

# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE AGENDA



**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2006**

**at 2.00 p.m.**

**in Committee Room B**

**MEMBERS: SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE:**

Councillors Cambridge, Clouth, Cook, Cranney, Flintoff, Hall, Hargreaves, James, Kaiser, Lilley, A Marshall, J Marshall, Preece, Richardson, Shaw and Wright.

Resident Representatives: Evelyn Leck, Linda Shields and Joan Smith

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005 *(to follow)*

**4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

4.1 Response from the Cabinet to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Final Report into the Authority's Financial Reserves *(Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Finance and Performance Management)*

**5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS FROM COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND NON EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

No Items

**6. FORWARD PLAN**

6.1 Forward Plan: January 2006 to April 2006 *(Scrutiny Manager)*

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

No Items

**8. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL MONITORING/CORPORATE REPORTS**

No Items

**9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

9.1 Second and Third Tier Officers Salary and Grading Review Scrutiny Referral - Process of the Review:

(a) Covering Report (*Scrutiny Manager*); and

(b) Presentation by a Representative from the Employers' Organisation

9.2 HMS Trincomalee Trust Scrutiny Referral – Informal Meeting with the HMS Trincomalee Trust held on 11 January 2006:

(a) Covering Report (*Scrutiny Manager*); and

(b) Verbal feedback/findings from Members of this Committee in attendance at the Informal Meeting (Councillors James, Hargreaves and Hall)

9.3 Draft Final Report of Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum – Pandemic Influenza – Contingency Planning (*Chair of the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum*)

9.4 Draft Final Report – Involving Young People (*Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum*)

**10. CALL-IN REQUESTS**

No items

**11. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### a) Scrutiny Training and Development Programme 2005/06:

- i) **Cabinet/Scrutiny Joint Event – 24 January 2006, 12.30 pm to 4.00 pm, Municipal Buildings** – To ensure the event is a success it is important that everyone is able to attend.

Please confirm your attendance for this event with Lisa Woodward on 01429 (28) 4092 as soon as possible.

### b) **Date of Next Meeting - Friday 20 January 2006, commencing at 2.00 pm in Committee Room B.**

Please note that an additional meetings of this Committee will be held on 27 January 2006, commencing at 3.30 pm in relation to the Authority's Draft Budget and Policy Framework Proposals 2006/07 to 2007/08.

# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

20<sup>th</sup> December 2005

### **Present:**

Councillor Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: John Cambridge, Rob Cook, Kevin Cranney, Bob Flintoff, Pamela Hargreaves, Geoff Lilley, Ann Marshall, Arthur Preece, Carl Richardson and Jane Shaw.

Resident

Reps: Evelyn Leck, Linda Shields and Joan Smith.

Officers: Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer  
Chris Little, Assistant Chief Financial Officer  
Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager  
Rebecca Redman, Temporary Research Assistant (Scrutiny)  
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also

Present: Councillor Robbie Payne (Culture, Housing and Transportation Portfolio Holder)  
Councillor Ray Waller (Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder)  
Peter Jackson (Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Holder)

### **91. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Harry Clouth, Gerard Hall, Stan Kaiser, John Marshall and Edna Wright.

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

None.

### **93. Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2005.**

Confirmed.

**94. Responses from the Council, the Executive to Committees of the Council to Reports of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

No items

**95. Scrutiny Topic Referral from Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Holder – Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review** *(Scrutiny Manager)*

The Scrutiny Manager reported that following the recent implementation of the Council's Corporate Restructure a review into Second and Third Tier Chief Officer Salaries was now being undertaken as part of the Council's Way Forward Agenda.

The Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Holder, on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2005, received a report from the Director of Neighbourhood Services outlining the proposed process for the salary and grading review. As part of the process the Employers Organisation (EO) was to undertake a technical evaluation of the salaries and make recommendations for an appropriate salary and grading structure. The Portfolio Holder asked that this report be referred to scrutiny so that the views of scrutiny could be taken into consideration by the Portfolio Holder, in conjunction with the EO's report, during formulation of the revised salary levels.

With a 10<sup>th</sup> February deadline for completion of the Co-ordinating Committees examination of the EO report consideration was sought of the following proposals for the aim of the scrutiny enquiry, its terms of reference, potential areas of enquiry/sources of evidence and timetable:

**i) Aim of the enquiry** – To examine the recommendations of the EO, as part of the Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review, within the prescribed time scale for the Cabinet Member referral.

**ii) Terms of reference**

- a) To gain an understanding of why the timing of the review was appropriate.
- b) To gain an understanding of the process being undertaken for the review together with its implementation.
- c) To consider the recommendations of the EO, in particular the proposed salary and grading structure.
- d) To formulate the written response of the Committee to the Portfolio Holder in relation to the EO's recommendations in line with the prescribed 'referral' time scale.

**iii) Potential area of enquiry/sources of evidence**

a) The invitation of the following people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations:

- Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Member
- Director of Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder (Lead Officer)
- Representatives from the EO

b) Receipt of the following information:

- New pay and salary grades from the EO
- Existing salary and pay grades
- Job descriptions for the new posts
- Job descriptions for the old posts, to allow a comparison

**iv) Timetable for the investigation**

**20<sup>th</sup> December 2005** – Scoping of the Scrutiny Referral/Enquiry – Formal meeting of the Committee to agree the proposed Terms of reference/timetable for the referral.

**9<sup>th</sup> January 2006** – Report to the Finance and Management Portfolio seeking an extension of the time scale for completion of the referral by 10<sup>th</sup> February 2006 to the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2006 in light of the availability of information.

**13<sup>th</sup> January 2006** – Meet representatives from the EO to provide evidence in relation to the review process being undertaken.

**10<sup>th</sup> February 2006** – Consideration of the EO report with particular focus on the recommended salary and grading structure.

**24<sup>th</sup> February 2006** – Consideration of this Committees draft final report into the Second and Third Tier Officer and Grading Review.

**13<sup>th</sup> March 2006** – Consideration of this Committee's final report into the Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review by the Cabinet.

**Decision**

The terms of reference and timetable for the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's examination of the recommendations of the EO, as part of the Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review, were approved as outlined above.

## 96. Forward Plan

No Items

## 97. Finalised Budget and Policy Framework Report

*(Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Chief Financial Officer)*

Further to minute number 89 of the meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed that initial details of the provisional grant settlement for 2006/07 and 2007/08 were issued by central Government on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005. Based upon the information provided detailed budget forecasts were updated to reflect the actual grant allocation and other changes to local government funding. A report containing details of the updated forecasts and draft budget and policy framework proposals 2006/07 to 2007/08 was considered by Cabinet on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and the recommendations made within the report approved, subject to the following amendments:

- A proposed Council Tax increase of 4.9%
- Budget priorities (Delete £20,000 equality standards, seek views on reducing Economic Development from £300,000 to £200,000, seek views on deleting £80,000 Economic Development (promotion of tourism/business))
- Savings withdrawn from the proposals (Closure of Community Centre - £42,000, Reduction in Community Pool - £123,000, Economic Development Grants - £40,000)

To assist the Committee in considering the Budget and Policy Framework proposals approved by Cabinet the Chief Financial Officer repeated the presentation given on the 19<sup>th</sup> December. Particular attention was drawn to the above amendments, including the proposal to bridge the NET 2006/07 budget deficit through a Council Tax increase of 4.9% and cuts. This was the second of three options considered by Cabinet and scrutiny's views were also sought on options one and three. Details of these were as follows:

Option 1 – 4.9% Council Tax increase 2006/7 and 2007/8 (with a £0.6m Budget Support Fund to assist the 2007/8 budget position)

Option 2 – 3.5% Council Tax increase 2006/7 and 2007/8.

Following consideration of the presentation given the Chairman highlighted that the role of scrutiny was not to recommend cuts but to make concerns known regarding cuts to enable Council to make the final decision. On this basis, during the course of discussions the following issues were raised:-

- i) Members considered the three options available for the bridging of the NET 2006/7 and 2007/8, budget deficit as outlined above.

Whilst it was agreed that the Committee would not comment on the option available at this time views were expressed regarding options 1 and 2. Some support was expressed for option 2 and the use of Gershon efficiency savings to reduce the level of cuts necessary to meet the budget deficit. It was, however, acknowledged that this was a risky strategy as there was no guarantee regarding the level of reward grant that would be released.

Support was also expressed for option 3 and a suggestion made that the Committee should look at how this could be achieved. Members suggested that the way forward could be to identify further efficiency savings and drew attention in relation to the Gershon savings to the difference between the anticipated reward grant figure and final figure. This difference resulted from a number of targets not being met, one of which related to improvements in GCSE performance, and it was felt that efforts should be focused on areas wherever there was evidence of under-performance or marked inconsistencies in performance. Whilst the Gershon savings were good Members felt that everything was not perfect and there was room for improvement.

The Chief Financial Officer indicated in relation to the Gershon savings that the £1.4m reward grant was to be paid over two financial years. This equated to £350,000 of one off help against which there were already commitments and as such this was not the answer to the Councils budget deficit.

- ii) Possible need for redundancies:

- Members queried what the costs of possible redundancies under option 2 would be and sought clarification as to how the Council had funded redundancy packages in the past. Officers confirmed that the Council had in the past funded redundancies from the balance sheet and that the actual number and cost of possible redundancies could not be calculated until budget proposals were finalised and the level of cuts needed to balance the budget identified. Only then could an assessment be made as to whether costs could be met from the balance sheet, with a further report to be presented to Cabinet should it not be possible to do so.
- Members sought clarification as to the worst possible redundancy scenario for 2006/7 should the preferred option (option 2 – including 5% savings) be approved and queried the level on the staffing structure at which they could be made. Officers confirmed that with option 2 the worst scenario would be 32 redundancies, however, it was unlikely that all of these would be necessary with



a number of posts vacated through staff turnover and retirement. In relation to the level on the staffing structure at which redundancies might come into place it was noted that work to this detail had not yet been undertaken. It was, however, highlighted that Council had indicated repeatedly that if redundancies were necessary frontline services would be protected. Whilst Cabinet had indicated that it shared this view Members felt that it was important for one of the Committees recommendations should be that whatever option was chosen by Council the protection of frontline services should be paramount.

