

CABINET AGENDA



Monday, 27 October 2008

at 9.00 am

**in Committee Room B,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

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

3.1 To receive the Record of Decision in respect of the meeting held on 13 October 2008 (*previously circulated*)

3.2 To receive the Record of Decision in respect of the meeting of the Emergency Planning Joint Committee held on 22nd September 2008 (*attached*)

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

No items

5. KEY DECISIONS

5.1 ICT Provision – Future Arrangements – *Assistant Chief Executive*

5.2 The Hartlepool Compact Review – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 The Way Forward – Business Transformation Programme – *Assistant Chief Executive*
- 6.2 Consultation Response – Transforming Places, Changing Lives – A Framework for Regeneration – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*
- 6.3 Housing Strategy Supplement 2008 – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*
- 6.4 Council Election by Thirds – *Chief Solicitor*

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

No items

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 8.1 Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) – *Assistant Chief Executive*

9. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

EMERGENCY PLANNING JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

22 September 2008

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough

Present: Councillor Barry Coppinger (Middlesbrough BC) (In the Chair)
The Mayor Stuart Drummond (Hartlepool BC)
Councillor Terry Laing (Stockton on Tees BC)

Officers Denis Hampson, Chief Emergency Planning Officer
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

10. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Dave McLuckie (Redcar and Cleveland BC)

11. Declaration of interest by members

None.

12. Confirmation of the minutes of the meetings held on 11 June 2008, 18 June 2008 and 5 September 2008

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

Ambulance Control Room – The Chair informed those present that the Secretary of State for Health had asked an independent review panel to see whether this warrants a review. The outcome of this should be known by the end of September.

Air Support Unit – The Chair stated that this was an ongoing issue with the Police Authority and any further developments would be fed back to the committee.

13. Reported Incidents/Cleveland Communications Strategy – Chief Emergency Planning Officer

The Chief Emergency Planning officer presented the report which detailed the incidents reported, weather and flood risk warnings received and communications strategy faxes received and dealt with by the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit (EPU) for the period between 1 June and 12 August 2008.

Over this period there had been 7 early warnings of heavy rain, 1 early warning of severe gales, 5 warnings of extreme rainfall and 1 heat wave warning. Since the preparation of the circulated report the EPU had received several flood warnings, but Cleveland escaped any major flooding whilst Morpeth and several areas in Northumberland had been seriously affected by flooding.

He also informed Members that the EPU was taking part in a 6 month pilot extreme rainfall scheme that the Meteorological Office is trialling. The pilot scheme was designed to give early and/or immediate warnings of extreme rainfall which had the potential to cause surface water flooding. This was in addition to flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency and therefore there may be times in the future when the EPU received warnings from both Agencies.

There had been a total of 76 'blue faxes' in the first four and a half months of 2008/09 (over half the total for the whole of 2007/08). A third of these had been received and dealt with by the Duty Emergency Planning Officer outside normal office hours. All were blue faxes which were for information only but where appropriate, the local authorities were advised and therefore able to field questions from either the media or the public.

The EPU had been involved in four incidents of note and on some occasions had deployed staff to the scene or Incident Command Rooms to represent the Local Authority. A number of other incidents of a minor nature were also reported to the Cleveland EPU, some of which were dealt with by the Duty Officer out of hours.

Decision

Members noted the report.

14. 4th European Congress on Disaster Management – Chief Emergency Planning Officer

The Chief Emergency Planning Officer (EPO) informed members of the Joint Committee that he had been invited to attend the 4th European Congress on Disaster Management in Bonn, Germany on 8 and 9 October 2008 as a speaker. The conference has been organised by

the German Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance, the German Federal Technical Relief Agency and the newspaper *Behorden Spiegel*. The Chief EPO has been asked to give a 20 – 30 minute presentation and be part of a panel to consider the capabilities of training and exercising. There is only one other speaker from the UK at the conference, a Chief Fire Officer. Travel and hotel accommodation would be met by the congress organisers and any ancillary costs would be met from the Emergency Planning training budget.

Members congratulated the Chief EPO on his invitation and suggested that there should be some publicity about this. The Chief EPO said that the Hartlepool Press Office would release a statement regarding this.

Decision

The Members noted the report.

15. National Health Service (NHS) Graduate Placement – *Chief Emergency Planning Officer*

The Chief EPO informed the meeting that the EPU had been approached by a mature student currently on a 2 year NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme who considered that a secondment to the unit would provide him with experience of business, planning and training processes. The secondment had been agreed, following consultation with the Human Resources Department of Hartlepool Borough Council, for a period from 1 September 2008 until 30 October 2008. There would be no cost to the EPU as all wages and expenses were to be paid by the NHS who also indemnify the EPU against any claims if he was injured etc whilst on his placement.

He would be given 3 projects to undertake; a review of the Cleveland Co-ordination Scheme, a feasibility study of the Joint EPU and the preparation of a multi-agency Scientific Technical Advice Cell (STAC) exercise, in conjunction with the Health Protection Agency. The Chief EPO stated that the Cleveland Co-ordination Scheme had last been updated 7 years ago and was therefore in need of revision. He stated that a Joint EPU feasibility study was necessary to review the need for a joint unit and if so, where this could be located in the future as the Fire Brigade were thinking of relocating from the current site occupied by the EPU. The Chief EPU said that the possibility of integrating the PCT Emergency Planning Officer into the joint unit was also being explored. This would aid more information sharing.

Decision

The report was noted.

16. Restructuring of the Emergency Planning Unit – *Chief Emergency Planning Officer*

The Chief EPO informed members of his proposals to re-structure the EPU to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency of the Unit at a time of increasing workloads and commitments. The Cleveland Unit has fewer staff than any of the neighbouring EPU's. The Strategic Business Plan 2008/11 and the Annual Plan 2008/09 of the Cleveland EPU had both identified the increasing workload of the EPU and increased emphasis on emergency planning from central Government through the Cabinet Office and Civil Contingencies Secretariat.

Over the past three years there has been a large changeover in staff who were recruited, received training but then left after 12 to 18 months, all to undertake more senior roles with their new employers. The knowledge, work ethic and experience they gained whilst with the EPU appeared to be an asset other employers were seeking. Exit interviews with staff who had left indicated that staff had too heavy a workload and that they were getting paid less than in neighbouring Authorities. The Deputy Chief EPO was due to take early retirement in the near future and this, coupled with three other members of staff leaving, had created an opportune time to restructure.

The proposed restructure was outlined i.e. the loss of the Deputy Chief EPO, the creation of a new Principal EPO, creation of a new post of Training and Exercise Officer and a new EPO. There was also the potential to create a new post of Civil Contingencies Officer but that was dependant upon the outcome of the review of the Civil Contingencies Act. The financial implications were outlined in the report. It was intended that the new structure would have a stabilising influence on the EPU and had the support of existing staff. It was envisaged that this would assist with the retention of staff, thereby significantly reducing associated costs of recruitment and retention.

Members asked what the proposed salary scales would be and the Chief EPO stated that there would be an ongoing increase of £13,000 in the proposed staff structure but this would be covered by the loss of the Deputy Chief EPU post, increased income generation and some Beacon status money. There would be no additional financial implications upon the Local Authorities.

Decision

The proposed restructures were endorsed.

17. Fire Brigade Control Room – Chief Emergency Planning Officer

The Chief EPO had prepared a report outlining the implications of the proposed transfer of the Cleveland Fire Brigade Control Room to a new Regional Fire Control Centre located at Belmont Business Park in Durham.

He stated that the proposed introduction of Regional Fire Control Centres was a national project sponsored by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and that the National Framework document stated that 'Fire and Rescue Authorities must make preparations to move their control services to the Regional Control Centre network'. The Government considered that the Regional Control Centres would provide an enhanced call handling and mobilising control facility, utilising the national network of 9 resilience centres which would be fully networked and capable of backing each other up if required. The Government was to invest over £100 million in new Information Technology systems and would cover the costs incurred in the Fire Brigades moving from their existing control rooms. The neighbouring control would be the North West based in Manchester, which would provide an overflow should activity levels exceed capacity in the North East centre and would act as the fall back. March 2010 had been identified as the move from the Cleveland premises. The Regional Control would be owned and run by a Local Authority Controlled Company which would include 2 elected members. It was established that this had been set up and the 2 Members involved were Brenda Forster from Redcar and Cleveland and Robbie Payne from Hartlepool.

The current and proposed staffing along with some current call handling statistics were outlined. It was noted that many larger premises in Cleveland had an automatic fire alarm which went directly to the Fire Control giving the exact location of a possible fire. The fire risks specific to Cleveland were also detailed including amongst others the high level of chemical industry and the nuclear power station.

The Chief EPO then referred to a request from the North East Ambulance Service for information on the views of the Cleveland Emergency Planning Joint Committee regarding the proposed move of the relocation of the Fire Brigade Control Room.

It was felt that the Committee should be consistent in its approach to the relocation of Ambulance and Fire Control Rooms. A suggestion was made that the Local Authority Scrutiny process should become involved. Members queried how advanced the Fire Control relocation process was. The Chief EPO stated that building work was complete and a Project Manager had been appointed. However, he was not aware of what internal work was completed or if the network equipment was installed. The Fire and Rescue National Framework document had

referred to consultation with stakeholders having taken place in 2007. The Chief EPO suggested that this may have been directed to Chief Executives or the Fire Brigade Committee. He was not aware of any public consultation exercise and there had not been any consultation with the Emergency Planning Unit.

Members were concerned about the lack of consultation in the process which they felt should have raised similar issues as those faced by the ambulance service. Members were also concerned that there would be a possible risk to the resilience of the area if the local control room was regionalised.

Decision

Members agreed that the regionalisation of the Fire and Rescue Control should be referred to the individual scrutiny forums of the Local Authorities.

The meeting concluded at 2.00 pm.

Barry Coppinger
CHAIR

CABINET REPORT

27 October 2008



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: ICT PROVISION – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the outcomes of discussions with Northgate in relation to the possible extension of the current ICT support agreement for the authority and obtain a decision on whether or not to agree to an extension.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The current arrangements with Northgate for ICT support to the authority are due to come to their natural conclusion in 2011 and a number of options for future ICT support are under consideration. One of the options is to extend the current arrangements for up to two years, ending in 2013.
- 2.2 A report to Cabinet on 7th July 2008, gave authority for the Assistant Chief Executive to enter into discussions with Northgate in relation to the option to extend the current arrangements and it was agreed that a further report would be brought to Cabinet once the outcome of those discussions was known.
- 2.3 These negotiations are now completed and this report provides details of the proposal, together with the benefits, opportunities and risks that need to be taken into account whilst considering it.
- 2.4 The proposal covers a number of key areas, further detail of which is included in the main body of the report, with commercial details given in Appendix A (exempt). The areas covered by the proposal are
 - A reduction in the base service annual fee
 - Topping up the investment fund to provide capital funding for ICT investment
 - The introduction of new services at no additional cost to the authority
 - Proposals to address the Green Agenda

- 2.5 The authority is well placed in terms of negotiating extension terms as the programme of work for the consideration of the options has commenced at a suitable time. This has resulted in a proposal which, if accepted, will provide the authority with cashable and non-cashable savings, improved services and the opportunity to address ICT issues without incurring the associated expenditure. It also puts the authority in a stronger position when considering future options after 2013.
- 2.6 The report also identifies a number of risks associated with the extension proposal, namely the possible effect on future market interest and the lost opportunity cost of possible gains by continuing to pursue other options at this time. Work has been undertaken to mitigate against these risks as far as is practicable.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

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

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key Decision – Test (i)

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet on 27th October 2008.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 Cabinet is requested to:
- i. Consider the proposals contained within this report to agree a two year extension to the current ICT contract arrangements
 - ii Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive to conclude any negotiations and variations to the contract with the agreement of the Performance Portfolio holder

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: ICT PROVISION – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the outcomes of discussions with Northgate in relation to the possible extension of the current ICT support agreement for the authority and obtain a decision on whether or not to agree to an extension.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A number of reports have been agreed by Cabinet over the last year in relation to arrangements for future ICT support when the current arrangements with Northgate come to their natural end in 2011. A number of options are currently under consideration.
- 2.2 A report to Cabinet on 7th July identified that one of the options was to extend the current arrangements with Northgate for 2 years from 2011 and it was agreed that the Assistant Chief Executive would enter into discussions with Northgate and bring a further report to Cabinet once the outcome of those discussions was known.
- 2.3 It should be noted that even if the decision is made to extend, this can only ever be an interim solution with a maximum addition of two years to the current contract term. Prior to the termination of any extension the mechanisms currently being implemented to determine any future arrangements would be implemented again.

3. PROPOSAL FOR EXTENSION

- 3.1 The proposal covers a number of key areas as outlined below. Details of the financial elements of the proposal are included in the exempt part of the report, at Appendix A.

- A reduction in the base service annual fee
- Topping up the Investment Fund to provide capital funding for ICT investment
- The introduction of new services at no cost to the authority
- Proposals to address the Green Agenda

3.2 Reduction in the base service annual fee.

- 3.2.1 One aspect of the proposal will produce a cumulative reduction in contract payments for the period from 2009/10 to 2013/14. The details

of the reduction are included in the exempt part of this report. It is proposed that this benefit is taken from the existing base contract on a phased basis to provide an ongoing benefit to the revenue budget for the life of the extended contract. This will be beneficial to the Council as the future budget position is challenging and efficiencies will become harder to achieve.

- 3.2.2 It will not be possible to take the whole of these annual reductions as an efficiency, as part of these reductions will be needed to offset inflation on the contract. As Members will be aware, the budget strategy includes provision for inflation of 2.5% for all areas with specific provision then being made for above inflationary increases on a case by case basis through the identification of pressures. The existing contract with Northgate provides for annual price increases of RPI plus 1% and over the last few years this has broadly been contained within the 2.5% inflationary increase included in the base budget. As the current level of RPI exceeds 2.5% there is a shortfall in the existing base budget for this area and if, as expected, inflation continues to exceed 2.5% this will create a budget pressure. This budget pressure can be avoided by allocating part of the contract saving to offset this cost. The table in Appendix A (exempt) illustrates the proposed phasing of the discount and how it could be used to offset this pressure. In the event that inflation falls significantly and remains below 2.5% then the value of the net efficiency which can be taken as a budget reduction will increase, but it would not be prudent to anticipate this potential benefit.
- 3.2.3 This is clearly a significant efficiency saving to the authority and helps to address the current and likely future budget shortfalls.

3.3 Topping up the Investment Fund to provide capital funding for ICT implementation.

- 3.3.1 The Investment Fund was established by Northgate at the beginning of the current contract in 2001 to provide capital funding for ICT developments which the authority wanted to take forward.
- 3.3.2 The proposal includes the topping up of this Investment Fund with two lump sums in 2009/10 and 2011/12. This is money that will be provided by Northgate.
- 3.3.3 This will provide the authority with a significant amount of capital funding for ICT developments, although it is important to ensure that any on-going revenue funding is also available before schemes are approved. As is current practice, any schemes seeking approval would need to present a business case and identify any funding streams before approval would be given.

3.4 Introduction of New Services at no Cost to the Authority

- 3.4.1 As part of the proposal, Northgate have agreed to provide some new services at no additional cost to the authority. During discussions, the authority has identified a number of services which would resolve some outstanding concerns and help to put the authority in a stronger position for any future negotiations.
- 3.4.2 It is proposed that these would be introduced in stages, starting from March 2009. All capital and revenue funding for these schemes would be provided by Northgate.
- 3.4.3 The suggested new services are:
- The provision of a robust service continuity capability to ensure rapid availability of critical Council systems following any main system hardware failure. This would mitigate against the risk of losing access to key data required for some of the authorities most vital services such as adult and community social care.
 - The provision of a new SAN Storage Solution to provide adequate medium term storage capacity based upon current requirements and growth rates. Storage is an ongoing issue for the Council as the amount of electronic data stored increases and this proposal will help to provide a solution in the medium term.
 - Extended service desk hours to support the increasingly flexible working requirements of the authority. The service desk will now be available from 8:00am until 6:00pm Monday to Friday.
 - The provision of a facility to allow users to reset passwords themselves thereby reducing the time users are without access and freeing up HBC ICT staff resources.

3.5 The Green Agenda

- 3.5.1 The proposal includes two potential areas where environmental issues can be addressed, working with HBC.
- 3.5.2 There is a potential for significant cost savings and a reduced carbon footprint through further virtualisation of the existing server estate (where single use servers are replaced by multi-use servers thereby reducing the number of servers required). The proposal is that this initiative is undertaken via a risk/reward scheme whereby Northgate fund the initial investment needed with any resulting cost savings being shared between the two organisations, on a basis to be agreed.
- 3.5.3 As ICT develops, and the number of desktops changes, there is the potential to better manage this estate by redeploying desktops. The proposal is to more actively manage this, potentially reducing the number of new units included in the base contract and there will also be a reduced charge for this equipment whilst not in use.

3.6 Summary of Proposal

3.6.1 To summarise, the proposal from Northgate, if agreed, will provide the Council with:

- Cashable savings via a reduction in the base fee
- Capital funding for ICT projects through a refreshed Investment Fund
- Non-cashable savings through the introduction of new services
- Potential to address environmental issues in relation to ICT with possible further cost savings.

3.6.2 The financial details of the proposal are commercially confidential and as such are included in Appendix A which is not for publication.

4. CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 A number of issues need to be taken into consideration. The proposal, if accepted, would clearly provide the authority with significant financial and service benefits over the next 4 years and delay the implementation phase of any future ICT provision. This includes deferring the need to invest in the re-procurement exercise which is currently planned through the ICT 2011 project as previously reported to Cabinet.

4.2 Consideration also needs to be given to what could be achieved by continuing with the implementation of alternative arrangements at the current time. This is currently an unknown quantity, although it has been possible through research to identify what other local authorities have achieved through similar processes.

4.3 Other major initiatives are also currently being considered and/or progressed by the authority and the decision on ICT provision needs to be made to ensure the timing fits in with these. Building Schools for the Future and Business Transformation are both likely to make demands on the authority in terms of resources whilst, at the same time, making changes to the way services are delivered. It is crucial that ICT provides a stable base for these developments and continues to support these services throughout this period of transition.

