

CABINET AGENDA



Monday 17th March 2008

at 9.00am

in

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

MEMBERS: CABINET:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

To receive the Record of Decision in respect of the meeting held on 3rd March 2008 (previously circulated)

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

No items

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Highway Policy and Procedures – *Director of Neighbourhood Services*
- 5.2 Pay and Grading Structure and Single Status Agreement – *Corporate Management Team*
- 5.3 Affordable Housing DPD Issues and Options Discussion Paper – For Consultation – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 The Parenting Challenge Parent Support Strategy – *Director of Children's Services*
- 6.2 Cabinet Contingency Fund – *The Mayor*

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / INFORMATION

- 7.1 The Hartlepool Compact Review (Progress Report) – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*

8. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

- 8.1 Formal Response to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme – *Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

EXEMPT ITEMS

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

10. KEY DECISIONS

- 10.1 Single Status Agreement – *Corporate Management Team (Para 4)*

CABINET REPORT

17th March 2008



Report of: Director of Neighbourhood Services

Subject: HIGHWAY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Highway Maintenance Policy and procedural documents which are required by national guidance to demonstrate that policies, priorities and programmes are explicit, transparent and inclusive.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 Background on the national policies necessitating the development of the documents and details of how the documents have been developed to date.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

- 3.1 This is a Cabinet decision

4. TYPE OF DECISION

- 4.1 Key Decision Test (ii) applies

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Cabinet approval on 19th June 2006 to adopt Road Liaison Board's three codes of practice as the basis for development of Highway Asset Management Plan (now superseded by Transport Asset Management Plan)

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- (a) Endorses the principles contained within the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and suite of supporting documents.

- (b) Authorises the continued development of these documents in collaboration with the other Tees Valley Authorities.
- (c) Agrees to the production of a further report to present options on Service Standards.

Report of: Director of Neighbourhood Services

Subject: HIGHWAY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Highway Maintenance Policy and procedural documents which are required by national guidance to demonstrate that policies, priorities and programmes are explicit, transparent and inclusive.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In July 2005 the national Roads Liaison Group published the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management titled 'Well-maintained Highways'. At the same time they also published a second document titled 'Guidance Document for Highway Infrastructure Asset Valuation'. This document is a companion to the 'Country Surveyors Society Framework for Highway Asset Management'.
- 2.2 These documents have the aim of achieving a set of procedures that are intended to apply throughout the United Kingdom. They also seek to reconcile and harmonize maintenance practice on local and strategic road networks where this is practicable. All this is to be done whilst taking account of the expectations of users, and retaining scope for local discretion and diversity. Whilst risk assessments remain the main driver for minimum standards of safety, further elements of network management are now introduced under the headings of sustainability and serviceability.
- 2.3 The effect of these documents together with new requirements for asset valuation mean that it is extremely important to exercise good control over the highway inventory and changes which take place throughout the year.
- 2.4 For highway authorities to be able to properly consider and determine their future service standards this must be based upon detailed knowledge of the highway asset and its rate of decline so that decisions on capital investment and whole life costing can be made.
- 2.5 Hartlepool Borough Council has decided that it will follow the recommendations made in the national guidance by developing a 'Transport Asset Management Plan' (TAMP). The TAMP is intended to sit within a hierarchy of policy guidance and management documents which is headed by the Local Transport Plan (LTP). A document schedule can be seen in **Appendix 'A'**.

- 2.6 In order that the local highway standards remain in harmony with user expectations throughout the Tees Valley region, it was decided that the TAMP and other supporting documents would be produced in collaboration with the other Tees Valley Authorities. Each authority has bespoke requirements reflected throughout the documents but basic issues regarding safety intervention etc. can be seen to be consistent by both users and enforcers alike.
- 2.7 The main documents which outline the Councils approach to maintenance of its network are:
- the 'Transport Asset Management Plan'
 - the 'Highway Network Management Plan'
 - the 'Highway Maintenance Plan'
 - the 'Highway Safety Inspection Manual'

These documents can be found in the Members library for reference. They are considered to be 'live' documents and are subject to regular review and update. As asset inventories and conditions change, they require decisions on service standards to be reviewed from time to time. Those changes will be managed by Technical Services Division on a continuing basis.

- 2.8 Two further management documents are to be introduced in the future these being:
- the 'Structures Maintenance Plan'
 - the 'Street Lighting Maintenance Plan'
- 2.9 In summary, the approval of this report will:
- Confirm the principles of the TAMP and the safety inspection parameters contained in **Appendix B**.
 - Authorise the continued development of these principles in collaboration with the Tees Valley Authorisation.

This will enable officers to continue to deliver the duties required of the Highway Authority in terms ensuring public safety.

3 CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES

- 3.1 Acceptance of the recommendation in this report will allow officers to carry out the Highway Authority duties within the minimum requirements of the national guidelines and hence protect the Authority's statutory defence in law against 3rd party claims for injury or loss.
- 3.2 A general decline in condition of the highway will lead to the need for greater expenditure on reactive maintenance with no added value to the asset, a situation previously criticised by the Audit Commission in 2002. There is a risk brought about through lack of investment in the highway infrastructure

resulting in a declining asset condition. This may reflect in the assessment of a Council's performance through the CPA and the LTP.

- 3.3 This report is a scoping report to appraise Members of progress to date. An option appraisal can only be made when the Council fully understands customer expectations, network condition and trends, and the service delivery standards and priorities that it can afford. Since further information has to be gathered before the full option appraisal can be offered for consideration by the Council, the detailed evaluation of the cost of delivering the various service standards will be brought through a further report.
- 3.4 The adoption of the TAMP and the supporting highway management documents will ensure that the upkeep of the highway infrastructure takes place in an approved manner which ensures that minimum standards are maintained, that local and regional concerns are considered and that Safety, Sustainability and Serviceability are all delivered with Executive approval.
- 3.5 By following the national guidance in the preparation of the TAMP and other supporting documents, the Council acting as the Highway Authority can ensure that it complies fully with all of the legal requirements relating to highways.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The production of the TAMP and other documents has required that the Tees Valley Authorities procure the services of a Consultant who has specialist knowledge of Highway Asset Management. These costs have been equally shared across the Tees Valley and have been funded by this Authority through existing Highway Revenue budgets.
- 4.2 The report referred to in 3.3 above will present the option appraisals based upon various service standards, customer expectations and knowledge of the asset condition and trends. The future financial implications could be significant and the report will consider whole life costing implications and possible requirements for capital 'Prudential' borrowing.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- (a) Endorses the principles contained within the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and the suite of supporting documents including Appendix B to this report.
- (b) Authorises the continued development of these documents in collaboration with the other Tees Valley Authorities.

- (c) Agrees to the production of a further report to present options on Service Standards.

6 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 There are requirements being developed nationally for Highway Authorities to report their Highway Asset Valuations through the 'Whole of Government Accounts' procedures. This necessitates that each Highway Authority produces a TAMP to facilitate this process.
- 6.2 The further guidance issued through various Codes of Practice, although not mandatory, require that policies, priorities and programmes for highway maintenance should be formally approved and adopted by authorities after consultation, published and incorporated into the Transport Asset Management Plan.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 The following guidance documents were used in the preparation of the TAMP and the other supporting highway management documents :-

'Framework for Highway Asset Management'

'Well-maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management'

'Management of Highway Structures, A Code of Practice'

'Well-lit Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Lighting Management'

APPENDIX A

NATIONAL GUIDANCE	CORPORATE POLICIES	HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE DOCUMENTS
Government Transport Policy		
Legislation & BVPI's	Corporate Policies	
Highways Act 1980	LSP	
NRSWA 1991	LAA	
Traffic Management Act 2004		
Transport Act, etc.	Traffic Network Management Plan	
Local Transport Planning Guidance	Local Transport Plan	Highway Improvement Plan (Transport Policy)
CSS Framework for Highway Asset Management	Transport Asset Management Plan	Highway Network Management Plan
Codes of Practice:		Street Lighting Maintenance Plan
Highway Maintenance		Structures Maintenance Plan
Lighting Maintenance		Other Transport related Plans*
Structures Maintenance		

*Supporting Documentation

Congestion Strategy	Intelligent Transport Strategy	Demand Management Strategy
Co-ordination Strategy	School Travel Plan Strategy	Bus Strategy
Performance Management Strategy	Walking/Cycling Strategy	Risk Management Strategy
Civil Emergency Plan	Severe Weather Emergency Plan	Biodiversity Action Plan
Design Guide-New Developments	Benchmarking Groups	Financial Management Plan
UKPMS	Rights of Way Improvement Plan	Consultation Strategy
Winter Service Operational Plan	Highway Maintenance Strategy	Environmental Management Strategy
Highway Maintenance Specification	Skid Resistance Strategy	Winter Service Training Strategy
Diversity Strategy	Sustainability Strategy	Liason/Collaboration Strategy
Procurement Strategy	Cross Boundary Arrangements	Highway Inspector Training Manual
Urban Safety Management Plan	Accessibility Strategy	Structures Implementation Plan
		Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX B**Frequencies of Inspection**

The Code of Practice specifies a particular inspection frequency regime as a starting point. Taking account of this regime, local requirements and parameters for Hartlepool, a modified frequency regime has been developed.

Particular attention has been paid to linking carriageway and footway inspections to similar frequencies wherever possible in order that inspections of carriageways and footways can be undertaken together thereby creating economies and improving efficiency.

Frequencies for safety inspections are based on the network hierarchy categories and are as follows:

Feature	Description	Category	C.O.P Frequency	H.B.C. Frequency
Roads	Strategic Routes	2	1 month	1 month*
	Main Distributor	3(a)	1 month	1 month*
	Secondary Distributor	3(b)	1 month	1 month*
	Link Road	4(a)	3 months	6 months**
	Local Access	4(b)	12 months	6 months**
Footways	Prestige Area	1(a)	1 month	1 month**
	Primary Walking Routes	1	1 month	1 month**
	Secondary Walking Routes	2	3 months	3 months**
	Link Footway	3	6 months	6 months**
	Local Access Footway	4	12 months	6 months**
Cycleways	Part of Carriageway	A	As for roads	As for roads**
	Remote from Carriageway	B	6 months	6 months**
	Cycle trails	C	12 months	12 months**

* 6 monthly Service inspections also carried out where footways are present

** Service Inspections

Whilst we endeavour to reach 95% of inspections within the allocated period this is not always possible, due to unforeseen circumstances.

The frequencies of inspection tabulated above are consistent within the various categories of the base hierarchy. However, taking into account risk assessments, it is clear that specific local criteria apply in certain circumstances which, because of their very nature and importance, should result in an increase in the inspection frequency in those locations.

Due to the hierarchy being under constant review throughout the safety inspection regime, reference to mapping for the relevant hierarchies must be made through the Transportation and Traffic Section of Neighbourhood Services.

The factors, which have been taken into account in determining whether special criteria apply, include:

- access route- school/hospital, etc.
- special environmental considerations- noise, appearance, etc
- special traffic zone- traffic calming, etc
- winter service route
- vulnerable users or with special needs- old people's homes, etc
- lorry route
- public transport route
- cycle network

All alternatives to the tabulated safety inspection frequencies must be documented within the appropriate system.

Items for Inspection

The list of highway inventory to be observed in a Safety Inspection for possible defects is as follows:

Item	Defect
Carriageway and Cycleway	Pot hole/spalling, ridge, hump, depression/sunken cover or gap/crack
Footway	Trip/pot hole/sunken cover, rocking slab/block or open joint
Kerb	Misaligned, loose/rocking or missing
Verge	Sunken area adjacent to and running parallel with the carriageway/footway edge or obstruction
Iron work	Gaps within framework, level difference within framework, rocking/cracked/broken/worn/polished or missing covers
Flooding-where condition allow	Standing water, water discharging onto or flowing across the running surface, significant flooding of property.
Drainage	Substantial standing water adjacent to edge of carriageway, blocked gully/kerb outlet or collapsed/blocked/settled items or systems
Road markings	Faded or worn markings
Road studs/eyes	Missing, void left in carriageway, displaced items on carriageway or defective studs/eyes.
Signs,/Bollards/Lights/Traffic signals	Damaged/misaligned items causing a hazard, missing items causing a hazard, lights/signals not operating correctly/malfunctioning, signals pointing the wrong way, signal lamp failure, exposed wiring, missing doors to lamp columns and electrical enclosures, items missing or items dirty/obscured/faded
Safety fencing/Barriers	Damaged/misaligned items projecting into carriageway/footway or structurally unstable items likely to cause danger

Highway general	Oil/debris/stones/gravel likely to cause a hazard, illegal signs, obstructions on the highway, obstructed sight lines, ramps in carriageway to aide vehicular movement, footway damage caused by vehicular access where no vehicle crossing, scaffolding or skips likely to cause a hazard, unprotected building materials on the highway or abandoned vehicles likely to cause a hazard.
Hedges and trees	Overhanging trees and vegetation or unstable trees and branches, damage associated to tree roots
Anything dangerous	Anything considered dangerous on the highway which could affect either the highway users or the general public

Appendix B of the Well-maintained Highways Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management (July 2005) gives guidance on a schedule of deficiencies to be identified during safety inspections. The list is not exhaustive it is provided as a check list and is modified to suit local parameters.

CABINET REPORT

17 March 2008



Report of: Corporate Management Team

Subject: PAY AND GRADING STRUCTURE AND SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on the preferred pay and grading structure agreed by Cabinet late last year, the draft Single Status Agreement and associated matters. To note the Consultation arrangements, decision making process and future timetable

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report sets out a brief background and an introduction to Single Status and the proposed arrangements for Cabinet to consider and approve a preferred pay and grading structure and Single Status Agreement.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Corporate impact on the agreed budget strategy, reward and remuneration strategy, legal implications and potential industrial relations impact.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key decision due to extent and nature of impact on employees and agreed budget strategy.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet on 17 March 2008 for decisions in principle, Council for any subsequent financial decision required, future Cabinet meeting for final decision.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

That Cabinet note the report.

Report of: Corporate Management Team

Subject: PAY AND GRADING STRUCTURE AND SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the preferred pay and grading structure agreed by Cabinet late last year, the draft Single Status Agreement and associated matters. To note the consultation arrangements, decision making process and future timetable

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 1997 a Single Status Agreement was reached as a result of national negotiations. The Agreement determined new arrangements for harmonising, at a local level, the terms and conditions of former “Manual Workers” and “Administrative, Professional, Technical and Clerical” (APT&C) groups – commonly referred to as Green Book employees. The Agreement included a requirement that pay and grading structures would be reviewed with the intention of developing a common pay framework. A deadline of 31 March 2007 for completion was later set as a result of slow progress being made in local authorities.
- 2.2 Since 2002 the extent of legal challenge to local authority pay structures under the Equal Pay Act 1970 has grown. Equal pay claims have been lodged against Hartlepool Borough Council which are proceeding through the legal processes. Significant work has been undertaken with local trade unions to mitigate the potential for additional claims which resulted in compensation payments to certain categories of employees. Additionally Green Book bonus schemes have been terminated.
- 2.3 Local Single Status negotiations have been on-going for a number of years with much time allocated to completing a job evaluation exercise and more recently discussing changes to terms and conditions and developing a local pay and grading structure. The aim has been to work in partnership with trade union representatives through formal arrangements with the support of ACAS officers. It should be noted however that a local Single Status Agreement requires specific trade union agreement in respect of pay protection arrangements only.
- 2.4 Cabinet has received many reports previously regarding the Single Status, job evaluation and equal pay related issues.
- 2.5 Cabinet made a number of decisions regarding the pay and grading structure and single status agreement at its meeting on 21 December 2008

3. PREFERRED PAY AND GRADING STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Cabinet agreed a preferred pay and grading structure late last year. Further details of the preferred Pay and Grading structure can be found in the confidential report.

- 3.2 Employees have been matched by Directors and Head Teachers to evaluations on an individual basis and the potential impact on their pay assessed. Where employees have more than one job, each has been matched separately.
- 3.3 Work is currently ongoing regarding the replacement of the current Career Grades by Development Schemes which are consistent with the revised pay and grading structure.
- 3.4 In order to comply with the 1997 National Single Status Agreement and the 2004 National Pay Award, which set a deadline for reviewing the Council's Pay and Grading Structure, any new structure will generally be effective from 1st April 2007. There are, however, some transitional arrangements as a consequence of not being in a position to implement the new structure until 2008.

4. DRAFT LOCAL SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT – KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 In addition to requiring the pay and grading structure to be reviewed, the 1997 National Single Status Agreement and the 2004 National Pay Award also required a review of other terms and conditions of service.
- 4.2 The draft local Single Status Agreement has been considered in conjunction with the preferred option for a revised Pay and Grading Structure as the key issues addressed in it include:
 - Pay and leave arrangements where employees do not work for the whole year, typically but not exclusively school based employees who work Term Time Only
 - Protection arrangements for those employees who suffer financial detriment as a consequence of the implementation of the revised pay and grading structure
 - Assimilation arrangements to the new pay and grading structure for employees
 - Pay and working arrangements for those employees who work less than the standard week
 - Allowances
 - Premium Rates for unsocial hours working
 - Appeal arrangements
- 4.3 Further details of the draft local Single Status Agreement can be found in the confidential report

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Further consultation on the preferred pay and grading structure and the draft local Single Status Agreement has either taken place and/or is being planned with key stakeholders including
 - Trade Unions
 - Bridging the Gap Group
 - Cabinet
 - Informal Cabinet
 - Single Status Working Group of members
 - Members
 - Full Council
 - Chairs of Governors and Headteachers
 - Corporate Management Team

6. ROLE OF ACAS

All agreements with the trade unions have been reached at the Bridging the Gap meetings. The Bridging the Gap Group comprises

- Senior Council officials (Assistant Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Personnel Officer and other Finance and HR staff)
- Regional Trade Union officers (GMB, UNISON and T&G section of UNITE)
- Local Trade Union Officials (including HJTUC Secretary, UNISON Branch Secretaries and GMB Convenor)
- ACAS

- 6.2 The involvement of ACAS, acting as 'Honest Broker' has been key in facilitating common understanding and agreement on a wide range of issues where the initial views of the Council and trade union officials differed significantly.