- iii) In relation to the proposed level of savings Members were advised that none of the departments could achieve the 5% required through efficiencies alone and whilst some departments could raise income, i.e. Neighbourhood Services through car parking etc, the Children's Services Department could not. The Children's Services Department was a new department with relatively small supply/services expenditure and a large proportion of its funding directly governed. This made it more difficult for the Department to control its budget and identify savings.
- iv) Concern was expressed that whilst on one hand redundancies were being talked about consideration was also being given to salary levels for second and third tier officers. Members were advised of the terms and conditions under which staff were employed and the requirement within them for pay increases after April. It was recognised that there was very little that could be done about this and that a calculation was included in the budget figures for the estimated cost of the increase each year.
- v) Following consideration of the scenarios and figures provided for 2006/7 and 2007/8 Members felt that the authority had no choice but to cease to enter into any other further commitments, this included the appointment of new staff and consultants. It was felt that the number of staff being appointed, and consultants used, needed to be looked at very closely and Officers were requested to provide the following information on a department by department basis for consideration at the Committee's next meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> January to:
  - The extent of use of consultants,
  - A breakdown of agency staff.

Members felt that this would enable them to accurately compare the possible costs of redundancies to be paid to existing staff, in particular Adult and Community Services Department and the Children's Services Department.

- vi) In relation to the £1.3m returned to the general fund following scrutiny's inquiry into the Council's reserves the Chair expressed

concern regarding the proposal for the resources be used to set up a contingency fund to cover equal pay costs. Members were of the view that the decision regarding the allocation of the £1.3m was a Council decision and agreed not to comment on the proposal at this time.

Following completion of discussions the Chair thanked Members and Officers for their participation and reminded Members of the date and time of the next meeting.

### **Decision**

- i) The report was received and noted.
- ii) Whilst Members felt that they were not in a position at this stage of the budget process to comment on the report the following issues were raised for consideration during formulation of the Committee's final report:
  - That one of the recommendations to Cabinet should be that whatever option was chosen by Council the protection of frontline services should be paramount and where recruitment was necessary it should be done internally wherever possible.
  - That whilst it should be recognised that there was a redundancy risk staff turnover and retirement, etc. could reduce the number of redundancies required making it unlikely that 32 (the worst scenario) would be needed.
  - That given the scenarios put forward the authority had no choice but to cease to enter into any other further commitments, these included the appointment of new staff and use of consultants. It was felt that the need for new appointments needed to be looked at that consideration should be given to the redeployment or secondment of staff to fill new appointments where possible. It was also felt that consideration needed to be given to the use of Consultants and agency staff. To assist in this Members requested that the following information be presented to the next meeting on a department by department basis:
    - The extent of use of consultants,
    - A breakdown of agency staff.
  - That the way forward regarding option 3 could be through the identification of further efficiency savings, with efforts focused on areas where there was evidence of under-performance or marked inconsistencies in performance.

- Members were of the view that the decision regarding the allocation of the £1.3m returned to the general fund following scrutiny's inquiry into the Council's reserves was a Council decision and agreed not to comment on the proposal at this time.

## **98. Quarter 2 – Corporate Plan Progress and Revenue Budget Monitoring Report** *(Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer)*

The Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer submitted a joint report detailing progress:

- towards achieving the Corporate Plan Service improvements (SIPS) in order to provide timely information and allow any necessary decisions to be taken;
- against the Council's overall revenue budget for 2005/06.

To assist Members a copy of the report considered by Cabinet on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 was circulated. Following consideration of the information provided issues were raised relating to:-

i) Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) funding. Members reiterated their concerns regarding their lack of involvement in the initial allocation of resources and expressed concern that with the end of this funding stream the perception would be that responsibility for the continuation of services would fall to the local authority. Clarification was sought as to how the local authority was involved in forward planning for the continuation of services funded by the NRF.

The Chief Financial Officer indicated that there was local authority representation on the LSP Board confirmed that the LSP had initially determined the allocation of NRF resources. NRF issues had been recognised as budget pressures and were to be looked at by Cabinet in accordance with usual practice. Members were assured that the LSP could not commit the local authority to funding and that exit strategies were being formulated.

Members expressed concern that with limited resources local authority representatives on the LSP Board needed to be careful as to what they took responsibility for at the meetings and highlighted the need for improvements to the process for the exchange of information. Attention was drawn to the problems experienced by members of the Neighbourhood Forums when challenged about NRF schemes they know nothing about.

ii) Headland Paddling Pool. The Chairman reported receipt of a written request for clarification as to what £9,000 was being used for on the Headland Paddling Pool only a few months after the contract handover. The Chief Financial Officer indicated he was not in a

position to answer the query and would circulate a written response to the Committee following clarification of the facts.

#### **Decision**

The report was noted

### **99. NRF, Capital and Accountable Body Programme Monitoring Report 2005/06** *(Chief Financial Officer)*

The Chief Financial Officer submitted a report detailing progress against the Council's overall Capital budget for 2005/6 and progress against the Spending Programme where the Council Acts as the Accountable Body and NRF.

To assist Members a copy of the report considered by Cabinet on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 was circulated. Following consideration of the information provided Members noted the progress made to date.

#### **Decision**

The report was noted.

### **100. Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee Progress Report** *(Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee)*

The Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee presented a report updating Members on progress made since consideration of the previous progress report, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005. As part of the report attention was drawn to the ambitious Work Programme for 2005/6 and the positive progress made by the Co-ordinating Committee and each of the standing Forums.

Members were reminded that a selection criteria to assist in the determination of those non-mandatory referrals worthy of further consideration was to be considered early in the New Year. Details were also provided of progress in relation to the Second Tier Officers Review and final reports recently considered and awaiting consideration. In relation to final reports it was confirmed that the scrutiny team were in the process of ensuring that the procedure for consideration of final reports was adhered to, by arranging for the relevant Cabinet Member and/or Director to feedback how the agreed scrutiny recommendations were to be actioned.

Regarding the Scrutiny Training Programme particular attention was drawn to the success of the event held on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and the up and coming joint scrutiny and Cabinet training session to be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

**Decision**

The report was received and noted.

**101. Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum Progress Report** *(Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum)*

The Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum reported that since consideration of the previous progress report, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the Forums investigations into local bus service provision and 40mph speed limits outside schools were ongoing. Details of progress within each inquiry were outlined in the report.

**Decision**

The report was received and noted.

**102. Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum Progress Report** *(Chair of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum)*

The Chair of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum reported that since consideration of the previous progress report, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the Forums investigations into 'Partnerships' was ongoing. Details of progress within the inquiry were outlined in the report.

**Decision**

The report was received and noted.

**103. Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Progress Report** *(Chair of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum)*

In the absence of the Chair of Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum, the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee reported that since consideration of the previous progress report, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the Forum had:

- Continued its investigation into Pandemic Influenza
- Received and update report from Tees and North Yorkshire Ambulance Service (TENYAS)
- Embarked upon a scrutiny investigation into 'Access to GP Services in Hartlepool

Details of progress within each inquiry were outlined in the report.

**Decision**

The report was received and noted.

**104. Children's Services Scrutiny Forum Progress Report** *(Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum)*

The Chair of Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum reported that since consideration of the previous progress report, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the Forum had:

- Considered a report commissioned by Hartlepool Community Network called 'Involvement of Young People in Decision Making in Hartlepool'
- As a small number of Members met as a Working Group on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005 to discuss the draft Involving Young People report.

Details of progress within each inquiry were outlined in the report.

**Decision**

The report was received and noted.

**105. Call-in Requests**

No items

MARJORIE JAMES

CHAIRMAN

# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

13<sup>th</sup> January, 2006



**Report of:** Cabinet

**Subject:** Response from the Cabinet to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Final Report into the Authority's Financial Reserves

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purposes of the report are to:

- i) To present Cabinet's response to the findings of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee review into the Authority's Financial Reserves;
- ii) to inform Members of the comments made by the Audit Commission in the 2004/2005 Annual Audit Letter on the Authority's Financial Reserves.

## 2. CABINET'S RESPONSE TO THE FINDINGS OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

2.1 At their meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2005, Cabinet considered the detailed report of this Committee on the outcome of the review into the Authority's Financial Reserves. The recommendations made by this Committee, as outlined below, were approved: -

- (a) That consideration be given to returning the £1.6 million Coastal Defences Specific Reserve to the Authority's General Fund, in light of the findings to be published in the engineer's report which is expected to state that significant improvement works would not be required as originally expected, only that of maintenance works;
- (b) That any remaining balances from the Benefit Subsidy Reserve be returned to the Authority's General Fund as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 and the associated risk transferred to the General Fund;

- (c) That the £50,000 Specific Reserve, ring-fenced for the Council Tax Re-evaluations for 2007/2008 be returned to the Authority's General Fund, given the Government has deferred such exercise until 2010;
- (d) That the procedures in place to ensure salary savings from vacant posts are rigorously followed across all departments to enable any resultant savings to be monitored and tracked within the overall budgetary control process.
- (e) That upon receipt of Audit Commission's findings into the Authority's Financial Reserves, consideration be given by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to the content of their report.

2.2 With regard to recommendation (d) your Committee is advised that these details are now explicitly identified in the detailed Budget Monitoring reports submitted to Cabinet and your Committee. Details of the position reported to Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 and referred to your Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2005, are summarised below:

Extract from Cabinet Report of 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2005

An assumed saving from staff turnover is included within salary budgets and this allowance was increased by £0.15m from 2005/2006. Details of individual department's targets are summarised in the following table. With the exception of Neighbourhood Services, it is anticipated that the target for 2005/2006 will be achieved by the year-end. Neighbourhood Services is currently anticipating that they will not achieve their turnover target and this is reflected in the forecast outturn.

