

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.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 19th December, 2012

Present:- Councillor Ian Matthews – in the Chair
Councillors Mrs Astle, Miss Baker, Cairns, Fear, Holland, Lawton,
Olszewski and Wilkes

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Studd, Cllr Mrs Peers and Cllr M Taylor.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2012 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPMENT**

A report was submitted to provide an update and clarify the status of the Newcastle Town Centre Partnership (TCP) including the appointment of the Town Centres Manager (TCM).

Officers confirmed that the paperwork had now been submitted regarding the TCP and that the Partnership would have a legal identity once this was returned at which stage the Town Centre Manager would be officially appointed.

Members discussed the theme groups referred to on page 6 of the agenda. It was hoped that these groups would enable the burden on the partnership to be better shared and to allow more partnership working.

It was agreed that regular updates be brought back to the Committee along with a calendar of movements and a timetable.

Resolved: (a) That regular updates be provided to the Committee
(b) That a timetable and calendar of movements be provided to the Committee.

5. **TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVES FOR VACANT SHOPS - THE POP-UP EMPORIUM INITIATIVE**

A briefing note was submitted to provide an update on the work that the Assets section had done in respect of pop up shops subsequent to the meeting of this Committee in September. Members agreed that it was good to see vacant shops and premises being used.

The Pop Up initiative was currently supported by approximately 30 independent businesses working together to enable them to afford the commercial rents. It was hoped that the use of pop up shops would help to bring a different sort of shopper to the town centre. The Town Centre Partnership would also be looking at ways to bring more independent traders into the town through initiatives such as website campaigns, vouchers and the use of smart phones. In order to measure the success of these initiatives the Town Centre Partnership would be developing a set of key performance Indicators.

Members queried the status of empty shops that were not owned by the Council. Officers confirmed that these were also being looked at by other organisations such as Newcastle College which was currently working with a vacant premise on the Iron Market. Local Landlords would also be represented on the TCP.

Resolved: That the update and briefing note be received.

6. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/2014

A report was submitted which outlined the key options for housing investment in the forthcoming year and sought Scrutiny Committee views on the proposed housing programme.

The Council considered the Housing Capital Programme every year to ensure that its housing investment priorities were up to date. With limited funding available from national funding streams it was appropriate for the Council to continue using the New Homes Bonus for housing purposes.

Members drew Officers attention to section 9.1 of the report and requested clarification as to what 'many' meant in relation to the number of vulnerable people living in unsatisfactory and potentially unsafe homes. Officers agreed that a figure would be provided regarding this.

Concern was raised regarding the fact that the Accredited Landlord Scheme funding was proposed to be cut from £5000 in 2012/13 to £0 in 2013/14 as it was thought that there were considerable problem regarding Landlords especially in the Kidsgrove area.

Some Members considered that more money needed to be set aside for social housing. Officers stated that social housing was included under affordable housing for which the allocated funding had been increased from £0 to £70,000 and that recommendations could be made at this stage to reallocate funding if the Committee wanted to submit suggestions to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting in January.

Resolved: That the report be received.

7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

A supplementary note was submitted to update the Committee on the implications of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Guidance 2012, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on Friday 14 December 2012, on the Community Infrastructure Levy viability work undertaken to date.

The new guidance would lead to changes in the draft CIL rents in the original report, it was still unclear as to other implications that the changes could have and no revised timetable had yet been devised.

Officers provided the Committee with a brief overview of the CIL and confirmed that any charging schedule would need to be in place before April 2014. Members agreed that an updated report be provided to the Committee following consultation on the draft charging scheme in April 2013.

Resolved: That the update be received and that a report be submitted to this Committee in April 2013 following consultation on the draft charging scheme.

8. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved: That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, because it was likely that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

9. Asset Management Strategy 2012-2015

A report was submitted requesting the Committee's views on the Council's Asset Management Strategy before its submission to Cabinet in January.

Concern was raised by some Members as to why the report had been restricted from public access. Officers confirmed that the report would be released into the public domain when it was considered by Cabinet in January.

The Council's Capital Strategy and Asset Management Strategy were key documents evidencing the Council's approach to its Use of Resources. This Strategy provided a clear framework for understanding the value and condition of property owned by the Council so that, in turn, investment decisions could be taken to optimise the use of the said land/property to meet the needs of the Borough's residents, businesses and visitors. This Strategy along with the Council's Capital Strategy sought to demonstrate alignment with, and delivery of, the Council's ambitions as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Officers highlighted the crucial differences in the Council as Land Lord and the Council as Planning Authority and requested that the Committee consider the Economic elements of the report in its capacity of landlord and its obligation to prepare a Local Plan and a 5 year housing supply. It was also highlighted that should the Council fail in this obligation that any decisions made could be overturned by the Planning Inspector.

The Committee requested a full breakdown of the 1.1 million generated from the commercial portfolio (including markets). Officers agreed that this would be provided.

Members also requested clarification that where areas of land were identified there would be full public consultation. This was confirmed by Officers.

Resolved: That the comments from this Committee be fed back to the Cabinet at its meeting in January.

10. WORK PLAN

Resolved: That the work plan be agreed as it stood.

11. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR IAN MATTHEWS
Chair

Briefing note to Economic Development & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire's Local Enterprise Partnership – Wave 2 City Deal

Introduction

Members have received information previously about the establishment of the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire's Local Enterprise Partnership; in short it is a private sector-led partnership that is responsible for driving economic growth for the area. The Council has a member seat at the LEP Board and a number of officers provide support to the secretariat and theme groups of the LEP which drive delivery of its business.

Wave 2 City Deal

From time to time the LEP will be undertaking work that is of particular interest to this Council (and others) and officers considered it important to appraise members of the emerging position regarding an "Expression of interest" submission for a "Wave 2 City Deal with Central Government. An executive summary of this submission is attached at appendix.

At this stage the LEP has received positive feed back about the broad content and has been invited to work with Civil Servants, over the next six months or so, to hone the submission to the point where the Government is prepared to formally offer a City Deal to the LEP.

Officers will be able to respond to any questions members may have about the practical and / or strategic implications for the Borough.

Recommendation:

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider the information and to make any comments to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Town Centres.