5. BENEFITS / OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

5.1 Clearly, this extension proposal brings a number of benefits and opportunities to the authority and these need to be considered against any possible risks associated with the decision.

5.2 The proposal will provide the authority with significant cashable efficiency savings. Not agreeing to the proposal will mean the authority will still need to fund the current arrangements for the remaining term of the current contract up to 2011, at the current price.

- 5.3 The authority is well placed in terms of the consideration of options past 2011 as the programme of work for the consideration of options commenced at a suitable time. The work undertaken to date has had a limited requirement for external support and expert advice. Any extension, if agreed, would not remove the need for this and the investment required (it would merely be deferred).
- 5.4 In addition to the financial benefits, the proposal also allows the authority to address a number of key issues such as business continuity and electronic storage. Proposals would have been developed for these matters and would have required significant investment on the part of the authority. The benefits attributable to these developments are immediate in terms of service provision but also, importantly, put the authority in a better position for any future ICT arrangements.
- 5.5 One of the key risks in agreeing to an extension is the risk of reducing future market interest in the authority. Any re-tendering exercise involves costly bidding processes on both sides and external providers may feel that an extension to the current arrangements is reinforcement that Northgate is too far embedded with the authority to justify the time and budget they would need to commit to any future bidding process. This risk has been mitigated against to some extent by the message given during a Soft Market Testing exercise and by the assurance that a completely open and auditable process is being followed by the authority.
- 5.6 Another risk is that, by accepting the terms of the extension, the authority may be missing the opportunity to negotiate better terms by following an alternative service provision route now rather than at the end of the extension period. This is an unknown, however, and the difficulty is in comparing the known benefits of the extension proposal against the unknown benefits of alternative negotiations. This risk is being mitigated against by carrying out research to uncover what other local authorities have gained through alternative options and by giving consideration to the results of a benchmarking exercise which was recently undertaken through SOCITM.
- 5.7 ICT is now such a critical tool to enable the authority to provide its customers with the services they require that it is essential the underlying technology and support is provided on a consistent and reliable basis. Any change to the provision of this service will incur risks and, taking everything into consideration, the proposal to extend the current arrangements provides for a balance of mitigating the risks of the transfer of provider, ensuring continued service provision whilst realising significant financial and service benefits for the authority and still providing for the full consideration of delivery options in two years time. The current arrangement is delivering a reliable service and the proposals in the extension will allow that service to continue, whilst incorporating improvements to the service and reduced costs.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Agreeing to an extension will provide cashable and non-cashable efficiency savings; give the authority access to capital funding for new ICT initiatives; provide some new services to resolve some of the current issues; allow the authority to strengthen its position in any future negotiations; minimise the short term risks and provide the flexibility in terms of timing and resources to ensure any future arrangements tie in with other key initiatives such as BSF and Business Transformation.
- 6.2 The decision on whether to agree to an extension or not, is clearly not a straightforward one. There are known and unknown issues and a range of risks and opportunities to consider, and the decision will need to be made on the balance of probabilities, using the best information available at the time.
- 6.3 Using the information available and taking everything into account, it is recommended that the decision is taken to agree to an extension of the current arrangements with Northgate for a period of 2 years up to September 2013.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 If the proposal to extend the current arrangements with Northgate is agreed, there are a number of actions that need to be completed to ensure everything is planned and executed smoothly and to allow the authority to make the best possible use of this period.
- 7.2 The proposals included in this report, if agreed, do require some further technical work and planning to ensure that they fully meet the authority's requirements. In addition, there is a need to formalise the arrangements as they will form part of the contractual arrangements with Northgate.
- 7.3 If the extension proposal is agreed there will be some elements of work which formed the basis of the programme for the agreement of the delivery of ICT which it would be beneficial to continue, in addition to reprogramming the work required for any re-provision in 2013.

8. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 8.1 Cabinet is requested to:
- ii. Consider the proposals contained within this report to agree a two year extension to the current ICT contract arrangements
 - iii. Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive to conclude any negotiations and variations to the contract with the agreement of the Performance Portfolio holder.

CABINET REPORT

27th October 2008



Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: The Hartlepool Compact Review

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the final version of the Hartlepool Compact to the Cabinet and agree to endorse the document.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The report outlines the work that has been undertaken on the Hartlepool Compact, since progress was last reported to Cabinet in March 2008. The final version of the Hartlepool Compact is attached as **Appendix 1**.

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 Key – Test ii applies

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Cabinet 27th October 2008. (Note: the Hartlepool Compact is being presented to the Hartlepool Partnership to be considered for endorsement on 24th October 2008).

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

6.1 The Cabinet is requested to:-

- 1) endorse the Hartlepool Compact (document attached)
- 2) note the next steps outlined, to produce a 'glossy' and PDF version of the Hartlepool Compact and production of the Hartlepool Compact Action Plan

Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: THE HARTLEPOOL COMPACT REVIEW

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the final version of the Hartlepool Compact to Cabinet and agree to endorse the document.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March this year a progress report was presented to the Cabinet for information. That report detailed the progress that had been made since October 2007 (when the Compact review was first reported to the Cabinet) and the intended next steps for the development of the Hartlepool Compact to take the document forward.
- 2.2 Members of the Cabinet will recall that the draft Compact comprised a simplified written agreement containing a series of codes designed to improve the working relationships between the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and statutory groups in Hartlepool.
- 2.3 The Hartlepool Compact update was launched at a consultation event at the Historic Quay in January 2008.

3. HARTLEPOOL COMPACT

- 3.1 The documentation presented to the Cabinet for information in March 2008 was sent to all delegates who attended the consultation for further comment. The same information was used for the basis of the second round of consultation. The main tool used for this consultation was the Council's e-consultation site 'Your Town Your Say'. The consultation was developed and put on the website for an 8 week period (April – June 2008); the consultation included a questionnaire, copies of the other consultation documents, links to the national Compact and Compact Advocacy websites. This information was provided to enable people completing the questionnaire to have an opportunity to read background and supporting information on Compacts and best practice guidelines if they wished to do so. A letter was sent to all VCS groups in Hartlepool via Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency's (HVDA) directory and all key partners were contacted to encourage participation in the online consultation. Opportunities for delegates to respond to the questionnaire directly by contacting the relevant officer, by post or email were also provided.

- 3.2 Once the consultation had closed, the information was collated and analysed. The Compact was then revised in line with the responses from the consultation. There were 24 responses overall and a strong level of agreement amongst participants on the subjects within the consultation. To strengthen the content of the Compact and show local examples of best practice, case studies have been provided to be showcased within the document. One case study has been included for each of the codes of the Hartlepool Compact.
- 3.3 Following the consultation results the codes of practice of the Hartlepool Compact were finalised as the following;
- 1) Funding Code
 - 2) Consultation and Policy Code
 - 3) Inclusion Code
 - 4) Code of Practice on Representation
 - 5) Volunteering Code
- 3.4 Agreement has been made by the Community Network to regularly include the Compact as part of the agenda at meetings. This will help monitor the progress of the Compact Action Plan (see 4.5), and review cases of breaches of the Compact Codes.
- 3.5 The key partners listed in the Compact have all been contacted to request that they become signatories of the Hartlepool Compact. A generic report was sent to all partners to aid the approval process of the Compact for individual boards. To date the National Probation Service Teesside and Durham, Hartlepool Primary Care Trust, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust, Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus and Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Trust have all confirmed that they would like to be signatories of the Hartlepool Compact. The Hartlepool New Deal for Communities Steering Group will be considering a report on the Compact following endorsement by Partnership and Cabinet, with a view to becoming a signatory.
- 3.6 Recently, the Hartlepool Compact has been shortlisted for a North East VCS Award (organised by the Voluntary Organisations' Network North East, VONNE) under the Compact category. The results of this nomination will be announced on 30th October 2008.

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The Hartlepool Compact is due to be presented for endorsement by Hartlepool Partnership on Friday 24th October 2008.
- 4.2 Once the Hartlepool Compact has been approved by both Partnership and Cabinet, it will then be reformatted and produced as a 'glossy' final document, but the content of the document will remain the same. This final version of the document will also be made available in PDF form allowing the

Hartlepool Compact to be viewed on the Hartlepool Borough Council's, Hartlepool Partnership's and the National Compact websites.

- 4.3 Signatures of all statutory partners that have agreed to become signatories of the Compact will be included within the glossy version of the document. This will show users of the document who has agreed to work towards the principles of the Compact. There is still some work to be undertaken to ensure that all partners sign up to the Compact, further contact will be made with partners who have yet to respond. Members of the Partnership who represent key partners who have yet to agree to become a signatory of the Hartlepool Compact have been requested to liaise with their relevant colleagues regarding signing up to the Compact.
- 4.4 Following the production of the 'glossy' version of the Hartlepool Compact, statutory partners listed in the Compact will receive a copy of the document. HVDA will be contacting all VCS partners on their mailing list, to ask if groups would like to sign up to the Hartlepool Compact. All those who wish to do so will be sent a copy of the Hartlepool Compact and the name of the group will be added to the Hartlepool Compact register held by HVDA.
- 4.5 The Hartlepool Compact Action Plan will be an additional document, intended to provide a set of agreed actions linked to promoting the use, recognition and implementation of the Hartlepool Compact. Progress on actions will be reported to and monitored by the Community Network, and reported to the Partnership. An example of the Compact Action Plan is included in the Hartlepool Compact as Appendix 3. Please note that the actions detailed are purely intended as a 'mock up' as the action plan has yet to be formulated and agreed. The final Action Plan will be reported to the Partnership for information in the future. It is envisaged that this will be in Spring 2009.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Cabinet is requested to:-

- 1) endorse the Hartlepool Compact (**Appendix 1**)
- 2) note the next steps outlined, to produce a 'glossy' and PDF version of the Hartlepool Compact and production of the Hartlepool Compact Action Plan

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

Appendix 1 –Hartlepool Compact

Background Papers

Cabinet Report 29th October, 2007.

Cabinet Report 17th March 2008

HARTLEPOOL COMPACT October 2008

FOREWORD

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.

Mayor Stuart Drummond
Chair of the Hartlepool Partnership

VISION

The Hartlepool Compact aims to strengthen the relationship between public sector and voluntary and community sector working towards shared objectives to improve the quality of people's lives within Hartlepool.

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 P^P (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 public sector partners is included in **Appendix 1**. A mechanism for identifying and signing up VCS partners is currently being worked up.

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).

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 that the monitoring will be undertaken by the Community Network, discussed quarterly at their meetings. The Compact will be an open agenda item that people can attend the meetings to discuss. This arrangement will be kept under review to ensure that it is the most efficient way to monitor the Compact.

It is also proposed that the annual action plan (*a template of the action plan is attached as Appendix 3*) need to be tied into Hartlepool's Local Area Agreement^{2P} Annual Performance Framework and they should be monitored through the Hartlepool Partnership/Community Network.

The Community Network has agreed to review case studies of disputes that may occur and feed them into the ongoing development of the Compact through the Action Plan. Appendix 4 shows a diagram that should be followed if disputes occur.

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).

COMPACT ADVOCACY

The Compact Advocacy Programme is run by the voluntary and community sector, for the sector. It is based at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). Since 2002 they have been working towards ensuring compliance with the Compact. This has been done at a national level through advocacy, campaigning and lobbying government departments on behalf of the voluntary and community sector.

The Compact Advocacy Programme also works at a local level, it is recognised that there is little awareness of the Compact at a local level and there are still many instances of non-compliance. The Compact Advocacy Programme will work on behalf of the voluntary and community sector working closely with organisations where the Compact and the associated codes have been breached. They do this by making a campaign plan to make representations on behalf of the organisation to relevant government or local departments, through lobbying, advocacy, wider campaigning and negotiation.

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. Inclusion Code (Minority and Small Community Groups code)
- d. Code of Practice on Representation
- e. Volunteering Code

a) Funding Code

- ii) All partners will adopt processes that are non-discriminatory to small voluntary and community groups.
- iii) All partners 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.
- iv) All partners 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.
- v) All partners 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.
- vi) All partners 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.
- vii) All partners 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.
- viii) All partners will adopt the practice of written agreements which set out the objectives of funding, the payment arrangements and the monitoring requirements.
- ix) All partners will seek to allocate resources against clear and consistent criteria, including value for money.
- x) All partners will seek to maintain high standards of governance and conduct and meet reporting and accountability obligations to funders and users.
- xi) All partners will respect and be accountable to the law and in the case of charities, observe the appropriate guidance from the Charity Commission.
- xii) All partners will seek to assist local groups to be able to compete for work which is being commissioned or contracted, where appropriate. Work that is to be commissioned or contracted shall be promoted so that appropriate VCS groups are also able to bid using the same processes as that for inviting other potential tenders for such work (including using the same notification processes and timescale

- xiii) All partners will seek to ensure that funding will be paid on time and where possible make payments in advance to 'kick start' projects.
- xiv) All partners 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.

Community Pool 2007/2008 - Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau

The Community Pool provides financial assistance to support those aspects of the activities of the voluntary/community/not for profit sector that clearly reflect the aspirations of the Council's Community Strategy. The main objective of the Community Pool is to support the strategies aim of "strengthening communities". Grant aid from the Community Pool is provided as a contribution towards the core costs of an organisation.

Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau is a free, confidential and independent advice, information and advocacy service for the local community.

In 2007/2008 Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau was awarded a grant of £74,801 from the Community Pool as a contribution towards the groups core costs including the salary costs of key members of staff.

Core funding from the Community Pool enabled Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau to employ key staff to manage/supervise the staff who work to deliver the various services/projects that the CAB provide for the benefit of local residents including Debt Advice Services, Community Care Advocacy Service, Legal Help Franchise, Welfare Benefits Advice Service, Housing Advice and Tenancy Support Service, Consumer Advice Service.

b) Consultation and Policy Code

- i) All partners 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) All partners will build early consultation into plans for statutory policy and strategy development, allowing 8 weeks for consultation, where practicable.
- iv) All partners recognise the constraints upon, and resource implications for voluntary and community organisations, and will use a variety of consultation methods (innovative where possible) and levels, in order to be as inclusive as possible.
- v) All partners 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) All partners 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) All partners to encourage the use of area based networks to ensure that information reaches the smallest/ more isolated groups to maximise resources.
- x) All partners 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.
- xi) All partners 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 appendix 2).

Hartlepool Young Voices Team

The challenge of the Hartlepool Participation Strategy has been to involve children and young people to create it themselves. To meet this challenge a team of young people, Hartlepool Young Voices (HYV), have devised and written the Participation Strategy for the town. HYV are a group of young people, from a range of backgrounds, including looked after children, nominated by members of the Hartlepool Participation Network. They are all linked to and representative of a number of other groups across the town.

This Vision Statement consists of seven statements that describe how young people should be involved in every aspect of an organisation's operation. It is supported by a set of standards and training materials, also devised by the young people, called 'Branching Out', to enable organisations to provide evidence that they are responding to the seven statements of the Vision.

To begin with they had 25 statements, related to the Every Child Matters outcomes, which were all relevant to both organisations and children and young people. Once they had decided on the most important ones they were sent out to various organisations that work with children and young people for consultation / feedback, before the final copy of the Vision Statements was agreed.

The activities and exercises the team have devised is definitely their unique trademark for working together to deliver the Participation Strategy and getting people to talk to each other whatever their age.



- c) Inclusion Code** (Minority and Small Community Groups' Code - known Nationally as Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations Code)
- i) All partners will include in this category other groups that may experience marginalisation, isolated, disadvantage, exclusion or discrimination.
 - ii) All partners will actively support the development of voluntary and community groups and related infrastructure organisations, recognising their local knowledge, expertise and perspective.
 - iii) All partners will share policy documents and best practice, and ensure that diverse community groups^{3P} are properly represented in their preparation.
 - iv) All partners 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) All partners 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) All partners 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) All partners 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) All partners will support existing Diverse Community Groups and will develop others so that people from diverse communities can raise concerns.
 - ix) All partners 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.

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Hartlepool is made up of many different and diverse communities, each of which has a right to have its voice heard. One way in which this happens is when a group of individuals come together to form a voluntary or community group. Within the black, minority ethnic (BME) community this has involved the development of the Salaam Centre and groups such as Hartlepool Pinoy (Filipino), Hartlepool Asian Association, Muslim Welfare Association, Bangladeshi Cultural Association, Asian Ladies Sewing Club and the Association of British Poles.

Work with other communities of interest has included the devolvement of Hartlepool Access Group's All Ability Forum and Hart Gables (a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Group). The All Ability Forum has provided an independent 'voice' for people with disabilities and Hart Gables has recently researched the views of the LGBT community.



d) 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 (reviewed every 3 years).

A copy of this full Protocol **can be found on the Hartlepool Partnership Website at HTUwww.hartlepoolpartnership.co.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.

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.

Protocol

The Hartlepool Partnership and the Hartlepool Community Network have agreed a Protocol that sets out how the Community and Voluntary Sector will be represented on the Hartlepool Partnership.

The Protocol aims to strengthen working relationships by setting out:

- Opportunities for Community Network representatives on the Hartlepool Partnership Board and Theme Partnerships
- Election processes for Community Network representatives
- Roles and Responsibilities of Community Network representatives
- How the Hartlepool Partnership will carry out consultation activity
- How conflict will be managed
- How progress will be measured.

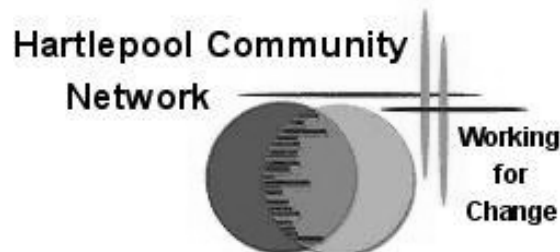
Joanne Smithson from the Hartlepool Partnership explains:

“When the Protocol was first developed in 2005 there was real concern amongst members of the VCS that they wouldn’t have a voice within the LSP. The development of the Protocol helped me understand those concerns and make sure our Terms of Reference were inclusive”.

