

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Thursday 6 September 2007

at 4.00 pm

in the Red Room, Avondale Centre,
Dyke House, Hartlepool
(Raby Road Entrance)

MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors Alison, R W Cook, S Cook, Cranney, Gibbon, Johnson, Laffey, London,
A Marshall, Worthy and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

Ted Jackson, Robert Steel and Iris Ryder

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
3. **MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2007.
4. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**
 - 4.1 Portfolio Holder's Response to the Investigation into the Performance and Operation of Private Sector Rented Accommodation and Landlords in Hartlepool – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities*

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5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items.

6. FORWARD PLAN

6.1 The Executive's Forward Plan – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

7. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items.

8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool

8.1 Setting the Scene Report – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*

8.2 Evidence from the Town's MP, Iain Wright – Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

8.3 Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities – Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

i) **Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 27 September commencing at 2.00 pm in the Red Room, Avondale Centre, Hartlepool**

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

12 July 2007

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm at Jutland Road Community Centre,
Jutland Road, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Shaun Cook (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob W Cook, Kevin Cranney, Steve Gibbon,
Michael Johnson, Pauline Laffey, Frances London, Ann Marshall
and Edna Wright

In accordance with Paragraph 4.2 (ii) Councillor Harry Clouth
was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Gladys Worthy
and Councillor Geoff Lilley was in attendance as substitute for
Councillor Stephen Allison

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Resident Representative:
Bob Steel

Officers: Stuart Green, Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning
Mark Dutton, Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator
Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

9. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephen Allison and Gladys Worthy, Peter Jackson as Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities and Iris Ryder.

10. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillors Mick Johnson and Pauline Laffey declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in minute number 15.

11. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2007

Confirmed with the addition of Councilbr Pauline Laffey's apologies.

12. Portfolio Holders Response to the Railway Approaches Scrutiny Investigation *(Joint Report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Portfolio Holder's for Regeneration and Liveability, Culture Leisure and Tourism)*

The Head of Regeneration stated that Cabinet had approved, in their entirety, the recommendations of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into Railway Approaches. Appendix A to the report set out the proposed actions to be taken in relation to each of the specific recommendations.

The Head of Regeneration gave an overview of the actions being taken on the recommendations as set out on the Action Plan attached to the report.

Recommendation

That the proposed actions, attached at Appendix A, be noted.

13. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

14. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None.

15. Scoping Report – Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a scoping report for the Forum's investigation into the availability of good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool. Contained within the report were suggestions for the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Enquiry/Sources of Evidence for the investigation. Details were also provided of the following:-

The aim of the investigation

To establish the extent of demand for, and availability of, good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool and recommend options for increasing availability.

Proposed Timetable of the Scrutiny Investigation

- 12 July 2007 – Scoping Session
- 8/9/10 August 2007 – Chair to attend Neighbourhood Consultative Forums.
- 16 August 2007 – Setting the Scene and Evidence from Portfolio Holders (To be rescheduled)
- 27 September/1 November 2007 – To receive evidence from relevant departments/individuals
- w/c 19 November 2007 – Informal Meeting to consider Draft Final Report
- 6 December 2007 – Consideration of Draft Final Report
- 4 January 2008 – Consideration of Final Report by Scrutiny Coordinating Committee
- 21 January 2008 – Consideration of Final report by Cabinet

During the course of discussion on the way forward for this investigation the following issues were raised:-

- (i) The need to explore during the investigation the lack of appropriate housing accommodation for young people (including through Foyer Schemes), single parents and the elderly. The Forum was also advised by the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning, that the Local Housing Needs Assessment would provide up to date information of housing requirements and would be worth discussing along with the experiences of other local authorities to ensure good practice.

It was reported that Jim Johnson of Tees Valley Living would be able to advise on the sub-regional picture and it was suggested that this source of evidence be added to Section 5.2 of the report.

- (i) Concern was expressed regarding the general issue of affordable housing in Hartlepool and the costs associated with shared ownership. The Forum recognised the importance of the wider issue of affordable housing in general, including the ability to buy homes, however, the Chair reinforced that the aim of this investigation was to look at the availability of good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool.
- (ii) In view of the 3,000 people currently on the housing waiting list, there was a need for the Council to consider a change in the current policy in terms of land availability. It was highlighted that the Government had recently identified good quality housing accommodation as a priority and that the issue of availability of land for new housing was currently being examined and to be considered by Cabinet shortly.

- (iv) Members were of the view that affordability should be a fundamental consideration when assessing accommodation requirements bearing in mind the increase in land costs and the high unemployment rates in the town.
- (v) Members were also advised that the Council would be given the opportunity to respond to the Government's Green Paper in relation to affordable housing.

Following discussions a number of additions were made to the suggested Terms of Reference and Potential Sources of Evidence for the investigation. Incorporating these additions the revised Terms of Reference and Potential Sources of Evidence for the investigation are as follows (additions shown in bold):-

Terms of Reference

- (a) To gain an understanding of national and regional policy/guidance, **and best practice elsewhere**, in relation to the provision of good quality affordable accommodation, with particular reference to the social rented sector;
- (b) To consider and agree a definition of good quality affordable social rented accommodation for the purpose of the investigation;
- (c) To gain an understanding of how good quality affordable social rented accommodation is currently provided in Hartlepool and the issues affecting provision;
- (d) To explore the extent of demand for, and availability of, good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool;
- (e) To consider the work already being undertaken by the Council and other agencies to seek to increase the supply of good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool, **having regard for the differing sectors of need across the town, including the elderly, young people and those with disabilities**;
- (f) To explore viable ways of increasing, and maintaining, the availability of good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool to go some way to meeting unmet demand, **having regard for the differing sectors of need across the town, including the elderly, young people and those with disabilities**; and
- (g) To seek the views of residents, including people from minority communities of interest, regarding the availability of good quality affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool.

Potential Areas of Enquiry/Sources of Evidence

- (a) Evidence from the town's Member of Parliament;
- (b) Evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor (Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Regeneration and Liveability) and Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Neighbourhoods and Communities;
- (c) Detailed Officer reports supplemented by verbal evidence (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and other relevant Hartlepool Borough Council Officers*);
- (d) Evidence from a representative from the Housing Corporation;
- (e) Evidence from Tees Valley Living (Jim Johnson);**
- (f) The views of local residents and tenants, including representatives of minority groups/communities of interest to supplement existing research (*50+ Forum, Hartlepool Access Group, Hart Gables, Talking within Communities and the All Ability Forum*);
- (g) The views of Local Residents Associations;
- (h) The views of the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums;
- (i) Evidence from Registered Social Landlords (*including Housing Hartlepool and Endeavour Housing Association*);
- (j) Evidence of best practice in other Local Authorities (***including the use of and Foyer Schemes***);
- (k) Evidence from Neighbouring Tees Valley Authorities (*to ascertain their position and work being undertaken to address the issue, and*
- (l) The views of Ward Councillors.

Recommendation

That the proposed remit of the Scrutiny investigation, be agreed subject to the additions to the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Enquiry/Sources of Evidence outlined above.

16. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Scrutiny Support Officer sought Members approval to reschedule the next meeting to accommodate Ian Wright MP.

Re com mendation

That the Scrutiny Support Officer be authorised to reschedule the next meeting to facilitate the MP's attendance.

SHAUN COOK

CHAIRMAN

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

6 September 2007



Report of: Joint Report of Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities

Subject PORTFOLIO HOLDERS RESPONSE TO THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE PERFORMANCE AND OPERATION OF PRIVATE SECTOR RENTED ACCOMMODATION AND LANDLORDS IN HARTLEPOOL

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum with feedback on the recommendations from the investigation into 'The Performance and Operation of Private Sector Rented Accommodation and Landlords in Hartlepool', which was reported to Cabinet on 11 June 2007.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The investigation into 'The Performance and Operation of Private Sector Rented Accommodation and Landlords in Hartlepool' was originally conducted by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum. The transfer of the Housing Division to the Regeneration and Planning Services Department, however, now means that this investigation falls within the remit of this Forum. The investigation also falls within the service area covered by the Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder and Regeneration and Liveability Portfolio Holder. The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities will at today's meeting be taking the lead on this issue.
- 2.2 On 11 June 2007, Cabinet considered the Final Report of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum into the Performance and Operation of Private Sector Rented Accommodation and Landlords in Hartlepool. This report provides feedback from the Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder following the Cabinet's consideration of, and decisions in relation to, the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's recommendations.

- 2.3 In addition to this report a further progress report will be produced for Member's consideration six months after this report to enable Members to monitor the implementation of their recommendations.

3. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND EXECUTIVE DECISION

- 3.1 Following consideration of the Final Report, Cabinet approved the recommendations in their entirety. Details of each recommendation and proposed actions to be taken following approval by Cabinet are provided in the Draft Action Plan attached at **Appendix A**.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note the proposed actions detailed within the Draft Action Plan, appended to this report (**Appendix A**) and seek clarification on its content where felt appropriate.

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Hartlepool Borough Council
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's Final Report 'The Performance and Operation of Private Sector Rented Accommodation and Landlords in Hartlepool' considered by Cabinet on 11 June 2007.
- (ii) Decision Record of Cabinet held on 11 June 2007.

NAME OF FORUM: Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: The Performance and Operation of Private Sector Rented Accommodation and Landlords in Hartlepool

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: Cabinet on 11 June 2007

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(a)	That before any actions are taken to improve the operation and management of the private rented sector an assessment of their impact be undertaken.	Impact assessment to be undertaken once proposed actions in relation to recommendations b) to q) have been completed.	Penny Garner-Carpenter	End March 08
	Selective Licensing			
(b)	That prior to the introduction of any Selective Licensing Scheme in Hartlepool an evaluation be undertaken of:- (i) Its feasibility and benefits; (ii) The level of staffing and financial resources required for its effective operation; and	Discussions to be held with Local Authorities already successful in obtaining CLG approval for selective licensing schemes	Joanne Burnley/ John Smalley	End Sept 07

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

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		Information to be collated in support of an application (or otherwise) for selective licensing designation.	Joanne Burnley/ John Smalley	End Nov 07
	(iii) The practicalities of operating the existing Voluntary Registration Scheme alongside any Selective Licensing and Tenant Referencing Schemes.	Prepare a report on how the existing voluntary scheme may work in conjunction with tenant referencing and selective licensing and the benefits of doing so.	Joanne Burnley/ John Smalley	End Nov 07
	Landlord Accreditation Scheme			
(c)	That the introduction of an incentive scheme to encourage landlords to become members of the accreditation scheme be further explored.	Information to be gathered from other scheme operators about incentives offered and how they complement their scheme. Prepare a report on potential schemes and likely costs. Consult existing scheme members to assess take up.	Ken Natt	End Nov 07
(d)	That the provision of tenant and landlord information packs as part of the accreditation scheme be explored.	Produce a model information pack and assess the financial implications of introducing this into the accreditation scheme.	Ken Natt	End Sept 07
(e)	That an assessment of staffing requirements to enable the effective provision, and expansion, of the Landlord Accreditation Scheme be undertaken.	Prepare a report on the operation and effectiveness of the accreditation scheme. Identify possible improvements to the effectiveness of the scheme. Assess additional resources required to make the accreditation scheme more effective.	Joanne Burnley	End Nov 07