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Executive Summary - Powerhouse Central: Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's expression of interest in a Wave 2 City Deal

On Tuesday 15th January 2013, the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council submitted a joint bid to secure a wave two City Deal from Government. If successful, the bid will secure greater funding, freedoms and powers to drive economic growth and support creation of around 31,000 jobs across the city and county over the next 10 years.

The proposal sets out how the public and private sectors will work in tandem to make Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire the home, the **powerhouse**, for advanced materials businesses (metals, ceramics, polymers) in the UK and Europe. Developing a unique and internationally competitive position in advanced materials and manufacturing will help attract, retain, and develop our businesses and grow our economic base. It is a key part of a wider plan, already being delivered, to create jobs and economic growth across the whole of the city and county, and transform Stoke-on-Trent into a thriving Core City of the future

The City Deal bid centres on four key challenges to turn Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire into Europe's leading destination for advanced materials businesses:

Sites - Advanced materials companies need land for new premises, with room to grow.

Solution – Across the city and county, 22 sites will be developed for advanced materials and other employers. A local investment fund, managed and delivered by a private sector partner, will invest and develop the sites - and provide infrastructure such as roads to make them highly desirable.

Energy – Businesses spend a lot on energy (up to 30% of an advanced materials company's total costs) but escalating prices and concerns about energy security are stifling growth.

Solution – We will enable the provision of affordable, locally-produced energy to businesses. Energy can be produced from a number of local sources, including geothermal, biomass and waste-heat opportunities. Councils will provide land while commercial partners are set to invest the funding to develop the energy.

Skills – Not enough people possess the skills needed by the advanced materials sector. Employers report skills gaps of over 40% and are unable to fill engineering vacancies.

Solution – In a national first, we have created an Education Trust, which brings together industry, public sector, schools, further education and higher education providers and will ensure the right skills training is being delivered to help local people access local employment.

Research and Development (R&D) – Businesses need access to world-class research and, whilst the UK is an academic world-leader in advanced materials research, there is a gap in applying this to commercial manufacturing.

Solution – We will provide the facilities to support innovation by:

- Creating a pioneering research and innovation centre led by the private sector and supported by major universities, to turn research into commercial activity
- Continued investment in the IC5 Innovation Centre at Keele University Science Park. Under the deal, annual investment will help entrepreneurs and venture funders convert research and development into activity.

Governance – The City Deal will be delivered by a joint enterprise between the Local Enterprise Partnership, councils and the private sector. This vibrant, powerful body will be created to make strategic decisions to drive economic growth. The private sector will also share the financial risk with councils pooling resources including staff, capital and land, to attract up to £1,800m of private sector and government investment.

A City Deal would help us to deliver:

- 400 hectares of high quality employment sites by 2022, with the potential to support up to 31,000 direct jobs
- Around 85 Gigawatts of energy (GWh) equivalent to 485 industrial kilns running 24 hours a day
- Up to 15% increase in the employment rate by 2032

Who is involved in the City Deal?

The following parties have input to the proposals set out in the expression of interest.

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- **Local authorities** - Stoke-on-Trent City, Staffordshire County, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafford, Staffordshire Moorlands, South Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Tamworth Borough Councils
- **Business Partners** –include JCB, Jaguar Land Rover, Steelite International, Perkins, Zyte, Alton Towers, E.ON, Alstom, Wedgwood Waterford Royal Doulton (WWRD), Wade Ceramics, Michelin UK, Johnson Tiles, Goodwin Group, Ceram Research, Bio Composites, Trent & Dove Housing, Developers and Landowners, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, National Memorial Arboretum.
- **Education and Skills** –Staffordshire and Keele Universities, Stoke-on-Trent College, Stafford College, South Staffordshire College, Burton College, Newcastle-under-Lyme College, City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College, Staffordshire Providers Association
- **Agencies and organisations that have been consulted** - Highways Agency, Network Rail, Train Operating Companies, M6 Toll, Skills Funding Agency, Job Centre Plus (JCP)

ends

HS2 Phase 2 - Briefing Note for Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20th March 2013

The purpose of this note is to inform members of

- the announcement by the Secretary of State of the 28th January 2013
- a meeting with the Secretary of State
- the next steps
- meetings that have been organised to date by the County Council for councillors of the affected wards
- the recent deliberations of the Working Party established by the Committee

The announcement by the Secretary of State on the 28th January 2013

The Transport Secretary, Patrick McLoughlin announced the Government's initial preferred route for phase 2 of HS2. Phase 2 takes the line north of Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds. In Staffordshire the proposed West Midlands to Manchester route continues from phase 1 in Lichfield and passes through the Boroughs of Stafford and Newcastle. In the Borough the route starts with an embankment opposite Stableford on the eastern side of the West Coast Main Line (WCML) before passing under the A53 near Whitmore and then goes into a 710 m tunnel at Whitmore Heath. It passes over the West Coast Main Line in between Madeley and Whitmore, travels to the west of Madeley where it goes into a 720m tunnel at Bar Hill, before leaving the Borough on an embankment over the Checkley Brook, on its way north to pass under Crewe. The published route plan and profile maps will be available for inspection at the meeting (they are available to view on the internet and a set has been made available for public inspection at the Guildhall).

At the same time as announcing the initial preferred route the proposed stations on the HS2 route have been indicated. There would be a link on the south side of Crewe to the West Coast main line and to Crewe Station. Also announced are details of the expected indicative service patterns for both high speed and released capacity. The expectation is that some HS2 northbound trains using 'classic' rail infrastructure – the so-called high speed classic compatible service - will run onto Crewe and beyond to Runcorn and Liverpool with connections to the North West, whilst the southbound HS2 classic compatible service starting in Liverpool would run southwards through Crewe and Stafford before joining the High Speed line north of Lichfield. No station on the HS2 line is proposed within North Staffordshire. It is anticipated that Stoke will be served by the classic rail services from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Manchester using the WMCL; and the classic rail services from Manchester to Southampton and Bristol.

Meeting with Secretary of State for Transport, Patrick McLoughlin at the Department of Transport HQ, London - Thursday 7 February 2013

The City Council arranged to meet with the Secretary of State to make representations about the published preferred route for the HS2 rail and invited colleagues from the North Staffs Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the County Council and Borough Council to accompany them.