7. DECISION MAKING PROCESS AND FUTURE TIMETABLE

- 7.1 The decision making arrangements are quite complex. At this stage, Cabinet, via the confidential report, are being asked to endorse, in principle, the preferred pay and grading structure and the draft local Single Status Agreement so that information can be provided to employees.
- 7.2 It is envisaged that employees will be provided with a briefing and supporting information about the preferred pay and grading structure and the draft local Single Status Agreement. Following the briefings employees will receive personal letters indicating the potential impact for each job they undertake.
- 7.5 Once employees have the personal impact information, the unions will be conducting a ballot of their members over a 2 week period.
- 7.6 As soon as the results of the union ballots and feedback from the Union national offices are available, these will be reported to Cabinet so that a final decision can be made about the revised pay and grading structure and local Single Status Agreement.
- 7.7 Council will be asked at the appropriate time to make a final decision regarding any additional funding which may be needed.
- 7.8 Schools will be invited to make the necessary decisions. Community Schools are required, by law, to use the Council's grading structure. Foundation and Aided schools do not have the same restriction and will be invited to adopt the Council's scheme.
- 7.9 Once decisions have been made by Cabinet, Council and Schools, letters will be sent to employees varying their contracts to incorporate the revised pay and grading structure and local Single Status Agreement and advising them of their rights to appeal.
- 7.10 The new arrangements will be incorporated into pay packets as soon as possible thereafter.
- 7.11 Appeals will be dealt with as quickly as possible, with appeals from those disadvantaged (in terms of pay) being considered first.

7.12.1 Arrangements will be made to ensure the integrity of the pay and grading structure is maintained thereafter.

7.13 A detailed timetable summarising 7.1 to 7.10 is attached at **Appendix 1**

8. RECENT CONSULTATION

8.1 Since your last meeting there have been regular meetings with the trade unions. The Bridging the Gap group has met on one occasion and is scheduled to meet again. The Single Status Working Group is due to meet twice in week commencing 10 March and two joint Chair of Governors/Headteacher briefings have been arranged.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet note the report.

• APPENDIX 1**Timetable**

17 March 2008	Cabinet determine proposed Single Status Agreement to brief employees on
25 March (for two weeks)	Employee briefings at various locations
w/c 7 April	Letters sent out to every employee giving details of pay and grading plus other aspects of the proposed Agreement
w/c 21 April	National Trade Union approval expected
28 April – 9 May	Trade Union ballot
19 May	Cabinet determine Single Status Agreement subject to trade union ballot result.
22 May	Council allocate additional funds (if needed)
2 June – 25 June	School Governing Bodies consider Single Status Agreement
w/c 23 June	Personalised letters setting out changes to employment contracts
1 July	Agreement implemented with new pay rates in pay packets in July. Backdated pay to follow

CABINET REPORT

17th March 2008



Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: AFFORDABLE HOUSING DPD ISSUES AND
OPTIONS DISCUSSION PAPER - FOR
CONSULTATION

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval of, for consultation purposes, the Issues and Options paper, comprising the first public stage in the preparation of the Hartlepool Affordable Housing Development Plan Document.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

As part of the new 'Local Development Framework' planning system established by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, optional Development Plan Documents (DPD's) can be produced when required as a response to a particular issue within the Local Authority.

The strategic aim of the Affordable Housing DPD is to address the recently identified shortfall of affordable housing provision in the borough. Its purpose is to provide clarity and detail about the amount and type of affordable housing provision that will be required on new housing developments in Hartlepool.

The publication of an Issues and Options paper represents the first stage in the preparation of this Affordable Housing Development Plan Document.

The discussion paper suggests objectives for the delivery of affordable housing, and sets out for comment some of the main issues in terms of the delivery of affordable housing and various possible options for the resolution of these issues. The purpose of this paper is to stimulate debate, not provide the answers.

The consultation will be wide ranging in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement and will last for three months until the end of May 2008.

In the light of responses to the consultation and of the sustainability appraisal of the options and any additional options put forward, preferred options will be developed for further consultation at the end of July 2008.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

The Affordable Housing DPD will comprise part of the Development Plan for the area and is thus part of the Budget and Policy Framework.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Budget and Policy Framework

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet 17th March 2008

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Approval to the Issues and Options paper for the Affordable Housing DPD for consultation purposes subject to minor editing and updating.

Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: AFFORDABLE HOUSING DPD ISSUES AND
OPTIONS DISCUSSION PAPER - FOR
CONSULTATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of, for consultation purposes, the Issues and Options paper, comprising the first public stage in the preparation of the Hartlepool Affordable Housing Development Plan Document.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduces a new plan-making system to replace the system of Structure Plans and Local Plans. In summary, the new planning system envisages at the local level a portfolio of planning documents (Local Development Framework) to replace the Local Plan at the strategic level and the Regional Spatial Strategy to replace the structure plan.
- 2.2 This Affordable Housing Development Plan Document is one document within the portfolio of documents in the Local Development Framework.
- 2.3 The Hartlepool Affordable Housing DPD will set out key policies for delivery of affordable housing on new housing developments in Hartlepool. It will comprise of strategic objectives and core policies. The purpose of the document is to provide clarity and detail about the amount and type of affordable housing provision that will be required on new housing developments in Hartlepool. The recent Scrutiny investigation into the provision of good quality rented affordable accommodation in Hartlepool provided a series of recommendations that have been taken into account in the formulation of key policy options within this document. Once adopted by the Council the DPD will carry considerable weight when making decisions on planning applications in the Borough.
- 2.4 This report is concerned with the first consultation stage in the preparation of the Affordable Housing DPD relating to the consideration of issues and options. An issues and options paper has been prepared to form the basis of this consultation. This is attached as **Appendix 1**.

3. THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING ISSUES AND OPTIONS PAPER

- 3.1 The main purpose of the Issues and Options paper is to stimulate debate and seek the views of the community and other stakeholders on how and where affordable housing should be provided and what type of affordable housing is required. The document conforms with the sustainable communities theme within the Core Strategy, which has currently undergone consultation of the Issues and Options stage.
- 3.2 The Affordable Housing Issues and Options paper firstly suggests, for comment, a set of proposed objectives. These suggested objectives reflect both the Hartlepool Community Strategy key aim 6 and the proposed Core Strategy themes and objectives. The aim of this discussion paper is to firstly seek views on these proposed objectives and their appropriateness in terms of the delivery of affordable housing.
- 3.3 The Issues and Options paper discusses a range of issues surrounding the provision of affordable housing, in terms of when, how much and where affordable housing should be provided in the Borough and how the housing provided on new developments can be retained to meet future affordable housing need. Possible options are suggested in response to these issues and questions are asked regarding the suitability of the possible options.
- 3.4 In suggesting options for addressing the issues, it is important that these are as wide-ranging as possible to provide a reasonable choice of spatial options for the public to respond to.

4. INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

- 4.1 Sustainability Appraisal of key strategies is mandatory under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In accordance with the government regulations for sustainability appraisals for Local Development Documents an initial sustainability appraisal is being prepared to evaluate the effects of the objectives and options suggested in the Issues and Options paper and to highlight social, environmental and economic impacts these may have.
- 4.2 The Sustainability Appraisal report being prepared uses as its base the Scoping Report prepared for the Local Development Framework and the Community Strategy. The Scoping report establishes the level of detail and the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 4.3 The Sustainability Appraisal Report will incorporate the additional requirements of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC with regard to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

- 4.4 The initial Sustainability Appraisal report will be made available with the Issues and Options paper during the consultation period and is currently being finalised. The sustainability appraisal is an ongoing process throughout the production of the documents, with appraisal reports being published to correspond to each of the key stages.

5. THE NEXT STAGES

- 5.1 The Issues and Options paper and the associated initial sustainability appraisal Report will be made available for consultation purposes for a period of three months until the end of May 2008. The consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 5.2 Comments received will then be considered, and then, in the context of further sustainability appraisal, preferred options determined having regard for these comments and new issues raised.
- 5.3 At the end of July 2008, representations will be invited on the preferred options agreed by Cabinet, for a statutory period of 6 weeks. The Preferred Options Report and associated sustainability appraisal report will set out different options considered during the preparation process and how and why preferred options were arrived at.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 Approval to the Issues and Options paper for the Affordable Housing DPD for consultation purposes subject to minor editing and updating being agreed in consultation with Portfolio Holder.

5.3 APPENDIX 1

Hartlepool Borough Council Affordable Housing Development Plan Document Issues and Options Discussion Paper February 2008

The Issues and Options Discussion Paper

This discussion paper represents the start of the process for determining how affordable housing will be delivered in Hartlepool in the future. It is important for you to get involved at this time to help shape the delivery of affordable housing in Hartlepool. This paper sets out a number of key issues and suggests possible options for addressing these. To assist in the consultation process, these suggested options are assessed in terms of their possible economic, social and environmental impacts in a separate document (Initial Sustainability Appraisal).

There may be other issues and also alternative options which you feel should be considered. The purpose of this paper is to stimulate debate- not provide the answers.

The Consultation Process

This Affordable Housing Issues and Options Discussion Paper and accompanying Initial Sustainability Appraisal will be widely available for a period of three months until the end of May 2008. They will be available for inspection at Bryan Hanson House, the Civic Centre and the town's libraries. A number of copies will be available for borrowing at the Central Library. The documents are also available for downloading at the Council's website <http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk> or on the online consultation site at <http://planningpolicy.hartlepool.gov.uk>.

Officers from the Planning Policy team are available at Bryan Hanson House during normal office hours to expand on anything included in this paper and/or to discuss any other matters relating to the preparation of the Affordable Housing Development Plan Document. Officers can also visit you at home if you are unable to get to Bryan Hanson House. If you are a member of a group of residents of businesses and would like an officer to attend one of your meetings, please contact the planning policy team on 01429 523539 or e-mail planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk.

How to Comment

There are a number of ways which you may make your views known:

- You can complete a questionnaire and return it to Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool TS24 7BT- the questionnaires are available

from Bryan Hanson House, the Civic Centre and the libraries or can be requested by phoning 01429 523539 or emailing planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk.

- You can complete the questionnaire on our online consultation website at <http://planningpolicy.hartlepool.gov.uk>. You will need to register when you visit the site, and you will be kept informed by email of consultations on later stages of the Affordable Housing Development Plan Document and other planning documents that are being produced.
- You can also send your comments by letter to the Planning Policy Team or by email to planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk

All comments and questionnaires should be received by May 31st 2008.

Introduction

The purpose of this Development Plan Document (DPD) is to provide clarity and detail about the amount and type of affordable housing provision that will be required on new housing developments in Hartlepool. Once adopted by the Council this DPD will carry considerable weight when making decisions on planning applications. The strategic aim of this document is to address the recently identified shortfall of affordable housing provision in the borough.

The Hartlepool Local Plan adopted in April 2006 has as its overall aim '*to continue to regenerate Hartlepool securing a better future for its people by seeking to meet economic, environmental and social needs in a sustainable manner*'. Specific objectives related to housing are

- To encourage the provision of high quality housing, and
- To ensure that there is throughout the plan period an adequate supply of suitable housing land which is capable of offering a range of house types to meet all needs.

However, housing studies carried out during the preparation of the plan highlighted at that time, the absence of unmet demand for affordable housing provision. As a result, the issue of affordable housing is not addressed within the Local Plan policies. Indeed although land was set aside for social housing provision in 1997 through the S106 agreement relating to the development of the major housing site at Middle Warren, it was many years before this was taken up.

Evidence collected through the recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Hartlepool (June 2007) has identified a significant shortfall of affordable units per annum, an issue exacerbated by the Right to Buy scheme, increased household formation, increased in-migration, stock reduction through housing market renewal and stock condition in Hartlepool. The issue of affordable housing has also been addressed through a recent scrutiny investigation, highlighting affordable housing provision as a key political priority in Hartlepool. The investigation focuses on the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation and recommended within the final report that through the Local Development Framework system planning policy should be updated to require the provision of affordable units on residential developments. This development plan document on affordable housing is therefore a response to the rapidly changing nature of the Hartlepool housing market and is intended to address increased problems with affordability of housing revealed in this latest assessment of housing need ensuring that the provision of affordable housing meets the needs of both current and future occupiers.

As part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) the Council is currently preparing a Core Strategy, which will set out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and core strategic policies for Hartlepool. An Issues and Options Discussion

paper for the Core Strategy was published for consultation in October 2007. This paper highlights the need for affordable housing in Hartlepool to provide sustainable mixed communities. The suggested objectives in the paper that are relevant to this affordable housing DPD are

- To Improve the choice, quality and affordability of housing
- To strengthen social cohesion and reduce inequalities by protecting and encouraging access to local facilities.

The provision of affordable housing to help meet the needs of local people is a priority. Achieving these aims will contribute towards a balanced housing market in the Borough and maximise housing choices to develop sustainable mixed communities. The Affordable Housing DPD will be a key document within the Hartlepool LDF portfolio and will provide detailed advice and policy guidance on affordable housing provision initially in line with the overall aim and housing objectives of the Hartlepool Local Plan and in due course in accordance with the strategic objectives and policies of the Core Strategy.

Defining Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is housing designed for those whose income generally deny them opportunity to purchase houses on the open market as a result of the difference between income and the market cost of housing. The difference between the terms 'affordability' which is a measure of what housing is affordable to certain groups of households and 'affordable housing' which is a particular product outside the housing market is acknowledged. Affordable Housing includes both 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 income and local house prices; and
- Including the provision of 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 housing provision.

The definition of social rented and intermediate housing will follow those set out in PPS3 as follows:

Social rented housing is:

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

Intermediate affordable housing is:

'Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products (e.g. HomeBuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.' These definitions replace guidance given in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3)* and *DETR Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing*. The definition does not exclude homes provided by private sector bodies or provided without grant funding. Where such homes meet the definition above, they may be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing. Whereas, those homes that do not meet the definition, for example, 'low cost market' housing, may not be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing.

Delivering Affordable Housing

Traditionally affordable housing was delivered through the Local Authority or more recently Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) and funded through government grants. This is still occurring through the Housing Corporation and the National Affordable Homes Programme. Viable and deliverable affordable housing schemes must be submitted in order to bid for this funding and housing associations must participate in joint working in a partnering process. The constraints within this method of affordable housing delivery are driven by the cap on rents stipulated by the Housing Corporation as a requirement of the funding, land value therefore must be low to secure scheme viability. In addition to this supply of new affordable accommodation there is a growing demand for affordable accommodation to be delivered through the private sector on new housing developments, contributing to the delivery of sustainable mixed communities.

Policy Context

This DPD takes account of various Planning and Housing policy guidance, nationally, regionally and sub-regionally. It reflects the overall central government agenda to provide more affordable homes and to achieve sustainable mixed communities.

Housing Green Paper: 'Homes for the future, more affordable, more sustainable':

This green paper sets out the Government's commitment to deliver affordable housing, highlighting a £8 billion Government investment in affordable homes and the aim of providing 70,000 affordable homes a year by 2010-11. Local Authorities' role in facilitating the supply of affordable housing is emphasised and a joined-up approach with alignment of housing plans and the planning framework suggested as a means of increasing affordable housing provision. The need is emphasised, for local authorities to identify enough land to deliver the homes required in their area over the next 15 years by rapidly implementing new planning policy for housing and undergoing an intensive assessment of housing land availability. (The suggested Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is currently being prepared by Hartlepool Borough Council as part of the evidence base for the various documents to be included in the Local Development Framework).

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3, Housing: PPS3 Housing was published in December 2006 and has been developed in response to *The Barker Review of Housing Supply* in March 2004. It sets out the Government's vision, objectives and policies in relation to housing provision and delivery. The principle aim of PPS3 is to increase housing delivery through a more responsive approach to local land supply, supporting the government's goal to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. The requirement for a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is emphasised within this PPS, the findings of which should help develop policies on affordable housing within the Borough. (Hartlepool completed its SHMA in June 2007). Local Authorities are required to set an overall target for the amount of affordable housing to be provided and that target should reflect the new definition of affordable housing (see above), they are also required to ensure that provision of affordable housing meets the needs of both current and future occupiers by setting separate targets for social-rented and intermediate affordable housing, specifying the size and type of affordable housing and setting out a range of circumstances in which affordable housing would be required. This Affordable Housing DPD aims to set clear guidance in response to these requirements.

Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (February 2008 consultation)
The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East acknowledges the significant inequalities in demand and affordability in the Region's housing stock and that it is not meeting the housing needs of people on modest or low incomes. The RSS states that 'it will be for LDF's to determine the actual target for affordable housing provision and the range of housing requirements through up-to-date housing assessments, however, low level thresholds should be set to determine the size of developments above which affordable housing should be provided'. Although Hartlepool's affordable housing need is not specified within the RSS the up-to-date SHMA provides the appropriate robust evidence required to determine the affordable housing requirement in the Borough.

Regional Housing Strategy

The issue of affordable housing is addressed under strategic objective Two: to ensure the supply, type and mix of new housing for rent and for sale meets social and economic needs, provides choice and supports growth. This will reflect the diversity of urban and rural communities and the needs for affordable, family and executive housing.

Tees Valley Sub-Regional Housing Strategy

Affordability and an increase in homelessness is highlighted as a particular pressure within the Tees Valley and specifically within Urban Areas, this is due to the disparity between house prices and household income. The aim of the document is to provide advice for consumers whilst maintaining quality and

accessibility for all members of the community. It advises that all LDFs should include appropriate and specific affordable housing policies to address the affordable gap, these should be backed by section 106 agreements.

Hartlepool Community Strategy (Hartlepool's Ambition)

The provision of affordable housing will support Key Aim 6: Housing, within the community strategy and will help to ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in sustainable neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live. This is one of the strategy's eight key aims for achieving its long term vision for the Borough.

