

CABINET AGENDA



Monday 1st October 2007

at 9.00am

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

MEMBERS: CABINET:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Councillors Hall, Hargreaves, Hill, Jackson, Payne and Tumilty

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

To receive the Record of Decision in respect of the meeting held on 17th September 2007 (previously circulated)

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

No items

5. KEY DECISIONS

5.1 Hartlepool Rights of Way Improvement Plan – *Director of Adult and Community Services*

5.2 Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy – *Director of Adult and Community Services*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 School Travel Pathfinder Scheme – *Director of Neighbourhood Services*
- 6.2 LINKS (Local Involvement Networks) – *Director of Adult and Community Services*
- 6.3 ICT Support – Future Provision – *Assistant Chief Executive*
- 6.4 Hartlepool Future Affordable Housing Programme – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and Head of Procurement and Property Services*

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / INFORMATION

No items

8. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10. ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 10.1 Hartlepool United Football Club – *Head of Procurement and Property Services* (para 3)

CABINET REPORT

1st October, 2007



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject HARTLEPOOL RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to request that Cabinet:-

- Consider, approve and adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (the Plan) as one of its corporate strategies and plans.
- Agree for the Plan to be reviewed at intervals of no more than every ten years, as laid out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, with a realistic review period of every five years.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report contains information relating to the reasons for the required development and production of the Plan as laid out in the afore-mentioned act (see **Appendix 1** – Executive Summary).

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Strategic links to the Local Development Framework and thus to the Hartlepool Local Plan, Local Transport Plan as well as other corporate plans and policies.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key Test II

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet, 1st October, 2007.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The decisions required from Cabinet are to:-

- Consider, approve and adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (the Plan) as one of its corporate strategies and plans.
- Agree for the Plan to be reviewed at intervals of no more than every ten years, as laid out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, with a realistic review period of every five years.

Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject HARTLEPOOL RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT
PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that Cabinet:-

- Consider, approve and adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (the Plan) as one of its corporate strategies and plans.
- Agree for the Plan to be reviewed at intervals of no more than every ten years, as laid out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, with a realistic review period of every five years.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced a new statutory duty, on every local authority, to prepare and produce a plan for improving local rights of way by November 2007. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (hereafter referred to as 'the Plan') has therefore assessed:-

- The extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public.
- The opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of their area.
- The accessibility of local rights of way to visually impaired persons and others with mobility problems.

2.2 As a 'Four Star CPA rated Authority' Hartlepool Borough Council could have applied for exemption from the requirement to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The exemption is stated under the provisions of *The Local Authorities' Plans and Strategies (Disapplication) (England) Order 2005*. The Council elected to produce a Plan in the belief it will enhance its delivery of service in this area.

2.3 Section 60(5) of the Act defines 'local rights of way' as including footpaths, cycle tracks, bridleways, and restricted byways within the Authority's area and the ways within the Authority's area, which are shown on the definitive map and statement as restricted byways or byways open to all traffic.

- 2.4 After publication of the Plan, whilst the Council will be required to reassess and review the Plan within 10 years and thereafter review it at not more than ten yearly intervals, it is likely that the plan will be reviewed every 5 years in line with the Council's Local Transport Plan.
- 2.5 The Plan is a strategic document and forms part of the Council's Local Access and Transport Policy. The Plan is therefore the first stage of an ongoing assessment and review of Hartlepool's local access network.
- 2.6 The Council has followed the 'Statutory Guidance for highway authorities in England in November 2002' (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) in the preparation and publication of its Plan.
- 2.7 The Plan identifies improvements to the local rights of way network in order to meet the Government's aim of better provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians, visually impaired persons and people with mobility problems, improving health and quality of life and supporting rural economies and tourism.
- 2.8 The Plan comprises of two main elements:
- **An Assessment** - the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public has been assessed.
 - **The Statement of Action** - addresses the identified issues and outlines strategic actions that will be used to bid for resources.

3. AIMS

- 3.1 The Plan outlines its aims as being:
- Provision of a wide range of improvements to the local rights of way network.
 - Making sure that improvements are diverse and that they include small scale projects as well as long-term improvements.
 - Creation of access for a wider range of users including people with disabilities.
 - Reduction or removal of barriers to access through improved information sharing and promotion.
 - Removal and replacement of physical barriers to existing and potential users who would like to access more of the network in both urban and rural areas.

(See **Appendix 1** – Executive Summary)

4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The Plan provides a long-term strategy to create a network of routes that suits everyone's needs and will enhance co-operation between neighbouring authorities. This will be in addition to improving the existing network to incorporate new legislation and successive guidance.
- 4.2 The Plan reflects the needs of the community by ensuring it encompasses the priorities and objectives of existing policies. Some of the main examples are shown below, namely:-
- Local Development Framework
 - The Local Plan
 - The Local Transport Plan
 - Walking the Way to Health Initiative
 - The Local Strategic Partnership
 - Community Strategy
 - Cultural Strategy
 - The Tourism Development Plan

5. CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 During the production of the Plan, wide and thorough consultation took place. Primarily it was decided to ask User Groups and Landowners their views based on postal questionnaires. In the case of the public, their views were sought through Viewpoint 1000.
- 5.2 The responses received from this stage of the consultation process were very positive from all sections of the community, whether they were users, public or landowners.
- 5.3 Further consultation was required and was sought through a meeting with the 'Talking with Communities' Forum. The messages gained from the consultation were for better information provision along with improved availability of access literature, stronger sense of security with regards to the rights of way network and ability to have community representatives trained up to lead and marshal groups for walks and other events. This would give the black minority and ethnic groups confidence to consider accessing the network for their own enjoyment.
- 5.4 There was also a need to assess the existing conditions of the network which led the Countryside Access Team to look at:-
- Resources and Duties
 - Budget and Income
 - Partnerships
 - Advisory Bodies
 - Tees Valley Equestrian Study
 - Recreation Audit

6. STATEMENT OF ACTION

- 6.1 Throughout the whole process of researching, consulting and assessing Hartlepool's local access network, emerging themes have developed as indicators of how best the Plan will function as a live and workable document.
- 6.2 The following themes have been used to develop the Statement of Action. These are:-
- Access for All
 - Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Bridleways and Cycleways
 - Definitive Map
 - Higher Rights
 - Internal Duties
 - Improvements and Maintenance
 - Information Resource
 - Promotion
- 6.3 The statement sets out the areas of work and the more specifically priorities and projects that will be carried out to help improve Hartlepool's local access network.
- 6.4 The Countryside Access Team will monitor and assess the Plan on a bi-annual basis, measuring and redefining the Plan's continual process. From this self-assessment we will look to develop the Plan further, to meet the changing needs of the user, landowner and general public.

7. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 7.1 Hartlepool Council has recognised that to be able to improve its network, the Countryside Access Team must appraise and report on the sustainability of the developing works that make up the statement of action. This appraisal connects with the need to write and produce a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Plan. The SA looks at how the Plan measures up to the SA's objectives, showing how it will deliver and bring about improvements to the local access network.
- 7.2 Sustainability Appraisal of key strategies is mandatory under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Although the Rights of Way Improvement Plan does not fall within the remit of this act, the Council considers it relevant to look at the broader implications and has carried out a Sustainability Appraisal of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

8. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Small scale projects will look to be funded through the existing rights of way budget.

- 8.2 For larger and more expensive improvements, funding will look to be sourced from other internal e.g. Local Transport Plan, Community Safety Capital Fund and external agencies, such as Natural England, Forestry Commission, Big Lottery, Heritage Lottery, Landfill Communities Fund and Awards for All

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet:-

- Consider, approve and adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (the Plan) as one of its corporate strategies and plans.
- Agree for the Plan to be reviewed at intervals of no more than every ten years, as laid out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, with a realistic review period of every five years.

CONTACT OFFICER: Andrew Pearson, Parks and Countryside Manager

Background Papers

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 60
Rights of Way Improvement Plans – Statutory Guidance to Local Highway Authorities in England (DEFRA, November 2002)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As with all other Highway Authorities throughout England, Hartlepool Borough Council has been required under section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to develop and produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan by November 2007.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan establishes a framework for local rights of way and countryside access work, over the next ten years, by identifying the key issues and pressures which affect countryside access and local rights of way around Hartlepool Borough and setting out in clear terms the Council's aims and objectives for itself, its partners and the wider public.

The legislation requires us to prepare a plan, which considers local rights of way (defined as including cycle tracks) in the context of;

- How local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public
- Opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of their area
- Accessibility of the local rights of way to blind or partially sighted people and those with mobility problems

SCOPE OF THE PLAN

It is expected that all rights of way improvement plans will seek to link more closely with the Local Transport Plan (LTP). At present full integration is not required although it is planned that the Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be strongly linked with the next LTP, which could be written in 2011.

Although the Plan sets out actions and priorities, work programs for the next ten years. It is intended to constantly review the Plan within that time, so as to coincide with the publication of the next LTP. This would bring the review and production of the Plan inline with the same timescale. The plan would then be reviewed either every five or ten years thereafter.

Whilst the Public Rights of Way network forms the most significant resource, which enables members of the public to access the countryside, looking at this network alone would not show the full picture of access to the countryside.

There are many other routes and sites that are used by the general public for recreational countryside access that are not legally recorded on the Definitive map, as public rights of way, but which complement the rights of way network extending and improving access to the countryside,

As a result, the Plan considers the whole network of off-road routes, public open spaces, country parks and green corridors, including the potential of 'Open Access', as well as public rights of way and highways.

THE PROCESS (HOW THE ROWIP HAS BEEN DEVELOPED)

5.1 Appendix 1

The Council has drawn on a variety of sources during the development of the Plan, including statutory guidance, countryside agency advice (now part of Natural England), public consultation, officer discussions, national research, network surveys and audits as well as the state of our network in relation to meeting Access for All standards.

In order to identify the issues that have shaped the Plan, the Council began by consulting with a wide range of groups including those listed below:

- Landowners
- General public
- User Groups
- Hartlepool Access Forum
- Tees Valley Local Access Forum
- Black Minority Ethnic Forum

The responses gained from this wide-ranging consultation have been the foundation by which the Council has been able to produce a Statement of Action. This statement lists all the key objectives that will form the basis of improvements to the Local Rights of Way for the future, as well as the potential funding routes that have been identified as being essential for the success of each objective.

We have also worked with the Tees Valley Local Access Forum to ensure that its members have had the opportunity to feed into the Plan at every stage. As the forum is a statutory body it is relied upon to identify and discuss issues and provide advice as to how the council should move forward to improve countryside access for everyone. The Council must take notice of this advice and where possible act upon it, as and when necessary.

The Forum will continue to be involved with monitoring the progress made towards the Plan's targets.

THE NEXT STEP (THE WAY FORWARD)

It is clear that many of the points identified above require much time and funding to deliver, for example the definitive map work, wherein cases will be identified in which progress can be made within a shorter timescale and within current resources.

The implementation of certain key actions will be more visible to users such as furniture improvement than say definitive map work. It is important though to keep in mind that this work has to be completed in its entirety before the 2026 cut off date implemented by the CROW ACT 2000.

However, although this work will take the longest to complete, due to its complexity and cost, it should nevertheless be given a high priority.

VISION STATEMENT

“To maintain, develop and promote countryside access, through partnership working with landowners, users and the general public to meet the needs of those who use or wish to use the local access network”.

Local rights of way are, once again, becoming an important part of the wider transport infrastructure. The implementation of this Rights of Way Improvement Plan will assist the Council and its partners in achieving their overall vision and aims.

Hartlepool Borough Council will look to:-

- ◆ Be guided by the principle that priority should be given to actions within the Plan that give the most benefit to the users and potential users.
- ◆ Increase the public's enjoyment of, and benefit derived from open spaces, the local countryside and access to the coast.
- ◆ Encourage visitors to the Borough for the purpose of countryside access and recreation.
- ◆ Work internally with the Local Transport Management Team to help find ways for improving the Borough's Cycleways, Bridleways and Access for All routes, throughout the Borough.
- ◆ Link strategically with its immediate neighbours, through improved connections to their National Routes/Trails.

This will be achieved by:-

- ◆ Consulting and working with all disability users and groups to improve countryside access facilities.
- ◆ Consulting with and improving access for all legal users of the local rights of way network.

Improvements will be monitored against the targets, during the ten year life of the Plan.

Throughout the development of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Hartlepool Borough Council has taken into account the related regional policies and national government aims and objectives for:-

- ◆ Safe, easy and sustainable travel/transport.
- ◆ Healthy living.
- ◆ Improved and sustainable quality of the environment.

CABINET REPORT

1st October 2007



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject INDOOR LEISURE FACILITY S TRATEGY

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Cabinet to consider a draft Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy for Hartlepool that incorporates future needs in the public, voluntary and private sectors.

The Strategy also includes a consideration of facility and management procurement options for the future funding of the capital costs involved.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The Strategy has been prepared by Consultants Capita Symonds in partnership with Regeneration and Planning Department as well as Children's Services Department. It considers:-

- (i) the existing stock of indoor sports and leisure facilities in Hartlepool, including swimming pools;
- (ii) the positioning and quality of these facilities in terms of geographical spread, local requirements and residents expectations;
- (iii) the opportunities presented by the BSF initiative for the development of school sports facilities to be made available to the community;
- (iv) facility and management procurement options for the funding of the likely capital costs involved for the future development of facilities.

A PPG17 assessment for Open Spaces, Play and Outdoor Sports provision is being completed separately by Capita Symonds and is designed to specifically complement the Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Of relevance to the Culture, Leisure and Tourism, Adult and Public Health Services, Children's Services and Regeneration and Liveability Portfolios.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key test ii.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet, 1st October 2007.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet is requested to approve:-

1. The Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy.
2. For officers to continue to explore the management and procurement options available in order to deliver facility developments.
3. The adoption of the identified Action Plan within the Strategy, allowing officers to continue to work on a range of short, medium and long term actions.

Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject INDOOR LEISURE FACILITY STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For Cabinet to consider a draft Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy for Hartlepool that incorporates future needs in the public, voluntary and private sectors.
- 1.2 An Executive Summary of the Strategy document is attached at **Appendix 1** with a full copy of the report available in the Member's Library.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the Council's stock of sports and leisure facilities has evolved over a long period of time. Some are coming towards the end of their lives and others are in need of significant investment. Some are not located in areas of greatest need and the current positioning and quality of these facilities contributes to a relatively low level of penetration and usage.
- 2.2 The provision of leisure and sports facilities is not a statutory obligation on Local Authorities and each one has its own decision to make on what and how it provides such facilities. However, Hartlepool's vision and priorities for the future, "The Way Forward", incorporates a strong role for leisure in the town recognising the value of this sector in contributing to the Council's strategic objectives and the input it can make to health and the regeneration process in the Borough.
- 2.3 The Council has carried out a number of studies over the past few years relating to the supply and provision of leisure and recreational facilities as follows:-
 - (i) Sport and Recreation Strategy (2000)
 - (ii) Swimming Pool Assessment (2002)
 - (iii) Play Facilities Strategy 2007
 - (iv) Playing Pitch Strategy (2004)
 - (v) H₂O Feasibility Study (2005)
 - (vi) Multi-Use Games Area Strategy (2006)

However, in order to facilitate the effective planning and management of leisure provision in the future and reflect the needs and aspirations of the local community, it was therefore deemed critical to draw all of this work together and a further study was commissioned and undertaken by Capita Symonds.

