taken forward in relation to a new programme of work focused on how we work with our customers and respond to the government's Welfare Reform agenda.

Making good use of public money

Having to do more with less means we will be looking more creatively at how we provide, and deliver, our services over the next four years - on our own and together with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. We will undertake a strategic review of our assets - working hard to keep Council Tax low, maximising our resources and seeking efficiencies in everything we do.

Performance Management Review

The council is always looking to improve the way it delivers services and will make the best use of information to target services to groups and individuals in our communities in the most efficient and effective way. To do this effectively we need to ensure that we are clear about what specific outcomes we want to achieve.

We have recently reviewed our approach to performance management to ensure that we focus much more on the outcomes that we want to achieve, and how we measure our progress.

Priorities, Outcomes and Activities

In this section we have set out, under each of our priorities, the outcomes that we are committed to delivering.

For each of the outcomes you will find:-

- An explanation of why improved outcomes are needed.
- Activities we will be undertaking over the next three years to achieve improvements.
- Performance indicators we will use to measure our success.
- A list of targets, linked to each indicator, showing how we propose to deliver the improvements over the next three years.

By 2016 the borough will look and feel like this:-



A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcomes:-

- Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health.
- Newcastle will be safer with vulnerable victims of crime and disorder receiving high quality support.
- The negative impact that the council, residents and local businesses have on the environment will have reduced.
- Our streets and open spaces will be clean, clear and tidy.
- Town centres across the borough will be sustainable and safe.



A borough of opportunity

Outcomes:-

- Levels of worklessness will have reduced.
- Local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth.
- Housing will be available and accessible to meet a range of diverse needs.
- Key parts of the borough will have been regenerated and there will have been overall economic growth.



A healthy and active community

Outcomes:-

- People who live work, visit or study in the borough will have access to high quality facilities.
- Levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased.
- There will be a range of healthy lifestyle choices, resulting in an increase in participation in sport and physical activity.



A co-operative council delivering high quality, community-driven, services.

Outcomes:-

- The council will have increased the capacity and skills of its workforce.

- Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates.
- The council will have delivered further efficiencies.
- Local communities are engaged and able to shape and deliver services which impact on their lives.
- Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough and utilising public and community resources.



Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.1 Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health

Why are the improvements needed?

The council has a duty to protect the public's health and improve the general quality of life where possible.

We know that . . .

- people are injured on the roads
- people suffer food poisoning
- past historic industries may have caused contaminated land

You told us that . . .

- you want safer places to eat
- you are concerned about the danger of unrepaired housing
- you want roads that are safe for the everyone to use

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Respond to outbreaks of food poisoning to try to prevent spread and reoccurrence
- Contaminated land strategy reviewed and published in 2013
- Continue to inspect food businesses in our planned programme to ensure they are safe to eat
- A new Public Health Strategy to be produced

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of people killed or seriously injured on the borough's roads (1.1.1)
- Percentage of food premises that have a zero or one national food hygiene rating. (1.1.2)
- The amount of contaminated land that has been remediated and is now in use (1.1.3)
- Percentage of Category 1 housing disrepair hazards concerns brought to the attention of the Council that are investigated and addressed (1.1.4)
- The number of food establishments which are broadly compliant with good hygiene law (1.1.5)

Outcome 1.2 Newcastle will be safer with vulnerable victims of crime and disorder receiving high quality support

Why are the improvements needed?

To offer an optimum service to reassure, support and protect vulnerable people in the borough.

We know that . . .

- too many people suffering from incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour are vulnerable because they are subject to this repeated behaviour
- some victims are more vulnerable than others and need more support
- early intervention is key in tackling and positively resolving incidences

You told us that . . .

- you want to live in a community where you feel safe
- you want to know that services are available to support and help when needed

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Review Anti-Social Behaviour policy 2013
- Work with partner organisations and key groups, together with communities to deal with crime and raise awareness of support services for the public
- Domestic Violence - Early Intervention Worker recruited to support services
- Continuation of funding for Anti-Social Behaviour Victims Worker
- Develop the existing multi-agency conference system to address the problems faced by vulnerable people

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of satisfaction with the support provided to vulnerable citizens (1.2.1)
- Number of interventions to support vulnerable citizens and victims of crime (1.2.2)
- Reduction in incidents of violence with injury, anti-social behaviour, serious acquisitive crime and domestic violence (1.2.3-6)

Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.3

The negative impact that the Council, residents and local businesses have on the environment will have reduced

Why are the improvements needed?