Housing Needs and Affordability in Hartlepool- The evidence base

David Cumberland Housing Regeneration Ltd was commissioned by Hartlepool Borough Council to undertake a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in December 2006. The completed assessment (June 2007) included a survey of all 39,271 households in Hartlepool, a 16.7% response rate allowed robust and defensible statistics for individual wards. An analysis of the current and future housing markets concluded that market demand was exceeding supply in most areas and that a degree of pressure in the current housing market was a result of considerable uplift in house prices across the Borough over the past five years. A shortfall of 393 affordable units a year was identified, this affordable need heightened by the limited capacity of the social rented sector with low vacancy rates and long waiting lists. This figure of 393 affordable units requirement is based on the evidence identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment process, it provides a clear indication of the extent of affordable housing need and identified a requirement for a affordable housing policy within the LDF, this discussion paper is the first stage in policy development however, other means of securing affordable housing provision are being pursued to breach the housing affordability gap.

On the basis of this evidence, the report suggested a target for affordable housing on new developments of 30% of which 80% should be social rented and 20% intermediate tenure. The PPS3 threshold of 15 dwellings or more on which such a requirement would apply was considered appropriate for Hartlepool. The report highlights that up to 2012 there are a number of significant supply side issues that will exacerbate the affordable housing situation, including, the lack of an affordable housing planning policy, the high number of extant planning permissions, significant number of planned demolitions (through HMR), continued Right-to-Buy activity and increasing house prices. The aim of this affordable housing DPD is to reduce this pressure by providing clear policy guidance for developers and providing the policy framework to secure affordable housing provision on housing sites.

Proposed DPD Objectives

The proposed objectives for this affordable housing DPD are as follows:

1. Provide good quality affordable accommodation to meet the need within the Borough.
2. Provide affordable dwellings that can help to deliver sustainable mixed communities

Key Issues and Possible Options

Issue 1: When should Affordable Housing be Required?

PPS3 indicates that development plan documents should set out a range of circumstances in which affordable housing would be required. It indicates that the national indicative minimum site threshold is 15 dwellings. It does however, allow local planning authorities to set lower minimum thresholds, where viable and practicable. PPS3 also allows local planning authorities, to set different proportions of affordable housing for different site-size thresholds across the plan area.

The SHMA suggests that the site threshold of 15 dwellings or more could be appropriate for Hartlepool but the RSS encourages local authorities to be more ambitious if a clear affordable housing need is evident. Reducing the threshold would result in increased provision of affordable housing and would make a contribution to delivering more sustainable and inclusive communities, and in this respect would be in accordance with the advice in PPS3. As the viability of schemes must also be considered alongside other requirements on residential developments such as energy efficiency, design standards and developer contributions, the provision of affordable housing could still be negotiated on a site-by-site basis.

Due to the extent of the affordable housing problem in Hartlepool (393 dwellings per annum) and in the context of a high level of existing commitments for housing development, consideration should be given to a lower threshold for the provision of affordable housing. The SHMA states 'given the high level of housing need identified across the Borough, it is essential that the Council explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable homes'. Currently Hartlepool has limited availability of larger uncommitted housing sites (pending the completion in 2011 of the Housing Allocations DPD), therefore a lower threshold may be required to deliver affordable housing to meet the needs of local residents.

The proposed affordable housing policy will include a target for the proportion of housing on a site to be developed as affordable but the total number of affordable houses delivered will depend on the number of sites that come forward above the minimum site size threshold. The following options should be considered:

When should Affordable Housing be Required?

Option 1: Set the site threshold to 15 units or more in line with PPS3.

Option 2: All residential developments to contribute to the delivery of affordable housing and no site threshold set.

Option 3: Reduce the thresholds for the provision of affordable housing in the areas highlighted as having the greatest need?

Issue 2: How much Affordable Housing should be provided?

The amount of affordable housing that would be sought as part of new housing developments is calculated as a percentage of the total number of units planned in the development. A higher percentage requirement will produce a higher number of on-site affordable units to meet the demonstrated need. The viability of housing schemes must also be considered. If it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional unforeseen costs associated with the development, that taken with the affordable housing requirement results in the scheme becoming unviable, the requirement may need to be reduced (this would be looked at on a site-by-site basis). The SHMA considered that a figure of 30% would be likely to produce sufficient affordable homes to contribute to the current demonstrated need of 393 affordable units per annum. However, the percentage of affordable housing provision may need to be varied depending on the site size to ensure greater affordable housing provision on larger sites.

Consideration should also be given to the current housing market renewal programme, which is moving forward with the first phases of clearance and redevelopment activity on several key housing sites in Central Hartlepool. On future sites loss of Housing Hartlepool stock would need to be replaced with a higher affordable requirement to retain overall stock numbers. The amount of affordable accommodation may need to differ on Housing Hartlepool and housing renewal sites to qualify for funding and to contribute to overall housing regeneration aims. The following options should be considered:

How much Affordable Housing should be provided?

Option 4: Set the affordable housing requirement to 30% on all sites in line with SHMA findings?

Option 5: Increase the percentage requirement of affordable housing to 40% across all eligible sites?

Option 6: Set a differing requirement depending on the number of units e.g.
1-2 units- financial contribution
2-15 units- 30% Affordable
15 or more units- 40% Affordable

Option 7: Negotiation based on the viability of schemes?

Issue 3: Where should the Affordable Housing be provided?

In line with the Government agenda of developing sustainable mixed communities, one way of achieving this is to integrate affordable housing provision into an overall scheme of market housing. However there may be circumstances where provision of affordable units on alternative sites or a financial contribution instead of providing affordable units, would be more appropriate for the development and more likely to develop sustainable mixed communities. The SHMA highlighted the wards within the Borough and their different affordable housing requirement. Areas such as Bum Valley, Grange and Seaton wards have a significantly higher affordable housing need. Should this difference in need be reflected within the policy?

Table 5.3 Overall annual shortfalls in affordable accommodation by sub-area, property size and designation

Ward	General Needs		Older Person	Total (gross)
	Smaller (1/2 Bed)	Larger (3+ bed)		
Brus				
Bum Valley	33	24	3	60
Dyke House		4		4
Elwick	4	12		16
Fens	5	18	4	27
Foggy Furze		12	2	14
Grange	18	19	3	40
Greatham	7	7	2	16
Hart	7	26	3	36
Owton		9	2	11
Park		28	3	31
Rift House		15	6	21
Rossmere	1	15	12	28
Seaton	8	32		40
St. Hilda		13		13
Stranton	4	2	6	11
Throston	2	22		24
Gross Requirement	90	258	45	393
% distribution	22.9%	65.6%	11.5%	100%

(SHMA 2007)

However due to the limited number of uncommitted housing sites currently allocated within Hartlepool it may not be appropriate to allow off-site provision. Housing regeneration sites may also require a more detailed site-by-site analysis of where affordable housing should be required to ensure it contributes to the overall strategic housing market renewal aims and the delivery of sustainable mixed communities. The flexibility of the policy in terms of where affordable housings should be provided is a key issue within this DPD and could be addressed through the following options:

Where should the Affordable Housing be provided?

Option 8: All affordable provision to be provided on-site?

Option 9: Off-site provision to be allowed if it is demonstrated that off-site provision will make a better contribution towards achieving strategic housing objectives?

Option 10: Allow commuted sums for developments where it can be demonstrated that a scheme is unviable in terms of delivering on site affordable units?

Option 11: Allow off-site provision to be provided in an alternative area of greater affordable housing need?

Issue 4: What type and tenure of affordable housing should be provided?

The recommendations within the SHMA suggest that a mix of social rented and intermediate tenure properties should be provided to meet the specific affordable housing need of local residents. The suggested requirements are 80% social rented and 20% intermediate tenure of the total amount of affordable units to be provided on-site. The first shared equity/ownership properties will soon be available in Hartlepool as part of the New Deal for Communities (NDC) housing regeneration scheme at Hart Lane. As knowledge about shared equity/shared ownership schemes develop across Hartlepool, there may be a greater demand for this type of affordable accommodation. It is currently untested in Hartlepool.

A good balance of stock is also required. The SHMA found that across Hartlepool, the demand for bungalows exceeds supply and there is strongest demand for two and three bedroom properties. The affordable housing policy may need to reflect this requirement by specifying a particular affordable housing type.

What type and tenure of affordable housing should be provided?

Option 12: 80% Social Rented and 20% intermediate tenure on each site, in line with SHMA findings?

Option 13: An 80/20% tenure split across all housing developments with the split on each individual site being negotiated having regard to the mix of tenures nearby?

Option 14: A more even split of social rented and intermediate tenure properties?

Option 15: Should housing types be specified within the policy e.g. family homes/bungalows etc?

Issue 5: How should the affordable units be managed and sustained in the future?

Traditionally affordable housing has been provided through the Council until the Council house stock was transferred to Housing Hartlepool in 2004, more recently affordable accommodation has been provided through Registered Social Landlords and retained as affordable housing in perpetuity. Schemes such as Right to Buy have reduced the amount of affordable housing stock therefore it is important to consider what measures can be put in place to retain affordable accommodation whilst it is needed in Hartlepool. Before the Council will grant planning permission for schemes including an element of affordable housing it will be necessary to ensure that the housing will be properly managed, retained as affordable units in perpetuity (whilst there is a demonstrated affordable housing need) and given to those with genuine affordable housing need. If affordable units could be then sold on the open market their affordability would not be secured and long-term solutions to the affordable housing problem would not be delivered. Due to RSL's legally binding Housing Corporation rules they must allocate accommodation to those people with genuine need and this must be retained as housing association stock. How to retain the affordable units provided through housing developments is a key area for discussion within this paper and could be achieved through the following options:

How should the affordable units be managed and sustained in the future?

Option 16: Affordable units should be delivered in partnership with a registered social landlord (RSL) by means of a Section 106 agreement?

Option 17: Affordable units should be delivered in partnership with a registered social landlord (RSL) by means of a Section 106 agreement with right to buy for tenants removed?

Option 18: Affordable units to be delivered and managed by the developer and the Council by means of planning conditions setting out occupancy criteria and criteria to retain the units in perpetuity?

Conclusion

This Issues and Options paper sets out suggestions for how affordable housing could be delivered in Hartlepool through the planning system. Two objectives for the delivery of affordable housing and to contribute to achieving the Core Strategy vision have also been suggested.

1. Provide good quality affordable accommodation to meet the need within the Borough.
2. Provide affordable dwellings that can help to deliver sustainable mixed communities

The main part of this paper sets out a number of strategic issues which should be addressed to help achieve increased provision of affordable housing, and some options for tackling them. Please consider the options in relation to the following questions:

Question 1: Are these the right objectives for the delivery of affordable homes in Hartlepool?

Question 2: Are there any other issues, not discussed above, that relate to the provision of affordable housing in Hartlepool?

Question 3: Are there any alternative options to address the issues discussed above?

Question 4: Are there any other comments you would like to make?

The Next Stages in the Preparation the Affordable Housing DPD

The Council will consider the comments put forward during the current consultation and these comments and the Council's response to them will be made publicly available.

Then, taking account of the comments and any new issues or options raised, and in the context of a further sustainability appraisal report, the Council will determine its preferred options for the future development of the Borough. The Council will publish, at the end of July 2008 a document setting out its preferred options. This document will also set out the different options considered during the preparation process and how and why the preferred options were arrived at.

The consultation to be carried out on the Preferred Options Report will present the last opportunity for you to influence the content of the Affordable Housing DPD before a finalised document is submitted for public examination on its soundness.

CABINET REPORT

17th March 2008



Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: THE PARENTING CHALLENGE
PARENT SUPPORT STRATEGY

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet the Strategy for Parenting Support. This is attached at **Appendix 1**.

This report will inform Cabinet of recent developments to increase the active support for parents across the Borough. The strategy presents a vision statement and a set of principles that have been developed by parents in Hartlepool. Cabinet is being asked to approve this vision and encourage all agencies working with parents to adopt the principles to ensure parents are central to the development of support services for families.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report contains background information on the creation and development of a town-wide parent support strategy. It briefs Cabinet on the ongoing work to date and highlights the consultation processes undertaken with key stakeholders and the subsequent development of the vision and key principles. The report also includes an audit of support for parenting support in Hartlepool.

This report asks Cabinet to consider the vision statements contained within the report and endorse them. It is envisaged that all agencies working with parents in Hartlepool, across all sectors of provision, will be asked to formally subscribe to making these vision statements a reality and the political support of Cabinet is required to enable the future cooperation of key stakeholders.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

The vision contained within the strategy has been created by parents who have received services in Hartlepool; this in itself is very powerful, however it is important that Cabinet endorse these vision statements as this will provide a local mandate to encourage agencies working with parents to adopt and embed these vision statements in their day to day involvement with parents and their families.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key.

5. DECISION-MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet are being asked to endorse the vision statements and principles in this strategy and provide the political support and backing required to implement them. This political endorsement will be shared with all agencies who work with parents in Hartlepool and they will be asked to adopt the vision and principles in the delivery of their services.

Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: THE PARENTING CHALLENGE
PARENT SUPPORT STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The overall purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet the Strategy for Parenting Support. This is attached at **Appendix 1**.

This report will inform Cabinet of recent developments to increase the active support for parents across the Borough. The strategy presents a vision statement and a set of principles that have been developed by parents in Hartlepool. Cabinet is being asked to approve this vision and encourage all agencies working with parents to adopt the principles to ensure parents are central to the development of support services for families.

2. BACKGROUND

Context

The vision and objectives of this strategy have been created by parents from Hartlepool. This strategy acknowledges that the best people to inform how families are supported are parents. Despite this local emphasis it remains important that this strategy is also viewed in a national and regional context.

The Hartlepool Parenting Strategy is based on clear principles and is grounded within the local and national policies of Every Child Matters (government guidance on how services for children should be delivered), National Service Framework (guidance regarding health services for children and maternity services) and Extended Services agenda (guidance to schools regarding services outside of normal school hours). The strategy document explains how Hartlepool intends to bring together these policies to deliver integrated, high quality and responsive services to children, young people and their families.

The strategy will underpin Hartlepool's response to the Government's Children's Plan that was published in December 2007.

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have produced guidance on the development of parenting strategies for every town and city in England and Wales. This guidance is based on evidence and research to demonstrate that parenting is the biggest influence on children's life chances

how they do at school; their general behavior, health and emotional well-being.

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) instructed all local authorities to appoint a Parenting Commissioner. In Hartlepool this role is being fulfilled by a Senior Children's Services Officer with responsibility for positive contribution. The strategy includes a local audit of resources available to parents and will keep this updated through the Family Information Service.

The strategy document will be monitored annually by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

Consultation and engagement of key stakeholders

Hartlepool's Parenting Support Strategy Group have met with parents and carers to discuss with them the services that are currently available in the town and any gaps that need to be filled. The draft strategy was circulated to a wide range of professionals who had the opportunity to share this with their user groups. In response to guidance from The Department of Children, Schools and Families, Hartlepool's Parenting Support Strategy partners will work together closely, identifying ways of sharing resources and information to improve joint working and promote co-operation within the Local Authority.

The Parenting Challenge and the Vision

Through consultation it was agreed that in Hartlepool we will set all parents and carers 10 challenges that need to be tackled if children are to reach their potential.

If endorsed by Cabinet we will challenge parents to sign up to take on these challenges through our Children's Centres and Extended Services. Through this strategy the council will support all partner agencies to encourage parents to sign up to the following:

I will:

- Protect my child from harm
- Protect my child from violence and aggressive language
- Teach my child to respect others and earn respect themselves.
- Teach my child what is right and what is wrong
- Ensure that my child lives a healthy life
- Be aware of where my child is when he/she is not with me
- Encourage my child to make the best of the opportunities they are given in and out of school
- Help my child enjoy their childhood
- Support my child to make good life choices
- Seek support when being a parent is hard

3. HARTLEPOOL VISION STATEMENT & KEY PRINCIPLES

‘Parents are people you look up to no matter how tall you grow’

The vision, as set out in the strategy document and below, will be enhanced if it is adopted as council policy. Such an endorsement will provide political and organisational strength to a set of principals that clearly identifies good parenting as a major factor in the well being of our communities.

With agreement from Cabinet our vision is that any Hartlepool parent who needs support, information or advice will be able to access the right support when they need it.

The following principles underpin Hartlepool's vision statement:

- We understand the need to provide support for families to ensure their children are healthy and safe. We want children to enjoy their education and to achieve successes. Children will therefore be of value to the community and do well in adult life.
- We aim to provide access to good quality family support for all people who bring up children. The support will be available across the town and will be provided by the most appropriate people who are matched to parents' needs.
- We recognise that bringing up children can be a challenging task; we will ensure that accessing parenting support will be a choice open to all parents and carers.
- We accept that some families will require intensive support if they are to fulfill their parenting responsibilities and safeguard their children. We commit to providing this support while it is safe to do so.

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

We have to have a Parent Support Strategy in place by April 2008 to comply with government directives.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This strategy does not have direct financial implications but should lead all commissioners and providers of services to operate differently and take into account the need for a partnership with parents in design, commissioning and delivery.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

This strategy is for all parents and carers in Hartlepool and is written to ensure accessibility of service in line with need.

7. SECTION 17

This strategy should have positive outcomes regarding section 17 as parents are supported to meet the “Parenting Challenge”. The responsibility for ensuring children are not involved in crime and learn to respect and be respected sits clearly with parents. The principles set out in this strategy will support parents with these challenges.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet endorse the vision statements and principles in this strategy and provide the political support and backing required to implement them. This political endorsement will be shared with all agencies who work with parents in Hartlepool and they will be asked to adopt the vision and principles in the delivery of their services.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Every Child Matters
National Service Framework (guidance regarding health services for children and maternity services)
Children's Plan Building Bright Futures (Department of Children Schools and Families)
Children's Centres and Extended Schools Strategy (Hartlepool)

10. CONTACT OFFICER

John Robinson, Senior Children's Services Officer, Children's Services Department, Level 3, Civic Centre. Tel (01429) 523348.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Every Child Matters



The Parenting Challenge

HARTLEPOOL PARENTING SUPPORT STRATEGY

March 2008

**A Strategic Plan for the Provision
of Parenting Support to the
Families of Hartlepool**

Text extracts can be made available in Braille, talking tapes and large print, on request. If you would like information in another language or format, please ask us.