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	Tenant Referencing Scheme			
(f)	That a Tenant Referencing Scheme be implemented within Hartlepool and the practicalities of its operation alongside the proposed Selective Licensing and Accreditation Schemes be explored.	Ensure best practice and lessons learned by other authorities are included in HBC's scheme. Establish tenant referencing scheme procedures, linking to accreditation and selective licensing as and when appropriate Implement Tenant Referencing Scheme	Sally Forth	End Aug 07 End Dec 07 End Jan 08
	Partnership working with outside agencies/bodies			
(g)	That partnership working be developed further to ensure the success of future initiatives to deal with problems associated with the private rented sector.	Continue the development of the partnership with the Landlord Forum. Explore possible links with other organisations involved with the private rented sector.	Ken Natt	End Dec 07
(h)	That ways of assisting the NDC to identify alternative funding sources to ensure the continuation of its Bond Guarantee scheme be explored.	Provide assistance in identifying sources of funding for the Bond Guarantee Scheme.	Penny Garner-Carpenter	End Dec 07
	Supported Accommodation			
(i)	That further work be undertaken to identify ways of increasing the level of supported housing in Hartlepool and/or 'floating support' in order to meet demand.	Work to be undertaken by SP team to maximise available funding through reviews of existing services.	Pam Twells, SP Lead Officer	End March 08

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(j)	That in dealing with planning applications for the provision of supported housing ways of better publicising accurate details of applications be explored in order to prevent the creation of misapprehensions.	Establish procedures for working with partners to ensure that timely and extensive consultation with residents and members is undertaken as applications are considered, ensuring that statutory guidelines on consultation within the planning processes are followed.	Penny Garner-Carpenter	End March 08
	Hartlepool Landlord Association			
(k)	That further work be undertaken with the newly formed Hartlepool Landlords Association in relation to:- (i) The promotion of partnership working, in particular the inclusion of a Hartlepool Borough Council representative on its board; and (ii) The development of its code of conduct, role and activities.	Discussions to be held with the Hartlepool Landlords Association regarding HBC representation on its board. Offer assistance to the Landlords Association in the development of its code of conduct, role and activities.	Ken Natt	End Dec 07
	Registered Social Landlords			
(l)	That the development of a working relationship between Registered Social Landlords and the private rented sector for the sharing of management services be explored.	Explore the types of services that could be offered by RSLs to private landlords to improve/ enhance management. Identify the level of interest of RSLs to take on this work.	John Smalley	End Jan 08

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(m)	That an evaluation of the effectiveness of Registered Social Landlords advice to prospective tenants in terms of their allocation policies be explored.	Carry out an audit of the advice given regarding allocation policies (jointly with HH & HBC as there is a joint allocation policy) Evaluate the findings of the audit Work with the RSLs to improve advice where the need is identified.	Lynda Igoe	End Dec 07 End March 08 End Sept 08
	Fair Rents and Discretionary Payments			
(n)	That the Authority explores a mechanism by which to lobby the Rent Office and Central Government in relation to the requirement of realistic rent assessments.	Explore the options available for lobbying Government and the Rent Service.	John Smalley	End Nov 07
(o)	That a review be undertaken of the process for the award of Discretionary Payments with particular reference to:- (i) The possible inclusion of a Housing Division representative on the Discretionary Payments Panel; and (ii) The practicalities of transferring responsibility for the award of discretionary payments to the Housing Division with input from Housing Benefits.	Negotiations between Department of Regeneration & Planning & Finance Department to decide on the future allocation of discretionary payments	Penny Garner-Carpenter	End Mar 08

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(p)	That the current budgetary allocation for Discretionary Payments be reviewed to more truly reflect demand.	Carry out a review of the demand for Discretionary Payments and its impact on budget allocation.	Penny Garner-Carpenter	End Mar 08
	Tenant, Resident and Landlord Support			
(q)	That further work is undertaken to more widely publicise the advice service available for residents, tenants and landlords through the local authority.	Audit of literature and information available to be carried out. Identify ways of extending advice availability Implement publicity as identified above	Penny Garner-Carpenter	End Dec 07 End Jan 08 End Feb 08

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

6 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum to consider whether any item within the attached version of the Executive's Forward Plan (relating to decisions within the remit of the Regeneration and Planning Services Department) should be considered by this Forum.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 One of the main duties of Scrutiny is to hold the Executive to account by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Forward Plan) and to decide whether value can be added to the decision by the Scrutiny process in advance of the decision being made. This would not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.2 As you are aware, the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee (SCC) has delegated powers to manage the work of Scrutiny, as it thinks fit, and if appropriate can exercise or delegate to individual Scrutiny Forums. Consequently, SCC has been monitoring the Executive's Forward Plan on behalf of Scrutiny and delegating decisions to individual Forums where it has felt it appropriate.
- 2.3 At the meeting of SCC on 29 June 2007 Members suggested that to enable more detailed consideration of the Forward Plan, it be disseminated departmentally and reported to the appropriate Scrutiny Forum on a quarterly basis with Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee continuing to receive the whole document.
- 2.4 As such, a version (relating to the Regeneration and Planning Services Department) of the the Executive's Forward Plan is attached at **Appendix 1** for the Forum's information and for Members to decide whether value can be added to the decision by the Scrutiny process.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum considers the content of the Executive's Forward Plan.

CONTACT OFFICER

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.



HARTLEPOOL
BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

AUGUST 2007 – NOVEMBER 2007

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The law requires the executive of the local authority to publish in advance, a programme of its work in the coming four months including information about key decisions that it expects to make. It is updated monthly.
- 1.2 The executive means the Mayor and those Councillors the Mayor has appointed to the Cabinet.
- 1.3 Key decisions are those which significantly modify the agreed annual budget of the Council or its main framework of policies, those which initiate new spending proposals in excess of £100,000 and those which can be judged to have a significant impact on communities within the town. A full definition is contained in Article 13 of the Council's Constitution.
- 1.4 Key decisions may be made by the Mayor, the Cabinet as a whole, individual Cabinet members or nominated officers. The approach to decision making is set out in the scheme of delegation which is agreed by the Mayor and set out in full in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

2. **FORMAT OF THE FORWARD PLAN**

- 2.1 The plan is arranged in sections according to the Department of the Council which has the responsibility for advising the executive on the relevant topic:

Part 1	Chief Executive's Department	CE
Part 2	Adult & Community Services Department	ACS
Part 3	Children's Services Department	CS
Part 4	Neighbourhood Services Department	NS
Part 5	Regeneration and Planning Department	RP

- 2.2 Each section includes information on the development of the main policy framework and the budget of the Council where any of this work is expected to be undertaken during the period in question. In this instance only Part 5 of the Plan is included below.
- 2.3 It sets out in as much detail as is known at the time of its preparation, the programme of key decisions. This includes information about the nature of the decision, who will make the decisions, who will be consulted and by what means and the way in which any interested party can make representations to the decision-maker.

3. **DECISIONS MADE IN PRIVATE**

- 3.1 Most key decisions will be made in public at a specified date and time.
- 3.2 A small number of key decisions, for reasons of commercial or personal confidentiality, will be made in private and the public will be excluded from any sessions while such decisions are made. Notice will still be given about the intention

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3.3 to make such decisions, but wherever possible the Forward Plan will show that the decision will be made in private session.

3.4 Some sessions will include decisions made in public and decisions made in private. In such cases the public decisions will be made at the beginning of the meeting to minimise inconvenience to members of the public and the press.

4. URGENT DECISIONS

4.1 Although every effort will be made to include all key decisions in the Forward Programme, it is inevitable for a range of reasons that some decisions will need to be taken at short notice so as to prevent their inclusion in the Forward Plan. In such cases a minimum of 5 days public notice will be given before the decision is taken.

4.2 In rare cases it may be necessary to take a key decision without being able to give 5 days notice. The Executive is only able to do this with the agreement of the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee or the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the local authority. (Scrutiny committees have the role of overseeing the work of the Executive.)

5. PUBLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

5.1 All decisions which have been notified in the Forward Plan and any other key decisions made by the Executive, will be recorded and published as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision is taken.

5.2 The Council's constitution provides that key decisions will not be implemented until a period of 3 days has elapsed after the decision has been published. This allows for the exceptional cases when a scrutiny committee may 'call in' a decision of the Executive to consider whether it should be reviewed before it is implemented. 'Call in' may arise exceptionally when a Scrutiny Committee believes that the Executive has failed to make a decision in accordance with the principles set out in the Council's constitution (Article 13); or that the decision falls outside the Council's Policy Framework; or is not wholly in accordance within the Council's budget.

6. DETAILS OF DECISION MAKERS

6.1 Names and titles of those people who make key decisions either individually or collectively will be set out in Appendix A once they are determined.

7. TIMETABLE OF KEY DECISIONS

7.1 The timetable as expected at the time of preparation of the forward plan is set out in Appendix B. Confirmation of the timing in respect of individual decisions can be obtained from the relevant contact officer closer to the time of the relevant meeting. Agenda papers are available for inspection at the Civic Centre 5 days before the relevant meeting.

PART FIVE - REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES

DEPARTMENT

A. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. THE PLANS AND STRATEGIES WHICH TOGETHER COMPRISE THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East is currently under preparation. A Public Examination was held between 7th March and 7th April, 2006. The Panel appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the Examination in Public (EiP) submitted its report in July 2006 and this was published for information only. The report, which can be downloaded from the Government Office website (www.go-ne.gov.uk), was reported to Cabinet and the Hartlepool Partnership in October 2006, details of which were reported to Cabinet and the Hartlepool Partnership in October 2006.

The Secretary of State has now considered the Panel recommendations and the representations made on the draft revision RSS, and proposes to make changes to the RSS before finally publishing it. (Report detailing proposed changes available from the GO-NE website – www.go-ne.gov.uk)

Because of the various recommendations from the Panel, Government has decided to provide a two stage consultation period. The first stage will last for ten weeks (deadline for responses 6th August 2007) covering the majority of the proposed changes and a report on these will be submitted to Cabinet in July.

There will then be a second period of consultation (8 weeks) on any changes resulting from certain additional information the Secretary of State has requested from the North East Assembly, on housing allocations and major employment sites.

This will extend the overall timetable for the RSS which is now not anticipated to be adopted until February 2008.

The Hartlepool Local Plan review has now been completed, the new plan being adopted by Council on the 13th April 2006.

With the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, a new development plan system has come into force. There are still two tiers of development plan, but in due course the Regional Spatial Strategy will replace the structure plan and development plan documents contained within a local development framework will replace the local plan. However, the new local plan will be saved for a period of at least three years after adoption.

The Tees Valley Structure Plan was 'saved' for a period of three years from September 2004 but application has to be made to the Secretary of State to save policies after September 2007 pending the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

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The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee therefore agreed a schedule of Structure Plan policies to be saved for referral to the Secretary of State and this schedule was endorsed by Cabinet and Council in April 2007.