2.4 The work involved has been considered in two parts:-

- (i) Indoor Sports Facility Strategy.
- (ii) Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit completed in line with the requirements of "Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation".

PPG17 assessment and audit is due to be completed November 2007 whereupon a further report will be brought to Cabinet.

2.5 The specific aims of the Capita Symonds work have been to:-

- ensure that the Council can plan effectively for sufficient open space, sport and recreation facilities and indoor sports facilities in line with current Government recommendations, Sport England planning resources and the guidance contained in PPG17 and its companion guide;
- take account of the opportunities presented by the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative;
- consult with the community to identify their leisure needs and aspirations;
- explore the possible capital financing and procurement options;
- provide a basis for decision making in relation to the future management of the Council's facilities.

2.6 More specifically, the objectives of the study have been to make use of the existing studies, as detailed in paragraph 2.3 and, where required, undertake new research to:-

- draw together a Borough wide audit of open space, sport and recreational facilities based on the open space typology and core built facilities as set out in PPG17 and its Companion Guide;
- to identify the current accessibility, quality and quantity of provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the Borough against relevant standards;
- to assess community attitudes, expectations and vision for future needs;
- to determine the current and future needs for use of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the Borough;
- to identify areas of deficiency or surplus of open space, sport and recreation facilities;
- to provide a set of standards and definitions of open space and other provision;
- to identify and evaluate strategic options and policy implications for the protection, enhancement, relocation of existing sites or provision of new open space, sport and recreation facilities;
- provide a firm foundation upon which policy decisions and funding for future development can be based.

3. RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 3.1 In undertaking the Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy, the Consultants first examined the policy, socio-economic and political context within which the services will need to operate. They reviewed a number of key policy documents, both local, regional and national and examined the general trends in the sport and recreation market.
- 3.2 A facility audit of all providers was undertaken in order to gain an understanding of the location, quality, use and long term future of the current provision. Central to this was swimming facility provision in that from previous studies and work undertaken, existing pools in the borough were considered sub-standard in one way or another.
- 3.3 The audit also considered the impact of facilities in neighbouring Authorities which local residents were likely to be aware of and/or likely to travel to.
- 3.4 The Consultants also undertook wide-ranging consultation involving:-
 - (i) Internal stakeholder consultation within the Council, namely with officers from Adult and Community Services, Children's Services, Youth Services and Planning and Regeneration.
 - (ii) External stakeholder consultation with the six secondary schools, Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre, HCFE, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and other principal sports facility sites as well as Sport England.
 - (iii) Residents' consultation consisting of a postal survey of 1,500 residents selected randomly from the electoral roll.
 - (iv) Sports Club consultation, where a questionnaire was sent out to all registered sports clubs in Hartlepool.
 - (v) Parish Councils.
- 3.5 Reference was also made to the consultation carried out with Hartlepool Swimming Club and the Amateur Swimming Association in 2005 as part of the H₂O Feasibility Study work as well as Viewpoint 1000 consultation on swimming from 2003.

4. FACILITY SUPPLY ANALYSIS

4.1 Review of Facility Quantity

- 4.1.1 The key point to be made with regard to the quantity of indoor sports facilities in Hartlepool is that there is a great deal available within the town. Over the years, provision has been made by a number of different services within Hartlepool Borough Council and by other public and voluntary sector bodies. There is very limited commercial interest in the development of indoor sports facilities in the town.

- 4.1.2 Looking at the provision of swimming pools, the key public facility at the Mill House Leisure Centre delivers just under 50% of the total water area in the town. The remainder is distributed amongst six pools on secondary school sites in the west of the Borough, making a total provision of just under 1,500m². To this can be added the small swimming pool at the Springs Health and Fitness Club, but this addresses a very different market to the public pools.
- 4.1.3 Similarly, the provision of indoor sports halls is dominated by those on education sites as each secondary school has its own large hall (generally 4 badminton court size). However, there is additional provision at three Sport and Recreation run public access sites, three Youth Service venues and a large voluntary sector site. Considering only the larger halls, the spaces available are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Current Sports Hall Provision

Size of hall	Number of halls	Total courts
Six badminton courts	1	6
Four badminton courts	8	32
Three badminton courts	4	12
TOTAL	13	50

- 4.1.4 There is what might be considered limited provision of Health and Fitness facilities in Hartlepool, but as this is an element that can generally be funded on a commercial basis, the number of facilities usually meets market needs. There are a number of other specialist facilities in the town which cater for particular user groups and, of these, the one that is often considered from a quantitative point of view is indoor bowls – consultation with the users of the present facility shows that there is more than sufficient capacity in the present building due to the fall in user numbers.
- 4.1.5 Attached at **Appendix 2** is a table comparing Hartlepool's level of facility provision against the national average. It also compares provision against other Local Authorities which the Office of National Statistics considers to be most similar to Hartlepool.
- 4.1.6 The review found that there was generally more than adequate provision and the issue considered was to what extent these can be reduced in order to minimise costs.
- 4.2 **Review of Facility Quality**
- 4.2.1 This is particularly pertinent with regard to swimming facilities in that the main public facility at Mill House is over 30 years old and will require significant capital investment if it is to remain in operation for more than a few years – this has led to the proposal to relocate swimming to the H₂O Centre as part of a Regional and sub-regional water attraction. The remainder of the pools in the Borough are a 30 year old 'package deal'

design utilising a timber framed structure over a 'plastic' tank and minimal changing facilities. It is testament to the care taken with maintaining these buildings that they are still open, but a number will require major investment in new roofs, new plant and tank relining, if they are to remain in operation. This is unlikely to be cost effective if other standards (e.g. energy, access, etc.) are also to be addressed. The review found that the poor quality of most of the present facilities is held up as a key issue.

- 4.2.2 The quality of sports halls is less of an issue in that these are far simpler buildings and can be maintained at lower cost than pools. As a result, most of the larger sports halls are in 'adequate' condition although some have specific structural and maintenance issues which will become more serious in time. Of note, the fact that investment had been made in two new dry sports centres was welcomed and highlighted in the public consultation.
- 4.2.3 It was felt that the public health and fitness provision is of a fair quality given that the two new sports centres have modern fitness rooms and that at Mill House has been refitted on a regular basis. The indoor bowls hall is a good quality facility, but consideration would need to be given to its long term maintenance if usage levels continue to decline.
- 4.2.4 Drawing this together, it will be important to raise the quality of all the indoor sports facilities in Hartlepool to that of the best if the Council is to provide all the Borough's residents with an opportunity to participate in sport in an attractive and safe environment – it is well documented that higher quality facilities both attract more users and engender greater respect and pride.

4.3 **Review Facility Accessibility**

- 4.3.1 The accessibility of sites involves two parameters: availability to different user groups and physical location.
- 4.3.2 In terms of the first factor, there are a number of key issues concerning availability of indoor sports facilities and/or elements within them:-
- many of them are on school sites and, as a result, are not available in curriculum time – they can also be 'buried' within the school campus and it may be difficult to provide easy and secure access out of school hours (especially for those who are not members of clubs);
 - however, this does mean that they could be available at peak public use periods in the evenings and, potentially, during the school holidays;
 - many of the facilities are old and were designed at a time when access for all was not as important – while many have been adapted to allow use by people with disabilities and other target groups, in many cases this is not easy.

The only fully accessible indoor sports facilities are the Mill House Leisure Centre, Belle Vue Youth and Community Centre, the Headland Sports Hall and (out of school hours) the Brierton Community Sports Centre.

- 4.3.3 In terms of physical location, as the majority of the indoor sports facilities in Hartlepool have been developed on secondary school sites, these are situated in an arc through the principal residential areas on the western side of the town – here they are accessible to local residents and are generally reachable by a variety of bus services. The Mill House Leisure Centre is close to the town centre and so can be reached by public transport from all parts of the town while the Headland Sports Hall is well located to serve its specific catchment area in Old Hartlepool.
- 4.3.4 The overall distribution of facilities was reviewed by using a 1 Kilometre radius from each within an easy 20 minutes walk, being the parameter used by the Audit Commission in assessing the accessibility of sports facilities for its CPA scores. Findings indicated that if access were given to all facilities, there would be a few parts of Hartlepool falling outside these catchment areas and in any redevelopment strategy, an objective should be to maintain as high an accessibility level as possible.
- 4.4 **Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Extended Schools/Community Use**
- 4.4.1 The BSF consultation process has led to the selection of 'Option Three' as the route forward leading to Cabinet resolving in March, 2007 "to discontinue Brierton Community School with effect from 31st August, 2009". This has now been approved for formal consultation by Cabinet on the 3rd September 2007.
- 4.4.2 As a result of this resolution, the Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy has been developed around a five school model. However, almost certainly the Sports Centre facilities at Brierton would be retained in any option chosen, leaving a specialist, purpose-built facility to be able to secure any development on the Brierton site, as well as the wider community.
- 4.4.3 With Extended Schools, it is not expected that all schools will offer all services on their site. Further discussion over the next eighteen months will ensure that there is a good understanding of the needs of each community where a school is sited and that any opportunity to provide better facilities is taken.
- 4.4.4 The relationship between the Borough's Leisure Facility Investment Strategy and the BSF/Extended Schools agendas is crucial in the delivery of high quality sport and recreation participation opportunities for all Hartlepool's residents. The funding for education facilities is strictly reserved for that purpose and the development of facilities that are intended for use by the community will not have the additional spaces that are required to make them accessible to the wider community without additional capital funding being sources. Without this, there will be no reception desk, no office for out-of-hours management, no staff facilities and, in some cases, no independent access without passing through the school buildings.

- 4.4.5 At Hartlepool, there is an opportunity to ensure that if the provision of some additional 'external' funding can transform a 'school facility' into one easily used by the community, this approach can be adopted as part of an holistic approach to the provision of facilities.

4.5 Facility Supply Analysis - Summary

- 4.5.1 Key conclusions which can be drawn from the review of facility supply include:-

- with more than adequate provision when compared with other similar Authorities, the quantitative issue is the extent to which it may be possible to reduce the number of indoor sports facilities to minimise the long term cost of providing such spaces in the Borough;
- the poor quality of most of the present facilities is a key issue and investment will be needed if the Borough's residents are to be given an opportunity to participate in sport in an attractive and safe environment;
- the accessibility of many of the existing facilities is poor in terms of programming and provision for people with disabilities – however, sites are well located around the town;
- the Council's response to the BSF initiative is currently being developed but this Investment Strategy can be adjusted to reflect either the five or six school model of provision;
- there is an opportunity to link the provision of new public and education facilities by appropriate investment in additional support facilities alongside those provided for pupils' use.

5. FACILITY DEMAND ANALYSIS

- 5.1 This element of the strategy included a review of the geo-demographic characteristics of the population living in Hartlepool, largely based on data prepared by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (JSU). It took into account an analysis of the population, residential development, population characteristics and their participation levels in sport and physical activity based on the "Active People" survey undertaken in 2006 by Ipsos MORI.

- 5.2 An examination of facility demand was made with reference to a number of sources:-

- previous reports carried out on the subject of facility demand;
- an analysis of potential demand utilising Sport England's Active Places Plus model (APP);
- a review of the way in which the present facilities are used.

5.3 Demand for Swimming Pools

5.3.1 A study of Hartlepool's public pools by the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM) in 2002 came to the following conclusions with regard to the quantity of water space:-

- the total water provision at the time was some 1,940m²;
- none of the pools met modern standards in terms of length/width, accessibility, energy efficiency, etc. and some were in poor condition – the overall view was that all should be replaced in the short to medium term as refurbishment was unlikely to be cost-effective;
- since then, pools at St Hilds and Rossmere have been closed to leave a pool water area of some 1,477m² in public and school pools;
- the ISRM stated that, based on generally accepted standards for the size of the Borough's population, provision should be some 900m²;
- this is mirrored by the current Sport England APP model which suggests that a total water area of 908m² should be provided in Hartlepool;
- Mill House Leisure Centre provides 637m², leaving a shortfall of only 270m² were this to be the only site retained – this is roughly equivalent to one 5-lane 25 metre pool (rather than the five school pools now available).

5.3.2 The Consultants took into account that events had moved on since this study was carried out and that our plans are now to replace Mill House (the only pool open for casual swimming) by the H₂O Centre a water based leisure centre of regional significance. Excluding its shallow leisure pool, which is not suitable for any more than fun play, it is envisaged the H₂O Centre will provide 523m² of water space, leaving a shortfall of some 377m² if the APP/ISRM figure is to be adopted as the requirement. A new 6-lane 25m pool elsewhere in Hartlepool would provide 325m², slightly less than the requirement. The addition of a teaching pool would provide more flexibility for lessons and take the provision only slightly above the target figure – it will also provide capacity for growth in participation in line with Government and Sport England objectives.

5.3.3 The Consultants considered that an alternative scenario might be to install a floating floor in any 25 metre community pool and relocate the associated teaching pool to a different site (existing or new) in order to distribute the facilities around the town. This would increase local accessibility and reduce travel times for schools using the teaching pool but lead to additional capital and operational costs.

5.3.4 Examining the current programmes of use for all those pools, it is apparent that the closure of all pools other than Mill House (or its replacement) would have a significant impact on the delivery of the Swimming Strategy and the school swimming curriculum. There would be insufficient water space available to meet the needs of current user groups. Such an approach would also not address Government aspirations for greater physical activity or for the specific requirements of localities such as Hartlepool where the ability to swim is essential in a coastal and dockland environment.

5.3.5 Taking all this into account, the Consultants recommended that the Borough should aspire to provide some 900m² of water space, generally in line with the conclusions of the APP model and ISRM report, and the practical review of present pool timetables. This is equivalent to 18 twenty five metre swimming lanes which they concluded could be provided in different ways.

5.4 Demand for Sport Halls

5.4.1 With regard to the demand for sports halls, the Consultants carried out an analysis of the current use of what is at present a large stock of sports halls and supplemented this by use of the Sport England APP model. The model shows that, allowing for the demand expected from the increased usage it was determined that the Borough should provide the equivalent of 25 badminton courts to cater for local needs. This is, in effect, six or seven large sports halls.

5.4.2 However, examining the use of the existing 50 badminton court provision, it was difficult to identify where the timetabling efficiencies could be made to accommodate all current users in what would be half of the present provision. However, it was considered that there are a number of specific issues which could require the provision of more than this base level of supply:-

- the five secondary schools (existing and/or proposed under the BSF programme) would each require a 3 or 4 court hall to meet curriculum demands;
- there is additional voluntary sector provision (Belle Vue) which also plays a key role in delivering activities for young people through a sports hall;
- there is an issue with Youth Service provision in that many young people like to 'take ownership' of their own facilities and do not find it as attractive to visit a public leisure centre.

5.4.3 The present public provision of halls at The Headland, Brierton and Mill House (total of 14 courts) plus Belle Vue (4 courts) would meet a large proportion of the demand. If the existing/new schools are added (up to 20 courts), however, there would be significant surplus. The Borough would have a total of 38 courts, excluding those operated by the Youth Service.