We know that . . .

- too many carbon emissions is harmful to the environment and impacts on the quality of life for residents and visitors alike
- to reduce excess waste the council needs to work with residents and businesses to minimise residual waste year on year

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about the future of the environment
- you want to maintain the level of the council's national award winning recycling service
- you would want recycling to be reprocessed in the UK
- you would also like to see other types of recycling introduced such as small appliances

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Continue to monitor air quality in the borough, consult with residents on findings and devise plans for monitoring and control of air quality
- Continue to investigate and take action in respect of nuisance identified in the borough
- Investigate and implement the kerbside collection of small electrical appliances and batteries
- Establish a trial recycling service for businesses and community buildings

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The amount of residual waste per household (1.3.1)
- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (1.3.2)
- The amount of carbon emissions by the Council (1.3.3)
- The number of non-residential collections covered by the trade waste recycling scheme - includes Council properties and schools (1.3.4)
- The level of air quality (1.3.5)
- Number of general nuisance complaints (1.3.6)

Outcome 1.4

Our streets and open spaces will be clean, clear and tidy

Why are the improvements needed?

Research has demonstrated that there are clear cross-cutting links between local environmental quality and other policy agendas;

- Clean, safe, green infrastructure has a vital role in ensuring mental and physical health.
- Good design and high standards of maintenance and cleansing are vital in reducing anti-social behaviour and other environmental crime

We know that . . .

- too much litter and detritus in the area does not attract people to live, work and invest in the area

You told us that . . .

- you are generally satisfied with the cleanliness of our streets and parks and open spaces but there are "hot spots" which need to be improved

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- LEQ surveys (3 per year) and resultant action plan to tackle hot spots
- Environmental Education and Enforcement Action Plan
- Community engagement and participation in caring for local green spaces and neighbourhoods
- Service challenge and review to ensure resources are deployed effectively and efficiently to tackle cleanliness issues

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Levels of street and environment cleanliness (LEQ survey) free / predominantly free of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting) (1.4.1)
- Number of community volunteer groups/hours spent caring for their local green spaces and neighbourhoods (1.4.2)
- Quality standards achieved eg Britain in Bloom, Green Flag Awards (1.4.3)
- Satisfaction with cleanliness of streets and green spaces (1.4.4)

Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.5

Town centres across the borough will be sustainable and safe

Why are the improvements needed?

The town centres within the borough play a vital role in providing employment, local services and entertainment for residents and visitors. The challenge is to ensure each centre remains sustainable and safe despite any economic downturn. For economic growth there is a need to work with other agencies and partnerships to keep the town centres as safe as possible and that crime is kept at a low level.

We know that . . .

- you value the town centres and want the council to ensure they remain vibrant and attractive - visually and economically
- it is important to develop town centres for the future

You told us that . . .

- regeneration for the borough's town centres is important to you
- you are concerned about levels of crime
- you are also concerned about visiting the town centre at night

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Town centre partnership established in Kidsgrove and Newcastle and town plans developed
- Scoping exercise to be undertaken of footfall within the town centre
- To take forward the retail-led redevelopment of the former Sainsbury/Ryecroft site.
- Completion of public realm improvements in the town centre and introduction of new market stalls
- Complete the gating off of problematic alleyways under the Green Routes scheme
- Attain a purple flag for the safety of night time economy

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Town centre vacancy rate (1.5.1)
- Percentage of investment portfolio (NBC owned) vacant (1.5.2)
- Levels of crimes in our town centres (1.5.3)
- Level of safety of town centres as indicated by residents (1.5.4)
- The level of town centre attractiveness as indicated by residents (1.5.5)



Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.1 Levels of worklessness will have reduced

Why are the improvements needed?

The level of unemployment in the borough is 2.6% at November 2012 which is lower than the regional and national rates. Amongst people aged 18 to 24 years the level increases to 4% (compared to 8.7% in the West Midlands and 7% in Great Britain).

We know that . . .