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(Kurdish)

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اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔
(Urdu)

01429 284284

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे
(Hindi)

01429 284284

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。
(Cantonese)

01429 284284

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The Parenting Challenge

I will:

Protect my child from harm
Protect my child from violence and aggressive language
Teach my child to respect others and earn respect themselves
Teach my child what is right and what is wrong
Ensure that my child lives a healthy life
Be aware of where my child is when he/she is not with me
Encourage my child to make the best of the opportunities they are given in and out of school
Help my child enjoy their childhood
Support my child to make good life choices
Seek support when being a parent is hard

HARTLEPOOL VISION STATEMENT & KEY PRINCIPLES

Parents are people you look up to no matter how tall you grow. Our vision is that any Hartlepool parent who needs support, information or advice will be able to access the right support when they need it.

The following principles underpin Hartlepool's vision statement:

- ◆ We understand the need to provide support for families to ensure their children are healthy and safe. We want children to enjoy their education and to achieve success. The children of today are the parents of tomorrow. Children will therefore be of value to the community and do well in adult life.
- ◆ We aim to provide access to good quality family support for all people who bring up children. The support will be available across the town and will be provided by the most appropriate people who are matched to parents needs.
- ◆ We recognise that bringing up children can be a challenging task; we will ensure that accessing parenting support will be a choice open to all parents and carers.
- ◆ We accept that some families will require intensive support if they are to fulfil their parenting responsibilities and safeguard their children. We commit to providing this support while it is safe to do so.

CONTEXT

The Hartlepool Parenting Strategy is based on clear principles and is grounded within the local and national policies of Every Child Matters (government guidance on how services for children should be delivered), National Service Framework (guidance regarding health services for children and maternity services) and Extended Services agenda (guidance to schools regarding services outside of normal school hours). This Strategy document explains how Hartlepool intends to bring together these policies to deliver integrated, high quality and responsive parenting services to children, young people and their families.

The strategy will underpin Hartlepool's response to the Government's Children's Plan that was published in December 2007.

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have produced guidance on the development of parenting strategies for every town and city in England and Wales. This guidance is based on evidence and research to demonstrate that parenting is the biggest influence on children's life chances; how they do at school; their general behaviour, health and emotional well-being.

Hartlepool's Parenting Strategy Group have met with parents and carers to discuss with them the services that are currently available in the town and any gaps that need to be filled. The draft strategy was circulated to a wide range of professionals who had the opportunity to share this with their user groups. In response to guidance from DCSF, Hartlepool's Parenting Strategy partners will work together closely, identifying ways of sharing resources and information to improve joint working and 'promote co-operation' within the Local Authority.

The Local Audit will be maintained by service providers in conjunction with the Children's Information Service.

The vision in Hartlepool is that it will be a town that believes in and invests in positive parenting that supports parents and carers to fulfil their responsibilities. Hartlepool will provide a range of high quality advice and support to enable parents to carry out their 'parenting role' and enjoy family life. Support will be offered for parents from the ante-natal stage through to adolescence and teenage years and will include services that are available to all as well as more intensive support for those families who need it. This will be a three year rolling strategy that will be implemented in March 2008 and reviewed by the Children's Trust annually before being revised in 2011.

In Hartlepool, we want our services to be :

- ◆ Accessible to all and personalised to the individual needs of children, young people and their families: what you need when you need it.
- ◆ Guided by parents.
- ◆ Based on a vision that is shared by services, children, young people and their families.
- ◆ Evaluated to ensure that they are working and having the desired effect.
- ◆ Delivered by skilled people in partnership with a variety of services.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Involvement of Parents

One of the core principles of this strategy is that services are developed and delivered to meet the needs of parents and families. Therefore, parents need to be involved at every stage. During the audit stage we visited parents who had been involved in previous parenting programmes to get their feedback. In May 2007 we held our first 'visionary day', which involved service providers and parents coming together and putting forward ideas about what they would like to see available at the four levels of need as defined by the DCSF (*Appendix 4*). This helped us identify what is already provided in Hartlepool and where the gaps in service are (*Appendix 2*). We will continue to invite all parents to be involved in development days and we will work alongside agencies to help parents have a continuous role in developing services.

Local Audit

The process began with an audit of the parenting provision already available in Hartlepool and who it is available for (*Appendix 1*). There are a variety of universal (available to all), targeted and specialist support services available in Hartlepool, including support for parents of children with disabilities, teenage parents and parents of young offenders. This audit will be available on the Hartlepool Borough Council website and is intended to be a working document which will be updated continually to reflect the current situation.

From this audit we are able to map what services are available to a whole range of parents with varying family needs and what/where the gaps are. (*Appendix 2*)

Delivery of the Strategy

Commissioning of services for parents will be set within a framework that ensures partners can demonstrate clear links with this strategy. The Hartlepool Commissioner for Parenting Support Services will support partners to ensure that the parenting strategy underpins all services for parents. The involvement of parents and carers in the process of service development and evaluation is essential.

Hartlepool is committed to the provision of locally based services for families through a network of resources within easy reach. Staff in local Children's Centres will ensure that families receive the services that they require.

The strategy relies on positive partnership between all stakeholders including parents and carers. We will ensure that families have a single point of access to services and a clear pathway to appropriate provision.

We believe that parents have a vital role as their child's first educators and we are committed to supporting organisations and all child care settings to develop their ability to enhance this early experience.

Services for Adults

This strategy and the relating documentation is focussed on supporting parents and carers. There are a wide range of services available in Hartlepool for Adults that can be accessed through a range of venues such as libraries and the civic centre.

Workforce Development

The Workforce Development Strategy for Hartlepool reflects the training needs of all staff who work with children and families. Working to support parents and families will be a core area of workforce development and training will be informed by the Parenting Strategy.

Delivery of Parenting Programmes

In 2007 three specific training programmes have been recommended by the DCSF – Triple P, Webster Stratton Incredible Years and Strengthening Families Programme. These three programmes are offered in addition to The Nurturing Programme, Mellow Parenting and Good Parenting Programme which are already successfully used across the town. We will develop other accredited programmes dependent on a continuing assessment of need and the availability of resources.

Provision for the parenting programmes will be delivered by professionals from a 'virtual team'. This concept means that members of the team do not transfer to a single team, but remain in their home agency and "work into" an integrated team on an agreed basis. The workers are still managed by their own agencies but the delivery of parenting programmes is overseen and co-ordinated by the Respect Parenting Practitioner who will report to the Parenting Commissioner.

This model does not prevent staff from organisations from delivering their own parenting programmes; the idea of the virtual team is that the Respect Parenting Practitioner is aware of groups that are running and can fill empty spaces appropriately, thus maximising the number of parents that access parenting support. Agencies who sign up to delivering parenting agree to work in this way. The benefits of this approach are that services meet expectations and deliver outcomes, the stigma to using services is reduced, trust in services is increased, opportunities for further service development and improvement are provided and opportunities for multi agency working increased. If this approach is to be successful in delivering high quality universal services schools, health and local children's centres must be key partners.

Precise guidelines for local joint working are not planned as part of this strategy. It is foreseen that all the agencies involved in the implementation of this strategy will also be part of the 'Change for Children' agenda (a programme of change leading to extensive workforce reform), the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Lead Practitioner arrangements and Information Sharing protocols. This work is currently being rolled out across the borough and involves all agencies involved in working with parents, children and young people.

Monitoring and Evaluation

By taking a joined up approach, it is expected that we will be able to obtain improved results across all the five outcomes from Every Child Matters; children and young people who are healthier, safer, who enjoy and achieve more, who make a positive contribution to their community and town and who enjoy economic well-being. In order to measure that these outcomes are being met, performance of each programme will be under continuous review. This is the task of the Respect Parenting Practitioner, who will ensure that every parent involved in a programme has an opportunity to evaluate it and provide feedback. Information will also be sought from the programme facilitators and the partner agencies. We aim to have a single evaluation tool to be used by all programme deliverers. A quarterly report will then be produced for the Parenting Strategy Partnership. The Hartlepool Commissioner for Parenting Support Services will report to the Children's Trust on an annual basis to inform strategic commissioning.

Commitment

Leadership and commitment throughout all agencies is needed to make this strategy a success. The Hartlepool Commissioner for Parenting Support Services will lead the strategic and operational developments that will deliver Hartlepool's vision. All stakeholders will be expected to give a clear commitment to provide services, which will ensure all children are brought up by families that are well supported, by signing this strategy. The role of the Children's Trust is essential in overseeing the continuing development of this strategy.

PARENTING AUDIT - SUPPORTING PARENTS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF NEED			
Level of Need	Definition of Need	Type of Support	Availability in Hartlepool
LEVEL ONE: Family & Community Networks of Support and access to universal provision.	All Parents – universal support, before problems have been identified.	Information, involvement and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health lead provisions from pregnancy: GP, midwives, health visitors and health centres. • Children's Centres and Sure Start including family resource workers seconded from Children's Services Specialist and Safeguarding Services Division. • Schools: Nursery School, primary and junior schools, secondary schools, Special Education Needs Schools. • Parental involvement in school fundraising; school policies, Healthy School Status and local children's centres • Adult Education: workshops for parents in Healthy eating/healthy lunches; numeracy, literacy etc. • A range of leaflets available regarding access and advice to all of the above. • The Children's Service Directory (CSD) is a web based service providing details of activities, events and links to other organisations that may be of use to parents, practitioners and young people aged 0-19 years. It is administered by the Children's Information Service and supplemented with data collected from organisations operating in the Hartlepool area and nationwide. Contact: Sharon Lister, tel: 284284. • Community Support: PATCH: A town-wide support for families with babies and young children under five. Uses trained volunteers to visit at home, run support groups, provide good quality play activities and during holidays arrange parties, trips and activities. They also offer a family training and development scheme which support parents looking for employment and/or new hobbies. Contact: The Avondale Centre, Dyke House School, Raby Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8NQ, tel: 862727.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PINS: (Parents in Need of Support) – offer practical and emotional support, information and advice to parents. Will accompany parents to meetings for support. One to one support, telephone support, drop-in facility and signposting to other relevant agencies available. Contact: Offices 5 & 6, Dimensional House, 81 Stranton, Hartlepool, TS24 7QT, tel: 260110. • Children & Family Support Project: Support service for parents who have children attending Lynnfield or Stranton Primary Schools, or who live in the New Deal area. One to one support and key worker role for families. The Nurturing Programme is available and runs several times over the year, term time. A crèche is available for younger children. Parents who have attended the courses have children from 0 to teenage years. Contact: Lynnfield Primary School, Grosvenor Street, Hartlepool, TS26 8RL, tel: 891471. Stranton Primary School, Southburn Terrace, Hartlepool, TS25 1SQ, tel: 265610.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool Libraries: Collections of books dealing with wide variety of topics and issues for parents available in all libraries. Includes books specially written and illustrated for parents to share with children when dealing with some of the difficult times in childhood. • 'Read and Rhyme' story, books and play sessions held in all libraries. Outreach support provided to parent and toddler and other similar groups.
LEVEL TWO: Family & Community Networks of Support and access to universal provision plus Additional Targeted Support.	Parents needing some additional support, either self-referred or because a service has identified the need for targeted support.	Support for Parents.	HBC Children's Services – Specialist and Safeguarding Services: Support is offered to parents of children and young people following an assessment to establish if the child or young person is a child in need. There are a range of leaflets explaining the services provided that are supplied to parents at the point of assessment. Services range from the provision of advice about parenting issues by social care staff to the involvement of Family Resource Workers based at Somersby and Grange Resource Centres in the South and North of Hartlepool. Also for young people over 11 years, there are Community Support Workers based at Station Lane Young Persons Business Unit and HBC Children's Services Duty Team, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, tel: 523391.

		Support for Parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting Befriending Worker – five workers across the town, based in three-community settings: Belle Vue; West Vue Project and Barnardo's Hartbeat. Parents offered practical support to tackle issues that are affecting their lives, such as parenting issues, debt, housing and relationships. Works with parents on a one to one basis or group work. Main programme offered is the Nurturing programme, a 10-week accredited course. Works with both mothers and fathers. Contact: Belle Vue Centre, Kendal Road, Hartlepool, TS25 1QY, tel: 280073.
		Support for Parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acorn: The Acorn Therapeutic Team consists of three qualified Social Workers, registered with the General Social Care Council and a qualified Play Therapist. The team offers individual therapeutic support to children and young people who are experiencing behavioural and emotional problems for a variety of reasons. Any agency or a parent may refer a child to this service. The Acorn Team is part of Hartlepool Borough Council Children's Services. Contact: EDC, Seaton Lane, Hartlepool, TS25 1HN, tel: 272222. • The team also runs a confidential Parental Advice Service for any parent or carer concerned about their child's behaviour and emotional well-being. As part of the Parent Advice Service the team has produced a number of information leaflets for parents and for children and young people, covering a large range of issues, tel: 294111. • The team provides a Parent Partnership service for parents of children with special educational needs. This service provides support to parents and carers if they have concerns about their child's education and includes the option of an opportunity of an independent person to support parents at tribunals and other meetings, tel: 272222.
		Support for Parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnardos Hartbeat: Carries out parenting work on behalf of the Youth Offending Service – engages parents from their children being identified at reprimand stage and beyond. Also accepts referrals from CAMHS; ASBU, schools and self referrals. Also offers parent support to those who live in the NDC area - on a whole range of issues, either one to one or husband and wife partner work. Main group work programme offered is the Nurturing programme; a 10 week accredited course. Works with both mothers and fathers, predominantly mothers. Contact: Brougham Enterprise Centre, Brougham Terrace, Hartlepool, TS24 8EY, tel: 271571.
		Support for Parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBC Children's Services – Social Inclusion Team: When behaviour has been identified as an issue, support from the Primary Behaviour Co-ordinator is available through primary schools.

		Support for Parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBC Children's Services – Psychology Team: A weekly drop-in service is offered in the Lowthian Road Children's Centre. Posters are displayed in all schools, nurseries, children's centres and GP surgeries across the town. Support and advice is offered to parents of children and young people 0-19 on issues such as challenging behaviour, anxiety, family matters and help with learning. No referral or appointment is needed. Contact: EDC, Seaton Lane, Hartlepool, TS25 1HN, tel: 272222.
		Support for the mental wellbeing of Parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIND: is a mental health charity with a base in Hartlepool that works with adults who are experiencing issues with their mental well-being. A wide range of support is available including advice/information on benefits, housing, bereavement, debt, careers and relationships. Workshops are available in stress management, relaxation, visualisation, self esteem and motivation. Contact: MIND, Crown Buildings, Avenue Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AS, tel: 269303.
		Support for Families of children and young people with mental health issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS (Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service): Assessment and treatment of children and young people 0-18 years of age with mental health problems. Advice, support and consultation for family members, carers and workers from health, children's services, educational and voluntary agencies. Promotion of positive mental health in children and young people. Referrals accepted from a range of professionals including Health, Education Psychologists, Attendance Officers, Social Workers, and Connexions. The Webster Stratton Incredible Years parenting programme is one of the services offered. Contact: Dover House, 1-3 Lynn Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7LX, tel: 285049.
		Support for parents whose children are involved in offending or low levels of anti social behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Offending Service: Following a young person coming to the attention of the YOS because of either their behaviour or offending behaviour, if it is deemed there is a link to parenting then voluntary support to parents will be offered. This will take the form of a home visit with one to one support at an early stage. This service is seen as preventative and early intervention. Any long term work or more complex help would be referred to Barnardo's Hartbeat. Referral Order Panels are community led panels who meet with young offenders, their parents and victims to address areas of support and reparation the young person needs to make amends for their behaviour. Support for parents is offered at this stage on a voluntary basis. YOS, Archive Building, Upper Church Street, Hartlepool TS24 7EQ, tel: 523986.

		<p>Support for parents whose children are involved in offending or low levels of anti social behaviour.</p> <p>Support for parents whose children are involved in offending or low levels of anti social behaviour.</p> <p>Under age use of alcohol.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool Intervention Project Panel: This is a multi agency panel which sits monthly and can allocate resources from a number of agencies to match family need. At level two this would normally be via the FAST: (see below). <p>FAST: (Families Accessing Support Team) a multi agency team managed by Barnardo's with outreach workers based in a number of community settings. Works with the whole family to provide a quick response to reported incidents of low level anti-social behaviour – support and advice for parents and support and constructive activities for children and young people to prevent and reduce further incidents of anti social behaviour. Contact: Barnardo's Hartbeat, Brougham Enterprise Centre, Brougham Terrace, Hartlepool, TS24 8EY, tel: 271571.</p> <p>Straight-line Project: This project targets young people who have been caught by the Police drinking under-age. Project staff visits the family and offer support, advice and information to the young people and their parents. c/o YOT, Archive Building, Upper Church Street, Hartlepool TS24 7EQ. tel: 523986.</p>
		Support for BME Families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Inclusion Co-ordinator BME Community: Support for BME parents and children from the BME community, where behaviour in school has been identified as an issue. Family learning opportunities/activities in the summer holidays. A teaching assistant available for BME pupils who require additional support. Links with Adult Ed and Sure Start. No specific parenting programmes available. Contact: EDC, Seaton Lane, Hartlepool, TS25 1HN, tel: 272222.