<b>Department</b>	<b>2005/2006 Turnover Target £'000</b>	<b>Expected to 30.09.05 £'000</b>	<b>Actual to 30.09.05 £'000</b>	<b>Variance (Adverse)/ Favourable to 30.09.05 £'000</b>
Adults & Community Services	233.7	113.0	116.0	3.0
Children's Services	179.8	101.1	103.0	1.9
Neighbourhood Services	119.7	59.9	0	(59.9)
Regeneration & Planning	61.8	30.9	52.0	21.1
Chief Executives	146.3	73.1	88.6	15.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>741.3</b>	<b>378.0</b>	<b>359.6</b>	<b>(18.4)</b>



2.3 Since considering your Committee's report on the Authority's Reserves Cabinet has been updated on the position in relation to Equal Pay costs. Details of these issues were outlined in the "Initial Budget and Policy Framework Consultation Proposals" report considered by Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2005 and referred to your Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2005.

2.4 Cabinet is suggesting that the reserves identified for return to the General Fund be earmarked for Equal Pay costs, as follows: -

	<b><u>£'000</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earmarked to fund remaining unfunded costs of three-year settlement covering 2003/2004 to 2005/2006;</li> </ul>	900
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earmarked as a contingency to need potential additional Equal Pay costs arising from the settlement of cases currently being pursued through the courts;</li> </ul>	1,297
	<u>2,197</u>

2.5 Cabinet recognises that approval of the above proposals is a Council decision, which will be considered as part of the approval process for the 2006/2007 Budget and Policy Framework proposals in February, 2006.

### **3. COMMENTS MADE BY THE AUDIT COMMISSION IN THE 20042/005 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER ON THE AUTHORITY'S FINANCIAL RESERVES**

3.1 The Council's External Auditors have made the following comments in relation to the Authority's financial reserves: -

#### **Financial Standing**

The Council has built up significant levels of reserves, which have allowed it to manage fluctuations in revenue funding without emergency cuts in services. However, the Council faces a significant budget gap in two year's time and cannot rely on those reserves to support the budget in the longer term. Members need to establish priorities for resources and implement a robust programme of efficiency savings to ensure future plans are adequately resourced.

### **General Fund Spending and Balances**

At the end of the financial year 2002/2003, the Council's reserves and balances stood at £23m, rising to £28m in 2003/2004 and to £35m at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2005. Of this amount £16.7m is set aside in specific reserves and the remainder is general balances. The 2003/2004 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter stressed the need for the Council to have a clear strategy for the use of these reserves and balances.

The General Fund balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2005, of £19m represent 16% of the net operating expenditure of the Council. Of this £19m, officers have identified £15m as needed to meet identified risks and contingencies. The contribution to reserves of some £6m arose from one off receipts or underspends which were greater than anticipated when the original budget was determined.

The Council has a plan in place to spend the majority of its reserves and balances over the next three years. A review of the plan identified some areas of weakness.

- There is not always a formal Risk Management documented for each reserve although we acknowledge that officers do carry out an informal assessment of risk.
- Although there is generally a timescale in place for the use of each reserve, these are not explicitly monitored throughout the year.
- There is not always a clear link between each reserve and the Council's key Business Plans.

The Council has reported a significant budget gap in 2006/2007 of between £4.7m and £8m with further budget pressures identified in 2007/2008. Given the commitments and risks identified against the reserves held by the Council, these reserves are not available to support the revenue account to any greater extent than planned. Consequently, the Council needs to prioritise its services and need for resources. It also needs to ensure that robust plans are in place to achieve real efficiencies in either cash terms and at the same time obtain improvements in services for the same level of resource. The Council also needs to regularly review the risks attached to each reserve, earmarked and unearmarked, to ensure the risk is still relevant and that the reserve is sufficient.

## **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is recommended that Members note the report.

## SCRUTINY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

13 January 2006



**Report of:** Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** CABINET'S FORWARD PLAN

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee (SCC) to consider whether any item within the attached Cabinet's Forward Plan should be considered by this Committee or referred to a particular Scrutiny Forum.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As you are aware, the SCC has delegated powers to manage the work of Scrutiny, as it thinks fit, and if appropriate can exercise or delegate to individual Scrutiny Forums.
- 2.2. One of the main duties of the SCC is to hold the Cabinet to account by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Cabinet and to decide whether value can be added to the decision by the Scrutiny process in advance of the decision being made.
- 2.3 This would not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.4 As such, the most recent copy of the Cabinet's Forward Plan is attached as **Appendix 1** for the SCC's information.

### 3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee considers the content of the Cabinet's Forward Plan.

**Contact Officer:-** Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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



**HARTLEPOOL**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**FORWARD PLAN**

**JANUARY 2006 - APRIL 2006**

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## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

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

## 2. **FORMAT OF THE FORWARD PLAN**

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

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

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

### **3. DECISIONS MADE IN PRIVATE**

- 3.1 Most key decisions will be made in public at a specified date and time.
- 3.2 A small number of key decisions, for reasons of commercial or personal confidentiality, will be made in private and the public will be excluded from any sessions while such decisions are made. Notice will still be given about the intention to make such decisions, but wherever possible the Forward Plan will show that the decision will be made in private session.
- 3.3 Some sessions will include decisions made in public and decisions made in private. In such cases the public decisions will be made at the beginning of the meeting to minimise inconvenience to members of the public and the press.

### **4. URGENT DECISIONS**

- 4.1 Although every effort will be made to include all key decisions in the Forward Programme, it is inevitable for a range of reasons that some decisions will need to be taken at short notice so as to prevent their inclusion in the Forward Plan. In such cases a minimum of 5 days public notice will be given before the decision is taken.
- 4.2 In rare cases it may be necessary to take a key decision without being able to give 5 days notice. The Executive is only able to do this with the agreement of the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee or the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the local authority. (Scrutiny committees have the role of overseeing the work of the Executive.)

### **5. PUBLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

- 5.1 All decisions which have been notified in the Forward Plan and any other key decisions made by the Executive, will be recorded and published as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision is taken.
- 5.2 The Council's constitution provides that key decisions will not be implemented until a period of 3 days has elapsed after the decision has been published. This allows for the exceptional cases when a scrutiny committee may 'call in' a decision of the Executive to consider whether it should be reviewed before it is implemented. 'Call in' may arise exceptionally when a Scrutiny Committee believes that the Executive has failed to make a decision in accordance with the principles set out in the Council's constitution (Article 13); or that the decision falls outside the Council's Policy Framework; or is not wholly in accordance within the Council's budget.



6. **DETAILS OF DECISION MAKERS**

- 6.1 Names and titles of those people who make key decisions either individually or collectively will be set out in Appendix 1 once they are determined.

7. **TIMETABLE OF KEY DECISIONS**

- 7.1 The timetable as expected at the time of preparation of the forward plan is set out in Appendix 2. Confirmation of the timing in respect of individual decisions can be obtained from the relevant contact officer closer to the time of the relevant meeting. Agenda papers are available for inspection at the Civic Centre 5 days before the relevant meeting.

## **PART ONE – CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S DEPARTMENT**

### **A BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK**

#### **1. Draft 2006/07 Budget and Policy Proposals**

Cabinet considered on 19 December 2005, the Budget and Policy proposals it wished to be subject to formal scrutiny. These proposals reflect the forecast level of Government financial support, which will be allocated to the Council for 2006/07. The proposals also covered service pressures, priorities, efficiency savings and service reductions which Cabinet is proposing be included in the overall budget package, together with an indication of the resulting Council Tax requirement for 2006/07. Following the conclusion of the formal scrutiny process and the announcement of the final Government grant allocation, Cabinet will finalise the Budget and Policy proposals on 10 February 2006. These proposals will then be considered by Council on 16 February 2006.

#### **2. Corporate (Best Value Performance Plan) 2006/07**

The production of the Corporate (Best Value Performance) Plan by 30 June each year is a national legal requirement.

The purpose of the Plan is to describe the Council's priorities for improvement for 2006/7, including how weaknesses will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people. It will include targets for future performance.

Preparation of the Corporate Plan for 2006/7 commenced in January 2006. The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will consider the proposed Council priorities identified in the Plan at its meetings on 24 February, 10 March and 19 May 2006. Cabinet will consider the Plan on 10 February 2006 and in May 2006 respectively. Final approval of the Plan will be by Council in June 2006. Dates for Cabinet and Council meetings in May and June are still to be decided.

## **B. SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS**

### **DECISION REFERENCE: CE05/05 MIDDLETON GRANGE SHOPPING CENTRE – LAND FRONTING PARK ROAD**

#### **Nature of the decision**

Whether to release car-parking land fronting Park Road for further development of Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.

#### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

#### **Timing of the decision**

The decision should be made in January 2006.

#### **Who will be consulted and how?**

Internal consultation only (possibly including external consultants DTZ).

#### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

- Impact of the proposed development on the Shopping Centre.
- Impact of the proposed land release on car-parking provision and the Council's income from car parking.
- Relevance of the proposal to the Phase II and Phase III covenants in the Head-Lease.

#### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY. Telephone 01429 523001, e-mail: [tony.brown@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:tony.brown@hartlepool.gov.uk)

#### **Further information**

Further information can be sought by contacting Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor as above.

## **DECISION REFERENCE: CE16/05 HARTLEPOOL'S LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA)**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider and agree Hartlepool's Local Area Agreement (LAA) submission to the Government Office for the North East. This is a key decision - type (ii) test applies. Local Area Agreements are being developed by a number of Local Authorities with central government. They form a key part of the government's 10 year strategy for Local Government and aim to streamline bureaucracy between central government and local deliverers and improve service outcomes.

### **Who will make the decision?**

Government guidance on Local Area Agreements states that they should be taken forward by local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships. It is therefore anticipated that the decision will need to be taken by both Cabinet and the Hartlepool Partnership.