The Local Development Framework will comprise a 'portfolio' of local development documents which will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the borough. Local development documents will comprise:

- a) Development plan documents – (DPDs) – these are part of the development plan and must include
 - o A core strategy setting out the long term spatial vision for the area and the strategic policies and proposals to deliver the vision
 - o DPDs on Site specific allocations and policies
 - o Generic development control policies relating to the vision and strategy set out in the core strategy, and
 - o Proposals Map
- b) Supplementary planning documents

In addition, the Local Development Framework will include Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents. Cabinet on the 12th April 2006 endorsed the principle of the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee taking responsibility for the initial preparation of Joint Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents on behalf of the Borough Council and the other four Tees Valley authorities. In April Cabinet was asked to endorse 'The Issues Options Report' and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for public consultation between 21st May and 30th June.

Work has started on two supplementary planning documents (SPD's), one on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans and the other on Planning Obligations. Drafts of these SPDs will be presented to Cabinet for approval for public consultation purposes in July and in October respectively.

Initial preparatory work has also started on The Core Strategy DPD, and various studies including the Local Housing Assessment and the Open Space and Sports Facilities Audit which will provide the evidence base for developing the issues and options for the Core Strategy are currently being undertaken. Regular reports will be made to Cabinet on progress on the Core Strategy and approval will be sought for the Issues and Options Report for public consultation in September/October 2007. As the key spatial planning objectives for Hartlepool to be set out in the Core Strategy should be fully aligned with the priorities identified in the Community Strategy, it is proposed to co-ordinate this consultation with the consultation on the final draft of the Community Strategy.

The other documents within the local development framework which must be prepared but which do not form part of the development plan are:

- a) Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how and when the Council will consult on planning policies and planning applications;

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- b) Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out a rolling programme for the preparation of local development documents, and
 - c) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) assessing the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which current planning policies are being implemented.
- a) The Statement of Community Involvement was adopted by the Council on the 26th October, 2006.
- b) The first Local Development Scheme (LDS) as approved by Cabinet came into effect on 15th April 2005. The Scheme has been updated annually and the most recent scheme came into effect on 28th March 2007.

The Local Development Scheme will continue to be updated annually as necessary to take into account completion of documents, the need to revise timetables and the need to include new documents.

- c) The first two Annual Monitoring Reports (for 2004-5 and 2005-06) as agreed by Cabinet are available on the Hartlepool website. Cabinet agreement to the third AMR covering the period 2006-07 will be sought in November 2007.

2. THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Background

Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 places on principal Local Authorities a duty to prepare "Community Strategies" for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas, and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK.

Government guidance issued in December 2000 stated that Community Strategies should meet four objectives. They must:

- Allow local communities (based upon geography and/or interest to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities;
- Co-ordinate the actions of the Council, and of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally;
- Focus and shape existing and future activity of those organisations so that they effectively meet community needs and aspirations; and
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development both locally and more widely, with local goals and priorities relating, where appropriate, to regional, national and even global aims.

It also stated that a Community Strategy must have four key components:

- A long-term vision for the area focusing on the outcomes that are to be achieved;
- An action plan identifying shorter-term priorities and activities that will contribute to the achievement of long-term outcomes; (Hartlepool's Local Area Agreement)

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- A shared commitment to implement the action plan and proposals for doing so;
- Arrangements for monitoring the implementation plan, for periodically reviewing the Community Strategy and for reporting progress to local communities. (LAA Delivery and Improvement Plan)

The Hartlepool Partnership, the town's Local Strategic Partnership, and the Council agreed a draft Community Strategy in April 2001 and adopted a final version in April 2002.

Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Review 2006

The current Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is part of the Community Strategy though published as a separate 70 page document. The Strategy sets out the boundaries of Hartlepool's disadvantaged neighbourhoods – and establishes a Neighbourhood Renewal Area. Neighbourhood Renewal is about narrowing the gap between conditions in the disadvantaged communities and the rest of the town. It is therefore important that the Neighbourhood Renewal Area is kept as tightly defined as possible and is based upon the statistical level of disadvantage.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy sets out the intention to prepare Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs) in the Borough's disadvantaged Neighbourhoods and provides a policy framework for this development. These NAPs are now in place and provide a more detailed policy framework for improvements in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods than was available in 2002.

Community Strategy Review

Hartlepool's 2002 Community Strategy set out a timetable for review in five years. In line with this agreement, a Community Strategy Review 2006 was launched on 5th May 2006.

The timetable and structure for the Community Strategy Review 2006 is shown below:

	<u>Timetable</u>	<u>Task</u>
Phase 1	5 th May 06 – 31 st July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review current Strategy and prepare a new Strategy
Phase 2	September – 17 th November 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members' Seminar• Cabinet 11th September• Hartlepool Partnership 5th September• Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee 15th September
Phase 3	January – August 2007 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members' Seminar 12th September• Prepare Environmental Report• Consult on findings• Publication of 3rd draft• Consultation 7th September – 9th

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November

- Cabinet 3rd September
- Hartlepool Partnership 7th September
- Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee 14th September
- Members Seminar – to be arranged

Phase 4 November -
December 2007

- Cabinet
- Hartlepool Partnership
- Council

The 1st consultation draft of the revised Community Strategy, *Hartlepool's Ambition*, was published in September 2006. Consultation on the draft ran until 17th November. The revised strategy builds on the 2002 strategy and sets out a revised policy framework for Hartlepool. Key revisions include:

- The strategy now incorporates the previously separately published Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (2002) and the Sustainable Development Strategy (2001);
- The vision has been revised along with many of the Priority Aims and Objectives;
- Housing and Environment are established as Priority Aims in their own right and as a result the number of priority aims has increased from 7 to 8;
- Changes to the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy boundary, including the addition of the disadvantaged part of Throston ward.

The feedback from this consultation demonstrated broad support for the Strategy and agreement with the vision was at high at over 90%.

The next stage of the review is to carry out a number of appraisals on the draft strategy to highlight practical ways to enhance the positive aspects of the Strategy and to remove or minimise any negative impacts. The appraisals outlined were:

- Sustainability Appraisal
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (2001/42/EC)
- Health Impact Assessment
- Section 17
- Rural Proofing
- Diversity Impact Assessment.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

Consultation on the Sustainable Appraisal Scoping Report for the Community Strategy and Local Development Documents is underway and runs until 10th August. Copies of the consultation draft are available on the Hartlepool Partnership website www.hartlepoolpartnership.co.uk by following the Community Strategy Review 2007 links. The scoping report covers the first main stage (Stage A) of the SA process which involves setting the context of the SA, developing the SA framework, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.

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The SA will incorporate the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and will be undertaken in line with guidance issued by ODPM (2005) in Sustainability Appraisal of Regional /Spatial Strategies and Local Development documents.

The scoping report covers

- Identifying other relevant policies, plans, programmes and SA objectives
- Collating baseline information
- Identifying sustainability issues
- Developing the SA framework

It has been agreed that a corporate approach to preparing sustainability appraisals will be carried out to ensure a consistent approach across the Authority and to avoid duplication of effort.

Following the results of the assessments, a third draft of the Strategy will be published. It is anticipated that this will be available in autumn 2007.

3. **LOCAL AGENDA 21 STRATEGY**

Hartlepool Borough Council agreed its Local Sustainable Development Strategy (Local Agenda 21 Strategy) in January 2001. The Strategy aimed to:

“achieve improvements in the quality of our lives without causing irreversible damage to the environment or preventing our children from being able to enjoy the benefits we have today”.

In 2005 the Government published Securing the Future - UK Government sustainable development strategy, updating the 1999 Strategy. The new Strategy outlines a pivotal role for local authorities and their partners, through Local Strategic Partnerships, in delivering sustainable communities. The Strategy states that:

Making the vision of sustainable communities a reality at the local level means sending the right signals to local Government about the importance of sustainable development, supporting strong local leadership and developing the right skills and knowledge. Government will work with its partners to develop toolkits and other materials to support Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in developing and delivering Sustainable Community Strategies which help deliver sustainable development in the UK.

In response to this guidance, the revised Community Strategy incorporates a revised local Sustainable Development Strategy. As a result it is proposed to remove the Local Agenda 21 Strategy from the Council's Budget and Policy Framework at the point when the revised Community Strategy is adopted by Council.

4. THE ANNUAL YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

The Annual Youth Justice Plan for 2008/09 will be required to be submitted to the Youth Justice Board by end of April 2008. An initial report on performance in 2007/08 will be prepared for Cabinet to consider in early 2008. After this, consultation with partners and stakeholders will be carried out, in addition to consideration by the appropriate Council Scrutiny Forum. Cabinet will then consider a draft Youth Justice Plan 2008/09, prior to approval being sought from the Council in April 2008.

5. CRIME, DISORDER AND DRUGS STRATEGY 2008-2011

The Police and Justice Act 2006 has amended the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to require the production of a three year strategy which is reviewed and updated annually. The strategy and annual updates will be informed by the results of an annual Strategic Intelligence Assessment, where data and intelligence will be analysed.

The first Strategic Intelligence Assessment will be conducted by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership during October and November 2007. A first draft three year Strategy will be reported to Cabinet in December 2007 or January 2008. Consultation with partners, stakeholders, and the appropriate Council Scrutiny Forum will be undertaken during January and February 2008. Cabinet will consider a final draft strategy in early March, prior to approval being sought from Council before end of March 2008.

B SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS

DECISION REFERENCE: RP89/05 DEVELOPMENT AT HARTLEPOOL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Nature of the decision

Cabinet are requested to consider further details of the HCFE expansion and development plans, including the potential proposed land take at the Council owned, Albert Street Car Park, design issues, funding sources and project timetable. The report will also provide details of the most recent HCFE Property Strategy, due to be completed June 2006, which will shape the College's future development options.

Who will make the decision?

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in September 2007, or following the completion of the HCFE Property Strategy.

Who will be consulted and how?

Officers have been working closely with Hartlepool College of Further Education (HCFE) and other partner organisations including University of Teesside and the Learning and Skills Council.

Information to be considered by the decision makers

The report will expand on information presented in two previous reports to Cabinet on the 04/04/05 and 22/07/05, and also extracts from the Town Centre Strategy, in order to progress the development of the College scheme.

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone 01429 523401, email peter.scott@hartlepool.gov.uk

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Peter Scott as above.

DECISION REFERENCE: RP 115/06 HARTLEPOOL COMPACT REVIEW

Nature of the decision

To agree a revised Compact between the Council and the Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector

The Compact will build on the Compact previously agreed by Cabinet in January 2003 and the findings of the Best Value Review of Strengthening Communities, the Strategic Improvement Plan for which was agreed by Cabinet in September 2006.

Who will make the decision?

The Compact is to be approved by Cabinet and will need to be prepared and agreed in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Timing of the decision

Early drafts of the revised Compact could be available by September 2007. However the formal Cabinet decision making process thereafter will formally be dictated by the Project Plan timetable (see below).

Who will be consulted and how?

A Project Plan for reviewing, revising and re-launching the Hartlepool Compact will be drawn up with the Voluntary and Community Sector including the proposed consultation mechanisms. Preliminary discussions on the proposed Compact Review have already commenced with the Hartlepool and Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) and will be extended to the Community Network including involvement of Council Members and Officers.

Information to be considered by the decision makers

A draft version of the proposed new Compact will be prepared for consideration by Cabinet. The revised Compact will represent a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the voluntary & community sector in Hartlepool concerning working relations and priority commitments

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration & Planning Services, Regeneration & Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone: 01429 523401, Email: peter.scott@hartlepool.gov.uk

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration, Regeneration & Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone: 01429 523597, Email: geoff.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk

DECISION REFERENCE: NS104/06 SELECTIVE LICENSING OF PRIVATELY RENTED HOUSES

Nature of the decision

To consider the merits of introducing selective licensing for landlords and managers or privately rented houses.