		Support with Health issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Development Team: There is a full time teenage parent co-ordinator in place and a support worker. The Teenage Pregnancy Support Service offer support to under-19s who are pregnant or who have babies. Referrals are received from GP's, schools, midwives, health visitors, social workers, B76 – following a positive pregnancy test or self-referrals. Whole range of support available both pre and post birth. Including, and accredited ante-natal group (OCNER level 1) 12 week course, a care pathway to co-ordinate support for pregnant school girls and a number of parent groups offered in a variety of locations across the town. Contact: Primary Care Trust, Mandale House, tel: 285079.
		Support for young parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PATCH: (Parent & Toddler Care in Hartlepool): Offer a teenage parent support scheme for young women aged 18 years or under and having a baby. For £25 you can borrow the most essential items needed for the new baby – all items are new. Volunteers also support young parents. The Avondale Centre, Dyke House School, Raby Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8NQ, tel: 862727.
		Support for Parents when children have disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families First: A support worker is employed six hours per week to work with families when a child has first been diagnosed with a disability. A supportive role, e.g. accompanying family to hospital appointments or just being there to listen. Can also offer the toy library. Offers a monthly coffee morning for the parents as mutual support. Referrals mainly from schools and nurseries. Whole range of disabilities covered and supported. Contact: Belle Vue Centre, Kendal Road, Hartlepool, TS25 1QY, tel: 867016.

	Support for Parents when children have disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool and District Dyspraxia Support Group: this is a self support group run by parents who have children with Dyspraxia and associated conditions, held weekly at the Belle Vue Centre on a Saturday during term time. The group provide a range of activities for children to participate in, including arts and crafts, sport activities and healthy eating. Parents have the chance to talk to each other about any worries or concerns that they have as well as to people who run the group. Social activities are arranged for the parents to participate in along with more structured courses available on request, providing training in areas such as: sports leaders, personal safety and first aid. A monthly meeting, just for parents, keeps all members up to date on any developments, alongside a newsletter. The group offer social activities out in the community during the summer holidays when available. Referrals are received from other groups and from schools but parents can also self refer. Adverts for the group are placed in The Hartlepool Mail and contact details are available from Children's Information Services. Contact: Belle Vue Centre, Kendal Road, Hartlepool, TS25 1QY, tel: 280073.
	Support for Parents when children have disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCOT Team: two experienced specialist support practitioners who work with parents and in childcare/school settings to support parents with social and communication difficulties, including support to parents of children currently being assessed by SCCT (Social Communication Coordination Team) or those with a diagnoses of an Autistic Spectrum Condition. They also run an informal playgroup, monthly at Ward Jackson Park and other social activities. All referrals are received from the Educational Psychology Team. Contact: Springwell School, Wiltshire Way, Hartlepool, TS26 0TB, tel: 280600.

		Support for Parents when children have disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool Borough Council Children's Services – Disability Team: The team offers a social care assessment to the parents of children and young people in Hartlepool who have a disability and who are in need of services to promote their health and well being. The assessment is intended to ensure that parents receive the services they need to support them in parenting their child; this can include access to short break care at Exmoor Grove and or the involvement of resource workers who will work with the child or young person and their family to promote independence and social inclusion. Assessments for direct payments are carried out by the team. Hartlepool's Care Co-ordinator is also based with this team and this role is designed to bring multi agency professionals together to improve services and support for families of children with complex needs who may not want or require a social care assessment. Contact: Aneurin Bevan House, Avenue Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8HD, tel: 523972.
		Support for Parents when children have ADHD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADHD: A parenting programme specifically aimed at parents who have children diagnosed with ADHD is available from Barnardo's Hartbeat project. Please contact Hartbeat for further information.
		Support for Parents when children have disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool Special Needs Group: Offer parents informal support groups and specialist workshops, children's groups, out of school activities and weekend activities involving the whole family. Families with children with a disability aged from birth up to 18 years, if appropriate. Referrals from health professionals, HBC Children's Services Disability Team, Schools, and self referrals. Contact: HSNSG Resource Centre, 109 Park Road, Hartlepool, TS26 9HR, tel: 863766.
		Support for Parents who have substance use issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitby Street Drug Centre: in conjunction with Women's Aid, an eight week parenting course is offered looking at basic parenting training, communication and play skills – separate courses are run for mothers and fathers. The 'play bus' also visits the centre on a weekly basis offering opportunities to develop relationships with children through play. Contact: Whitby Street, Hartlepool TS24 7AB, tel: 285000.

		<p>Support for Parents when their children are carers.</p> <p>Hartlepool Carers: offers a town wide support network for adult carers who look after someone who is frail, or has a physical or learning disability, a mental health issue, sensory loss or substance addiction; all of which could have an impact on other dependant children. Our volunteers offer their services to assist Carers with a sitting service, emotional support, messages and appointments, gardening, DIY, dog walking, etc. Each package is tailored to suit individual and family requirements. We offer a 'Carers into Employment' programme, giving one to one advice and assistance to help carers either back into work or to enable them to stay there. Hartlepool Carers, 200 York Road, Hartlepool, tel: 283095, email: staff@hartlepoolcarers.org.uk</p> <p>Hartlepool Carers -Young Carers Positive Future Project: This project supports young carers throughout Hartlepool and the surrounding villages. Offering emotional support, play activities, drop-in service, group work and individual one to one session work. This providing respite for parents helping evaluate further pressures. We work with the young carer on an individual need, which can often include support for parents/carers. Signposting to the other relevant agencies is part of our service. Telephone and practical support also looks to help reduce social isolation, whilst building self-confidence and esteem ensuring their overall health emotional well-being and safety. The age range for young carers is from 7 years to 18 years after which, if the need is still prevalent, they be moved across to adult carers. Contact details: Hartlepool Carers, 200 York Road, Hartlepool, tel:283095, email: staff@hartlepoolcarers.org.uk.</p>
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LEVEL THREE: Family & Community Networks of support and Access to Universal Provision plus Intensive and Targeted support.	Parents in families with complex needs.	Interventions with Families Support for parents whose children are involved in offending and/or anti social behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool Intervention Project Panel: This is a multi agency panel which sits monthly and can allocate resources from a number of agencies to match family need. At level three this would normally be via the HIP (see below): • Hartlepool Intervention Project: This is a multi agency approach to supporting families with complex needs where it has been identified that children and young people are at risk or anti-social or offending behaviour and social exclusion. A multi agency panel meets monthly [YOT, Barnardo's Hartbeat, Children's Fund, Education, Children & Families; CAMHS, Housing, ABSU, Connexions, Youth Service, Police] to co-ordinate a multi agency approach to support families. Referrals are received from schools or any of the above agencies – the referral being passed to the representative from your organisation who sits on the panel – who will then present the information to the panel members. Contact: Hartlepool Youth Offending Service, Archive Building, Upper Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7EQ, tel: 284018. • Family Intervention Project: As part of the RESPECT agenda – referrals mainly come in from the police, schools and community wardens. Supports families whose children are identified as being at risk of anti-social behaviour or enforcement action as a result of their behaviour. A multi agency approach to supporting families with complex needs and will offer parenting support, housing support and a range of activities for children. Often backed up with Behaviour Contracts, Parent Contracts and/or Tenancy Agreements. Contact: Anti Social Behaviour Unit, 73 Jutland Road, Hartlepool, TS25 1LP, tel: 296582. • Youth Offending Service: Following a young person coming to the attention of the YOS because of their offending behaviour, if it is deemed there is a link to parenting then support to parents will be offered, often backed up by a Parenting Order made by the Courts. Statutory Parenting Orders are supervised by staff based at Barnardo's Hartbeat on behalf of the YOS. Contact: YOS, Archive Building, Upper Church Street, Hartlepool TS24 7EQ, tel: 523986.
		Support and interventions for families.	

	Teenage Parents with complex needs.	Supported Housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBC Children's Services – Specialist and Safeguarding Services: Support is offered to parents of children and young people following an assessment to establish if the child or young person is a child in need or a child in need of protection. There are a range of leaflets explaining the services provided that are supplied to parents at the point of assessment. Services range from the provision of advice about parenting issues by social care staff to the involvement of Family Resource Workers based at Somersby and Grange Resource Centres in the South and North of Hartlepool and for young people over 11 years Community Support Workers based at Station Lane Young Persons Business Unit. In some assessed circumstances parents may be provided with day care or after school provision purchased on their behalf by the service. They may also be offered the option of voluntary accommodation, normally with foster carers, for their children. Where such a placement takes place or appears likely to be required then support can be offered via The Star Centre. The focus of involvement for The Star Centre is to work with the child or young person or their foster carer. The service also carries out its statutory responsibility to ensure that children and young people are not exposed to risk of significant harm as defined by the Children Act 1989. Contact: HBC Children's Services Duty Team, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, tel: 523391. • Anna Court: A partnership between Tees Valley Housing and Teenage Pregnancy Unit. Offers purpose built self-contained flats within a complex with 24/7 staff support. The teenage mum's are taught a range of skills including parenting, independent living skills and further education. Support to move on to own accommodation when ready. Contact: 1 Anna Court, Flaxton St, Hartlepool, TS26 9JZ, tel: 224495.
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LEVEL FOUR: Family & Community Networks of Support and Access to Universal Provision plus statutory intervention.	Parents who can't or won't cooperate.	Statutory Intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Offending Service: Following a young person coming to the attention of the YOS because of their offending behaviour, if it is deemed there is a link to parenting then support to parents will be offered, often backed up by a Parenting Order made by the Courts. Statutory Parenting Orders are supervised by staff based at Barnardo's Heartbeat on behalf of the YOS. Contact: YOS, Archive Building, Upper Church Street, Hartlepool TS24 7EQ, tel: 523986. • Family Intervention Project: as above – but targets the six most at risk families – issues such as anti social behaviour, housing problems, concerns about family members – these families will have refused to co-operate with level three interventions so will likely have a family contract with clear sanctions attached in the case of further non-co-operation. Contact: Anti Social Behaviour Unit, 73 Jutland Road, Hartlepool, TS25 1LP, tel: 296582. • HBC Children's Services – Specialist and Safeguarding Services: Where efforts to promote the wellbeing of the child or young person within its birth or extended family have proved unsuccessful the service will fulfil its statutory obligations by application to the Courts for a legal order as defined in the Children Act 1989, which may lead to the temporary or permanent removal of the child or young person from its family. Contact: HBC Children's Services Duty Team, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, tel: 523391.
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**GAPS IN PROVISION AS IDENTIFIED
IN VISIONING DAY WITH PARENTS
MAY 2007**

Befriend / on call parent support 24 hours per day:

- Telephone
- Internet
- Drop in centre
- Home visit

All services available to all, regardless of area you live in town.

Better sign posting of available services.

Consistency of support (keeping the same worker).

Advice available for siblings on how to cope with additional needs.

Support doesn't just finish – it slowly ends.

Respite Childcare.

More male workers.

Services available outside 9 to 5 and weekends.

More parenting support for men.

Family workshops – parents, children and young people working together.

PROVISION OF SUPPORT IN HARTLEPOOL

The DCSF have defined parenting support across four levels of need and we have based our audit accordingly [see *Appendix 4*]

LEVEL 1: INFORMATION, INVOLVEMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

At level 1, we are working to ensure:

- All agencies will give strong and consistent messages that parents/carers are valued partners and, that they are the most important influence on their child's future, and that every parent will need support at some point in their child's life, and that there is no stigma in asking for help.
- High-quality resources and information on all aspects of parenting will be widely available in schools, children's centres, libraries, health centres, community centres and via the internet.
- There will be open and honest communication with parents and carers through a variety of channels to reach parents and carers from all ethnic, cultural and social groups, and all kinds of family or partnership. Parents and carers will be consulted, and involved in decisions affecting their child.
- Schools and services take active steps to support and encourage parents and carers involvement in their child's learning and development.
- There is a range of learning opportunities targeted at parents and carers, including introductory parenting courses, family learning opportunities and routes into employment.
- Parents' skills will be recognised, and parents will be consulted about service provision and enabled to actively contribute to this work.

LEVEL 2: SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

At level 2, we are working to ensure:

- High-quality, up-to-date information on family support, community groups and self-help provision will be available through the online service directory.
- Staff in universal agencies and services will effectively fulfil their role in communicating with and supporting parents and signposting them to further help.

- High-quality, evidence-based parenting training will be widely promoted through every children's centre and school. In addition, families that would benefit from this preventative support but may not choose to access it are identified early and given appropriate support and encouragement to access the training. In particular, there will be a clear strategy to engage with parents and carers of children with behaviour problems at the earliest signs of difficulties, and to work sensitively but assertively to ensure that they access parent-training courses.
- Training for parents and carers of older children and teenagers will be available across town and will be accessed through self-referral as well as professional referral.
- A core menu of effective preventative family support services will be available across town. Staff in all agencies will use a common assessment framework. There will be shared understanding of the risk factors, which should trigger a preventative intervention.
- Parenting support will be available for parents and carers of children with learning difficulty, disability or special educational need (LDD/SEN).

LEVEL 3: INTERVENTIONS WITH FAMILIES

At level 3, we are working to ensure:

- There will be a robust multi-agency case planning process with a clear lead professional role. Assertive key working will assist families in accessing universal and level 2 services, as well as family support interventions that have a strong evidence-base and are known to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Services working with vulnerable adults, including those with drug and alcohol problems, mental health problems and domestic violence issues, will consider the impact of the parent's problems on the family as a whole. There will be targeted parenting interventions for these vulnerable groups. Staff in mainstream services will be trained to work with specialist services to meet the needs of these families.

LEVEL 4: STATUTORY INTERVENTION

At level 4, we are working to ensure:

- There will be a robust and assertive key working approach for families that are unwilling or unable to co-operate.
- Staff will be committed to the twin-track approach, and legal powers will be used to ensure parents and carers co-operate in the interests of the child or young person. Staff working at this level will be trained and supported in effective interventions with this group.

**PARENTS VISION MAY 2007
FOR SUPPORTING LEVELS OF NEED**

LEVEL 1: Family & Community Networks of Support and access to universal provision

- Unstructured support groups – coffee afternoons / playgroups based in children's centres, libraries, community centres with a good quality crèche available.
- Home / school liaison personnel available on request to offer advice in all schools.
- Parenting tips available – leaflets / websites.
- Parenting classes available (for all) after antenatal classes – Nurturing available town-wide.
- Support services for all needs and all ages, under one roof.
- Better cooperation across all services.
- Antenatal classes for all, no matter what age.
- Befriend / on call parent support 24 hours a day:
 - telephone
 - internet
 - drop-in centre
 - home visit
- Skilled health visitors that take interest and do what they say they are going to do.
- Extended support networks e.g. adopt a granny or an aunty.
- Create interest groups / courses.
- All services available to all, regardless of area.
- Better sign posting for available services.
- Consistency of support.

LEVEL TWO: Family & Community Networks of Support and access to universal provision plus Additional Targeted Support

- Respite care – to give parents/carers time, children to be picked up and dropped off – No charge.
- Liaison service.
- Inclusive – available support for families across town, not just area based. Unrestricted, not just depending on postcode.
- Adequate telephone support available 24 hours a day.
- Advice available for siblings on how to cope with additional needs.
- Support groups for all parents in schools, children's centres, and libraries.
- Structured parenting groups for all parents in schools, children's centres and libraries.
- Parenting support / structured groups for parents of pupils with additional needs in schools, children's centres and libraries.
- Support groups for parents in community buildings – totally confidential.
- Continued targeted support – support just doesn't finish, it slowly ends.
- Consistency of support.

LEVEL THREE: Family & Community Networks of support and Access to Universal Provision plus Intensive and Targeted support

- Social services – children and family team.
- Personal support worker.
- Good for social services to work with other agencies.
- Childcare – respite.
- Health Visitor.
- More male workers.
- Adaptability.
- Services available outside 9 to 5.

- Anger management for women.
- More parenting support for men.
- Training in effective communication.
- More focused support re. issues.
- Family workshops – parents, children and young people working together.
- Multi-agency work with families.
- More youth workers trained in parenting advice.
- Drop-in / phone service facility for men involved in domestic violence.
- Social workers more involved.
- Consistency of support.
- Develop a clear plan of action.

LEVEL FOUR: Family & Community Networks of Support and Access to Universal Provision plus statutory intervention

- Family residential accommodation – counselling, anger management and nurturing for the whole family as well as mediation skills.
- Super nanny – go and live in the family home to help with all needs – honest feedback at the time. Help to get family back to Level 1 / 2 – children come first.
- Specialist foster carers.
- Better system of identifying families before they get to Level 4 (We can identify them now but we are unable to enforce the support).
- Range of family support / befriending service – unpick the situation.
- Develop a clear plan of action.

INFORMATION ON PARENTING PROGRAMMES			
Programme	Target Group	Detail	Evidence
Webster Stratton 'Incredible Years'	Parents of 2-10 year olds.	The 'Incredible Years' is a 10 to 12 week programme, aimed at treating aggression and behaviour problems, helping parents support their child's education and deal with bad behaviour by building on parenting strengths already present.	Participants of the programme have reported sustained improvements at immediate and three-month follow-ups.
Triple P	Parents of children aged 0 to 12 and 12 to 16 years of age.	This is an 8 week programme, which helps parents deal with difficult childhood and teenage behaviour such as tantrums, sleeping, bullying or teenage withdrawal.	Evidence reviewed shows significant effects across several trials.
Mellow Parenting	Parents and children, with one child under the age 4 years. Aimed at parents whose relationships with their children are under severe stress.	A 14 week programme focusing on the mother-child relationship, designed to support families experiencing relationship problems with their children.	A non-accredited programme however, feedback from parents was positive, and their suggestions helped improve the programme further – particularly looking at their own experiences of being parented and how this influenced their relationships with their own children.
Strengthening Families Programme	Families with children under 10-14, where there may be a breakdown or a high risk of a breakdown in relationships	The Strengthening Families Programme is a 7 week programme which develops parenting skills, children's life skills and family life skills, through parents and children participating in separate group settings for the first half of the session, then both together for the second half. The goal of Strengthening Families is to improve the social, emotional and physical well being of children and young people.	There is a strong evidence base that the programme has successfully increased awareness about the importance of child and youth well being, and increased the capacity of families to work together, and with agencies, to solve problems that help improve the well being of their children.