- 5.4.4 The conclusion drawn was that while there is potentially a requirement for more than the base provision as identified by the demand model, there would be a surplus of provision if all sites were taken into consideration – even without any dry facilities at the new H₂O (to replace Mill House), provision would be 180% of projected demand. It was concluded therefore that there should certainly be no further provision of dry sports halls in the Borough and careful consideration be given to any major investment in existing halls until all slots available in the existing public and proposed school halls are taken up.
- 5.4.5 The Consultants did note, however, that the one area where an exception may be valid could be in Seaton Carew where the present public indoor sports facility is of a very poor quality. They felt that there may be potential for a smaller scale facility which would target both young people and the wider community in a single space, perhaps linked to the redevelopment of the park at the heart of the area. This would enable closure and demolition of the present sports hall in Elizabeth Way.

5.5 Demand For Other Facilities

- 5.5.1 With respect to Health and Fitness facilities, the review found that taking into account all operators in the sector, the supply of individual health and fitness stations or machines per 1,000 population is 50% higher than the English average. It was noted, however, that with comparatively low disposable incomes in the Borough, good public facilities were required.
- 5.5.2 The Consultants concluded that the indoor Bowls Centre provision was more than sufficient to meet demand, but it would not be cost effective to reduce its size, unless there was a specific initiative to redevelop it as part of the redevelopment of the Mill House site. This will depend on an overall approach to delivering community development and the asset plans for the Borough.

6. FACILITY DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

- 6.1 A number of options have been determined as a result of the facility audit and demand assessment. This has also been considered in the context of the overall vision for leisure in Hartlepool and the Council's policies and strategies. Cognizance of key stakeholders views and those of the wider community have also been taken into consideration.
- 6.2 In terms of facility distribution, account also has been made of those existing high quality facilities that we would wish to retain as part of our long term facility strategy. These include Headland Sports Hall, Brierton Sports Centre, sports facilities at St Hild's School, as well as Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre.

6.3 In summary, therefore, these development options are as follows:-

Option	Title	Description
One	Do nothing	Leave existing facilities until closure is required due to essential repair or external factors (e.g. site redevelopment).
Two	Minimum	Existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H ₂ O) with existing dry facilities (Headland, Belle Vue and Brierton) and new/refurbished school halls.
Three	Optimum	Existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H ₂ O) with new pool(s) at Brierton, existing dry facilities (Headland and Belle Vue) and new/refurbished school halls.
Four	Maximum	Existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H ₂ O) with new pool(s) at Brierton, refurbished/new wet/dry centre in NW Hartlepool, existing dry facilities (Headland and Belle Vue) and new/refurbished school halls.
Five	Replace Existing	Existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H ₂ O) with existing dry facilities (Headland, Belle Vue and Brierton), refurbished/new wet/dry facilities at five school sites and new wet/dry facility at Seaton Carew.

- Option One leaves existing facilities until closure is required due to essential repair or external factors (e.g. site redevelopment) – such a route would not allow the authority to deliver its Vision for sport and leisure, however.
- Option Two sees a Borough facility (Mill House or new H₂O Centre) with present dry facilities (Headland, Belle Vue and Brierton) and new/refurbished school halls – as this will not deliver the outcomes within our adopted strategies, it is felt that this should not be taken forward.
- Option Three combines an existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H₂O) with new pool(s) at Brierton, existing dry facilities (Headland and Belle Vue) and new/refurbished school halls – this Option is well aligned with the demand models for swimming but could perpetuate the surplus of dry side facilities.

- Option Four adds a new wet/dry centre in NW Hartlepool to the existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H₂O), new pool(s) at Brierton, existing dry facilities (Headland and Belle Vue) and new/refurbished school halls – this will allow the Borough to deliver its Vision for sports and physical activity but there is an issue regarding the overall quantity of the provision.
- Option Five replicates the established pattern of swimming pools at secondary school sites and adds these to an existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H₂O), existing dry facilities (Headland, Belle Vue and Brierton) and a new wet facility at Seaton Carew – this level of provision is more than can be justified and will require significant capital and revenue expenditure.

6.4 A summary of a more comprehensive options appraisal is attached at **Appendix 3**. Whilst no formal scoring exercise was undertaken, it can be seen from this that in general terms, Option Three performs well in most regards.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The table below summarises the capital and revenue costs of each of the options:-

	<i>Option One</i>	<i>Option Two</i>	<i>Option Three</i>	<i>Option Four</i>	<i>Option Five</i>
Scheme	Do nothing	Minimum	Optimum	Maximum	Replace Existing
Capital Costs	£4.5 to £5 million	H ₂ O £26m plus schools additions for community use £625,000 Total £26.63m	As Option Two plus Brierton pod £4.5-5.2m Total £31m to £32m	As Option Three plus North Pool £3.4m Total £34m to £35m	H ₂ O £26m plus new pools/ community use at schools £3.5m each Total £43.5m
Revenue Costs	Increasing as buildings age	H ₂ O £500k pa plus school support	As Option Two plus Brierton £100k - total £600k pa plus school support	As Option Three plus North Pool £50-100k - total £650-700k pa plus school support	Up to £1 million pa

7.2 An additional allowance would need to be made for any new community facilities provided at Seaton Carew.

7.3 It is generally recognised that the Council will not be able therefore to deliver such developments in isolation and other procurement options will have to be explored.

8. FACILITY MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

8.1 Facility Procurement

8.1.1 The longer-term procurement route with regard to incorporating major investment is complex, with a number of variables that could have a major impact on the future delivery of leisure services. Variables such as planning, funding and investment issues, affordability, market interest and capacity and other commercial opportunities on the existing sites could have an impact. If there are no significant capital reserves available, in order to deliver the potential development programme, it will be essential for the Council to build upon the BSF investment to provide a more viable long term solution.

8.1.2 A key decision will be whether to procure any new building development separately from the future management of the facility. The routes generally considered appropriate for the independent procurement of leisure buildings are as follows:-

- traditional: the Council commissions to prepare designs and specifications for works that are tendered separately
- design & build: the Council enters into a contract for both design and construction of a building
- management: a contractor will be paid an agreed fee to finish the detailed design and manage the construction through a series of sub-contractors
- construction management: the Council takes on the management of the sub-contractors itself.

A full description of these alternatives is set out in Appendix E of the main Strategy document, together with an assessment of their advantages and disadvantages.

8.1.3 For any non-school sites, a long term partnership with an organisation that could provide design, construction and management expertise could be appropriate. This could be a form of a partnership with an operator that could provide the capability to deliver an integrated design, build, operate and maintain service (see section 8.3).

8.2 Facility Management Options

8.2.1 At present, there is a mixed economy in terms of facility provision with management being delivered through a number of means:-

- Adult and Community Services, Hartlepool Borough Council – public access facilities and smaller community centres (latter with limited sports use)

- Youth Service, Hartlepool Borough Council – sports halls attached to youth centres (limited other public use)
- individual schools – operation of various wet/dry facilities out of school hours but limited casual access
- voluntary sector – organisations such as the Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre and Hartlepool Indoor Bowling Centre.

A key feature of the consultation and the site visits was that, to some extent, the operators manage the buildings to site-specific parameters or to address the needs of specific target groups rather than as a holistic service.

- 8.2.2 The detailed consideration of potential management options was not within the scope of this Facility Strategy but, in view of the close relationship between facility provision and on-going management, high level review of options which the Council could find of value in taking the procurement process forward was carried out. This is also included in Appendix E of the Strategy.

8.3 Integrated Facility Procurement and Management

- 8.3.1 In the leisure context, a Design, Build, Operate and Maintain contract (DBOM) is one where a client (the local authority) procures a consortium consisting of an architect (and cost consultant), build contractor and leisure operator to design, build, operate and maintain a leisure facility on a long-term contract (usually at least 15 years, but up to 25-30 years). It is typically employed where a Council requires a significant capital investment in its leisure facilities and, more often than not, the development of a new facility.
- 8.3.2 The DBOM approach emerged from the DBFO structure of the early leisure PPP and PFI projects, where as well as the design, construction and operation, a consortium would include a bank to provide the finance for the development. However, with the advent of the Prudential Code for capital finance in April 2004, Local Authorities have been allowed far greater freedom in borrowing to fund capital investment, particularly where this borrowing would generate revenue savings (i.e. through reduced management fee/improved operational position for leisure facilities). These revenue savings could then be used to finance the debt. In addition, the rate at which local authorities could borrow is more advantageous than the private sector.
- 8.3.3 For this reason, other Local Authorities have explored the possibility of their providing the finance for new facility developments, with the private sector providing the architectural, construction and management expertise. In addition, with the private sector being responsible for the design and construction of the facility, a significant element of the risk associated with facility development can be transferred to them.

- 8.3.4 The Consultants concluded that the more traditional public/private partnerships through the PPP and PFI routes may still be appropriate if we are unable to raise the funds to build new leisure facilities. However, there are issues with obtaining appropriate credits from Central Government and in the long term nature of such contracts which can be difficult to specify in a changing leisure market.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The following key points have emerged from the Facility Strategy:-

- (a) the current position regarding facilities is not sustainable in the long-term, as many key sites are in a spiral of decline due to a lack of recent investment – in particular, the school swimming pools are life expired;
- (b) the newest facilities at The Headland and Brierton have the potential to be a key part of the Borough's provision for many years;
- (c) there is an assumption that a new Regional water based attraction will be constructed in the medium term and that Mill House will remain in operation until such time as this opens - the capital cost would range from the £26 million for the H₂O Centre as presently envisaged to £24.8m for excluding the sports hall at Victoria Harbour or a significantly greater reduction for a new pool alongside the present sports hall at Mill House Leisure Centre (a further study would be required, however);
- (d) the options review has highlighted that the most appropriate approach to replacing the present school pools would be to add swimming facilities (25 metre and teaching pools) to the existing Brierton Sports Centre at a capital cost of between £4.5 and £5.5 million;
- (e) while this would provide a slight surplus in terms of water space, there could be an issue with regard to access to swimming in North Hartlepool – this could be addressed by the refurbishment of an existing pool such as that at High Tunstall (minimum of £300,000) or construction of an additional standalone teaching pool (some £3.5 million);
- (f) the redevelopment and/or refurbishment of the school sports halls under the BSF programme is an opportunity to consolidate the service to the town's residents, but investment in a separate entrance and reception/office can facilitate use as a community sports centre outside school hours - this could amount to some £125,000 for each site.

9.2 The Consultants also concluded that:-

- (a) a Service Level or Community Use Agreement with individual schools should be developed to ensure that the facilities are operated in a consistent and complementary manner;
- (b) to assist schools to manage community facilities effectively, it is recommended that a Borough-wide organisation should be established to co-ordinate their overall operation;
- (c) whilst the current provision of sports halls is well over that required if the parameters of the facility planning model are to be adopted, current programmes of use demonstrate that there is actual demand for more than the minimum suggested;
- (d) the Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre should remain a key partner, but the operation of the core sports facilities should be integrated with that of other sites in Hartlepool;
- (e) to ensure appropriate performance measurement, it should be a priority to implement a common Management Information System across all leisure sites in the Borough.

10. NEXT STEPS

10.1 The following section sets out the key actions which it is felt would help address issues and deliver the proposals have been set out within the Strategy.

10.2 Short Term Actions

10.2.1 The elements of the Action Plan set out below are those which it is considered are essential to improving the delivery of sport and recreation services in the Borough and could be carried out within a year.

- (a) Further develop ***inter-departmental relationships*** between teams which have an impact on the development or management of facilities (for example, Planning, Highways, Children's Services and Adult Services). This will assist in developing a common Vision for sport, recreation and physical activity.
- (b) Develop ***inter-agency links*** which will ensure that potential partners such as the Primary Health Trust, regeneration bodies, voluntary organisations and the private sector are given the opportunity to contribute to this common Vision.

- (c) Adopt the results of the appraisal of the quantity and quality of the Borough's parks and open spaces, which is being carried out in line with the guidelines set out in **Planning Policy Guidance 17** and its supporting documentation. This will enable the Authority to determine a detailed strategy for its outdoor sports and informal activities, with the conclusions contributing to the Sport and Recreation Strategy.
- (d) Revise the **Sport and Recreation Strategy** as a working document to guide future investment in facilities, personnel and activities. The Strategy should be informed by the documents above and this Facility Strategy.
- (e) Following adoption of the Facility Strategy as an appropriate route forward and on finalisation of the structure of the education estate, to **confirm the initial financial analysis** of the capital and revenue costs within this document.
- (f) Develop a **basic monitoring scheme** to record and analyse the use of all indoor (and ideally outdoor) sports and recreation facilities in Hartlepool. This should be capable of being carried out at a variety of levels in order to be applicable to a single use community building with limited staffing, as well as the most complex multi-element indoor facility fitted with a comprehensive management information system.
- (g) Develop an **output monitoring strategy and community use agreement** for the school BSF sites, and other venues, in order to ensure appropriate public access to any sport and recreation facilities which may be provided.
- (h) Commission detailed feasibility studies into the funding and delivery of the following key indoor sports developments:-
 - the extension of **Brierton Leisure Centre** to provide a 25m community swimming pool, teaching pool and/or enhanced fitness/exercise facilities – this should incorporate a detailed capital and revenue cost review of the option to locate an additional teaching pool on a site in North West Hartlepool;
 - the provision of new indoor sports and other community facilities at **Seaton Carew** (potentially in association with the local Sports Club);
 - the basic **design and spatial requirements** to ensure that any sports facilities constructed under the BSF programme can provide cost-effective community access out of hours - this should include an assessment of the likely additional capital costs for any community elements and potential sources for the funding required.

10.3 Medium Term Actions

10.3.1 It is considered that the following Action Plan elements should be carried out over the new two to three years, in order to continue improving the delivery of sport and recreation services in the Borough – given the availability of appropriate budgets, some of these elements could be brought forward.

- (a) Keep a careful watching brief on the condition of the **School Swimming Pools** to ensure that the safety of users is not compromised. As the buildings do not have a cost-effective long term future, it may be inappropriate to spend significant sums on their repair should major elements fail.
- (b) Monitor the condition of the **Mill House Leisure Centre** to ensure that the safety of users is not compromised.
- (c) Seek the procurement of the proposed **H₂O Centre** at Victoria Harbour and, if this Regional facility cannot be delivered in the form envisaged, review the outline design brief and business case for the project in order to ensure that high quality Borough level sport and recreation facilities (especially swimming pools) are retained in or close to the town centre.
- (d) Procure any agreed swimming pool developments at the **Brierton Leisure Centre** in order to ensure that it is possible to maintain the school swimming programme and offer enhanced participation opportunities should any of the existing school teaching pools be closed.
- (e) Procure the enhanced **School Sports Facilities** to be constructed under the BSF initiative and establish operational arrangements which will deliver cost-effective sports and recreation opportunities to the whole community.
- (f) In conjunction with the present Trust, review the long term operation and revenue funding of the **Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre** in order to ensure that the facility can further develop its role in encouraging sport and physical activity in the area.
- (g) Install a comprehensive **Performance Monitoring Scheme** which ensures that all facility users are recorded in order to determine the extent to which the service meets local and national targets for participation.
- (h) Develop an integrated web-based **Facility Booking Package** encompassing all indoor sports facilities (public, school, voluntary sector and commercial) in order to provide a one-stop location which can be accessed in homes, sports centres, schools or other public buildings.

10.4 Long Term Actions

10.4.1 While it might be valuable to carry out the following actions earlier, it is acknowledged that budget and officer time limits mean that some will need to be delayed – the following elements would be implemented at any time but principally after year four.