Who will make the decision?

The Cabinet will make the decision.

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in September 2007.

Who will be consulted and how?

- Residents in the North Central and West Central regeneration areas – individual questionnaires and drop-in sessions.
- Residents in appropriate areas of private housing outside those areas – individual questionnaires.
- Residents groups through presentations at their meetings plus completion of questionnaire on behalf of the group.
- Landlords – questionnaires.
- Agencies – NDC, Hartlepool Revival, Housing Hartlepool.
- HBC sections dealing with housing and anti-social behaviour.
- Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum is currently investigating the performance and operation of private sector rented accommodation and landlords. Recommendations are expected to be finalised by spring 2007.

Information to be considered by the decision makers

- The data concerning the criteria which must be met to designate selective licensing, i.e. to show that an area is in 'low demand' or likely to be in 'low demand', or that significant or persistent anti-social behaviour, requires action through licensing.
- The information collected from residents, landlords and officers on the extent of the problems and the suitability of selective licensing to tackle them.
- Formulate a guide as to which areas might be appropriate for licensing.

How to make representation

Representations should be made to John Smalley, Principal EHO (Housing), Regeneration & Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel: 01429 523322. Email: john.smalley@hartlepool.gov.uk

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Joanne Burnley, Senior EHO (Housing), Regeneration & Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel: 01429 523324. Email: joanne.burnley@hartlepool.gov.uk

DECISION REFERENCE: RP 119/07 OWTON NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN (NAP) UPDATE

Nature of the decision

To endorse the Ow ton Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) Update.

Each of the Neighbourhood Action Plans across the tow n (Dyke House/Stranton/Grange, Burbank, Rift House/Burn Valley, Owton, Rossmere and North Hartlepool) are being updated, in the order in w hich they w ere developed. In addition to this, it should be noted that the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme has developed a NAP for the NDC area, making seven in total across the tow n.

The Ow ton Neighbourhood Action Plan is the fourth NAP to be updated following the completion of the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange NAP Update in November 2006, the completion of the Burbank NAP Update in January 2007 and the anticipated completion of the Rift House/Burn Valley NAP Update in June 2007.

Who will make the decision?

The decision w ill be made by the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder.

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in October 2007.

Who will be consulted and how?

The first draft of the Neighbourhood Action Plan Update w ill be developed following the initial community consultation event w hich is to be held in July 2007. The community consultation event w ill be crucial in identifying the community's priority concerns and the actions required to address the concerns. Household survey data (MORI 2006) and other baseline data and statistics w ill also be examined in order to provide an understanding of the conditions in the Ow ton area. These statistics w ill also be included w ithin the plan.

To complement this, comprehensive consultation w ill also be undertaken to ensure comments are received from key stakeholders and residents on the first draft of the NAP. Further consultation w ill include:-

- Delivering a new sletter to every household in the area;
- Visiting Residents Associations in the Ow ton area;
- Visiting the Ow ton Forum;
- Visiting Youth Groups operating throughout the area;

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- Holding online consultations at : <http://consultation.hartlepool.gov.uk>
- Holding community drop-in sessions at various community buildings;
- Visiting and working with pupils from local schools;
- Liaising with Hartlepool Community Network and Housing Hartlepool;
- Meeting with key service providers including; Hartlepool Borough Council Officers, Housing Hartlepool, Cleveland Police, Voluntary/Community Groups, Ward Councillors and representatives from the Theme Partnerships; and
- Taking the first draft of the plan to the Owton Forum, Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder, South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum and the Hartlepool Partnership for comment.

The final draft will then be circulated for comment to ensure that all amendments have been incorporated and reflected accurately.

Information to be considered by the decision makers

A copy of the Owton Neighbourhood Action Plan Update along with a summary document highlighting the priority concerns, and the actions to address these will be available for consideration by the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder. The Owton NAP Update will also be considered for endorsement by the Owton Forum, the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum and the Hartlepool Partnership.

The document will be structured in a way that is intended to give a clear picture of the strong themes running through the Neighbourhood Action Plan back to the Community Strategy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

The format of the document will differ slightly from that of the original Owton NAP which was endorsed in July 2005, as the template has been amended as a result of the findings of the NAP Review as well as taking on board suggestions for improvement from service providers who refer to the plan on a regular basis. The Rift House/Burn Valley NAP Update can be cited as an example of a NAP which has been developed using this format.

The introductory section will continue to cover the background to NAPs, a brief description of the Owton neighbourhood, how the Owton NAP Update has been developed, and a summary of the community's main concerns.

The following section will then comprise the seven theme areas:- Jobs and Economy; Lifelong Learning and Skills; Health and Care; Community Safety; Environment and Housing; Culture and Leisure and Strengthening Communities. Each theme will identify the key statistics, the strengths and weaknesses and the gaps in service delivery which need to be addressed.

Following this will be a table which identifies the community's priority concerns, the actions that are required to address these concerns, a column to identify whether actions are short term (within one year), medium term (between one and five years) or long term (five + years), the organisations who need to be involved in delivering the actions, possible funding

APPENDIX 1

and resources and how the actions will contribute to addressing strategic targets (such as the Local Area Agreement Indicators).

The next section will then outline the key resources and programmes delivered in the area / accessible to residents of the Owton area. These will follow the seven theme areas identified in the paragraph above. The last section of the plan will be a Jargon Buster and a Summary Document.

Neighbourhood Action Plans are important in encouraging local people and organisations to work together to narrow the gap between the most deprived wards and the rest of the country, and they should be influential in the future allocation of resources. The objective of the NAP is to integrate policies at the local level to improve the way that services are provided.

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel. 01429 523401, e-mail. peter.scott@hartlepool.gov.uk.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Gemma Clough, Principal Regeneration Officer, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel. 01429 523598, e-mail. gemma.clough@hartlepool.gov.uk.

DECISION REFERENCE: RP121/07 CHOICE BASED LETTING SCHEME

Nature of the decision

To provide up to date information to the Portfolio Holder on the development and implementation of Choice Based Lettings in Hartlepool and participation in the sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme for the Tees Valley.

Who will make the decision?

The decision will be made by the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder.

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in August 2007.

Who will be consulted and how?

Consultation is on-going with reference to this scheme in the Housing Strategy and has included reports and presentations to members, Housing Hartlepool Board, Housing Hartlepool's Tenants Panel and the Housing Partnership.

Information to be considered by the decision makers

It is a statutory requirement to have a CBL scheme in operation by 2010 and the Council has already agreed to be involved in a Tees Valley wide scheme. Investment has already been incurred in participation in a sub-regional scheme for the Tees Valley. The government is championing the development of regional and sub-regional schemes.

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Lynda Igoe, Housing Advice Manager, Regeneration and Planning Services, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Civic Centre, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY. Tel. 01429 523338, e-mail. lynda.igoe@hartlepool.gov.uk

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Lynda Igoe as above.

DECISION REFERENCE: RP122/07 SUB REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

Nature of the decision

To approve the Sub Regional Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

Who will make the decision?

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in August 2007. Each LA will be asked to approve the strategy prior to submission to GONE and Regional Housing Board

Who will be consulted and how?

The Sub Regional Housing Strategy is a combination of each local authority housing strategy and as such has been the subject of considerable consultation (particularly around housing market renewal). Further consultation is taking place with partners across the sub region

Information to be considered by the decision makers

The Sub region has been asked to provide a sub regional housing strategy and costed action plan prior to the Regional Housing Board making decisions regarding allocations of the Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP), which is the allocation of housing capital grant funds.

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Penny Garner-Carpenter, Strategic Housing Manager, Regeneration and Planning Services, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel. 01429 284117, e-mail. penny.garner-carpenter@hartlepool.gov.uk

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Penny Garner-Carpenter as above.

DECISION REFERENCE: RP123/07 TEES VALLEY MULTI AREA AGREEMENT

Nature of the decision

Agreement to the proposed Tees Valley Multi Area.

Agreement on sub-regional funding for economic development, transport and housing.

Who will make the decision?

The decision will be made by Cabinet

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in September 2007

Who will be consulted and how?

Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnerships

Information to be considered by the decision makers

The Tees Valley Multi Area Agreement document prepared by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit which will include agreed outcomes to measure progress on regionally funded schemes delivered through Tees Valley Unlimited on economic development, transport and housing.

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel. 01429 523401, e-mail. peter.scott@hartlepool.gov.uk.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Peter Scott as above..

DECISION REFERENCE: RP124/07 TEES VALLEY METRO SCHEME

Nature of the decision

Agreement in principle to HBC's involvement in Tees Valley Metro Scheme with associated broad funding commitment.

Who will make the decision?

The decision is to be made by Cabinet

Timing of the decision

The decision is expected to be made in September 2007

Who will be consulted and how?

Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership

Information to be considered by the decision makers

Proposals for the Tees Valley Metro Scheme prepared by Tees Valley Regeneration including costs and benefits, arrangements and phasing.

How to make representation

Representations can be made in writing to Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel. 01429 523401, e-mail. peter.scott@hartlepool.gov.uk.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from Peter Scott as above..

APPENDIX A

DETAILS OF DECISION MAKERS

THE CABINET

Many decisions will be taken collectively by the Cabinet.

- The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
- Councillor Pamela Hargreaves
- Councillor Ged Hall
- Councillor Cath Hill
- Councillor Victor Tumilty
- Councillor Robbie Payne
- Councillor Peter Jackson

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Members of the Cabinet have individual decision making powers according to their identified responsibilities.

Regeneration and Liveability Portfolio	-	The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
Performance Portfolio	-	Councillor Pamela Hargreaves, Deputy Mayor
Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio	-	Councillor Ged Hall
Children's Services Portfolio	-	Councillor Cath Hill
Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio	-	Councillor Victor Tumilty
Finance and Efficiency Portfolio	-	Councillor Robbie Payne
Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio	-	Councillor Peter Jackson

APPENDIX B

TIMETABLE OF KEY DECISIONS

Decisions are shown on the timetable at the earliest date at which they may be expected to be made.

1. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN AUGUST 2007

1.1 DATE NOT YET DETERMINED

RP121/07	CHOICE BASED LETTING SCHEME	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
RP122/07	SUB REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY	CABINET

2. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN SEPTEMBER 2007

2.1 DATE NOT YET DETERMINED

RP123/07	TEES VALLEY MULTI AREA AGREEMENT	CABINET
RP124/07	TEES VALLEY METRO SCHEME	CABINET

3. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN OCTOBER 2007

3.1 DATE NOT YET DETERMINED

RP119/07	OWTON NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN (NAP) UPDATE	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
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4. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN NOVEMBER 2007

4.1 NONE

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

6 September 2007



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning

Subject The Availability of Good Quality Affordable
Social Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool –
Setting the Scene Report

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information to set the scene for the beginning of the Forum's investigation into 'Access to Good Quality Affordable Social Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool'.
- 1.2 To consider a definition of 'The Availability of Good Quality Affordable Social Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool'.

