

# PLEASE NOTE VENUE

## **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA**



**Thursday 17 January 2008**

**at 2.00 pm**

**in the Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre,  
Kendal Road, Hartlepool**

**MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:**

Councillors Allison, R W Cook, S Cook, Cranney, Gibbon, Johnson, London, A Marshall,  
Worthy, Wright and Young

Resident Representatives: Ted Jackson, Robert Steel and Iris Ryder

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2007 (attached).

**4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE  
COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.

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

No items.

# PLEASE NOTE VENUE

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

- 6.1 Regeneration and Planning Services Department: Budget and Policy Framework Consultation Proposals 2008/09 – *Scrutiny Support Officer*
- 6.2 Safer Hartlepool Partnership's Draft Strategy 2008-2011 – *Head of Community Safety and Prevention*
- 6.3 Six Monthly Progress Report – Scrutiny Investigation into Railway Approaches (Action Plan) – *Directors of Regeneration and Planning Services and Neighbourhood Services*

## **7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- 7.1 Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool – Draft Final Report – Chair of Regeneration and Planning Services *Scrutiny Forum (to follow)*

## **8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- i) Date of Next Meeting : Wednesday 23 January 2008 at 3.00 pm – Conference Suite, Belle Vue

# **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

## **MINUTES**

**6 December 2007**

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm at Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

Councillor: Shaun Cook (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob W Cook, Kevin Cranney, Steve Gibbon, Michael Johnson, Frances London, Ann Marshall, Gladys Worthy, Edna Wright and David Young.

In accordance with Paragraph 4.2(ii) of the Council's Procedure Rules Councillor Geoff Lilley attended as a substitute for Councillor Steve Allison

### **Resident Representatives:**

Ted Jackson and Bob Steel

Officers: John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)  
Antony Steinberg, Economic Development Manager  
Andrew Golightly, Senior Regeneration Officer  
Derek Gouldbum, Urban Policy Manager  
Patrick Wilson (Andrew/Joan please confirm surname)

### **Also present:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond  
Councillors Cath Hill and Mike Turner

## **52. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Steve Allison and Resident Representative Iris Ryder.

## **53. Declarations of interest by Members**

None

**54. Minutes of the meetings held on 1 November and 14 November 2007**

Confirmed

**55. Portfolio Holder's Response to the Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Investigation** *(Joint report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability)*

The Economic Development Manager advised that Cabinet had approved, in their entirety, the recommendations of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into youth unemployment. Members were advised of the proposed actions to be taken in relation to each of the specific recommendations, as set in Appendix A to the report.

During discussions in relation to the recommendations and proposed actions, a Member queried if there was any flexibility for young people who missed the qualifying period by a few weeks which would prevent access to New Deal training programmes. The Economic Development Manager advised that the programme was very prescriptive and it was hoped that in future the Government would review how the programme operated. Following further discussion, clarification was provided in relation to the changes to the day one eligibility criteria for young people.

Discussion ensued with regard to the recommendation that opportunities for the number of modern apprenticeships be increased and the reasons why apprenticeships had decreased over the years. Whilst it was noted that all departments within the Council had taken on modern apprentices, concerns were expressed that there had been no apprentice in post in the civic garage for approximately 15 years. It was suggested that this issue be explored.

**Recommendation**

That the contents of the report, be noted and an update report be provided in six months time.

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

None

**57. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents**

None

## **58. Scoping Report – Scrutiny Investigation into Seaton Carew Regeneration Needs and Opportunities** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a scoping report for the Forum's investigation into Seaton Carew regeneration needs and opportunities.

### **The aim of the investigation**

To consider the effect of past regeneration investment in Seaton Carew and explore the area's future regeneration needs and opportunities.

### **The Terms of Reference for the investigation**

- (a) To gain an understanding of national, regional and sub regional economic policy and the ways this can influence approaches to the regeneration of Hartlepool, and in particular Seaton Carew;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the key stakeholders / partners involved in the regeneration of Seaton Carew and their roles and responsibilities; (i.e. residents, commercial businesses and the Council, etc.)
- (c) To gain an understanding of current and future community facility provision in Seaton Carew and explore their role in the regeneration of the area;
- (d) To gain an understanding of the Council's land holdings in Seaton Carew and their potential role in the regeneration of the area;
- (e) To gain an understanding of how Hartlepool, and in particular Seaton Carew, is marketed to attract tourism and businesses and consider if there are any additional ways to raise the town / area's profile;
- (f) To consider the scale, range and impact of previous regeneration investment in Seaton Carew by the public and private sector over the last five years;
- (g) To explore Seaton Carew's current and future regeneration needs, and opportunities, and gain an understanding of the plans and strategies being implemented to address with them;
- (h) To explore examples of good practice in another Local Authority(s), and lessons learnt, in relation to the regeneration of coastal areas / towns; and
- (i) To seek the views of the public, local schools, other key stakeholders and local businesses in relation to the effectiveness of

previous regeneration activities in Seaton Carew and the areas future regeneration needs and opportunities.

### **Potential Areas of Enquiry/Sources of Evidence**

- (a) Member of Parliament for Hartlepool;
- (b) Elected Mayor (Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Regeneration and Liveability);
- (c) Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Culture, Leisure and Tourism;
- (d) Seaton Ward Councillors;
- (e) Officers from the Regeneration and Planning Services, Neighbourhood Services and Adult and Community Services Departments;

*(Issues including regeneration, marketing, tourism, waste disposal, conservation, community services and coastal defences)*

- (f) Local residents / residents groups;  
  
*(E.g. Seaton Carew Renewal and Advisory Group (SCRAG), Seaton Carew Youth Centre Committee, Elm Tree Caravan Park Management Group, Woodcroft Allotment Association and Seaton Carew Bowls Consortium)*
- (g) Representatives for the Business Community in Seaton Carew;  
  
*(E.g. Hartlepool Economic Forum, Seaton Golf Club, Seaton Carew Renewal and Advisory Group, Seaton Carew Cricket and Social Club and all businesses in Seaton Carew, including Able UK and Hartlepool Power Station)*
- (h) Representatives from another local authority(s) as an example of good practice and lessons learnt;  
  
*(E.g. Redcar and Cleveland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside)*
- (i) Representatives from stakeholders;  
  
*(E.g. Seaton Carew Renewal Advisory Group (SCRAG), The Foreshore Management Group, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, CABI, Tees Valley Unlimited / Joint Strategy Unit and One North East, Area Tourism Partnership – Visit Tees Valley)*
- (j) Information on best practice and the lessons learnt in relation to the regeneration of coastal areas / towns;

*(E.g. The British Urban Regeneration Association, Possible event for the Chair to attend on behalf of the Forum and English Heritage ('An asset and a challenge: Heritage and Regeneration'), Destination Performance UK etc.)*

- (k) The Neighbourhood Consultative Forums; and
- (l) Schools.

Key suggestions of documentary/internet sources were included in the report together with a proposed timetable for the scrutiny investigation.

The importance of exploring funding for regeneration needs as widely as possible and the coastal erosion on the sea front was highlighted. Members were advised that coastal erosion would be explored as part of the issues for the Shoreline Management Plan and the authority were about to employ consultants to look at Seaton. It was suggested that during the course of the investigation it may be appropriate for the Neighbourhood Services Department to provide further information on the coastal defences and impact on Seaton Carew.

AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE TED JACKSON DECLARED A PERSONAL AND NON-PREJUDICIAL INTEREST AS SECRETARY OF SEATON CAREW GOLF CLUB

Discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised:-

- (i) It was pointed out that facilities at Seaton Carew Golf Club were not sufficiently publicised in the town. The Economic Development Manager advised that as part of the Golf Week Programme, golf opportunities were promoted, however, it was recognised that this was not a major part of the Hartlepool Guide. Reference was made to the Golf Club's previous decision to reject grant funding for the provision of additional facilities and the type of incentives provided by the Golf Club to make facilities more affordable. It was pointed out that 100 places for youths had recently been generated and special offers were provided as a means of attracting more interest.
- (ii) A member of the public highlighted concerns with regard to the state of disrepair of the clock tower in Seaton Carew. The need for facilities on the land at the sea front and the possibility of providing live music events, ice skating, and crazy golf facilities was highlighted. Whilst the need for additional facilities was noted, it was acknowledged that the public did not wish to see Seaton Carew overdeveloped.
- (iii) In considering who needed to be invited to participate in the investigation the Forum highlighted the need to obtain the views and ideas of young people and schools in Seaton Carew and suggested that a leaflet should be circulated to schools in Seaton Carew to raise awareness of the investigation. A leaflet of this kind should also be

circulated to libraries and community facilities to raise awareness and increase public participation in the investigation. It was also suggested that evidence be sought from the Regional Development Agency as part of the investigation.

- (vi) In considering Term of Reference C, concerns were expressed that due to limited opening times of the bowling green, access to the public was restricted. The Assistant Director advised that the bowling green was closed as a mechanism to protect it and this facility was self managed by the Bowls Consortium. Part of the agreement was that the public could use the facility during opening hours to prevent vandalism. The feasibility of providing security to monitor the facility was also discussed and indications given that community facility provision in Seaton Carew and its role in the regeneration of the area was to be looked into in greater detail as part of the investigation.
- (vii) During consideration of proposals for the involvement of the Seaton Carew business community in the investigation, the Forum requested that a leaflet / invitation be circulated to all businesses in and around Seaton Carew including Able UK and Hartlepool Power Station. All businesses were to be invited to participate in the investigation at every stage with a specific invitation to participate in a Focus Group session in early February.

In terms of the involvement of an overarching business association in the investigation, Members were surprised to learn that whilst there had historically been a Seaton Carew business consortium no such body currently existed. Members drew attention to the benefits of the involvement of such a group in discussions and felt strongly that the establishment of a new version of the business consortium needed to be explored by the Economic Development Manager in consultation with the Regeneration Unit.

- (viii) Members emphasised the need to raise the profile of Seaton Carew and were of the view that during consultation with residents care needed to be taken to clarify that the recommendations from the investigation would be subject to funding availability. Concern was expressed that expectations should not be raised that could not be delivered upon.
- (ix) Following discussion regarding the lack of funding and investment in Seaton Carew, Members emphasised a need for the Forum to obtain an understanding of how regeneration activities were funded and were advised that details of recent and potential future investment would be provided at the next meeting.
- (x) The Forum requested that in addition to the areas covered in the scoping report consideration should also be given to areas for improvement in relation to the upgrading of the clock tower, a cleanliness programme and improvements to the beach area to encourage walkers to utilise and appreciate the sea front location.



The Scrutiny Support Officer drew Members attention to the purpose of the investigation and the tight timescale for completion of the inquiry. It was envisaged that additional meetings would be required in order to achieve the scrutiny completion deadline.

**Recommendation**

- (i) The proposed remit for the investigation, terms of reference and potential sources of enquiry/sources of evidence were agreed as detailed above with the addition of the following:-
  - (a) To seek the views of local and commercial businesses to include Able UK and the Power Station, small hotels, schools and residents.
  - (b) The Regional Development Agency be invited to attend a meeting of the Forum to provide evidence.
- (ii) That the comments of the Forum be used to assist with the scrutiny investigation.

SHAUN COOK

CHAIRMAN

## **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

17 January 2008



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT: BUDGET AND POLICY  
FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION PROPOSALS  
2008/09

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum to consider the Regeneration and Planning Services departmental pressures, contingencies, terminating grants, priorities and efficiencies, as part of the Budget and Policy framework consultation proposals for 2008/09.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 2 November 2007, consideration was given to the Executive's Initial Budget and Policy Framework Consultation Proposals for 2008/09. At this meeting it was agreed that the initial consultation proposals would be considered on a departmental basis by the appropriate Scrutiny Forum. This occurred during November 2006.
- 2.2 The comments/observations of each Forum were fed back to the additional meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 21 November 2007 and were used to formulate the formal Scrutiny response to Cabinet on 21 December 2007.
- 2.3 The comments/observations made by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee were taken into consideration by Cabinet during the finalisation of its finalised Budget and Policy Framework Proposals for 2008/09 on 21 December 2007. The Executive's finalised proposals were considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 4 January 2008 and repeating the process previously implemented have again been referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Forum for consideration on a departmental basis.

- 2.4 As such attached as **Appendices A to E** are the Regeneration and Planning Services departmental pressures, contingencies, terminating grants, priorities and efficiencies. Any alterations / additions (following the Cabinet's meeting of 21 December 2007) will be made verbally during this meeting.
- 2.5 To assist Members of this Scrutiny Forum in the consideration of the Adult and Community Services departmental proposals, arrangements have been made for the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services to be in attendance and an invitation to this meeting has also been extended to the relevant Portfolio Holder (attendance subject to availability).

### 3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum:-
- (a) considers the Regeneration and Planning Services departmental pressures, contingencies, terminating grants, priorities and efficiencies as part of the Budget and Policy Framework consultation proposals for 2008/09; and
  - (b) formulates any comments and observations to be presented by the Chair of this Scrutiny Forum to the additional meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 18 January 2008 to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 11 February 2008.