- (a) Monitor the condition of all indoor **sports, youth and community facilities** to ensure that the safety of users is not compromised through structural failure and, if the buildings do not have a cost-effective long term future, determine if it is possible to deliver the service through existing premises, rather than provide additional new buildings.
- (b) Commission **specific feasibility studies** to address the development of shared service centres or community hubs at potential locations such as:-
 - Area encompassing Mill House Leisure Centre, the Indoor Bowling Centre and Hartlepool United FC (potentially also former Odeon Cinema);
 - West Park and St Hild's;
 - Rossmere and Owton Manor;
 - Dyke House;
 - any other appropriate sites.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet to approve:-

1. The Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy.
2. For officers to continue to explore the management and procurement options available in order to deliver facility developments.
3. The adoption of the identified Action Plan within the Strategy, allowing officers to continue to work on a range of short, medium and long term actions.

CONTACT OFFICER: John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)

Background Papers

Cabinet 23rd November, 2005 - Feasibility Study for H₂O Centre.

INDOOR LEISURE FACILITY STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Capita Symonds Consulting has prepared a Borough-wide indoor sports facilities audit and strategy that incorporates future needs in the public, voluntary and private sectors which is complemented by a separate appraisal of open space (PPG17 study).
2. Many national policies recognise the importance and significance of sport and education in meeting the shared priorities of all government, particularly to encourage higher levels of activity, but Local Authorities alone cannot achieve service improvements.
3. The development and/or refurbishment of sporting and other cultural facilities in Hartlepool could contribute significantly to the achievement of the longer-term regional and sub-regional priorities
4. The Borough's Sport and Recreation Strategy emphasised it was crucial to consider any refurbishment of existing or development of new facilities within a strategic context
5. A key approach to meeting the Vision of the Council's Sport and Recreation Strategy could see fewer centres providing higher quality services, located to reflect sustainable access principles.
6. An earlier Review concluded that there is an over-provision of poor quality pool facilities in the Borough and that, rather than expensive refurbishment, new better quality and more flexible water space would significantly benefit the community.
7. The Mill House Leisure Centre is the only swimming complex open to the public throughout the day and, due to the quality, the Council has plans to replace this by the new H₂O Centre – the other pools on school sites have limited community opening hours and are beyond their expected lifespan.
8. The majority of sports halls are located on school sites and so are not available during curriculum time - only those at Mill House, the Headland and Belle Vue Centres are available for community use during the school day.
9. The provision of other sports facilities appears to be generally in balance and, in view of the 'self-contained' nature of the Borough, is not envisaged that any facilities in surrounding towns will have any impact on the provision of community sports and recreation buildings in Hartlepool.
10. Consultation with key Council Departments has provided an appreciation of the main issues which need to be addressed in the Strategy including:-
 - an acceptance that closures will be required
 - the value of the current BSF initiative
 - the demand for specific Youth space
 - an identification of areas where new homes will increase demand
 - a strong management commitment to maximising use of existing/new sports facilities.

11. Surveys of residents determined that almost half of those contacted never visited an indoor sports facility, but that these are important to a substantial minority representing most age groups - accessibility is reflected by results showing higher usage by those with cars and those living closer to Mill House Leisure Centre.
12. Although Mill House was by far the most popular facility (it includes the only public access swimming pool), it is also the only site to record a negative satisfaction score, while other sites scored 'good' towards 'excellent' - sports clubs were generally satisfied with provision, but stated they had difficulty in booking facilities at peak times.
13. The poor quality and accessibility (in programme terms) of most of the facilities is also a concern if the Borough's residents are to participate in sport in an attractive and safe environment.
14. With more than adequate provision of facilities in Hartlepool, the issue is the extent to which it may be possible to optimise the number of indoor sports facilities.
15. The Council's response to the BSF initiative is being developed towards an agreed Strategy for Change in May 2008 and there is an opportunity to link the provision of new public and education facilities.
16. The population structure is not very different from the sub-regional or national profile and thus facilities are likely to be typical for a town of such a size - however, extensive development in the northern part of the town (equivalent to 10% of the current Borough population) will add significantly to the local need for sports and recreation facilities.
17. With the catchment population being characterised by relatively poor residents with limited disposable income, there is a likelihood of below average use of sports and recreation facilities and a preference for cheaper facilities and/or activities.
18. The results from Sport England's Active People Survey place Hartlepool in the bottom quartile with regard to those participating in regular physical activity - this is 2% lower than the average for England, 1% lower than most of the Borough's comparator authorities and over 5% below that for Stockton-on-Tees.
19. The Sport England demand model calculates that the Borough should aspire to provide up to 900m² of water space (equivalent to three six-lane 25 metre pools or two with teaching pools).
20. From an analysis of use patterns and the consultation, there is a demand for more than the base sports hall provision as identified in the demand model but, with provision at twice the recommended level, investment in any new halls should be minimised until all capacity available in the existing stock is better utilised.
21. Rationalisation of other buildings suitable for sports use will depend on an overall approach to delivering community development and the asset plans for the Borough.

22. It is unlikely that co-location of other Council services (e.g. libraries or one-stop-shops) with sports centres on school sites will be appropriate in view of their locations away from the local shopping centre and other amenities important to such facilities.
23. To reflect past investment in existing buildings, it may not be possible to create an 'ideal' distribution of facilities, but a number of different location mixes were tested in a series of Options.
24. Option One leaves existing facilities operating into the foreseeable future until closure is required due to essential repair or external factors (e.g. site redevelopment) – such a route would not allow the Authority to deliver its Vision for sport and leisure.
25. Option Two is focussed around a single Borough pool facility (Mill House or new H₂O Centre) with present dry facilities (Headland, Belle Vue and Brierton) and new/refurbished school halls – as the quantity of water space provided will not deliver the outcomes envisaged, it is felt that this should not be taken forward.
26. Option Three combines an existing or new new/dry Borough facility (Mill House or H₂O Centre) with new pool(s) at Brierton, existing dry facilities (Headland and Belle Vue) and new/refurbished school halls - this Option is well aligned with the demand models for swimming, but will perpetuate the surplus of dry side facilities.
27. Option Four adds a new wet/dry centre in North West Hartlepool to the existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H₂O Centre), new pool(s) at Brierton, existing dry facilities (Headland and Belle Vue) and new/refurbished school halls – this will provide too much dry sports space.
28. Option Five replicates the established pattern of swimming pools at secondary school sites and adds these to an existing or new Borough facility (Mill House or H₂O Centre), existing dry facilities (Headland, Belle Vue and Brierton) and a new wet facility at Seaton Carew - this level of provision is far higher than necessary and will require greater capital and revenue expenditure.
29. The table below summarises the capital and revenue costs of each of the options.

	<i>Option One</i>	<i>Option Two</i>	<i>Option Three</i>	<i>Option Four</i>	<i>Option Five</i>
Scheme	Do nothing	Minimum	Optimum	Maximum	Replace Existing
Capital Costs	£4.5 to £5 million	H ₂ O £26m plus schools additions for community use £625,000 Total £26.63m	As Option Two plus Brierton pool £4.5-5.2m Total £31m to £32m	As Option Three plus North Pool £3.4m Total £34m to £35m	H ₂ O £26m plus new pools/ community use at schools £3.5m each Total £43.5m
Revenue Costs	Increasing as buildings age	H ₂ O £50k pa plus school support	As Option Two plus Brierton £100k - total £600k pa plus school support	As Option Three plus North Pool £50-100k - total £650-700k pa plus school support	Up to £1 million pa

30. A review of facility and management procurement options has determined that a crucial initial decision will be whether to procure any new facilities separately or in conjunction with their on-going management.
31. If the Council is in a position to fund the capital cost itself through savings or other sources, a Design Build Operate and Maintain approach may be an appropriate route for the integration of building and management.
32. In testing the extent to which each option addresses the desired long term outcomes for the facility development process, Option Three performs best in most regards and will ensure that the residents of Hartlepool are provided with an affordable range of sports and recreation facilities which address their needs and aspirations.
33. In preparing the recommended Strategy, we have assumed that the new est facilities at The Headland and Brierton will be a key part of the Borough's provision for 20/30 years – we have also assumed that the H₂O Centre will be constructed within 2 to 3 years and that Mill House will remain in operation until such time as this opens.
34. It is concluded that the most appropriate approach to replacing the present school pools and enhancing public pool provision would be to add swimming facilities (a 25 metre and a teaching pool) to the existing Brierton Sports Centre.
35. The bulk of the existing primary school swimming teaching programme could be accommodated within two teaching pools (e.g. Mill House/H₂O Centre and new Brierton) at limited additional cost in terms of travel time/charges.
36. The development (or retention) of an additional teaching pool in the North West of the Borough would provide capacity for growing swimming as a sport, to meet Government aspirations for more physical activity in schools and to enable school-time use by secondary schools and the wider community.
37. The current provision of sports halls is well over that required if the parameters of the demand model are to be adopted - as a result, any investment in refurbishment of existing or building of new halls (including that proposed at the H₂O Centre) should be carefully considered.
38. The Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre should remain a key partner, but the operation of its sports facilities should be integrated with that of other sites in Hartlepool.
39. The recommendation regarding other sports halls owned and managed by Hartlepool Borough Council (e.g. the Youth Service) is that they should be retained until significant investment is required, at which time consideration should be given to replacement by smaller built facilities with linked outdoor sports space.
40. The redevelopment and/or refurbishment of the school sports halls under the BSF programme is an opportunity to consolidate the service to the town's residents, but investment in a separate entrances and reception/office space can facilitate use as a community sports centre outside school hours.

41. A Service Level or Community Use Agreement with the individual schools should be developed to ensure that the facilities are operated in a consistent and complementary manner - this could involve a Borough-wide organisation to co-ordinate overall operation.
42. To ensure appropriate performance measurement, it should be a priority to implement a common Management Information System across all leisure sites in the Borough.
43. With regard to specific areas of under-provision, Seaton Carew has no high quality public facility and there is potential for a small scale development to serve both young people and the wider community in a single hall, potentially linked to redevelopment of the Park and/or library.
44. There is not a shortfall in provision with regard to any of the other key sporting facilities which would normally be expected in a town of such a population.
45. With regard to integration with other service provision, the key issue is that the principal sports facilities on the five secondary schools are situated away from the larger local shopping parades which tend to be the most appropriate places for branch libraries and community facilities.
46. We have set out the key actions which we feel would help address issues and deliver the proposals we have set out this Strategy – it is considered that the following should be implemented in the short term (within a year):-
 - further develop inter-departmental relationships
 - develop inter-agency links with potential partners
 - adopt the results of the concurrent Planning Policy Guidance 17 appraisal relating to open space and link this to the Facility Strategy
 - revise the Sport and Recreation Strategy as a working document
 - develop a basic monitoring scheme to record and analyse the use of all facilities
 - develop a community use agreement for the BSF sites and other venues
 - commission detailed feasibility studies into developments at Brierton Leisure Centre, Seaton Carew and the requirements for community access to BSF sites.
47. The following Action Plan elements should be carried out over the next two to three years:
 - review the condition of the School Swimming Pools and Mill House Leisure Centre to ensure the safety of users and assist in asset management planning
 - procure appropriate enhanced facilities under the BSF initiative and establish cost-effective operational arrangements to benefit the whole community
 - review funding opportunities to deliver the overall strategy, including procurement of the proposed H₂O Centre at Victoria Harbour
 - procure the swimming pool(s) at the Brierton Leisure Centre to ensure the school swimming programme can be maintained should any existing pools be closed

5.2 Appendix 1

- review the long term operation of the Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre to ensure that it continues its role in encouraging sport and physical activity
 - install a comprehensive Performance Monitoring Scheme to allow determination of the extent to which the service meets local and national targets for participation
 - install an integrated one-stop Facility Booking Package encompassing all indoor sports facilities which can be accessed through the web.
48. While it might be valuable to carry out the following actions earlier, it is acknowledged that these may need to be delayed until after year four:-
- monitor the condition and use of all indoor sports, youth and community facilities and determine if it is possible to deliver the service through existing premises rather than provide additional new buildings which may be required
 - commission specific feasibility studies to address the development of shared service centres or community sporting hubs at locations such as:-
 - Mill House Leisure Centre, Indoor Bowling Centre and Hartlepool United FC
 - West Park/St Hild's School
 - Rossmere/Owton Manor
 - Dyke House School (potentially linked to Mill House project)
 - other appropriate sites.

INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ~ COMPARATOR PROVISION

Facility	Comparator Authorities	Facility/1,000
Swimming Pools (total m ² of all pools)	Hartlepool	22.37
	England	17.45
	Redcar & Cleveland	11.30
	Sunderland	18.99
	Middlesbrough	11.67
	Barnsley	11.76
Sports Halls (total m ² of all of halls)	Hartlepool	105.60
	England	69.70
	Redcar & Cleveland	114.05
	Sunderland	120.94
	Middlesbrough	96.51
	Barnsley	63.94
Health and Fitness (stations)	Hartlepool	6.90
	England	4.94
	Redcar & Cleveland	4.25
	Sunderland	5.00
	Middlesbrough	5.85
	Barnsley	4.26
Indoor Bowls (rinks)	Hartlepool	0.04
	England	0.04
	Redcar & Cleveland	0.06
	Sunderland	0.05
	Middlesbrough	0
	Barnsley	0.02
Indoor Tennis (courts)	Hartlepool	0
	England	0.02
	Redcar & Cleveland	0
	Sunderland	0.06
	Middlesbrough	0.06
	Barnsley	0

Source : Sport England 'Active Places Power' 2007.