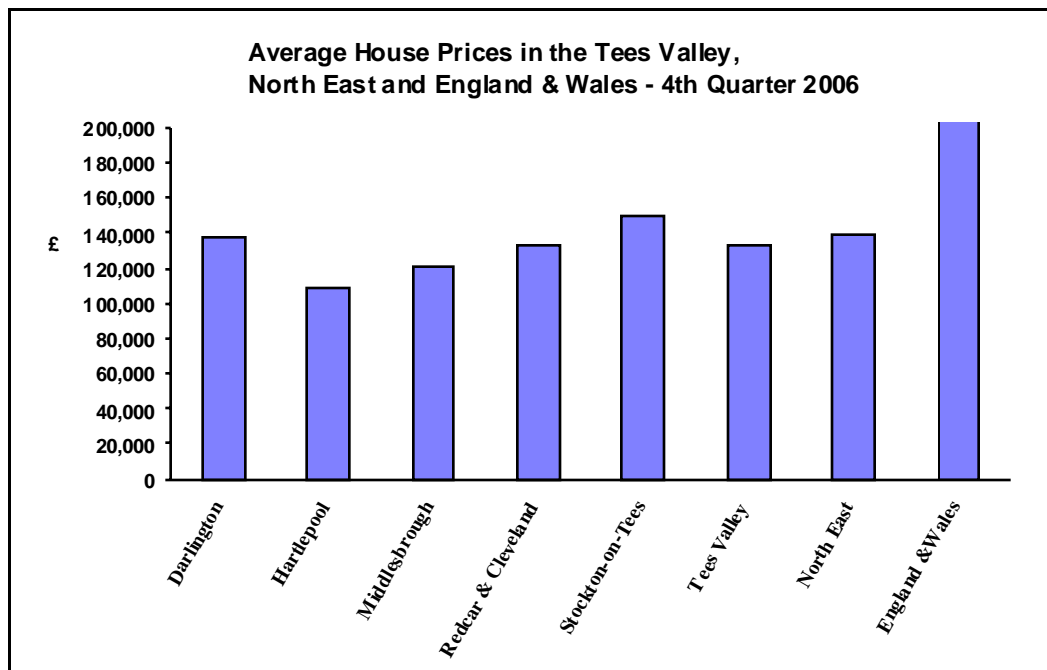
2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The real affordable housing issues that have recently emerged in Hartlepool need to be seen in the wider context. Average wage levels in Hartlepool are relatively high. Though house prices have increased significantly in Hartlepool they have not increased as much as in neighbouring authorities and in relative terms the area is still relatively affordable and is perceived as such by regional and national bodies. This is demonstrated by the maps below extracted from the Housing Green Paper comparing the position in 1999 and 2006 in terms of house prices to lower quartile earnings.
- 2.2 In the fourth quarter of 2006, the mean house price in Hartlepool was £108,500 against an average of £132,800 in the Tees Valley, £139,600 in the North East Region and £207,600 nationally (See Table 1). Dwellings in Hartlepool were therefore on average cheaper than in any of the other Tees Valley districts, 82% of the Tees Valley average and 52% of the national average.

**Average Price of Residential Sales Completed
October - December 2006****Table 1**

	Detached		Semi-Detached		Terraced		Flat / Maisonette		Total	
	Av. Price	No.	Av. Price	No.	Av. Price	No.	Av. Price	No.	Av. Price	No.
Hartlepool	214,646	66	122,363	153	75,845	268	99,703	41	108,527	528
Tees Valley	226,149	758	131,451	1,388	89,163	1,468	112,906	250	132,763	3,864
North East	239,853	-	138,426	-	108,055	-	111,690	-	139,618	-
England & Wales	313,144	-	187,717	-	163,749	-	189,695	-	207,573	-

Source TV JSU & Land Registry February 2007



- 2.3 The Joint Strategy Unit compared average house prices in the Tees Valley area to average earnings of full-time workers resident shows a crude 'affordability' index of 5.7 for the Tees Valley compared to 5.8 in the region and 7.0 nationally. This analysis concluded that "houses in the sub-region are more affordable than those in the North East as a whole because earnings are similar yet average house prices are lower. Nationally although earnings are higher than those in the sub-region the mean price of houses is substantially higher making houses even less affordable." (TV JSU Feb 2007)

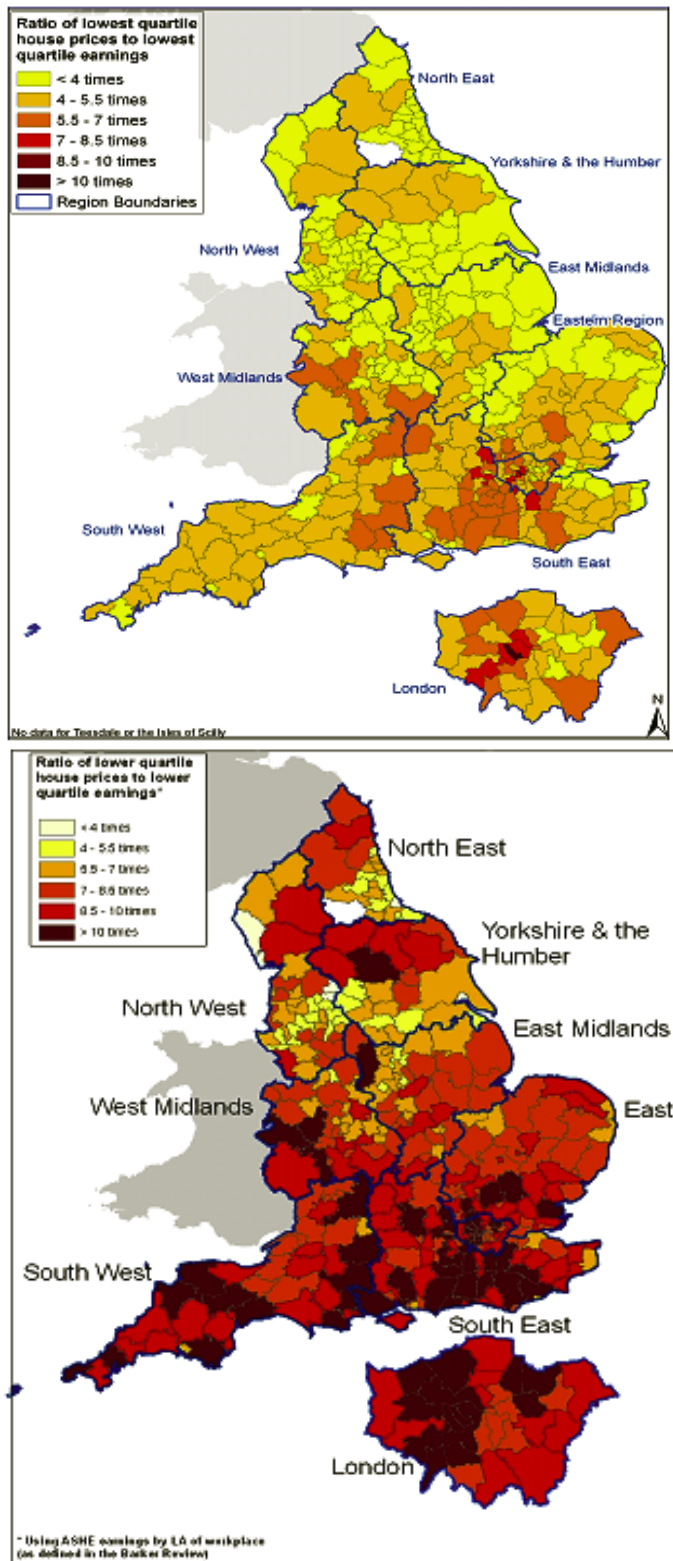
**Table 2 House Prices to Earnings by Residence Ratio
4th Quarter 2006**

	Mean House Prices All property types	Average Earnings of Full-time Employees 2005	Prices/Earnings Ratio
	£	£ per annum	
Darlington	137,000	22,400	6.1
Hartlepool	108,500	24,400	4.5
Middlesbrough	120,700	21,500	5.6
Redcar & Cleveland	132,800	22,400	5.9
Stockton-on-Tees	149,700	25,100	6.0
Tees Valley	132,800	23,400	5.7
North East	139,600	23,900	5.8
England & Wales	207,600	29,900	7.0

Source: Land Registry/ASHE

- 2.4 Nationally comparing lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings suggests that the ratio has increased from less than 4 in 1999 to 4-5.5 in 2006. (See maps below)

Ratio of House Prices to Earnings (lower quartile): 1999 and 2006



Source: CLG Analytical Services Directorate 'Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable' Housing Green Paper- DCLG (July 2007) Fig7 p19

3.0 A Summary of Hartlepool's Housing Market and the Council's Strategic Housing Role

3.1 The Hartlepool Housing Market

Hartlepool is a relatively self-contained market, with most people moving tending to remain within the Borough, though this is changing. However, recent trends suggest that more people are moving into Hartlepool than moving away, with in-migration particularly from Easington, Sunderland and Stockton. Primary market drivers are shown below.

Primary Driver	Attributes	Impact on overall demand through:
Demography	Changing no. of households, household structure, ethnicity	Natural Change
Economy	Jobs, income, activity rates, unemployment	Economic migration
Housing stock and aspirations	Quality vs aspirations, relative prices, accessibility, development programmes	Residential migration

3.2 The housing market in the town comprises relatively affluent and buoyant western and suburban areas, a relatively deprived town centre core and thriving new market areas, most notably the marina developments adjacent to the town centre. There is a degree of pressure in the current market evidenced by market demand exceeding supply in most areas, considerable uplift in house prices in the past 5 years, strong demand for private rented accommodation and limited capacity of the social rented sector with long waiting lists, low vacancy rates and reducing stock. There is strong demand for social rented houses, and this has intensified in recent years.

3.3 The town centre core area has a housing mix dominated by old smaller 2 and 3 bedroomed terraced properties and has experienced significant housing market turbulence over the last 10 years. In relative terms Hartlepool has a very high proportion of terraced stock (41% in 2001, as opposed to 32% for Tees Valley and 26% for England and Wales as a whole), and relatively smaller proportions of detached and semi-detached houses when compared to regional and national averages. A telling indicator in terms of establishing the quality of the overall housing stock is that over 60% of it is in Council Tax Band 'A', the lowest band. Many older housing areas in Hartlepool were identified as housing needing intervention as early as 1940s.

3.4 The Strategic Housing Role

The Council is the Housing Authority. The Strategic Housing role in Hartlepool is firmly rooted within the Government's agenda for achieving 'Sustainable Communities' and promoting successful, safe, and thriving neighbourhoods where people want to live. Housing is a key priority for the Council represented in the Environment and Housing theme of the Community Strategy. The Hartlepool Housing Strategy (2006) complements the key themes within the overall Community Strategy for the town and makes the necessary links to a range of other regional, sub-regional and local policies and plans.

3.5 The Housing Strategy has three main areas of focus which together will contribute to promoting sustainability in the broadest sense and ensure that we successfully deliver on the range of challenges that have been set:

- Addressing the housing regeneration challenge and dealing with issues of housing market imbalance and problems caused by low and changing demand for housing;
- Meeting and surpassing the national targets for Decent Homes standards; and
- Ensuring the housing and support needs of the most vulnerable in our town are met.