In particular the City Council expressed a wish for the Secretary of State to consider the potential scope for a station on the HS2 route that would reinforce and future-proof the plans for growth in North Staffordshire (with specific reference to the

ambitions set out in the City Deal dialogue with Government). The Borough Council officer confirmed the stance of this Council (as resolved last July).

In summary the Secretary of State:

- Seemed happy to hear about any proposed variations or modifications that would improve the HS2 plans;
- Was receptive to the notion of supporting growth of the North Staffordshire economy;
- Clarified that the HS2 investment is about not only achieving quicker journey times but aimed to increase rail capacity;
- Was receptive, in principle, to any pragmatic proposal for the location of a station where demonstrable economic benefit might be achieved;
- Instructed the HS2 representative to work with representatives of North Staffordshire to assess the technical feasibility and economic benefit of a station serving the area. (The HS2 representative confirmed that any economic business case to be undertaken in accordance with Treasury guidance).

Next steps

The announcement does not mark the commencement of a formal consultation process – rather it marks the commencement of engagement with “stakeholders” in order to identify significant issues in the expectation that these might be addressed before undertaking a more comprehensive and formal public consultation exercise later in 2013. No announcement has yet been made of when this consultation exercise will commence. Following this consultation the Government is expected to announce the chosen route by the end of 2014.

A separate consultation is currently ongoing concerning the Exceptional Hardship Scheme for HS2 Phase 2. This consultation will finish at the end of April.

Meetings that have been organised to date by the County Council for councillors of the affected wards

The County Council organised, on the 12th February, a meeting to which the councillors of the affected wards were invited as well as the Council Leader. At this meeting presentations were given by Professor McNaughton (HS2 Chief Engineer) and colleagues, followed by question and answer sessions. The County Council have now arranged for an officer group to meet with representatives of HS2 Limited on the 13th March, and for an HS2 Summit for affected elected members including borough councillors and parish councillors, and action group members on the 19th March. The purpose of the summit is to hold a workshop to help communities have a more informed engagement with HS2 Ltd on the technical aspects of the proposals including:

- tunnels, bridges and viaducts
- noise
- ecology, archaeology and landscape
- cuttings and embankments

The recent deliberations of the Working Party established by the Committee

Since the 28th January announcement the Council's Scrutiny Working Party has met once (on the 20th February) and a further meeting is planned for the 14th March. The membership of the Working Party consists of Councillors Becket, Loades and Cairns.

At its meeting on the 20th February the Working Party:

- agreed to defer the election of a Chair until after the Council meeting on the 27th February, at which a motion moved by Councillor Loades was to be considered. (The motion was subsequently lost – the Council's position accordingly remains as agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on the 18th July 2012)
- received a briefing note from the Head of Planning
- was notified of HS2 Ltd's March 2012 Options Report which had now been released – an optioneering report which considers how Lichfield and Manchester can be connected
- were informed of the information received at the meeting held on the 12th February
- agreed to hold a further meeting on the 14th February to consider in particular whether representations should be made on the Exceptional Hardship Scheme consultation, and any further updates that could be provided by officers, including on the meeting officers were holding with representatives of HS2 Ltd on 13th March

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Briefing Note on the Community Infrastructure Levy

Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20 March 2013

Introduction

Following the consideration of the report on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Viability Study at the 19 December 2012 Economic Development and Enterprise meeting the Council has commissioned further work to take into account new CIL guidance published on 14 December 2012.

The consultants, commissioned by the City Council and the Borough Council to undertake the original CIL Joint Viability Study, advised that changes to the viability calculations and supporting report needed to be made. The historic section 106 payments made on various forms of development have been added to the viability calculations and minor changes have been made to the Viability Study Report. This report focuses on the amendments to the Report and its findings.

Key findings

Residential development

Following a comprehensive assessment of market values, the borough was split into four Charging Zones based on Ward boundaries so that different CIL rates could be charged for housing development in different parts of the Borough. Due to differences in house prices either side of the M6 in the Halmer End Ward it has been decided to split this ward along the M6. A map showing this change and the other zones will be provided prior to the meeting.

In the very low value zone (zone 1), all residential development was shown to be unviable with no margin for CIL. In current market circumstances the development of apartments is not generally viable in either Authority other than in the highest value zone in Newcastle. However the report makes it clear that there may be exceptions to this and there will be significant variations dependent on specification, construction methods, associated build cost and sales rates, which may make some forms of apartments viable.

Commercial development

The assessment of commercial land and property values indicated that one zone should cover the whole of Newcastle and Stoke for commercial development.

The viability appraisals illustrated that most forms of commercial development are not viable in current market circumstances in Newcastle or Stoke and this is reflected in the lack of activity in these sectors.

However food supermarket retail and general retail were assessed to be viable and capable of accommodating CIL across the study area. Retail development illustrated high viability with rates ranging from £155-£705 per sqm, dependent on existing land use. However it should be noted that this range is based on a limited number of transactions due to the lack of activity in the sector and as specific retail projects emerge it is likely that landowners will expect significant premiums in order to release sites. This will reduce viability levels significantly and this should be taken into consideration in rate setting.

It is not recommended that a separate CIL rate category is adopted for supermarkets; the differential between supermarket (food retail) and non food retail is being

increasingly scrutinised in recent CIL examinations. Although in most cases supermarkets command higher values both in terms of land price and rate per sq m than other retail uses, a case can be made to counter this position. This is commonly done by analysing ‘best case’ non food retail evidence and contrasting with lower quality food retail evidence. Consequently, it can not be guaranteed that in each and every instance food and retail always command higher values.

For these reasons it has been recommended that a single retail rate to cover Use Classes A1-A5 is used to present an entirely robust position at CIL Examination. However, this rate should allow for Section 106 contributions to be made for Food Retail development if required.

It should also be noted that for the same reasons it is not possible to create a disincentive to out-of-town retailing by charging a higher CIL rate than town centre development, although Section 106 contributions could still be requested.

Draft CIL rates

The viability results show **maximum potential** CIL rates which could be applied without threatening the economic viability of development now and through the economic cycle. However the appraisals are generic tests, which do not make allowance for site specific abnormal costs.