### **Timing of the decision**

The Decision should be made in February 2006

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

Guidance states that the LAA should reflect the local Community Strategy, which in Hartlepool was prepared following significant consultation. Members of the Hartlepool Partnership Board will be consulted on the LAA along with key stakeholders. The LAA is required to include a statement of the involvement of the voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and local people in the design and delivery of the agreement. This will state, for example, how local people and the VCS have been informed, consulted and given the opportunity to participate in the LAA process and the delivery of outcomes.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Hartlepool Community Strategy  
Best Value Performance Plan  
Hartlepool Partnership Performance Management Framework

Reference copies are available in the members' room; further copies are available from the Community Strategy Division.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be sent in writing to the Head of Community Strategy

### **Further information**

Joanne Smithson, Head of Community Strategy

Tel. 01429 284161  
e-mail [joanne.smithson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.smithson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**DECISION REFERENCE: CE17/05**

- **Phase 2 Corporate Electronic Document and Records Management and Workflow System**

**Nature of the decision**

To approve the commitment of expenditure on Phase 2 of this corporate IT development.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made at a Cabinet meeting in February 2006.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

The project proposal will be considered by the Hartlepool BC / Northgate Partnership Board and by officers undertaking the role of IT Governance. The project will build on the consideration by members and their previous commitment to Phase 1 of the project in September 05.

**Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Cabinet will be provided with a detailed proposal document, which will set out the arrangements and revisit the business case for extending the corporate document and record management framework to include those services not included within phase 1. The proposal will focus on the linkages to business process improvement and the IT Strategy necessary to improve the way services are delivered to the public and assist in the achievement of future efficiency savings.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to John Morton, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services - Telephone 01429 523093, e-mail: [john.morton@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:john.morton@hartlepool.gov.uk).

## **PART TWO – ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **A. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

**NONE**

## **B SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS**

### **DECISION REFERENCE: SS24/05 DIRECT PAYMENTS**

#### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the extension of the Direct Payments Scheme to cover the purchase of items of equipment.

Direct Payments currently covers the provision of Personal Assistant support, respite care – day care, it is proposed that the scheme be extended to cover items of equipment.

#### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services.

#### **Timing of the decision**

The decision will be made in January 2006.

#### **Who will be consulted and how?**

Consultation will occur through the Direct Payments Working Group and Direct Payments Peer Support Group.

#### **Proposed means of consultation**

- Agenda item and presentation to Working Group to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2004
- Agenda item at next Peer Support Group

#### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

- The results of the consultation
- Report on the implications
- Best practice elsewhere
- Work undertaken via Tees-wide group

#### **How to make representations**

Representations can be made by contacting Margaret Hunt, Head of Business Unit (Strategy and Resources) on 01429 523928 or via email [margaret.hunt@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.hunt@hartlepool.gov.uk)

#### **Further information**

For further information please contact Margaret Hunt, Head of Business Unit (Strategy and Resources) on 01429 523928 or via email [margaret.hunt@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.hunt@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **DECISION REFERENCE: SS29/05 REVISION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

### **Nature of the decision**

To approve, as the basis for wider consideration, options in respect of Eligibility Criteria For Adult Social Care.

(Final decision on levels of eligibility will be made by Council as part of the budget for 2006/7).

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision will be made in January 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

People who use services, carers, providers of services, partner organisations and staff-side bodies. Consultation will be through the existing planning and consultation groups established through the Local Strategic Partnership and by inviting stakeholders to make comments in writing.

### **Proposed means of consultation**

A report detailing options approved by Cabinet on the basis of consultation will be taken for consideration to the Health and Social Care Strategy Group and its sub groups. Key stakeholders (including Trade Unions) will be given opportunity to make comment.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Current levels of eligibility and the impact of changes to these on people who use services, carers, staff and other organisations and on levels of resources required to meet changed levels.

### **How to make representations**

Representations can be made by contacting Ian McMillan on 01429 523914 or emailing [ian.mcmillan@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:ian.mcmillan@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Representations can be made by contacting Ian McMillan on 01429 523914 or emailing [ian.mcmillan@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:ian.mcmillan@hartlepool.gov.uk)



## **DECISION REFERENCE: SS30/05 ADULT EDUCATION PREMISES**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the relocation of the Adult Education Service into refurbished premises in the Burn Valley Centre. (Subject to funding from LSC).

It is proposed to use the Centre as an office base, and to operate four training rooms from the site to replace some of the poorer rooms used in the community.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision will be made in January 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

- i) Other providers by consultation at the Adult Providers Group
- ii) Local Community and Voluntary sector organisations through the Community Network.
- iii) Other Council departments through individual meetings.
- iv) Learning and Skills Council through review meetings.
- v) Existing learners through surveys

### **Proposed means of consultation**

- Learner and partner forums
- Questionnaires to partners, staff and learners.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

- The results of the consultation
- Report on the implications
- Financial implications for the service and the community
- Diversity impact

### **How to make representations**

Representations can be made by contacting Maggie Heaps, Adult Education Co-ordinator on 01429 868616 or via email [Maggie.heaps@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Maggie.heaps@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

For further information please contact Maggie Heaps, Adult Education Co-ordinator on 01429 868616 or via email [maggie.heaps@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:maggie.heaps@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **PART THREE – CHILDREN’S SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

### **A. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

#### **Children and Young People’s Plan**

Following a launch event on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2005, work has begun on Hartlepool’s first Children and Young People’s Plan. Producing a draft Children and Young People’s Plan, for consideration by elected members, will involve co-operation between the Borough Council, in its capacity as Children’s Services Authority, and a number of strategic partners. These partners are identified by the Children Act 2004. Subsequent Regulations identify a number of bodies with whom the Authority must consult before the plan is agreed by Council.

The preparation and drafting work will take place during the Autumn of 2005. A key feature of the preparation will be the involvement of children and young people. A draft Children and Young People’s Plan will be presented to Cabinet, examined by Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum and considered by Council during the early months of 2006.

### **B. KEY DECISIONS**

**NONE**

## **PART FOUR - NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

### **A. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

**NONE**

## **B. SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS**

### **DECISION REFERENCE: NS59/05 COAST PROTECTION – HEADLAND STRATEGY STUDY**

#### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the outcome of the Headland Strategy Study that has been undertaken by W S Atkins.

#### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

#### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in January 2006.

#### **Who will be consulted and how?**

All three Neighbourhood Forums.

#### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Background information leading to the proposals contained in the Strategy Study will be provided.

#### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Alan Coulson, Engineering Manager, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel: 01429 523242. Email: [alan.coulson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:alan.coulson@hartlepool.gov.uk).

#### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Alan Coulson, as above.

**DECISION REFERENCE: NS67/05 PUBLIC CONVENIENCE PROVISION**

**Nature of the decision**

Consideration of public convenience provision throughout the Borough.

**Who will make the decision?**

The Cabinet will make the decision.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in January 2006.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Local Resident Groups, the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums and Headland Parish Council.

**Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Report prepared on current condition of public conveniences, with recommendations for some replacement.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Dave Stubbs, Head of Environmental Management, Civic Centre, Hartlepool TS24 8AY. Tel: (01429) 523201. Email: [dave.stubbs@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dave.stubbs@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Dave Stubbs, as above.

## **DECISION REFERENCE: NS76/05 NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT TEES VALLEY AND SOUTH DURHAM NHS LIFT.**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the relevant land transactions on the Town Centre NHS LIFT site and the Owton Rossmere NHS LIFT projects.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in January 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

NHS LIFT Company and Hartlepool PCT.  
Owton Rossmere Resource Centre

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Background will be provided on the NHS LIFT development and land transactions in connection with the Town Centre and Owton Rossmere sites.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Graham Frankland, Head of Property Services, Neighbourhood Services Department, Leadbitter Buildings, Stockton Street, Hartlepool. Tel 01429 523211. E Mail [graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Graham Frankland, as above.

## **DECISION REFERENCE: NS78/05 CONCESSIONARY FARES**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the concessionary fares scheme that the council will introduce following the introduction of statutory free, off peak travel in April 2006

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision will be made in February 2006

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

The over 50's forum and the Director of Adult and Community Services

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Options for the scope of the concessionary fares scheme and the costs of each option.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Ian Jopling, Transportation Team Leader, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel: 01429 523242. Email: [ian.jopling@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:ian.jopling@hartlepool.gov.uk).

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Ian Jopling, as above.

## **DECISION REFERENCE: NS79/05 NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT - CONSTRUCTION, PROPERTY AND HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP**

### **Nature of the Decision**

To consider the business case and options for future service delivery.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in March 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

- Staff via briefings
- Unions via involvement in working groups and Steering Group
- Steering Group of Officers and Members

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

The following information will be presented:

- Baseline service information
- Key objectives of the Council
- Staff and Trade Union comments
- Delivery options
- Functions to be included

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services, Neighbourhood Services Department, Leadbitter Buildings, Stockton Street, Hartlepool. Tel 01429 523211. Email [graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Graham Frankland, as above.



## **DECISION REFERENCE: NS80/05 INCREASED RECYCLING PROPOSALS**

### **Nature of the Decision**

To consider increased recycling proposals.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in March 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

The following will be consulted via meetings and presentations:

- Neighbourhood Consultative Forums
- Scrutiny Forums
- Residents' Associations

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Evidence from pilot scheme and costings.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Dave Stubbs, Head of Environmental Management, Neighbourhood Services Department, Civic Centre, Hartlepool TS24 8AY. Tel: (01429) 523201. Email: [dave.stubbs@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dave.stubbs@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Dave Stubbs, as above.

## **DECISION REFERENCE: NS81/05 NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT, RESTORATION OF WAR MEMORIALS**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the restoration requirements of War Memorials.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in February 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

- English Heritage
- Resident Groups
- Ward Councillors
- Relevant Armed Forces Groups

Via briefings and presentations

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

The following information will be considered:

- Restoration requirements
- Long term maintenance
- Funding
- Application for grants

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services, Neighbourhood Services Department, Leadbitter Buildings, Stockton Street, Hartlepool. Tel 01429 523211. Email [graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Graham Frankland, as above.

## **PART FIVE - REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES** **DEPARTMENT**

### **A. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

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

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East is currently under preparation by the Regional Assembly for the North East. It is expected that a Public Examination will then be held in March 2006. Any changes which the Secretary of State wishes to make will be published in spring 2006, with a further period of consultation on the changes in summer 2006. It is anticipated that the RSS will be formally adopted in the winter of 2006-7.

The Hartlepool Local Plan review is at an advanced stage.