**Contact Officer:-** Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
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Email: joan.wilkins@hartlepool.gov.uk

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT – SCHEDULE OF BUDGET PRESSURES 2008/2009**

Development of Housing Options Centre Services	The development of a Housing Options centre with Housing Hartlepool is a necessary step to maintaining housing services and will be necessary to meet expectations for customer focussed and accessible services and to help meet the government's target for the introduction choice based lettings by 2010. This will be the case whether the Council decides to join the Tees Valley Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme or not. Existing services within the Housing Advice Team and Housing Hartlepool's lettings team will need to be reconfigured to provide an Housing Options approach from a highly visible central location. This will enable a more customer focussed statutory service, providing choice, meeting service standards and supporting those in need	R	Without support the statutory housing service could not change effectively to meet government and service expectations. CBL and the involvement or not of Hartlepool in the Tees Valley CBL scheme is currently under consideration and a decision is expected towards the end of the year. The estimate of cost of the Council's contribution is tentative at this stage.	75	0	The development of a Housing Options Centre will facilitate the Council's work in statutory homelessness prevention and advice, will enable the Council as Housing Authority to maintain and continue to improve BVPI performance, meet service standards and is essential to providing an excellent service to the residents of Hartlepool. Funding this pressure will maintain statutory services and performance.	L
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Supported Housing Co-ordinator	The need for this service was identified within the Homelessness Strategy Review and by the Supporting People Service Strategy and the need for this was recognised in the Supporting People Inspection and a report to Cabinet. The role of this post is to coordinate the most effective use of the existing supported housing services within the town, help facilitate 'move on' and successful outcomes for residents, to monitor and evaluate referrals for support and to identify any gaps in service provision. The post is currently being funded by Housing Hartlepool until April 2008	R	Without replacement funding this post could no longer be provided. The risk impact would be that the existing resources for supported housing and floating support services were not effectively coordinated or made best use of. PI's for statutory services to the homeless and tenancy sustainment would be at risk and recent improvements in service delivery and outcomes for residents would be lost. Not providing the funding for this post to continue would also have a negative impact on our effective partnership working with Housing Hartlepool and future Supporting People & Housing Inspections.	35	0	Performance in associated PI's for statutory services to the homeless and tenancy sustainment should be maintained and enhanced, gaps would be identified in service provision to those in need of supported housing. It would help to ensure the achievement of good outcomes for service users.	S
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Townwide CCTV	CCTV - to meet deficit on the maintenance, electricity and signal transmission costs of the existing CCTV camera system	R	There are some 70 cameras sited across the town, which are managed and maintained by HBC. They have an age ranging from few months old to 10 years old or more in few cases. Some cameras have been refurbished during their lifetime. Electricity costs and BT line rental costs have increased significantly during past 2 years. Repairs and maintenance costs continue to rise, as the cameras age. Gross CCTV budget is £131,000, income generated £25,000, therefore net cost to HBC is currently £106,000, with £70,000 being monitoring charges, thus leaving £61,000 to cover all other costs. The estimated maintenance cost for 2007/08 and 2008/09 is £83,000 (ie £41,500 per annum). Signal transmission costs ( BT line rental £43,500 per annum) and electricity costs(approx £8,000per annum) must be added to this cost. Estimated potential overspend £30,000 in 2007/08. Risk could only be managed by prioritising most strategically important cameras for repairs and maintenance, and not repairing others when they fail.Impact could be vital evidence is not available.	30	0	Additional funding will enable the existing townwide CCTV system to be maintained meeting a projected deficit recognising a review of the system which is underway which is likely to require reconfiguration investment. CCTV is popular and indeed residents continually ask for further cameras in their neighbourhoods and there is much evidence nationally that cameras deter criminal activity and on occasions, provide vital evidence for criminal prosecutions.	S
			<b>TOTAL RED PRESSURES</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>0</b>		

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT – SCHEDULE OF 2008/09 BUDGET PRESSURES TO BE TREATED AS CONTINGENCY ITEMS****Appendix B**

LAA Delivery	The delivery of Hartlepool's Local Area Agreement has placed an unsustainable pressure on the Community Strategy division to deal with additional financial and performance reporting requirements. The team's work has significantly increased from managing 1 funding stream, NRF (aprox £5 million per annum) in 2005/06 to the 2007/08 LAA with 15 funding streams across the Council and its partners with a value of over £9m. This is now a highly complex programme to coordinate and a specification is being prepared of the financial monitoring requirements which will need to be addressed preferably through adjustment of the existing financial system and new accountancy instructions and input. The cost estimate is provisonal at this stage and therefore a contingency.	R	The risk in not recognising this pressure is that the LAA will not have appropriate financial controls in place and that the Council will not be able to adequately demonstrate spend and associated performance outcomes.	40	0	Recognising the pressure will ensure that LAA delivery is managed and that the appropriate finance and performance reporting mechanisms are in place. The performance of the LAA will be a key element of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the retention of its current excellent rating.	H
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## Appendix B

Conservation Area Appraisal	Continuation and expansion of work in undertaking Conservation Area appraisals/assessments with independent advice to provide up-to-date basis for policy re planning applications, preservation and enhancement of conservation areas to meet expected standards and recognising controversy	R	Up-to-date date appraisals essential for a consistent and informed planning policy in a contentious area of activity. Danger that character, appearance and community support for conservation areas will suffer if appraisals are not undertaken and expected service standards will not be met.	20	0	Carrying out appraisals of conservation areas is a best value performance indicator (BVPI 219 a & b). Appraisals will assist in defining the character of Conservation Areas. This is required for consideration of planning applications within the conservation areas. The information gathered will be fed into the current conservation policy review.	M
				60	0		



Appendix C

Grant Title	Does Council need to consider mainstreaming the grant? Please state Yes/No and provide brief justification.	Risk - Red, Amber, Green	Probability 1 = Likely to continue, 2 = may continue, 3 Unlikely grant will	Grants Terminating during 2007/08						Service improvement to be achieved by funding grant (including details of current performance and target for 2007/2008 performance)
				Risk Impact of not funding Pressure	Value of Grant terminating in 2007/2008	Value of resulting budget pressure in 2008/09	Total number staff employed (permanent contract/ permanent owing to roll forward of contract/fixed term)	Provisional estimated cost of making staff redundant based on HBC employment	Funding available to fund redundancy costs	
					£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	
Regeneration Programmes	<b>YES</b> - The Regeneration Team is supported by approximately £60k of NDC grant under a SLA arrangement and for additional work managing Commercial Area Grants and Voluntary Sector Premises Pool	<b>R</b>	<b>3</b>	Failure to find replacement funding for this and the £40k NAP development (NRF) item would put extreme pressure on the ability to maintain the Regeneration Team in its current form and any rationalisation would reduce the capacity to participate and develop the regeneration agenda for the town and contribute to emerging opportunities eg Tall Ships	60	60	2 staff (1 ftc to Mar08, 1 permanent employee)	3.0	Earmarked reserves will be used to maintain the employment of the permanent staff member into 2008/9	
NDC community safety premises	The community safety office at 173 York Rd accommodates staff who work entirely in the NDC area, as well as Police and Council officers who work across the central neighbourhood area.	<b>R</b>	<b>3</b>	Initial approval of the NDC project covering this office base ends in 2010/11. However, the project approval has always indicated a desire to start mainstreaming the costs before NDC ceases. The Police already contribute £23,000 towards overall annual building budget of £69,000. The project appraisal seeks an annual contribution of £23,000 from the Council. There are 31 members of staff from Council, Police and NDC based at this office. This is well used office for residents in the NDC area to drop-in for advice from Police or other team members. 30% all crime recorded in the Town in first quarter of 2007/08 occurred in the NDC area. Less NDC funding will be available for other projects if this is not supported.	23	23				Continuation of existing services, measured by crime and anti-social behaviour indicators
				<b>SUB-TOTAL - REG. &amp; PLANNING</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>8.0</b>			

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT – SCHEDULE OF BUDGET PRIORITIES 2008/2009****Appendix D**

Private Sector Housing	Funding required to adopt Selective Licensing with the aim of reducing anti social behaviour caused by poor tenants within a targeted area	R	The council is considering its participation in the selective licensing scheme which would promote and potentially enforce good landlord standards in a designated area where anti social behaviour is a significant problem. This is seen as a measure to tackle problems caused by poor tenants and is a high political priority and is a recommendation from Scrutiny. The specifics of such a future scheme cannot yet be determined. Although some income from licences would be generated it is anticipated that this would not fully cover the authority's costs of implementation and any budget gap would need to be met. At this early stage a figure of £40,000 is suggested.	40	0	The number of anti social behaviour referrals in the designated area would be a measure
Sustainable Development	Resource needed to coordinate strategic HBC response to Government's Sustainable Development including the Climate Change programme. Currently no dedicated officer time for strategic Sustainable Development within Community Strategy Division and no scope to reconfigure current work programmes.	R	Unable to respond to agenda - failure to meet 2 proposed Climate Change PIs and a number of other associated PIs	50	0	Currently unable to quantify Council's response to Climate Change and Sustainable Development as there is no officer time available to do this. By funding the pressure the Council will be able to effectively prioritise strategic activity to improve performance on Climate Change and demonstrate this to residents, funders and inspectors.
			<b>TOTAL RED PRIORITIES</b>	90		

## Appendix D

Domestic Violence	Domestic Violence Prevention Co-ordinator (increase of 1/2 post)	A	As a town, Hartlepool suffers from high levels of domestic abuse. We currently share a DV co-ordinator with Stockton BC. She is funded by the pump -priming element of Local Area Agreement reward element (previously LPSA2). Besides Police enforcement to bring perpetrators of DV to justice, progress in tackling this crime needs to commence with education and prevention programmes in schools and other youth settings. An extra half post would enable Hartlepool to develop the work within schools etc, as well as co-ordinating activities to help victims and training front-line staff. These more pro-active, preventative activities can not be carried out unless extra resource is available.	20	0	Currently councils must aim to achieve compliance with BVPI 225, which comprises 11 separate elements. We are currently failing to achieve four of these, namely 1) multi-agency training, 2) information sharing protocol, 3) sanctuary scheme for victims, 4) reduction in repeat rehousing of victims due to them becoming homeless again within 2 years.
Addressing Alcohol Abuse	Development and provision of prevention and education services for those at risk of, or abusing alcohol	A	Alcohol consumption is recognised as a significant public health challenge, as well as contributory factor in many crimes and anti-social behaviour. The Primary Care Trust has allocated some funding for developing specialist local alcohol treatment services in 2007/08, but further funding is needed to provide preventative services and education in schools etc. Appointment of an officer would enable Hartlepool to develop training for front-line staff such as social workers and housing advice staff, so that they can give informed advice to their clients, provide advice to teenagers who may already be drinking, and extend programmes in schools for younger pupils. These more pro-active, preventative activities can not be carried out unless extra resource is available.	30	0	No service exists at present and staff in various organisations are increasingly faced by clients who have alcohol problems, which they are unable to deal with. Residents continually complain about 'drunk and rowdy' behaviour and under-age drinking. This project would aim to have long term impact on the health of individuals and improve the quality of life for communities.

## Appendix D

Economic Development Marketing	Expand budget for marketing Hartlepool and its specific investment opportunities for commercial/industrial development and new businesses	A	The risk is that marketing will rely on non guaranteed free PR and that Hartlepool does not maximise the economic benefit of key new developments such as Queens Meadow ,Central Area and the Southern Business Zone and therefore loses out on the attraction of inward investment, business start up and sme growth with the associated benefits of private sector investment and job creation. As an example of opportunities that we need to capitalise on are two new key developments at Queens Meadow, with 80,000 sq ft of speculative development underway and 156,000 sq ft office development [subject to planning approval].	40	0	The marketing activity directly supports the following performance indicators-Business enquiries, Business assisted. These are key activities in the process of encouraging inward investment ,business start up and sme growth supporting private sector investment and job creation.
Conservation Grants	The conservation grant scheme is currently receiving a high number of applications. Increase budget to meet more of unmet demand	A	Strong demand for conservation grants: 60% of current year's budget committed in first 4 months and current applications would utilise bulk of the remainder. Further applications in the pipeline. Strong feedback from residents that grant aid is needed to assist in meeting standards appropriate for listed buildings/conservation areas and danger of deterioration of condition/appearance/character if such work cannot be supported.	25	0	The increased grant budget would assist in supporting more residents who own listed buildings or live in a conservation area. The number of grants which are offered are currently recorded at Departmental level as a performance indicator, this would continue.

Housing Needs	The establishment of a base budget is required to meet the cost of ongoing research activities and specialist studies on housing	A	Ongoing research and studies are required to assess housing needs for the council's housing strategy and to support its future bids for funding. Although there is some opportunity to work with other authorities at a sub regional and regional level, contributions are nevertheless required to fund these joint projects. No ongoing base budget currently exists. Affordable Housing is a 'red red' risk for the authority and is a high Government and local priority. The council needs to ensure it is effectively responding to this issue and positively influencing the local housing market	20	0	Various indicators measure performance in housing and the council overall strategies to meet need
			<b>TOTAL AMBER PRIORITIES</b>	135		
			<b>Total</b>	225		

**REGENERATION & PLANNING DEPARTMENT PROPOSED EFFICIENCIES****APPENDIX E**

Youth Offending Service	Reduce the budget for the payments of carers and fostering allowances	<b>G</b>	It is anticipated that this budget can be reduced with minimal risk and impact by not recruiting to one of the vacant Carer's positions.	It is not anticipated that service performance will be adversely affected by this reduction	14
Economic Development	HBC Contribution to Joint Strategy Unit	<b>G</b>	It is expected that the JSU will again reduce their budget to reflect national cashable efficiency target. The precise saving to Hartlepool will depend on the final inflation indicator and population statistics applied by the JSU but a budget reduction in the region of £5,000 should be possible.	This reduction will have no direct impact on the Economic Development service. The department currently passports some £230k to the JSU but has no control over this budget. In view of the total reductions required and the growing pressures on HBC budgets, Members may wish to seek a revised JSU budget formula for future years in conjunction with the other Tees Valley authorities.	5
Staff Turnover	Increase in Vacancy Abatement target by 0.5%	<b>A</b>	The Vacancy Abatement target for 2007/8 has been achieved albeit largely through three long term vacancies. It is expected these vacancies will shortly be filled. Achievement of the 2008/9 target will depend on HBC funded staff leaving a relatively stable department in recent years and therefore some risk does exist in increasing this target.	An impact on service performance may occur if, to meet this target, posts had to be held vacant for longer than appropriate.	20
Community Safety	Reduce Staffing Budgets / Efficiency Review	<b>A</b>	Community Safety is one of the areas undergoing a departmental review in the current year as part of the overall Efficiency Strategy. No final conclusions have yet been reached in the review but it is felt that some efficiencies may be achievable.	It is anticipated that the impact on the part of the service where efficiencies are likely to be generated can be managed without a major affect on performance. However potential pressures in other areas of Community Safety most notably those previously funded via NRF mean that the overall risk to the service has been judged as 'Amber' at this stage.	20
Housing Division	Reduce Staffing Budgets / Efficiency Review	<b>A</b>	The Housing Service is another area undergoing a departmental efficiency review in the current year. Scope for modifications to the staffing structure may also exist. No actions have been agreed at this stage but it is anticipated that some efficiencies would be achievable in 2008/09.	The main impact of this reduction would be that no budget flexibility would exist to address in-year changes or the unexpected small scale pressures which regularly arise in this increasingly high profile service. The Amber risk shown might however need to be upgraded to 'Red' should adequate funding not be agreed for Housing related pressures including the introduction of Choice Based Lettings and Selective Licensing, details of which are set out elsewhere in the budget process.	30
General	Inflation freeze imposed on various budget headings	<b>A</b>	It is proposed to freeze inflation increases for a number of non contractual departmental budget headings.	The impact on service performance would be spread across a number of headings and is expected therefore to be manageable.	30
Planning Policy and Regeneration	Reduce the Major Regeneration Projects Budget	<b>A</b>	It is proposed to reduce this budget by £10,000 in order to meet the 3% target.	Though this is a high priority project for HBC it is anticipated that a reduction at this modest level could be managed.	10
<b>TOTAL OF 3% EFFICIENCIES</b>					<b>129</b>

## **STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2007 - SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In 2006/07, the combined total of the BCS Comparator Crimes recorded in Hartlepool was 6365 offences. This is a 26% reduction on the 2003/04 baseline figure of 8646 offences.