Having factored in the Section 106 information all of the viability results were altered and the new tables have been inserted into the report. Although the margins of viability have been squeezed in a couple of the zones the report recommends that no changes are made to the draft rates.

The recommended rates covering both authorities have been set accordingly and are outlined below:

Residential Rates C3		
Zone 1	Very Low	£0sqm
Zone 2	Low	£20sqm
Zone 3	Medium	£50sqm
Zone 4	High	£80sqm

Retail Rates (A1-A5)	
District wide	£100sqm

Projected CIL revenue

Based on the above rates and retail projections from the adopted Core Spatial Strategy and the latest housing projections in each chargeable category, is estimated that, the following CIL revenues could be raised over the plan period in Newcastle:

Newcastle under Lyme Total Revenue (estimate)	
Residential	£1,866,600
Retail	£1,100,000
Total	£2,966,600

These projections will form the evidence that is required to prove the need for CIL at examination. There is a need to demonstrate the aggregate infrastructure gap i.e. the potential gap between CIL income and the cost of infrastructure. The Viability Study Report does not make recommendations on how any revenue is spent, or on how the

CIL will be administered; we will need to determine that ourselves at a later stage but prior to the CIL examination.

Please note that these projections are based on the best case scenario where the housing and retail targets set out in the Core Spatial Strategy are achieved. To date these targets are not being met. Furthermore the residential projections apply the proposed rates to an average house type of 90sqm and make allowance for Affordable Housing exemption at the relevant proportion of affordable housing for the CIL Charging Zone. The residential and retail projections should be regarded as maximum figures as no allowance is made for CIL relief from the re-use or demolition of existing buildings.

Sites that are developed using planning permission granted prior to the adoption of the CIL Charging Schedule (which sets out the CIL rates) are not liable to pay CIL. However following the adoption of the Charging Schedule, CIL will be payable on small 'windfall' developments which are currently not subject to planning obligations including individual new dwellings, some changes of use and large house extensions (over 100 sqm).

It should also be noted that the viability appraisals are necessarily generic tests and some forms of commercial development, for example, may still be viable and able to support Section 106 Contributions such as NTADS which the Council will still charge until 31 March 2014.

Consultation on Preliminary draft Charging Schedule

In accordance with the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 a charging authority must consult on its preliminary draft charging schedule.

The intention is to undertake a joint consultation with Stoke in late April 2013 for 6 weeks involving key stakeholders such as developers and agents. This will be an important process of engaging early with developers and being clear about their infrastructure needs and how they will be paid for. However, in the Borough the County Council, parish and town councils will also be consulted as statutory consultees.

The Planning Policy Business Unit is satisfied that the viability assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the CIL statutory guidance and that the recommended rates should be put forward for consultation.

Appendix 1

Newcastle-under-Lyme Residential Zones

Map to be added

Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
Low			High

Four differential value zones were identified in Newcastle-under-Lyme whilst only three were identified in Stoke-on-Trent.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO EDE SCRUTINY

Date	20 th March 2013
Heading	Update on the Town Centre Partnership and their emerging Business Plan
Submitted by	Joanne Basnett
Portfolio	Regeneration, Planning & Town Centres
Ward(s) affected	Primarily the Town Centre

Purpose of the Report

The report provides an update on the business of the Newcastle Town Centre Partnership (TCP) including the draft priorities for the developing business plan.

Recommendations

- (a) That progress is noted.
- (b) That Scrutiny Committee directs any comments for the Town Centre Partnership via the Council's Executive Board representative; the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning & Town Centres.

Reasons

It is appropriate that the Scrutiny Committee reviews the progress of this key Council priority and this report provides an update in terms of the TCP developing a Business Plan.

1. Background

- 1.1 The establishment of the Newcastle Town Centre Partnership (TCP) was a clear objective of the Council in the expectation that it would help to improve the economic fortunes of the centre. In March 2012, Cabinet agreed to the Council becoming a director of the Newcastle town centre partnership company and authorised officers to take the necessary steps to facilitate this. In July 2012 Cabinet agreed to the preferred model and formalisation of the TCP as a Community Interest Group (CIC). The TCP is now legally established and operating as a CIC, with a separate bank account and independent payroll for the Town Centres Manager.
- 1.2 TCP membership comprises representatives from the Newcastle Chamber of Trade & Enterprise, Partnership Against Business Crime, Newcastle under Lyme BC, the New Vic Theatre, the Roebuck Shopping Centre, Keele University, Newcastle College, North Staffs Chamber of Commerce, independent retailers and others from the commercial sector.
- 1.3 The Town Centres Manager commenced employment with the TCP in January and reports directly to the Chair of the TCP.

2. **Issues**

2.1 Over the past two months the TCP has been considering their priorities and has agreed the necessity of preparing a Business Plan. The TCP Board is timetabled to consider the draft Business Plan between the time of writing this report and the Scrutiny meeting. This report therefore outlines the key draft priorities and officers will be able to provide a verbal update at the meeting (this information is provided in good faith but may be liable to change).

2.2 The TCP's draft priorities and actions include:

- Marketing and events – the TCP aims to raise the profile of the town centre and to promote a year round programme of professional and community led events. A key element of this is the launch of a TCP website in April, which will promote events and individual businesses. The TCP made a significant start in demonstrating their leadership of town centre events with the 2012 Christmas Lights Switch on. They have also made significant progress in developing an annual events programme; in March there are events for Fairtrade Fortnight, Student RAG parade, TCP launch event, Britain in Bloom launch event and an Easter Egg hunt for families during the Easter holidays.
- Business and Enterprise – the TCP aims to support the growth of existing businesses and encourage the development of new businesses in the town centre. There will be a range of actions to support businesses including business mentoring, retail coaching and encouraging young entrepreneurs through to business promotion through a town centre map and introduction of a shop loyalty card.
- Environment and infrastructure – the TCP is seeking to enhance the built environment through supporting a range of projects, from promoting better use of upper floors of business premises through to chewing gum removal.
- Night time economy – the TCP is aiming to increase footfall between 5pm and 2am improving both the evening leisure and catering offer in the town. This month the TCP launches the entirely new Thursday student night with student transport from Keele University to the town centre. Further plans include cross trade promotions between food and entertainment businesses and longer term plans for further themed evenings.
- Safety and security – the TCP has a clear priority of developing the Purple Flag scheme and supporting the delivery of projects in conjunction with the Partnership Against Business Crime (PABC).
- Outdoor markets – the delivery of the town centre public realm work is a key project this year and the outdoor markets group is working together to support the market traders. The partnership then aims to attract new high quality traders and specialist markets, as well as encouraging new market traders through schemes such as 'First Pitch' and 'Love your Local Market'.