Keith Bayley, from the Hartlepool Community Network

“The Protocol was a real step forward in determining how members from the VCS could have a real input to the Partnership’s work. Importantly, the Protocol set out the support that representatives would receive alongside their roles and responsibilities”.

hartlepoolpartnership



e) Volunteering Code

The National Compact includes a Volunteering Code of Good Practice. 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.

Key Principles

- Volunteering must be the result of a free choice by the volunteer.
- Volunteering must be open to everyone.
- Volunteers must receive some benefits to make their contribution worthwhile.
- Volunteers must be publicly recognised.

VOLUNTEERING AT EPILEPSY OUTLOOK

A positive volunteering experience requires a properly structured and supported placement involving induction, clearly defined roles and lines of accountability. Over the years Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) has facilitated this through formal training and one to one good practice support to groups such as Epilepsy Outlook.

Epilepsy Outlook is a user led group which operates a drop in group and gives advice to about 300 people a year including around 100 carers. The group has its own charity shop and furniture collection scheme.



The Group operates a unique volunteer programme whereby at any one time half of the 30 or so volunteers have epilepsy or a specific medical condition, mental health problem or disability. The programme provides support and training to all volunteers within the organisation. Volunteer job roles include: advice workers, trainers, tutors, shop assistants, van drivers, warehouse workers, furniture repairers, craft makers and administration workers.

"I feel safe when I work with my friends at Epilepsy Outlook because everyone knows what to do if I have a seizure and don't make me feel different."

Volunteer
Epilepsy Outlook

Volunteer Opportunities in Hartlepool

People who wish to volunteer can contact HVDA, which provides information, advice and guidance which will match their skills and interests with available opportunities. There is a specific service for young people, those aged under 25. This work is branded under the name vlnvolved which is part of the National Youth Volunteering Programme. If you wish to volunteer please get in touch with HVDA's Volunteer Centre if aged over 25 or the vlnvolved team if aged under 25.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit www.thecompact.org.uk for further information on the National Compact, guidance for the codes of practice, copies of other local Compacts and the latest Compact news. The website also links to the Compact Advocacy Programme.

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/compactadvocacy is the website for the Compact Advocacy Programme

For a copy of the Protocol and further information on the Hartlepool Partnership including the Local Area Agreement visit www.hartlepoolpartnership.co.uk.

The Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) website is www.hvda.co.uk, the site provides details of the services that HVDA offer including further information on volunteer opportunities that are available in Hartlepool. HVDA have a directory of VCS groups in Hartlepool. For more information on this please call 01429 262641.

For more information on the Community Network contact HVDA.

More information on the Community Pool can be found under Community Resources on Hartlepool Borough Council's website, www.hartlepool.gov.uk, alternatively contact 01429 523474.

THE PARTNERS

• Hartlepool Borough Council
• Cleveland Police Authority
• National Probation Service Teesside and Durham
• Hartlepool Youth Offending Service
• Hartlepool Primary Care Trust
• North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust
• Learning and Skills Council
• Jobcentre Plus
• Cleveland Fire Authority
• The Environment Agency
• One NorthEast
• Sport England
• Hartlepool New Deal for Communities
• Housing Hartlepool
• Business Link
• Tees, Esk & Wear Valley Mental Health Trust

HVDA will write to all of the VCS groups which contract and/or are funded by public sector bodies inviting them to sign up to the Compact. In addition a letter will be sent to all VCS groups on HVDA's database asking them if they would wish to receive a copy of the Compact and give consideration to becoming signatories.

Children and Young People's Code

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 none 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) All partners 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) All partners 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) All partners will share evidence, knowledge and skills on how we involve, support and praise children and young people;
- iv) All partners will identify what money, time and resources there is to support what we do;
- v) All partners 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;
- vi) All partners will take young people's views seriously about what all children and young people think is important;
- vii) All partners will explain and respect the rights and responsibilities of children and young people.

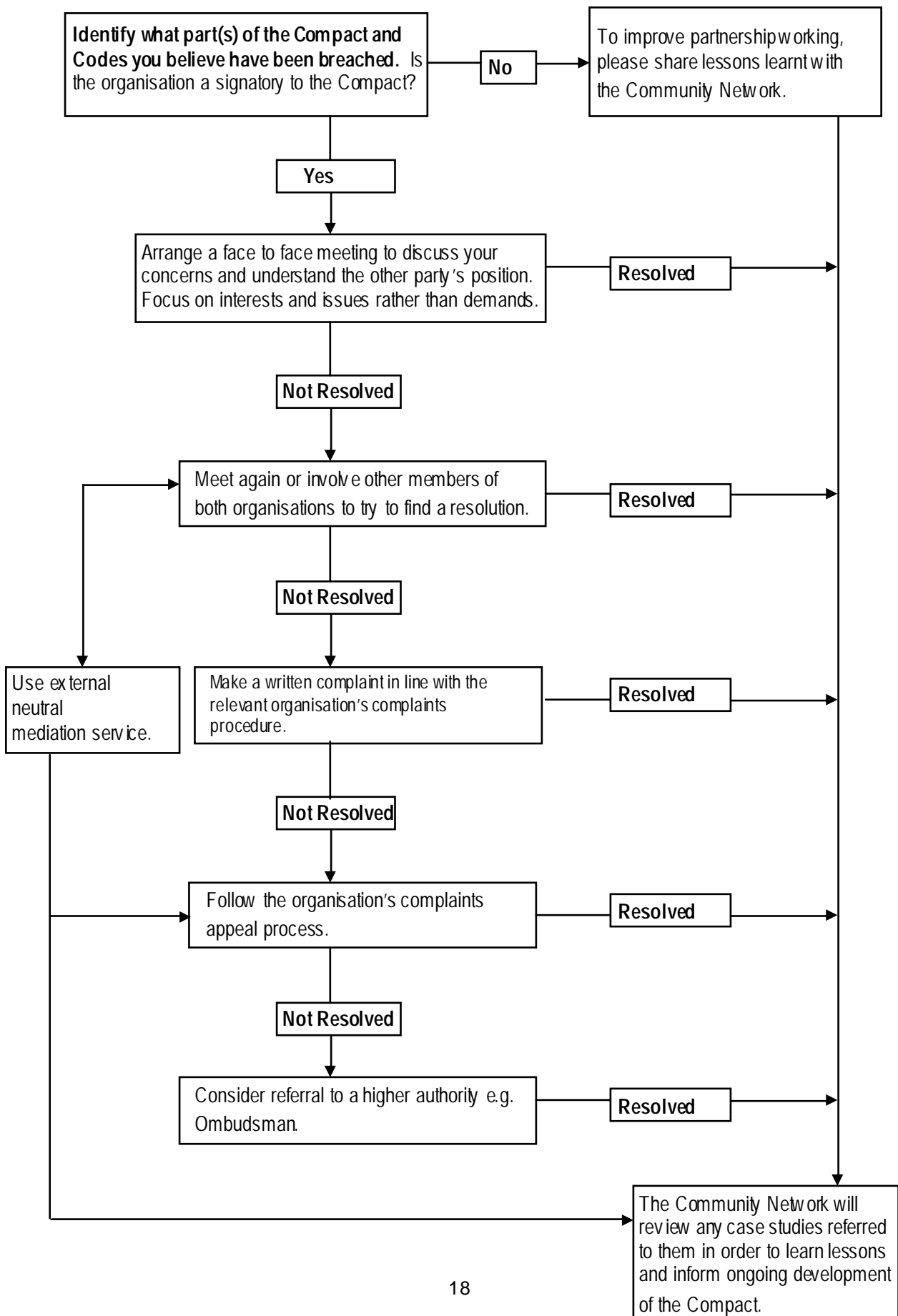
The 7 visions were developed and written by the Hartlepool Young Voices, they have endorsed the use of these within the Hartlepool Compact

Action for improvement of Hartlepool Compact	Action Owner and organisation	Support requirements and resources required	Date to be completed	Sub Actions
Set up register of VCS groups signing up to the Compact	KB HVDA/CN	HBC to produce glossy document HBC to draft letter for HVDA to send out asking VCS to register. HBC to fund postage. HVDA to keep and update register and send out documents to VCS groups wanting to register.	Ongoing	Promote Register to VCS in National Compact Week (Nov 1 st -8 th). Achieve 100 registrations from VCS by March 2009
Nominate specific contact officer(s) in each partner organisation as facilitators to assist in liaison with the voluntary sector and encourage their access to info/services.	GT/HBC	HBC to liaise with partners already signed up to identify officer(s). HBC to chase partner agencies not yet signed up to confirm commitment and identify contact officer.	April 2009	LSP report in October 2008 will identify partners already signed up. Will also encourage LSP partners not yet signed up to commit. Reminders will be issued in November to those not yet signed up. Contact details list completed April 2009.

PLEASE NOTE THIS TABLE IS CURRENTLY A MOCK UP TO SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE. THE ACTION PLAN IS TO BE PREPARED BY PARTNERS ONCE THE MAIN COMPACT DOCUMENT IS AGREED.

Compact and Codes of Practice

What to do when things go wrong



CABINET REPORT

27th October 2008



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: THE WAY FORWARD –
BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To clarify the Governance arrangements for The Way Forward – Business Transformation Programme

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Cabinet have received a number of reports as part of the development of the Business Transformation Programme. The first report (on 11th February 2008) established the basis and need for the programme. In addition it identified the Governance arrangements for the programme.

A Programme Board was established for the programme, based on the decisions of Cabinet at the meeting on the 11th February, with decision making on the programme retained by Cabinet.

A subsequent report to Cabinet on 15th September 2008, which dealt with the outline Business Transformation Programme and the next stages of its implementation, amended the membership of this Board to increase the Trade Union representation from one to two.

Attached at Appendix A is a Membership and Terms of Reference for the Programme Board which have been prepared to ensure the Governance arrangements for the programme are clear

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

The Business Transformation Programme is a corporate programme of strategic significance to the Council and falls within the remit of Cabinet

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non Key Decision

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet meeting on 27th October 2008

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet are recommended to agree the Membership and Terms of Reference for the Programme Board, subject to any comments or recommendations they wish to make

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: THE WAY FORWARD –
BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To clarify the Governance arrangements for The Way Forward – Business Transformation Programme

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet have received a number of reports as part of the development of the Business Transformation Programme. The first report (on 11th February 2008) established the basis and need for the programme. In addition it identified the Governance arrangements for the programme.

3 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 A Programme Board was established for the programme, based on the decisions of Cabinet at the meeting on the 11th February, with decision making on the programme retained by Cabinet.
- 3.2 A subsequent report to Cabinet on 15th September 2008, which dealt with the outline Business Transformation Programme and the next stages of it's implementation, amended the membership of this Board to increase the Trade Union representation from one to two.
- 3.3 Attached at Appendix A is a Membership and Terms of Reference for the Programme Board which have been prepared to ensure the Governance arrangements for the programme are clear

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet are recommended to agree the Membership and Terms of Reference for the Programme Board, subject to any comments or recommendations they wish to make

APPENDIX A

The Way Forward – Business Transformation Programme Programme Board Membership and Terms of Reference

Membership

Membership of the Programme Board will be as follows:

Elected Members

The Mayor
Portfolio Holder for Performance
Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency
Chair of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee
Elected Member nominated by Council

Officers

Chief Executive
Assistant Chief Executive
Director of Adult and Community Services

Key Partners

Trade Union Representatives (x2)

Terms of Reference

Membership

Membership of the Programme Board will be determined by Cabinet. Membership of the Board will be reviewed at least annually.

Alternates

Any member of the Programme Board who is unable to attend a particular meeting may nominate an alternate for that meeting. An alternative must be nominated on the basis that he/she fully represents the substantive member and can fully participate in the work of the Board.

Chair

The Chair of the Project Board shall be the Mayor

Frequency and conduct of meetings

It is envisaged that the Programme Board will meet on a bi monthly basis. There shall be an agenda for each meeting and this will be circulated to members in advance of the meeting. The Chief Executive's Management Team (CEMT) Support Officer will attend each meeting to produce draft Minutes. The Programme Manager will attend each meeting in an advisory capacity.

Role of the Board

The Programme Board has been created to maintain an overview of the programme. The management of the programme and its implementation is to be undertaken by the programme team. The Board will consider and provide input to the strategic direction of the programme and overarching priorities to inform and provide guidance on the programme, the realisation of benefits and the communications to stakeholders underpinning this.

Decision Making Processes

Programme matters requiring decisions by elected members will be taken by Cabinet (or the appropriate Portfolio holder if this is more suitable)

CABINET REPORT

27 October 2008



Report of: DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES

Subject: CONSULTATION RESPONSE – TRANSFORMING PLACES, CHANGING LIVES - A FRAMEWORK FOR REGENERATION

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider and respond to the consultation document issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government entitled “Transforming Places, Changing Lives – A Framework for Regeneration.”

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report brings to the attention of Cabinet the consultation document in relation to Transforming Places, Changing Lives. A brief summary of the consultation document is provided, along with a suggested draft response to the consultation which it is proposed to submit in conjunction with the other Tees Valley Local Authorities (**Appendix 1**).

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

The Framework for Regeneration covers a wide range of proposals in subject areas across a number of Portfolios, and suggests revised roles for organisations, including Local Authorities, involved in tackling deprivation.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet 27 October 2008

6. DECISION REQUIRED

To agree the contents of this report as the basis of a joint Tees Valley response to the consultation document Transforming Places, Changing Lives – A Framework for Regeneration.

Report of: DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES

Subject: CONSULTATION RESPONSE – TRANSFORMING PLACES, CHANGING LIVES : A FRAMEWORK FOR REGENERATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider and respond to the consultation document issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government entitled “Transforming Places, Changing Lives – A Framework for Regeneration.”

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In July 2008, the Government published ‘Transforming places, changing lives: a framework for regeneration’. The document sets out proposals to:
- Co-ordinate and prioritise regeneration investment – including criteria towards investment priorities and for developing regional regeneration priorities maps;
 - Align investment behind local and regional regeneration priorities;
 - Focus regeneration investment on tackling the underlying economic challenges holding back deprived areas, focusing on jobs and enterprise.
- 2.2 The framework signals a shift in emphasis away from output delivery to achievement of priority outcomes. Proposals are included in particular around how best to measure regeneration outcomes towards improving economic performance in deprived areas, work and enterprise in deprived areas and creating sustainable places where people want to live and work and where businesses wish to invest. It also explains how the framework should aid the devolution of more decisions to the regional and local level.
- 2.3 The consultation proposes the development of **Regional Regeneration Priorities Maps**. These will provide an evidence based approach to align central government investment that will also improve private sector confidence in the priority areas. Regional Development Agencies and partners will need to provide

indicative regional regeneration priorities maps as part of their regional funding advice by early 2009.

- 2.4 A copy of the full consultation document has been placed for information in the Members Library and can also be accessed electronically at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/citiesandregions/pdf/896104.pdf>

The deadline for consultation responses is Friday 31 October 2008. Officers have considered the Consultation from a Hartlepool perspective and fed views through to the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit who are preparing a joint response on behalf of the Tees Valley Local Authorities. All of the Hartlepool comments have been incorporated into the proposed draft response, and whilst this is very much “work in progress” the latest version of a proposed response is included at Appendix A.

- 2.5 A summary of the Framework for Regeneration consultation document is set out below

3. SUMMARY : TRANSFORMING PLACES, CHANGING LIVES – A FRAMEWORK FOR REGENERATION

Chapter 1: Regeneration – what is it and why should we invest in it?

The Government identifies regeneration as a process that:

- Secures long term change;
- Improves places – making them more attractive to residents and businesses;
- Creates ambition and unlocks potential
- Improves the flexibility and targeting of mainstream services;
- Delivers sustainable development; and
- Creates more equal communities.

It recognises the need to improve mainstream services but that more targeted, geographically based intervention is also needed.

Chapter 2: What should regeneration deliver?

The Government proposes that regeneration should be more tightly focused on improving economic outcomes in deprived areas. It proposes a move from an output based approach to an outcomes based one, focusing on three priority outcomes that will guide targets for Government expenditure on regeneration in the future:

- Improving economic performance in deprived areas;

- Improving rates of work and enterprise in deprived areas;
- Creating sustainable places where people want to live and can work, and businesses want to invest.

These could be the success criteria in the future;

It also:

- Consults on whether the economic development indicators within the new Local Government Performance Framework are the right measures and how the scale and rate of private investment to deprived areas could be measured;
- Recognises that improvement in economic performance needs to be linked to improvements in the lives of residents, such as improving the environment, reducing antisocial behaviour etc – if regeneration is to be sustainable;
- Stresses the importance of community involvement in regeneration and the need to give communities a stronger voice;
- Highlights that regeneration schemes need to consider any climate change implications for deprived areas and to equip them to be responsive to this agenda.

Chapter 3: How and where to target regeneration investment

The Government wants a common approach for targeting regeneration investment to ensure central government investment is aligned with local and regional priorities. It argues that activities at these different spatial levels should be linked to 'ensure a shared direction of travel, consistency of effort and efficient use of resources'.

The document acknowledges that local authorities:

- Identify local priorities through the Local Area Agreement (LAA) process and the development of Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Development Frameworks;
- Are working with communities to identify neighbourhood priorities but are also working collaboratively on wider issues.

It proposes the development of **Regional Regeneration Priorities Maps**. These will provide an evidence based approach to align central government investment that will also improve private sector confidence in the priority areas. Regional Development Agencies and partners will need to provide indicative regional regeneration priorities maps as part of their regional funding advice by early 2009.

Four criteria are set out to determine the priority locations:

1. Level of deprivation – as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) – taking the starting point as areas in the 10 percent most deprived at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA). The framework encourages a focus on the intensity (maximum IMD score) and concentration (median IMD score). Whilst the government expects local authorities to improve outcomes in the most deprived areas regardless of regeneration investment, it expects partners to focus on areas where deprivation is more widespread (clusters of deprived neighbourhoods).

2. Strength of the sub-regional economy – through an analysis of economic output, productivity, employment, skills, enterprise, state of the housing market, etc. This should identify the need for different approaches to regenerating deprived areas. It is not clear if a strong sub-regional economy will reduce the priority for regenerating an area within it.