Domestic burglary has reduced by 50%, but there were 2530 criminal damage offences in 2006/07, which only equates to a 1% reduction over the 3 years, and 2652 violence against the person offences, which is a 42% increase. Shop theft has reduced by 40%, but we are bottom of the CDRP family group and this is a common crime amongst drug users. Valuable metal theft is an emerging problem. Stranton ward suffers the highest levels of recorded crime.

There is no data available from Safer Hartlepool agencies which would give a clear and unambiguous picture of alcohol-related crime. Just over 37% of all violent offences committed during the past 6 months have been flagged with 'Committed Under the Influence'. This percentage increases to 44% when considering those offences committed in Stranton ward which has a large percentage of the District's licensed premises.

Data from North West Public Health Observatory shows the profile of alcohol related harm in Hartlepool to be significantly worse than the England average for Alcohol-specific hospital admission (both genders), Alcohol-attributable hospital admission (both genders), Binge drinking, Alcohol-related recorded crimes and Alcohol-related violent crimes.

There are identified gaps in alcohol treatment provision, with no specialist alcohol treatment available in Hartlepool, but there is currently an Alcohol Needs Assessment underway which is investigating the requirements for an alcohol specific treatment service.

From September 2005 to September 2007 only 24% of all drug offences relate to Class A drugs; a further 5% relate to Class B and the vast majority relate to Class C, predominantly cannabis (68%).

The proportion of those offenders subject to mandatory drug test shows a slight increase in opiates, a slight decrease in cocaine while both (cocaine & opiates) has stayed approximately constant. It is significant that the proportion of those testing positive for opiates and both (cocaine & opiates) with previous positive drug tests is increasing; meaning that these individuals have previously been identified as drug misusing offenders. Conversely, the proportion of those testing positive for cocaine with previous positive drug tests is decreasing over time.

The estimated prevalence of problem drug users (PDUs) aged 15-64 is 846. There are approximately 190 PDUs in Hartlepool have not been in treatment in 2005/06 or 2006/07. The age group 15-24 is most likely to be treatment naïve. For 99% of PDUs, the primary drug use is opiate (heroin). This has remained relatively static over the past few years.

The number of anti-social behaviour incidents recorded by Cleveland Police in the last 6 months (April - September 2007) have increased by 28% compared to the previous six months. This increase is likely to be linked to the school holidays and the increased hours of daylight associated with these months or greater confidence in the Police, possibly due to Neighbourhood Policing. Approximately three quarters of incidents are classified as 'rowdy and inconsiderate' behaviour.

The ASB Unit and Housing Hartlepool cases follow the same increasing trend as that of Police. As at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007 there were 17 Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA), 2 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC), 24 Criminal Anti-social Behaviour Orders (CRASBO) and 11 Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBO) active in Hartlepool.

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Deliberate property fires have steadily decreased over the last two financial years. Three wards namely Brus, Rossmere and Owton account for approximately 40% of all deliberate property fires during 06/07. The same 3 wards accounted for 45.8% of vehicle fires.

During 2006, the biennial survey was carried out by Ipsos MORI. 64% of the Borough's residents reported feeling safe out in their area after dark which was slightly lower than the national average of 70%. Only 23% of residents considered burglary to be a problem in their area, where as 28% considered car crime to be a problem. More than half (55%) were satisfied with the service provided by the Police, compared to 62% nationally and 66% in the NDC area.

The results had a clear correlation with those of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership doorstep survey (June 2006) of 400 households in 2 NRF wards (Owton and Dyke House) and 2 non NRF wards (Seaton and Hart), with 63% feeling safe out in their neighbourhood after dark and 61% not worried about having their home broken into. The main reasons residents felt unsafe were groups of youths congregating and fear of harassment of personal threats.

At the more recent Police Tier 3 public meeting consultation meeting in October 2007, attended by some 75+ residents, tackling anti-social behaviour (25%), drugs dealing (22%) and providing high visibility patrols (19%) were 3 main areas for the Police to concentrate on. Reducing violent crime was fourth with 14%.

Hartlepool has a wealth of voluntary and community groups and a variety of consultation mechanisms, all of which could provide information to contribute to the Partnership strategic assessment. For the purposes of the 2007 assessment, information from some of these sources has been gathered. It is intended that information gathering from communities will be improved for the next strategic assessment in 2008.



## RESULTS OF PAST PERFORMANCE – CHANGES OVER 10 YEARS

Comparison between Audit conducted in 1998 and strategic assessment in 2007 reveal that:

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Drug treatment	1997:	246 (referrals) number in treatment not known
	2006/07:	615 adults in treatment

Research into fear of being a victim shows residents concerned about having home broken into:	1997	79%;
	2006/07	39%

No powers to tackle anti-social behaviour in 1997

Youth offending teams introduced in 2000

Increased Police officers, have had community wardens, now got PCSOs.

Introduction of DIP and PPO schemes

Alcohol strategy	}	Local developments
Domestic Violence strategy		
Social behaviour strategy		
Arson reduction strategy		

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

**Nationally**, the Government has recently launched its new Crime strategy (Cutting crime. A new partnership approach 2008 – 2011) which has a number of key areas:

- stronger focus on serious violence
- continue pressure on anti-social behaviour
- renewed focus on young people
- new national approach to designing out crime
- continuing to reduce re-offending
- greater sense of national partnership
- freeing up local partners, building public confidence

A new national drugs strategy is due to be published early in 2008.

The Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and associated National indicators, which underpin these national strategies are:

PSA23 - make communities safer, which has 4 priority actions:

- Reduce the most serious violence
- Continue to make progress on serious acquisitive crime
- Tackle the crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour issues of greatest importance in each locality, increasing public confidence in the local agencies involved in dealing with these issues
- Reduce re-offending through the improved management of offenders

PSA25 - will aim to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs to:

- The development and well-being of young people and families
- The health and well-being of those who use drugs or drink harmfully and
- The community as a result of associated crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour

In addition, PSA14, increase the number of children and young people on the path to success, includes measures covering:

- first time entrants to the Criminal Justice System aged 10-17 and
- young people frequently using drugs, alcohol or volatile substances

**Locally**, the vision of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership is to: “reduce crime and drugs misuse to build a safer, healthier Hartlepool”.

The Hartlepool Partnership’s Community strategy aim for community safety is to: “make Hartlepool a safer place by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and tackling drugs and alcohol”.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership (as the community safety theme partnership for the Local Strategic Partnership i.e. Hartlepool Partnership), provides the lead role for development and delivery of the community safety outcomes in the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

The LAA outcomes for 2008 were agreed in Autumn 2007, and at the same time, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) agreed its strategy objectives for 2008-2011 as follows:

<b>LAA Outcome 2008</b>	<b>SHP Strategy 2008-2011 objectives</b>
Reduced crime and narrow the gap between the Neighbourhood Renewal area and Hartlepool	Reduce crime
Reduced harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol	Reduce harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol
Improved neighbourhood safety and increased public confidence, leading to reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	Improve neighbourhood safety and increase public confidence, leading to reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
Reduced anti-social and criminal behaviour through improved prevention and enforcement activities	Reduce offending and re-offending

When selecting 3 year objectives and annual priorities, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership needs to concentrate its actions into those aspects of crime, disorder and substance misuse where it considers the most beneficial effect will be gained from focused working in partnership, recognising that each partner agency will continue to deliver its mainstream activities, much of which is now co-ordinated with other strategic plans.

The annual priorities from the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Assessment 2007 (covering October 2006 – September 2007) have been agreed as:

- 1) drug dealing and supply
- 2) violent crime, including domestic abuse
- 3) acquisitive crime
- 4) criminal damage and anti-social behaviour, including deliberate fire setting
- 5) preventing and reducing offending, re-offending and the risk of offending
- 6) delivery of the alcohol harm reduction strategy 2006-2009, including the introduction of an effective local alcohol treatment service.

These priorities will be reviewed and updated when the annual Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Assessment is conducted in Autumn 2008, 2009 and 2010.

## MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGY

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership has been rated 'green' by Government Office North East for its performance during 2006/07.

A new Home Office performance management framework, known as 'Assessment of Police and Community Safety' (APACS) will be introduced in 2008/09.

Various Government Departments will continue to require performance reports at least quarterly from the SHP for the following aspects of the Partnership's activities:

- Youth Offending Service – quarterly monitoring
- Anti-social Behaviour Unit – quarterly monitoring
- Drugs treatment for adults – quarterly monitoring
- Substance misuse treatment for young people – quarterly monitoring
- Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) – monthly monitoring
- Prolific and Priority Offenders Scheme – monthly monitoring

The SHP has selected one Improvement Indicator for each of the community safety LAA outcomes and associated strategy objective, and negotiated targets with Government Office North East. These, together with agreed local indicators, are set out in Appendix 1.

SMART Action Plans for each annual priority will be developed by 1<sup>st</sup> April in the following year and implemented during the following financial year. These annual action plans will form the basis of the LAA delivery and improvement plan for the same year.

Each Action Plan will consider the aspects covering victims, offenders, locations and reassurance for the priority.

The SHP Performance and Planning Group (for crime and ASB) or Joint Commissioning Group (for substance misuse) will review performance on a quarterly basis and require an end of year report from the lead officer for each priority.

**SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP INDICATORS AND TARGETS**

<b>STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:</b>	REDUCE CRIME
<b>Annual priorities 2008/09:</b>	- Violent crime including domestic abuse - Acquisitive crime

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u>  (subject to negotiation with GONE) NI 16 - serious acquisitive crime rate NI 20 - assault with injury rate				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u>				
1. number of domestic burglaries (with reward)	(2004/05) 821	644 (*2099)	-	-
2. number of vehicle crimes (with reward)	(2004/05) 1271	1024 (*3298)	-	-
3. number of incidents of local violence (with reward)	(2004/05) 1826	1650 (*5300)	-	-
4. number of repeat referrals to Police for incidences of domestic violence (with reward)	(2004/05) 1731	1531	-	-
5. number of perpetrators attending a perpetrator programme not re-offending within 6 months of completing programme (with reward)	(2004/05) 0	45	-	-

\* indicates cumulative target for 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09

**STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:** REDUCE HARM CAUSED BY ILLEGAL DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

**Annual Priorities 2008/09:** - Alcohol  
- Drug dealing & supply

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u>  (subject to negotiation with GONE) NI 38 - drugs related (class A) offending rate				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u>  Not yet determined				

**STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:** IMPROVE NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY AND INCREASE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, LEADING TO REDUCED FEAR OF CRIME AND ASB

**Annual Priorities 2008/09:** - ASB  
- Criminal damage, including deliberate fire setting

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u>  (subject to negotiation with GONE) NI 17 - Perceptions of ASB				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u>  1. % residents stating “teenagers hanging around on the streets is a problem” (with reward)	(2003/04) 66%	-	61%	-
2. % residents stating “people being drunk or rowdy in public places” is a problem (with reward)	(2003/04) 57%	-	52%	-

**STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:** REDUCE OFFENDING AND RE-OFFENDING

**Annual Priorities 2008/09:** Reduce offending and re-offending

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u> (subject to negotiation with GONE) None				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u> NI 111 - First Time Entrants to Youth Justice System aged 10-17				



## **REGENERATION & PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

17<sup>th</sup> January 2008



**Report of:** Head of Community Safety & Prevention

**Subject:** SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP'S DRAFT STRATEGY  
2008-2011

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum about the development of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's draft strategy, as part of the Authority's Budget and Policy Framework.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established a statutory duty for the Local Authority and Police to form a partnership and produce a 3 year strategy, based on a review of crime and disorder, which occurred in the previous 3 years. The Police Reform Act 2002 extended this duty to include the Primary Care Trust, Police Authority and Fire Authority. Collectively these 5 bodies are known as Responsible Authorities, for the purposes of the partnership provisions in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 2.2 Following a review of the partnership provisions in the 1998 Act, the Police and Justice Act 2006 amended the Act, so that new regulations could be introduced, which would extend the statutory duty placed collectively on the Responsible Authorities.
- 2.3 The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007 and set out minimum standards on how the Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) should function in formulating and implementing strategies to tackle crime, disorder and substance misuse in Hartlepool.
- 2.4 One requirement of the Regulations is that the SHP must produce an annual strategic assessment.

The purpose of the strategic assessment is to provide knowledge and understanding of community safety problems that will inform and enable the partners to:

- Understand the patterns, trends and shifts relating to crime and disorder and substance misuse;
- Set clear and robust priorities of their partnership;
- Develop activity that is driven by reliable intelligence and meets the needs of the local community;
- Deploy resources effectively and present value for money;
- Undertake annual reviews and plan activity based on a clear understanding of the issues and priorities.

2.5 Following consideration of the strategic assessment findings, the SHP must produce a Partnership Plan by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. The Plan must:

- Include a strategy for tackling crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment) and for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area over the subsequent 3 years;
- Be revised at least annually;
- Contain the priorities identified through the strategic assessment;
- Contain information about the role of each partner in supporting the delivery of the priorities and how this will be resourced;
- Contain information about the way the partnership will engage with the community.