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT - OPTIONS APPRAISAL

	Option One	Option Two	Option Three	Option Four	Option Five
Scheme	Do nothing	Minimum	Optimum	Maximum	Recreate Existing
Supports corporate & sports priorities?	no - does not provide affordable, high quality facilities	partial - higher quality facilities and opportunities for partnership	yes - high quality facilities and partnership opportunities to deliver higher participation	yes - high quality facilities and partnership opportunities to deliver higher participation	yes - high quality facilities and partnership opportunities to deliver higher participation
Overall provision?	as existing	as existing for dry sites but significantly less water-space through closure of school pools	dry as existing but slightly less water-space (new pool at Brierley partially offsets closure of school pools)	dry as existing but same water-space (new pools at Brierley & High Tunstall? to offset closure of school pools)	more than existing
Pool provision?	577 m ² surplus	263 m ² shortfall (equiv to 5-lane 25m pool)	162 m ² surplus (equiv to teaching pool)	287 m ² surplus (equiv to large teaching pool)	697 m ² surplus (equiv to two 6-lane 25m pools)
Sports hall provision?	significant surplus calculated but limited capacity	potential to reduce capacity by not replacing some halls & better utilisation	potential to reduce capacity by not replacing some halls & better utilisation	potential to reduce capacity by not replacing some halls & better utilisation	potential to reduce capacity by not replacing some halls & better utilisation
Other provision?	no significant issues	no significant issues	no significant issues	no significant issues	no significant issues
Geographic spread?	as existing - fair	poor - single pool site & no public dry in North & South of town	good - two pool sites but no public dry in North & South of town	very good - three pool sites but no public access dry facility at Seaton Carew	excellent - good distribution of wet and dry facilities
Link to schools?	good - current established pattern adjusted to reflect BSF closure	poor for pools - difficult to deliver swimming programme from one site (excellent on dry side)	fair for pools - some difficulties in delivering swimming programme from two sites (excellent on dry side)	good on wet side and excellent on dry side	excellent with enhanced facilities on all secondary school sites
Partnership opportunities?	limited - no opportunities for investment	fair - potential for development and/or management partner for new wet/dry site	good - potential for development and/or management partner for new wet/dry sites	wide range of options to deliver new facilities off school sites	limited - difficult to integrate with school site facilities
Sports development potential?	poor - sub-standard pool facilities but improving dry provision	limited for swimming due to shortfall in water space - good on dry side	good for swim training and on dry side	excellent - good opportunity for swim training and teaching	good - good opportunity for swim training

	Option One	Option Two	Option Three	Option Four	Option Five
Scheme	Do nothing	Minimum	Optimum	Maximum	Recreate Existing
Capital cost of non-BSF works?	not applicable - no new development but limited expenditure to keep facilities going	H ₂ O +£0 (zero)	H ₂ O+ £4.5- 5.5 million	H ₂ O+ £7.5 - 9 million	H ₂ O +£12-18 million
Capital cost risk?	very high - impossible to determine costs in life-expired buildings	some - complex building proposed at H ₂ O	limited - simpler building at Brierley although H ₂ O still complex	limited - simpler buildings at Brierley/other site but H ₂ O still complex	some - potential for new 'package deal' pools
On-going revenue costs?	high and increasing due to staffing, energy costs and maintenance/repairs	lower than at present - no school pools and more cost-effective principal facility	potentially lower than or similar to existing but better quality of delivery	potentially similar to existing but better quality of delivery	higher than existing due to large number of pools
Net revenue cost risks?	high - lower usage levels as quality of buildings falls	medium - unable to accommodate demand and higher cost to deliver school swimming programme	low - good match of supply and demand with cost-effective to run facilities	some - over-provision but potential to increase participation in cost-effective to run facilities	high - significant over-provision with limited potential to increase participation in school-based facilities
Sustainability?	very poor	excellent if Mill House replaced	excellent balance between supply & demand in modern energy-efficient buildings	good - modern energy-efficient buildings	fair - modern energy-efficient buildings but not fully utilised

CABINET REPORT

1 October 2007



Report of: Director of Neighbourhood Services

Subject: SCHOOL TRAVEL PATHFINDER SCHEME

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To approve the submission of a formal application to put forward Hartlepool Borough Council as a potential School Travel Pathfinder authority.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report includes background information on the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and an outline of sustainable travel initiatives, which will form the basis of the formal application.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

It is the responsibility of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood and Communities but has relevance to other portfolios.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

This is a non key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet will make the decision.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

That Cabinet gives permission for Hartlepool Borough Council to submit a formal application to become a potential School Travel Pathfinder authority, for approval by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Report of: Director of Neighbourhood Services

Subject SCHOOL TRAVEL PATHFINDER SCHEME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the submission of a formal application to put forward Hartlepool Borough Council as a potential School Travel Pathfinder authority.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Education & Inspections Act 2006 introduced a new duty for Local Authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport. At a meeting of the Cabinet on the 3rd September 2007 permission was granted to publish Hartlepool Council's draft strategy on the Council website for consultation. A copy of the draft strategy can be found by logging onto www.hartlepool.gov.uk/travelstrategy.

2.2 School Travel Pathfinder Schemes

As part of these new regulations the Government is providing an opportunity for up to 20 pilot school travel schemes called 'Pathfinders'. Local Authorities are required to apply for Pathfinder status through a formal application process.

- 2.3 Hartlepool submitted an informal expression of interest in time for the June 2007 deadline, giving the Council the opportunity to submit a formal expression of interest to become a Pathfinder Authority. Formal applications, set out in accordance with the guidance should be submitted by no later than 30 November 2007.

- 2.4 Work to prepare the formal application is being coordinated by the Education Inspection Act (EIA) Group, which meets on a monthly basis and reports to the Strategic Transport Group. The steering group comprises of representatives from both Neighbourhood Services and Children Services. Membership of the group has recently been revised to ensure all key areas are engaged in the process.

- 2.5 Pathfinder schemes have a number of compulsory features:

- transport arrangements that support parental preference
- transport arrangements for pupils living more than 2 miles from school
- reducing levels of car use on the home to school journey

2.6 There is also a range of optional features that will determine the nature and content of the proposal:

- transport arrangements that support the delivery of the 14-19 strategy, and or attending breakfast clubs or after school activities under extended schools arrangements
- pupils travelling to schools preferred on religious or philosophical belief grounds
- pupils travelling along routes that parents consider unsafe
- pupils participating in extra curricular activities
- innovative purchasing arrangements
- modern technology in route planning
- closer links with post 16 transport policies, leading to more consistent provision for older pupils
- wider use of staggered school opening hours
- new approaches to transport safety issues
- transport solutions tailored to rural schools

2.7 This report outlines a variety of options to inform the content of the formal expression of interest, should approval be granted to submit a formal proposal.

2.8 **Scheme Options**

A variety of scheme options have been discussed at a meeting of the Strategic Transport Group on the 5th September. The most appropriate options to take forward are outlined below :

2.8.1 Modern technology in route planning - Information technology would be used to deliver a transition project supporting pupils when they begin travelling to their secondary school. Key features of this might include:

- a student friendly website with travel and transport information
- an on line journey planner
- a personalized journey planning service for all year 6/7 pupils
- year 6 taster travel days to their partner secondary schools
- targeted marketing and promotion of sustainable travel to pupils living certain distances from their school using a combination of measures
- working with the Choice Adviser to support disadvantaged groups

2.8.2 Pupils participating in extra curricular activities - It is more difficult for a pupil living in a rural area to participate in extra curricular activities if they live in a household without a car. To provide fairer access to extra curricular activities a sweeper bus could operate in outlying rural areas where there is a limited evening services. These areas might include Elwick, Greatham, Hart, and Dalton Piercy.

- 2.8.3 Independent travel - Hartlepool Borough Council has already undertaken a significant amount of work on independent travel with Catcote School, as part of the school travel plan programme. As a result of this work, the school has now appointed a full time Independent Travel Coordinator. The local authority is keen to build on this success and investigate the feasibility of escorts and cycle allowances as alternatives for providing bus passes on specific services, at specific times, to enable students to access extended learning opportunities and encourage healthier and more active travel. This project would set the foundations for delivering alternative solutions and promoting greater levels of sustainable travel with opportunities for further development with the adult learner.
- 2.8.4 Pupils travelling along routes that parents consider unsafe - Walking buses would be used to help increase levels of walking to and from primary schools. The buses could specifically operate on routes that parents may consider unsafe, but appropriate to use if their child was accompanied. A walking bus comprises of a minimum of two adult operators who walk a group of children along a set route at a specific time each day. There are currently four walking buses in operation in Hartlepool.
- 2.8.5 Cycle Hire Scheme - An example of a cycle hire scheme is the OY Bike System, which is a street-based rental station network that allows you to hire and return a bicycle via your mobile phone. The OY Bike system is based on the availability of rental bicycles at key locations, which could include secondary schools and colleges within the Hartlepool. These bicycles are secured to their bike stands using cables that are attached to the bicycle and which double as security locking cables when the bicycles are on hire. Each bike stand is equipped with a specially developed electronic lock operated through a keyboard and LCD display. This lock holds the cable secure until that bicycle is rented out. An OY Bike registered user select an available bicycle and the locks display a code, the user then calls the OY Bike call centre and gives them that code. A unique pin code is then read out to the user and sent back by text messaging. This pin code is entered into the lock to release the bicycle. After use the bicycle is locked into any empty port on an available OY Bike station. A unique pin will appear on the lock display that must be sent back to OY Bike to end the hire period. Dyke House School has recently trained two members of staff to the new national standard for cycling and is keen to become a training provider for on road cycle training.
- 2.8.6 A flat fare scheme for young people on public transport and a school shuttle service to transport pupils during the school day were also discussed by the Strategic Transport Group, however it was felt that feasibility of delivering these options would be investigated by Hartlepool Borough Council without additional Pathfinder funding.

2.9 Duration of schemes

Approved schemes start in September 2009, running until the end of July 2012 or a later date agreed.

2.9.1 Timescales are illustrated below :

3 Sep 2007	Cabinet granted approval to publish the draft strategy
9 Oct 2007	EIA Group to discuss scheme options for Pathfinder Proposal
1 Nov 2007	Consultation closes on draft Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy
30 Nov 2007	Deadline for submission of formal expression of interest
10 Dec 2007	Revised Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy to be presented to Cabinet
Sept 2008	Pathfinder authorities would be awarded funding
Sept 2009	Pathfinder authorities would begin their pilot of innovative schemes
Jan 2012	Formal evaluation undertaken by the DCSF

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The Government expects bidding authorities to conduct a public consultation that will give interested parties a minimum of 28 days during school term to respond. The results of the public consultation should be published and included in scheme applications, with the views of parents who currently have transport provided given separately from other parents.
- 3.2 An extensive consultation exercise has recently been undertaken on Building Schools for the Future with key stakeholders, including young people, parents, residents and governors. The findings of this consultation will be used to inform the Pathfinder application, to ensure any initiatives put forward reflect the desires of the people of Hartlepool.
- 3.3 Consultation on sustainable travel issues will be undertaken as part of the development of the revised Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy. Comments from the general public and parents will be collated using the corporate e-consultation tool from Thursday 27 September 2007.
- 3.4 Chairs of governors and head teachers of Hartlepool schools have been notified of the consultation in writing and provided with a copy of the draft strategy, inviting comments by the 1 November 2007. The Assistant Director for Children Services will be presenting the document to the Chairs of Governors on the 18 and 19 September 2007.

- 3.5 To ensure that the views of young people are reflected in the proposal a workshop is to be held at Hartlepool Historic Quay on the 26 September 2007, as part of the School Travel Plan Celebration event. Young people will be invited to put forward their concerns about travelling to and from school in a safe and sustainable way and asked to provide suggestions on how the Council might improve travel choices for young people.
- 3.6 The findings from the consultation exercise will inform which scheme options are the most appropriate to include in the formal expression of interest.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 If Hartlepool were successful the Council would be awarded up to £200K revenue pump priming. The level of funding awarded is proportionate to the numbers of pupils on the school roll. As Hartlepool is a small authority one would anticipate the level of funding awarded is significantly less.
- 4.2 The funding may be awarded over two years (08/09) or provided in one installment, this has yet to be confirmed by the DCSF. Between 2009-2012 an additional £12 million revenue funding will be spread over all of the successful Pathfinder authorities.
- 4.3 Scheme applications must set out how schemes will be financially viable and sustained beyond the period of the initial pump prime funding. A requirement of the proposal is that revenue income generated from the sale of surplus seats of those pupils who are not entitled to free home to school transport will be reinvested into the school travel pathfinder scheme.
- 4.4 Matched funding will be required from the Local Transport Plan and Building Schools for the Future to strengthen the application.
- 4.5 The formal application will outline the anticipated costs of establishing the scheme and ensuring that any scheme delivered is financially viable.

5. OFFICER ADVICE

- 5.1 That Cabinet gives permission for Hartlepool Borough Council to submit a formal application to become a potential School Travel Pathfinder authority, for approval by the Department of Children, Schools and Families,

CABINET REPORT

1st October 2007

Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject: LINKS (Local Involvement Networks)

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To brief Cabinet of the requirement to introduce a Local Involvement Network within Hartlepool and to seek approval to explore a joint contracting arrangement with neighbouring authorities.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report highlights the policy context to the development of LINKs, a summary of the current guidance, which includes:

- The role of LINKs
- The role of the host organisation
- Proposed procurement process
- Role of the expert Advisory Team

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

The project has town wide impact

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non Key

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet 1st October 2007

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- i) To note the contents of the report and to support the development of LINKs in Hartlepool
- ii) To agree to ring-fence the LINKs grant allocation
- iii) To agree to explore collaborative commissioning arrangements
- iv) To delegate the procurement process to the Director of Adult and Community Services

Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject LINKS (LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORKS)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To brief Cabinet of the requirement to introduce a Local Involvement Network within Hartlepool and to seek approval to explore a joint contracting arrangement with neighbouring authorities.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Department of Health have agreed to the Development of Local Involvement Network (LINKs) to improve Service User and Public Engagement in Health and Social Care.
- 2.2 Local Government has an absolutely vital role in delivering improved health and well being and there is an ongoing debate taking place in Government about the role of people that use services, Local Communities and Local Authorities in shaping the delivery of public services.
- 2.3 Local Government is committed to empowering citizens to give them more confidence and more opportunities to influence public services in ways that are relevant and meaningful to them and in ways that will make a real difference to services. If we are to create a truly people user led Health and Social Care Services that are centred around the needs of both individuals and communities, it is essential that services are responsive to what the people using them want and need and are accountable to Service Users and Local Communities. The aim of the LINKs Network is to create a system where more people are empowered to be active partners in the Health and Social Care rather than passive recipients.
- 2.4 A Stronger Local Voice published in July 2006 set out the Government's plan to achieve these aims. As part of the plans, Local Authorities with Social Services responsibilities will have a statutory duty to make arrangements for the establishment of Local Involvement Networks. These LINKs will bring together local people and organisations and will provide flexible ways for communities to engage with Health and Social Care organisations to help shape services and priorities in ways that best suit the communities and the people in them. They will gather the views and experience of the people within their areas on all the Health and Social Care Services they use, building on existing community networks and the work of Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPI).

- 2.5 Funding for the LINKs will be provided from Central Government to all relevant Authorities. The Local Authorities, where appropriate, will contract with local organisations such as voluntary and community groups or social enterprises to identify the most appropriate arrangements for hosting and providing support to the LINKs. Given the skill requirements of support organisations, it is likely they will be chiefly drawn from local non-profit organisations with skills in community development and networking.
- 2.6 The new system aims to simplify and strengthen the current system by being able to hold NHS and Social Care Commissioners to account and refer services to overview and scrutiny committees.
- 2.7 LINKs are expected to become operational from 1 April 2008, however this date is not definite as Royal assent to the bill has not yet been given.

3. CURRENT GUIDANCE

- 3.1 The Department of Health published two documents on 8 August 2007:
 - (i) 'Planning your Local Involvement Networks' which incorporates the findings of LINKs early adopter sites. It includes the issues that local communities need to think about to provide a LINKs, the list of actions Councils need to take and who needs to be involved in establishing LINKs, the resources required and how such a network could work
 - (ii) Contracting a host organisation for your LINKs.
- 3.2 **Appendix 1** provides the Department of Health briefing document related to these two documents.
- 3.3 Key points to note are that each LINK will be supported by a host organisation that is contracted by the Local Authority. **Appendix 2** planning your Local LINKs highlights the membership of LINKs.
- 3.3 LINKs will have a role in:
 - (i) Promoting and supporting the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of Local Health and Social Care Services.
 - (ii) Obtaining the views of people about their need for, and experience of Local Health and Social Care Services.
 - (iii) Enabling people to monitor and review the commissioning and provision of care services.
 - (iv) Raise the concerns of local people with those responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising services.