The Council's proposed modifications of the Local Plan were subject to a six week public consultation period, ending on 10<sup>th</sup> November. The Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> December will receive a report recommending responses to the representations received, which will then need to be considered by full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> December. The Cabinet is recommended to agree to proposed further modifications which will require a further six week consultation period. Subject to no new substantive representations being received at that stage, the Local Plan would then be formally adopted, in Spring 2006.

With the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, a new development plan system will come into force. There will still be two tiers of development plan, but in due course the Regional Spatial Strategy will replace the structure plan and development plan documents contained within a local development framework will replace the local plan. However, the new local plan currently being prepared will be saved for a period of at least three years after adoption - expected Spring 2006.

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

- Development plan documents – these must include:
  - A core strategy setting out the long term spatial vision for the area and the strategic policies and proposals to deliver the vision
  - Site specific allocations and policies
  - Action Area Plans for areas of change

- Generic development control policies relating to the vision and strategy set out in the core strategy
- Proposals Map
- Supplementary planning documents
- Statement of Community Involvement.

A draft statement of Community Involvement was agreed by Cabinet in July 2005 and a period of public consultation was held between July and October 2005. Consideration of representations is to be reported to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> December with the final SCI document being submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2006. This will be followed by a further consultation period and possible Public Examination. The SCI is expected to be adopted in December 2006. In addition, an Annual Monitoring Report assessing the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which current Development Plan policies are being achieved, will be submitted to the Cabinet in December, for information.

The Annual Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005. A draft plan will be prepared during first 3 months of 2006 and reported to Cabinet in March/April 2006. Consultation with statutory and other partner organisations, as well as referral to Scrutiny will be carried out during April and May 2006. Approval to the finalised plan will be sought from Council in June, following recommendations from Scrutiny being considered by Cabinet in early June 2006.

## **B SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS**

### **DECISION REFERENCE: RP60/05 HEADLAND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO KEY RESIDENTIAL AREAS (2006/07 PROJECTS)**

#### **Nature of the decision**

To approve schemes forming part of the 2006/07 programme of works within the Headland Environmental Improvements to Key Residential Areas Programme. (HEIKRA).

#### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the appropriate Portfolio Holder in response to a joint report from the Directors of Regeneration & Planning Services and Neighbourhood Services

(In parallel, the North Hartlepool Partnership will also make a decision on the design and funding of the scheme).

#### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in March 2006.

#### **Who will be consulted and how?**

The proposals will be subject to consultation with all the Headland residents including specifically the neighbouring ones, the Parish Council and other stakeholders.

Proposals will also go to the North Hartlepool Partnership's Housing, Environment and Community Safety Advisory Group and its Design Sub-group.

#### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Feedback from all consultations including the views of The North Hartlepool Partnership, The Headland Town Council and residents etc.

#### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made in writing to Stuart Green, Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development), Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone 01429 284133, e-mail: [stuart.green@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.green@hartlepool.gov.uk)

#### **Further information**

Further information can be sought by contacting: Karen Oliver, Neighbourhood Services Department, Civic Centre, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY. Telephone 01429 523680. e-mail: [karen.oliver@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:karen.oliver@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **DECISION REFERENCE: RP85/05 NORTH CENTRAL HARTLEPOOL HOUSING REGENERATION - APPOINTMENT OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER PARTNER**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider a report concerning the selection process to secure a preferred partner to take forward housing redevelopment proposals for North Central Hartlepool, and to formally confirm the outcome.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in January 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

Consultation with local residents was integral to the development and progression of housing regeneration proposals for North Central Hartlepool. Residents have representation on the Steering Group overseeing the project on behalf of the Council's Cabinet.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

Consideration will be given to previous reports to Cabinet of 9 August 2004 and 6 June 2005 describing the background and context for the development of the North Central Hartlepool Housing Regeneration Project and its contribution to rebalancing the local housing market in this part of the town.

### **How to make representation**

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

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Mark Dutton, Housing & Regeneration Co-ordinator, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel: 01429 284308, email: [mark.dutton@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:mark.dutton@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **DECISION REFERENCE: RP88/05    STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES BEST VALUE REVIEW**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider the recommendations arising from a Best Value Review of Strengthening Communities which is being undertaken as part of the Council's Best Value Review Program. The review has considered the arrangements within the Council aimed at delivering the parts of this theme within the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan (Best Value Performance Plan) that the authority is responsible for.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in January 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

Members, officers, residents and partners have been invited to participate in the review. Primary engagement in the process has been through a network of sounding boards that have met at key stages throughout the review.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers:**

- Hartlepool Community Strategy
- Corporate Plan (Best Value Performance Plan)
- Hartlepool Partnership Performance Management Framework

Reference copies are available in the members' room; further copies are available from the Community Strategy Division.

### **How to make representation**

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

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration, of Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT Tel. No. 01429 523597 or e-mail [geoff.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:geoff.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

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

### **Nature of the decision**

Cabinet are requested to consider further details of the HCFE expansion plans, including the proposed land take, design issues, funding sources and project timetable.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet

### **Timing of the decision**

Decision to be made in January 2006

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

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

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

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

### **How to make representation**

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

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Peter Scott as above.



## **DECISION REFERENCE: RP93/05 LOCAL ENTERPRISE GROWTH INITIATIVE (LEGI): BID OUTCOME**

### **Nature of the decision**

To consider and approve a potential offer of a Local Enterprise Growth Initiative Resource and also approve detailed implementation plans. LEGI is a major new DTI/ODPM/Treasury Department initiative aimed at realising the productivity and economic potential of our most deprived local areas and their inhabitants through enterprise and investment – thereby boosting local incomes and employment opportunities.

Neighbourhood Renewal areas have been invited to bid, in competition, for funding between £2m and £10m per annum up to ten years. It is anticipated that only around 30% of NR areas will be successful. The first phase of LEGI requires a bid submission by 9<sup>th</sup> December 2005 with approvals around January/February 2006 with project implementation commencing April 2006.

### **Who will make the decision?**

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

### **Timing of the decision**

It is anticipated that a decision on implementing a successful LEGI bid will be made in January 2006, depending on the timing of Government decisions on the bid submissions.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

The initial LEGI application will be developed with key partners and stakeholders including the Hartlepool Economic Forum, Hartlepool Partnership, Business Link, the Learning and Skills Council, Community Empowerment Network and local business community.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

The report providing details of the LEGI award should Hartlepool be a successful bidder together with detailed implementation plans.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made in writing to Antony Steinberg, Economic Development Manager, Regeneration and Planning Services, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Tel. No. 01429 523503, e-mail [antony.steinberg@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:antony.steinberg@hartlepool.gov.uk).

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Antony Steinberg as above.

## **DECISION REFERENCE: RP98/05 NEIGHBOURHOOD ELEMENT FUND 2006-10**

### **Nature of the decision.**

To agree strategic priorities for the Neighbourhood Element programme for 2006-10.

### **Who will make the decision?**

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

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in March 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

It is a condition of receipt of the NE grant that the programme is approved by the Borough Council and the LSP.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs) provide the framework for the NRF programme. Reference copies are placed in members room. Further copies are available from the Community Strategy Division.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be sent in writing to Joanne Smithson, Head of Community Strategy, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone 01429 284161, e-mail: [Joanne.smithson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Joanne.smithson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information on this matter may be sought from Chris Barlow, Principal Community Planning Officer, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone: 01429 523589 or e-mail: [chris.barlow@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:chris.barlow@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **DECISION REFERENCE: RP99/05 NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUND (NRF) - PROGRAMME 2006-08**

### **Nature of the decision.**

To agree priorities for the NRF programme for 2006-08

### **Who will make the decision?**

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

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in January 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

It is a condition of receipt of the NRF grant that the NRF programme is approved by the Borough Council and the LSP.

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy provides the framework for the NRF programme. Reference copies placed in members room. Further copies are available from the Community Strategy Division.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be sent in writing to Joanne Smithson, Head of Community Strategy, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone 01429 284161, e-mail: [Joanne.smithson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Joanne.smithson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information on this matter may be sought from Chris Barlow, Principal Community Planning Officer, Regeneration and Planning Services Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. Telephone: 01429 523589 or e-mail: [chris.barlow@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:chris.barlow@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **DECISION REFERENCE RP 100/05 North Hartlepool (Brus and St Hilda Wards) Neighbourhood Action Plan**

### **Nature of the decision**

Key decision. The Portfolio Holder will be asked for their endorsement on the final North Hartlepool Neighbourhood Action Plan.

### **Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability. The Portfolio Holder will have also seen the draft plan in February for comments.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in March 2006.

### **Who will be consulted and how?**

The North Hartlepool Neighbourhood Action Plan will have been developed through a wide range of consultation with both residents, Ward Councillors, service providers and local voluntary/community groups. A Community Conference and follow up ,drop-in sessions will be held, with the assistance of the Community Network to establish the community's priority concerns and actions required, and all comments received will be taken into consideration in producing the plan.

The North Hartlepool Neighbourhood Action Plan will also be taken to the following for comments :

- Local Schools and school children
- Key Services providers and interested parties
- Residents Associations and Community Groups
- North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum
- Hartlepool Partnership

### **Information to be considered by the decision makers**

The North Hartlepool Neighbourhood Action Plan

## **How to make representation**

Representations should be made in writing to Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration, Department of Regeneration and Planning, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT Tel. No. 01429 523597 or e-mail [geoff.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:geoff.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Genevieve Parker, Principal Regeneration Officer, Department of Regeneration and Planning, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool TS24 7BT Tel. No. 01429 523521 or e-mail [genevieve.parker@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:genevieve.parker@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **DETAILS OF DECISION MAKERS**

#### **THE CABINET**

Many decisions will be taken collectively by the Cabinet.