The Partnership plan therefore comprises a 3 year strategy (to tackle crime, disorder and substance misuse) and annual action plans for 2008/09.

2.6 A summary of the Partnership Plan must be published by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT OF HARTLEPOOL'S STRATEGY AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS**

3.1 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership considered its first strategic assessment in November 2007. Four strategic objectives have been agreed and 6 annual priorities established for 2008/09:

Strategic Objective 2008-2011	Annual Priority 2008/09
1. Reduce crime	1. Violent crime, including domestic abuse 2. Acquisitive crime
2. Reduce harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol	3. Alcohol treatment 4. Drug dealing and supply
3. Improve neighbourhood safety and increase public confidence, leading to reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	5. Anti-social behaviour and criminal damage, including deliberate fire setting
4. Reduce offending and re-offending	6. Preventing and reducing offending, re-offending and the risk of offending

- 3.2 In addition, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership has agreed that it must continue to provide drug treatment – which has a planning process prescribed by Government for both adults and young people; and take a longer term approach to improving reassurance of residents and increasing public confidence.
- 3.3 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership's initial draft strategy to tackle crime, disorder and substance misuse 2008 – 2011 is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.4 The Head of Community Safety and Prevention will make a presentation to the Forum on the reasons for selecting the strategic objectives and annual priorities outlined above at paragraph 3.1 and invite comments on how the Council and the community can assist with the delivery of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's 3 year strategy and annual action plans.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum:
- considers the contents of the report and the draft strategy attached at Appendix A and question the Head of Community Safety and Prevention accordingly;
  - formulates any comments and observations on this Budget and Policy Framework item to be fed back to Cabinet.

Contact officer: Alison Mawson  
Head of Community Safety & Prevention

Background Papers

Reports to Safer Hartlepool Partnership on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> November and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

# **SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP**

**Draft Strategy 2008 – 2011**

**to**

**tackle crime, disorder**

**and substance misuse**

**in**

**Hartlepool**

## Foreword

Almost a decade ago, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, put partnership working on a statutory footing for the first time. Since that time, we have conducted 3 audits and produced 3 strategies covering 1999-2002, 2002-2005 and 2005-2008. Crime has reduced significantly in Hartlepool since 1999, but major challenges remain and there are still communities which are experiencing high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. There is more to do to reduce re-offending, tackle the misuse of drugs and alcohol and improve the life chances of young people. We must also work harder to improve people's quality of life and limit the harm caused to communities.

In the Autumn 2007, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership conducted its first strategic assessment, which analyses the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and substance misuse during the previous 12 months, so that the Partnership can set clear priorities and develop actions to meet the needs of the local community.

This strategy sets out the partnership's longer term plans for the next 3 years. Each year a strategic assessment will review these plans and re-prioritise our annual activity.

During the period of the strategy for 2005-2008 we have seen the introduction of neighbourhood policing in the town. This has brought more frontline Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) into neighbourhoods, leading to an improved visual patrolling presence on our streets. Residents told us this is what they wanted, and now they report feeling safer.

In the coming years, we will work hard to tackle other things which residents say they want, such as reduced drug dealing, less rowdy behaviour and more activities for young people, to keep them out of trouble. I would like to encourage everybody who is interested in making Hartlepool a safer and healthier place, to join with us and play your part in combating crime and disorder.

Mayor Stuart Drummond  
Chair of Safer Hartlepool Partnership

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Improved neighbourhood safety and increased public confidence, leading to reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	Improve neighbourhood safety and increase public confidence, leading to reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
Reduced anti-social and criminal behaviour through improved prevention and enforcement activities	Reduce offending and re-offending

When selecting 3 year objectives and annual priorities, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership needs to concentrate its actions into those aspects of crime, disorder and substance misuse where it considers the most beneficial effect will be gained from focused working in partnership, recognising that each partner agency will continue to deliver its mainstream activities, much of which is now co-ordinated with other strategic plans.

The annual priorities from the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Assessment 2007 (covering October 2006 – September 2007) have been agreed as:

- 1) drug dealing and supply
- 2) violent crime, including domestic abuse
- 3) acquisitive crime
- 4) criminal damage and anti-social behaviour, including deliberate fire setting
- 5) preventing and reducing offending, re-offending and the risk of offending
- 6) delivery of the alcohol harm reduction strategy 2006-2009, including the introduction of an effective local alcohol treatment service.

These priorities will be reviewed and updated when the annual Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Assessment is conducted in Autumn 2008, 2009 and 2010.

## **MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGY**

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership has been rated 'green' by Government Office North East for its performance during 2006/07.

A new Home Office performance management framework, known as 'Assessment of Police and Community Safety' (APACS) will be introduced in 2008/09.

Various Government Departments will continue to require performance reports at least quarterly from the SHP for the following aspects of the Partnership's activities:

- Youth Offending Service – quarterly monitoring
- Anti-social Behaviour Unit – quarterly monitoring
- Drugs treatment for adults – quarterly monitoring
- Substance misuse treatment for young people – quarterly monitoring
- Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) – monthly monitoring
- Prolific and Priority Offenders Scheme – monthly monitoring

The SHP has selected one Improvement Indicator for each of the community safety LAA outcomes and associated strategy objective, and negotiated targets with Government Office North East. These, together with agreed local indicators, are set out in Appendix 1.

SMART Action Plans for each annual priority will be developed by 1<sup>st</sup> April in the following year and implemented during the following financial year. These annual action plans will form the basis of the LAA delivery and improvement plan for the same year.

Each Action Plan will consider the aspects covering victims, offenders, locations and reassurance for the priority.

The SHP Performance and Planning Group (for crime and ASB) or Joint Commissioning Group (for substance misuse) will review performance on a quarterly basis and require an end of year report from the lead officer for each priority.

**SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP INDICATORS AND TARGETS**

<b>STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:</b>	REDUCE CRIME
<b>Annual priorities 2008/09:</b>	- Violent crime including domestic abuse - Acquisitive crime

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u>  (subject to negotiation with GONE) NI 16 - serious acquisitive crime rate NI 20 - assault with injury rate				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u>				
1. number of domestic burglaries (with reward)	(2004/05) 821	644 (*2099)	-	-
2. number of vehicle crimes (with reward)	(2004/05) 1271	1024 (*3298)	-	-
3. number of incidents of local violence (with reward)	(2004/05) 1826	1650 (*5300)	-	-
4. number of repeat referrals to Police for incidences of domestic violence (with reward)	(2004/05) 1731	1531	-	-
5. number of perpetrators attending a perpetrator programme not re-offending within 6 months of completing programme (with reward)	(2004/05) 0	45	-	-

\* indicates cumulative target for 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09

**STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:** REDUCE HARM CAUSED BY ILLEGAL DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

**Annual Priorities 2008/09:** - Alcohol  
- Drug dealing & supply

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u>  (subject to negotiation with GONE) NI 38 - drugs related (class A) offending rate				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u>  Not yet determined				

**STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:** IMPROVE NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY AND INCREASE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, LEADING TO REDUCED FEAR OF CRIME AND ASB

**Annual Priorities 2008/09:** - ASB  
- Criminal damage, including deliberate fire setting

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u>  (subject to negotiation with GONE) NI 17 - Perceptions of ASB				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u>  1. % residents stating “teenagers hanging around on the streets is a problem” (with reward)	(2003/04) 66%	-	61%	-
2. % residents stating “people being drunk or rowdy in public places” is a problem (with reward)	(2003/04) 57%	-	52%	-

**STRATEGY OBJECTIVE:** REDUCE OFFENDING AND RE-OFFENDING

**Annual Priorities 2008/09:** Reduce offending and re-offending

Indicator	Baseline	Target		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<u>Improvement Indicator</u> (subject to negotiation with GONE) None				
<u>Local Indicators agreed</u> NI 111 - First Time Entrants to Youth Justice System aged 10-17				



## REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

17<sup>th</sup> January 2008



**Report of:** Directors of Regeneration and Planning Services and Neighbourhood Services

**Subject:** SIX MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT – SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO RAILWAY APPROACHES (ACTION PLAN)

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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum with an update on the progress that has been made in relation to the Railway Approaches investigation six months after the Forum made its recommendations.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 During the 2005/6 Municipal Year Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum conducted an investigation into Railway Approaches.
- 2.2 On 5 March 2007 the Final Report on Railway Approaches of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum was submitted to Cabinet for approval, and an Action Plan then agreed by Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007. Following Cabinet's decision in relation to the Scrutiny Investigation the Action Plan and progress report from the Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Liveability; Culture, Leisure and Tourism; and Neighbourhoods and Communities was considered by the Forum on 12 July 2007.
- 2.3 This report has been produced six months after the Forum's recommendations were considered by the appropriate decision-making body and as such provides an outline of the progress made to date in relation to the recommendations made by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum.
- 2.4 An updated Action Plan is attached at **Appendix A** with the progress made to date outlined in bold text under the proposed action.

### **3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 3.1 Members will recall that the overall aim of the Scrutiny Investigation was:

*To examine the railway approaches into Hartlepool and develop suggestions for improvement.*

### **4. DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE TO THE PROGRESS MADE TO DATE UPON THE DELIVERY OF THE ACTION PLAN**

- 4.1 Good progress has been made to date on the delivery of the Action Plan. Of the twenty actions it contains, eight of these have, to all intents and purposes, been achieved and are simply to continue as ongoing pieces of work within the approved Action Plan. One action (Rec c) has been delayed until January 2008. The remainder of the actions are at least partially achieved and being undertaken by the Lead Officer as work in progress and, as far as possible, within the originally agreed timescale. Particularly worthy of note is the successful establishment of a Railway Approaches Forum, chaired by the Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA), to help maintain momentum on the scrutiny topic issues. The Forum is continuing to meet on a regular basis.

### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 That Members note the progress to date in relation to the delivery of the Action Plan, and where felt appropriate seek clarification upon the achievement / none achievement of the delivery timescales / recommendations.

**Contact Officer:-** Geoff Thompson - Head of Regeneration,  
Department of Regeneration and Planning Services,  
Regeneration Division,  
Hartlepool Borough Council

01429 523597  
geoff.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- (i) The Regeneration & Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's Final Report into Railway Approaches considered by Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> March, and subsequent Action Plan approved 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Railway Approaches

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 5 March 2007 (Recommendations) and 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007 (Action Plan)

RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(a)	<p>That in relation to Network Rail:</p> <p>(i) The Authority seeks to develop a proactive approach with Network Rail around combating graffiti, and in particular through making connections to Network Rail's graffiti budget;</p> <p>(ii) That Network Rail's 24 hour helpline number (08457 11 41 41) is publicised through the</p>	<p>Introduce regular liaison meetings and prepare action plan to remove existing graffiti and establish protocols for reporting incidents.</p> <p><b>Achieved. Protocol has been established with the maintenance division of Network Rail to provide a response to incidents of graffiti / fly posting, littering and fly tipping. Network Rail has proved to be efficient in responding to those incidents since protocol was established.</b></p> <p>Dissemination of final Forum Report and associated press release upon approval of Action Plan.</p>	<p>Denise Ogden (Head of Neighbourhood Management)</p> <p>September 2007 (ongoing)</p> <p>Steve Hilton (Asst. Public Relations)</p> <p>June 2007 (and ongoing)</p>

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
<p>dissemination of the Forum's final report, associated press releases and through the Authority's Hartbeat magazine; and</p> <p>(iii) That the Authority invites Network Rail to bring the 'No Messin' scheme to schools in Hartlepool in the interests of reducing trespassing, graffiti and vandalism around the railway</p>	<p>Ongoing publicity via Hartbeat and other appropriate press-release opportunities, via magazines and other media.</p> <p><b>Achieved. A press-release publicising the final Scrutiny Forum report was prepared and appeared in the Hartlepool Mail in September 2007. An Article was also included in the September issue of Hartbeat Magazine, highlighting the Network Rail helpline telephone number.</b></p> <p>The Children's Services Department to raise awareness of the "No Messin" campaign within schools through dialogue with Network Rail. Invitation to attend Head Teacher meeting(s) and visits to individual schools, as</p>	<p>Officer)</p> <p>John Collings (Assistant Director, (Performance and Achievement))</p>	<p>October 2007 (Autumn term)</p>

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	lines.		
(b)	That the Authority reports incidences of graffiti and litter along the Railway Approaches and liaises with Network Rail about these where appropriate.	Craig Thelwell (Environmental Action Manager)	September 2007 (and ongoing)

appropriate.

**Partially Achieved.** Assistant Director has met with co-ordinator of “No Messin” campaign for Hartlepool. Invited to attend head teacher meetings although it was felt that general awareness raising initially was preferred. This is scheduled for January 2008. “No Messin” already engaged in some schools.

Introduce regular liaison meetings and prepare action plan to remove existing graffiti and protocols for reporting incidents.