3. The economic and social characteristics of an area – this focuses particularly on whether there is a high degree of population churn through an area (acting as a 'launch pad' for residents) or whether the population is more static and isolated from opportunity.

4. The dynamics of the area – assessing how a place is changing over time by analysing trends around employment rates, educational performance, population changes, business startups, house prices etc.

This analysis should determine the approach and type of regeneration programme to be implemented. It is not clear which pots of central government funding would be targeted through the regional regeneration priorities map (possibly capital investment) or whether this would determine allocations of national funding to regions/different local authorities.

The framework also sets out ways to evaluate and appraise the net benefits of regeneration investment. The Government will explore how to join up the appraisal and evaluation of regeneration activities.

Chapter 4: Who needs to act differently as a result of this framework?

This section gives some indication of what a new framework for regeneration might mean for different agencies. This builds on a number of government policies:

For **local authorities** this means leading on the delivery of economic development, driving positive outcomes through their LAA, putting communities at the heart of the design and delivery of regeneration and ensuring that housing and regeneration policies are mutually reinforcing. **Local Strategic Partnerships** will prioritise regeneration funding locally.

For **Regional Development Agencies**, this will include delegating their funding, building capacity of local authorities and sub-regional partnerships, working with partners to identify indicative regional regeneration priorities maps and exploring the use of special purpose vehicles with the Homes and Communities Agency and government.

There is also a clear expectation that the **Homes and Communities Agency and RDAs** will work together to co-ordinate the input of other key agencies and move towards a programme rather than project based approach. They will work with local authorities to make sure residents' views are taken into account in decisions on regeneration schemes.

The **Homes and Communities Agency** will prioritise regeneration investment in its regional funding advice, connect homes to job opportunities and consider how to meet residents' training and work needs when investing in stock.

Government Offices will be monitoring progress of LAAs and MAAs, build capacity working with Regional Improvements and Efficiency Partnerships, e.g. North East Improvement & Efficiency Partnership (NEIEP), and be involved in the development of the indicative regeneration priorities maps. **National government** will integrate investment appraisals, un-ring fence money and merge funding streams where possible and provide flexibilities and responsive mainstream services. Communities and Local Government (CLG) will monitor the key outcomes in deprived areas and use the priority maps to steer capital investment (both public and private) towards these.

4. PROPOSED DRAFT RESPONSE

- 4.1 There are a series of Annexes included within the Framework for Regeneration, the first of which contains a series of Chapter-specific questions for responding to the consultation. These have been used as the basis of the attached (Appendix 1 refers) draft proposed response by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (JSU) on behalf of the Tees Valley Local Authorities.
- 4.2 Hartlepool has had a significant input into the response contained at Appendix 1, having attended an initial meeting with the JSU to consider the Framework for Regeneration in detail and suggesting substantial changes to the first draft response produced by JSU Officers, some of which the JSU are still working upon.
- 4.3 The JSU is especially concerned that regeneration mapping of this kind will be overly prescriptive, and undermine Local Authority investment flexibility. The first draft response to the consultation questions did concentrate mainly on such criticisms but following representation from Hartlepool the response has a more balanced view and whilst expression of such concerns still remain, there are instances of welcoming support indicating a willingness of the Tees Valley to engage with the emerging regeneration agenda.
- 4.4 Now included within the response, and useful from a Hartlepool perspective, is the welcome given to the framework's recognition of a needs-led approach to regeneration, it's offer of more local flexibility to create programmes that fit places rather than expecting places to fit programmes, and the recognition of the importance of place-shaping.
- 4.5 There is also a welcome, at Hartlepool's suggestion, of the vital contribution that housing makes to regeneration, and reference to HMR activity within Tees Valley and dealing with the Credit Crunch, are being added by the JSU.

- 4.6 Other Hartlepool comments that have been, or will be taken on board include additions to Q 3 regarding the importance of focusing on outcomes rather than outputs, supporting the role of the private sector in Q5 and in Q7 the recognition of contaminated land remediation as a pre-requisite for creating the right conditions for economic development, plus the references to eco-footprinting.
- 4.7 The draft response attached to this report has also been considered by the Tees Valley Directors of Regeneration who have suggested that the following points could be usefully added :-
- Regeneration Maps – having clearer prioritization through the emerging Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS)
 - Greater clarity about the spatial level – it is not always possible to solve economic or regeneration problems in the local area, warranting city region solutions
 - The need to look at value for money of regeneration investment and striking the proper balance between addressing local deprivation areas and taking strategic opportunities
- 4.8 Officers are continuing to liaise with the JSU on further iterations of the proposed response, including for example responding to Q17 on issues associated with diversity, and will ensure this Local Authority's views are adequately reflected in the final formal consultation submission.
- 4.9 The consultation document is also to be considered by the Hartlepool Partnership at its meeting on 24th October 2008, which will provide a further opportunity to influence the debate on the Framework for Regeneration from a Hartlepool/LSP perspective.

5. **DECISION REQUIRED**

To agree the contents of this report as the basis of a joint Tees Valley response to the consultation document Transforming Places, Changing Lives – A Framework for Regeneration.

Background Papers

Transforming places, changing lives : A framework for regeneration.

6.2 APPENDIX 1

DRAFT RESPONSE PROFORMA

Draft Number 2 / KJ / JSU

Transforming places; changing lives : A framework for regeneration

Respondent Details :

Name: John Lowther

Please return by: **Friday 31 October 2008** to:

Email: RegenFramework@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Organisation:

Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, working on behalf of the Authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees

Or by hard copy to:

**Roger Wilshaw
Regeneration Strategy Division
Communities and Local Government
Floor 3, Zone G10, Eland House,
Bressenden Place
London,
SW1E 5DU**

Address: Melrose House,
Melrose Street, Middlesbrough,
TS1 2XF

Telephone: 01642 264800

Fax:

e-mail: john.lowther@teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk

Is your response confidential?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Comments:

Provision is made throughout this questionnaire for you to provide additional comments. If, however you wish to provide more detailed comments on any aspect of the consultation then please feel free to append additional materials and supplementary documents, clearly marked and cross referenced to the relevant questions, as necessary.

Questions in Chapter One Q1. Is this analysis right?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Comments:

Overall, the Tees Valley Local Authorities support the analysis given, the principles given as to the purposes of Regeneration investment and activity are in line with our understanding and approach. We welcome the framework's recognition that regeneration should be focused on tackling underlying economic causes of decline (paragraphs 1.9, 1.19, for example). We endorse the view that if the economy is right, improvements in the other domains will follow – as Chart 1 in Annex B usefully implies.

The Tees Valley Local Authorities also welcome:

- The frameworks' needs-led approach, although we feel that it should be more clearly linked to opportunities-led agenda;
- The offer of more local flexibility to create programmes that fit places rather than expecting places to fit programmes (1.18);
- The recognition of the importance of place-shaping (1.43).

It is our view that issues such as these haven't always been readily recognised in past Government policy documents on regeneration, and we welcome the involvement of all agencies, and believe that it essential for all Government departments buy-in to this regeneration agenda, i.e., BERR, DIUS, DCSF, DWP, DfT, DEFRA DH and the Treasury, whose policies obviously have direct and indirect influences on regeneration.

The section on housing, and the vital contribution it makes to regeneration, is also to be welcomed. However, the framework makes only very limited reference to the private rented sector and housing market renewal, in comparison with its focus on social housing. The Tees Valley Local Authorities endorse the position that the scale of the regeneration challenge is increasing (1.23) and eagerly await the findings from the study from Michael Parkinson in relation to the Credit Crunch. In parallel to this, Tees Valley Unlimited has set up a Credit Crunch Task Group, which is due to report in early October 2008.

We also have the following observations:

- Whilst recognising that regeneration can reverse economic decline by large and small scale interventions, and deliver social inclusion by empowering neighbourhoods and individuals to break cycles of poverty, the report implies that, despite well targetted investment of recent years, the pattern of deprivation has remained the same, but provides no indication of the potential pattern of deprivation without this targetted intervention.
- The "Past Approaches" box at 1.24, is a rather uneven summary: it switches between city, town and neighbourhood scales and rural v urban without any particular structure and omits significant programmes – Urban Development Corporations, City Challenge and the Single Programme for example;
- Much of the content of this chapter seeks to deal with terminology, definitions, scope and relationships (covering "regeneration", "economic development", etc and referring to "areas" without being clear and consistent in the

meaning). This tends to prompt a somewhat semantic debate, e.g. is regeneration a sub-set of economic development or vice versa?; Whilst there are sections on regeneration and economic development relationships and on why housing matters, why aren't there similar specific sections on other important policy areas which impact on regeneration, e.g. health, education, transport?

Q2. What further analysis is needed to ensure the needs of different demographic groups are properly reflected in our regeneration priorities?

Comments:

Demographic characteristics obviously vary significantly from area to area and therefore imply the need for area-specific assessment, perhaps initially within the proposed local economic assessment but particularly within the analysis leading to the development of strategy for identified priority areas. The spatial evidence and analysis for local economic assessments, ERDF prioritisation and the IMD should reflect the needs of different demographic groups.

Local Authorities have been encouraged to involve local people in decisions in developing a response that fits local needs, and evidence suggests that local interventions stimulate new opportunities and provide necessary skills to improve the lives of those living in or near poverty, which in turn can halt the spiral of social and physical decline, transforming deprived areas. We are concerned that, if future regeneration needs to be more focussed, perhaps around regional maps, this will not allow an ongoing programme of tackling deprivation at a neighbourhood level to ensure all localities can contribute to economic growth. The larger picture may disadvantage the smaller area and/or the smaller or less spatially concentrated communities. This not to suggest that further analysis is needed but that it must be at the most appropriate level and recognises diversity.

Questions in Chapter Two

Q3. Are the outcome measures proposed helpful? Will they ensure regeneration benefits the poorest people and places in society?

Yes ☒ No ☒

Comments:

Focus on the outcome measures detailed will target activity towards the most disadvantaged in the most deprived areas. To ensure other outcomes are achieved, including social and economic, a focus should be maintained on themes that cut across all other areas, and perhaps inclusion of some measures around creating a thriving third sector (NI7) or Neighbourhood belonging (NI2) could contribute towards measuring progress.

Q4. Have we proposed the right measures?

Yes ☒ No ☒

Comments:

We welcome the link to the Local Government Performance Framework, but caution that not all regeneration outcomes can be successfully measured at a local level, in a cost effective, accurate manner; we have some major concerns with the availability, reliability and comparability of economic outcome measurements at LSOA level.

We are also concerned that "new businesses registration rate in deprived areas" doesn't sit well with the rest of the suggested measures, and see it as a weak measurement (deprived areas may be residential areas unsuitable for new business registration)

For the same reason, NI172 (% of small businesses in the area showing growth) would not be a substitute.

We are also unsure why housing indicators are omitted.

Q5. Should we measure the scale and rate of private investment in deprived areas, and how could we do so?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Comments: The Tees Valley Local Authorities support the recognition of the role of the private sector, but would not advocate attempting to measure the scale and rate of private investment to deprived areas, in view of the practical difficulties of establishing a method which would be comprehensive and consistent in its basis, in time and space. High level rates-based measures, which might be used, can be skewed by very small numbers of decisions by individual businesses, such as to make them unreliable indicators.

Q6. What can central Government do to give communities a stronger voice in shaping regeneration? How can other agencies help?

Comments: LAs need flexibility to do this in ways that meet local circumstances and needs. A prescribed one-size-fits-all approach to this decreed by national Government would be inappropriate and potentially extremely unhelpful.

We, as local authorities, are used to working closely with our communities in shaping our regeneration priorities through a number of different means, as an integral part of our LSP structure and through the Sustainable Community Strategy preparation.

A thriving third sector is one of the priorities of the Government, as it supports cohesion, and empowers neighbourhoods. Adopting local priorities by involving partners in decision making supports the wider strategy for tackling social exclusion, and in turn empowers the community and its own organisations. We already procure with, or involve, the third sector to harness the strength of this sector, who understand the needs of the communities they serve. Nearly half of our NRF expenditure over the last two years was through the third sector. We recognise that strong partnerships between the public, private and third sector strengthen the local infrastructure to allow more speedy response to change.

Local communities need to be able to shape and inform the content of some contracts that are commissioned at a national level but deliver services at a local (sub-regional or lower) level, such as those let via JCP and LSC with ESF Co-financing funds. Those organisations providing services under such contracts should be placed under a duty to consult and cooperate with local organisations and communities.

Q7. What else can we do to ensure regeneration is responsive to environmental change?

Comments:

The Tees Valley Local Authorities welcome the recognition at 2.17 of contaminated land remediation as a pre-requisite for creating the conditions for economic development is welcome but in practice this may mean that the public sector needs to address the problem, without a certainty of private sector development following at a guaranteed scale and rate – and in some instances on the basis that there may not be an appropriate “hard” economic development after-use, where past industrial locations are inappropriate for new employment uses (or even other commercially viable forms of development).

Q8. How can we further strengthen sub-regional partnerships to deliver regeneration outcomes?

Comments:

By devolving regional regeneration budgets. It is currently very frustrating that since the SNR was published in July 2007, the Tees Valley sub-regional partnership has much less control over regeneration budgets than previously.

The RDA's must develop a process where budgets are confirmed well in advance, and SRPs are allowed to set their own sub-regional priorities.

The Tees Valley local authorities would also like **further devolution of power to sub-regional partnerships.** For example, government should enable sub-regions to commission Job Centre Plus external contracts for Flexible New Deal and Pathways to Work, and Learning and Skills Council external contracts.

(Nb. John Lowther to input)

Questions in Chapter Three

Q9. Is the criteria based approach a helpful way of ensuring greater consistency in prioritising regeneration investment?

Yes ☒ No ☒

Comments: The way in which the criteria based approach is presented in the Framework implies that the regeneration prioritisation process will be moved away from a negotiated, accountable dialogue as part of developing the Single Regional Strategy (and scrutinised through an Examination in Public), to a criteria-based administrative process.

The further recognition of the role of LAs in Regeneration and Economic Development is obviously welcomed. However, a major concern is the proposal to set regeneration priorities through a regional process in which it is not clear what role or involvement LAs will have. Also to provide robust regional regeneration priorities maps by early 2009 is not a realistic timescale especially in light of the importance they will have for future funding allocations.

Whilst the fact that the proposed criteria can be applied at different spatial levels does give some flexibility and allow some recognition of local differences, it also gives rise to some confusion and risks achieving the desired consistency and common approach. Particular concerns on the four criteria proposed are as follows:

- Level of deprivation – prioritising neighbourhoods by the intensity and extent of deprivation and focussing on those clumped together risks omitting more isolated but just as needy areas from plans.
- Strength of the sub-regional economy – we need to be clear what this will be relative to (presumably national but how will it feature within a regional map?).
- Economic & Social characteristics – how can we accurately and consistently measure movements to/from small deprived areas especially during times of rapid housing changes?
- The dynamics of the area – much of the data will not be available for deprived neighbourhoods which are often residential and so business specific measures may not apply.

Q10. Should we ask regions to develop regional regeneration maps? What are the disadvantages of that approach?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Comments: The Tees Valley Local Authorities welcome the greater role they will play in economic development and regeneration, and acknowledge the need for a prioritisation process. Chapter 3 puts LAs at the heart of delivery of regeneration (3.3), but the framework is unclear how local authorities will be involved in the proposed prioritisation system.

We are not clear about the additionality of producing the Regeneration Prioritisation Maps. We already have spatial evidence and analysis for local economic assessments, LSP regeneration mapping, ERDF prioritisation and the IMD - we will also have the Single Strategies. There would need to be maximum integration between whatever mapping process emerges and existing mapping, and local flexibility for investment off-map if that is where the economic opportunities/benefits lie.

We have a number of questions:

- We are not clear about which elements of regeneration funding would be included.
- What will the relationship be between a Regeneration Prioritisation Map, all the existing documents, and the proposed Integrated Regional Strategies?
- The consultation does not state how long the regeneration maps will be valid.
- Whilst there are criteria suggested as to how the maps will be drawn up its not clear how these will equate to an area being of greater or lesser priority, and therefore difficult to see how these will actually impact.

We also see a number of disadvantages:

- We are not certain that one map listing prioritisation areas would be appropriate. For example, housing regeneration areas differ from areas that need regeneration focusing on underemployment (of labour, land and other factors of production).
- We are concerned that a regional mapping exercise for regeneration funding could effectively constrain the processes of spatial targeting and prioritisation that are key elements of the Single Strategy (the Single Strategy is meant to exploit the synergies between spatial and economic issues).
- There are risks in developing further maps, including opening up further debate on priorities which have already taken place, increasing complexity and pushing towards spreading the financial resource more thinly.
- Regeneration priority areas may be too dependant on specific projects, and when regeneration projects are prioritised the very nature of large capital build finance can make criteria based prioritisation very complex. An example of this was the prioritisation process that was implemented for Priority 3 projects in the last North East of England Objective 2 Programme, when over a year of activity was purely dedicated to a prioritisation process.

Q11. Should we go further? What else can be done to align national Government investment behind local and regional priorities?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments:

Government could consider ways in which mainstream funding allocations and national government investment, such as that provided for agencies like JCP and LSC, should be aligned with regional and sub-regional regeneration priorities and plans and there should be more flexibility and local say in the criteria for how it is spent.

We also want Government to continue with maximum decentralisation of public sector jobs to redress historical disparity and imbalance and to support balanced regional development

Q12. Will this approach give the private sector confidence and unlock long-term investment? If not, what would?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Comments: Private sector confidence is currently too dependant on the wider economic impact of the Credit Crunch

Q13. If there is a case for central government still identifying some specific neighbourhoods and targeting particular assistance at them in future in order to learn lessons, as we have done with NDCs?

Comments: Yes.

Questions in Chapter Four

Q14. Taken together, do these new and enhanced roles for different agencies equip them to deliver the expectations in the framework?

Yes ☒ No ☒

Comments: We welcome the involvement of all agencies, but suggest that roles are co-ordinated at a regional level to avoid duplication or confusion or inefficiency.

Q15. What would be the costs and benefits of this approach?

Comments:

Q16. How should this framework be implemented in London given London's unique governance arrangements?

Comments: Why should the implementation of a regeneration framework depend upon governance arrangements?