The Nurturing Programme	Parents of children aged 0 to 12	<p>This is a 10 week programme providing numerous effective approaches to develop healthy relationships in adults and children.</p> <p>The programme promotes emotional health in both adults and children. It supports positive behaviour in children, and goes much further than that by exploring the emotional needs behind their behaviour and developing consistency in responding to the needs of the child.</p>	The programme benefits both adults and children by: promoting emotional health, raising self-esteem, developing communication and social skills, teaching positive ways to resolve conflict and encouraging adults to take time to look after themselves.
The Good Parents Group	Young Parents Aged 19 and under.	An eight week programme covering baby development; domestic abuse, childhood illnesses, play, dealing with behaviours, contraception and healthy eating on a budget.	Evaluations from parents undertaking the course all rated it as good or excellent in providing practical advice and skills.
Tots To Teens	Parents of Primary School aged Children	Tots to Teens is a six session programme linked to and delivered in various primary schools and Children's centres.	Developed and delivered locally by Barbara Towler, the Primary behaviour Coordinator for Hartlepool. Not accredited but endorsed by local primary schools.
Parents Support Group	Parenting peer support group for	for Parents who require lower level support than that provided in a parenting group, such as, a mutual support and discussion forum where parents can meet and discuss issues and perhaps share simple solutions.	In early development stage, led by Barbara Towler and supported by the Parenting Co-ordinator.

AGENCIES INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING THE FIRST DRAFT PARENTING STRATEGY

Hartlepool Borough Council Children's Services:

- Children & Families Departments
- Children's Centres
- Schools including nursery, primary, secondary and special schools
- Extended Schools
- Educational Psychology Service
- Behaviour & Attendance Team
- Youth Offending Service
- Anti Social Behaviour Unit
- BEST
- Acorn Team
- Children's Fund

Health:

- Health Visitors
- School Nurses
- Midwives
- Health Development Team (including Teenage Pregnancy)
- Children & Adolescent Mental Health Teams (CAMHS)

Voluntary & Community Sector:

- Barnardo's North East – Hartbeat
- New Deal for Communities
- Belle Vue Centre
- West View Project

CABINET REPORT

17 March 2008



Report of: The Mayor

Subject: CABINET CONTINGENCY FUND

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To propose a further scheme to utilise the Cabinet Contingency Fund in 2007/08.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report sets out details of a scheme submitted for Cabinet's consideration for funding from the 'Contingency Fund'.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Expenditure from the fund is delegated to Cabinet.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet 17 March 2008

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet is requested to consider the proposed scheme for funding from the Cabinet Contingency Fund 2007/08.

Report of: The Mayor

Subject: CABINET CONTINGENCY FUND

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose a further scheme to utilise the Cabinet Contingency Fund in 2007/08.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Attached as an appendix to the report is a proposal for expenditure from the Cabinet Contingency Fund. There is sufficient remaining in the Contingency Fund to cover the proposal.
- 2.2 The scheme proposed is for the Jutland Road Playground scheme and £5,000 is proposed to be made available as part of the package of funding being drawn together to fund the scheme. £28,000 has already been allocated to the project from planning gain and Section 106 funding and £10,000 from the South Neighbourhood Forum Minor Works Budget, £10,000 from Housing Hartlepool and £5,000 from the South joint Action Group.
- 2.3 Full details of the proposal are set out at **Appendix 1** to the report.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the above schemes for funding from the Cabinet Contingency Fund 2007/08.

Name of Organisation:....Home and Away Club

Name of Activity/Project:....Jutland Road Playground

Description of the activity/project

The Home and Away Club are working closely with HBC Adult and Community Services to provide a new playground for the children in this area. Various funds are being accessed in order to complete this much needed project.

Initial consultation has taken place with members of the group which consists of over a hundred families with children and young people, and other groups using the Jutland Road Community Centre.

Further consultation will be carried out once enough funds have been raised. It is envisaged that once a capital pot of approximately £60,000 is established Officers will prepare a tender document and invite companies to tender for the work and provide some initial designs for a steering group to view and appoint a company based on play value, reputation and overall design. The steering group will consist of residents, young people, council officers and community representatives including elected members.

Why is this activity/project needed?

The current play area at Jutland Road is very limited as most of the equipment has been removed for safety reasons. The nearest playground is located in Rossmere Park and would mean children crossing the busy A689 in order to access a safe play area. The recent PPG17 open spaces assessment identified the Jutland Road Play Area as requiring significant investment to increase the level of play value, care and maintenance to meet proposed standards of playgrounds adopted by the study. This need was also highlighted in the Rossmere Neighbourhood Action Plan following consultation events.

What difference will the activity make to the local area?

The play area will provide a safe environment for families and children in an area of deprivation, The Home and Away Club are actively working with families in the area on environmental improvements such as litter picks, gardening and general improvements to the neighbourhood, in order to create a better environment and feeling of wellbeing for all residents.

The playground will improve the overall look of the area as well as raising the aspirations of the residents living there. As this is a project that the families, young people and children have been fully involved in from the beginning, it is hoped that an 'ownership' of the playground will help in the protection against deliberate damage and vandalism.

Play facilities are increasingly being recognised as important in people's lives and there is a need for better designed and maintained play areas. Playgrounds in residential areas, when imaginatively equipped and well maintained are popular with children and parents.

How success be measured?

Success will be measured in the number of children and families using the playground and feedback from residents in the area. The informal access to such a facility means it is difficult to estimate user numbers but it is envisaged through the PPG17 Open spaces assessment that this play ground would have a catchment area of approximately 400m or 15 minutes walk. The PPG17 open spaces assessment estimated that in the South Area there are 6 play areas serving a population base of 5,055 young people aged birth to 15. This equates to 843 young

people per play area. However in the Rossmere Ward there are a significant number of young people aged birth to 15 (1105 in total making up 20% of the South Area young people population).*

*based on Tees Valley JSU Ward File data 2006.

How many people will benefit from the activity/project

750+

How much funding is being requested for this activity/ project?

£5000

Will the proposed funding cover the total cost of the proposed activity/project?

NO

How much will the activity/project cost in total?

**£60,000
approx**

How will the costs not covered by this funding be met

£28,000 has already been allocated to this project from planning gain and Section 106 funding and £10,000 from the Minor Works Budget, £10,000 from Housing Hartlepool and £5,000 from the South joint Action Group.

CABINET REPORT

17th March 2008



Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: THE HARTLEPOOL COMPACT REVIEW
(PROGRESS REPORT)

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update progress on revising the Hartlepool Compact and to outline the next steps proposed in taking this work forward

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The report summarises the consultation to date and includes an attached appendix which records comments received through this process. An amended version of the first draft of the Compact, which incorporates a number of the straight forward improvements proposed is also attached as an appendix.
- 2.2 In addition the report details proposals for the next stages in the development of a final document.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

- 3.1 From a Council perspective, the protocol which the Compact is seeking to promote will need to be reflected in virtually all aspects of the Council's functions and responsibilities. It is therefore relevant to all Portfolio Holders.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

- 4.1 Non key

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Cabinet 17th March. (Note : a final draft of the Compact will be brought back to Cabinet in the autumn for final approval , after it has been considered by the Hartlepool Partnership).

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 Cabinet is requested to note and comment as appropriate on :

- a) Progress to date in developing the Compact
- b) Next steps outlined for taking this work forward.

Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: THE HARTLEPOOL COMPACT REVIEW
(PROGRESS REPORT)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update progress on revising the Hartlepool Compact and to outline the next steps proposed in taking this work forward.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2007 a report was considered by the Cabinet on the draft Hartlepool Compact along with some key milestones to progress the Compact from a draft to formal adoption.
- 2.2 Cabinet members will recall that the draft Compact comprised a simplified written agreement containing a series of codes designed to improve relationships between the voluntary, community and statutory groups in Hartlepool.
- 2.3 It was also proposed to launch this draft Compact at a consultation event to seek initial views on the document and to establish support for the approach.

3. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.1 The conference was successfully held in January at the Historic Quay and the event was opened by Councillor Jackson who welcomed everyone to the event, on behalf of the Council.
- 3.2 Around 50 representatives from a range of voluntary and community sector groups and public agencies attended the event - including potential key partners such as the Primary Care Trust, Housing Hartlepool, Job Centre Plus, Learning and Skills Council, Business Link North East, Cleveland Fire , Cleveland Police Authority, Hartlepool Youth Offending Service and National Probation Service Teesside and Durham.
- 3.3 Through group workshops and feedback sessions a range of constructive comments and suggested improvements were received.
- 3.4 The link between the Compact and the work currently being undertaken on the Voluntary Sector Strategy was also highlighted.

- 3.5 All of the suggestions raised at the Conference are summarised in the document attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.6 Many of these suggestions, such as including page numbers, incorporating a jargon buster and simple proposals to usefully add and improve the draft text could be taken on board immediately.
- 3.7 Such suggestions are highlighted in italics in Appendix 1. Other suggestions need further consideration or more measured responses.
- 3.8 The highlighted comments (or 'quick fixes') have now been incorporated into the next version of the first draft of the Compact, which is attached as **Appendix 2** (the changes are highlighted in italics).

4. **4.0 NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 The next steps proposed are to send the document (attached as Appendix 1) to all those delegates who attended the conference (and those who expressed an interest in attending but were unable to come on the day) to establish whether their comments have been accurately recorded and reflected.
- 4.2 Following suggestions made at the Conference it has been agreed to publish the findings of the Conference on the web as part of an outline consultation exercise, to seek wider views from voluntary and community sector groups who were unable to attend the event.
- 4.3 This on-line consultation will last for an 8 week period and will be publicised to all voluntary and community groups on Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency's mailing list, along with the offer to issue hard copies of the information for those groups who may have difficulties in accessing the on-line system.
- 4.4 Once information from this method of consultation has been gathered and analysed a second draft of the Compact will be produced over the Autumn and the intention is that this will be reported to Mayor's Briefing, and to the Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership for comment, prior to being brought back to Cabinet for formal consideration and endorsement.
- 4.5 It is envisaged that a final version of the Compact can be produced before Christmas and as part of this process the ambition is that the key partners identified in the Compact can be encouraged to sign up to this final version.
- 4.6 The views of the Community Network are being sought on the most appropriate mechanism for voluntary and community groups to sign up and there might well be a role for the Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership to encourage public sector agencies to sign up to the final version of the Compact. A similar progress report to this is being taken to the Local

Strategic Partnership for information on the 14th March 2008, and any comments arising from the LSP deliberations will be reported verbally at the Cabinet meeting.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Cabinet is requested to note and comment as appropriate on:

- a) Progress to date in developing the Compact*
- b) Next steps outlined for taking this work forward*

CONTACT OFFICER: Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration,
Regeneration and Planning Services Department.

Appendix 1 –Comments from first round of consultation on the Hartlepool Compact.

Appendix 2 –First Draft (amended version) of Hartlepool Compact.

Background Papers

Cabinet Report 29th October, 2007.

Comments from Compact Consultation (inc. LSP, Conference, Cabinet, Portfolio Holder, HBC Departments, partners, HVDA)

General Points

- 1) Clear, simple, basic, plain English.
- 2) In codes consider using 'all parties' or 'all parties' instead of 'we'.
- 3) ***Include Jargon Buster / glossary.***
- 4) ***Include page numbers.***
- 5) ***All references to town wide, change to Borough wide (rural groups not to be excluded).***
- 6) Question need for steering group to take this piece of work forward (including monitoring & review). Suggest use existing mechanisms e.g. Community Network.
- 7) Examples of best practice should be included.

Purpose, Background, Status, Implementation and Review

- 1) Main points / issues raised
 - a) Vision needs to be included.
 - b) Action plan / business plan identifying who does what by when to be produced.
 - c) Extra section on compliance/ arbitration/ enforcement/ complaints to be added.
 - d) Role of LSP in implementation / review should be clarified.
 - e) Need for steering group to monitor / review assessed – perhaps use / expand existing groups instead e.g. Community Network.
- 2) Specific amendments proposed.
 - a) Suggest foreword should be by LSP chair and not mayor.
 - b) ***Status 2nd paragraph, 3^d line should read meaningful consultation.***
 - c) ***Compact should be aimed at VCS, public sector, partners and commissioners. Include commissioners.***

Funding Code

- 1) Main points / issues raised
 - a) ***Payments should be paid on time.***
 - b) ***Take inflation into account where possible.***
 - c) ***Reflect trend in funders moving away from supporting core costs towards full cost recovery.***
 - d) ***Guidance to be provided with applications including examples where possible, clarifying what information is required and what costs are and are not eligible.***

- e) *Give early notification on agreement to future years funding and if this is not possible identify contingencies e.g. extend existing contracts by a couple of months until decisions are made.*
- f) *Where possible provide advance initial payments to kick-start projects.*
- g) *Same processes/ timescales/ information apply to VCS groups when applying for tenders. Level playing field.*

2) Specific amendments proposed.

- a) *Timely process – identify key dates.*

Consultation & Policy Code

1) Main points / issues raised

- a) *Viii – extend to ensure closer coordination between departments and organisations.*
- b) Encourage area based networks to ensure information gets to smallest / more isolated groups and maximises resources?
- c) Different levels of consultation.

2) Specific amendments proposed.

- a) *ii) formats include e.g. language texts.*
- b) *iii) remove ideally and written.*
- c) *iv) variety of methods and new methods – innovative?*
- d) *vii) include clear and constructive.*
- e) *ix) remove 'seek' from sentence (check code if in leave).*
- f) *ix) typo well – will.*
- g) *x) remove 'developing' from sentence.*

Children's & Young People Code

1) Main points / issues raised

Conflict - Everyone should be treated the same – danger of not doing this if groups are listed e.g. young people, elderly, shouldn't be separate as community means everyone.

- Young people special case – don't vote, can't attend day time meetings etc. 7 vision statements purely for young people – kept separate. Support separate code and use young people words with their permission.

2) Specific amendments proposed.

- a) Need to be specific about inclusion of young people with disabilities.

Young Voices – 26/11/07

The young people were happy for the 7 vision statements to be included in the Compact on the condition that it is clearly identified that they were written by the Young Voices. They also felt that it would not be appropriate to widen out the vision statements to apply to different groups beyond children and young people.

Minority and Small Community Groups Code

- 1) Main points / issues raised
 - a) Lots of points. Needs to be more cohesive/ better order.
 - b) Point 3 needs to be overriding statement.**
- 2) Specific amendments proposed.
 - a) iii) include isolated groups.**
 - b) vi) include BME reference group.
 - c) ix) remove diverse people (NB. HBC Diversity Officer asked for this).
 - d) Think of a better title – be clearer about what groups are being referred to.

Code of Practice on Representation

- 1) Main points / issues raised
 - a) Reps should be selected and/or elected.
 - b) Use existing mechanisms where possible e.g. Community Network.
 - c) Protocol needs to be reviewed every 3 years.
 - d) Who are relevant advocates?
- 2) Specific amendments proposed.
 - a) “is that where” – grammar needs amending.**
 - b) Footnote 4 missing.**

Volunteering Code

- 1) Main points / issues raised
 - a) HVDA have a volunteering code – could cross reference this as well as the national code.
- 2) Specific amendments proposed.
 - a) Remove 4th sentence in entirety.**

Partners

- a) As it is plus Sports Council and Network Contacts.
- b) Which sports council – North East or Hartlepool/
- c) Hospital/ Trusts needs clearing up.

Post Conference Draft 1

HARTLEPOOL COMPACT 2008

FOREWORD (The Mayor?)

In Hartlepool there is a strong tradition of the public, private and community and voluntary sectors working in partnership to improve the environment and economic and social well being of the Borough.

This Compact sets out the agreed working practices between the voluntary, community and named public sector service providers and recognises the value of services provided by voluntary and community groups in Hartlepool.

This Compact aims to make a difference to our community by helping to deliver, directly and in partnership with others, high quality services which will improve the quality of life of our residents.

COMMENTS

May wish to extend the Compact to include setting out principles to be aspired to when dealing with particular groups of people, for example children and young people, the elderly, minority groups as well as VCS groups who represent these people.

1. PURPOSE OF COMPACT

The Compact is an agreement between Hartlepool Borough Council, local service providers *and commissioners of services* and the voluntary and community sector.

The purpose of the Compact is to set out codes of practice and terms of engagement that organisations will agree to work to and more importantly sign up to. This will ensure that all partners are aware of and can be responsible for the level of engagement expected from them and what they expect from others when working in partnership. This mutual agreement between partners will improve their relationships and benefit the communities within Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) is a key partner in the design and delivery of services that communities want.

In recognition of this, in 1998 a national compact was launched which set out an agreement between the Government and the VCS to improve their relationships for mutual advantage.

Such an approach was also encouraged at regional and local levels.

Early in 2003 a framework was developed that set out the shared values, principles and operational guidelines between Hartlepool Borough Council, community groups and voluntary organisations in Hartlepool. This was the Borough's first local Compact and it included a commitment to extend the approach to encompass other agencies' relationships with the Hartlepool community and voluntary sector.

In 2006 a regional compact was developed aiming to improve partnership working and relationships between regional organisations within the VCS and the public sector in the North East. It provides a basic framework setting out the main principles and commitments that these relationships can be built upon.

One of the recommendations of the Borough Council's Strengthening Communities Best Value Review in 2006 was that the local Compact needed to be strengthened and re-launched. Hartlepool Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership¹ (LSP)) considered these recommendations in February 2007. In addition, in line with the commitment in the first local Compact, and following the Regional Compact, which encompasses the whole of the public sector, this second local Compact has been developed to include other named partners, and therefore builds on the first Compact.

A full list of all the partners is included in **Appendix 1**.

3. STATUS OF THE COMPACT

This local Compact has been drawn up in partnership following consultation with the VCS, key public sector bodies and local organisations.

It is a written agreement containing a series of codes designed to improve relationships between the VCS and other organisations in Hartlepool (and sets out guidelines on *meaningful* consultation with various sectors of the community could be cross-referenced with Hartlepool Borough Council's Consultation Toolkit).