- The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
- Councillor Stanley Fortune
- Councillor Cath Hill
- Councillor Peter Jackson
- Councillor Robbie Payne
- Councillor Ray Waller

#### **EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

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

Regeneration & Liveability	-	The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
Policy Co-ordination	-	Councillor Stanley Fortune
Children's Services	-	Councillor Cath Hill
Finance & Performance Management	-	Councillor Peter Jackson
Culture, Housing & Transportation	-	Councillor Robbie Payne
Adult Services & Public Health	-	Councillor Ray Waller

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **TIMETABLE OF KEY DECISIONS**

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

#### **1. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN JANUARY 2006**

##### **1.1 DATE NOT YET DETERMINED**

CE05/05 (Pg 7)	MIDDLETON GRANGE SHOPPING CENTRE – LAND FRONTING PARK ROAD	CABINET
NS59/05 (Pg16)	COAST PROTECTION – HEADLAND STRATEGY STUDY	CABINET
NS67/05 (Pg17)	PUBLIC CONVENIENCE PROVISION	CABINET
NS76/05 (Pg18)	NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT TEES VALLEY AND SOUTH DURHAM NHS LIFT	CABINET
RP85/05 (Pg26)	NORTH CENTRAL HPOOL HOUSING REGENERATION - APPOINTMENT OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER PARTNER	CABINET
RP88/05 (Pg27)	STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES BEST VALUE REVIEW	CABINET
RP89/05 (Pg28)	DEVELOPMENT AT HARTLEPOOL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION	CABINET
RP93/05 (Pg29)	LOCAL ENTERPRISE GROWTH INITIATIVE (LEGI): BID OUTCOME	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
RP99/05 (Pg31)	NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUND (NRF) – PROG 2006-08	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
SS24/05 (Pg11)	DIRECT PAYMENTS	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
SS29/05 (Pg12)	REVISION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CABINET
SS30/05 (Pg13)	ADULT EDUCATION PREMISES	CABINET

#### **2. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN FEBRUARY 2006**

##### **1.2 DATE NOT YET DETERMINED**

CE16/05 (Pg 8)	HARTLEPOOL LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA)	CABINET
CE17/05 (Pg 9)	PHASE 2 CORPORATE ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT & RECORDS MANAGEMENT & WORKFLOW SYSTEM	CABINET
NS78/05 (Pg19)	CONCESSIONARY FARES	CABINET
NS81/05 (Pg22)	NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT, RESTORATION OF WAR MEMORIALS	CABINET

#### **3. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN MARCH 2006**

##### **3.1 DATE NOT YET DETERMINED**

NS79/05 (Pg20)	NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT – CONSTRUCTION, PROPERTY AND HIGHWAY SECTION	CABINET
NS80/05 (Pg21)	INCREASED RECYCLING PROPOSALS	CABINET
RP60/05 (Pg25)	HEADLAND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO KEY RESIDENTIAL AREAS (2006/7 PROJECTS)	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
RP98/05 (Pg30)	NEIGHBOURHOOD ELEMENT FUND 2006-10	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
RP100/05 (Pg32)	NORTH HARTLEPOOL (BRUS AND ST HILDAS WARDS) NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN	PORTFOLIO HOLDER

#### **4. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN APRIL 2006**

##### **4.1 NONE**

**SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

13 January 2006



**Report of:** Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** Second and Third Tier Officers Salary and Grading Review Scrutiny Referral – Process of the Review: Presentation by the Employers' Organisation

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee that a representative from the Employers' Organisation will be in attendance at this meeting to outline the process of the Second and Third Tier Officers Salary and Grading Review as part of this Committee's ongoing Scrutiny Referral.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Committee on 20 December 2005, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by this Committee for the undertaking of this Scrutiny Referral.
- 2.2 Consequently, a representative from the Employers' Organisation has been commissioned to undertake the review and has agreed to attend this meeting.
- 2.3 During this meeting, the representative from the Employers' Organisation will deliver a presentation which outlines to the Committee the process being undertaken for the Second and Third Tier Officers Salary and Grading Review.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee consider the content of the presentation to be delivered by a representative from the Employers' Organisation during this meeting.



**Contact Officers:** - Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council

Tel: 01429 523 087 / 523 647

Email: [charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Manager entitled 'Scrutiny Referral: Second and Third Tier Officers Salary and Grading Review – Scoping Report' presented to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 20 December 2005.

**SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

13 January 2006



**Report of:** Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** HMS Trincomalee Trust Scrutiny Referral:  
Covering Report – Informal Meeting with the HMS  
Trincomalee Trust held on 11 January 2006

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To verbally update Members of this Committee with regard to the Informal Meeting held with the HMS Trincomalee Trust on 11 January 2006 as part of the Scrutiny Referral/Inquiry.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Committee held on 14 November 2005, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Committee for this Scrutiny Referral.
- 2.2 At this meeting, Members felt it was appropriate to meet informally with the Trust to discuss the process to be undertaken for the Scrutiny Referral.
- 2.3 In light of the various commitments, difficulties were encountered in arranging such meeting until 11 January 2006, resulting in further delay in the undertaking of this referral as per the revised project plan (agreed by this Committee on 20 December 2005).
- 2.4 At the time of the writing of this report, the arrangements had been finalised for the Informal Meeting on 11 January 2006 with the below-named being invited to attend:-

Members of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee: Councillors James, Hargreaves and Hall;

Officers: Borough Solicitor, Acting Assistant Director – Community Services, Head of Planning and Economic Development, Scrutiny Manager and the Research Assistant (Scrutiny Support); and

Chairman and General Manager of the HMS Trincomalee Trust

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the findings and agreed outcome(s) of the Informal Meeting held on 11 January 2006 between the HMS Trincomalee Trust and this Committee, be verbally presented during this meeting as part of the Scrutiny Referral/Inquiry.

**Contact Officers:** - Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523 087  
Email: [charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Manager entitled 'Scoping Report – HMS Trincomalee Trust (Council Referral) presented to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 14 November 2005.

## SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

13<sup>th</sup> January 2006



**Report of:** Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** Pandemic Influenza - Contingency Planning – Draft Final Report

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Members of the Committee with a Draft Final Report of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into Pandemic Influenza – Contingency Planning.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members of the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum undertook a short investigation into 'Pandemic Influenza – Contingency Planning.' The investigation was initiated as a response to concerns expressed about the rise in Avian Influenza and the possible impact this could have on human health.
- 2.2 During an early evidence gathering session Members agreed to focus the concerns raised in relation to Avian Influenza within the overall contingency planning for Pandemic Influenza by the Local Authority and Health Sector. The Forum agreed that this investigation would be useful to allay concerns and informative thus it was agreed to incorporate this investigation into the forums annual work programme.

### 3. AIM OF THE SCRUTINY ENQUIRY

- 3.1 To undertake a short inquiry into Pandemic Influenza, looking at the overall contingency planning for a possible outbreak of "avian flu."

#### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY ENQUIRY**

4.1 The following terms of reference were established for the review:-

- To identify how the UK is working with international bodies to monitor the development of the virus; and reduce the risk of pandemic influenza emerging and spreading.
- To consider the current assessment of the likely impact of pandemic influenza on the UK (both in terms of health and on wider society, including the economy)
- To consider if the UK's stockpile of antiviral treatments adequate, and how will it be distributed? Furthermore, to consider what steps are being taken to ensure that the UK has access to sufficient antiviral treatment and vaccine in the event of a flu pandemic?
- To identify how the risk of pandemic influenza is being assessed and how this assessment can be improved?
- To identify what the long-term strategy is for reducing the threat of pandemic influenza?
- To consider the plans to co-ordinate between health, emergency and other essential services for responding to a pandemic
- To identify the current assessment of the likely impact of pandemic influenza on Hartlepool (both in terms of health and on wider society, including the economy)
- To consider how well prepared and co-ordinated is the Local Authority, health, emergency and other essential services are both regionally and locally for responding to a pandemic?
- To consider the awareness raising plans in place to ensure that the general public are aware of the risks and likely effects of a pandemic, and of how they should react.

#### **5. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

- 5.1 The Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum agreed to undertake a short review of the Contingency plans in relation to Pandemic Influenza. A variety of sources were used in order to conduct a robust yet targeted investigation.
- 5.2 Members of the Forum consulted a range of sources including, Department of Health Guidance, World Health Organisation Reports and spoke with

representatives from the Health Protection Agency, Hartlepool PCT and the Council's Director of Neighbourhood Services.

## 6. CONDUCT OF THE INVESTIGATION – SUMMARY OF PROCESS

Meeting	Date	Issue
1	20 <sup>th</sup> Sept 05	'Setting the Scene' – Overview of the main issues relating to Bird Flu.
2	18 <sup>th</sup> Oct 05	'Scoping the review' – Defining the aim of the investigation and the terms of reference.
3	15 <sup>th</sup> Nov 05	Evidence Gathering Session – Determining the Conclusions & Recommendations
4	13 <sup>th</sup> Dec 05	Publication of Draft Final Report

6.1 Once the Forum has approved the Draft Final Report, the report is scheduled to be considered by:-

- **SCC - Date to be determined** - To endorse Final Report
- **Cabinet – Date to be determined** - To consider the Final Report of this Committee.

## 7. FINDINGS

**7.1 - The disease – establishing what is a Pandemic & its potential impact** (Also, see Table 1 below)

- (a) Pandemic flu is a type of influenza that spreads rapidly to affect most countries and regions around the world. However, unlike the ordinary flu that occurs every winter in the UK, pandemic influenza can occur at any time of year.
- (b) Pandemics of influenza have occurred sporadically throughout history – three times in the last hundred years – resulting in many deaths.
- (c) Experts predict another pandemic will occur but cannot say exactly when it will happen. When it does, it may come in two or more waves several months apart. Each wave may last two to three months.
- (d) Pandemic flu is more serious than 'ordinary' flu. As much as a quarter of the population may be affected – maybe more.
- (e) Pandemic flu is likely to cause the same symptoms as 'ordinary' flu. The symptoms may be more severe because nobody will have any immunity or protection against that particular virus.
- (f) A serious pandemic is likely to cause many deaths, disrupt the daily life of many people and cause intense pressure on health and other services.

- (g) Each pandemic is different, and until the virus starts circulating, it is impossible to predict its full effects.
- (h) The current epidemic of highly pathogenic avian (bird) flu – (H5N1) is generally thought to have increased the likelihood of a Pandemic occurring in the near future.