3. Scrutiny Views

- 3.1 This report outlines progress. Members of the Scrutiny Committee are therefore asked to note progress and to direct any comments for the TCP via the Council's Executive Board representative; the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning & Town Centres Development.

4. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 Outcomes from these actions will significantly affect the 'Borough of Opportunity' corporate priority, and will have implications for the quality of life, regeneration, and sustainability of the town centre, the borough as a whole and ultimately North Staffordshire.

5. Legal and Statutory Implications

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out but the actions identified will help to make the town centre more able to meet the needs of both residents and the business community, in particular those interested in the possibility of starting their own business.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The Council has allocated £30,000 to the TCP to recognise that the new partnership and the delivery model need to be supported to establish itself and that it would be appropriate to allocate funding for at least a further two years with a review by the end of 24 months. As the TCP was formalising itself in December 2012 a Service Level Agreement was signed between the TCP and the Council to cover set up costs and three months salary contribution, website development and the government funded Town Team £10,000.

- 7.2 As mentioned above it is recognised for the Partnership to have long term sustainability it is intended that officers work with the partnership with a view to optimising external funding options (including the M&S S.106 funding, the potential for a Business Improvement District and support from Kidsgrove Town Council).

8. Major Risks

- 8.1 Whilst the TCP shares many of the Council's aims and objectives in terms of economic development of the centres the Partnership is a separate company and as such the Council needs to be clear that whilst it can utilise the Member involvement at the TCP Board it cannot prescribe actions. There is a possible reputational risk if the TCP fails but potential benefits outweigh the risk.

9. Earlier Cabinet Resolutions

- 9.1 Mar 2012 - Cabinet agree to Newcastle under Lyme B.C. becoming a director of the Newcastle town centre partnership company and authorises officers to take the necessary steps to facilitate the same.
- 9.2 Mar 2012 - Cabinet agrees to officers working under the auspices of the Newcastle town centre partnership to prepare and submit a bid to become a "Portas pilot", in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning and for the Council to act as the accountable body for administering any grant.
- 9.3 July 2012 – Cabinet agreed to the formalisation of the Town Centre Partnership and financial support for the TCP to appoint a Town Centres Manager
- 9.4 Dec 2012 – Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered progress in formalising the Town Centre Partnership and the recruitment of the Town Centre Manager.

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 None.

Briefing Note to the Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 20/3/2013

Town Centre Initiatives for Vacant Shops

Purpose of the briefing Note.

This briefing note seeks to provide the Committee with an update as to the Council's Assets section's approach as landlords to supporting the retail businesses in its shops in the town centre. Furthermore, the strategies, and initiatives used to minimise the number of empty shops within its portfolio.

Existing tenants.

We allow some tenants to hold over at the end of their existing lease to provide them with the maximum flexibility of tenure in the face of the current economic recession. We have looked carefully at the rents we charge and where applicable have negotiated rental reductions. This contrasts with some private town centre landlords who are seeking rent increases from their tenants.

In a number of cases we have moved away from the property industry standard of quarterly rental payments in advance, to a monthly advance payment. This is much more closely aligned to tenant's cash flows, and consequently more easily managed by tenants.

Where tenants are in arrears we provide a close and supportive monitoring regime to help manage the situation and create affordable and flexible repayment of arrears. We have successfully retained a number of tenants in the town through this process.

New Lettings.

Incentives are provided for new tenants these include: rent free periods, stepped rents which start low and gradually build to market rental levels.

Break clauses in leases which provide the opportunity to, and minimise the cost of unsuccessful businesses vacating premises. Shorter lease terms than the industry norm.

General points.

The Council has funded the appointment of a Town Centre Manager who hopefully will provide a number of initiatives to create interest in the town both in the short and medium term.

At your last meeting we reported upon the Council's active participation in a pop up shop initiative. This proved to be successful over the Christmas period and we are talking to one partner organisation about a more long term presence in the town centre.

Through its initiative in bringing partner organisations into the Civic Offices the Council has brought some 200 jobs back into the town centre and retained another 100 plus jobs despite the closure of the police station.

We continue to work at bringing more jobs into the town centre to provide customer opportunities for the retail sector.

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Agenda Item 9

<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	Town Centre Car Parking
<u>Submitted by:</u>	Graham Williams, Engineering Manager Louise Stevenson, Scrutiny Officer
<u>Portfolio:</u>	Regeneration, Planning and Town Centres
<u>Ward(s) affected:</u>	Town

Purpose of the Report

To recommend to the Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee the task and finish group recommendations for town centre car parking initiatives.

Recommendations

- a) **That Members consider the contents of the report and the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.**
- b) **That Members decide which of the recommendations they wish to propose to Cabinet.**

Reasons

To increase the footfall in the town centre.

1. Background

The Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee has received a number of requests to reduce the parking charges in the expectation that this would assist with the town centre economy. Prior to Christmas the Committee resolved to set up a task and finish group to investigate and recommend suitable parking initiatives taking account of the potential adverse impact on the Council's income. The task and finish group members consisted of Cllrs Baker, Studd and Peers, the Town Centre Manager and the Roebuck Centre Manager.

2. Issues

As a result of the general economic situation and changes in shopping habits the town centre has suffered a reduction in footfall which, in turn, has worsened trading conditions. The business community has requested that the parking charges be reviewed to encourage additional visitors to the town centre and/or to increase the length of time that customers stay in the town. In section 3 Members will see the range of options that the sub-group reviewed.