- 3.4 The details of the policies of LINKs will be provided in future regulations.
- 3.5 Local Authorities are expected to commence the procurement of host organisations once the bill is given Royal assent.
- 3.6 It is recommended that Local Authorities and Interested stakeholders begin to engage with local groups and interested individuals now and that they begin to identify a working model for the LINKs at the same time as preparing for the procurement process.

4. ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- 4.1 The role of the Local Authorities is as follows:
- Local authorities with social services responsibilities will be under a statutory duty to establish LINKs to specified standards, with guidance to ensure consistency across local authorities;
 - Funding to support LINKs will be as a targeted (not ring-fenced) specific grant;
 - Local authorities will be strongly encouraged to involve local people and organisations in process of awarding the first contract to support LINKs;
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be encouraged to hold their executives to account for how this is done.
- 4.2 Local Authorities need to progress the following:-
- (i) Local Authority Officers and Councillors need to stimulate interest in LINKs with both potential members and participants and with potential host organisations. These could be via workshops, meetings, information on Council Website and Council Newsletter.
 - (ii) Entering into a contract with a host (for three years) and performance managing the contract.
 - (iii) OSC (Overview and Scrutiny Committees) within the Local Authorities have a role in scrutinising how the contracting process was undertaken and ensuring best value is achieved.
 - (iv) The OSC may commission a LINK to undertake work on its behalf.
 - (v) Local Authorities and LINK may agree to pool information or work together to gather the views and experiences of local people and groups regarding particular health and social care services.

5. ROLE OF LINKS

5.1 The role of LINKs is as follows:

- Primarily a network to represent the views and concerns of the whole community in relation to health and social care services;
- Will need to demonstrate good governance and accountability;
- The LINK will be held to account for its activities by the local community;
- Provision of evidence of active outreach and engagement with different local groups and communities;
- Demonstrate the impact it has had on changes to local health and social care provision to better meet locally identified needs;
- Provision of regular information to the community;
- Powers to enter health and social care premises (with exceptions) to observe and assess the nature and quality of services {not all LINK members will have this role};
- Duty to co-operate and co-ordinate activities with the regulators;
- Engage in monitoring through actively seeking views directly from individuals and groups, indirectly from advocates and representatives, complaints, PALS, surveys, comment cards, etc;
- Report annually to the Secretary of State for Health on activities and outcomes;
- A LINK may decide to review how local commissioners are communicating with the public;
- LINKs will have a strong relationship with all the decision makers in health and social care and will assess community needs, decide priorities and influence commissioning decisions;
- LINKs will have powers to:
 - enter specified premises and assess services
 - request information and receive a response within a specified timescale
 - make reports and recommendations and receive a response within a specified timescale
 - refer matters to an OSC and receive a response;
- To have diverse membership including people with learning disabilities, sensory impairments, from all age groups and different ethnic groups;
- LINKs may wish to set up special interest groups e.g. mental health services; services for children and young people or focus on an acute trust;
- LINKs may wish to join with neighbouring LINKs on issues that span their borders, or network regionally and/or nationally;
- LINKs will not have a primary role in relation to services for children but will need to develop a relationship to children's trusts;
- If LINKs are unable to resolve a social care issue they may work with front line councillors using the "community call for action" process;

- LINKs will need to understand the structure of OSCs within the local authority;
- LINKs will provide a valuable source of intelligence and evidence based information to commissioners; OSCs and health and social care providers;
- LINKs will want to develop effective relationships with local strategic partnerships and similar groups and networks.
- Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people from across the community to influence commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social care services;
- Obtaining views of local people about their health and social care needs;
- Enabling local people to share their skills and experience in order to influence the development and improvement of local services;
- Supporting people within the community to make their voices heard including those who find it difficult to participate in traditional ways or choose not to;
- Act as a hub within a network of user led and community based groups, channelling views and information;
- LINKs will set their own agenda and focus on issues of concern to local people and seek to influence change;
- LINKs will be required to report their activities and expenditure to the public, to health and social care bodies, the relevant local authority, the Secretary of State for Health, and other interested organisations;
- Although the functions will be set out in legislation how they are undertaken will not be prescribed;
- LINKs may carry out additional work commissioned and funded by the NHS and/or OSCs if they wish.

6. GETTING READY FOR LINKS

6.1 The Department of Health policy document policy highlights the core responsibilities of the LINKs host organisation together with the proposed tender requirements for Local Authority to follow. The host and LINKs responsibility are as follows:

- Holding LINK finances (decision on expenditure will be responsibility of the LINK not the “host”)
- Recruiting members to LINKs;
- Co-ordination, support and promotion of LINKs priorities; work plan and activities
- Provision of advice and support;
- Data management and record keeping;
- Dealing with LINK communication and correspondence;
- Guide the LINK access to the views of the whole community;
- Identifying quality standards for delivery of support;

- Enabling effective working relationships with local partners
- Ensuring awareness and compliance with equality legislation;
- Produce a six monthly report to the Local Authority;
- Help LINK members demonstrate that they are able to comply with a standard code of conduct;
- Ensuring training and development is provided for LINK members and that members do not undertake activities they do not have the skills to carry out.

6.2 Funding to Local Authorities will be via a specific grant to cover:

- (i) Local Authority Contract Management Costs
- (ii) Host Organisation support function costs
- (iii) LINKs expenditure costs

6.3 It is suggested by the Department of Health that the amount given to the Local Authorities (as yet undetermined) is ring-fenced by the Local Authority for the procurement of LINKs and the host.

7. LOCAL PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 In view of the requirement for Local Authorities to procure a host organisation, it is proposed that there are a number of advantages for Hartlepool Borough Council to explore entering into a collaborative commissioning arrangement with neighbouring authorities.

7.2 The procurement process would be more cost efficient if undertaken and led by one Local Authority, with a strong proviso that each local area would be adequately represented in the organisation of the LINKs, for example by having local persons in the LINKs.

7.3 The indicative allocations for the early development of LINKs is only £10,000 to support the contracting process. Individual Local Authorities will receive a financial allocation, yet to be determined based on a population basis, therefore Hartlepool needs to look at how best this funding can be used to provide a good quality local LINKs service.

7.4 The administration and overhead costs of the host could be minimised and more cost effectively managed by one organisation, enabling more resources to be interested in the delivery of the core LINKs functions, namely engagement.

7.5 Cabinet approval is sought therefore to explore and pursue this option. It is felt to be the most effective way to provide this service. A draft timetable is attached **Appendix 3**.

- 7.5 It is recommended that the procurement process of delegated to the Director of Adult and Community Services.

8 EXPERT ADVISORY TEAMS

- 8.1 The Local Authority is able to book placements with the Department of Health LINKs Expert Advisory Team to help us prepare for LINKs. We can receive up to three days support between September 2007 and March 2008 to help us:

- (i) Understand the rationale for LINKs and Impact
- (ii) Begin discussions with local people and groups about how to develop the local LINK
- (iii) Understand the skills required from the host organisations and the timescales for contracts with a suitable host.
- (iv) Establish good relationships between the executive, overview and scrutiny, the host and the LINKs.

- 8.2 The three days are split as follows:

- (i) Preparation Day
- (ii) Delivery days – advisors providing practical support. Each Local Authority needs to identify the support required locally.

- 8.3 It is proposed that these 3 free days consultancy are booked to explore how we can begin the LINKs development process in Hartlepool.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet are requested to note the contents of this report and to agree:

- i) That the LINKs grant is ring-fenced to the procurement and provision of a LINKs service
- ii) That the collaboratively contracting commissioning arrangements can be pursued per paragraph 7.1 above.
- iii) That the procurement process is delegated to Director of Adult and Community Services.

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) Explained

August 2007

Where have Local Involvement Networks come from?



In 2003, the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health was set up.

Their job has been to support different ways for people who use health services to have a say about how those services are run.

They support Patient Forums. There is a Patient Forum in each NHS Trust.

Where have Local Involvement Networks come from?

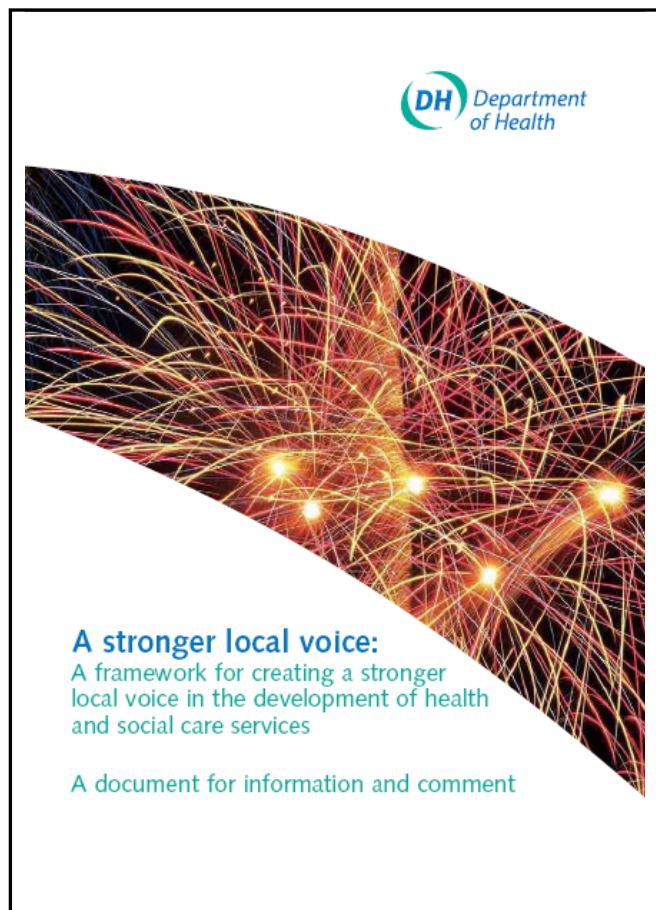


Our Health, Our Care, Our Say Health and Social Care White Paper 2006

People should have, '*more choice and a louder voice*' about the services they get.

Both health and social care services.

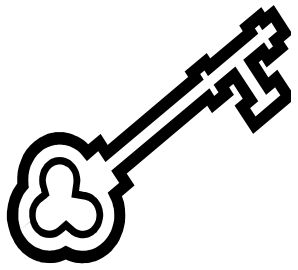
Where have Local Involvement Networks come from?



A Stronger Voice July 2006

New ways for people who use health and social care services to have a say in how they are planned and run.

This includes new **Local Involvement Networks** – or **LINKs**.



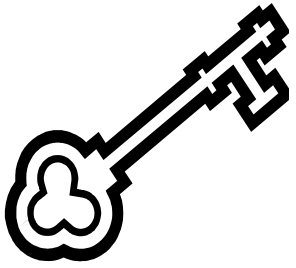
Key facts about LINKs

LINKs will replace Patient Forums.

The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health will close.

There will be a LINK in every Local Authority area (that is responsible for Social Services).





Key facts about LINKs

LINKs will be a network of people and organisations or groups. They will be able to represent the views and ideas of lots of different people.

They will not take over from groups that work at the moment. They should be able to make it easier for groups to have their say about local services.



What will LINKs do?

- ✓ Give people the chance to say what they think about their local services – what is working well and what is not so good
- ✓ Give people the chance to check how care services are planned and run
- ✓ Feedback what people have said about services so that things can change for the better



Who can be part of a LINK?

LINKs must be **Diverse** – they must be able to represent all of the different groups and types of people that make up the local population.



LINKs will need **strong leaders** and **clear structures** so that everyone knows who is responsible for what. LINKs will also need to be **trustworthy and reliable**. Local people will need to be able to see that what they say is being **listened** to.



Who can be part of a LINK?

LINKs will need to include **everyone**:

User-led organisations



Local voluntary and community sector organisations



Individual people

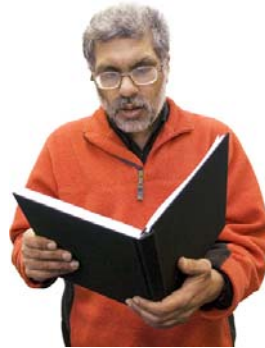


Butyou **do not**
have to be a member
to get involved

What Powers will LINKs have?

LINKs will have special powers so that they can say how local services should improve. They will be able to:

Make reports and recommendations and get a reply within a set amount of time.



Ask for information and get a reply within a set amount of time.

Go into some types of services to see what they do.



Tell an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) what they have found and get a response.



How will LINKs be set up?

Each local authority will get a grant from the Department of Health.



Each local authority will use the money to pay a **host organisation**. The host will be responsible for setting up the LINK and giving practical support to keep it going. The host will be accountable to the LINK.



The LINK will be independent from the local authority. Each LINK will decide how they want to get the work done

How will LINKs be set up?



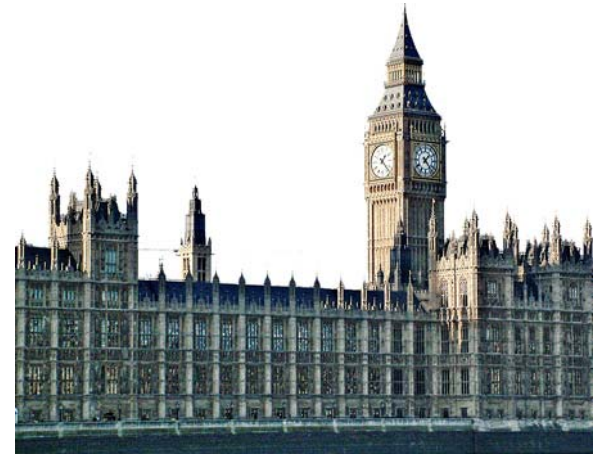
Host



LINK

When will LINKs happen?

The rules about LINKs and how they will work are part of the **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill**. This is being looked at by the Houses of Parliament at the moment.



The Bill should receive Royal Assent when the House returns (after the summer recess) in October.