- it is key to raise skill levels to help drive enterprise, to create more and better jobs
- training opportunities for people to develop and gain confidence is essential

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about levels of worklessness in the borough

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Plans to encourage enterprise within the borough to be developed
- Town Centre Partnership action plan
- Work with the "Make it" initiative
- Support given to unemployed by the Newcastle Business Enterprise Coach

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The level of employment in the borough (2.1.1)
- The number of jobs created by Council-backed initiatives in the borough (2.1.2)
- The percentage of people of working age claiming benefits (2.1.3)
- The level of NEETs (2.1.4)

Outcome 2.2 Local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth

Why are the improvements needed?

The council understands the importance of working with partners to ensure there are opportunities available to access to support development.

We know that . . .

- it is important to provide a wide range of activities to support our communities
- volunteering activities need to be encouraged and supported

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned whether opportunities will be limited in the future

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Work with Newcastle Employment and Skills Group (NESG) to identify areas for improvement and further opportunities

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The number (or percentage) of people obtaining NVQ levels (2.2.1)
- The number of people gaining additional educational qualifications as a result of Council-backed initiatives (2.2.2)
- The number of volunteers used by the council/taken on by the council who go on to gain employment (2.2.3)
- Narrative on the impact of the Council's role as employer of volunteers (2.2.4)
- Number of organisations working with the council to take on volunteers (2.2.5)
- Number of hours worked by volunteers in council co-ordinated activities (2.2.6)

Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.3

Housing will be available and accessible to meet a range of diverse needs

Why are the improvements needed?

Housing is most frequently cited in terms of its appropriateness and affordability.

Appropriate housing meets the needs of residents in terms of size, physical attributes and location. Affordable housing includes affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. With many local residents unable to access a home that meets their needs, it is important that the council works with local housing providers to deliver needed accommodation.

We know that . . .

- there is a lack of suitable available housing in the borough
- there are nearly 3,000 households on the housing register wanting affordable housing

You told us that . . .

- you prefer affordable longer term tenancies with greater security
- you are concerned about homelessness
- you are concerned about increasing fuel bills and want to be able to keep your home warm

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Partnership working with Registered Providers and the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver new affordable housing in line with the Local Investment Plan
- Delivery of new homes at Charter Road
- Encouragement and support to private home owners to return their empty properties back into use
- Development of Eco brokerage service

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The number of affordable homes provided as a result of partnership working with Registered Providers and the Homes & Communities Agency (2.3.1)
- The net number of additional homes provided (2.3.2)
- Number of empty properties brought back into use (2.3.3)
- Percentage of referrals for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) approved within six months (2.3.4)
- Percentage of minor adaptations delivered within four months (2.3.5)
- Number of homelessness cases prevented (2.3.6)



Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.4

Key parts of the borough will have been regenerated and there will have been overall economic growth

Why are the improvements needed?

To enable further growth of the borough, the council needs to attract inward investment from the private sector. To facilitate this the Council will work with the private sector and partners to bring forward suitable and viable development opportunities.

We know that . . .

- to provide more employment opportunities, more suitable development sites to attract investment are needed

You told us that . . .

- regeneration in the borough is important to you

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Work with Make It inward investment service for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to promote the area for inward investment
- Bring forward attractive development sites
- Marketing of specific development opportunities
- Work with Business Enterprise Support (BES) to help in the delivery of its enterprise support scheme
- Delivery of the Annual Newcastle Business Boost competition
- Consultation to be undertaken by the council with communities on a draft Site Allocation Policies Local Plan
- Develop coordinated enterprise strategy
- Support development of the emergent knowledge intensive sectors
- Support development of professional and business services sectors
- Make the most of the Borough's successful logistics sector
- Promote further development of Keele Science and Business Park

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of economic health across the borough (2.4.1)
- Percentage of investment portfolio which is vacant (2.4.2)
- Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) showing employment growth (2.4.3)
- Buildings within the built heritage asset register improved and no longer at risk (2.4.4)
- Number of proposed jobs from successful planning applications (2.4.5)
- Rate of new VAT business registration (2.4.6)
- Average stall occupancy rate for markets (2.4.7)



Priority 3: A healthy and active community

Outcome 3.1

People who live work, visit or study in the borough will have access to high quality facilities

Why are the improvements needed?

The Council is committed to ensuring there are high quality facilities available to residents and visitors to the borough. Significant capital development at J2 has resulted in increased participation and substantial operational revenue savings.