Q17. What would be the impact of this approach on different groups, according to:

- gender and gender identity;
- disability;
- race;
- age;
- religion/belief; and
- sexual orientation

Comments: Too early to predict

Further Information

We would be grateful if you could provide us with the following information to feed into the full Impact Assessment:

Information requested

How are the regeneration priorities, you deal with, currently decided? Are these communicated clearly?

How much time do you currently spend on negotiating regeneration priorities?

To what degree is the local community in your area engaged in this process?

What would be the likely cost of doing this if it is not done already?

What analysis do you currently undertake to support regeneration policy?

Are the analytical proposals in the Framework additional to what you are currently undertaking?

Will the proposals set out in the consultation document lead to a more focussed approach?

And better value for money? If so, how?

CABINET REPORT

27th October 2008



Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: Housing Strategy Supplement 2008

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present a Supplement to the Housing Strategy

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The Housing Strategy 2006-11 requires some updating, this has been done in the form of a supplement (**Appendix 1**), to be read alongside the Strategy

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Updating the housing strategy brings together a number of activities carried out by the authority.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To approve the Housing Strategy Supplement, to be read alongside the Council's Housing Strategy

Report of: The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: Housing Strategy Supplement 2008

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report presents to Cabinet a Housing Strategy Supplement, to be read alongside the existing Housing Strategy 2006-11.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy 2006-11, a 'fit for purpose' housing strategy is still relevant. However, since the strategy was produced a number of important factors have happened locally and nationally which has meant that the strategy needs reviewing.
- 2.2 The most important locally is the completion and findings of the Housing Needs Assessment, part of our Local Housing Assessment which reflects the changing situation of social housing in the town. Very much tied in with this is the significant requirement for 'affordable' housing. An updated Housing Strategy is critical in supporting changes to our planning policy.
- 2.3 Nationally following a Housing Green Paper and a collection of consultation papers and strategies affecting a range of areas the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 has been passed.
- 2.4 Critically there have been changing priorities nationally and the impact of uncertainties and changes to the global economy are all affecting housing in Hartlepool.
- 2.5 An interim supplement has therefore been produced which will update and refresh the existing strategy. It is anticipated that a full review will take place within the next two years when the impact of the Housing and Regeneration Act, our private sector stock condition survey and the global financial markets will be known.
- 2.6 The action plan is, as yet, not finalised. It will, however, be a compilation of actions already approved by Cabinet (eg action plan to implement selective licensing and to implement future housing regeneration programmes). The action plan will be compiled and Government Office will not be assessing the strategy supplement although they will be receiving a copy.

3 PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy Supplement reflects existing priorities and strategies already approved by Cabinet. Consultation on the supplement has been undertaken through the Housing Partnership.

The Housing Strategy gives support and 'authority' to funding bids etc, particularly by Housing Providers to the Housing Corporation (soon to be the Homes and Communities Agency), the supplement will reflect changes since the approval of the Housing Strategy 2006-11.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy is an important one for the local authority, bringing together all the housing threads. It is critical that our strategy stays up to date, reflects latest policies and supports financial bidding, policy changes etc

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Cabinet approves The Housing Strategy Supplement 2008 to be read alongside and to form part of the Housing Strategy 2006-11

Hartlepool Borough Council

Housing Strategy Supplement 2008

To be read alongside Housing Strategy 2006-11

Final Draft October 2008



DRAFT

Front picture: Hartfields – Retirement Village recently opened in partnership with Department of Health, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Health. Built, owned and managed by Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust.

Contents

	page
1 Introduction	4
2 Progress on Housing Strategy 2006-11	5
3 National Issues and Priorities	7
4 Partnership Working	11
5 Current Priorities and how we are tackling them	12
• Balancing Housing Supply and Demand	
• Changing Housing Needs and Meeting the Housing Needs of Vulnerable People	
• Access to housing	
• Improving the quality of existing housing	
6 Other Local Issues	27
7 Resources	28
8 Conclusions	29
9 Action Plan 2008 - 2012	30
Comments	

1 Introduction

Hartlepool Borough Council is responsible for the strategic housing in the borough. This means that we take an overview of all housing related issues, including achieving sustainable and cohesive communities; in the borough and Tees Valley with our sub regional partners. We regularly look at the housing market, the condition of homes and how people can access social housing. The Housing Partnership which consists of resident representatives and housing organisations active in Hartlepool, alongside Members and Officers of the Council, all of whom contribute to producing and implementing the housing strategy.

Since the Housing Strategy was produced in 2006 a number of important factors have happened locally and nationally. The most important locally is the completion and findings of the Housing Needs Assessment, part of our Local Housing Assessment, which reflects the changing situation of social housing in the town. Very much tied in with this is the significant requirement for 'affordable' (housing for sale and/or rent at less than full market value) housing.

Nationally following a Housing Green Paper and a collection of consultation papers and strategies during 2007/8 affecting a range of areas the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 has been passed.

Critically to Hartlepool is the affect on our housing capital programme of changing priorities nationally, specifically the switching of funding away from individual authorities to the national affordable housing programme having both a beneficial and a detrimental impact on differing areas of our capital programme. Whilst it is beneficial to have more provision of affordable housing, it is detrimental to have a reduced funding to improve and maintain existing homes, potentially putting our regeneration areas in jeopardy with adjacent streets falling into disrepair and standing empty.

Importantly we will need to monitor the impact of changes in the economy and the impact on the housing market, our regeneration programmes and other housing issues such as fuel poverty, the ability of first time buyers to get mortgages etc. We will need to be reactive and proactive in limiting any adverse effects in the town.

This update supplement considers progress made on the housing strategy to date and sets out the context for future progress and priorities. Given the significant changes over the past 18months and the new legislation this update has been produced to be read alongside the Housing Strategy 2006-11.

It is anticipated that a full review of the strategy will take place within the next two years, when the impact of the Housing and Regeneration Act, our private sector stock condition survey, and the global financial markets will be known.

2 Progress on 2006 Housing Strategy

The Strategy identified a number of key housing issues:-

- Within the private sector, particularly around the housing market, issues around private landlords and general housing conditions
- Meeting targets for decent homes standards – within both the social and private housing sectors
- Issues around meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people included:
 - Landlord management and licensing
 - Considering access to social housing, including introducing choice based lettings
 - Completing and implementing the Five Year Supporting People Strategy
 - Addressing fuel poverty and thermal insulation
 - Enabling residents to live safely in, or return to, their own homes where they wish to
 - Encourage Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to bid for funds and to develop housing schemes to address needs within the borough
 - Develop a younger persons housing strategy
 - Facilitate implementation of the Respect agenda, particularly around support to families in crisis

How successful have we been?

We have successfully taken action to implement much of the actions set out in our strategy. There have been changes since the Strategy was published and this will change our priorities and the actions we will take to address issues.

- We have made good progress in our two regeneration areas of West Central and North Central Hartlepool. The three first phase sites have been acquired and cleared and construction work is well underway with the first homes now being occupied. Our housing regeneration strategy continues to evolve and following a review of programme delivery arrangements with our regeneration partners in 2007 Housing Hartlepool is now the sole frontline delivery agency for the programme across central Hartlepool on behalf of, and in partnership with, Hartlepool BC and Hartlepool New Deal for Communities.
- Funding continues to be sought and we have £16.6m allocated from the Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP), Communities and Local Government (CLG) and English Partnerships (EP) for the four years 2008/12 to address Phase 2 in both regeneration areas. We have refreshed the North Central Plan and the NDC Housing Plan; the two schemes have now been jointly renamed Central Hartlepool as both are now being delivered in a partnership between Housing Hartlepool the Council and NDC. Additionally we are supporting Housing Hartlepool implement the £1.2m NDC Home Improvement Project which is focussed on improving private sector homes across the NDC area and supporting 'facelift' improvements to properties surrounding areas of major redevelopment.

- We have targeted support to renovate and repair housing in areas adjacent to redevelopment areas and set up a sub regional empty homes initiative which is currently addressing empty properties in the town. With reduced funding available, this project is not as extensive as envisaged, this is an area which we would like to expand in the future, subject to funding availability
- We have successfully implemented the mandatory HMO licensing scheme for certain Houses in Multiple Occupation. We are currently implementing (subject to formal approval) a selective licensing scheme in parts of the borough, a decision made by Cabinet following extensive consultation with residents and landlords and a scrutiny of private sector housing by Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee (subsequently moved to Regeneration & Planning Scrutiny Committee).
- We are continuing to engage with key agencies and landowners to bring forward the redevelopment of Victoria Harbour – a regeneration project aimed at providing 3,500 homes of all tenures together with commercial and leisure opportunities that will create a step change in the fortunes of Hartlepool drawing in new residents and businesses to the town.
- Our RSLs are on target to achieve the Government's decent homes target of 2010
- We are currently on target to achieve the Government's decent homes target for private housing, although reduced funding will impact on this.
- We are currently, in partnership with the sub region, reviewing the accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers.
- We have been successful in implementing activities to reduce fuel poverty although the increasing price of fuel will have affected the actual reduction of fuel poverty.
- We have completed an assessment to identify a 5 year supply of housing land and are in the process of preparing a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in line with land use planning policy requirements.
- We are currently working with RSLs to increase affordable homes and have encouraged RSLs to bid for funding for specialist accommodation.
- We successfully completed the 5 Year Supporting People strategy and this has subsequently been reviewed. Work is progressing on its implementation.
- We have reviewed our Homelessness Strategy, ahead of the due date to ensure we are up to date. It is likely this will be reviewed again during 2009/10
- We are making progress in implementing a Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings scheme. It is anticipated that this will be operational between January – April 2009.
- We have not completed a Younger Persons Housing Strategy, although work is currently progressing to achieve this.
- We have produced an Older Person's Housing, Care and Support Strategy.

3 National Issues and Priorities

Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

This act built on the Barker review of Housing Supply 2004 and the Homes for the Future Housing Green Paper 2007 both of which called for a step change in the scale of housing delivery to reflect economic needs. The Cave Review and consultations on Tenant Empowerment, Delivering Housing and Regeneration and the Future of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

The Act received royal assent on 22nd July 2008. The Act aims to support the delivery of an additional 240,000 new homes per year by 2016. The Act also creates the Homes and Community Agency – a new investment agency for housing (formed from parts of the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships) and the Tenants Services Authority, a new regulator of social housing, as well as other provisions designed to support the delivery of housing.

The new Act comes at a time of great economic uncertainty and a very transitional time in housing policy. It must, therefore, be seen in context of some of the parallel processes taking place, including:-

- New Local Performance Framework
- New LAAs and flexibilities in funding
- Emerging MAAs
- Local government review and the move to a single regional strategy
- Communities in Control white Paper
- Transforming places, changing lives: a framework for regeneration consultation paper, with a focus on targeted economic regeneration
- New delivery vehicles, such as local housing companies and joint ventures
- The global credit crunch

'Independence and Opportunity' June 2007, the Government's strategy for Supporting People

This ties in with the White paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' and sets out four key themes:-

- Keeping people that need services at the heart of the programme
- Enhancing partnerships with the 'voluntary' sector (that is non statutory organisations such as care providers and registered social landlords)
- Delivering in the new Local Government landscape, and
- Increasing efficiency and reducing bureaucracy

It sets out what the Government will do to achieve the aims of the programme, what they expect Supporting People commissioners and providers to do, and what service

users should therefore be able to expect from housing related support services. It does not address future funding levels or distributions.

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society' February 2008

This sets out the Government's response to the global challenge of ageing. It outlines plans for making sure that there is enough appropriate housing available in future to relieve the forecasted unsustainable pressures on homes, health and social care.

The increasing number of older households is a major factor in our need for more homes. Homes themselves are only part of the picture – we need to make neighbourhoods safe and inclusive. The vision is to 'future proof' communities – to succeed in providing appropriate housing and effective care to all in a more targeted manner, there must be a coherent, joined-up, plan – hence this strategy.

In future, housing, health and care will be increasingly interdependent; this strategy makes housing and ageing a cross-government priority

The strategy sets out actions to promote independence by improving housing choices and provision for older people today. There is also a need to improve information and advice services so that they know how to make the right choice for them and aren't forced to leave their homes before they are ready or need to do so. There will be a national housing advice and information service, linked to this local housing information services will be strengthened. Additionally the strategy sets out to make it easier and safer for people to stay in their own homes. New rapid repairs and adaptations services will be introduced to support handypersons schemes. New funding will enable an additional 125,000 older people each year to get the repairs and minor adaptations necessary to help them carry on living in their own homes. The Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are to be modernised and funding increased. The means test will be improved and more flexibility given to local authorities to expand the choices available.

All social housing will be built to Lifetime Homes Standards by 2011 with, aspirationally, all homes built to these standards by 2013. A new beacon scheme will be established on inclusive planning to recognise local authorities providing leadership in this area.

The strategy aims to improve joined-up assessment, service provision and commissioning across housing, health and care to deliver better outcomes for older people. This will be achieved through the development of personal budgets.

Changes to the planning process

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2005 introduced a new planning system replacing the Structure Plan/Local Plan system with Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and Local Development Frameworks (LDF).

The Local Development Framework is a collection of documents prepared by local planning authorities that shows how local developments should take place. It is the

spatial interpretation of the Sustainable Community Strategy and sets out how the vision of the Local Strategic Partnership will be translated into physical reality.

A series of Planning Policy Statements (PPS's) sets out the Government's national policies on aspects of planning and these need to be considered in formulating local policies. PPS3 sets out the governments housing objectives and underpins the Government's response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply seeking a step change in housing delivery through a new, more responsive approach to land supply at a local level. PPS3 reflects the Government's commitment to improving the affordability and supply of housing in all communities ensuring that 'everyone has the opportunity to of living in a decent home which they can afford, in a community where they want to live.' To realise this, the Government is seeking:

- To achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community.
- To widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need.
- To improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing.
- To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural.

At the local level, the LDF comprises a Core Strategy which incorporates the principal planning policies and sets the strategic planning framework for the area. This is supported by a series of other topic or location specific documents which may be statutory (Development Plan Documents (DPD's)) or provide supplementary guidance (Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)). Hartlepool's Core Strategy is currently being prepared and this should be in place in 2010. Policies within the current Local Plan which was adopted in 2006 will be 'saved' until the Core Strategy is completed. In the meantime an Affordable Housing DPD is being prepared which will establish clear requirements for the incorporation of affordable housing within new developments. This should be adopted in 2009. Following the adoption of the Core Strategy a Housing Allocations DPD will be prepared which will identify specific locations within the borough for housing development.

The new planning framework must be supported by a strong base of evidence to ensure that individual policies are sufficiently robust. This includes:-

- A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which identifies specific deliverable housing sites for the next five years and other developable sites over a further 10 year period, and assesses their suitability and deliverability against a range of criteria.
- Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) which involves a detailed assessment of the local housing market and an analysis of what is happening within it including identified housing provision, pressures, aspirations and preferences to help identify future requirements.
- Sustainability appraisals involving a wide ranging look at whether developments and policies proposed will be sustainable in the long term.
- Other appraisals and assessments such as flood risk appraisal, green infrastructure appraisals, economic assessments.

A further forthcoming change to the planning system involves the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy which is included in the new Planning Bill. This proposes a charge against all new developments (except householder) with the income used to pay for local, sub-regional and regional infrastructure costs.

Changes to housing capital

Up to four years ago each LA was given an annual 'borrowing permission' for housing capital works based on a historical formula. This was changed to a two year allocation through a bidding process (SHIP – Single Housing Investment Programme) by the Regional Housing Board. The second SHIP round saw a grant allocation through a tighter bidding round. The third SHIP round was expected to be based on costed sub regional housing strategy action plans for three years. Funding from central Government has been, however, substantially reduced in order to fund affordable housing programmes nationally.

The authorities in the sub region worked hard to achieve a costed action plan and submitted a detailed bid for funds. It was successful in that the 3 year allocation was a high proportion of the region's funds, but considerably less than previous allocations. This will affect our ability to reach decent homes targets in the private sector, address issues of fuel poverty and help the elderly and vulnerable residents with home repairs.

4 Partnership working

- Tees Valley Living
This continues to be a successful partnership attracting funding and overseeing housing regeneration projects within the Tees Valley
Tees Valley Living Research Group
- Tees Valley Unlimited
This is a partnership of public, private and voluntary bodies which coordinates activities, appropriate to a city region level, designed to improve the economic performance of the entire Tees Valley. TVU comprises a number of boards/sub-boards along with a supporting officer structure.
- Wider joint working, including Chief Housing/Planning Officers meetings
A range of meetings take place across the Tees Valley ensuring that we work closely together across a range of housing topics.
- Joint Protocol with Housing Corporation – one of the first sub regional protocols aimed at improving relations and standardising information required from RSLs across the sub region.
- Tees Valley Regeneration
The Sub Regional Urban Regeneration Company, working on behalf of Hartlepool to bring forward the Victoria Harbour development. Working closely with public sector partners English Partnerships, One North East and private sector landowner PD Ports.
- Tees Valley Sub Regional CBL Partnership
- Empty Homes Initiative
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment

5 Current Priorities and how we are tackling them

Balancing Supply and Demand

Maintaining Housing Regeneration

The first two housing renewal schemes in West and North Central Hartlepool are now fully assembled all the demolition has been completed with over 600 properties being demolished. All three sites have been sold to the developers who were successful following the open tender process entered into. The developers have carried out site remediation and infrastructure and building works are well underway. Some residents have already moved into their new homes and the choice and range on offer to purchasers has been very popular. A full range of tenure choices has also been achieved on this site and this will add to the future sustainability of the area. Clearly sales are now being affected by the global financial issues – mortgages have been harder to find and the housing market has been sluggish. Residents moving within the regeneration areas (selling their houses as part of the scheme) have been able to take advantage of the shared ownership properties. We will report on how the credit 'crunch' affects the scheme in our next Housing Strategy.