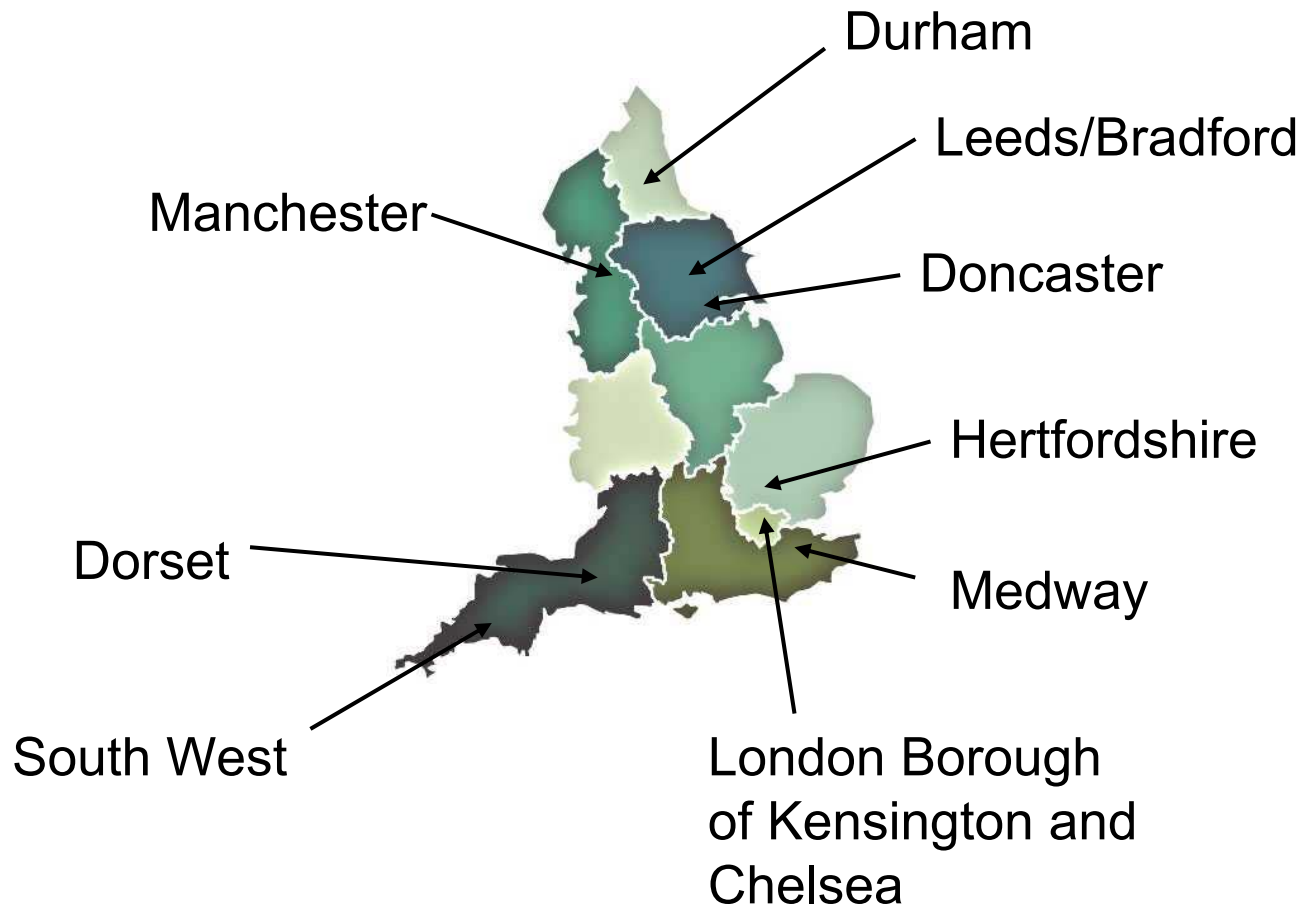
We expect Patient Forums to be abolished in March 2008 and LINKs to start from April 2008.



**April
2008**

LINKs Early Adopter Projects

There are 9 places around England that are trying out how LINKs might work:



LINKs Early Adopter Projects

They will be able to give us information, advice and guidance about what can work well and what gets in the way of a good LINK. They will try out different ways of doing things. They will share what is working as well as the things they find difficult.



LINKs Early Adopter Projects



The Early Adopter Projects will think about:

- ✓ How to encourage people to get involved with their local LINK
- ✓ What LINKs should do and how they should work.
- ✓ How to decide what the most important things are to do
- ✓ What sort of organisations LINKs should be – what should they look like and how should they be run
- ✓ What support LINKs will need from their Host organisation
- ✓ How Local Authorities should decide which organisations are best to be a host and what money they will need

More Information?



www.cppih.org

go to the Knowledge Management System (KMS)
go to Changing NHS:

LINKs, Early Adopter pages



www.dh.gov.uk/patientpublicinvolvement

Search for 'Local Involvement Networks'

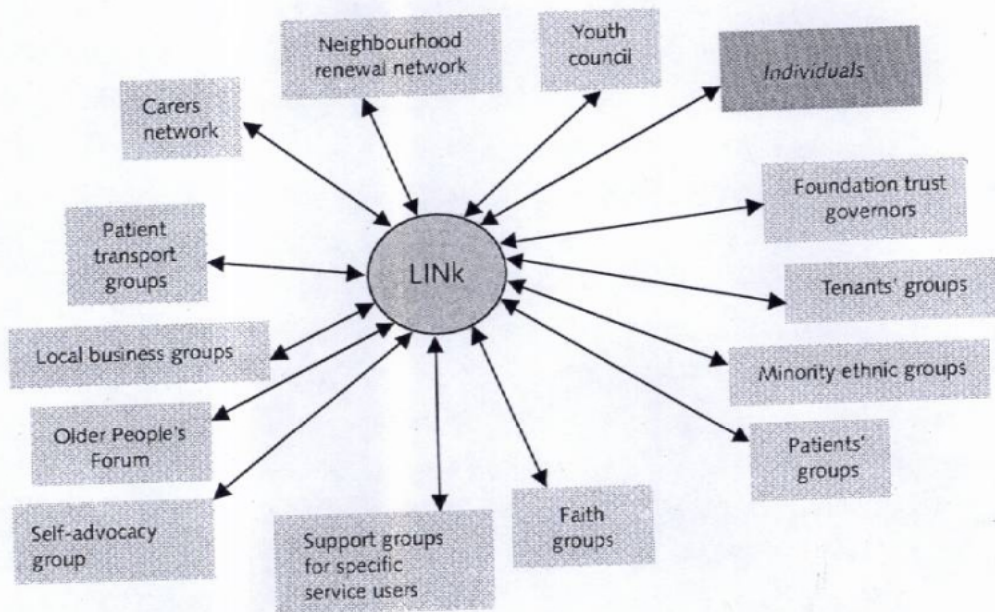
LINKs Bulletin



www.nhscentreforinvolvement.nhs.uk

Register on Home page

Figure 1: Membership of a LINK



6.2 Appendix 3

Item	Sep-07	Oct-07	Nov -07	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08
Meet with other Tees Valley authorities								
Consultation								
Engage with providers								
Prepare spec and tender doc								
Advertise								
PQQ/Evaluation								
Interviews								
Award tender								
Lead-in								
Start of Contract								

CABINET REPORT

1st October 2007



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: ICT SUPPORT – FUTURE PROVISION

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To outline the recommended process leading up to the end of the current partnership arrangements for the provision of ICT support to the Council.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

In October 2001, HBC entered into a 10 year agreement with Sx3 (now Northgate) to provide the Council with telecommunications and information technology services. This agreement comes to an end in September 2011.

This report outlines the recommended process working towards 2011 to ensure the authority makes the best decision with regard to the future provision of ICT support.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Information and Communication Technology falls within the remit of the Portfolio holder for Performance but it impacts across the whole of the authority and failure to address the future requirements adequately will fundamentally affect the authority's ability to provide its services.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet on 1st October 2007.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Subject to any amendments they wish to propose, Cabinet is requested to approve the process leading up to the end of the current provision of ICT support to the Council including:

- The need to carry out this programme of work
- The process outlined in the report
- Nominations for Senior Responsible Officer and Programme Manager
- Carrying out of OGC Gateway Reviews
- Timescales as outlined in the report

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject ICT SUPPORT – FUTURE PROVISION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To agree the process leading up to the end of the current partnership arrangements for the provision of ICT support to the Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2001, HBC entered into a 10 year agreement with Sx3 (now Northgate) to provide the Council with telecommunications and information technology services. This agreement comes to an end in September 2011.
- 2.2 Northgate is the Council's largest single supplier, with an annual contract value for 2005/06 of £2.5m plus additional services, purchases etc, adding a further £2m per annum. Given the importance of this service to the Council and the amount of work needed to ensure the smooth transition, it is essential that this is properly planned to ensure that the service can continue to be provided, in whatever format is agreed, after the end of the current contract
- 2.3 The decision to outsource the ICT service in 2001 was made with the following reasons in mind:
- As an authority, we are substantial users of a variety of ICT systems which underpin the ability to provide services efficiently and effectively. It was felt that having a partner would allow us to share the risk and improve the efficiency of our ICT systems.
 - The size of the authority meant it was proving difficult to retain the skill sets needed to cover the wide range of systems and technology in use. It was hoped the partnership would give access to a wider skills base, knowledge and technical expertise.
 - It was felt that by entering into a partnership with a specialist technology company, we would enhance the capacity of the authority to identify and use developments in the broader public sector to enable all our services to improve.
 - The agreement gave us access to an Investment Fund of £2m which could be used during the term of the agreement to develop our use of technology.

It is important that, as part of this exercise, we revisit these reasons and anticipated benefits to ascertain the extent to which they were realised and whether they still remain as important to the authority in today's environment.

- 2.4 Reviewing the current contractual arrangements, determining and agreeing the options for the future and implementing this decision is a complex package of activity. The technical, service delivery, financial and legal requirements underpinning this cannot be underestimated if we are to ensure that the implemented solution will deliver our requirements and support highly effective and innovative service delivery.

3. RISKS

- 3.1 The risks of not addressing this programme of work in a planned and robust manner are significant, as it will fundamentally affect the authority's ability to provide its services. The high reliance on ICT, the technical issues involved, the significant cost of the service and the capacity for failure all combine to make this a high-risk activity.
- 3.2 To mitigate against these risks, the process is starting sufficiently early, and steps are being taken to ensure it is properly planned and resourced, building in reviews and sourcing external expertise as required.

4. CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 There are a number of issues that must be taken into consideration during the process.
- It must be remembered that the responsibility for provision of ICT support and development remains with HBC regardless of who delivers the service so there is a need to maintain adequate control and resources internally.
 - The current agreement is vague in places and therefore takes significant time and effort to make it work successfully. It is important that we develop an appropriate agreement which clearly defines the Council's requirements.
 - Legislative and regulatory considerations – what are the legal requirements, barriers etc. to any future agreement?
 - Financial considerations – what level of cost savings are likely to be required from this exercise and what are the likely splits between capital and revenue budgets available?
 - Future Shape of the Authority – the direction the authority is going in will have a significant influence on the type of ICT support and development required after 2011.

5. PROCESS

- 5.1 It is essential that this is adequately planned, managed and resourced and it should be recognised that this programme of work is in addition to the day-

to-day operation of the authority and there is limited, if any, spare capacity within the organisation to accommodate this.

- 5.2 Appendix A shows the recommended programme team. The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) will take the lead on this, supported by the Programme Manager (PM) heading up a Programme Board, consisting of Workstream Leads (WSL), each concentrating on the key issues to be addressed under the remit of their workstream.
- 5.3 OGC Gateway Reviews will be incorporated into the process at key decision points to provide independent guidance and ensure the programme is ready to progress to the next stage.
- 5.4 The process will involve 3 phases:

Phase 1

This will include:

- agreeing the plan
- ensuring sufficient and relevant resources are identified and allocated
- gathering information
- evaluating the current arrangements in terms of service delivery and value for money
- consideration of whether the current arrangements have enabled us to do what we wanted to – has it met original expectations?
- making comparisons using benchmarking data
- identifying any added value provided by the current arrangements
- clarifying any gaps in delivery between what we currently have and what we may need in the future
- legal review of current contract

The outcome of this Phase will be a complete picture of current arrangements and future requirements.

The target date for completion of Phase 1 is March 2008.

Phase 2

This will include:

- Identification and evaluation of the various options for future delivery
- Liaison with other local authorities with experience in re-tendering for outsourced services

The outcome of this Phase will be a report showing the various options for the future delivery of the ICT service and their relative advantages and disadvantages.

The target date for completion of Phase 2 is March 2009.

Phase 3

Phase 3 will involve the post-decision work. Once agreement has been reached on how the authority wants to proceed, then work will be required around procurement, implementation etc.

The target date for completion of Phase 3 is September 2011 when the current arrangement expires.

Further detail, and financial implications for Phase 3 will be the subject of a future Cabinet report once the outcome of Phases 1 and 2 are known.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Each member of the project team needs to be clear about, and accept, their responsibilities within this programme of work.

6.2 Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)

The SRO has the prime responsibility for the programme and for ensuring that any remedial actions recommended by the Gateway reviews are implemented. They are responsible for ensuring the programme meets its objectives, maintains business focus and is actively managed.

Suggested SRO: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive.

6.3 Programme Manager (PM)

The programme manager is responsible for the overall programme management, ensuring the plan is established and clearly understood, highlighting risks, monitoring adherence to the plan, establishing and enforcing governance procedures, maintaining forward movement and escalating any show-stoppers to the SRO. They will chair the Programme Board and co-ordinate the work of the workstream leads, acting as an unblocker when required and ensuring the necessary links between the various workstreams are made.

Suggested Programme Manager: Joan Chapman, Principal Strategy Development Officer (e-gov)

6.4 Workstream Leads (WSL)

The workstream leads will be members of the Programme Board and be responsible for developing and monitoring project plans for their workstream, identifying information and resource requirements, critical path, key deliverables etc. and highlighting any risks, key obstacles etc. to the programme manager. They will be responsible for establishing and giving direction and guidance to project teams within their areas.

7. Communications

- 7.1 With a programme of this size and importance, there needs to be an agreed communication plan to incorporate all necessary internal and external communications. It is recommended that this be developed by the Programme Manager in conjunction with the Public Relations Manager.

8. Decision points

- 8.1 The key decision points of the process are:
- Oct 07 – agreement of process
 - March 08 – completion of phase 1
 - March 09 – completion of phase 2 and agreement of way forward

9. Gateway Reviews

- 9.1 OGC Gateway reviews are mandatory for procurement, IT-enabled, and construction programmes and projects, so it could be argued that in this case we have no option but to follow the gateway process. For a programme of this size and importance however, it is strongly recommended that the reviews be carried out regardless of any mandatory requirement.
- 9.2 The Gateway reviews provide a 'peer review' in which independent practitioners from outside the programme use their expertise and experience to examine the progress and likelihood of successful delivery. They support the SRO and PM by adding an external challenge to the robustness of the plans and processes. It works on the principle of mutual support so there is no charge to the authority for this exercise, other than expenses and support to the review team, although the authority is expected to offer some HBC staff to the programme to carry out reviews in other authorities. To date 3 members of staff (Mike Ward, Graham Frankland and Derek Reynolds) have been trained as reviewers.
- 9.3 The reviews should be carried out at key decision points throughout the programme, looking ahead to provide assurance that progression to the next stage is possible.
- 9.4 It is recommended that Gateway reviews be carried out at the following stages of this programme:

Review 1 - agreement of process

This first review tests whether stakeholders' expectations of the programme are realistic, in relation to costs, risks, outcomes, resource needs, timetable and general achievability.

Mid stage Reviews

Mid stage reviews are particularly concerned with establishing the continued validity of the programme and ensuring that the outcomes and desired benefits of the programme are on track. The focus here is on whether anything has changed in terms of policy direction, resources availability etc.

Further reviews will be carried out at key points in the programme such as:

- Completion of specific phases
- Where there are significant changes to the desired outcomes
- When it becomes clear that the programme needs to be reshaped
- When the programme's sponsors have concerns about the programme's effectiveness
- When there is a change in SRO for the programme
- To learn lessons to transfer to other programmes when a substantial amount of successful delivery has taken place.

At the very least there should be a review upon completion of phase 1 (March 08) and phase 2 (March 08).

Final Review

The final review takes place at the conclusion of the programme, to assess the overall success of the programme and the extent to which the desired outcomes and benefits have been achieved, and to check that the lessons learned have been properly analysed.

10. Phase 3

10.1 Phase 3 will be post-decision and will involve ensuring the correct procurement processes are followed and creation of an implementation plan for whichever method of service delivery is agreed upon. It is inevitable that some degree of external expertise will be required for this phase and there will be financial implications which will become clearer during the development of phases 1 and 2.