We know that . . .

- it is important to recognise the vital role that being active plays in the lives of everyone
- access to well equipped and safe facilities is important

You told us that . . .

- you want quality and affordable leisure services
- you want open spaces and parks to be safe places to visit

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Full feasibility study developed for the refurbishment/ replacement of Kidsgrove Sports centre
- Complete the review of community centres
- Develop outline business case for future management/ governance of leisure and cultural services

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of parks which have green flag status (3.1.1)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-run parks and open spaces (3.1.2)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-run a) leisure and b) cultural services (3.1.3)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-owned car parking facilities (3.1.4)
- Levels of satisfaction with bereavement services (3.1.5)
- Level of service quality of the two main Council information centres – Guildhall and Kidsgrove (3.1.6)
- Percentage of town centres public toilets that meet the Council's minimum standard for quality and cleanliness (3.1.7)

Outcome 3.2

Levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased

Why are the improvements needed?

Involvement in artistic and cultural activities is beneficial physically, mentally and emotionally for young and older people.

We know that . . .

- the cultural facilities contribute significantly to the economy of the borough
- it is important for the council to encourage cultural activity in the borough to ensure people can enhance their life experiences

You told us that . . .

- the availability of local events and facilities to visit are important in your lives

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Programme of cultural events and exhibitions
- Development programme for volunteers
- Multi-agency Arts Strategy to be developed
- Feasibility study into the development of the museum to meet future aspirations

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Visitor satisfaction (3.2.1)
- Number of people visiting museums (3.2.2)
- Number of people attending local theatres (3.2.3)
- Economic impact of visitors to museums (3.2.4)
- Impact of volunteer development programme (3.2.5)
- Impact of community-run cultural events and people attending (3.2.6)

Priority 3: A healthy and active community

Outcome 3.3

There will be a range of healthy lifestyle choices, resulting in an increase in participation in sport and physical activity

Why are the improvements needed?

The council wants to incentivise people to adopt healthier lifestyles.

We know that . . .

- too many people do not exercise on a regular basis
- well equipped, accessible and affordable facilities are necessary

You told us that . . .

- leisure facilities and play areas are very important to you

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Sportivate programme to encourage younger people to participate in physical activities
- Sportmakers programme to increase adult participation
- Healthy walk programme
- Delivery of programme of healthy initiatives with partners including:
 - GP referral scheme
 - Cardiac rehabilitation scheme
 - Joint/muscle mobility exercise
- Allotment policy review
- Delivery of improvement projects to outdoor sport facilities

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The percentage of primary school children who are categorised as obese (3.3.1)
- The number of referrals from GPs to organised sporting activity (3.3.2)
- Percentage of people referred for exercise by GPs whose health improves (3.3.3)
- The number of teenage pregnancies (3.3.4)
- The number of premature deaths (3.3.5)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.1

The Council will have increased the capacity and skills of its workforce

Why are the improvements needed?

In order to maintain high levels of service and deliver efficiencies, the capacity and skills of our existing workforce need to continue to be developed.

We know that . . .

- our customers expect a high standard of service when they contact the council
- our customers want easy access to multiple agency services at convenient locations. Joint working and engagement with partners in day to day service delivery provides a valuable learning environment that improves the skills of the joint workforce

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned that services may suffer as a result of the economy

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Delivery of the Workforce Development Plan
- Develop a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme with partners
- Development of e-learning facilities
- Increasing the ways in which customers can contact us, by providing greater choice - developing self service, web services, SMS, email and other means of contact - linked to customer need
- Deliver further customer service training to continue to meet Customer Service Excellence standards.
- Programme of skills development for ICT to ensure we maximise the benefits of existing and new technology

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of apprenticeships /shared apprenticeship placements offered (4.1.1)
- Percentage of workforce with completed learning and development plans (4.1.2)
- Percentage of staff who have completed accredited training courses (4.1.3)
- Number of e-learning modules completed (4.1.4)
- Percentage of staff who feel they have the necessary skills/competencies to do their job effectively (4.1.5)

Outcome 4.2

Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates

Why are the improvements needed?

Communities need representation and support in order to empower their communities.

We know that . . .