**Achieved – as per (a)(i) above.** Protocol has been established by the Neighbourhood Action Team to provide an effective response by

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
		<b>Network Rail to incidents of graffiti, litter and fly tipping. Site meetings are held with staff from Network Rail where incidents are complex, or of particular concern to the Council.</b>		
(c)	That the Authority invites Northern Rail's police and schools liaison officer to attend Hartlepool schools.	As per rec. (a) iii, Children's Services to have dialogue with Northern Rail through invitation to attend Head Teacher meeting(s) and visits to individual schools as appropriate.  <b>Not yet Achieved. Contact with Northern Rail police has not been made. Meeting expected to take place in January 2008.</b>	John Collings (Assistant Director (Performance and Achievement))	October 2007 (Autumn Term)
(d)	That the Authority uses its Planning and Development Control powers proactively to enhance the Railway Approaches into the town.	Planning & Development Control powers to be used as appropriate, including reporting mechanisms via Planning Committee, subject to individual site considerations.	Richard Teece (Development Control Manager)	June 2007 (ongoing)

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
		Partially Achieved. Ongoing process to identify potential sites. Request for Committee authorization to take formal action with respect to one specific site is imminent.		
(e)	That the Authority seeks to maximise the regeneration benefits of the 2010 Tall Ships event, the development of 'Hartlepool Quays', and the direct rail link to London by linking, where appropriate, prospective improvements to Hartlepool's Railway Approaches into the regional, sub-regional and local strategies described in the main	<p>Liaise and participate as appropriate with relevant staff representatives upon the thematic working groups being established under the Tall Ships Programme. Engage with and influence where possible the production of relevant strategies at the local, sub-regional and regional level.</p> <p><b>Partially Achieved. Tall Ships Workstream groups progressing</b></p>	Stuart Green (Assistant Director, (Planning and Economic Development))	March 2008 (and ongoing)

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	body of this report.	issues including communications plan/marketing and transport arrangements, including Transport Interchange development and links with train operators.		
(f)	That the 'key problem spots' sites identified in the Railway Approaches Scrutiny Investigation, are incorporated, wherever possible, into the Green Infrastructure Strategy and its associated site specific schedules.	Continued officer representation on Green Infrastructure Strategy Working Group, including requests for adequate reflection of Hartlepool Railway Corridor within the document and to ensure that the authority is well placed to access any funds that become available for environmental works to improve the green infrastructure network within Tees Valley.  <b>Achieved. The latest draft of the Green Infrastructure Strategy includes proposed network priorities and actions and for Hartlepool in</b>	Matthew King (Principal Planning Officer)	June 2007 (ongoing)



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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	particular “investigate opportunities to enhance the railway corridor on the southern (and northern) approach to Hartlepool.” Officers are drawing up possible schemes which may enable Single Programme funding to be accessed in support of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.		
(g)	That the area of unused land identified in paragraph 11.6 of the Scrutiny Final Report (Rear of Westview Rd between Horseshoe Tunnel and Rovers Rugby Club) is developed as a ‘Community Forest’ or ‘Woodland Area’ and as a diversionary route away from traffic.	Karen Oliver Neighbourhood Manager (North)	March 2009

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
		Officers are exploring possible funding opportunities to improve the site along to the Linear Park, including Community Safety monies, Pride in Hartlepool and NAP funding.		
(h)	That the Authority supports the development of the North Hartlepool Linear Park strategy.	<p>This action to be taken forward in conjunction with the North Hartlepool Partnership (SRB) End of Programme Evaluation and Forward Strategy.</p> <p><b>Partially Achieved. Officers from Neighbourhood Services Department are liaising with local community groups (Friends of Spion Kop) to explore funding opportunities via the Government's (Lottery) Open Spaces Fund. The Linear Park also features as one of the neighbourhood priorities within the North Hartlepool NAP area.</b></p>	Karen Oliver Neighbourhood Manager (North)	March 2008 (ongoing)

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(i) That discussions between representatives of the Regeneration and Planning Services Department and Tees Forest (North East Community Forests) around the development of a broad programme of planting to create 'green fingers' of woodland extending into the urban area along the railway corridor is supported.	Discussions to commence with North East Community Forests with a view to selecting appropriate sites and securing funding.  <b>Partially Achieved. Discussions have commenced with NECF and are still ongoing, although identification of funding sources is proving difficult. Incorporation of the appropriate sites within the draft strategy (Rec (i) below refers) may help to unlock the necessary resources.</b>	Richard Waldmeyer (Principal Planning Officer (Policy Planning & Info.)	Planting season Spring 2008 – Spring 2009
(i) That the Authority develops an 'allotments policy' and consults allotment users in the development	A review of existing policy documents and future strategy for the improvement of all allotments within town is to be	Andrew Pearson (Parks and	March 2008

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	and implementation of this policy.	undertaken. This will include consultation with tenants and the development of allotment associations where none exist with a view to increasing devolved management.  <b>Partially Achieved. Work is in progress, including working with tenants to develop Allotment Association.</b>	Countryside Manager)	
(k)	That the 'key problem spots' identified during the Scrutiny Investigation are incorporated, where appropriate, into the list of Untidy/ Derelict Land and Buildings.	Action being taken on board by the Derelict Buildings and Underused Land Group Chaired by the Mayor  <b>Partially Achieved. Following the scrutiny investigation, a Railway Approaches Forum (Rec (p) below refers) has been set up to address</b>	Denise Ogden (Head of Neighbourhood Management)	June 07

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
		issues on land adjacent to the railway corridor. Significant progress is being made to improve the appearance of these areas and this will continue to be monitored by the Railway Approaches Forum and the Derelict Land and Buildings Group.		
(I)	That the Authority develops a strategy geared towards screening the 'key problem spots' identified during the Scrutiny Investigation based on the approaches outlined in paragraph 11.5. of the Final Scrutiny Report	<p>Strategy to be prepared setting out priorities for tackling key problem sites. Discussions with owners and operators to be undertaken to encourage and require improvements where possible new planning applications and enforcement action where necessary</p> <p><b>Partially Achieved. Draft Strategy has been prepared for consideration initially by the Railway Approaches Forum (28<sup>th</sup> January 2008) and will be</b></p>	Richard Waldmeyer (Principal Planning Officer (Policy Planning & Info.))	July – August 2007

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	made available for consultation thereafter. The possibility of some of the “key problem sites” contained within the strategy being tackled under the Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) initiative to provide employment and training opportunities is also being explored.		
(m)	That in relation to Stations in Hartlepool:  (i) The Authority pursues enhanced adoption of Hartlepool Station to a ‘Partners Scheme’ in conjunction with Northern Rail and that involvement from the CVS, ‘Coastliners’ and Pride in Hartlepool is sought in this;	Identify the procedure and progress the adoption of Hartlepool railway station in discussion with Northern Rail and Network Rail  <b>Partially Achieved. Process identified through discussion with Network Rail and Northern Rail. Formal</b>	Ian Jopling (Transportation Team Leader)  July 2007

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
<p>(ii) That the Authority pursues the development of a station adoption scheme at Seaton Carew Station in conjunction with Northern Rail and that involvement from the CVS, 'Coastliners' and Pride in Hartlepool is sought in this;</p> <p>(iii) The Authority maximises the</p>	<p><b>adoption to be progressed in 2008 following completion of Hartlepool Station improvements and interchange works.</b></p> <p>Identify the procedure and progress the adoption of Seaton Carew railway station in discussion with Northern Rail and Network Rail</p> <p><b>Partially Achieved. Process identified through discussion with Network Rail and Northern Rail. Formal adoption to be progressed in 2008 following completion of Seaton Carew Station improvements funded by the Council's Local Transport Plan.</b></p> <p>Formally write to Network Rail to</p>	<p>Ian Jopling (Transportation Team Leader)</p> <p>Alastair Smith</p>	<p>July 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
<p>opportunity that the Tall Ships event provides to lobby the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Northern Rail to make structural improvements to Hartlepool and Seaton Stations, prior to improving the cosmetic appearance of these;</p> <p>(iv) That the Authority continues to lobby the Department for Transport, Network Rail and</p>	<p>request that planned infrastructure works at the stations are brought forward, or, as a minimum, delivered as currently programmed.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved. Formal discussions have taken place with Network Rail and lobbying continues on an ongoing basis. Network Rail's 2007 Strategic Business Plan includes a list of candidate stations for the National Stations Improvement Programme. This is a £150m programme intended to cover 150 stations. Hartlepool is included in this programme for 2009/10.</b></p> <p>Explore regional and national opportunities for funding</p>	<p>(Director of Technical Services)</p> <p>Ian Jopling (Transportation Team Leader)</p>	<p>September 2007</p>



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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
<p>Northern Rail for a station halt to reopen at Hart Station; and</p> <p>(v) That pedestrian and vehicle signage (including further development of brown signage) around Hartlepod Station is improved, especially in relation to the town centre.</p>	<p><b>Partially Achieved. Funding opportunities are being investigated by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit. This includes Government funding for the trial of tram-train technology on the Durham Coast and Darlington to Saltburn rail lines. This could provide high frequency rail services and improved / new station facilities.</b></p> <p>Provide new highway signage as considered appropriate.</p> <p><b>Partially Achieved. A town wide signage strategy was completed in 2006, which included all tourist destination and amenities. Additional signs required for the Transport Interchange will be done as part of</b></p>	<p>Peter Frost (Traffic Team Leader)</p>	<p>March 2008</p>

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(n)	<p>That 'Coastliners' have a continuing involvement in implementing the outcomes of this investigation. In particular in improvements to Hartlepool and Seaton Carew Stations and in the development of a 'Railway Approaches Forum'.</p>	<p><b>the main contract.</b></p> <p>Council officers to attend meetings of Coastliners' to update and involve members as considered appropriate</p> <p><b>Achieved. The Council's Transportation Team Leader attended the Coastliners meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2007. An update on the Interchange project was provided. Coastliners are also represented on the newly established Railway Approaches Forum.</b></p>	<p>Ian Jopling (Transportation Team Leader)</p> <p>July 2007</p>
(o)	<p>That the CVS has a number of specific contributions it can make to improvements to Railway Approaches, (as outlined in Appendix C to the Final Scrutiny Report), and that the Authority considers how best the adoption of these options can be</p>	<p>Meetings to be arranged between Council officers and CVS to agree CVS involvement with ongoing support via Railways Approaches Forum (see Rec. (p) below)</p> <p><b>Achieved. It was agreed at the last</b></p>	<p>Ian Jopling (Transportation Team Leader)</p> <p>October 2007 (Ongoing)</p>

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RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	supported.	(19 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2007) meeting of the Railway Approaches Forum that the Chair of the group and other voluntary sector members of the Forum would meet to agree potential areas for CVS involvement. The next meeting of the Railway Approaches Forum is scheduled for 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2008.		
(p)	That the Authority helps to establish a 'Railway Approaches Forum' in partnership with the CVS to ensure that the momentum for this issue is maintained around improvements to both the railway corridors and stations. In addition to the Authority and the CVS, the rail operators, rail user groups and the disabled access group should be involved in this forum.	Meetings between Council Officers and CVS (as above) to agree representation upon Railway Approaches Forum. Quarterly meetings of Forum thereafter.  <b>Achieved. Preliminary discussions between the Council and HVDA resulted in Peter Gowland of the HVDA agreeing to act as Chair of the Railway Approaches Forum. Meetings of the Forum took place in</b>	Alastair Smith (Head of Technical Services)	October 2007 (Ongoing)

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Railway Approaches

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 5 March 2007 (Recommendations) and 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007 (Action Plan)

RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
		<b>October and November 2007 and a further meeting is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008.</b>		
(q)	That the recommendations from this report are reflected, where appropriate, in actions contained in Departmental / Service Plans.	<p>Include co-ordination / monitoring responsibilities for the Railway Approaches Action Plan in R&amp;PS Departmental Plan and invite other lead officers to accommodate within their own more detailed Service Plan arrangements</p> <p><b>Achieved. The 2007/8 – 2009/10 R&amp;PS Departmental Service Plan includes an overarching Departmental Plan Objective to support a strategic programme of rail corridor improvements, and a specific action (REG22-1) to co-ordinate the production and delivery of the Action Plan recommendations arising from the Scrutiny</b></p>	Geoff Thompson (Head of Regeneration)	June 2007

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RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	Investigation into Railway Approaches. Monitoring takes place on a regular (quarterly) basis as per established corporate monitoring mechanisms. Other departments with staff who have "Lead Officer" responsibilities have been encouraged to do similarly, where deemed appropriate, within their own detailed service planning arrangements. The Railway Approaches Forum will also receive an update on specific actions at its meeting planned for 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2008.		

## **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

**17 January 2008**



**Report of:               Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny  
Forum**

**Subject:                DRAFT FINAL REPORT – THE AVAILABILITY OF  
GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL  
ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL**

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### **1       PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1       To present the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's findings following completion of its investigation into 'The Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool'.

### **2       SETTING THE SCENE**

- 2.1       The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum, at its meeting on the 14 June 2007, established its annual work programme for the 2007/08 municipal year. During the course of this meeting, concerns were raised regarding the effect of increasing pressure on the current housing market in Hartlepool and the problems which this had created in terms of:-
- (i) Demand exceeding supply in most areas;
  - (ii) A considerable uplift in house prices in the last 5 years;
  - (iii) Strong demand for private rented accommodation, and
  - (iv) Limited capacity in the social rented sector with long waiting lists, low vacancy rates and reducing stock.
- 2.2       Issues of particular concern for the Forum were the availability of good quality affordable accommodation in Hartlepool and, in relation to the provision of 'social' accommodation, the increasing length of housing waiting lists held by the town's Registered Social Landlords. With this in mind, the Forum was of the view that Scrutiny has a key role to play in the identification of a way forward to address the issues and selected 'The Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool' as its first investigation for 2007/08.

- 2.3 The selection of the investigation reflected the strength of public feeling regarding this issue. It was also seen by the Forum to be a logical follow-on from the work already undertaken by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum during its 2006/07 investigation into 'The Performance and Operation of Private Rented Accommodation and Landlords'.

### **3 OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 3.1 The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to establish the extent of demand for and availability of, good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool and recommend options for increasing availability.



### **4 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

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

## **5 MEMBERSHIP OF THE REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

5.1 The membership of the Scrutiny Forum was as detailed below:-

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

Resident Representatives Ted Jackson, Robert Steele and Iris Ryder.

## **6 METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

6.1 Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from July 2007 to January 2008 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) Evidence from the town's Member of Parliament;
- (b) Evidence from the Authority's Cabinet Member with Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities;
- (c) Evidence from the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and other relevant Hartlepool Borough Council Officers;
- (d) Evidence on the role / activities of the Housing Corporation;
- (e) The views of local residents and tenants, including representatives of minority groups/communities of interest to supplement existing research;
- (f) The views of the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums;
- (g) Evidence from Registered Social Landlords with properties in Hartlepool;
- (h) Evidence of best practice in other local authorities; and
- (i) The views of Ward Councillors.