10.2 A further report will be brought to Cabinet before the beginning of Phase 3.

11. Barriers/Show Stoppers

11.1 There are a small number of critical stages which could prove to be show stoppers.

- If the information is not available and/or accurate when required, this will impact on the validity of any decision made.
- If the necessary resources are not allocated at the necessary times then the timescales will slip and decisions will not be made in time.

12. Financial Considerations

- 12.1 As stated earlier, this is a major piece of work, the outcome of which will have an undeniable impact on the authority as a whole and its ability to provide services to the borough. Whilst the programme needs to be owned and led by HBC staff, it is recognised that there is a shortfall in both the capacity and skills required to undertake a programme of work of this magnitude and importance.
- 12.2 The recommendation is that existing staff carry out the Senior Responsible Officer, Programme Manager and Workstream Lead roles in addition to their normal day to day activities. It needs to be recognised, however, that all of the suggested officers are either Chief Officers or Principal Officers and many of them are already leading on, or heavily involved in, implementing a series of important projects. In order to facilitate this additional work, it is very likely that some degree of back-filling will be necessary to ensure normal service is maintained during this programme. This back-filling will be used to carry out some of the tasks that cannot be left without having an adverse effect on the work of the authority, although the details will become clearer as Workstream Leaders develop their individual workplans.
- 12.3 In addition, there is a need for specific skills which are not available in-house for parts of the work. The actual tasks to be undertaken will vary between the workstreams but examples of the type of expertise needed are benchmarking skills, technical and legal knowledge.
- 12.4 There is also likely to be the need for a small number of 'fact finding' site visits to other local authorities that have already outsourced services and then either further outsourced or brought back in-house to identify any areas we may have missed and learn lessons from their experiences.
- 12.5 There is no charge for the Gateway Reviews but we will need to cover expenses.
- 12.6 The estimated financial resources needed for phases 1 and 2 are £150,000, spread across the period from October 2007 to March 2009. Given the size of the contract, equating to a 10 year value of approximately £45m, this expenditure is approx. 0.3% of this value.
- 12.7 The anticipated costs of phases 1 and 2 of this project will be funded from departmental managed underspends.

13. Reporting Arrangements

- 13.1 The actual decision on how future ICT support will be provided is a political decision so the decision is to be made by Cabinet but there needs to be a lot of input from key stakeholders throughout the process and the following table outlines the recommended reporting arrangements.

- 13.2 The ICT Steering Group is a cross-departmental group consisting of Assistant Director level members who steer the use of ICT for the authority and this group clearly has a leading role to play in this project. Regular reports will be considered by this group in addition to the Chief Executive's Management Team (CEMT) and the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

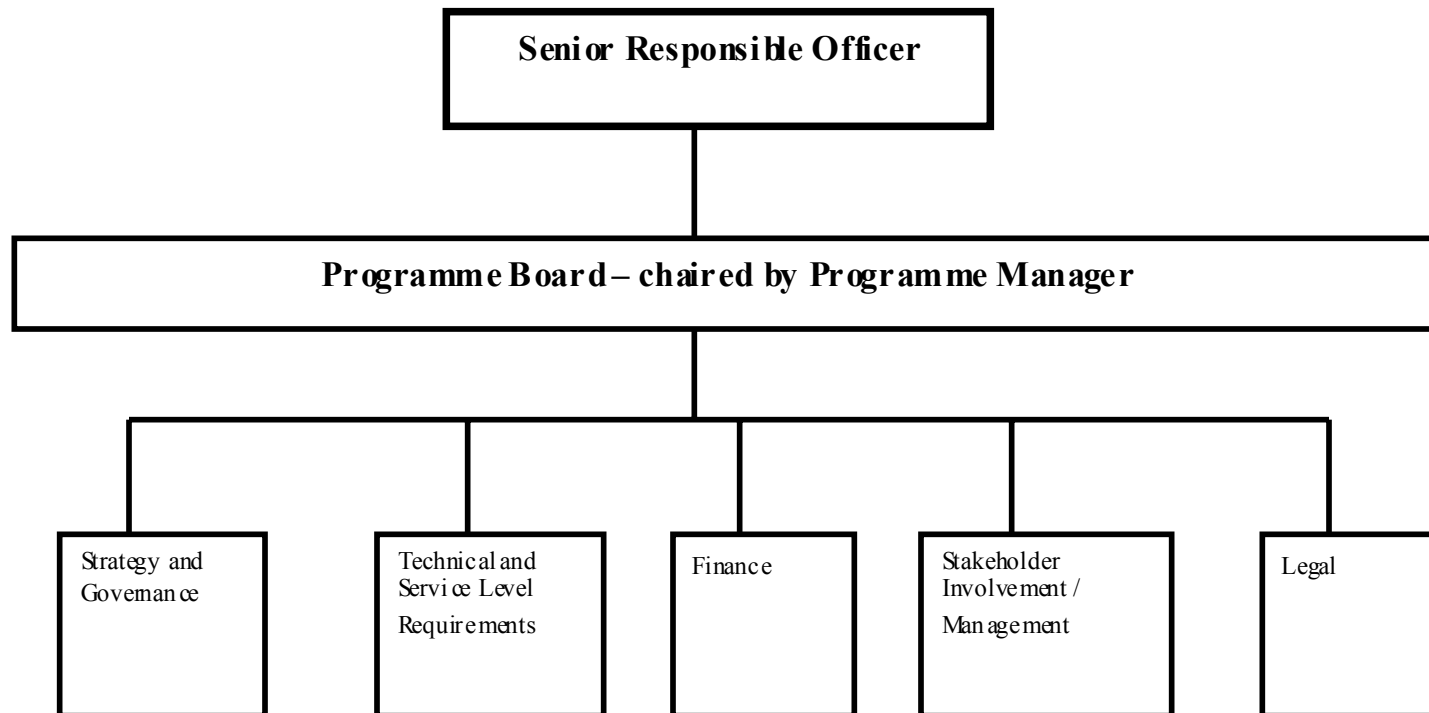
Date	Forum (s)	Information/Decisions
August 2007	CEMT, CMT, ICT Steering Group	Suggested process.
Oct 2007 Oct 07 – Mar 2009	Cabinet CEMT, CMT, ICT Steering Group	To agree process. Regular update reports
Mar 2008	Cabinet	End of phase 1
Oct 2008	Cabinet	Interim report on progress
Mar 2009	Cabinet	End of phase 2
Phase 3 – Mar 09 to Sept 11	To Be Agreed	

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 It is recommended that Cabinet agree to the following:

- The need to carry out this programme of work
- The process outlined in the report
- Nominations for Senior Responsible Officer and Programme Manager
- Carrying out of OGC Gateway Reviews
- Timescales as outlined in the report

Programme Management Structure



CABINET REPORT

1st October 2007



Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
and Head of Procurement and Property Services

Subject: HARTLEPOOL FUTURE AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To set out the process of bidding by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) for the Housing Corporation resources to develop affordable housing and the initiation and consideration of bids for Council owned land.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report considers the Housing Corporation funding process and expectations, the ongoing liaison with housing associations, the availability of public land and identifies a process of inviting 'bids' for some larger sites from one or more locally connected RSLs.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

This is a significant strategic issue that affects the well-being of the town.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet, 1st October, 2007.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet is recommended to note and endorse the approach outlined in the report.

Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
and Head of Procurement and Property Services

Subject: HARTLEPOOL FUTURE AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PROGRAMME

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To set out the process of bidding by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) for the Housing Corporation resources to develop affordable housing and the initiation and consideration of bids for Council owned land.

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Hartlepool Local Housing Assessment (2007) demonstrates the need to increase the development of affordable housing in Hartlepool. This is the subject of an ongoing Scrutiny process. The rate of development of new affordable housing has been on average only about ten gross new dwellings per year since 1996.
- 2.2 In the short/ medium term the main way to achieve an increase in the development of affordable housing by RSLs is through the a programme funded through the Housing Corporation. The programme for the next three years is now open to bids from Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and also accredited private developers and the first round of bids have to be submitted by the 2nd November 2007 for the first tranche of funding. The submissions have to be in some detail with costings and funding models. It would be appropriate to flag up other emerging opportunities to be submitted in detail later.
- 2.3 Affordable housing includes both housing for social renting and intermediate housing such as rent and buy schemes. In some cases mixed development including some owner occupied dwellings will enable RSLs to cross subsidise other social rented units.

3. **HOUSING CORPORATION FUNDING PROCESS**

- 3.1 Whilst Housing Corporation bidding processes for the next 3 years are to some extent fluid, they effectively require bid submissions being made by housing associations (Registered Social Landlords) by the 2nd November 2007 for a proportion of available resources with funding announcements anticipated early next year.

- 3.2 The Housing Corporations funding is increasing but it is also seeking to achieve more from the resources invested in affordable housing and the regional distributions are not yet clear. As indicated in the housing green paper "Homes for the Future - more affordable, more sustainable" (2007) the government proposes that investment in new social rented and intermediate houses is a priority and will increase substantially involving direct government investment in social housing through the Housing Corporation (and in due course the New Homes Agency). Current investment funding from the Housing Corporation nationally accounts for 44% of total scheme costs and RSLs raise 56% through borrowing and their own surpluses. The paper notes that the Corporation has concluded that "Housing Associations can borrow more against their existing businesses with scope for efficiency savings to be secured for new affordable housing". The government's aim is "to use more competitive bidding so that social landlords... can win a bigger programme if they offer better value for money." At the same time the standards of design and environmental quality are being raised adding to ever increasing construction costs.
- 3.3 In the northern region the Corporation is therefore seeking to lower the subsidy per dwelling from an average of about £62,000 per dwelling to about £51,000 per dwelling.
- 3.4 In addition however the Corporation also expects that local housing authorities will where Councils own land make this available at below market value or nil value. This will give such authorities a greater chance of their local housing need being met and also provide nomination rights to the authority to enable residents in housing need to be put forward for tenancies in the dwellings provided. The provision of subsidised land by Housing Authorities below market value is a clear expectation from the Housing Corporation and advice strongly suggests that the partner housing association bids are very unlikely to be successful unless there is a willingness to provide land at nil value or at least substantially below market value especially where unit costs are higher (ie bungalows and larger family housing the very types of housing highlighted in the housing needs assessment). One approach already adopted in a Yorkshire area has been that the Housing Corporation will not support social housing schemes where land costs are more than £5000 per dwelling.
- 3.5 The bidding round is competitive and designed therefore to drive down grant levels and increase contributions from other sources other than housing corporation subsidy. This will favour schemes that tend to have a greater level of other contributions and a lower level of Housing Corporation grant per unit cost. The degree to which the Council is prepared to discount the value of its land will therefore influence the degree to which RSLs will be prepared to expend resources on preparing bids and the likelihood of the success of any scheme bids.

4. **LIAISON WITH HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS**

- 4.1 Discussions have been taking place with some of the locally connected housing associations in particular Housing Hartlepool, Three Rivers and Endeavour Housing Association. The strategic housing assessment has been given to these associations to evidence the extent and nature of need in the town. Lists and plans of sites, both allocated and unallocated for housing, and particularly sites owned by the Council have been given to and discussed with these associations. Housing Hartlepool has undertaken considerable work and has a draft programme which may form part of their bid, and discussions have taken place with Three Rivers Housing Association on the Surtees Street area.

5. **PUBLIC LAND AVAILABILITY**

- 5.1 Ideally Housing Associations need a clear position on the willingness of the Council to provide land and the degree of discount that might be forthcoming.
- 5.2 The Council, as all local authorities, are bound by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 which states that land must be sold for the best consideration reasonably obtainable. Normally, any transaction that did not achieve best consideration reasonably obtainable would need to be referred to the Secretary of State for consent to the transaction. The Local Government Act 1972: General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 states that specific consent is not required for the disposal of any interest in land which the authority consider will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area or all or any persons resident or present in its area. It is considered that the sale of land for social housing schemes would be covered under the General Disposals Consents.
- 5.3 Use and discounting of land for affordable housing has to be balanced against other needs and the financial position of the authority. However the need for affordable housing is a significant consideration.
- 5.4 Searches of land registers and databases indicates that the overall availability of public owned land suitable for housing in Hartlepool is unfortunately very limited. There are a larger number of small sites that may be useful where an RSL has stock in the vicinity but will be relatively expensive to develop. There are only a handful of sites of a reasonable size in Council ownership that are suitable for housing development, though in all cases they are not currently allocated for housing in local plans and would require planning permission and in one case would affect open space and would require consent from Government Office North East. Nevertheless it is important to try if they prove acceptable to introduce these sites into the bidding process as soon as practicable and at least flag them up in the first tranche of bids.

5.5 The identified larger parcels of Council owned land include the following:

1. Cleared land adjacent to Surtees Street and Hucklehoven Way
2. A site on the south side and fronting onto Seaton Lane and
3. A site on the west side (landward side) of Coronation Drive on the northern edge of Seaton Carew.

A site at the former St. Hild's school site has not been included at this stage in the list above because of the review of school capital provision.

5.6 The approach proposed is that each of these sites are proactively considered further and the locally connected housing associations are asked without prejudice and subject to planning permission to advise what they would wish to develop on one or more of these sites in terms of housing mix and tenure, the levels of nominations and what level of capital receipt they would be prepared to give in return. Proposals for each site may come forward from one or more locally connected housing associations. This would help to establish what degree of discount would be appropriate though it will mean that these sites will possibly be flagged up rather than detailed submissions in the first tranche. Some informal discussions have taken place with Three Rivers Housing Association on the Surtees Street site and Housing Hartlepool is considering and has expressed informal interest in some of the sites. The RSLs need some confidence that the Council will in principle be supportive as work is required at risk to prepare bids. The outcome of this work will then be reported back for a formal decision on each site along with any smaller sites that may come forward from the longer list.

6. OTHER PUBLIC LAND

6.1 The RSLs are being encouraged to look at their own land holdings and Housing Hartlepool for example has looked at the potential for redevelopment and remodelling within its limited land holding.

7. PRIVATE SITES

7.1 Most of the private land in the town that is suitable for housing development is concentrated in Middle Warren and Victoria Harbour. The Hartfield Village scheme is being developed at Middle Warren and it is intended that there will be some affordable housing within the Victoria Harbour Scheme though this is likely to be on commercial land terms and development is at least two years away. Most suitable private land has planning permission already and any element of affordable housing would require the agreement of the owner on commercial terms. There are one or two opportunities that have been identified where a proportion of affordable housing could be sought as part of

the consideration of a planning application. Housing associations are also being encouraged to look at private sites though clearly an effective subsidy from the landowner cannot be required where planning permissions are in place and there is generally more uncertainty around these sites.

8. OTHER SCHEMES

- 8.1 There is a need to pursue any existing schemes that have not yet come to fruition. One example is the outstanding housing association scheme proposed by Three Rivers to provide a small development of supported housing for adults over 25 years with complex support needs as reflected as a high priority in the Council's Homelessness Strategy. There is a danger that the funding for this scheme will be lost unless an appropriate site can be identified and that this would damage the probability of securing future funding as the Housing Corporation applies very strict delivery criteria and would probably downgrade future bids. It is now intended to adjust the location of the scheme so that it is located on the far side of a new affordable housing scheme between Surtees Street and Hucklehoven Way subject to consultation with the local community. (Surtees Street/Hucklehoven Way site noted above).

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Cabinet is requested to note and endorse the approach outlined in the report.