3. Options Considered

1) Cashless Parking

An additional method of payment is to use mobile phone technology to pay for parking; this allows for the customer to extend their payment period whilst away from the car park. The customer would incur an additional charge, over and above the normal parking tariff, of 20p per visit. The Borough Council would lose income due to the debit and credit card charges.

The cost for introducing such a system comprises £950.00 for the alterations to the hand-held devices used by the civil enforcement officers and approximately £1000 for the signage.

The loss of income would be in the order of £1100 per 1% of the tickets issued (based on an average debit/credit card charge of 15p). Where similar systems have been introduced at local Staffordshire authorities, approx. 1% of customers have chosen to use this method of payment. Of course if there was an increase in patronage as a result of introducing cashless parking then there would be a subsequent increase in income.

2) Pay on Foot (Midway Car Park)

In this system our customers take a ticket on arrival at the car park (by a barrier) and pay for the time stayed on the car park at a payment station prior to leaving the car park.

The difficulty in implementing a traditional pay on foot system is the lack of queuing space before the exit barrier of the car park, causing potential log jam of the car park.

To reduce the potential log jam in the car park it would be necessary to install a hybrid barrier system. The capital cost for introducing such a system would be approximately £125,000.

3) Free parking after 6pm (All Car Parks)

Due to the limited data available it has been difficult to produce an accurate potential loss; based upon proxy data officers estimate that it could be in the order of £40,000.

It is noteworthy that the task and finish group considered that it is more important to implement initiatives which stimulate the day time economy.

4) Free parking after 2pm on Thursday (Midway Car Park only)

Following two consecutive parking surveys undertaken on Thursdays, it has been estimated that the minimum potential annual loss would be £27,500 (excl. VAT). This has not taken into account any displacement from other charging periods.

5) Free Parking All Day on Thursdays (Midway Only)

Using the same data as in item 4, it has been estimated that the minimum potential loss is £71,500 (excl. VAT per annum). This has not taken into account any displacement from other charging periods.

6) Free Car Parking Pass Competition

The task and finish group discussed the possibility of introducing a quarterly competition to win a quarterly free parking pass. The Town Centre Manager indicated that he would incorporate this with other initiatives that the Town Centre Partnership will run.

7) Nipper Parking

Nipper parking is normally 30 minutes free parking, generally near to the centre of the town centre.

Nipper parking was considered by the task and finish group for High Street and Bridge Street. Presently these parking spaces are Staffordshire County Council assets and the income generated by the on street charging is used to self-finance the on street enforcement throughout the Borough. Without this income it would not be possible to self-finance the on-

street enforcement. It is understood, therefore, that the County Council would not support nipper parking in these locations.

However, the County Council have indicated that the spaces outside the former Police Station on Merrial Street may be converted into limited waiting spaces. There is a cost associated with any change to these spaces, which would be in the order of £4,000 and this funding would have to be sought.

8) Other Options

A number of variations to the above options were considered along with other ideas. However, the task and finish group concluded that these would be better considered after the implementation of other recommended options.

4. Proposal

Having reviewed the above options, Members of the task and finish group recommend that initially the following be implemented:

a) Cashless Parking

That cashless parking be introduced as soon as practicably possible. This would encourage customers to stay longer in the town as they could extend their length of stay without returning to the car.

b) Pay on Foot (Midway Car Park)

Whilst Members support the introduction of such a system, they acknowledge the significant capital cost required. The task and finish group therefore recommend the scheme be implemented should capital funding become available.

c) Free parking On Thursdays (Midway Car Park only)

Of the two proposals for free parking on Thursdays (all day or after 2pm), the task and finish group members recommend free parking all day. However, the Members acknowledge the current financial situation, and would accept free parking after 2pm, if free all day parking was not achievable.

5. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough
- creating a Borough of opportunity

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

Any changes to the parking regime require a modification to the Off Street Parking Order.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

Implementation of recommendations 4(a) and 4(c) would potentially result in an annual loss of income to the Council of about £30,000. Whilst the introduction of pay on foot facilities at the Midway MSCP would cost the Council about £125,000 of capital expenditure. There is no provision made for any of these initiatives in either of the approved revenue or capital budgets.

8. Major Risks

Failure to implement some parking concessions could contribute to the demise of the town centre economy. Equally the implementation of some initiatives may result in a higher than anticipated loss of income to the Council thereby jeopardising delivery of a balanced revenue budget.

Newcastle Town Centre Public Realm & Market Refurbishment Project

Task	Target Date	Dependencies / stages to completion
Construct taxi rank in lower High Street	Start early Feb 2013 End late March 2013	90% complete.
Removal of trees as phase 1 of tree works in line with December 2012 Cabinet resolution	Complete	Completed
Completion of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROS) for Hassell Street (Traffic Regulation Orders control the flow of traffic and access times)	Start date - started End date late June 2013	Tasks Staffordshire County Council finalise design of TROs. Staffordshire County Council complete statutory consultation process. Dependencies <i>If no significant objections received TROs can be implemented.</i> <i>If significant objections received this timescale is at risk of being extended.</i>
Finalise paving proposals – design and materials	Start date – started End date late April 2013	Tasks Borough Council resolving design problems caused by current guidance on tactile paving for visually impaired people. Consultation with Guide Dog for Blind representative. Staffordshire County Council confirms suitability of sub base proposals. (drafted but not formally approved) Staffordshire County Council confirms suitability of taxi rank demarcation proposals. (Previous design rejected). This relates to any enforcement action needed for illegal parking once the scheme is complete. Staffordshire County Council approving drainage design in the light of managing the flood risk for 99p shop and NatWest side door once kerb lines are removed. Dependencies All above approvals being gained.