## **FINDINGS**

### **7 DEFINITIONS OF 'AFFORDABLE' AND 'SOCIAL RENTED' ACCOMMODATION**

7.1 As a starting point for the Scrutiny process, the Forum found it beneficial to establish clear definitions of the terms 'affordable' housing and 'social rented' housing for the purpose of the investigation. Members noted the difference



between the terms 'affordability' (as a measure of housing affordable to certain groups of households) and 'affordable housing' (particular products outside the housing market) and agreed the following definitions:-

- 7.2 **'Affordable Housing'** is social rented and intermediate housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, with the purpose of:
- Meeting the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; and
  - Including the provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.<sup>(x)</sup>
- 7.3 **'Social Rented Accommodation'** is rented housing owned by Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), for whom guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.<sup>(x)</sup>
- 7.4 The Forum noted with interest that the general definition of 'affordable housing' includes both 'social rented' and 'intermediate' housing. Intermediate housing being housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price and rents (including shared equity products, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent). The Forum also learned that homes provided by private sector bodies, or without grant funding, can also be classified as 'affordable housing' for planning (providing they meet the above definition).
- 7.5 Taking into consideration the general definition provided in Section 7.4, the Forum chose to continue to focus its investigation on the provision of 'social rented' housing. Members, however, acknowledged the importance of private sector bodies and the provision of intermediate housing schemes as an integral part of the wider housing market in Hartlepool.

## 8 GOVERNMENT POLICY RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION

- 8.1 Members considered evidence in relation to national / regional policy and best practice in terms of the provision on affordable accommodation. It was apparent to Members from the information provided below, that the wider issue of provision of affordable accommodation, and Councils' strategic housing role in providing it, are key elements of Central Government's agenda for achieving 'Sustainable Communities', with emphasis on the provision of successful, safe, and thriving neighbourhoods where people want to live. The Forum was also pleased to learn that the 'Barker Review of Housing Supply' <sup>(ii)</sup> had recommended that there should be an increase in the provision of social rented housing to deal primarily with increasing house

prices, resulting in a growth in need for social housing, and the consequences of the loss of stock through Right to Buy.

## National Policy

8.2 **‘Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable’ Housing Green Paper (July 2007)** set out plans to work with partners for the provision of more homes to meet growing demand; well-designed greener homes, linked to good schools, transport and healthcare and more affordable homes to buy or rent. These plans required:-

- (i) A collaborative effort involving local communities, local authorities and their delivery partners; the home building industry, regional bodies, and Government and its agencies;
- (ii) A new target of delivering 2 million homes by 2016 including 20,000 on surplus public sector land;
- (iii) More affordable homes to be supplied to help young people and families - a target of 70,000 more affordable homes a year by 2010-11;
- (iv) Local authorities to identify enough land to deliver the homes needed in their area over the next 15 years by rapidly implementing new planning policy for housing;
- (v) Intensive assessment of housing land availability; and
- (vi) The exploration of new methods of funding/providing social housing.

8.3 The Forum welcomed the proposals contained within the Green Paper and the views expressed by Members during the investigation contributed to the formulation of a consultation response to the document.

8.4 **North East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Consultation Draft May 2007** set out proposals that:-

- (i) Affordable housing should meet local aspirations and be situated in locations where it is needed;
- (ii) Local Planning Authorities will need to demonstrate that housing need exists and that mechanisms to retain the affordability of the housing in perpetuity are clearly established; and
- (iii) Encourages the use of planning obligations to achieve affordable housing.

8.5 **“Housing” Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) DCLG (November 2006)** highlighted the need to provide a variety of housing in terms of tenure, price and a mix of different households such as families with children, single person households and older people. The PPS3 required the local authority to produce a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (details of which are outlined in Sections 11.4 and 11.5 of this report) and required that the local planning authority:-

- (i) Set separate targets for social-rented and intermediate housing;

- (ii) Specify the size and type of affordable housing likely to be needed in particular locations;
- (iii) Set out a range of circumstances in which affordable housing would be required; and
- (iv) Set out the approach to seeking developer contributions to facilitate the provision of affordable houses.

8.6 **‘Delivering Affordable Housing’ (November 2006)** set out guidelines for:-

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

## Local Policy

8.7 **Hartlepool’s Housing Strategy (2006)** complements the key themes within the overall Community Strategy for the town, focusing on:-

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

8.8 Members noted that the Housing Strategy (2006) had been developed to complement the key themes contained within the towns overall Community Strategy, whilst also making the necessary links to a range of other regional, sub regional and other local policies and plans.

8.9 From the information provided, the Forum learned that Hartlepool’s policy, including the towns Local Plan, did not include specific provision for the provision of affordable housing. During exploration of the reason for this the Forum noted that the statutory plans process extended over a number of years and that until very recently housing affordability had not been a major issue sub-regionally. However, changes to the wider housing market, as outlined in Section 11.11 onwards of the report, now meant that increasing the supply of new and high quality affordable homes was a strategic priority, not just for Hartlepool but, for the Tees Valley as a whole. In light of this, Members welcomed indications that work to include affordable housing within local planning policy was now underway through the Local

Development Framework (LDF) to reflect the rapid changes being experience in town's housing market.

### **Best Practice in another Local Authority**

- 8.10 In terms of 'best practice' the Forum noted the activities of Harrogate District Council and Darlington Borough Council. Particular attention was drawn to the Harrogate's success in terms of the good number of planning developments which include requirements for the provision of affordable housing. It was, however, noted that sites in Harrogate are expensive and that the knock on effect of this had been to deter developers.
- 8.11 In terms of Darlington Borough Council, attention was drawn to the inclusion of a specific 'Affordable Housing Plan' within the Councils overall 'Housing Plan'. Members noted that work was also underway for the inclusion in planning developments of a requirement for the provision of social housing and the authorities support for shared equity schemes as a way of improving levels of affordable social housing across all tenures of property.

## **9 THE HOUSING MARKET IN HARTLEPOOL**

- 9.1 Prior to focusing its investigation on the provision of affordable social rented accommodation, the Forum found it useful to gain an understanding of the composition of the wider housing market in Hartlepool and explored perceptions of its affordability.

### **Composition of Hartlepool's Overall Housing Market**

- 9.2 Members learned that the housing market in Hartlepool had historically been self-contained in terms of tenant numbers. However, this situation had changed over the last five years with an in-migration of residents from elsewhere in the North East increasing the number of households in Hartlepool from 34,300 in 1981 to 40,000 in 2006, with a projected figure for 2021 of 44,200. This increase alongside demographic changes, including an increasing elderly population, had been a significant factor in increasing demand over supply in most areas across Hartlepool. In turn, escalating house prices and intensifying demand for private and social rented accommodation from those unable to afford to buy their own homes, further details of which were outlined in Section 12 of this report.
- 9.3 Whilst in positive terms the Members acknowledged that the in-migration of residents reflected the increasing quality of housing on offer in the town, particularly the peripheral new build estates in western areas of the town, continuing concern was expressed regarding the type of homes being provided. The Forum highlighted the need for more realistically affordable family homes as part of new developments and, given the upward trend in the elderly population (expected to continue until 2029), suitable accommodation for elderly and disabled residents.

- 9.4 In terms of the composition of the market in Hartlepool, the Forum was aware of the towns' affluent / buoyant western and suburban areas, its relatively deprived town centre core and thriving new market areas. Members noted the existence of a longstanding imbalance within Hartlepool in terms of the types of property available, with a much higher proportion of older / smaller 2 and 3 bedroom terraced properties than detached and semi-detached (family) homes. Evidence showed that in 2001, 41% of Hartlepool's market consisted of such terraced property (compared to 32% in the Tees Valley and 26% for England and Wales as a whole) and Members were concerned regarding the significant affect this had on availability and demand across all sectors of the market (Social rented, private rented and owner occupiers) and many areas of the community.

### Affordability of the Housing Market in Hartlepool

- 9.5 Members were surprised to learn that on a comparative basis average wages in Hartlepool were in fact relatively high and dwelling prices cheaper than in any of the other Tees Valley districts (82% of the Tees Valley average and 52% of the national average).<sup>(xi)</sup> A combination of these factors had in turn created a housing market in Hartlepool which was perceived by regional and national bodies as being in reality relatively affordable. A comparison of house prices to earnings is shown in **Table 1** to help illustrate this.

**Table 1 - House Prices to Earnings (4th Quarter 2006)**

	Mean House Prices All property types (2006) - £	Average Earnings of Full Time Employees (2005) - £ (per annum)
Darlington	137,000	22,400
Hartlepool	108,500	24,400
Middlesbrough	120,700	21,500
Redcar & C'land	132,800	22,400
Stockton-on-Tees	149,700	25,100
<b>Tees Valley</b>	<b>132,800</b>	<b>23,400</b>
North East	139,600	23,900
England & Wales	207,600	29,900

*Source: Land Registry/ASHE*

- 9.6 Whilst Members acknowledged the basis for the national and regional perception of Hartlepool's housing market, they strongly supported the reality for many of their residents that good quality housing, whether it be rented or bought, was either beyond their means or simply in too short a supply.

## 10 HOW AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL HOUSING MARKET IN HARTLEPOOL

- 10.1 As part of its investigation the Forum gained an understanding of how Rented Social Housing was provided in Hartlepool. Members learned that Hartlepool's housing market had always, and continued to consist of a relatively high percentage of social housing. This was illustrated by current figures which showed that 25% of the town's stock (a total of 10,000

properties) was currently provided through social housing. Whilst this was higher than the national average of 20%, the Forum learned that this figure had decreased from over 28% in 2001, a primary factor in which had been the effects of the Right to Buy (RTB) scheme. Further details of RTB issues were discussed in Section 11.7 of this report.

- 10.2 The Forum noted with interest that the 10,000 social rented properties available in Hartlepool were currently provided, and managed, by a total of 15 RSL's, all of which had been invited to participate in this investigation. The majority of these properties (70%) were, however, provided by one organisation, Housing Hartlepool, whose stock consists predominantly of former "Council houses" transferred to them by the local authority in 2004.
- 10.3 Members expressed support for the work being undertaken by the town's RSL's and welcomed assurances, from the Chief Executive of Housing Hartlepool, that all RSL's let their properties for 'affordable' rents with no benefit gap. Members also welcomed confirmation that the Social Rented Housing Sector was tightly regulated by the Housing Corporation, Audit Commission and Charity Commission, with emphasis on the provision of good standards of management. Whilst this was in contrast with the relatively poor management controls for the private rented sector, it was recognised by the Forum that the private rented sector also had a significant role to play in Hartlepool's housing market, with the desirability (or otherwise) of accommodation in this sector impacting on the demand for affordable social housing.

## **11 ISSUES AFFECTING THE PROVISION OF GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL**

- 11.1 Based upon the evidence provided, the Forum established that several key issues had, and continued to, impact upon the provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool. These included:-
- (i) Housing Needs / Demand;
  - (ii) Levels of Existing Stock (Availability);
  - (iii) Housing Market Changes;
  - (iv) Housing Market Renewal;
  - (v) Land Supply;
  - (vi) New Build; and
  - (vii) Planning Policy.

### **Housing Need / Demand**

- 11.2 In relation to housing need, the Forum noted that whilst the social housing sector in Hartlepool had experienced some issues with difficult to let dwellings, there had been no widespread issue with under use / abandonment of social housing or poor design. Problems in Hartlepool had tended to relate to an inability to invest in stock, some obsolete housing stock and past estate design issues.

- 11.3 The Forum learned that today's social housing market was far removed from that of 2002, where demand was static or falling and waiting lists were short or non-existent. In today's market, demand for affordable social housing has been driven up in the main by sharp increases in house prices, with other contributory factors being:-
- (i) Reducing social rented housing stock over time through Right to Buy;
  - (ii) Increased household formation;
  - (iii) Increasing in-migration into Hartlepool; and
  - (iv) Localised pressures associated with the ongoing housing regeneration programme.
- 11.4 Whilst the Forum noted that the availability of 'affordable' housing was recognised as a national problem, Members were concerned that the results of the recently completed 'Housing Needs Assessment' had shown that the problem in Hartlepool equated to an annual affordable housing shortfall of 393 properties. Although there were similar high levels of need across the sub-region, and the region, Members were alarmed to learn that Hartlepool's shortfall equated to the average annual number of all housing completions in the town over last decade. On this basis, Members acknowledged the need to be realistic regarding the Council's ability to address this shortfall in that it may well be possible to reduce a proportion of the figure through the actions outlined later in report (Section 12 of the report refers).
- 11.5 Members welcomed indications that increasing the supply of new and high quality affordable housing was now a key strategic priority, both in Hartlepool and across the wider Tees Valley. The Forum was encouraged to learn that a Strategic Housing Market Assessment had already been undertaken within Hartlepool, the results of which confirmed:-
- (i) A significant level of unmet housing need in Hartlepool today, with 3,700 residents on housing register, 3,000, of which were not currently social renters; and
  - (ii) The limited level of capacity remaining within the social rented sector, its low vacancy rates and long waiting lists with unmet need highest for larger (3+ bedrooms) family housing (75%), followed by bungalows and supported accommodation (19%).
- 11.6 In considering these results, the Forum noted the statistical evidence in relation to relatively low level of demand for the provision of bungalows and supported accommodation in comparison to other types of property in Hartlepool. There was, however, evidence that Hartlepool's population is ageing, as outlined in Section 9.3 of the report, a view which was supported by the number of concerns raised with Members. In view of this, Members felt strongly that the provision of accommodation for elderly and disabled residents should be accommodated within new developments where possible and suggested that a minimum of two bedrooms should be provided to enable support providers to stay over. It was, however, also recognised that ways in which this accommodation was provided needed to be viewed

more innovatively. This could include the use of other one level accommodation e.g. ground floor flats.

### Levels of Existing Stock

- 11.7 Evidence provided by the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, showed that the number of authority social properties had reduced significantly over recent years, from approximately 12,000 to 7,000. Members noted with concern the significant role which Right to Buy (RTB) had played in this, with 1425 properties bought over the last 10 years, most notably in 'traditional' type property i.e. 2 and 3 bedrooms family houses. This situation had been further compounded by housing policy changes in the 1980s which had prevented local authorities in England from building new social stock in any significant numbers (for example the last new build Council homes in Hartlepool were completed in the mid 1980s).
- 11.8 Although RTB demand had been strong across the town, the Forum noted peaks in areas including Clavering, Throston Grange, large parts of Owton Manor and Rossmere, where 90% of housing stock had been lost via RTB over the last 20 years. On a more positive note, although 40% of the original housing stock had been lost, 12% of which had been over the last 10 years, the Forum welcomed indications that the trend for RTB's was now decreasing towards much lower numbers of approximately 50 per year. Details of this are illustrated in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2 - Hartlepool Right to Buy Sales 1998-2007**

Time Period		Number of Dwellings Sold
April 1998	March 1999	57
April 1999	March 2000	75
April 2000	March 2001	105
April 2001	March 2002	171
April 2002	March 2003	257
April 2003	March 2004	273
April 2004	March 2005	259
April 2005	March 2006	113
April 2006	March 2007	95
April 2007	To date	20 (full year equivalent 53)
<b>Total</b>		<b>1425</b>

Source: Scoping Report – 6 September 2007

- 11.9 The Forum was reminded that the RTB scheme was only accessible for former Council tenants, with 5 years occupancy and the level of any investment for refurbishment taken into account when calculating the RTB



price. For those who were not former Council tenants 'Right to Acquire' rules provided a similar scheme, however, Members were reassured to learn that this was not expected to have the same impact on stock levels as RTB. Assurances were also welcomed that RSL's in Hartlepool were endeavouring to increase supply to meet increasing demand through the process identified later in the report.