3.6 Actions to progress these priorities involve works on existing houses, e.g. selective demolition and rebuilding in the regeneration areas, targeting renewal assistance funding to support regeneration, renovation and repair of non-decent houses, and enabling elderly residents to continue living in their own homes. Enforcement of housing and public health legislation for private rented houses and initiatives on empty houses and fuel poverty assist this.

3.7 Action is also being taken to prevent homelessness, improve access into social housing, providing support to maintain tenancies, and improving the management of private rented housing. This includes grant activity and disabled facilities grants.

3.8 The Council, as a local housing authority, has a duty under the Housing Act 1985 not only to consider housing conditions but needs with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation. This requires up-to-date information on how the housing market is changing, and identifying gaps in current and future provision. Securing the funding, or enabling others to meet the needs identified is an important role.

- 3.9 The enabling role, working mainly with the RSLs, continues to be a high priority in providing new supported housing for vulnerable groups. The need for more general needs affordable housing is identified in the Housing Needs Assessment 2007 referred to later in this report. The Council's role will be to assist RSLs in the development of schemes for affordable housing and in the preparation of bids for capital to the Housing Corporation.

4.0 Details of the Government policy/guidance in relation to the provision of affordable accommodation, with particular reference to the social rented sector

- 4.1 A suite of documents set the policy context for the provision of affordable housing. With some of their key messages, these include the following:-
- 4.2 'Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable' Housing Green Paper- DCLG (July 2007).

This recent discussion paper is out to consultation until 15th October 2007. In this the Government sets out plans to work with partners to provide:

- More homes to meet growing demand;
- Well-designed greener homes, linked to good schools, transport and healthcare; and
- More affordable homes to buy or rent.

These plans envisage nationally levels of additional housing not seen for 40 years. This is seen to require a collaborative effort involving local communities, local authorities and their delivery partners; the home building industry, regional bodies, and Government and its agencies

- A new target of delivering 2 million homes by 2016 including 20,000 on surplus public sector land
- More affordable homes need to be supplied to help young people and families - a target of 70,000 more affordable homes a year by 2010-11
- Local authorities will be expected to identify enough land to deliver the homes needed in their area over the next 15 years by rapidly implementing new planning policy for housing
- Intensive assessment of housing land availability
- Exploring new methods of funding/providing social housing

4.3 “Housing” Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) DCLG (November 2006)

- Highlights the need to provide a variety of housing in terms of tenure, price and a mix of different households such as families with children, single persons households, and older people
- Local Planning Authorities were required to produce a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to identify the proportions of households likely to require market or affordable housing and to calculate the size, type and percentage of affordable housing needed per year for current and future occupiers
- PPS3 requires Local Planning Authorities to:
 - a) Set separate targets for social-rented and intermediate affordable housing.
 - b) Specify the size and type of affordable housing that is likely to be needed in particular locations
 - c) Set out a range of circumstances in which affordable housing will be required
 - d) Set out the approach to seeking developer contributions to facilitate the provision of affordable houses.

4.4 ‘Delivering Affordable Housing’ (November 2006) DCLG

- more high quality affordable housing within mixed sustainable communities to widen the opportunities for home ownership and offer greater quality, flexibility and choice to those who rent
- an increase in the provision of social rented housing
- encouraged the best possible use of planning obligations and other tools to improve delivery and to set ambitious but realistic affordable housing targets and thresholds that do not jeopardise the viability of sites
- creative use of their own resources for example by giving planning permission or other support including land or money to new providers

4.5 North East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Consultation Draft May 2007

- Affordable housing should meet local aspirations and be situated in locations where it is needed

- Local Planning Authorities will need to demonstrate that housing need exists and that mechanisms to retain the affordability of the housing in perpetuity are clearly established
- Encourages the use of planning obligations to achieve affordable housing

4.6 Local Policy

Additionally, some local policy in for example the Local Plan needs to be revised following rapid changes within the housing market in the town. The statutory plans process extended over a number of years and housing affordability has not been evidenced as being a major issue sub-regionally until very recently, in large part due to the relative abundance of low cost terraced housing, and a relatively large social housing stock. Local policy needs to be revised through the Local Development Framework (LDF)

- 4.7** Increasing demand for affordable housing has been driven in the main by sharply increasing house prices in recent years (in common with other areas, and particularly in relation to earnings growth over the same time period), as well as factors associated with a reducing social rented stock over time through Right to Buy, increased household formation, increasing in-migration into Hartlepool as well as localised pressures associated with the ongoing housing regeneration programme. Taken together these and related factors means that increasing the supply of new and high quality affordable housing has become a key strategic priority, both in Hartlepool and across the wider Tees Valley.

5.0. Agree a definition of good quality affordable rented accommodation in Hartlepool

The most authoritative definitions of affordable rented accommodation are included in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing 2006 (see above).

- 5.1** The definition of affordable includes “social rented” and “intermediate housing”, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Social rented housing is owned and managed by registered social landlords (RSLs, often also called housing associations), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

5.2 Affordable Housing Definition:

‘Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision’.

5.3 Social Rented Housing Definition:

Social rented housing is ‘rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. The proposals set out in the Three Year Review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented as policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Housing Corporation as a condition of grant.’

5.4 Intermediate Affordable Housing Definition:

Intermediate Affordable Housing is ‘housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products (e.g. HomeBuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.’

5.5 These definitions replace guidance given in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3)* and *DETR Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing*.

5.6 The definitions do not exclude homes provided by private sector bodies or provided without grant funding. Where such homes meet the definition above, they may be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing. Whereas, those homes that do not meet the definition, for example, ‘low cost market’ housing, may not be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing. There is further guidance on eligibility for affordable housing, recycling of subsidy, specific features of social rented and intermediate affordable housing and the application of the affordable housing definition, in particular with regard to the extent to which non-grant funded and private sector low cost housing products meet the definition in the Affordable Housing Policy Statement.

5.7 The terms ‘affordability’ and ‘affordable housing’ therefore have different meanings. ‘Affordability’ is a measure of whether housing may be afforded by certain groups of households. ‘Affordable

housing’ refers to particular products outside the main housing market.

6.0 Details of how good quality affordable rented accommodation is currently provided in Hartlepool

- 6.1 In terms of housing supply, Housing Hartlepool and the other RSLs (a total of 15) that operate in Hartlepool currently own and manage just under 10,000 properties, representing about 25% of the dwelling stock, down from over 28% in 2001. About 70% of these are owned and managed by Housing Hartlepool and were former “Council houses” owned by the local authority. Housing associations have had quite a relatively large proportion of the housing stock in the town. (See Appendix 1)
- 6.2 All of the housing association properties are let at affordable rents and there are a small number of shared ownership properties. There are more of these currently in the pipeline across the town, generated through new development schemes in town centre housing regeneration areas.
- 6.3 In order for RSLs to provide new social housing, subsidy is normally required from Government, in the form of grant from the Housing Corporation. There is a bidding process for Housing Corporation Grant. This grant is to assist with the costs of providing homes, either for rent, shared ownership/equity share.
- 6.4 The bidding rounds are held every 2 years. Although, the next round of bidding to the Housing Corporation will be for a 3 year period and will include opportunities for “in year” bids. Essentially the process involves RSL’s, with the support of the local housing authority, submitting detailed, costed proposals for new build schemes that have been designed to meet identified and evidenced local needs and requirements. Currently officers are engaged in strategic discussions with both the Housing Corporation and several RSLs with local connections about potential bids that may go forward into the next bidding round in Autumn 2007.
- 6.5 The main driver for the Housing Corporation is to secure as many new dwellings as practicable for each pound of grant subsidy. The level of subsidy is decreasing and this placing a significant pressure on Housing Associations to borrow against their assets to help fund development and to secure land at below market value. Average build costs for three bed roomed dwellings are about £110,000 + excluding land, whereas the average grant rate per dwelling in the region last year was about £61,000 and there is pressure from the Housing Corporation to reduce this to about £50,000 per dwelling. In addition standards are increasing especially related to environmental requirements. Each scheme proposed is assessed in competition against other bids to achieve maximum value for money. The

number of potential housing providers is increasing now with the inclusion of private construction companies in the bidding process.

- 6.6 In Hartlepool there are a number of RSL schemes in the pipeline and on a larger scale the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust are currently helping to address the issue of provision for the older population in the town through the development of Hartfields at Middle Warren, which will include a range of elderly extra care provision. The development of this 'retirement village' comprising 200 apartments and bungalows is a collaboration between the Council, the Health Service and Joseph Rowntree.

7.0 A summary of the issues affecting the provision of good quality affordable rented accommodation in Hartlepool

- 7.1 Several key issues have impacts which affect the provision of good quality affordable rented accommodation in Hartlepool, particularly those relating to the existing stock, changes in the wider housing market and land supply.

- 7.2 On the demand side the growth in households and projected population changes are also factors together with the aging population. "Hartlepool has witnessed a net in-migration of residents over the last 5 years, particularly from elsewhere in the North East (notably Easington, Sunderland and Stockton) and also from London and the South East. This reflects the increasing quality of the housing offer, particularly the peripheral new-build estates in western areas and around the Marina." (Hartlepool Local Housing Assessment (June 2007) (HLHA))

Household Trends

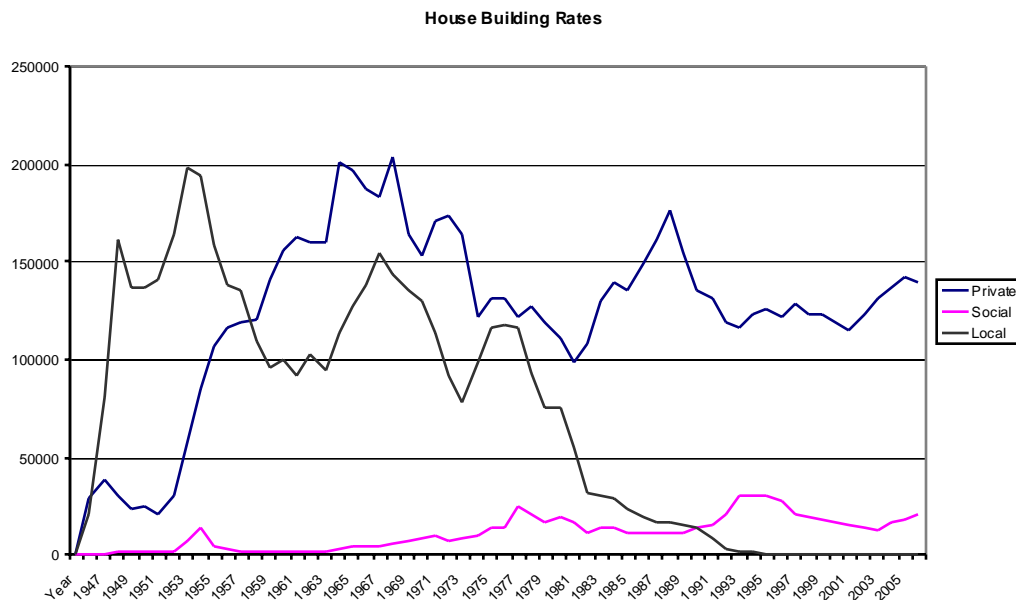
	1981	1991	2001	2006	2011	2021
Darlington	37,000	40,600	42,400	45,100	47,400	49,600
Hartlepool	34,300	36,400	38,200	40,000	40,900	44,200
Middlesbrough	52,500	56,200	56,600	58,200	60,200	62,800
Redcar & Cleveland	53,200	57,200	57,500	59,400	61,500	65,700
Stockton-on-Tees	63,000	69,900	74,200	76,900	80,800	83,700
Tees Valley	240,000	260,300	268,800	279,500	290,800	306,100

Source: TVJSU.