**Table 1**

'Ordinary' flu	Pandemic flu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Ordinary' flu occurs every year during the winter months in the UK.</li> <li>• It affects 10-15% of the UK population, causing around 12,000 deaths every year.</li> <li>• Globally, epidemics of 'ordinary' flu are thought to kill between 500,000 to 1 million people every year.</li> <li>• Most people recover from 'ordinary' flu within one or two weeks without requiring medical treatment.</li> <li>• Deaths are generally confined to 'at risk' groups including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• elderly people over 65 years of age</li> <li>• people with existing medical conditions such as lung diseases, diabetes, cancer, kidney or heart problems</li> <li>• people whose immune systems are compromised due to HIV/AIDS or because they have a transplant, for example</li> <li>• the very young.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The vaccine against 'ordinary' flu is effective because the virus strain in circulation each winter can be fairly reliably predicted.</li> <li>• Annual vaccination, when the correct virus strain is fairly reliably predicted, and antiviral drugs are available for those at risk of becoming seriously ill.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pandemics of have occurred sporadically throughout history and can take place in any season.</li> <li>• It affects many more people than 'ordinary' flu – a quarter or more of the population – and is associated with much higher rates of illness and death. For example, the worst flu pandemic last century – the 1918 'Spanish Flu', caused around 250,000 deaths in the UK alone and up to 40 million deaths worldwide.</li> <li>• Pandemic flu, usually associated with a higher severity of illness and consequently a higher risk of death, represents a much more serious infection than 'ordinary' flu.</li> <li>• People of all age groups may be at risk of infection with pandemic flu, not just 'at risk' groups.</li> <li>• A vaccine against pandemic flu will not be available at the start of a pandemic. This is because the virus strain will be completely new. It will be different from the viruses that circulated the previous winter, and not predictable in the same way.</li> <li>• Antiviral drugs may be in limited supply, their use depending on evidence of their efficacy which will only emerge once the pandemic is under way. (Treatment available for pandemic flu is described in more detail in Chapter 3).</li> </ul>

➤ ***Extract from Explaining Pandemic Flu - A guide from the CMO' (Chief Medical Officer), Department of Health, October 2005***

## 7.2 International Monitoring & Surveillance

7.2.1 Members of the Forum noted that it is unlikely that the global spread of a pandemic flu virus could be prevented once it emerges. Therefore, the emphasis in pandemic flu virus control is on reducing the impact of Pandemic Influenza. The Forum was advised that several tools help achieve this aim:-

- Year round global surveillance
- effective and accurate methods of diagnosis
- vaccines (once they become available)
- antiviral drugs
- social interventions.

7.2.2 The Forum was advised that surveillance is a year around global activity. Its objective is to monitor the evolution of flu viruses and associated illness to inform recommendations for the annual vaccine, but also in order to detect the emergence of 'unusual' viruses that may have pandemic potential as they emerge. The sooner a potential pandemic virus is detected, the sooner control measures can be put in place and the sooner the development of a vaccine can begin. Effective surveillance is vital, not only in detecting the first virus, but also for example, in detecting the first signs of person to person transmission.

7.2.3 The UK is an integral part of an international network of flu surveillance to which it contributes, and from which it receives data:-

- **The World Health Organization Global Influenza Surveillance Network**

- This is an international network of laboratories which provides a mechanism for monitoring flu viruses and detecting the emergence of new viruses with pandemic potential. The World Health Organization network consists of four WHO Collaborating Centres (in Australia, Japan, the USA and the UK), which perform genetic analyses of around 2000 flu viruses each year, and 112 contributing national influenza laboratories in 83 countries, including the UK, which collect more than 175,000 samples from patients with flu like illness.

- **The European Influenza Surveillance Scheme**

- This is a collaborative surveillance network within the European Network for the Epidemiological Surveillance and Control of Communicable Diseases and is funded by the European Union. It combines clinical surveillance and reference laboratory reports from 23 European countries, including the UK, allowing flu activity to be monitored across Europe.



- **UK Health Protection Agency**

- Flu surveillance across the UK is coordinated by the Health Protection Agency (an independent body funded by the Department of Health) throughout the year but with a particular focus over the winter months. The agency uses a range of information sources including data on new general practitioner consultations for flulike illness, laboratory reports and data from the NHS telephone information service – NHS Direct, and their equivalents in the other UK countries, to monitor circulating flu virus strains and the illness they are causing. It aims to detect new subtypes of epidemic or pandemic potential.

### **7.3 Vaccinations**

- 7.3.1 The Forum noted that medicines known as antivirals can be used to *treat* influenza. They have been shown to be very helpful in the treatment of 'ordinary' flu, and it is likely that they would be effective in the treatment of pandemic flu, but their effectiveness would not be known until the pandemic virus is circulating. It was emphasized that antivirals do not stop the flu from developing but they do subdue the symptoms and reduce the time people are sick.
- 7.3.2 The Government announced plans to procure 14.6 million courses of the antiviral drug Tamiflu, which is expected to reduce the impact of the disease. This will provide treatment for one in four of the UK population - the proportion most likely to become infected with the disease and is consistent with the figure recommended by the World Health Organisation for planning purposes. The vaccines will be used to protect key medical and emergency workers across Britain against a possible global pandemic.
- 7.3.3 Influenza pandemics are caused when a new flu virus emerges which is markedly different from recently circulating strains. As it is new, ordinary flu vaccines will not be effective and a new vaccine will need to be developed. This will take time and therefore a vaccine will not be available at the beginning of a pandemic. However, the UK is participating in research to speed up the production of a vaccine against a future pandemic flu outbreak.

**Summary – Table two****Controlling pandemic flu: Summary**

- Surveillance, diagnosis, vaccination, antiviral drugs and 'social' interventions are the principal tools in controlling pandemic flu.
- A vaccine for use against pandemic flu can only be produced once the pandemic strain has been identified. This means that vaccines will not be available immediately.
- Antiviral drugs are the only other medical countermeasure available but there are important limitations to their use including uncertainty over their efficacy.
- The UK plan has identified strategies and has prioritised groups for receipt of both vaccines and antivirals according to their availability.
- Various 'social' interventions at both the personal and national level may be necessary. These include personal hygiene and possible restrictions on travel and mass gatherings.
- For more information on pandemic flu control, visit:
  - Department of Health: [www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu](http://www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu)
  - World Health Organization: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

➤ ***Extract from Explaining Pandemic Flu - A guide from the CMO' (Chief Medical Officer), Department of Health, October 2005***

## **7.4 CO-ORDINATION BETWEEN AGENCIES- NATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLANS**

- 7.4.1 The Forum established that the Government has prepared a UK wide Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan which will be put into action in the event of a pandemic. The Plan includes initiatives to improve our preparedness now, before another pandemic occurs.
- 7.4.2 The UK Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan was published in March 2005. Replacing the Multiphase Contingency Plan for Pandemic Influenza published in 1997, the current plan has been updated to take account of new scientific developments, changes in the health service, lessons learned from the 1997 outbreak of avian flu in Hong Kong and from the 2003 SARS outbreak and experience in emergency planning since the events of 11 September 2001. It has subsequently been revised, taking into account comments received in response and further developments in planning.

7.4.3 The UK plan has been developed in accordance with international recommendations issued by WHO and adapted to meet national needs. Its overall objective is to minimise the impact of a flu pandemic on the UK population. Key elements are:

- the organisational arrangements for an effective response
- identifying pandemic flu and monitoring its spread and impact, to inform actions
- containing the spread of infection to the extent that this is possible
- reducing illness and saving lives
- ensuring the continuation of essential services, thereby minimising social and economic disruption
- ensuring that the public, health professionals and media have up-to-date, comprehensive information at all stages.

## **7.5 An integrated international, national and local response**

7.5.1 The Forum established that the UK plan provides the overall framework for a UK wide response and covers the national health response. Contingency plans however, are also being developed at a local level by the Primary care trusts and strategic health authorities and the Local Authority to ensure local needs are met while remaining integrated in the national and international response.

7.5.2 The Forum was advised about local business continuity planning, pandemic influenza contingency planning by both Hartlepool PCT and the Council. The Forum was pleased to note the joint working between the various stakeholders, at a local level, which included links to partners such as Government Office North East and the Health Protection Agency.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Members were pleased to see that there is a great deal of work underway, globally, nationally, regionally and locally in order to anticipate and respond effectively to an influenza pandemic, should one occur.

8.2 The Forum noted that protecting the public from pandemic influenza was an integral part of ongoing work by Hartlepool Borough Council, Hartlepool PCT and the Health Protection Agency.

8.3 Members wished to endorse the first generation contingency plan presented by Hartlepool Borough Council.

8.4 Members endorsed the approach adopted by Hartlepool PCT in relation to its activities, both in contributing to the development of a Local (SHA-area wide) contingency plan and, the PCTs own business continuity plan.

- 8.5 Members recommend that in the event of a pandemic, Hartlepool Borough Council and the Health Agencies would undertake to publicise good basic hygiene that would reduce the risk of influenza spreading.

## 9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Members of the Forum would like to place on record their thanks to;
- Peter Kendal, Regional Health Emergency Planning Advisor – Health Protection Agency North East
  - Peter Price, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing - Hartlepool PCT
  - Ian Parker, Director of Neighbourhood Services -Hartlepool Borough Council

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) – Briefing Note 'presented to the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2005.
- (ii) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Pandemic Influenza – Contingency Planning' - Scoping Paper presented to the Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005
- (iii) 'Explaining Pandemic Flu - A guide from the CMO' (Chief Medical Officer), Department of Health, October 2005

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## **SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**13<sup>th</sup> January 2006**



**Report of:** Children's Services Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** Draft Final Report - Involving Young People

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### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To present the draft findings of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum following its inquiry into Involving Young People.

### **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 At Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2003 and again on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2003, a Member raised the issue of involving young people in the affairs of the town and how the Council was proposing to develop robust mechanisms to ensure that young people's views were heard and considered. It was agreed that the subject was one that should be examined through the scrutiny process.
- 2.2 Consequently, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004 the (then) Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum began its inquiry into Involving Young People. This inquiry has been conducted over two broad stages:
- (a) 2003/4 Municipal Year – the Scrutiny inquiry was largely concerned with exploring mechanisms to engage young people in district affairs; and
  - (b) 2004/5 Municipal Year – the Scrutiny inquiry largely focused on strategies for involving young people through participation.
- 2.3 At the end of each stage of inquiry the Forum has postponed producing a Final Report whilst it waited for the results of a piece of work by the Hartlepool Community Network, which is based on consultations with young people. The findings of this piece of work were reported to the Forum on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 and again on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005.