- 11.10 The Forum noted that the standard of social housing stock in Hartlepool was high and that historically there had been significant investment in the sector by the Council through housing or regeneration programmes. The Forum also recognised the impact on stock turnover of Hartlepool Housings' success in terms stock management, and delivery of its Decent Homes Modernisation scheme, with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment showing that 80% of the 393 property annual shortfall relate to social rented accommodation.

### **Housing Market Changes**

- 11.11 In exploring issues around the effect of housing market changes on the provision of affordable social accommodation, Members noted the implications of rapid house price inflation on resident's ability to buy homes and in turn demand for affordable social housing. The Forum learned that dwelling prices of all properties types across Hartlepool had risen by 43%, between 2004 / 06, a figure which added further to Members scepticism regarding the affordability of housing in Hartlepool.
- 11.12 The Forum also learned that house price inflation had created a knock on effect for land prices, resulting in instances where RSL's had made the maximum allowance for land likely to be acceptable to the Housing Corporation's, only to be 'gazumped' by a private developer. This was recognised by the Forum as being a little known, but significant, factor in preventing the delivery of new social housing stock.

### **Housing Market Renewal**

- 11.13 Confirmation of housing market changes in Hartlepool came as no surprise to Members who were receiving housing availability complaints from their Constituents on a regular basis. Members noted with interest, the implications of housing market renewal and the changing nature of housing demand on the provision of affordable social rented accommodation, particularly in some older private terraced housing areas to the west and north of the town centre. Whilst the Forum recognised that this situation had worsened in Hartlepool over recent years, for example in terms of high levels of dwelling vacancy and associated issues related to market failure in several areas of older housing, Members were encouraged to learn that the Council had given priority within its Housing Strategies, and the Local Development Plan / Planning Policy Framework, to deal effectively with these issues. A key factor in this being the identification of ways to deal with the situation in a sensitive, coherent and managed fashion, through a

combination of selective demolition, clearance and redevelopment, and housing improvement.

11.14 Members recognised that a significant programme of redevelopment within older housing areas had already begun. However, some concern was expressed that the demolition of older properties may not always be the best course of action given the shortage of good quality affordable housing in the town. On the other hand the need to meet modern housing aspirations and improve housing quality was acknowledged. Whilst it was acknowledged that some residents could be reluctant to move away from homes within communities they were familiar, it was recognised that the programme was developed and delivered in a sensitive fashion and in consultation with communities. Members recognised that the refurbishment of older properties to the required standards and modern aspirations was not always economically viable.

11.15 With this in mind, the Forum supported the suggestion that the most appropriate way forward was to replace older housing areas through a process of gradual renewal, working with the communities affected. The Forum also recognised the importance of:-

- (i) Increasing availability of modern new dwellings meeting modern aspirations across the housing market as a means of opening up alternative housing options for existing social rented tenants, thus freeing up social rented accommodation for other tenants; and
- (ii) Improved performance and operation within the private rented sector (management through regulation) to make it more attractive to tenants, reducing pressure on social rented accommodation. This view had also been expressed by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum during its investigation into 'The Performance and Operation of Private Sector Landlords in Hartlepool'.

## Land Supply

11.16 Members noted with interest the requirement for local authorities to demonstrate at least a 5 year land supply for housing. The Forum was concerned to learn that this was viewed as somewhat problematic for Hartlepool, in that the Council had insufficient large scale landholdings of publicly owned land within the Hartlepool boundary appropriate for housing development. In looking at ways of dealing with this, Members were encouraged to learn that considerable work was being undertaken through the Council's '3-5 Year Land Disposal Strategy' to identify a way forward. This included exploration of the feasibility of the use of smaller plots and the possible need to consider the release of greenfield land and review business allocations within the local plan.

11.17 The Forum was pleased to learn that work so far had resulted in the identification of 25 possible sites, but noted that many of these presented policy difficulties. These sites are:-

- (i) 20 small sites - all under 1 hectare which generally accommodates 40-50 dwellings;

*(3 in the East Central Area, including the Reed Street site and the very small site at Crown House, 10 involving both the total or partial loss of green space and 6 previously developed land now possibly classed as amenity open space)*

- (ii) 2 large sites under consideration within the Building Schools for the Future Review; and

- (iii) 3 remaining larger sites.

*(1 greenfield site, requiring the loss of employment land, 1 site already allocated in the draft Local Plan and 1 backland site)*

11.18 Members acknowledged that a contributory factor to the viability of sites for social housing was the price at which land was disposed of, details of which are discussed further in Section 11.22 of the report. Members noted that success in the bidding process to the Housing Corporation was effectively dependent on the provision of subsidised land. The Forum learned that Section 123 Local Government Act 1972 currently required the Council to sell all land for the best possible consideration, i.e. achieving the highest possible value from any sale. However, the Forum learned that there were routes through which sites could be disposed of below market value. These included:-

- (i) The submission of an application for the use of General Disposal Consent (GDC) should they wish to dispose of land at less than market value; and
- (ii) In instances where it was considered disposal of land would improve social and economic well-being of an area or residents land could be sold at less than market value without GDC. It was considered that sale of land for social housing could be covered within this consent.

11.19 In considering the feasibility for disposal of land in this way to make it more economically viable for the provision of social housing, the Forum recognised that there are competing priorities with the Council's need to achieve capital receipts to fund capital projects. The Forum acknowledged that this was a very difficult subject, but recognised that the provision of land at less than market value could well be the only way to make the building of new affordable homes financially viable for registered social landlords, enabling them to succeed in securing funding from the Housing Corporation.

- 11.20 As such, in order to demonstrate the local authority's commitment to providing good quality affordable social rented housing, Members expressed support for the implementation of a criterion based policy indicating in principle that the local authority was prepared to sell its land to RSL's at below market value, subject to certain criteria with each case being considered on its merits.

### **New Build**

- 11.21 It was evident to Members that whilst development rates for housing in Hartlepool had been relatively high, with about 300 dwellings per year for the last 15 years, new build of social housing purposes had been relatively low since 1998. A contributor factor to this had, and continued to be, the availability of building plots with no large bank of Council owned land suitable for this purpose.
- 11.22 Members found that in addition to conventional rented social properties, a smaller number of shared ownership properties were also being provided, with more in the pipeline through new development schemes in the town centre housing regeneration areas. Concentrating on the provision of rented accommodation, Members learned that RSL's submit bids to the Housing Corporation for funding to build new properties every 2 years, although this years bid was for a three year period.
- 11.23 The Forum learned that each bid was required to meet regional priorities, as set by the local authority as the Strategic Housing Authority, and be deliverable in terms of site assembly and planning. It was noted that grants paid had on average last year been at around £61,000 per unit, however, indications were that the subsidy regime was being tightened with levels per unit this year expected to be in the region of £50,000 per dwelling. This reduced subsidy, combined with the factor that the Housing Corporation would not accept paying market value for local authority land, placed pressure of the economic viability of new housing sites for RSL's. With Unit costs consisting of construction costs, land cost and fees, RSL's in assessing the viability of sites go consider if the rents that could be charged would cover the gap between the overall cost of the unit and the subsidy provided.
- 11.24 Whilst Members acknowledged that the Housing Corporations main driver was the provision of as many new dwellings as possible for each pound of subsidy, concern was expressed that decreasing level of subsidy were placing pressure upon RSL's to borrow against their assets to fund developments and secure land at below market value. Members also recognised the importance of the Council's 'enabling' role in working with RSL's to develop schemes and support bids for funding from the Housing Corporation. The Forum was encouraged to lean that the provision of new supported housing for vulnerable groups was to continue to be a high priority, with the need for more 'general needs' affordable housing identified in the Housing Needs Assessment 2007.

- 11.25 In terms of the Housing Market Assessment, the Forum supported the sentiment expressed within it that 'given the high level of housing need identified across the Borough it was essential that the Council explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable homes'. Members noted that this could include:-
- (i) Considering disposing of local authority owned land for affordable housing (Section 11.18 to 11.20 refers);
  - (ii) Setting affordable housing targets of (at a percentage to be defined), for which x% should be for social rented housing and y% for intermediate tenure (splits to be defined); and
  - (iii) Setting site thresholds for affordable housing (in line with PPS3) recognising the capacity of the market.
- 11.26 In identifying possible sites, the Forum noted that whilst there was some flexibility in the interpretation of the requirements of the Spatial Strategy, there continued to be strong emphasis on the use of brownfield land, especially given that in preparation for the Local Plan a number of housing sites had been deleted by the inspector. Members, however, found that where brownfield sites were marginally viable in financial terms, additional cost to support site remediation and infrastructure often made new social housing schemes either unviable or requiring levels of public subsidy. In these instances affordable housing provision would probably need to be on commercial land terms. In addition to this, the Forum noted that whilst there had been a number of windfall and conversion schemes with regeneration benefits, there would continue to be increasing pressure to make efficient use of land, increase densities and look at modern methods of construction.

## Planning Policy

- 11.27 Members were frustrated to find that there was currently no requirement within planning policy for the provision of affordable rented housing, neither was there any capacity for the Council to influence the 6000 existing planning permissions in Hartlepool to include affordable rented accommodation. The Forum was, however, pleased to find that in terms of the Victoria Harbour development, whilst there was no requirement in the planning approval for affordable housing negotiations were being undertaken with the Regeneration Company and owner of this site in relation to the mix of housing. Although, Members noted that should the Victoria Harbour not come on stream as soon as expected the Council could be forced to look at other areas, including greenfield sites and the possible re-designation of some unused business sites.
- 11.28 In terms of the Local Plan, Members noted that it did not currently contain sites identified for the provision of affordable rented housing. In terms of the use of greenfield sites, Members noted that central Government had indicated that greenfield sites should not be identified where practicable and that emphasis should be given to brownfield sites. This did not, however,

help in addressing the Councils shortage of land for affordable housing and the Forum acknowledged that with a review of the Local Plan currently taking place it might be necessary to examine the use of greenfield sites in the future. Members also noted that allocations of business land would also be looked at, the other opportunities may arise from the Building Schools for the Future programme, and that there could be a need to look at other vacant private sites.

11.29 The Forum was encouraged to find that a review of planning policy was now underway, although timescales for the implementation of a new Planning Policy Framework were expected to be approximately 4 years. Members learned that planning policy to assist in the delivery of affordable housing was to take the form of:-

- (i) **Core Strategy Planning Development Document.** A policy for the delivery of a long term spatial vision for the Borough and general locations for spatial development, including potentially requirements for affordable housing in new housing developments.
- (ii) **Housing Allocation Planning Development Document.** Relates to the strategic vision and is scheduled for adoption in March 2010.
- (iii) **Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.** Primarily related to the formalisation of general developer contributions, but could include the use of Section 106 Agreements and the setting of specific criteria on housing sites coming forward, e.g. specifying levels of affordable housing within new developments, including potentially affordable rented housing. Not part of statutory development plans, with possible formal adoption in spring / summer 2008.
- (iv) **Affordable Housing Development Plan.** Could take the form of a single issue development plan document looking solely at affordable housing. Timescale for implementation being 18 months to 2 years, with formal adoption possible in 2009 onwards.

11.30 Taking this into consideration, Members welcomed indications that in order to provide a route for action, sooner rather than later, work was underway to implement the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to enable the inclusion of a requirement for developers to include provision of affordable housing within new developments.

11.31 Members emphasised the need to influence Government Policy and the effects this has on planning policy. Attention was also drawn to the need to reconcile aspirations with planning permissions, in that whilst there is a strong preference for housing in terms of social accommodation, 36% of planning permissions relate to flat / apartment developments.

## **12 ACTIVITIES BEING UNDERTAKEN TO INCREASE AND MAINTAIN THE SUPPLY OF GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL**

12.1 In exploring work already being undertaken, the Forum noted that various developments were already being undertaken to deal with this issue of availability of affordable social rented housing. These included:-

- (i) Strategic discussions with the Housing Corporation and several RSL's with local connections regarding potential bids to the 2008-11 'Affordable Homes Programme';
- (ii) The establishment of a partnering protocol with the Housing Corporation and RSL's in order to support a more efficient, sub-regional approach toward to increasing the supply of affordable housing in the future;
- (iii) Consideration to whether the Council should get more involved directly in funding or developing new social housing, through prudential borrowing and joint ventures;
- (v) Reporting the findings of the Hartlepool Local Housing Assessment to Cabinet and using them to inform policy including the new statutory Local Development Framework which is currently under preparation;
- (vi) Preparation of the Sub-regional Housing Strategy, with consideration to be given to the need to revise elements of the Hartlepool Housing Strategy;
- (vii) Contributing to the development of the sub-regional HMR Strategy and supporting work, as one of the core local authority partners within the Tees Valley Living Initiative and the sub-regional housing market restructuring partnership for Tees Valley;
- (viii) The preparation of a list of potential development sites (both Council and privately owned) that may be suitable for new affordable housing;
- (ix) The preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document on Developer Contributions expanding on policy GEP9 of the Local Plan, including proposals for a requirement for developers to provide a certain level of affordable housing on new housing sites using legal agreements.
- (x) Developing a strategic view in partnership with RSLs who want to develop and deliver good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool. Discussions were ongoing with the Housing Corporation through the Northern Housing Challenge to facilitate this; and

- (xi) Undertaking of its enabling role, mainly with the Registered Social Landlords, on the development of schemes for affordable housing and in the preparation of bids for capital to the Housing Corporation.
- (xii) The Hartfields development at Middle Warren aimed at providing accommodation for the older population in the town. Members were aware of his development and the collaboration between the Council, the Health Service and Joseph Rowntree for its provision. However, whilst Members supported the creation of accommodation for the elderly as one of the key areas for increased provision in the town, concern was expressed as to the accessibility of the development in terms of cost. The Forum emphasised the need to provide 'affordable rented' accommodation for the elderly across Hartlepool.