7.3 Social Housing Provision in Hartlepool

Hartlepool has historically had a relatively high percentage of social housing provision and this is currently approximately 25% of the total stock. Nationally the average level of social housing is under 20%. Unlike in many urban areas the social housing sector in Hartlepool has had issues of difficult to let dwellings but has never had a major widespread issue with underuse or abandonment of social housing nor has the social stock suffered from the worst design issues such as high rise, concrete construction, system build, developments with walkway problems etc necessitating major remodelling or demolition. In many other areas this type of issue has led to extensive clearance of social housing which now provides areas of opportunity for social housing redevelopment. This is not the case in Hartlepool.

- 7.4 In Hartlepool the social sector has always seen a reasonably steady demand and any problems have been associated with previous inability to invest in stock, some obsolescent housing stock (e.g. BSF) which is past its economic life, and some estate design issues.
- 7.5 Equally in relative terms the standard of housing in Hartlepool has been relatively high. It is significant that though the town is relatively disadvantaged, housing conditions overall do not figure significantly in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for the town. In addition, historically significant investment in the social housing stock has been undertaken by the Council through a number of housing or regeneration programmes including Estate Action, City Challenge and the Single Regeneration Budget programmes. In recent years, the business plan of Housing Hartlepool involves a very significant planned investment in the remaining social housing stock formerly owned by the Council and this is well underway. Since the large scale transfer of the local authority stock, Housing Hartlepool has earned a very good reputation, for management and delivery of the decent homes modernisation programme, which is approaching 70% completion, and on target to meet the Government's target that all social housing is or exceeds 'Decent Homes Standard' by 2010.
- 7.6 The success of the Decent Homes Programme of Housing Hartlepool has resulted in more satisfied residents who are less likely to move on and therefore this may also be reducing turnover of stock. Decent Homes Plus investment and spending on environmental improvements, longer-term sustainability, maintaining standards in the medium and long term future has also contributed to this.
- 7.7 In terms of new additional dwellings supply, key housing policy changes in the 1980s meant that local authorities in England have been unable to build new social stock in any significant numbers for many years (for example the last new build Council homes in Hartlepool were completed in the mid 1980s). There is now a growing acceptance that RSL new build has not been sufficient in scale to fully meet both changing aspirations and newly arising housing need. The significant overall national reduction in social and local authority housing provision is shown in the graph below.

National House Building Rates 1947-2005

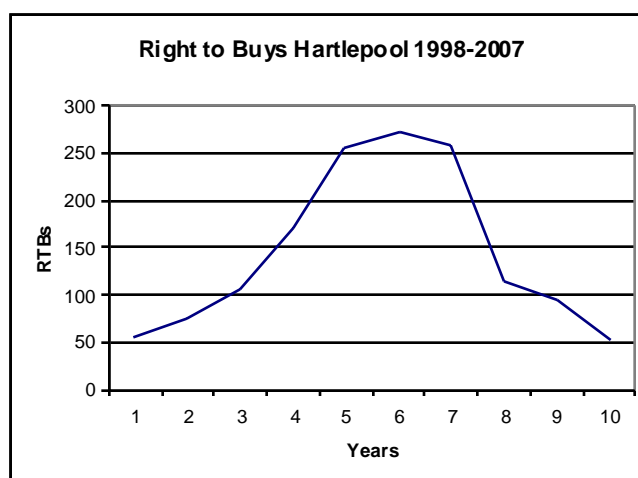
Source DCLG Housing Statistics

7.8 The “Right to Buy” (RTB) has also significantly reduced the overall amount of social rented housing, particularly in more popular areas. In Hartlepool the pressure from RTB has been strong across the town, although most notably in ‘traditional’ type property i.e. 2 and 3 bedrooms family houses. An example is Rossmere, where 90% of the housing stock has been sold via RTB over the last 20 years. This leaves the remaining social stock being in very high demand with very little turnover and consequently high levels of unmet need.

7.9 Overall the former local authority social stock has decreased from approx 12,000 properties to 7,000 properties. Areas, such as Clavering, Throston Grange, Rossmere and large parts of Owton Manor are now predominately owner occupied. The table below shows that 1425 properties have been bought via RTB in the last 10 years. Though over 40% of the original stock has been lost to social renting, and around 12% in the last ten years, the current trend is towards much lower numbers of approximately 50 per year.

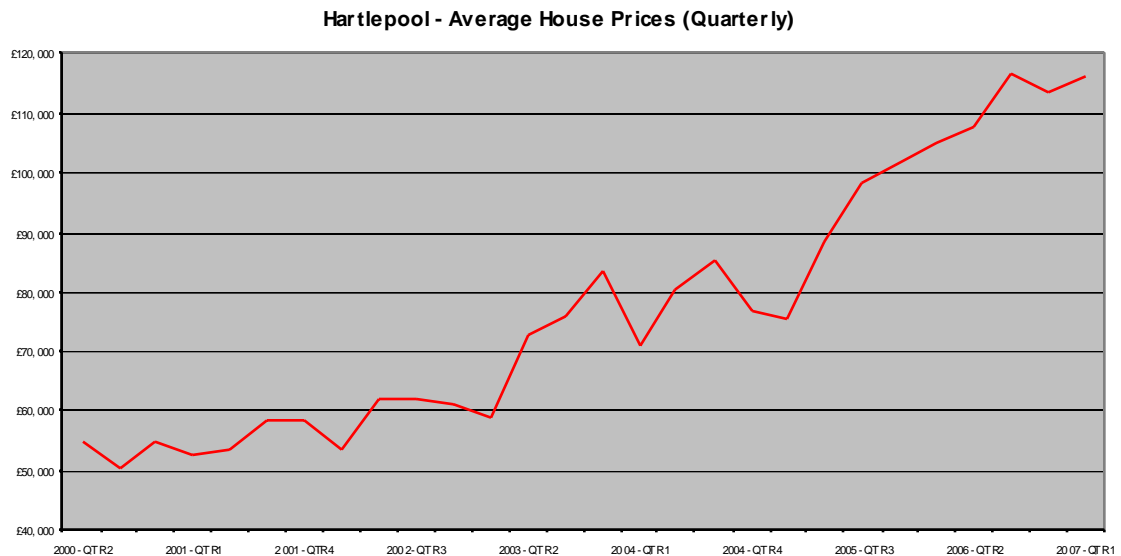
Hartlepool Right to Buy Sales 1998-2007

Right to Buys Hartlepool 1998-2007		
Period		Number of dwellings Sold
April 1998	March 1999	57
April 1999	March 2000	75
April 2000	March 2001	105
April 2001	March 2002	171
April 2002	March 2003	257
April 2003	March 2004	273
April 2004	March 2005	259
April 2005	March 2006	113
April 2006	March 2007	95
April 2007	To date	20 (full yr equivalent 53)
Total		1425

Hartlepool Right to Buy Sales 1998-2007 – Annual Distribution**7.10 Housing Market Changes**

Rapid house price inflation in recent years has resulted in an increase in those unable to access owner occupation, thus creating additional pressures on RSL stock, and further reducing turnover. Mean fourth quarter dwelling prices of all property types in Hartlepool decreased in 2004 but then increased by 43% in the period 2004-2006. The graph below illustrates the quarterly trend in prices. This is also reflected in land prices generally and there are already a case where a housing association scheme making the maximum allowance for land likely to be acceptable to the Housing Corporation appears to have been “gazumped” by a private developer.

Hartlepool Average House Prices 2000-2007



7.11 In terms of house prices the greatest proportional increase has been in lower quartile priced dwellings and in certain wards in the town such as Stranton and Grange.

7.12 **Housing Market Renewal**
 Alongside this, the problem of low and changing demand and 'housing market failure', most particularly in some of the older private terraced housing in the areas to the west and north of the town centre, has been a worsening problem for Hartlepool in recent years. In response, the Borough Council has given priority within both successive Housing Strategies and the Local Development Plan/Planning Policy Framework to seek to deal effectively with these issues in a sensitive, coherent and managed fashion, through a combination of selective demolition, clearance and redevelopment, and housing improvement. The overall objectives are effectively to rejuvenate and regenerate these areas and achieve better balanced local housing markets by addressing those areas suffering with the most acute levels of housing vacancy and associated problems, and to help ensure these parts of the town have a sustainable future by facilitating the development of new, good quality, modern homes with contemporary features, design and build standards, to replace obsolete stock that will be cleared. Whilst the majority of the new housing will be for owner occupation, it is important to note that these new developments will all contain elements of high quality affordable accommodation, for rent, shared ownership and equity share. Given recent emerging evidence relating to high and rising levels of unmet housing need, it is imperative that future phases of redevelopment include significant numbers of new high quality homes for rent, so far as this is viable and deliverable on a scheme by scheme basis.

7.13 Land Supply and New Build

Development rates for housing in total have been relatively high in Hartlepool at about 300 dwellings per year for the last 15 years. The housing requirement emerging from the RSS for Hartlepool is relatively large at over 6000 units. There appears to be greater flexibility in interpreting such requirements though with still a strong emphasis on brownfield land. In the preparation of the Local Plan, a number of housing sites were deleted by the inspector who heard the inquiry giving considerable focus on Victoria Harbour. More recently there have been a number of windfall and conversion schemes with regeneration benefits. There is increasing pressure to make efficient use of land and increase densities and look at modern methods of construction. There has been some resistance locally to proposals for non-traditional dwellings.

7.14 In terms of land supply to facilitate potential future affordable rented housing development, the Council does not have significant large scale landholdings of publicly owned land that may be appropriate for housing development. In the private sector, on those sites that are potentially available, it is acknowledged that often certain brownfield sites have marginal viability in financial terms (often arising from relatively high site remediation costs) and that additional cost burdens arising from any support the provision of new social housing could often makes schemes unviable or directly increase public subsidy. Where large amounts of public subsidy are likely to be needed to support site remediation and infrastructure, then affordable housing provision will probably therefore need to be on commercial land terms.

7.15 In terms of planning permissions for new homes, there remains a significant bank of extant permissions for private housing development (predominantly at Middle Warren and the Marina) which do not include requirements for developers to provide affordable accommodation, because when planning applications were originally under consideration issues around housing affordability had yet to emerge.

7.16 Regulation of Social and Private Rented Housing

Overall, it is important to note that the Social Rented Housing Sector is tightly regulated, by the Housing Corporation, Audit Commission, Charity Commission and a key element of this regulation is to ensure good standards of management. .

7.17 In contrast, management controls for the private rented sector are relatively poor. There is an acceptance that the private rented sector has a significant role to play in Hartlepool's housing market, and the desirability (or otherwise) of accommodation in this sector has an impact on the demand for affordable social housing.