The strategy for the next phase of housing market renewal in central Hartlepool will be informed by the Tees Valley Living Housing Gap Funding model produced by Deloitte. HBC and Housing Hartlepool jointly commissioned Deloitte, Dickinson Dees and Nathaniel Lichfield Partners to undertake a Housing Market Renewal Modelling Framework for Central Hartlepool. This has helped to identify where further interventions should take place, taking into account expectations from the community and other stakeholders, current conditions in potential intervention areas, costs and

other intervention funding being committed to the area. This piece of work has also considered the legal and planning arguments for the intervention as well as types of financial packages or vehicles that may be appropriate for the programme. It is likely that this will be revised to take account of any impact of the tightening of the mortgage market

A review of the NDC Housing Plan has also taken place. These reports have collectively helped the Council to establish priorities for the second phase of housing market intervention.



Growth Point (providing new homes)

Following recommendations included in the Housing Green Paper, the Government last year invited bids for further Growth Point areas, which seek to secure accelerated levels of housing growth. The Tees Valley authorities supported by Tees Valley Living submitted a sub-regional proposal which provided a compelling case for accelerated economic and housing growth. The proposal sets out the reasoning and justification for a scheme which would achieve housing growth which is almost 20% greater than projections included in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Following the Housing Green Paper the Tees Valley Authorities and Tees Valley Living put up a convincing argument that the Tees Valley should be designated a 'Growth Point' 'Tees Valley Growth Point Proposal: why Tees Valley, Why Now? The compelling case for accelerated, additional economic and housing growth.' 2008. This was successful and with the publication of 'Facing the housing challenge: Action today, innovation for tomorrow' in July came the announcement of additional Growth Points, including Hartlepool. This has now, however, been affected by the global financial market and it is likely to be postponed until the mortgage and development markets settle.

Changing Housing Needs and Meeting the Housing Needs of Vulnerable People

Our housing need assessment looked at the provision of housing in the borough, the shortages in terms of new requirements and the flexibilities and shortcomings within the existing stock.

The assessment confirmed the view that the requirement for affordable housing in Hartlepool has changed over the past couple of years. Five years ago we had a fairly short waiting list for accommodation, housing to buy was reasonably priced (even new build) and the CURS report (Jan 2002) stated that we may have to reduce social housing units in the town to avoid low demand issues. Social housing units have reduced through the RTB and demolition of obsolete stock, and now demand far exceeds supply. We have a very long waiting list (over 3,000) and an urgent need for more affordable housing in the town with stock turnover reducing from ** in *** to ** in 2007?. The ability for households to access the social rented sector has become increasingly difficult over the past few years. As a result, private renting has become the only viable option for many households, although issues such as stock condition, the short-term length of tenancy and dwelling quality all point to concerns regarding the role of the private rented sector in promoting long-term community sustainability and quality of life. Strong emphasis on good management and maintenance through tenancy relations, landlord accreditation, enforcement and the introduction of selective licensing are all designed to improve this sector and offer a viable private rented sector.

The shortage of social housing has come about due to changes in the housing market nationally and locally. Housing prices have risen, making owner occupation less affordable. New build prices have risen due to rising costs of materials and land. We have lost high numbers of social rented homes through the RTB and RSLs have built very limited numbers of 'general needs' properties in the past 10 years, although we are now taking action to address this with a number of schemes 'on site' or planned. Whilst house prices locally have reduced, as they have nationally, the difficulty in getting mortgages has further reduced people's ability to move into owner occupation. This is unlikely to change in the very short term, it is however likely that prices will stabilise and mortgages will become available, although it is likely that the percentage of mortgage offered to purchase price will reduce and home ownership will continue to be difficult to move into. Existing owners are unlikely to want to sell if prices continue to reduce and more owners are moved into negative equity.

The housing need requirements identified through the Local Housing Assessment is an estimated gross 393 homes per year – subject to a number of factors which should be regularly reviewed. This is a useful tool when assessments of housing need is done in Hartlepool. There is a high level of general needs requirements for 3 or more bedrooms, second priority is for two bedrooms, then older persons accommodation. There is high level of need for affordable homes to rent and/or part purchase (shared ownership and equity shared ownership).

A sub regional Housing Needs Assessment is also currently being prepared which will also help to provide useful information on housing requirements.

Up to 2021 there are a number of significant supply side issues that could potentially exacerbate the affordable housing situation, these include:

- Lack of an affordable housing planning policy (although this should be in place within the next year)
- A high number of extant planning permissions
- Significant number of planned demolitions
- Continued level of right-to-buy activity, and
- Increasing house prices, although this is being affected by the credit crunch and, due to lower average wages in Hartlepool, the ability of residents to get mortgages is being hampered.

The study found that given the high level of housing need identified it is essential that all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable homes are explored. This includes delivering affordable homes through the planning process. We are progressing work on an Affordable Housing Development Plan Document. This will produce a planning framework to deliver affordable housing as part of planning application for housing development over a certain size. It will also consider the percentage of affordable housing needed including type and tenure plus if contributions for off-site provision are appropriate. The Affordable Housing Development Document should be operation in 2009.

A major gap in our housing provision is that for wheelchair users of all ages, particularly for people needing family size homes. Whilst 3 or 4 bedroom bungalows would be ideal, we are conscious of their large footprint and two storey homes will be considered. We require 2-3 units per year. We also need 2 bed units suitable for wheelchair users for single people and couples, a high percentage of who may be elderly. We require 3-5 units per year – bungalows and/or flats (with lifts).

We have changing demographics to consider. Hartlepool's population is getting older. There is an increasing necessity to ensure that support services are appropriate to the needs of the elderly. The survey asked about the future requirements from older people and the support services they required. Data suggests that the vast majority of older people (81%) would want to stay in their own home with support when needed. A further 23.6% stated a preference for sheltered accommodation.

We have produced an 'Older Person's Housing Care and Support Strategy', published 2008 in partnership with Housing Hartlepool and Health (PCT).

This Strategy considers how to provide a holistic service to the elderly. In pure housing terms, however, it considers

- Rebalancing the specialist accommodation system for older people – including how we shift the balance away from residential and nursing home care towards sheltered and extra care housing. It identifies a need for an additional 150 units of extra care *in addition* to Hartfields (Joseph Rowntree Retirement Village). The Retirement Village was opened on July 30th 2008 with the first residents moving in during August. The success of the retirement village with Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust encouraged a further bid to the Department of Health in partnership with Housing Hartlepool to provide a 60 unit scheme on the site of Orwell Walk. This bid has also been successful and we look forward to a further

extra care scheme in the town, offering further choice and support to older residents.

- How we should encourage private provision of homes suitable for older people for sale
- Enabling RSLs to provide affordable homes for sale and for rent for older people

Older people see residential care as a last resort rather than as a positive choice. Additionally they want more choice between housing and care options and more tenure choice. This very much focuses on quality of life rather than quality of care. The aim is to offer as much choice as possible – enabling residents to either remain safely in their homes or to move to suitable alternatives such as sheltered housing.

The Council's five year Supporting People strategy was updated during 2007, 12 months after its production, as a result of the changes both nationally and locally, including the Government's publication of a national Supporting People Strategy 'Independence and Opportunity'.

The Supporting People strategy sets out the following priorities:-

- Hartfields Retirement Village, offering 242 units of mixed tenure including extra care. This will still leave a shortfall of about 100 extra care units in the town. *This has subsequently been updated to 150 by the Older Person's Housing, Care and Support Strategy produced 2008.*
- At the conclusion of the commissioning and implementation strategy (following on from the Older Persons Housing Strategy) will allow us to reshape older persons support services over the next 3-5 years
- Adult (over 25) homeless person's scheme. This sale of land for this scheme was approved by Cabinet, however planning permission was not granted. We are currently working with the RSL who had agreed to seek funding in order to provide this service for us for an alternative provision using existing properties.
- Shared ownership scheme for people with learning disabilities, 6 flats built in partnership with Three Rivers Housing Association & Redcar & Cleveland BC. This project is being built using Health Extra Care funding and offering an exciting and unique development further extends our range of housing options for people with learning disabilities.
- Telecare. The full report and findings of the one year pilot (ended Sept 07) are being compiled. The early indications are that the pilot was successful and complemented a range of other support services such as intermediate care and the basic community alarm service. The service looks set to continue and be further developed over the next five years, including telemedicine.
- Floating support services have been established in the borough, however it is recognised that a range of needs need to be developed to support people moving on from supported accommodation and for specific client groups such as learning disabilities, where there are currently no services in place.
- There continues to be gaps in provision for people with drug and/or alcohol issues both in terms of accommodation and floating support. We have recently been able to commission some short term projects using funding available due to delays in other projects. These projects will be appraised and, where appropriate, included in any future planning (subject to funding availability)

- Joint reviews are currently taking place where care and SP funding is in place in learning disability schemes. Joint contracts will be developed, where feasible, for these services.
- Funding will continue to be an issue, our funding for SP will remain static for the next three years, which in real terms will mean a decrease annually (allowing for inflation).

Access to housing

Choice Based Lettings

The Government set a target date of 2010 for all Local Authorities to implement, with appropriate partners and where possible on a sub regional basis, a Choice Based Lettings scheme.

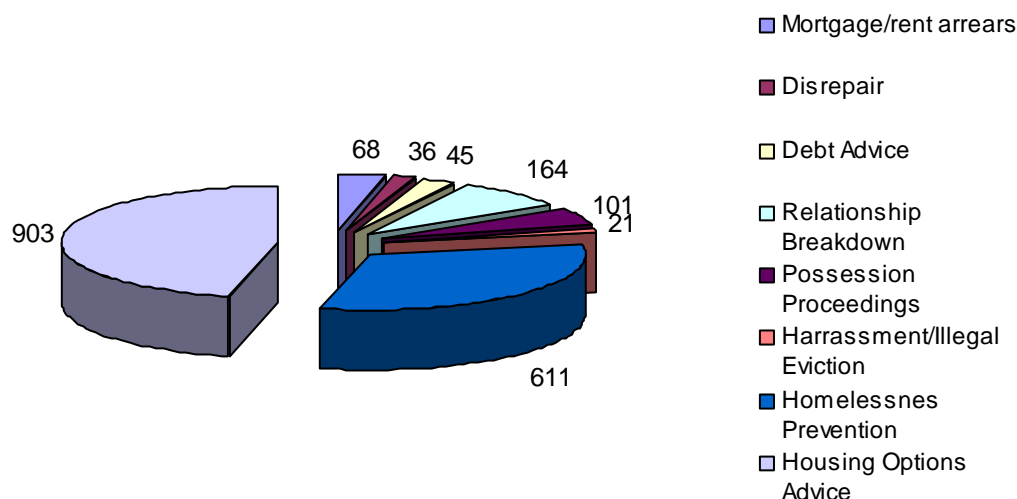
Hartlepool has formed a partnership with the other local authorities and their partner landlords within the Tees Valley to introduce a Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme with a Common Allocations Policy for the whole area. The Common Allocations Policy has been subject to extensive consultation. The consultation and approval process has been lengthy. It is planned that the Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme will be implemented using a phased approach during January to April 2009.

Within Hartlepool this will involve major changes to how applications for housing are assessed moving from a points based assessment to a banding and bidding system. This system is seen as being more transparent, although some applicants will need help in bidding for properties. The need for this enhanced support has been one of the factors behind the proposal to develop a centrally located Housing Options Service for the town which could become the main point of contact for Choice Based Lettings and the focal point for all other housing needs and advice.

Homelessness Prevention

The work of the Housing Advice Team continues to focus on homelessness prevention

Housing Advice Cases Opened in Period 01.04.2007 to 31.03.08

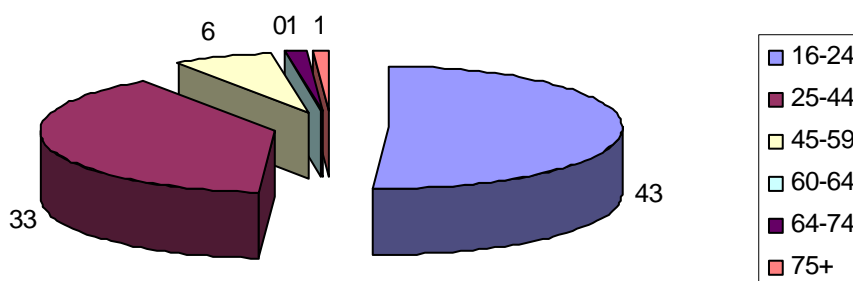


During the financial year 07/08 1,514 case files have been opened for applicants needing detailed housing advice, the above table provides a breakdown of the main presenting problems when the case was opened. These figures do not include those customers receiving one off general advice either in person or by telephone.

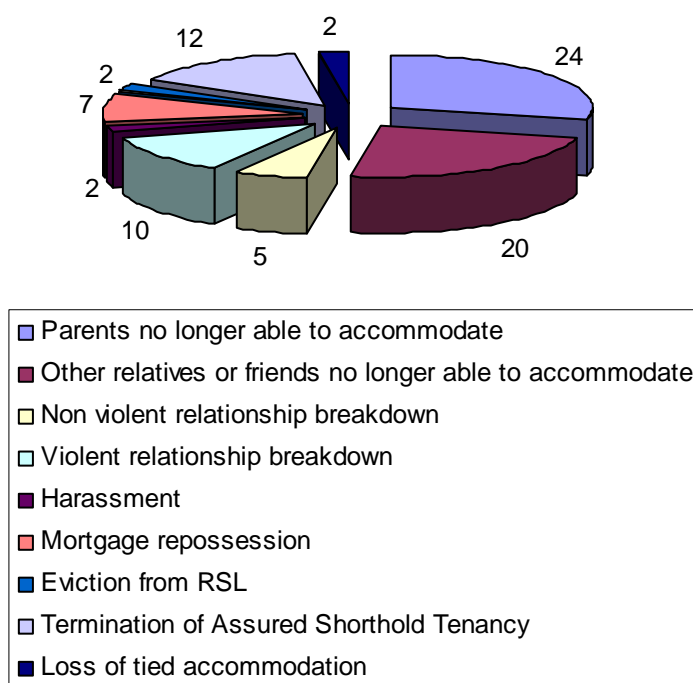
The number of cases involving mortgage repossessions has risen significantly and further detailed monitoring of this has been introduced from April 08 to enable a more accurate analysis of this trend.

From April 07 to March 08 the Council has accepted a duty under the homelessness legislation to rehouse 84 homeless applicants; the following tables provide some information relating to these applications.

Homeless Acceptances by Age Range 1.4.07. to 31.3.08



Reasons for Homelessness 1.4.07 to 31.3.08



Multi Agency Panel

A recent major achievement has been the setting up of a multi agency panel to improve the chances of housing for offenders and substance misusers, reduce homelessness and repeat homelessness and to help prevent homelessness. The Panel works on the principles of the Hartlepool Protocol and accepts referrals to supported schemes, ensuring that they are appropriate and that move-on accommodation is appropriate, with suitable support.

The panel is made up of the following agencies:-

- Probation
- Youth Offending Service
- Supporting People
- Supported Housing Providers
- Housing Hartlepool
- Drug Treatment Agencies
- Mental Health Teams
- Support Agencies

It has been apparent that a high demand for support is coming from alcoholics, we are currently negotiating with a support provider to offer supported accommodation for recovering alcoholics, using existing accommodation.

Young People

Whilst we have made achievements in offering support and housing for young people – it has become increasingly clear that we have insufficient supported housing. We are, therefore, working with Tees Valley Housing Association, who currently run St Paul's and floating support for young people in the town, to offer a further supported housing scheme to offer move-on from St Paul's and Gainford House and direct nominations (all done through the vulnerable person's panel) to widen our options and offer support for young people. It is important that we work with young people with chaotic lifestyles and ensure that they progress to independent living, work and a stable life.

Home Improvement Agency, helping people remain in their own homes

For the past 20 years our Home Improvement Agency (HIA) has been run by Endeavour Housing Association, helping residents improve and repair their homes, administering HomePlus grants, some Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) on our behalf and handyperson services aimed at helping residents live safely in their homes.

With a national tightening of funding available to support specific scheme a number of HIAs have merged or the services being undertaken by local authorities. With reducing funding from a variety of sources Endeavour no longer felt that it was viable to maintain the HIA as an independent unit.

The Council's private sector housing team took over some of this service, but at reduced levels due to reductions in SHIP funding. The level of service offered currently (handyperson service & HomePlus grants) is not sufficient to be viewed as a fully fledged HIA. It is anticipated that the service will be built up over the next few years to include an advice service, offering the full HIA services although this is unlikely to be a discreet team, given the limited resources available.

Affordable Housing

The housing green paper established the national requirement for affordable housing and changes to housing capital allocation confirmed the Government's support for the provision of affordable housing.

Locally the housing needs assessment has identified a high level of affordable housing requirements in the town – far higher than we can currently provide through the planning process (it would take all our new planning allocations) and more funding than is available.

During 2007 Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny forum considered the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool. Concerns had been raised on the effect of increasing pressure on the current housing market in Hartlepool and the availability of good quality affordable accommodation.

Scrutiny concluded that the main challenges for the provision of good quality affordable rented accommodation are:-

- ensuring residents are able to stay in the community they are familiar with
- partnership arrangements, which are already strong in terms of potential joint ventures, should be further explored,
- the availability of land and the problem of developers retaining land, and
- achieving the target of zero carbon by 2016

Scrutiny made a number of recommendations including:

- a review of land be undertaken to identify possible additional sites for affordable social rented homes
- that a criterion based policy supporting in principle the disposal of Council land to RSLs at below market value be created – with each being considered on its merits, in line with government guidance.
- that the provision of housing for elderly/disabled residents be explored in an innovative way
- that local planning policy be revised as swiftly as practicable, through the Local Development Framework to provide affordable rented homes

In partnership with RSLs bids were submitted to the Housing Corporation for affordable housing to be provided within the borough. Bids for

- 12 family houses for rent (site created by clearance of 12 poor quality flats plus some HBC owned land)
- 20 shared ownership homes (14 houses and 6 bungalows) provided within the NDC development by George Wimpey. A further 15 first time buyer homes provided directly by the developer.
- 16 houses (10 for rent and 6 for shared ownership)
- 6 bungalows for rent
- 26 houses and bungalows for rent and 8 shared ownership
- 11 houses and bungalows for rent
- 4 shared ownership houses

- 7 1 and 2 bedroom supported apartments in a refurbished sheltered housing scheme
- 13 houses for rent

Housing Hartlepool recently celebrated the completion of their first new build homes – 16 bungalows for the elderly and disabled and 20 shared ownership homes within the NDC regeneration area.