- Good communication is necessary to understand the needs of communities of the borough and also to ensure that the council delivers clear, transparent messages of what they have achieved or want to improve upon

You told us that . . .

- you want to know what is planned which will impact upon your community

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Delivery of Scrutiny work plan
- Training programme for members

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Percentage of elected members who have a personal development plan (4.2.1)
- Impact of actions from the work plan (4.2.2)
- Percentage attendance at planned meetings by members (4.2.3)
- Number of issues raised by members (4.2.4)
- Percentage of candidates and agents satisfied/very satisfied with electoral service (4.2.5)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.3

The Council will have delivered further efficiencies

Why are the improvements needed?

We want to ensure services are delivered efficiently and of high quality to its customers. The council strives to deliver effective services within the restraints of its budget.

We know that . . .

- the economic downturn may impact upon the council and add further pressure to its budget with a greater demand for its services.

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about the council being more efficient and effective

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy reviewed annually and reported
- Monthly budget monitoring programme
- Delivery of the Procurement (Strategic) work plan

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Percentage of planned procurement efficiencies achieved (4.3.1)
- Percentage projected variance against full year council budget (4.3.2)
- Average number of days per employee lost to sickness (4.3.3)
- Percentage of residents who feel that the Council is providing VFM (4.3.4)
- Achieving a balanced budget (4.3.5)
- Percentage return on council investments (4.3.6)
- Ratio of planned versus responsive maintenance expenditure on all Council owned buildings (4.3.7)
- Net income collected from Council assets (4.3.8)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.4

Local communities are engaged and able to shape and deliver services which impact on their lives

Why are the improvements needed?

To impact on solving problems of everyday life in local communities, the people need to be able to see how their views can shape the solutions that will make a lasting difference in the way services are delivered. In doing this the Council will be an open, honest and transparent organisation which undertakes regular consultation with its residents and listens to their views.

We know that . . .

- different communities have problems to face unique to their neighbourhood
- support is necessary to encourage engagement
- communication within a community and involvement of stakeholders is key to solving solutions

You told us that . . .

- you do not always feel you have the confidence or skills necessary to be involved or influence decision making in your community

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Support to groups from funded infrastructure project
- Develop communities around the localism agenda
- Focus on dealing with troubled families and enhancing community involvement and self-reliance
- Further Community Pride events to deal with community issues

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of satisfaction with the role of the Council in supporting communities to solve local problems, as indicated by local people (4.4.1)
- Level of satisfaction with the Council's support to communities, as indicated by partner organisations (4.4.2)
- The impact of the Council's support in empowering communities to solve specific local problems (4.4.3)
- The overall level of satisfaction with the Council as a provider of services (4.4.4)
- Percentage of people who feel that they can influence Council decisions
- Level of satisfaction with the support provided to LAPs and other community groups to improve their organisational strength (4.4.5)
- Increase the number of residents, community and voluntary groups engaged with LAPs (4.4.6)
- Percentage of requests resolved at first point of contact (4.4.7)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.5

Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough, and utilising public and community resources

Why are the improvements needed?

In order to deliver appropriate and optimum services to the people of the borough it is necessary for the council to continue to work with existing partners and develop strong new partnerships across all sectors. Also, the Borough Council recognises that the priorities set by the council cannot be delivered by the council alone.

We know that . . .

- strong partnerships are necessary to progress our outcomes effectively

You told us that . . .

- you would like to see more partnership working involving the council

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Investigate opportunities to develop a Social Enterprise with key partner agencies
- Build on relationships with the voluntary and community sector in delivering key services to local people
- Deliver the Lets Work Together (LWT) project in partnership with others
- Develop and implement a Co-operative Strategy for the council with other key stakeholders
- Develop health promotion work in areas of greatest need
- Map vulnerability across the Borough and its neighbourhoods to target services more effectively
- Welfare reform - to be delivered with partners

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Community/citizen satisfaction levels increased (4.5.1)
- Communities feel they are able to influence decisions (4.5.2)
- Engagement with LAPs increased (4.5.3)
- Quality of service delivery (4.5.4)
- Knowledge amongst public about co-operative approaches (4.5.5)
- Decrease in anti-social behaviour levels and domestic violence - linked to LWT project (4.5.6)
- People feeling safe in their homes and fear of crime lessened (4.5.7)