7.18 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum has following extensive scrutiny last year made 17 recommendations covering 9 areas for

action to improve the performance and operation of private rented accommodation. These relate to:

- Improving management through regulation (considering licensing landlords in areas exhibiting low demand or persistent antisocial behaviour)
- Improving the effectiveness of the existing landlord accreditation scheme
- Introducing tenant referencing
- Working with RSLs and other agencies to offer tenancy support services
- Working with landlord groups to improve management standards
- Providing advice to both tenants and landlords
- Reviewing discretionary housing benefit payments to bridge the gap between rent assessments and actual rent

8.0 Details of the extent of the problems in Hartlepool in terms of the availability of good quality affordable rented accommodation (with residents and other groups/agencies)

- 8.1 The recently completed Hartlepool Local Housing Assessment (June 2007) (HLHA) commissioned by the Council, indicates that there is limited capacity in the social rented sector with low vacancy rates and long waiting lists. Unmet need is highest for larger (3 bedroom+) family housing, followed by bungalows and supported accommodation.
- 8.2 The Assessment includes a detailed analysis of affordable housing requirements in Hartlepool using a methodology advocated by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This identifies a shortfall of 393 affordable dwellings per annum across Hartlepool Borough (1965 over the period April 2007 to March 2012). The authors of the Assessment confirmed that similar high levels of need are now being identified across the sub-region and the region.
- 8.3 The estimate of affordable housing need in the HLHA provides strong evidence of the scale of the problem and provides a working benchmark. However, it must be noted that this exceeds the average total annual figure for **all** new build in the last 15 years in Hartlepool. Meeting the need for affordable housing is therefore a significant issue for the Council though expectations need to recognise the realistic capacity of the land supply, the funders, the building industry and partners. A good balance of small and larger

general needs stock needs to be delivered along with some older persons' affordable accommodation.

8.4 The Assessment recommends that given the high level of housing need identified across the Borough it is essential that the Council explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable homes. This could include:

- Considering disposing of local authority owned land for affordable housing
- Setting affordable housing targets of (at a percentage to be defined), of which x% should be for social rented housing and y% for intermediate tenure (splits to be defined)
- Setting site thresholds for affordable housing (in line with PPS3) recognising the capacity of the market.

8.5 Recent evidence from the Neighbourhood Action Plan reviews, particularly in Dyke House, Rift House/Burn Valley and the NDC area, all show that action is required both to continue to address housing quality issues and facilitate the renewal areas of market failure, alongside the clear need to address shortages of good quality affordable rented housing as described above.

9.0 Details of the work already being undertaken by the Council and other agencies to address the issue.

9.1 A range of work is already underway including the following:

9.2 Various developments already underway will assist in meeting some of these identified needs, for example the Hartfields Extra Care Joseph Rowntree 'retirement village' development, other flats and apartments that are in the supply pipeline, special needs schemes currently being developed in association with RSLs and new affordable homes being developed as part of the ongoing programme of market renewal (for example 19 new, high quality bungalows for rent have been completed in 2007). In addition issues with existing some existing schemes need to be resolved if practicable.

9.3 Hartlepool is one of the core local authority partners within the Tees Valley Living Initiative, the sub-regional housing market restructuring partnership for Tees Valley, and as such has played an active role in contributing to the development of the sub-regional HMR Strategy and supporting work. Central Hartlepool remains a key element within the overall Tees Valley Living intervention area. As a core priority for sub-regional housing market renewal, central Hartlepool is the focus for a bid to the Housing Corporation's Northern Housing Challenge, a substantial new funding pot made available for the period 2008-11 via a top-slicing of approximately 12% of the allocation from the Corporation's Affordable Homes Programme to the three northern

regions. This places particular emphasis on promoting linkages between new housing investment and supporting economic growth and development, and Housing Hartlepool has led on a Hartlepool bid based around supporting housing regeneration and jobs and economy initiatives in Belle Vue and North Central Hartlepool. Providing new affordable housing is central to this bid, and it is anticipated that a final decision concerning funding allocations will be confirmed imminently.

- 9.4 As discussed earlier, officers are currently engaged in strategic discussions with the Housing Corporation and several RSLs with local connections regarding potential bids to the mainstream 2008-11 Affordable Homes Programme through the regional office of the Housing Corporation. Housing Hartlepool for example is developing a significant programme of potential site developments including affordable housing. Modelling of typical housing costs and funding are being provided by two housing associations. Additionally discussions are ongoing in terms of establishing a partnering protocol with the Housing Corporation and RSLs in order to support a more efficient, sub-regional approach towards increasing the supply of affordable housing in the future. It is understood that central Hartlepool will be recommended as a strategic priority by the Housing Corporation. It is also important that current housing schemes proposed to be funded by the Housing Corporation are facilitated where practicable.
- 9.5 In addition given the limited funding available through the Housing Corporation for affordable housing, consideration is also being given to whether the Council should get more involved directly in funding or developing new social housing, through prudential borrowing and joint ventures. The costs, benefits and risks of this, needs to be assessed. In any case, management and maintenance would be handed to an RSL. The avoidance of the restrictions and regulation of complex housing revenue accounts would need to be avoided.
- 9.6 The statutory Hartlepool Local Development Plan was finally adopted in 2006 following a long preparation period extending back several years. The Public Inquiry and subsequent report of the Planning Inspectorate led to the deletion of a number of housing sites, and an increased focus on Victoria Harbour. It has been anticipated that this privately owned site will ultimately enable the development of up to 3500 new dwellings (primarily a mix of apartments and town houses) largely to meet newly arising demand from people moving into the area from outside of Hartlepool. The planning permission does not refer to affordable housing though discussions are underway with Tees Valley Regeneration on the potential to include some affordable housing on a commercial land basis.
- 9.7 Recent government guidance and the Green Paper on housing are being fully considered in the Hartlepool context. In terms of future planning policy and allocations, the HLHA findings and

recommendations have been reported to cabinet and are being assessed and used to inform policy including the new statutory Local Development Framework which is currently under preparation in line with an agreed statutory programme. The Council is also involved in the preparation of the Sub-regional Housing Strategy and consideration is also being given to the need to revise elements of the Hartlepool Housing Strategy.

- 9.8 The Decent Homes Programme continues at great speed and included in this programme is the removal of some obsolete stock which will produce some land suitable for redevelopment.
- 9.9 Public land availability as an issue is being dealt with corporately in terms of the ongoing preparation of a list of potential development sites (both Council and privately owned) that may be suitable for new affordable housing. The Council's land ownership is relatively limited and includes mainly small potential sites with only a few sizeable sites. The Housing Corporation has made it clear that there is a preference for larger sites to secure efficiencies of scale etc. A report is proposed which will seek to establish to what extent the Council may be prepared to prioritise social housing as a use on the limited Council owned land that is likely to become available and the degree to which it may be prepared to provide land at below market value to subsidise social housing provision given its overall financial position and the expectations of the Housing Corporation. Additionally the ongoing work to bring unused and disused buildings and land into use has resulted in some significant residential conversions and potential redevelopment sites.
- 9.10 In accord with this, a Supplementary Planning Document on Developer Contributions expanding on policy GEP9 of the Local Plan is currently being prepared and this will propose a requirement for developers to provide a certain level of affordable housing on new housing sites using legal agreements. This draft document will be the subject of consultation in November this year. However in view of the number and extent of extant planning permissions the contribution from new sites is likely to be limited in the short to medium term. Additional allocations may also be necessary within the RSS housing requirement for the Borough. An examination of potential sites within the urban area also includes privately owned land which may be suitable for social housing provision.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Members are requested to note and comment on the outline context to affordable housing issues in the town as set out in this report.

Household Tenure - 2001 Census

Appendix 1

	All households	% of households :							
		Owner-occupied				Rented from :			
		All owner-occupied	Owens outright	Owens with mortgage or loan	Shared ownership *	Council (local authority)	Housing Association etc	Private landlord or letting agency	Other
HARTLEPOOL	37,400	63.0	26.4	36.3	0.4	19.8	6.9	7.4	3.0
TEES VALLEY	265,300	67.9	27.4	40.0	0.5	18.4	5.0	6.5	2.3
NORTH EAST	1,066,300	63.6	25.3	37.9	0.4	22.4	5.3	6.3	2.5
ENGLAND & WALES	21,660,500	68.9	29.5	38.8	0.6	13.2	6.0	8.7	3.2

* - shared ownership - pays part rent part mortgage.

Source - Office for National Statistics - 2001 Census data is Crown Copyright

Type of House 2001 Census

	All households	% of households :				
		Detached house	Semi-detached house	Terraced house	Flat, maisonette etc	Other
HARTLEPOOL	37,400	14.2	33.0	41.1	11.3	0.4
TEES VALLEY	265,300	16.7	40.2	32.1	10.8	0.2
NORTH EAST	1,066,300	14.5	39.4	32.1	13.9	0.1
ENGLAND & WALES	21,660,500	22.8	31.6	26.0	19.2	0.4

Source - Office for National Statistics - 2001 Census data is Crown Copyright

Households & Dwellings 2006

Number of Households and Dwellings 2006

Area	Households	Dwellings
Hartlepool	40,000	41,600 104.0
Tees Valley	279,500	290,800 104.0
North East	1,116,000	1,168,000 104.7
England & Wales	22,900,000	23,800,000 103.9

Source : TVJSU/ONS

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

6 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO THE AVAILABILITY
OF GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL
ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL – EVIDENCE
FROM THE TOWN'S MP, IAIN WRIGHT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To inform Members of the Forum that the town's Member of Parliament (MP) has been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to this Forum's ongoing investigation into the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 12 July 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, Iain Wright, the town's Member of Parliament (MP), and newly appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary in Communities and Local Government, has agreed to attend this meeting to submit evidence to the Forum.
- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session with the town's Member of Parliament, it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
 - a) Speaking on behalf of your constituents of Hartlepool, do you feel that the level of rented social accommodation in Hartlepool is sufficient to meet demand?
 - b) During recent surgeries with your constituents, what comments have been made regarding the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation, within Hartlepool?

- c) What in your view are the main barriers to the provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation within Hartlepool and what would you like to see the Council doing to overcome them?
- d) You have been heavily involved in the production of the Government's Green Paper on Housing. How will the proposals contained within the Green Paper help Councils, and in particular Hartlepool Borough Council, deal with the issue of affordability and the availability of good quality rented social accommodation?
- e) What other advice / information are you able to provide to this Forum, that would assist this scrutiny investigation?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That members of the Forum consider the views of the town's MP in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.3.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool – Scoping Report' Presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 12 July 2007.

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

6 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: THE AVAILABILITY OF GOOD QUALITY
AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL
ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL – EVIDENCE
FROM THE AUTHORITY'S PORTFOLIO HOLDER
FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES –
COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities has been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to this Forum's ongoing investigation into the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 12 July 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities has been invited to this meeting to provide evidence to Forum in relation to his views on the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool.
- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session with the Authority's Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder, it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- (a) What are your roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool?
 - (b) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool?
 - (c) What do you feel are the major issues, and areas of concern, effecting the provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool?

- (d) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool?
- (e) Why are schemes of redevelopment and improvement necessary in some parts of the town?
- (f) What provision is there within the Council's strategies and plans for the provision of affordable rented accommodation?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.3.

CONTACT OFFICER

Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
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Email: joan.wilkins@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (a) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool – Scoping Report' Presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 12 July 2007.