Given the high requirements for affordable housing – both rented and shared ownership homes – it is critical that we support RSLs in their applications to the Housing Corporation and with the planning process (through s106 agreements) to ensure high levels of provision. The completion of the Affordable Housing DPD will strengthen the Council's hand in securing affordable housing through s106 agreements and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) will also support the identification of future development sites. Additionally, over the past 12 months the Council has been working proactively with RSLs to identify and bring forward land within its ownership for affordable housing.



Improving the Quality of Existing Properties

Private Sector Priorities

Local housing authorities are required under the Housing Act 2004 to keep housing conditions under review; to identify any action to be taken on health and safety hazards, licensing of privately rented houses, using management orders and the use of the Regulatory Reform Order to provide financial and other assistance for the improvement of housing

Stock Condition Survey

In partnership with Darlington and Stockton Borough Councils, the authority is procuring a stock condition survey which will provide data on the condition of private housing set in the context of national and regional data and English House Condition Survey reports, describe to what extent the authority may need to exercise its duties under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, dealing with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and non-decent homes across owner occupied and private rented sectors, and energy efficiency.

Private Sector SHIP funding

A substantial reduction in the funding to improve decent homes standards in private housing has resulted from the Government's concentration on supporting affordable housing, decent homes in the public sector and maintaining housing market renewal targets in the SHIP 3 funding period (2008-11). Hartlepool's allocation for private decent homes over the next three years is £955,360. In comparison, the allocation for the year 2007/8 was £918,000. In order to support this important core work the Tees Valley sub-region has agreed to make £200,000 per year available to each authority from the housing market renewal budget. The impact of the reduced allocation will also be offset by additional NDC expenditure on home improvements over the next two years. It remains, however, that there is a considerable reduction in the budget for achieving decent homes standards in the private sector and this will impact on our ability to achieve the Government's decent homes target.

Renewal Assistance

Reduced central government funding for private sector housing improvement increases the focus on recycling scarce resources. Councils are being encouraged to investigate the use of alternative funding methods and particularly to move away from providing non-repayable grants towards the use of repayable loans. Regionally the North East authorities are exploring the possibility of a regional loans process, although reduced funding may affect the implementation of this, which is currently anticipated to be 2009. It does, however, appear inevitable that loans will substantially replace grant in the future.

In 2006 as part of a sub regional loan introduction we introduced a grant/loan product (70% grant and 30% loan) in the SHIP 2 (2006/8) funding period.

Moving towards loans, from 2008 assistance has been changed to 50% grant and 50% loan.

Energy Efficiency

The reduction in funding available for private housing improvement is forcing some authorities to concentrate on improving housing standards and discontinuing energy efficiency schemes. Energy efficiency has been promoted through our housing capital programme for many years, drawing in additional funding from energy utility companies. Hartlepool has a good track record of improving energy efficiency and has made considerable funding available to do so, targeting households effectively, at the same time ensuring that this funding hasn't replaced other government assistance available.

Funding, if reduced, has been maintained in the capital programme for 2008/9 with the intention of seeking at least match-funding from one of the utilities.

A new national performance indicator has placed a responsibility on authorities to collect information on levels of fuel poverty among vulnerable households.

Energy Performance Certificates for private rented properties are expected to be introduced from October 2008; although the exact details are not yet known. The certificate is intended to inform tenants of the standard of energy efficiency of properties they are considering and (theoretically) to inform their rental choices.

Fuel Poverty and SAP ratings

With increasing costs of fuel, reducing fuel poverty remains a high priority, both locally and nationally. Over the past four years we have been able, in partnership with fuel providers, offer grants to ensure high levels of take up of national grants and managing a local scheme with one of the utilities and to ensure that homes in the borough are insulated to the highest levels possible, given that structurally some of the properties are hard to improve. This work has become increasingly vital given the increases in fuel. Without the works carried out residents would have fallen increasingly into fuel poverty, with residents unable to heat homes sufficiently and winter illnesses increasing.

With reduced capital funding, however, it is unlikely that we will be able to continue at the same level of investment. It is anticipated that a reduced level programme will continue for the next three years. We will continue to monitor SAP ratings and work towards our targets.

Whilst work has contributed to reducing winter deaths in the town and made a significant impact on many residents, the increasing cost of fuel is likely to keep many in fuel poverty.

Decent Homes

A new national performance framework has replaced 1200 indicators previously collected by Councils with 198 which form part of the new comprehensive area assessment. Whilst the new national indicators include the government's target for decent homes in social housing, the private sector target of 70% of the houses occupied by vulnerable private households to meet the decent homes standard by 2010 has not. The 'percentage of vulnerable households in decent houses in the private sector' remains as an indicator – which includes improving the quality of housing. The

reduction in funding to the authority will have an impact on the numbers of houses meeting the target.

Enforcement of Housing Legislation

Working with Private Landlords

There are a number of initiatives and services aimed at addressing issues associated with low demand and anti-social behaviour. Additionally it is considered that selective licensing will further reduce the issues associated with concentrations of private rented housing – including anti-social behaviour and empty properties – bringing them to an acceptable level.

Empty Properties

The importance of taking action on empty private houses has never been more important in the light of continuing regeneration work, the need for affordable housing, and the decision to press for selective licensing. Whilst an informal and assisting approach has resulted in houses being brought back into use, and demolition has reduced empty house numbers, there is a need to be even more proactive and to consider the use of all of the options open to the council. A Tees Valley Empty Property Strategy is being developed in conjunction with the other Tees Valley authorities to introduce wider ranging and varied enforcement approaches, and where possible, to follow a common approach. In particular, the possibility of using 'enforced sale' provisions in the Law of Property Act 1925 and 'empty dwelling management orders' under the Housing Act 2004 to either instigate action by an existing owner or take over the management of the property, and the detailed procedures required, are being actively considered.



Selective Licensing of landlords and their properties

The possibility of adopting a selective licensing scheme for areas suffering from low demand is an additional tool to raise private sector housing management and maintenance standards and to improve the behaviour of antisocial tenants. A decision to pursue this has been made by Cabinet following a review by scrutiny.

The Housing Act 2004 introduced a discretionary power for Local Housing Authorities to designate areas for the selective licensing of private sector rented housing suffering from, or likely to suffer from, low demand and/or significant and persistent anti-social behaviour. The term 'selective' recognises the intention to apply this to targeted areas, a focussed and intensive area-based activity in a small area normally not more than a ward or 500 – 1000 licensable dwellings.

The objective is to improve the housing management standards of landlords in the areas designated which, it's envisaged will reduce anti-social behaviour and increase the occupancy of the housing stock stabilising demand. Consultation has indicated overwhelming support from residents in the central parts of the town for the introduction of licensing, whilst landlords were less in favour.

Selective licensing needs to be integrated and to have a consistent strategic fit with other initiatives aimed at regeneration of older housing areas in Hartlepool. Whilst it is a useful tool, just as 'bad' landlords are not the sole reason for an area's decline, selective licensing isn't the sole solution to all problems.

During 2007 the Council's Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny considered activities in the private rented sector. The resulting action plan included an evaluation prior to a decision being made.

Existing schemes in other areas have found that implementing selective licensing in areas earmarked for demolition – it can help to manage the difficult period leading up to demolition and redevelopment.

Hartlepool was included in the Government's pilot project considering actions which could be taken to assist the private rented sector to function more coherently. Despite this knowledge and a wide range of initiatives and services in place or under development it is considered that further controls, via selective licensing, are necessary to reduce the issues associated with concentrations of private rented housing including ASB and empty properties to an acceptable level.

It is proposed that a phased introduction is used, allowing progress to be monitored more accurately and to identify the resources required to manage a scheme effectively. The option chosen by Cabinet was that of areas in most need first, with consultation starting around April 2008 it is hoped that the first scheme (covering 6 areas and approx 536 privately rented properties) will be approved by October 2008. The scheme will be for a maximum of five years, although if conditions persist a further designation may be made. A second phase may be implemented based on a further analysis subject to capacity and the monitoring of impact and further analysis and would be dependent on the issues evident. The intention is to encourage a general improvement and to discourage displacement of 'poor' landlord activity into new areas.

6. Other Local Issues

Local Area Agreement

A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three year agreement 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 Local Strategic Partnerships).

Hartlepool's LAA (to end 2008) is structured around the aims and themes of the Community Strategy. It forms the strategic framework for monitoring progress and aims to deliver a better quality of life for people through improving performance on a range of national and local priorities. It was agreed by the Hartlepool Partnership Board and the Council's Cabinet in February 2006 and signed off by Government in March 2006. The LAA submission and the Delivery and Improvement Plan 2007/8 is available on the Partnership website (www.hartlepoolpartnership.co.uk)

The new LAA for 2008-11 reflects the work of the Housing Partnership, emphasising key issues and actions

Diversity

In July 2008 an initial meeting was held between Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool to discuss recommendations from the Audit Commission about balancing the proportion of lettings made to the BME communities. Following this meeting an action plan around access to housing services from the BME communities has been drawn up and will be presented to the next meeting of the group. It was agreed that a baseline position needs to be established before further work is undertaken. In partnership with Housing Hartlepool the Council will endeavour to raise awareness of services and how to access these with the ultimate aim of producing a long term strategy for BME housing needs and aspirations. It is intended that this work will be presented to the Housing Partnership for a steer on its future development.

A sub regional study of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment is currently being undertaken in accordance with Government Guidelines.

A sub regional study into diversity issues is a priority in the forthcoming update of the Sub Regional Housing Strategy, building on the limited research already undertaken, the study found difficulty in engaging with ethnic minority residents in Hartlepool.

7 Resources

Housing Capital Programme

We continue to be successful in securing funding for regeneration.

The changes to the way authorities receive funding for housing capital projects has changed – from a formulaic allocation of borrowing permission to an allocation of grant money from the regional housing board has led to a severe reduction in funding for the next three years. This is as a result of national changes in priority transferring funding to increasing provision of affordable housing nationally. The Tees Valley Authorities have jointly agreed to transfer £1m per year of SHIP funding allocated for regeneration to support the other private sector activities. This is to prevent further deterioration in areas which are basically sound, but require investment. This has been approved by the Regional Housing Board and will reduce the impact of the funding reduction for at least three years.

However, it should be noted that within the region the Tees Valley area has received a very high proportion of funding due to excellent bidding, however, this may not continue in future rounds.

The process of determining capital allocation is, however, likely to change in the future with a review of regional housing boards.

Supporting People Funding

Funding for the next three years will remain static – which, taking into account inflation, will mean an ongoing reduction in true funding. Clearly this will mean some services will be remodelled (with some services having reduced funding and others an increase) and others provider's funding may also remain static.

Social Housing Providers

Our housing provider partners, particularly Housing Hartlepool will be continuing their investment in homes to achieve decent homes targets and beyond for their existing stock. They will also contribute to the delivery of affordable housing and the provision of supported housing to deliver the Housing Strategy.

8 Conclusions

We have made much progress against our Housing Strategy, particularly around:-

- Housing regeneration, our existing projects are well advanced and we continue to attract funding to progress in other areas, with full consultation with residents.
- Increasing the thermal insulation of homes and reducing fuel poverty
- Working with private landlords to improve housing conditions and the management of homes
- Considering access to social housing and making significant progress on the implementation of a sub regional choice based lettings scheme
- Completing and implementing the Five Year Supporting People Strategy
- Encouraging RSLs to bid for funds and to develop housing schemes to address housing 'need' within the borough
- Supporting residents to live independently in their own home
- Developing the planning policy framework and identifying sites to help promote housing development and facilitate the provision of affordable housing

A number of factors have affected housing within the borough, particularly changing housing markets and an increase in the 'affordable' homes requirement. Rapidly changing factors have led to quickly changing priorities.

/

As a result this update has been produced to enable the strategy to be focussed on current issues, priorities and actions. We still have much work to do, although progress has been made, we still have much to achieve.

Our priorities for the next five years will be:-

- Focus on housing regeneration in central Hartlepool, including Victoria Harbour (part of the Growth Point)
- Ensure provision of affordable housing by RSLs and through the planning process
- Meet decent homes targets within the social and private housing sectors
- Introduce Choice Based Lettings and the Housing Options Centre
- Complete and Implement the Older Person's Housing, Care and Support Strategy
- Develop a younger persons housing strategy
- Progress support of the Respect agenda, including supporting people and implementing selective licensing

Action Plan:-

To be completed

DRAFT

Please send comments about the Housing Strategy and/or this update (preferably by email) to:-

Penny Garner-Carpenter
Strategic Housing Manager
Hartlepool Borough Council
Regeneration & Planning, Housing Division
Bryan Hanson House
Hanson Square
Hartlepool, TS24 7BT

Tel 01429 284177

Email: Penny.garner-carpenter@hartlepool.gov.uk

CABINET

27 October 2008



Report of: Chief Solicitor

Subject: COUNCIL ELECTION BY THIRDS

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

At a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 22 August 2008, a report was presented by the Chief Solicitor which allows for changes to Council electoral cycles as part of the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The report included the approximate costs of consulting with registered electors on the most appropriate electoral scheme and Members requested a report be submitted to Cabinet to seek its views on the proposed consultation and the possible identification of an appropriate budget.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report provides details of various reports which have been submitted to the General Purposes Committee in respect of changes to an electoral cycle. The reports have advised the General Purposes Committee of the processes that need to be followed to make a change to electoral cycles from elections by thirds to “all out” elections once every 4 years. One task that must be undertaken is in relation to consultation and no specific funding is available to undertake this task. The report provides the potential costs of a consultation exercise with either each household or each elector in the Borough.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

Changes to the electoral cycle falls within the remit of Council but Cabinet views are sought in relation to the carrying out of a consultation exercise.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key decision

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet
General Purposes Committee
Council

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 That consideration be given to the proposed consultation including the possible identification of an appropriate budget.
- 6.2 If the consultation exercise is agreed, that funding is identified as part of Cabinet's budget considerations.

CABINET**27 October 2008****Report of:** Chief Solicitor**Subject:** COUNCIL ELECTION BY THIRDS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 22 August, 2008, a report was presented by the Chief Solicitor, which allows for changes to Council electoral schemes as part of the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The report included the approximate costs of consulting with registered electors on the most appropriate electoral scheme and Members requested a report be submitted to Cabinet to seek its views on the proposed consultation and the possible identification of an appropriate budget.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The General Purposes Committee, at its meeting held on 4 July 2008, considered a report of the Chief Solicitor, which concentrated upon the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007, which allows for changes to Council electoral schemes. Members in noting the contents of the report, requested “that the costs of consulting with all registered electors on the most appropriate electoral scheme” be provided through a further report to the Committee. A further report was submitted to the General Purposes Committee held on 22 August 2008 that included some indicative costs of consultation that are included at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 For the information of Members, the content of previous reports on this subject has been replicated in this report, to generally assist Members in their deliberations. Since 1974, following local government reorganisation, elections in Hartlepool had taken place by thirds. Local government reorganisation in 1996, arising from the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1994, confirmed the holding of elections by thirds through the Cleveland (Structural Change) Order, 1995, which provided all out elections in 1995, but for elections then to revert to election by thirds. A report had been presented to the Council’s Unitary Status Committee on 11 January, 1995, informing the Committee of the intended provisions of the Order. It is indicated, in the requisite minute from that Committee, that the report was duly noted, but without further comment. The Chief Solicitor, in his report to the General Purposes Committee on 18th

January, 2008, indicated a total of 137 authorities, currently elect by thirds, with one third of Members retiring each year and their seats up for fresh election. Seven authorities elected by halves, whilst 234 held whole Council elections once every four years. Although, indicative costs were supplied as to the holding of an election, a number of factors could influence such a consideration, not least, having a combined poll such as a Parliamentary and European election. For the elections in 2008, the direct elections costs are approximated at £75,000. These recent elections covered 15 wards as opposed to 17 and did not include the rural wards of Greatham and Elwick, which can have a profound effect on the issue of costs. The average cost of organising and staffing a polling station is £1000 which would take the costs of an election in all wards of the borough to around £83000 under the current electoral arrangements.

- 2.3 At the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 22 August 2008, Members discussed the additional costs that could be incurred at an “all out” election and asked for a breakdown of the costs of both types of election. In addition to the costs identified above, additional expenditure of around £27000 would be incurred in the following areas at an “all out” election:

Staffing (admin support in relation to dealing with extra candidates)
 Election staff training
 Count staff
 Electoral Participation/Advertising/Information to electors

- 2.4 A further area of consideration is in relation to by-elections. Consultation with other Councils who currently hold “all out” elections has indicated that around 3-4 by-elections occur during the intervening period between elections. The average cost of any by-election would be £6000 but is dependent upon the number of polling stations in the ward in question.
- 2.5 Further, it was clearly noted, that any move to alter the current arrangements, would require considerations other than matters of cost. Indeed, the Chief Solicitor, noted issues such as community engagement, staff skills and training and a “democratic deficit issue”, to consider.

3. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT, 2007

- 3.1 As indicated in previous reports, this legislation enables a local authority to change their electoral scheme. However, the provisions require a process of consultation to be followed. There is also the stipulation of certain periods during which a resolution may be passed and at which point a resolution will be capable of implementation, so as to ensure that the implementation fell in line with the ordinary day of elections for authorities of the type to which the change was made. Accordingly, in the case of Hartlepool, the decision to change from current arrangements made prior to 31 December, 2010; take effect at the elections immediately following that date ie May, 2011. Thereafter, such a decision could be made in 2014 and in each fourth year thereafter between the date of Annual Council and 31 December and would be implemented at the date of elections in the following year.