### **13 METHODS OF INCREASING AND MAINTAINING, THE AVAILABILITY OF GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE SOCIAL RENTED ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL**

13.1 Following receipt of the evidence provided, and taking into consideration the work being undertaken, as outlined in Section 12 of the report, the Forum summarised the primary difficulties being experienced in terms of the provision of affordable rented social housing as being:-

- (j) The availability of suitable land;
- (ii) Planning Policy; and
- (iii) Funding in terms of the level of subsidies available and price of land.

13.2 In term of the way forward in increasing and maintaining the provision of good quality affordable social rented accommodation, the Forum drew attention to:

- (i) The importance of continuing to develop a strategic view of housing provision in Hartlepool, with the Housing Corporation and RSL's in the town;
- (ii) The need to explore and identify potentially suitable sites for the provision of this accommodation; and
- (iii) The importance of engaging with the RSL sector and supporting them in the submission of this years bids to the Housing Corporation for grant funding.

### **14 EVIDENCE FROM THE TOWN'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**

14.1 The Member of Parliament (MP) for Hartlepool welcomed the opportunity to comment on this matter and, at the meeting of the Forum on the 6



September 2007, commended the Forum on the selection of this issue as its first topic for 2007/08.

- 14.2 It came as no surprise to the Forum that housing, and in particular the lack of good quality affordable accommodation, in Hartlepool constituted 50% to 60% of the issues raised with the MP during his Ward Surgeries. Members were themselves receiving large numbers of resident representations regarding the issue during their Ward Surgeries.
- 14.3 The Forum supported the MP's observation that housing in Hartlepool need to be developed to accommodate demographic changes within the market, with increased provision for the elderly, families and young / single residents. The Forum also shared the MP's view that the major challenges facing the Council in terms of the provision of good quality affordable accommodation are:-
- (i) Achieving the target of Zero Carbon by 2016;
  - (ii) Ensuring residents were able to stay in or close to the community they were familiar with;
  - (iii) Partnership arrangements were already strong in terms of potential joint ventures and this should be further explored; and
  - (iv) The availability of land and the problem of developers retaining land.
- 14.4 The MP welcomed the report produced to initiate the Scrutiny process and praised the quality of analysis. The MP also advised the Forum of his particular concern regarding the detrimental effect of poor quality housing and overcrowding on the long term life chances of Hartlepool's residents, and in particular the town's children. The MP further indicated that Housing Hartlepool should be commended on the services they provide for residents of Hartlepool, the success of which had contributed to increased demand and a low turnover of tenants.
- 14.5 With the need for the provision of increased social housing foremost in their minds, Members supported the MP's view that ways of removing or reducing barriers to new build, in terms of the availability of land and the inclusion of affordable accommodation within the planning process, needed to be a priority for the Council. Members also shared the MP's frustration regarding the practice of 'Land Banking' and the fact that existing planning permissions could not be changed to require the inclusion of affordable housing within new developments.
- 14.6 Members noted with interest the MP's support for the implementation of a dual approach to dealing with the housing shortfall through investment in new housing and housing market renewal, as the appropriate way to meet future aspirations and create a stock of quality housing to meet needs and aspirations. The MP felt strongly that whilst in doing this Hartlepool needed to be viewed as a series of communities and that emphasis must be placed

upon the provision of the types of homes people want in the areas they want to live. Whilst it was recognised by the MP that in some homes are not economically viable to refurbish to the required Decent Homes standards, i.e. some older housing particularly around the town centre, emphasis was placed upon the importance of making provision as far as is practicable for residents to stay in or close to the communities that they are familiar with.

- 14.7 In terms of the provision of new developments, whilst it was suggested that the development at Victoria Harbour would be a key opportunity to address the lack of affordable, and social, housing in Hartlepool, the Forum acknowledged that emphasis needed to be placed on the provision on the right types of properties to meet the housing shortfall. With this in mind, Members supported the MP's suggestion that in terms of future provision the results of the 'Housing Needs Assessment' needed to be rigorously analysed and refined to determine future developments and requirements of the town, including the level and need for flats.

## **15 EVIDENCE FROM THE AUTHORITY'S CABINET MEMBER WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES AND THE TOWN'S MP**

- 15.1 The Forum welcomed the views of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities at its meeting on the 6 September 2007. During the course of discussions, Members received confirmation of the Portfolio Holder's support for the provision of improved levels of affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool and the for the use of a dual approach through investment in new housing and housing market renewal to achieve it.
- 15.2 Members learned that the Portfolio Holder viewed the primary challenges to the Council in terms of this issue as being:
- (i) The identification of suitable sites for affordable social housing;
  - (ii) The need to look at how Hartlepool could be developed in partnership with the RSL sector;
  - (iii) Proposals for the development of Victoria Harbour; and
  - (iv) The development of a framework in relation to Choice Based Lettings and the involvement of private landlords.
- 15.3 The Forums noted the Portfolio Holder's recognition of the pressure being placed upon the social rented sector by the Council's current regeneration programme and his acceptance that in some instances the improvement of properties, e.g. terraced properties in the town centre was not economically viable.

- 15.4 In terms of new build, and a way forward for the future, the Portfolio Holder advised the Forum that it was unlikely that any changes in legislation would result in the Council initiating its own building programme as the authority no longer has the necessary infrastructure to effectively build and manage such properties. As such, the Portfolio emphasised the importance of the Council's role in identifying suitable land and developing partnership arrangements with Housing Hartlepool, and other RSL's, for their management as a way forward for the future.
- 15.5 In relation to Council policy in terms of the use / disposal of Council land below market value to encourage new social housing developments the Portfolio Holder assured the Forum that any recommendations made in relation to this issue, and the need for changes to the Local Plan, would be welcomed by Cabinet.

## **16 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – THE VIEWS OF RESIDENTS, INCLUDING PEOPLE FROM MINORITY COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST**

- 16.1 Members of the Forum were keen to engage with residents, including people from minority communities of interest as part of the investigation. In order for this to occur, a formal invitation through the local press and radio for residents to attend the meeting of the residents to attend the meeting of the Forum on the 27 September 2007 to put their views on the availability of affordable social rented accommodation in Hartlepool. Formal invitations were also extended to the Hartlepool 50+ Forum, Hartlepool Carers and the Hartlepool Access Group to attend this meeting.
- 16.2 In addition to this, input was sought directly from the following sources and the issues / concerns raised fed back to the Forum at its meeting on the 27 September 2007.

### **The North, South and Central Neighbourhood Consultative Forums**

- 16.3 The Chair of the Forum attended each of the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums in August and relayed back to the Forum residents concerns / views in relation to:-
- (i) The demolition and improvement of street houses;
  - (ii) Concerns regarding the shortage of bungalows and the surplus of flats in the town;
  - (iii) The need for affordable housing, especially for first time buyers who are being priced out of the rented and owner occupier housing market;
  - (iv) The levels of empty properties in the North area of the town,
  - (v) Concerns that the 'tin houses' in the central area of the town would not be replaced by sufficient new housing;
  - (vi) Concerns that new houses were not being built quick enough to meet demand; and

- (vii) Concerns that tenants were being moved out of street houses when they didn't want to be and that the views of tenants and not landlords needed to be taken into account.

### **Minority / Diversity Groups in Hartlepool**

16.4 In an effort to incorporate more fully diversity into the investigation the Scrutiny Support Officer, in September 2007, attended meetings of the following groups to seek their views on the availability of affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool:-

- (i) Talking with Communities;
- (ii) The All Ability Forum; and
- (iii) The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) group;

16.5 The Forum noted that the issues / concerns raised at by each of these groups mirrored those expressed by the wider community, with emphasis on:-

- (i) Real shortage of affordable housing for all sections of the community, in particular single people, elderly / disabled residents and larger families; and
- (ii) The need for the provision of suitable "affordable housing" to be viewed by the local authority as a high priority.

## **17 CONCLUSIONS**

17.1 The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-

- (a) That in addition to the provision of 'social rented' housing, the importance of joint working with private sector bodies and provision of intermediate housing schemes should be recognised as an integral part of the provision of affordable housing in Hartlepool;
- (b) That it is important that in the rented sector has an element of choice for all elements of the community in terms of tenure, price range and location;
- (c) That the need for the Council to consider the sale of land at below market value is a crucial issue for RSL's, with a knock on effect in terms of the viability of their bids to the Housing Corporation for grant funding and future new social rented housing provision;
- (d) That in recognition of the local authority's commitment to providing good quality affordable social rented housing, a criterion based policy supporting in principle the disposal of land to RSL's at below market value should be implemented, with each case considered against a set criteria on its own merits;

- (e) That the main challenges for the provision of good quality affordable rented accommodation are:-
  - (i) Achieving the target of Zero Carbon by 2016;
  - (ii) Ensuring residents were able to stay in the community they were familiar with;
  - (iii) Partnership arrangements were already strong in terms of potential joint ventures and this should be further explored; and
  - (iv) The availability of land and the problem of developers retaining land.
- (f) That emphasis needs to be placed on the provision of the right types of properties to meet the housing shortfall and in order to do this the results of the 'Housing Needs Assessment' needs to be rigorously analysed, tested and refined to determine future developments and requirements of the town, including the provision of flats;
- (g) That ways of working more closely in partnership with Housing Hartlepool and other RSL's for the provision of affordable rented social accommodation in the town, and the development of opportunities contained within the Green Paper, need to be fully explored;
- (h) That with limited Council owned land suitable for the provision of new housing, every effort needs to be made to make best use of available sites available, and work undertaken to identify additional sites wherever possible;
- (i) That all new housing developments should be required to include the provision of good quality affordable housing, including rented social housing and provision for elderly / disabled and younger residents of Hartlepool, whilst recognising the findings of the Housing Needs Assessment;
- (j) That the provision of housing for elderly / disabled residents in Hartlepool needs to be explored in innovative way, to make the provision of accommodation on one level viable on sites where conventionally large building plots required for bungalows are not available;
- (k) That the Councils Local Plan needs to be amended / updated to include provision for affordable accommodation, and in particular social rented accommodation;
- (l) That the revision of local planning policy through the Local Development Framework, to respond to recent rapid changes within the housing market and in particular the need for affordable rented social accommodation, should be supported and progressed as swiftly as practicable;

- (m) That in view of the timescale involved in the revision local planning policy, progress should continue with the preparation of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, to enable the inclusion of a requirement for developers to include provision of affordable housing within new developments;
- (n) That as a means of provisionally identifying additional land for the provision of affordable social rented accommodation, a review of some unused business allocations and greenfield sites should be undertaken in addition to brownfield sites;
- (o) That it should be recognised that the local authority may only be able to address a part of the overall shortfall in provision of affordable housing in Hartlepool with the tools available to it; and
- (p) That Housing Hartlepool should be commended on the way in which they provide and manage their services for residents of Hartlepool.

## 18 RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:-

- (a) That a review of land availability, including brownfield and greenfield sites, be undertaken with the aim of identifying possible additional sites for affordable rented social housing;
- (b) That as part of the review of the local planning policy provision be made for the identification of suitable sites for the provision of affordable housing;
- (c) That a criterion based policy supporting in principle the disposal of Council land to RSL's at below market value be created, with the requirement that each case be considered, against a set criteria, on its own merits whilst taking into consideration the possible impact on capital receipts;
- (d) That a rigorous analysis be undertaken of the results of the 'Housing Needs Assessment' together with testing and refinement to determine future developments and requirements of the town, including the provision of flats;
- (e) That ways of working more closely in partnership with RSL's for the provision of affordable rented social accommodation in the town, and the development of opportunities contained within the Green Paper, be explored;

- (f) That the provision of housing for elderly / disabled residents in Hartlepool needs to be explored in innovative ways to, for example explore possible provision of accommodation on one level on sites where conventionally large building plots required for bungalows are not available;
- (g) That local planning policy be revised, through the Local Development Framework, to require the provision within all new housing developments of good quality affordable housing, including rented social housing and accommodation for elderly / disabled and young / single residents; and
- (h) That the Councils local planning policy be amended / updated to include provision for affordable accommodation, and in particular social rented accommodation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

### Hartlepool Borough Council:

The MP, Iain Wright;

The Mayor Stuart Drummond – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;

Councillor Peter Jackson – The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities;

Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning;

Stuart Green, Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development);

Mark Dutton, Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator; and

Derek Gouldbum, Urban Policy Manager.

### External Representatives:

Cath Purdy, Housing Hartlepool;

Representatives from the All Ability Forum, Talking to Communities and the LGBT; and

Mr Carruthers-Watt, the 50+ Forum.

**COUNCILLOR S COOK  
CHAIR OF THEREGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY  
FORUM**

**January 2008**

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Scoping Report – The Availability of Affordable Good Quality Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool (Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum – 12 July 2007);
- (ii) Delivering Affordable Housing (Communities and Local Government – November 2006);
- (iii) Review of Housing Supply (Kate Barker – [www.barkerreview.org.uk](http://www.barkerreview.org.uk));
- (iv) Hartlepool Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2006-11;
- (v) <http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/>;
- (vi) <http://www.core.ac.uk/core/> (Core - Continuous recording System) monitors social landlord's lettings and sales in England.);
- (vii) <http://www.hqnetwork.org.uk/> (The Housing Quality Network is a network of local authorities, registered social landlords and housing associations which seeks to promote good practice and quality in the provision of rented accommodation in the UK.);
- (viii) Hansard Speech by Iain Wright on the 18 June 2007 (and Ministerial response);
- (ix) Hartlepool Housing Needs Assessment (2007);
- (x) Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing 2006; and
- (xi) 'Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable' Housing Green Paper (July 2007).