¹ The Hartlepool Partnership is the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). Working through a Board and a set of Theme Partnerships; it brings together a range of local organisations to give the Borough a strong, united voice.

It is **not** a -

- Service level agreement
- Contract
- Legally binding document
- Funding guarantee
- Replacement for existing partnership agreements

It is hoped that the Compact will bring real change in culture and produce significant benefits to local communities by helping public agencies and local organisations, both voluntary and statutory, to work more effectively to provide better services.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

There is need for an ongoing process of review to ensure effective implementation of the Hartlepool Compact, ensuring that it is made to work in practice.

The following arrangements have been made to keep its operation under review:-

It is proposed to set up a Steering Group of representatives from the public sector and local organisations and elected/selected VCS members, meeting regularly to monitor progress and develop annual action plans.

It is also proposed that the annual action plans need to be tied into Hartlepool's Local Area Agreement² Annual Performance Framework and they should be monitored through the Hartlepool Partnership.

5. THE HARTLEPOOL COMPACT CODES

The Hartlepool Compact puts forward a series of Codes which provide the ground rules for good practice. The Codes are for all parties to strive to achieve. They cover the following areas:-

- a. Funding code
- b. Consultation and Policy code.
- c. Children and Young People's code (to be discussed further)
- d. Minority and Small Community Groups code
- e. Code of Practice on Representation
- f. Volunteering Code

² Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are based on Local Community Strategies that set out the priorities for a local area agreed between Central Government (represented by the Regional Government Office) and a local area (represented by the local authority and other key partners through the LSP).

a) Funding Code

- i) We will adopt processes that are non-discriminatory to small voluntary and community groups.
- ii) We will recognise the importance of funding core costs (*whilst acknowledging the trend of funders moving away from funding core costs to encouraging VCS groups to apply for funding on the basis of full cost recovery rates*), repeat funding and inflation rises.
- iii) We will recognise the benefits of offering multi-year and roll-forward funding, preferably on a 3 year basis where possible, to allow for long-term planning.
- iv) *We will where possible give early notification on agreements for future years funding and if this is not possible identify contingencies e.g. extend existing contracts by a couple of months until decisions are made.*
- v) We will adopt an open, transparent and timely (*clearly set out*) funding process and ensure that voluntary, community and local organisations realise the principles of accountability and transparency in all areas of their activities.
- vi) *We will adopt an open, transparent and timely (clearly set out) tendering process ensuring that the same processes / timescales / information will apply to all will apply to VCS groups and organisations.*
- vii) We will adopt the practice of written agreements which set out the objectives of funding, the payment arrangements and the monitoring requirements.
- viii) We will seek to allocate resources against clear and consistent criteria, including value for money.
- ix) We will seek to maintain high standards of governance and conduct and meet reporting and accountability obligations to funders and users.
- x) We will respect and be accountable to the law and in the case of charities, observe the appropriate guidance from the Charity Commission.
- xi) We will seek to assist local groups to be able to compete for work which is being commissioned or contracted, where appropriate

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- xii) *We will seek to ensure that funding will be paid on time and where possible make payments in advance to 'kick start' projects.*
- xiii) *We will adopt the practice of providing detailed application guidance for voluntary, community and local organisations, including examples where possible, clarifying the information required and detailing eligible costs.*

b) Consultation and Policy Code

- i) We will ensure inclusiveness with partners, and share strategy documents and consultation exercises.
- ii) All our documents will use simple, clear language and will be available in formats, *including different languages if requested* to meet the needs of residents.
- iii) We will build early consultation into plans for statutory policy and strategy development, allowing 8 weeks for consultation, where practicable.
- iv) We recognise the constraints upon, and resource implications for voluntary and community organisations, and will use a variety of consultation methods (*innovative where possible*) in order to be as inclusive as possible.
- v) We will make clear the purpose and scope of each consultation and will provide background information and contact details for additional information.
- vi) For each consultation, information will include details of the timescale, any decisions already made, arrangements for expressing views and clarification on what influence those views will have on any other contributory factors to the final decision making process.
- vii) We will ensure there will be clear *and constructive* feedback setting out reasons for decisions made or the adoption of a specific approach.
- viii) To avoid duplication and consultation fatigue, and to ensure the best use of resources, we will use existing networks and forums to publicise and organise consultation *as well as ensuring closer coordination between departments of large organisations and between public sector agencies.*
- ix) We *will* seek to ensure respect and confidentiality in relation to the privileged information that may be exchanged, within the constraints of the law and the proper performance of public duties.

- x) We will support the 7 visions of the participation strategy to increase the effective involvement and participation of children and young people in shaping the Borough-wide services available to them across the statutory and non-statutory sectors (see below).

c) Children and Young People's Code

COMMENTS

Rather than have a separate code on children and young people these 7 commitments could be presented as generic as they could also be applied to other people, for example the elderly, the mentally ill, people with learning difficulties etc. etc. If presented in this way could then cross reference this using associated established consultation mechanisms where they are available, such as the Participation Strategy for Children and Young People, then the 7 visions could be put into an "appendix."

In response to the national 'Every Child Matters' agenda Hartlepool Borough Council is developing a Participation Strategy aimed at increasing the effective involvement and participation of children and young people in shaping the Borough-wide services available to them, across the statutory and non-statutory sectors.

The first stage of the Strategy includes seven visions for Young People's Participation in Hartlepool, and the Compact adopts these, as follows:

- i) We will ensure our staff and the children and young people that we work with receive training and support on how they can take part to make things better;
- ii) We will ensure that we inform and involve children and young people in the working of the organisation, including volunteering and work opportunities where appropriate;
- iii) We will share evidence, knowledge and skills on how we involve, support and praise children and young people;
- iv) We will identify what money, time and resources there is to support what we do;
- v) We will make sure there are different ways for our staff, and the children and young people who we work with, to be involved in participation;

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- vi) We will take young people's views seriously about what all children and young people think is important;
 - vii) We will explain and respect the rights and responsibilities of children and young people.
- d) Minority and Small Community Groups' Code
- i) We will include in this category other groups that may experience marginalisation, *isolated*, disadvantage, exclusion or discrimination.
 - ii) We will actively support the development of voluntary and community groups and related infrastructure organisations, recognising their local knowledge, expertise and perspective.
 - iii) We will share policy documents and best practice, and ensure that diverse community groups³ are properly represented in their preparation.
 - iv) We will ensure that we do not discriminate against any voluntary or community group on the basis of faith, race, disability, age or sexual orientation (lesbian, gay and bisexual) and gender (transgender), and will respect the voluntary nature of their work.
 - v) We will work to promote and monitor policies and services that eradicate discriminatory practice, implementing equality and diversity policies, and setting objectives and targets as appropriate.
 - vi) We will work with advocates and existing support mechanisms to maximise contributions. Named contacts will be identified within the Voluntary Sector and key organisations (?) to deal with issues raised by minority groups, and act as a conduit to access relevant officers and services.
 - vii) We will seek to ensure that staff and contacts receive training and awareness as to specific needs and responses to particular sectors of Hartlepool's diverse community.
 - viii) We will support existing Diverse Community Groups and will develop others so that people from diverse communities can raise concerns.
 - ix) We will encourage involvement and networking between the VCS, diverse people, and small community groups thereby increasing skills and knowledge.

³ Diverse community groups refer to Black and Minority Ethnic groups and other minority groups.

COMMENTS

It has been noted that the Council now has the duty to promote equality and diversity with its partners.

Whilst the points above (particularly iv and v) reflect this, as part of the process of monitoring policies equality targets need to be identified, defined, agreed and worked towards.

Once this Compact framework has been finalised, in consultation with public sector partners and the VCS, as indicated in Section 4 (Implementation and Review), an Annual Action Plan will be prepared and will be used to monitor progress. Targets will be set, and in line with the Council's duty to promote equality and diversity, equality targets could be included in the Annual Action Plan

e) Code of Practice on Representation

A Protocol between the Hartlepool Partnership and the Hartlepool Community Network⁴ was agreed by the Hartlepool Partnership Board on 21 October 2005.

A copy of this full Protocol **can be found on the Hartlepool Partnership Website at www.hartlepoolpartnership.gov.uk** and it includes principles for community and voluntary sector representation on the Hartlepool Partnership.

A basic principle of this Protocol is; where there is a requirement for representation from the VCS, representatives will be selected or elected through an open and transparent recruitment process and representatives will be accountable to the VCS.

The Compact adopts this basic principle on representation.

f) Volunteering Code

The National Compact includes a Volunteering Code of Good Practice. A copy of this Code **can be found on the Compact Website at www.thecompact.org.uk**. The Code of Good Practice sets out principles and undertakings for both Government and the VCS in England on how to work together to support and promote volunteering and voluntary action. This Code including the principles on volunteering have been adopted into this local Compact.

⁴ Hartlepool Community Network is the town's Community Empowerment Network and is the means by which the community is brought together to influence the work of the Hartlepool Partnership. The aim is to bring the views of the VCS into the development of the decision making process and to encourage wider resident participation in neighbourhood renewal.

COMMENTS: May wish to add in local information on the Volunteer Bureau and Millennium volunteers.

COMMENTS: We could break up the Codes with some case studies and examples of best practice, locally.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

To include contacts and websites for groups etc. and information on national, regional compacts, LSP, etc.

E.g. further information on the national and regional Compacts is available on the Compact Website at www.thecompact.org.uk

THE PARTNERS

• Hartlepool Borough Council
• Cleveland Police Authority
• <i>National Probation Service Teesside and Durham</i>
• Hartlepool Youth Offending <i>Service</i>
• Hartlepool Primary Care Trust
• North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust
• Learning and Skills Council
• Jobcentre Plus
• Cleveland Fire <i>Authority</i>
• The Environment Agency
• One NorthEast
• <i>Sport England</i>
• Hartlepool New Deal for Communities
• Housing Hartlepool
• Business Link

COMMENTS

This initial list has been based on the new named partners that will be placed under a duty to co-operate with each other to agree relevant targets in the LAA, plus other key local organisations which are partners on the Hartlepool Partnership.

THE VCS

COMMENTS

Need to establish how best to indicate signing up of all VCS partners.

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A	
Accessibility	<u>Either</u> easy to approach, enter into, or use, e.g. information or a Task Group or building. 2. Or designed to include disabled people e.g ramps for wheelchair users, signers for deaf people and large print for partially sighted people.
Accountable body	The legal body that will handle government grants on behalf of a Partnership
Accountability	Being responsible for someone or something.
Action Plan	A short term plan of action with targets and milestones.
Advantage	A beneficial feature.
Agreement	Holding the same opinion.
Audit	To identify all facilities, activities, resources specific to an area / group / department / association. For example, a Community Audit, or a financial check which is undertaken.
B	
Baseline	Starting point.
Baseline Figure/Information	A description of the current local conditions against which planned changes will be measured.
Benchmark	The criteria by which to measure or compare something.
Best Value	Means by which public bodies are required to continuously review and improve services.

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Best Value Review (BVR)	The Council is required by law to work towards better services for local people within reasonable costs; this is a review of this process.
BME Group	Black and Minority Ethnic Group.
Business Link	Provide the information, advice and support you need to start, maintain and grow a business.
C	
CCTV	Close Circuit Television is used for surveillance of an area in order to deter and reduce crime, and to identify individuals who partake in criminal activity.
Census	Exercise undertaken every 10 years (last one: 2001). This provides statistical information on the population.
Charity Commission	The Charity Commission for England and Wales is established by law as the regulator and registrar of charities in England and Wales.
Children's Trusts	Partnerships that provide a mechanism to lead the way in delivering a step change in services for children and young people.
Cleveland Fire Brigade	Local Fire Authority.
Cleveland Police Authority	Cleveland Police Authority is an independent body set up as a result of the Magistrates Court Act 1994.
Codes	A system of pre-arranged words, letters or symbols.
Community	All the people living in a specific locality.

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Community Capacity Building	To increase educational attainment hopes and aspirations, the number of opportunities to exercise positive choice and confidence build, particularly where planning for the future is involved. The main aim is to equip the community with the skills, which will enable them to participate.
Community Empowerment Network (CEN)	The network of voluntary and community sector groups and organisations operating in Hartlepool.
Community Sector	See 'Voluntary Sector' – but usually more dependent on volunteers, not paid staff.
Community Strategy	The plan that has been produced by law to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the community and sustainable development.
Compact	A framework for working to improve the relationship between a statutory body (like the council) and the community/voluntary sector aimed at improving relationships and based on shared values and mutual respect.
Consortium	A group of organisations that combine resources towards a common aim.
Consultation	Involvement of individuals in the decision-making process e.g. service providers, residents, school children, community and voluntary groups and Councillors.
Council Cabinet	Main policy co-ordination body of the Council.
Councillor	An elected representative who is a member of Hartlepool Borough Council.
D	
Department	The Borough Council is split in to a number of different functions e.g. Regeneration and Planning, Adult and Community Services, Children's Services etc. Each one of these is a

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	department.
Deprived, Deprivation & Disadvantage	Communities or groups where several factors reduce the life chances and opportunities for people (see Index of Multiple Deprivation).
Discriminatory	Unfavourable treatment based on prejudice.
Diversionary activities	Activities to attract people away from crime.
DfES – Department for Education & Skills	The Department for Children, Schools and Families leads work across Government to ensure that all children and young people: stay healthy and safe; secure an excellent education and the highest possible standards of achievement ; enjoy their childhood; make a positive contribution to society and the economy; have lives full of opportunity, free from the effects of poverty.
Drugs Action Team (DAT)	Hartlepool DAT is a multi agency partnership with the aim of identifying and implementing policies and strategies for tackling drug misuse, reducing health risks related to drug misuse, increasing the safety of communities from drug related crime and raising awareness of drug issues through education and campaigns.
E	
Economic Forum	Partnership interested in the economy and jobs.
Engagement	To take part in something.
Environment Agency	We are the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales.
ESF – European Social Fund	European funding aimed at training.

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Evaluation	To judge or assess the success of something, which has taken place.
F	
Feasibility Study	An exercise before implementation to assess whether an action is likely to achieve its objective.
Forward Strategy	Arrangements to continue the process once a regeneration programme is complete.
Framework	An established plan or structure.
Funding	A stock of money.
G	
GONE – Government Office North East	Exists to bring together the regional aspects of various Government departments. Responsible for spending some Government money at regional level, including the co-ordination of regional programmes.
Governance	How a body or organisation is managed.
Government	A system by which a state or community is governed.
Guidelines	A principle or criterion, guiding or directing action.
H	
Hartlepool Community Network	The community empowerment network in Hartlepool which seeks to involve residents and community groups in the decision making of local partnerships.
Hartlepool New Deal for Communities (NDC)	Hartlepool New Deal for Communities (NDC) is one of 39 similar regeneration initiatives across the country. Each has been awarded up to £54 million of extra Government funding over a 10

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	year period.
Hartlepool Partnership	Hartlepool's 'Local Strategic Partnership' (LSP) including the key service providers, business and community interests working together to improve the quality of life in the town.
Hartlepool Primary Care Trust (PCT)	Hartlepool Primary Care Trust (PCT) is the organisation that provides and commissions Hartlepool's local primary and community health services. Its main role is to improve health and make sure that when people are ill they have access to the best possible health care.
HBC - Hartlepool Borough Council	Hartlepool Borough Council is the local authority for Hartlepool and the surrounding district. It is a unitary authority and, as such, is responsible for all local government functions within its area.
Health Action Zone	A seven-year project in Hartlepool, which aims to drive forward innovation and change between health and social care agencies to improve results on a number of health targets.
Health Improvement Plan	Improvement plan for the local Health and Authority and Primary Care Trust.
Housing Association	A not-for-profit organisation which provides social housing and is run by voluntary committees. They improve properties and build new homes. They also provide homes for sale through special schemes to help people on lower incomes, who wish to become home owners.
Housing Hartlepool	Housing Hartlepool has taken over the running of 7,500 houses, which were formally Council stock. Housing Hartlepool is a not for profit organisation delivering a £99 million improvement programme.
HVDA - Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency	Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) helps local groups to deliver their services effectively and to access appropriate advice and information on a wide range of issues from charitable status, to managing a group, raising funds or developing meaningful partnerships with other agencies.

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I	
ICT – Information and Communications Technology	Information and Communications Technology – modern machines which help with the distribution of information e.g. personal computers).
Implementation	Carrying out a strategy.
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	This index measures the relative levels of need across all areas of England.
Inequalities	Gaps between the most advantaged and most disadvantaged.
Intergenerational Activities	Activities to enable all age groups to work together.
J	
Jobcentre Plus	Provides help and advice on jobs and training for people who can work and financial help for those who cannot find employment.
JSU – Joint Strategy Unit	Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit – responsible for strategic planning on local services and issues in the Tees Valley area.
K	
Key Indicators	The outputs and activities regarded as central to the fulfilment of the Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP).
Key Stages (KS)	Key Stages (in education, stages where progress is measured).
L	

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LAAs - Local Area Agreement's	Agreement between Hartlepool Borough Council, the Hartlepool Partnership and Central Government that sets out the priorities for Hartlepool, along with indicators and three year targets.
LIT – Local Implementation Team	A joint body comprising health and care agencies that plan and implement local service delivery.
Local	Belonging to the neighbourhood.
LSC Tees Valley – Learning and Skills Council	Organisation responsible for the coordination of post 16 years training and education in the Tees Valley.
LSP – Local Strategic Partnership	See Hartlepool Partnership.
M	
Match Funding	Funding, obtainable from various sources, towards the eligible costs of a project, in the form of monetary and in-kind support.
Milestone	Important stages or events with date – used to indicate the progress a partnership is making towards its aims.
Minority	A relatively small group of people differing from others in society of which they are a part in race, religion, language or political persuasion.
Monitoring	Regular measure of the progress of projects.
MORI Survey	A sample survey carried out to obtain statistical information from households (last one: 2006).