- 3.2 Of particular note, any change needs to be approved by Council at a meeting specially convened for that purpose and be carried by a two thirds majority.
- 3.3 It is a requirement under the Act that before a Council can proceed to a resolution for whole Council elections it must have *“taken reasonable steps to consult such persons as it thinks appropriate on the proposed change”*. (Section 34(2) of the Act refers). Although, the extent of any consultation is not prescribed within the Act, the Cabinet Office has issued a “Code of Practice on consultations”. Within that consultation document, are six consultation criteria, as follows;
1. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
 2. Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
 3. Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
 4. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
 5. Monitor your department’s effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated Consultation Co-ordinator.
 6. Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.
- 3.4 It should be noted that this Cabinet Office document does not have legal force, and therefore cannot prevail over statutory or mandatory requirements. That said, its use and application is encouraged on aspects of consultation by public authorities. The Electoral Commission have indicated, although as indicated the same is not prescribed, that consultation should be “all encompassing”, a view endorsed by Members of the General Purposes Committee at their meeting on 4 July, 2008. The discussions of the Committee are contained within the minutes of that meeting and are exhibited within the papers.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That consideration be given to the proposed consultation including the possible identification of an appropriate budget.
- 4.2 If the consultation exercise is agreed, that funding is identified as part of Cabinet’s budget considerations.

5. CONTACT OFFICER

Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor

APPENDIX 1

CONSULTATION COSTS

Description	Approximate Costs
Consult all electors – printing information and response sheets, inserting information into envelopes and delivery/return postage costs (approx 69,000 electors)	£40, 000
Advertising costs (Hartlepool Mail)*	£300
Receipt, opening and counting responses for 30% response rate	£700
TOTAL	£41,000

Description	Approximate Costs
Consult all households – printing information and response sheets, inserting information into envelopes and delivery/return postage costs (approx 43,000 households)	£30, 000
Advertising costs (Hartlepool Mail)*	£300
Receipt, opening and counting responses for 30% response rate	£600
	£30,900

*Article in Hartbeat could be provided free of charge and press releases issued.

CABINET REPORT

27th October 2008



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA)

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Cabinet of the fundamental change in the approach of the public service inspectorates towards inspecting the Council and its partners and identify the implications for the Council.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report sets out the changes with the introduction of CAA along with the proposed timetable. It details the implications for the Council both through the introduction of Area and Organisational Assessments that make up the inspection process.

3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

This is a major change from the CPA regime in the way that the Council and its partners will be inspected. It is important that the Council's members and officers and its partners are ready for this change and strategies are in place to deal with these changes.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet 27th October 2008.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet is requested to note the report.

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: **COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the fundamental change in the approach of the public service inspectorates towards inspecting the Council and its partners and identify the implications for the Council.

2. WHAT IS CAA?

- 2.1 CAA is the proposed new approach from the Audit Commission that is intended to provide an independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It is suggested that it will assess and report how well public money is spent and will try to ensure that local public bodies are accountable for their quality and impact.
- 2.2 The 2006 White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' set out proposals for a new performance framework for local services. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, put the legal framework for many of these proposals in place, including CAA.
- 2.3 For the first time the Audit Commission is proposing to bring together the work of the following seven inspectorates to provide an overview of how successfully the local organisations are working together to improve what matters locally:
- Audit Commission;
 - Commission for Social Care Inspection
 - Healthcare Commission;
 - HM Inspectorate of Constabulary;
 - HM Inspectorate of Prisons;
 - HM Inspectorate of Probation
 - Ofsted.
- 2.4 This is a fairly radical approach for the auditing body and one which has been tried before without much success. However the seven inspectorates have developed the main principles and overall approach. The final consultation has taken place and closed on 20th October 2008. CAA is due to be introduced in April 2009 with the promise of the first reports being published in November 2009. The full timetable from the Audit Commission can be seen in Appendix 1.

- 2.5 Councils and partners are expected to play a broader role in leading their communities as they tackle significant challenges such as developing the local economy or improving environmental sustainability and reducing crime and inequalities. CAA looks to provide independent assessment information to strengthen the ability of local people to challenge and influence how services are provided and improved. It is the view of the Audit Commission that for the first time, local public services will be held collectively to account for their impact on better local outcomes. The objective from the outset was for CAA to provide clear and accessible information to help people make informed choices and influence local decisions. The Audit Commission has been consulting how best this could be done given that reporting on collection of local bodies to local people as collective has not been done before.
- 2.6 In CAA the inspectorates will hope to maximise the use of existing performance information already used to self assess and manage services. This will include information from satisfaction surveys detailing how happy local people are with their locality and the public services they experience. They will adopt the Collect Once and Use Numerous Times (COUNT) principle, so where the same evidence is relevant for an area assessment and organisational assessment it will be collected only once.

3 CAA vs CPA

- 3.1 CPA was the Audit Commission's assessment of councils. CAA is a proposed cross-inspectorate approach to looking at how well people are served by all their local public services, not just councils. CAA aims to focus on:
- Areas not just organisations
 - Likelihood of future delivery not just performance in the past
 - Outcomes for communities and in particular, those most in need, rather than outputs and process
 - Local priorities as well as national targets
- 3.2 The Audit Commission believes that CPA and other performance assessments have played a part in driving improvement for councils and fire and rescue services. It is proposed that CAA will reduce the assessment and inspection burden on organisations and their partners as they believe it is a more streamlined approach to assessment. Performance assessments such as direction of travel scores, star ratings and corporate assessments are to be replaced with a more forward looking assessment of the outcomes for a particular area and an assessment of each organisation's effectiveness.
- 3.3 In CAA, it is intended that the inspectorates will make maximum use of the performance management information that local public services use to self-

assess. There should be far fewer major programmes of intensive inspection and all inspection will be based on risk, with national rolling programmes of inspection limited to very few services that are inherently high risk (such as one covering children in care and safeguarding vulnerable children). As far as possible, it is proposed that CAA will be carried out 'in the background' to keep any disruption to local service organisations to a minimum. However councils and partners must be prepared for this new assessment regime and now look to see how this will work in practical terms and ensure that strategies and frameworks are in place to allow necessary information to be collected.

Two key elements of CAA

- 3.4 The inspectorates assessments, both area and organisational, will be based upon what information local services and partnerships use to understand and manage their own areas. In some cases the Audit Commission will look that the lack of local data may indicate an inadequate understanding of the local challenges or how to address them which they may investigate further.
- 3.5 Figure 2 below sets out the Audit Commission's current proposals for CAA that was contained within this summer's consultation document.

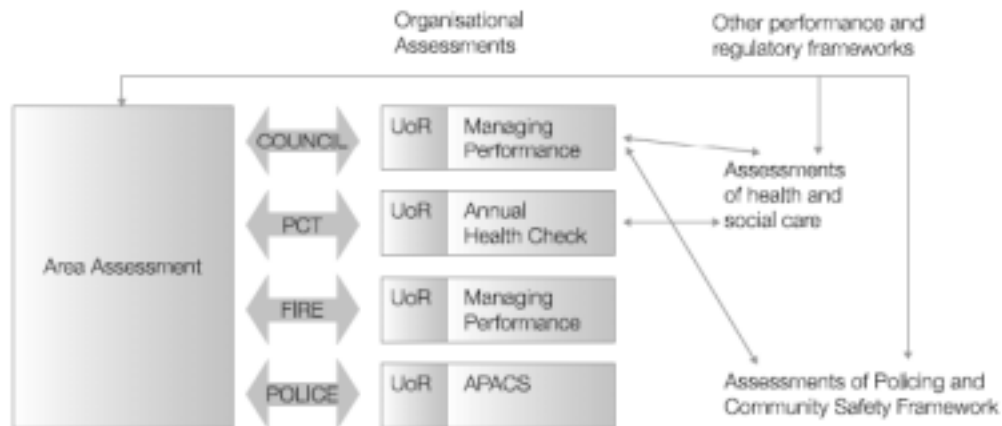
Figure 2
Our current proposals



Source: Comprehensive Area Assessment, Joint Inspectorate Proposals for Consultation – Summer 2008, Audit Commission

- 3.6 Figure 3 below shows how the Audit Commission believes each of the local organisations will be assessed to enabling them to award an over all score for the area.

Figure 3
How CAA will align to other performance frameworks



** Other local organisations such as housing associations and probation boards are also subject to inspection frameworks but do not receive use of resources assessments.

Source: Comprehensive Area Assessment, Joint Inspectorate Proposals for Consultation – Summer 2008, Audit Commission

4. AREA ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 It is intended that an area assessment will be developed as a joint judgement on outcomes in a specific area and not a direct assessment of the local strategic partnership, a council or any other local service body. The Audit Commissions aim is to provide a sharper focus on the accountability of partners for their contribution to improved outcomes whilst proposing to reduce the level of detailed inspection of individual services.
- 4.2 While the focus is on the area the Audit Commission believes that councils should be seen as having an enhanced role to play, for example it is “councils and partners” that are expected to play a broader role. They believe that this is because of council’s community leadership role and breadth of their responsibilities. This creates both opportunities and risks for the council as the outcome of CAA will particularly reflect on HBC as the community leader.
- 4.3 The Area Assessment intends to take the Local Area Agreement (LAA) as its starting point, but it will also look more widely at outcomes for local people and other inspection evidence. In particular, the area assessment will use available evidence to evaluate the experience of people in vulnerable circumstances. The Sustainable Community Strategy and Housing Strategy, the Local Development Framework and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment have been suggested as key documents which will be used to look at whether the ambitions they set out are on course to be achieved.
- 4.4 The range of available evidence to be used has been identified as:

- Views of service users including residents, third sector organisations and local businesses in the area via the Place survey and other nationally available surveys.
 - National Indicator Set and other nationally available data.
 - Inspection, regulation and audit findings – including evidence from other performance frameworks.
 - Other intelligence, briefing or evidence from other agencies including GO, SHA, the Homes and Communities Agency and RDA's.
- 4.5 The Audit Commission will detail how they intend to verify and assure the quality of evidence after the final consultation is complete. The Use of Resources Assessment will include a review of the data quality arrangements within each body.
- 4.6 The area assessment intends to focus on three main questions:
1. How well do local priorities express community needs and aspirations?
 2. How well are the outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?
 3. What are the prospects for future improvements?
- 4.7 Where the Audit Commission identifies significant issues arising from the area assessment, red and green flags will be used to indicate this. It is suggested that a 'red flag' will indicate that significant concerns about outcomes or performance and future prospects are not being adequately addressed by the service provider. Whereas a 'Green flags' will indicate innovative or exceptional practice in the area. They will represent more than the 'good' performance or steady improvement that will be expected everywhere. The Audit Commission has suggested that it is quite possible that an area assessment will include no red or green flags in a particular year. So in order to provide a balanced overview a short account of any issues that are important locally and nationally will be produce whether or not 'red' or 'green flags' have been identified.
- 4.8 A 'red flag' will indicate that outcomes and/or performance and prospects for sustained improvement in local priorities are inadequate, for example, because:
- performance is poor, slipping or not improving;
 - service or outcome standards are unacceptable;
 - improvement is not on track to achieve a target;
 - locally agreed priorities do not reflect evident and pressing need;
 - insufficient account is being taken of inequality;
 - insufficient account is being taken of people whose circumstances make them vulnerable or who are at risk of avoidable harm; or

- capacity and/or capability of partners is inadequate, and/or not enough is being done to meet impending and future challenges
- 4.9 If a red flag is awarded, the Audit Commission suggests that different or further action will be needed to ensure the required improvement is achieved. Although no detail as to who is responsible for developing this has been release yet.
- 4.10 The Audit Commission expects councils and partners to have their own performance arrangements in place to enable them to review their priorities and evaluate their progress. The Audit Commission have said that they expect this to produce an annual self evaluation which they will use along with any service level evaluation as long as it is based on verifiable evidence.
- 4.11 They have suggested that the more robust this self evaluation is the more reliance they will be able to place on it. They believe that being unable to coherently respond on self evaluation is likely to make CAA less successful and more of a burden. Council and partners have experience from CPA and other assessment processes which could be adapted to satisfy CAA in a manageable way. Although the Audit Commission have yet to provide firm guidance as to how the adaptation could or should be done.

Implications for Hartlepool Borough Council and partners

- 4.12 The switch to CAA has a number of implications. These need to be addressed over the next 6 months to ensure the Council and other partners are in position to respond to the demands which can be anticipated.
- 4.13 The appropriate inter organisational frameworks must be in place and robust strategies and plans need to be developed that will stand up to scrutiny.
- 4.14 The Sustainable Community Strategy has recently been reviewed. A robust LAA has been agreed and will be further developed over the next 6 months. Both have been subject to extensive consultation and will confirm local priorities express community needs and aspirations.
- 4.15 For CAA the frameworks to be put in place must
- Enable the required information to be collated across organisations for day to day performance management
 - Allow for earliest possible identification of performance issues to key decision makers in the council and partner organisations
 - Authorise action by partners in a timely and coordinated way to address performance issues as they arise and post CAA, for example to address red flag issues

- 4.16 These final three issues are related. A number of processes are already in place to deal with them. For example the process for review of LAA progress and organisation's own internal performance management arrangements. The key arrangements at present include Hartlepool Partnership Board, theme partnerships groups and the partnership performance management group. The development of Children's Trust, and closer working with other partners will also help. The Covalent performance management system has been introduced and partners are being provided with training.
- 4.17 While existing arrangements have proven capable of meeting demand to date it is suggested a short review with partners to confirm arrangement or strengthen arrangements is undertaken.

Process for compilation of annual self assessment.

- 4.18 The CAA documentation makes clear that an area self assessment on an annual basis is expected. Although there are a number of processes already in place including review of the LAA with GONE and meetings with individual inspectorates this type of self assessment is a new requirement. Appropriate arrangements need to be put in place building on existing arrangements. An early meeting with Hartlepool's CAA lead inspector to establish likely requirements has already been held.
- 4.19 In addition to these inter organisational issues there are a number of others specific to the Council:
- Robust strategies and plans that will stand up to scrutiny
 - Early identification and monitoring of those indicators that are adopted as LAA targets where the Council is the lead.
 - Data quality policy is sound and embedded across the organisation, particularly for new National Indicators.
 - Collection of service users views is wide and statistically sound
 - Diversity Assessments are up to date and the work is proportional to the size of the diverse community in Hartlepool
- 4.20 Addressing these will ensure the Council can play a full and positive part in the CAA process. These issues within the Council are being addressed through the Council's usual service planning and performance management arrangements and there are no specific issues which require immediate action but this will be kept under review as the details of CAA are finalised.

5. ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Organisational assessments will bring together the Use of Resources and Direction of Travel assessment into a combined assessment of organisational

effectiveness, aiming to ensure that the council is accountable to the public for their quality and impact.

- 5.2 The Audit Commission suggests that the evidence for the Council's organisational assessment, as with the area assessment, will be gained from routine dealings with the Council and other local partners. The scoring system for organisational assessment is still being consulted on.
- 5.3 The changes to the organisational assessment are not as significant as the area assessment. The process and scope remain similar to existing arrangements for Use of Resources, Value for Money and Direction of Travel annual assessments under CPA.

Implications for Hartlepool Borough Council

- 5.3 An assessment of the implications and current position is below:
- There will be detailed changes to the keylines of enquiry (KLOES) which will need to be addressed. A desk top exercise has already been completed to determine where, as an Authority, we are placed in respect of the new Use of Resources criteria. An action plan is in place and responsible officers identified. The action plan is being monitored through the Council's Performance Management Software, Covalent.
 - The organisational assessment will comment on the council's effectiveness as a community leader. In addition the assessment will examine the impact and effectiveness of the Council's contribution to broader partnership outcomes in the LAA. Previous inspections have commented on the Council's strong community leadership role and existing performance management arrangements, including Covalent, should ensure the Council satisfies these requirements.
 - As well as the agreed rolling programme of inspections additional investigation will only take place where the Audit Commission needs more evidence to make a robust assessment. An action plan/process needs to be developed as to how we will deal with these ad-hoc requests/inspections if required.
 - When both red and green flags are identified in the area assessments and are linked to the Council more a detailed report will be provided in the organisational assessment and so could impact on the organisational score of the Council.
 - The scoring system is still being consulted on. The options are a rigid system with little flexibility (Model 1) or one which allows for more professional discretion in weighing up evidence and context (Model 2). The third option is no overall score with use of resources and managing performance being reported separately. HBC had the opportunity to express a view on preferred option in the current round of consultation. Model 2 is the preferred option because Hartlepool is not a typical unitary council, for example because of its size. Model 2 therefore gives the Council the opportunity to explain and argue that the way Hartlepool does its business is appropriate for Hartlepool.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The above report shows that the introduction of CAA is a fundamental change in the way that inspections have been conducted in the past. It is new regime which is as yet untested. It will involve the Council and local partners and groups working together to produce a robust area assessment that stands up to scrutiny.
- 6.2 It is therefore important that all plans, strategies and performance management frameworks across all service area are strong enough to allow the Audit Commission to place reliance on the information contained within them. Whilst existing arrangements have met current demands a short review with partners to confirm arrangements or strengthen arrangement may be beneficial.
- 6.3 Due to the council's community leadership role it may also be beneficial for the council to lead a group of senior officers from all relevant partners, groups and organisations to guarantee that all process are in place to deliver the requirements of CAA. The group would ensure that the appropriate arrangements for the self assessment are in place.
- 6.4 The Chief Executive has already had an early meeting with Hartlepool's designated CAA lead inspector to establish likely requirements. Feedback from this meeting will be given to partners possibly via the senior officer group detailed in the paragraph above if established.
- 6.5 As this is a new and currently untested inspection regime it is worth being mindful of the amount of time invested in the process should be proportional to the benefits gained from it.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- note the implications of the change to the CAA inspection process; and
 - Agree arrangements and proposals suggested for preparing for CAA.

Appendix 1**Full Timetable for the Implementation of CAA**

2008	
April	New National Indicator Set comes into effect
May	Published response to consultation on scope of CAA by inspectorates
June	New style Local Area Agreements agreed
July to October	Trialling CAA methodology by cross inspectorate teams in ten areas
July	Published partner inspectorate CAA framework proposal consultation (Tuesday 29 July to Monday 20 October)
September/ October	Series of national CAA consultation events run by partner inspectorates
October	CAA framework consultation closes (Monday 20 th October 2008)
November	CAA trialling ends with evaluation
December	Finalise detail of CAA framework for publication
2009	
February	Publish final CAA framework by partner inspectorates
April	CAA comes into effect
November	First results under CAA published by partner inspectorates