Items in italics are critical dependencies

Task	Target Date	Dependencies / stages to completion
Construct Friars Street & Hassell Street	Start date August 2013 End date November 2013	<p>Tasks Staffordshire County Council complete TROs Staffordshire County Council approve construction design detail. Staffordshire County Council confirm traffic management arrangements whilst construction is underway.</p> <p>Dependencies <i>TRO process being completed</i> No unexpected surprises when groundworks are being undertaken. (every effort has been made to trace underground services).</p>
Obtain planning permission for new market stalls	Started End date late June 2013	<p>Tasks Planning application submitted. Deadline for decision 24 April 2013</p> <p>Dependencies <i>Number of objections received to planning application</i> <i>Planning permission being granted</i></p>
Finalise design of new market stalls, procure and place on site.	Started End date September 2013	<p>Tasks Finish collecting feedback on the current test stall (significant delay due to recent poor weather affecting trader attendance and need to prioritise clearing the lower end of High Street.) Resolve issue of removable / fold up counter tops Issue specification and get quotes for manufacture. Appoint contractor for foundation / construction work. Put on site</p> <p>Dependencies Further weather disruption interrupting process. <i>Planning permission being granted.</i> No unexpected surprises when groundworks are being undertaken. Co-ordinate works around the Hassell Street junction with Staffordshire County Council works (new drainage connections cross the market area)</p>

Items in italics are critical dependencies

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 20 March 2013

Title: Newcastle Housing Advice (NHA) – Homelessness, Housing Options and Housing Register Contract Retendering Exercise

Submitted by: Joanne Basnett

Portfolio: Stronger and Active Neighbourhoods

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To advise the Scrutiny Committee of the requirement to retender the Newcastle Housing Advice (NHA) contract in readiness for expiry of the existing contract.

To advise the Scrutiny Committee of the plans to produce a fully costed formal appraisal of the NHA service in order to produce an in house bid for consideration alongside tender submissions from interested external providers.

Recommendations

For Scrutiny Committee to note the requirement to retender the NHA contract in readiness for the expiry of the existing contract so that the Council's statutory duty can be maintained.

That any views from Scrutiny on the process or plans to produce an in-house bid are directed to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget Management for him to take into account as part of the overall process.

Reasons

The current arrangements for the NHA service are due to expire on 31st March 2014 and the Council has a statutory duty to ensure that services are in place to meet the needs of local residents regarding Homelessness, Housing Options and a Housing Register.

1. Background

1.1 The current NHA service delivered under contract by Aspire Housing, on behalf of the Borough Council, commenced on 1 September 2009 and is due to expire on 31st March 2014. Under the contract the NHA team at Aspire Housing deliver the following:

- the homelessness service which includes the prevention of homelessness through advice, discharging the Council's homelessness duty and ensuring customers are housed appropriately;
- the housing options service which includes an initial triage service and more comprehensive housing advice across all tenures, joint working with key stakeholders and providers and signposting to other specialist services;

- the housing register service which includes the management of the Housing Register, nominations to social housing providers and advice on the Housing Register.
- 1.2 Informal Cabinet gave Officers approval to extend the expiry date for the NHA service contract from April 2012 to March 2014, subject to a number of cost savings that were achieved as a result of negotiated amendments to the original specification with the existing contractor.
 - 1.3 The Council has secured a continued commitment from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for the homelessness prevention grant for the period 2012 - 2015 to support a range of homelessness prevention activities to be utilised alongside the NHA service.

2. Issues

- 2.1 In line with the current NHA contract requirements the Housing Strategy Team has conducted a review of the NHA service provided by Aspire Housing within the third year of the contract for the period 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012. This Contract Review Report has been shared with the current Portfolio Holder and is available on request.
- 2.2 The NHA Contract Review Report evaluated how the contracted services have developed over the last twelve months of the contract and how the services have met the requirements of the contract. The review report identifies aspects of the services where there is a need for improved performance and highlights areas for future development.
- 2.3 The Council needs to undertake a retendering process for the NHA service in order to ensure that the service is available for Borough residents beyond April 2014. There is a need to perform this process to comply with EU tendering/procurement procedures.

3. Proposal and Reason for Preferred Solution

- 3.1 In order to undertake the retendering exercise for the NHA service, a comprehensive tender specification has been prepared to outline the Council's requirements and expectations for the service and to instruct potential tenderers of the process for submitting tenders.
- 3.2 A Working Group for the NHA retendering process was established and tasked with the creation of the tender documentation for the process. The Working Group has consisted of representatives from Housing Strategy, Legal, Business Improvement, Finance and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget Management.
- 3.3 As part of the forthcoming NHA retendering exercise, the NHA Contract Retendering Working Group is proposing to develop an 'in house' bid, as an option to be considered as a tender submission for comparison purposes and to ensure the best service is delivered whilst achieving good value for money aims.

4. Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The NHA service contributes to meeting the Council's Corporate Priority for creating a Borough of Opportunity and Healthy and Active Communities.

5. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, to provide homelessness, housing advice and housing register services in the local authority area. Under the provisions of the Contracting Out and Deregulation Act 1994, Local authorities can contract out making inquiries and/or decisions on homelessness applicants, provision of housing advice, securing accommodation to discharge their homelessness duties and the allocation of housing.
- 5.2 If the retendering process for the contract is not progressed and the contract not awarded or alternative arrangements made the Council will have no provision for the statutory services after 31st March 2014, which would be in breach of statutory obligations.
- 5.3 If the contract is awarded to an alternative contract provider or is brought back in house (at the Council), there would be TUPE implications for individuals currently employed by Aspire Housing.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Council Officers completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) on the NHA contract in 2009, which was later reviewed in 2011. EIAs will remain a pre-requisite of any future service provision and the Borough Council will continue to offer guidance and support in the submission of equalities information from prospective service providers.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Budgetary provision has been made for the NHA service for the financial year 2014/15 in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) notionally based upon the allocation in the 2013/14 budget.
- 7.2 As outlined in 5.3 above, there may be additional associated revenue costs under TUPE if the Council were to decide to bring the service back in house.
- 7.3 The award of this service has financial implications as a three year commitment is given, however this is in line with government guidance and there is recourse for the Council if the terms of the contract are not met by the successful contractor.
- 7.4 There are resource implications for Council Officers and Members who are involved in and will co-ordinate and administer the retendering exercise for the NHA service.

8. Major Risks

- 8.1 Failure to take appropriate action regarding the award for the provision of homelessness, housing options and housing register services, resulting in the Council being unable to perform its statutory duties, leaving the Council open to legal challenge.
- 8.2 Failure to provide an adequate homelessness, housing options and housing register service, resulting in the Council being unable to discharge its statutory duties effectively, leaving the Council open to legal challenge.
- 8.3 There is also a risk of reputational damage to the Council if it does not deliver its statutory duties lawfully and effectively.