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Mutual	Common to two or more people with reference to each other.
N	
NAP - Neighbourhood Action Plan	Document produced to set out the vision and objectives of the community for their neighbourhood and which details the actions and initiatives which will help to achieve them.
NEET - Not in Education Employment or Training.	This refers to those people (aged 16-18) who are not currently engaged in " <u>Employment</u> , <u>Education</u> or <u>Training</u> ".
Neighbourhood Development	To make improvements in the streets and surrounding areas where people live.
Neighbourhood Element (NE) Funding of the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF)	Funding to improve outcomes for the people living in the neighbourhoods which fall within the 3% most deprived wards nationally.
Neighbourhood Management	Management of services recognising local needs.
Neighbourhood Renewal	Improvement and revitalising of the quality of lives in neighbourhoods.
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF)	Special funding initiative to help Councils point main programme activity to neighbourhoods most in need.
NHS – National Health Service	The publicly funded health care system of England providing the majority of healthcare in England, including primary care (such as general practitioners), in-patient care, long-term healthcare, ophthalmology and dentistry.
NHS Foundation Trust	NHS foundation trusts (often referred to as 'foundation hospitals') are at the cutting edge of the Government's commitment to the decentralisation of public services and the creation of a

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	patient-led NHS.
NRF Area - Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Area.	A designated area to utilise NRF funding (see Neighbourhood Renewal Fund).
NRF Residents Priorities Budget	Funding to tackle residents priorities in NRF areas.
O	
Objectives	Short or medium term aims that can usually be measured.
One North East	The Regional Development Agency (RDA) for the North East of England responsible for delivery of an economic strategy and regeneration.
Outcome	Something that follows from an action (e.g. as a result of an initiative, the unemployment rate is reduced by 15%). The long-term effects you want to see created by a strategy or programme.
Output	Something produced directly as a result of an action and usually more easily counted (e.g. as a result of an initiative 10 jobs were created and 6 people gained qualifications). Tells you about the immediate results of a project, programme or strategy.
P	
Participation	A two way process involving the sharing of information and ideas, where residents are able to influence decisions and take part in what is happening.
Partnership	Drawing together a number of separate groups or individuals for a common purpose.
Pilot Project	A small-scale study or trial of a larger project or plan.

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Primary Care	Health care given outside hospital, often in the community.
Primary Care Trust (PCT)	Hartlepool based trust responsible for primary care.
Priorities	Most important aims, activities or areas.
Private Sector	Business or other non-public agencies
Projects	The individual components or elements of the overall regeneration scheme, which may or may not require funding.
Public Sector	Organisations run or paid for with public money.
R	
Regeneration	The upgrading of an area through social, physical and economic improvements.
Regional	An area of land or division of the earth's surface, having definable boundaries or characteristics.
Relationships	A connexion or association.
Residents Association	A group of residents bound by a written constitution, who represent residents' views within a certain area.
Review	Revision or reconsideration.
S	
Service Providers	An organization that provides some kind of service.
Social Exclusion	To leave out of society, or prevent from entering in to it, or to alienate. Usually occurs due to

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	poverty, deprivation and disadvantage, lack of access / opportunities to rights, benefits, services, jobs and the housing market.
Sports Council	Sport England advises, invests in and promotes community sport to create an active nation.
Stakeholder	A group or an individual with an interest, usually physical or financial, in an initiative, project or activity, and its outcomes etc.
Strategic Target	A target that actions identified in the NAP will seek to address.
Strategy	An overall plan, which can be short, medium or long term and clearly states what, is going to be achieved.
Sustainability	To keep up the vitality and strength of something over a period of time e.g. a community.
T	
Targets	Measurable level being aimed for, usually within a set time period.
Tees Valley Probation Service	Regional probation service.
Tenure	In a housing context, this refers to the ownership of a property or home e.g. owner – occupier, privately rented, Housing Hartlepool etc.
V	
Void	An empty property.
Voluntary Organisation	Voluntary organisations are bodies whose activities are carried out otherwise than for profit, but do not include any public or local authority. The organisation should be formally constituted, for example as a charitable trust or a company limited by guarantee.

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Voluntary Sector	A collective name to describe voluntary organisations in a town. In Hartlepool, over 400 organisations make up the voluntary sector.
Y	
Youth Offending Team	Team established to address youth offending.

7.1 APPENDIX 2.2

Hartlepool Compact 2008

List of Abbreviations - DRAFT

CEF	Community Empowerment Fund
CEN	Community Empowerment Network
CMT	Corporate Management Team
CS	Community Strategy
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
HBC	Hartlepool Borough Council
HVDA	Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
JSU	Joint Strategy Unit
LA	Local Authority
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LDF	Local Development Framework
LEA	Local Education Authority
LPSA	Local Public Service Agreement
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MORI	Market & Opinion Research International
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NHS	National Health Service
NRS	Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
PI	Performance Indicator
PMF	Performance Management Framework
PSA	Public Service Agreement
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
TVJSU	Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit
TVP	Tees Valley Partnership
URC	Urban Regeneration Company
VCS	Voluntary / Community Sector

CABINET REPORT

17 March 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Subject: FORMAL RESPONSE - POST OFFICE LIMITED
NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response will be presented at this meeting in relation to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee met on the 6 March 2008 and after hearing evidence in relation to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme, the Committee formulated a formal response.
- 2.2 The response from the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will assist/shape the Council's formal response to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme, as part of the consultation process which closes on 26 March 2008.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the content of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response with regard to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme, to assist / shape the Council's formal response for submission to Post Office Limited by 26 March 2008.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

- 4.1 Non-key decision as response to formal consultation process undertaken by Post Office Limited.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 6 and 14 March 2008 and Cabinet on 17 March 2008.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the content of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response with regard to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme, to assist / shape the Council's formal response for submission to Post Office Limited by 26 March 2008.

CABINET

17 March 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Subject: FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE POST OFFICE
LIMITED NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response in relation to the consultation process for the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme will be circulated to Members in advance of and for consideration during this meeting.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 By way of background information, Post Office Limited is required to fulfil the Government's requirements of reducing the overall size of the Post Office Network. In practice this means that Post Office Limited are proposing to close a number of branches in Hartlepool, namely Elwick Road, Hart and Raby Estate Branches as outlined within their Area Plan Proposal for Cleveland with South Durham and Richmond.
- 2.2 The Council's approach to the Post Office Network Change Programme's formal consultation process has been twofold, firstly a Public Meeting was held on the afternoon of 29 February 2008 to ensure the views of local people were taken into account before any decisions are made by Post Office Limited and secondly, the involvement of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the evening of 6 March 2008 to assist in the formulation of the Council's formal response to the consultation process.
- 2.3 This six week public consultation exercise, undertaken by Post Office Limited commenced on 12 February 2008 and closes on 26 March 2008. To enable the Council to submit a response to the formal consultation process by the required deadline, the views of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will be considered at this meeting, to assist/shape the Council's formal response.

- 2.4 In accordance with the Authority's Access to Information Rules, it has not been possible to include the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response within the statutory requirements for the despatch of the agenda and papers for this Cabinet meeting, as the Committee meet on the evening of 6 March 2008. Although, arrangements have been made for the Committee's formal response to be circulated under separate cover and in advance of this meeting.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

(a) notes the content of this report; and

(b) considers the content of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response with regard to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme, which has been previously circulated under separate cover in advance of this meeting to assist / shape the Council's formal response for submission to Post Office Limited by 26 March 2008.

Contact Officer:- Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

CABINET

17 March 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Subject: FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE POST OFFICE LIMITED NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response in relation to the consultation process for the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 By way of background information, Post Office Limited is required to fulfil the Government's requirements of reducing the overall size of the Post Office Network. In practice this means that Post Office Limited are proposing to close a number of branches in Hartlepool, namely Elwick Road, Hart and Raby Estate Branches as outlined within their Area Plan Proposal for Cleveland with South Durham and Richmond.
- 2.2 As such the Council's approach to the Post Office Network Change Programme's formal consultation process has been twofold, firstly a Public Meeting was held on the afternoon of 29 February 2008 to ensure the views of local people were taken into account before any decisions are made by Post Office Limited and secondly, the involvement of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the evening of 6 March 2008 to assist in the formulation of the Council's formal response to the consultation process.
- 2.3 This six week public consultation exercise, undertaken by Post Office Limited commenced on 12 February 2008 and closes on 26 March 2008. To enable the Council to submit a response to the formal consultation process by the required deadline, the views of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee are outlined hereafter in this report.

3. FORMAL RESPONSE OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

- 3.1 This response is based on the written and verbal evidence presented by a wide range of stakeholders to both the Public Meeting held on 29 February 2008 and the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 6 March 2008. Members felt very strongly that the Post Office closure programme for Hartlepool would have a severe impact on the community, particularly amongst groups at risk of experiencing social exclusion, including older people, lone parents, unemployed people, disabled people, carers, those without access to a car and those who find it difficult to access public transport.
- 3.2 For Hartlepool, the closure programme will lead to three branches closing in Hartlepool, namely Elwick Road, Hart and Raby Estate Branches as outlined within the Area Plan Proposal for Cleveland with South Durham and Richmond.
- 3.3 The evidence presented during both meetings illustrated that the three Post Offices proposed for closure provide an essential service to their communities and for many, Post Offices are a lifeline and without them many thousands of people will become increasingly isolated.
- 3.4 In support of maintaining the three Post Offices proposed for closure in Hartlepool, further information has been commissioned by the Hartlepool Partnership and is outlined below :

Raby Estate Post Office

- (a) The Raby Estate Post Office lies within the Dyke House / Stranton / Grange Neighbourhood Renewal area. There are three LSOA's within the immediate vicinity of the Post Office, all three are in the top 9% most deprived with one (ref ED1011956) just outside the most deprived 1%. There is a population count of 31,091 (23,487 Adults) within a one mile catchment area of the Raby Estate Post Office.
- (b) Car ownership within this catchment area is low at 36% compared to 44% nationally, this equates to approximately 15,000 people not owning a car within one mile of this Post Office. The next nearest branch is Middleton Road 0.5 miles from the Raby Estate branch, however this could equate to a two mile round trip to the next nearest Post Office, for people living on the outskirts of the one mile catchment area. In terms of households without a car within the Dyke House Ward; this equates to 54.8%, double the national average of 26.8%.
- (c) It is estimated that the average cost of a round trip by bus to and from the next nearest Post Office at Middleton Road is £2.00. To travel by

bus to and from the Middleton Grange Branch would cost approximately £2.40. Access by foot to the next nearest Post Office would result in a number of people 'cutting through' the North Cemetery as the shortest direct route to the Middleton Road branch. This raises issues of personal safety particularly for the more vulnerable members of the population.

- (d) Approximately 7,500 people (24%), within one mile of the Post Office, suffer from long term limiting illness compared to 18.5% nationally. There are 8,392 families living within the catchment area with 22 % of these being lone parents against a national average of 16.5 %. There is an elderly population of approximately 4,650 (15%), this measures against a national average of 16%. Working age population receiving Incapacity Benefits within the Dyke House Ward is extremely high at 35% compared to just 13.3% nationally.
- (e) The percentage of people having access to a bank or building society account within the one mile catchment area of the Raby Estate Post Office is lower than the national average (95 % against national average of 97.5%). This equates to a figure of up to 1170 people relying on the Post Office card account to access their benefits / pension.
- (f) Should this Post Office close there will be approximately 634 addresses over one mile away from nearest Post Office. Of these 634 addresses, 144 are from the Lower Layer Super Output Area E01012006 which is ranked as in the bottom 22.27% of most deprived areas within England (Index Multiple Deprivation 2007). However under both Employment Deprivation and the Health Deprivation and Disability Domain this particular SOA falls within the most deprived 10%.
- (g) The Hartfield retirement village which is scheduled for completion in 2008/09 falls within the one mile catchment area of the Raby Estate Post Office. There are 214 apartments and 28 bungalows within this development giving an estimated elderly population increase within the one mile catchment area of up to 480 people. There are also a further 98 dwellings under construction as part of the ongoing Middle Warren development. The retirement village and the new dwellings also fall within the one mile catchment area of the West View and King Oswy branches.
- (h) The Post Office is based within an independent retail store with four staff. It is likely that the store would close if the Post Office function was not retained.

3.5 In summary, the Raby Estate Post Office lies within a highly deprived area, closure of this branch would impact on some of the most vulnerable people within the community, many of whom rely on the services provided by this

branch. Car ownership is extremely low in comparison to the national average with many people therefore relying on the local bus services to access the next nearest branch / branches. There are also concerns relating to the accessibility of the next closest Branch in terms of the shortest possible route on foot.

Elwick Road Post Office

- (a) This Post Office lies on the boundary of the Hartlepool NDC area and the Rift House / Burn Valley Neighbourhood Renewal area and covers areas within the 3% most deprived (IMD). There is a population count of 29,247 (22,117 Adult) within a one mile catchment area of the Post Office. Car ownership is low at 36% compared to 44% nationally, this equates to approximately 14,000 people not owning a car within one mile of the Elwick Road Post Office. Within the Stranton Ward this figure equates to 60.3% of households without a car. The next nearest branch is the Rift House estate branch 0.5 miles away, to which there is no direct bus service. The nearest branch on a bus route is Middleton Grange, one mile from the Elwick Road Post Office. The average cost of a return fare to Middleton Grange would be £2.00.
- (b) Within one mile of this Post Office, approximately 7,000 people (24%) suffer from long term limiting illness compared to 18.5% nationally. There are 8,190 families living within one mile of the Elwick Road Post Office, with 22% of these being lone parent families measured against 16.5% nationally. There is an elderly population of around 4,650 (16%).
- (c) The working age population receiving Incapacity Benefit within the Stranton Ward is 38.7% almost three times the national average.
- (d) The percentage of people within the one mile catchment area accessing a bank or building society account is below the national average (95% against 97.5%) This equates to a figure of up to 1031 people relying on the Post Office card account to access their benefits / pension, within one mile of this Post Office.
- (e) There are six care homes within the immediate vicinity of the Elwick Road Post Office with an overall total capacity of 132 people.
- (f) A number of concerns were raised by both Ward members and residents at both the Public Meeting and the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee with regard to pedestrian access to the Rift House Post Office (next closest available). There was a general consensus that the route would pose serious problems for the elderly and disabled in terms of both personal safety and distance to travel on foot as there is no direct bus service.

3.6 In summary, the Elwick Road Post Office serves many residents from highly deprived neighbourhoods. Many elderly people rely on accessing this Post

Office's services and would face significant access problems to services should this branch close as there is no direct bus route to the next closest Post Office on Oxford Road (Rift House Estate).

Hart Village Post Office

- (a) The population count within a one mile catchment area of the Hart Village Post office is 2,898 (2180 adult population) This will increase on completion of the Middle Warren / Bishop Outhbert estate. A further 315 dwellings are under construction or have Planning approval and will all be within 1 mile of the Post office. Evidence also confirms that there is also a strong customer base from the Bishop Outhbert estate as well as Hart village. Customers from the Bishop Outhbert area are driving approximately one mile to access the Post Office.
- (b) Car ownership is 52% compared with 44% nationally, this equates to 1046 people not owning a car within one mile of the village post office. The next nearest branch is the West View Post Office at 21 Brus Corner. This Post Office is 2.19 miles away from the Hart Post Office with an hourly bus service to and from Hart. King Oswy Post Office is 2.35 miles away and has no direct bus service to and from Hart.
- (c) The village store is also likely to close should the Post Office also close. Should this be the case then there would be no shop within the village.

3.7 In summary, should this branch close then the next closest Post Office is over two miles away with buses running at only one per hour. There will be no village shop within Hart which again impact on the more vulnerable residents within the village.

Post Offices and Partnership Working

- 3.8 In addition to the comments set out above that relate to specific branch closures, the MP, Elected Members, resident representatives, local residents and public sector partners all expressed concerns that Post Office Limited had not sought to have discussions with any key service providers in Hartlepool to explore alternative models of service delivery.
- 3.9 Hartlepool has an established tradition of strong partnership working across all sectors to improve quality of life for the borough's most disadvantaged residents. A number of examples of good practice exist where organisations share outreach facilities including joint work between the Police, Housing Hartlepool, Schools, Community Centres, the local voluntary and Community Sector and Hartlepool Borough Council. There is a strong sense of disappointment that the restrictive timetable established by Post Office Limited precludes partnership working to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are as less as effected as possible by the planned branch closures.

- 3.10 This restrictive timetable runs contrary to the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation that came into effect on 1 April 2004. The revised code has two main aims; to strengthen the commitment to providing respondents with feedback and follow better regulation best practice in developing policy options. The first of the code's six consultation criteria is:

"consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy"

- 3.11 Whilst it is acknowledged that there was a 12 week consultation period on the methodology of the closure programme, it is not considered acceptable that those most affected by the closures do not have the same amount of time available to consider the impact of the proposed closures on the locality and plan accordingly.

Conclusion

- 3.12 The additional information above outlines the precise impact of the proposed post office closures in Hartlepool according to profile of the local community and demographics. Such data was compiled during the limited time available of the six weeks formal consultation process to support their efforts to remain open. Should the proposed closures go ahead, many people who, in one way or another, will experience real genuine hardship as a result of the closures. Should this be the case, the Council firmly believes that Post Office Limited have a responsibility to its customers and would like to know what measures would be put in place to support individuals through the transition to closure process in Hartlepool.

Further More

- 3.13 With some Local Authorities financially protecting Post Offices, Cabinet should ask Post Office Limited what impact such a move has on the consultation and reorganisation process. In addition to this Cabinet should be aware that the Houses of Westminster currently have three Post Offices and might the MP comment on the possible reduction of this number to one or two Post Offices as a gesture of support to the closures planned nationally.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet considers the content of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response with regard to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme, to assist / shape the Council's formal submission to Post Office Limited by 26 March 2008.

COUNCILLOR MARJORIE JAMES

CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Contact Officer:- Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council Tel: 01429 523087
Email: charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (a) Post Office Limited Network Change Programme's Area Plan Proposal for Cleveland with South Durham and Richmond.
- (b) Report of the Head of Community Strategy entitled 'Post Office Network Change Programme' presented to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 6 March 2008.