8.4 Risks are reviewed as part of the retendering exercise process, prospective service providers offered training as part of the commissioning process and identified risks monitored and controlled throughout the length of the contract period between the Council and successful service provider.

9. Key Decision Information

9.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide homelessness, housing advice and housing register services in the Borough and the delivery of this service affects all wards.

9.2 This report can be considered key in the following ways: -

- It results in the Borough Council incurring expenditure of an amount which is significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates and;
- To be significant in terms of its affects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in the Borough

10. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

10.1 14th January 2009 - Cabinet approved the decision to award the Newcastle Housing Advice – Housing Options and Housing Register contract to Aspire Housing Ltd for the period 1st September 2009 – 31st March 2012, with the option to extend for two years on satisfactory performance.

10.2 15th December 2010 – Cabinet approved and adopted the Newcastle-under-Lyme Homelessness Strategy 2010 – 2015, which links to the provision of Homelessness, Housing Advice and Housing Register contract.

11. List of Appendices

11.1 None

12. Background Papers

12.1 None

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20 MARCH 2013

Title	Scrutiny Method	Progress to Date/Actions from last Meeting	Expected Completion Date	Expected Outcomes/Date for Progress to be Assessed
Economic Development Strategy (GREEN)	Full Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet agreed strategy & 1st year action plan 23.05.12 Feedback & progress on action plan possibly end Q4 or Q1 2013/14 		
The S-O-T & Staffs LEP (AMBER)	Working Group: Cllrs Matthews, Peers & Studd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving summary paper. Will meet as/when required. 		
Broadband Provision (AMBER)	County Council Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeanette Hilton to attend working group & feedback to EDE. Re-scoping required. WG need to define what needs to be scrutinised & where they would like to go with it. 		
High Speed 2 Limited (AMBER)	Working Group: Cllr Becket Cllr Loades Cllr Cairns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 04.07.2012 - wg resolved to recommend: 1) continue stance to object, but should it take place then local station should be provided 2) EDE (through WG) continue to scrutinise & meet when consultation stage begins 3) highlight to Cabinet consultation due to begin in Autumn. Cabinet resolved 18.07.2012: 1) modify Council stance to offer support for principle of HS2 as long as potential economic benefits for N. Staffs could be demonstrated to outweigh environmental consequences & whether such benefits would be derived from local station to serve area. 2) EDE continue to monitor through wg who will reconvene when consultation begins. Update provided to EDE 17.09.2012. Still awaiting consultation as at 07.12.12, however stance on Dept of Transport & HS2 websites has changed to 'early 2013 engagement programme on phase 2 initial preferred route'. Report presented to March meeting. 		
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (AMBER)	Full Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief report received 17.09.2012. Report presented to December meeting. Report presented to March meeting. 		
Staffordshire Strategic Assets Review (GREEN)	Full Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report discussed at 21.06.2012 meeting. To be considered at Jan Cabinet with the Asset Management Strategy. 		
Asset Management Strategy (GREEN)	Full Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report presented to December meeting 2012. 		
Town Centre Partnerships Development (AMBER)	Full Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update report for 2nd round Portas Pilot bid on 17.09.2012. Update briefing at Dec meeting clarifying status of TCP incl. appointment of Town Centre Manager, funding update & key priorities. Report presented to December meeting. 		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report presented to March meeting. 		
Town Centre Initiatives for Vacant Shops (AMBER)	Full Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair & vice-Chair met with officers to discuss town centre initiatives for vacant shops 06.09.12. Briefing note provided 17.09.2012 to update EDE. EDE comments to be considered by Portfolio Holder & Officers • Officer briefing note re pop-up emporium initiative 19.12.12 • Report presented to March meeting. 		
Former St Giles and St Georges (AMBER)	To be decided, possible working party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recs for Cabinet 28.06.12: EDE would support further investigation of combination of options 'A' & 'C'. 'B' should be discounted completely • Reconsidered 17.09.12. Museum resiting still considered desirable. Indoor market suggested. EDE remain opposed to demolition, but would be less hostile if could be satisfied replacement would be correct scale & design. Likely value of cleared site, costs of indoor market & museum suggestions requested. More info required before a preferred option can be offered. • Cabinet agreed option A (market bldg again in current condition) 17.10.12. Requested Officers look into option 'e' (use site for housing). Open item for EDE while waiting for decision, can discuss without referring back to Cabinet. 		
Knutton Recreation Centre (GREEN)	To be decided, possible working party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional meeting 28.07.2012. • Recs to be passed to Sept Cabinet. • Will be brought back to Committee if necessary. 		
Town Centre Car Parking (AMBER)	Working Group: Cllrs Baker, Peers, Studd & M. Taylor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader request to investigate & consider potential options that may exist to improve current arrangements • Scrutiny brief for 17.09.12. WG formed – 2nd meeting 24.10.2012. Interim report expected. • Report presented to March meeting. 		
N/C Town Centre Public Realm Project (AMBER)	Working Group: Cllr Baker Cllr Cairns Cllr Holland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG met 24.10.12. EDE considered 22.11.12. • EDE expressed some concerns, passed to Cabinet. • Await outcome of Dec Cabinet. • Request for review 12 months after implementation – dependent on Cabinet decision. • Report presented to March meeting. 		
Empty Homes Strategy	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report provided for consideration on 17.09.2012. • Considered at Dec Cabinet. 		
Home Improvement Agency Services	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report/scrutiny brief to Committee –originally expected for Dec meeting. Now more likely the report will be ready in early spring given the complexity of partnership arrangements. 		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service currently provided by Revival, options to be reviewed incl county wide service or NBC standing alone. 		
Housing Capital Programme 2013/14	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the allocation of funding, particularly from New Homes Bonus funds to deliver housing priorities ensuring that the most vulnerable residents receive support. • Report presented to December meeting 		
Newcastle Housing Advice (NHA) – Homelessness, Housing Options & Housing Register Contract Retendering Exercise	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation in March 2014 • Report presented to March meeting. 		

MEMBERS SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY TOPICS

Suggested by:	Suggestion for Scrutiny Topic:

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