### 3. SETTING THE SCENE

3.1 Over the course of this Scrutiny investigation there have been several 'streams of inquiry'. A lot of the work carried out under these has been about enabling Members to have a better understanding of young people's activities and, therefore, how they can become involved in decisions that affect their lives. It is, therefore, hoped that young people will become increasingly involved in the community and democratic processes, as a result of the recommendations of this report.

3.2 In 2003 MORI produced a report on the attitudes of the group they called 'Disaffected Youth' and concluded that:

*'Though (young people) have well-formed opinions on, and are able to discuss issues such as mobile phones, sex, crime or their local neighbourhood; they have little patience with political debate, which seems to them to occupy a parallel universe to the one they inhabit. It should not be assumed that this group are 'apathetic'. They have strong opinions and often feel passionately about public service delivery issues that impact on their life and work. However, they do not make the connection between their personal dissatisfaction with a particular aspect of public life and participating in the traditional political processes as a way of expressing that dissatisfaction or seeking a solution to these problems.'*

3.3 The conclusions that MORI reached in the above paragraph justify the Forum's approach to gaining an understanding of the activities of young people as a 'bridge' to developing participation strategies.

3.4 Since August 2002 citizenship has been a statutory national curriculum subject for all pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 (11-16 year olds) and a national voluntary one for primary schools. More recently the Government has given consideration to extending citizenship education for those over 16. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2005 the Forum was provided with evidence about citizenship in schools and how it forms a strand of the framework for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) in primary schools. The Forum commended the work being undertaken in this regard, and the connections that are being made between this and school councils.

3.5 The Council is also making good progress in a number of areas through encouraging participation in decision making and supporting the community. Some examples of which are:

- (a) young people developing a 'Behaviour on Buses' policy in collaboration with LEA officers;
- (b) development of the Sexual Health policy for young people for young people looked after was produced by a joint group of health, social services, education staff and young people;

(c) the Children's Fund has received positive reports from inspectors in terms of the involvement of children and young people; and

(d) holding a Cabinet meeting in a school.

3.6 In addition, every school in the town has a school council, which provides an opportunity for students to gain some experience of democratic processes and school based decision making. The Forum welcomed this development and questioned whether there might be opportunities to build on this mechanism to extend young involvement in a wider range of decisions.

#### **4. OVERALL AIM OF THE INQUIRY**

4.1 The co-ordination of the development of a strategy to involve young people and the development of mechanisms – identified by the young people themselves – to engage in district affairs.

#### **5. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

(a) Is there a need for a mechanism to be established to involve young people?

(b) If so is it a Council priority to fulfil this need?

(c) If it is a Council Priority to respond, to what extent is it for the Council and/or its partner organisations to determine the format that this will take?

(d) What mechanisms (if any) do Members favour for involving young people i.e. formal mechanisms such as youth councils or less formal mechanisms?

(e) What influence/powers are the young people the Council is seeking to involve be granted, if any?

(f) Who should the Council seek to involve e.g. age groups, educational organisations, 'other' groups?

5.1 It should be noted that the original terms of reference relate more to the first stage of the inquiry (outlined in section 2.2 above) than the second, although the purpose of the second stage was to ground the identification of decision making mechanisms within the context of the experiences of young people.

#### **6. MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM**

6.1 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum 2003/4 Municipal Year:

Councillors: Allan, Cambridge, Griffin, Herbert, Iseley, Pearson, Preece, Rogers (Chair), Shaw, Turner and R Waller

Co-opted Members:

Mr Relton, Mrs Marchant and Mr R McGovern

6.2 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum 2004/5 Municipal Year:

Councillors: Belcher, Cambridge, Fleet, Griffin, Lauderdale, London, Marshall, Preece, Richardson, Shaw (Chair) and Wistow

Co-opted Members: Mr F D S Relton, Rev J Smith, Mrs J Fawcett and Mrs L Barraclough

Resident Representatives: M Boreland, I Campbell and J Smith

6.3 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum 2005/6 Municipal Year:

Councillors: Cambridge, Coward, Fleet, Griffin, Hargreaves, Lauderdale, London, Preece, Richardson, Shaw (Chair) and Wistow

Co-opted Members: Mr F D S Relton, Rev J Smith, Mrs J Fawcett and Mrs L Barraclough

Resident Representatives: M Boreland, I Campbell and J Smith

## 7. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

7.1 During the various stages of the inquiry Members of the Forum formally met between 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004 and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 to discuss/receive evidence relating to this investigation.

7.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:

- (a) Detailed Officer reports supplemented by verbal evidence;
- (b) Detailed presentations from external partners, including from Hartlepool Community Network and B76;
- (c) Site visit to Gateshead Youth Assembly;
- (d) Site visit to Abbey Street Community Centre;
- (e) Site visits to youth projects and outreach workers; and
- (f) Site visits to Brougham, Dyke House, Fens, Jesmond Road, and West View Schools.

## 8. SCRUTINY FINDINGS

8.1 The findings of the Forum are outlined below and have been divided into three sections:



- (a) School and Youth Project Visits;
- (b) Community Network consultation and Mechanisms to Involve Young People in Decision Making; and
- (c) Co-ordinating Participation.

## **FINDINGS SECTION 1 – SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROJECT VISITS**

- 8.2 Over the course of the inquiry Members of the (then) Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum decided that it was important to gather the views of young people about how they can be involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Members had welcomed the consultation that the Hartlepool Community Network was carrying out but considered that the Forum needed to incorporate the views of young people below the age of 16. Consequently, a working group was established by the Forum on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2005 to discuss how to incorporate young people's views into the process.
- 8.3 The working group agreed that a set of questions should be prepared for the visits so that the young people were asked the same questions for each of the visits.

### **Questionnaire Results from School Visits**

- 8.4 Outlined below is a summary of the consultation results from the school visits to each of the questions the Forum's Working Group agreed would be asked during these visits.

#### **1) *What sort of things do you like to do when you are not at school?***

The most common activities carried out by young people when they are not in school were: swimming; football; playing outside; dancing; riding bikes; gymnastics; playing on the computer; trampoline; shopping; watch TV; and puzzles.

#### **2) *What sort of things would you like to do after school or at the weekend?***

The activities most young people would like to do after school (other than the ones they were currently doing) were: to go on trips (outdoor activities, museums etc.); ice-skating; spend time with/visit relatives; tennis; cricket; skateboarding and bird watching.

#### **3) *Why don't you do these things now?***

The most common reasons given by young people for not being able to take part in activities included: its too expensive; it is 'not easy to do' (this was quite a common view amongst young people suggesting a variety of barriers to activities); they are too far away; don't know where to go for chosen

activities; parents are too busy to take them; transport is poor; more wardens are needed in parks/play areas; bullies; some classes/clubs are not available; some facilities are not very good; and they are 'not allowed' to do chosen activities – largely because they are too young. N.B. it should be noted that a reasonable number of young people responded that they *did* take part in the activities they wanted to.

**4) *How could we help you do these sort of things?***

The most common responses to this question were: make activities free/cheaper; create new clubs; build an ice rink in town; design a letter telling young people what they can do – publicise 'what's on'; provide transport; we want a safe place to go to; put different activities on; run classes/groups more frequently; provide taster clubs/classes; and listen to young people when building new developments.

**5) *Where could you do them?***

The most common answers to this question included: at school; in a local sports hall; Mill House Leisure Centre; Grayfields; outside (e.g. parks); school yard; at home; and as close to home as possible.

**6) *Are there any clubs or groups you would like to join?***

The following were the most common answers from respondents: Cub Scouts; Brownies; Sports/Dance/Music/Art/Youth/After School Clubs; Ice Skating Groups; choir; cycling proficiency; BMX riding; much bigger skate park; and Horse Riding. In addition, a relatively high number of young people answered 'no' to this question.

**7) *Would you like your Mam or Dad to do these things with you?***

About two thirds of young people wanted their parents to do these activities with them.

**8) *What would you like them to do?***

The most common answers from the young people were: help me; join in; play with me; watch; and transport me.

**9) *Some children can be naughty. What things could children do that would help them behave better?***

The most common answers to this question included: behaviour chart; make them play sensibly – or with someone who is sensible; play with them; teach them how to behave; reward the good kids so the bad get jealous; show them a prison cell; and we need people to help them who understand them.

**10) *What's the best club or group you have been to after school or at the weekend? Why?***

The following answers were most common amongst the respondents: football team/clubs (learn new skills); dance class/group (keeps me fit/learn new steps); gymnastics (see my friends/do a show); after school club (play lots of games/make things); karate (it's the best); and swimming.

#### **11) *Do you go to the library?***

Approximately half of the young people responding to the survey attended the library.

#### **12) *What sort of things should libraries do to make children want to go to them more?***

The most common responses to this question were: provide more computers with access for everyone; provide more and 'better' books for kids; provide help with reading and read to young people; provide reading groups/book clubs; more people to help with homework; provide a play/activity area; provide more arts and crafts events; and make the library more fun and exciting – colourful.

- 8.5 The working group met on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2005 to discuss these visits. A number of potential recommendations emerged from this meeting and these are outlined in section 8.8 below.

#### **Responses from Manor West Residents Association – Cool Project**

- 8.6 This project is supported by the PCT, with an emphasis on health i.e. healthy food is provided and activities are mainly sport based. A Member of the Forum provided the following evidence from their site visit:
- (a) After school they: go swimming; play football; go to the library to play computer games; and attend Manor Residents After School Club.
  - (b) They would like to: go horse riding; ice-skating; ride motor-bikes; spend time at Summerhill and go quad biking behind B&Q.
  - (c) The reasons they gave for not being able to do what they wanted were: too much homework; not being old enough to drive; and parents telling them not be late.

#### **Responses from the 'Beck Buddies'**

- 8.7 The Beck Buddies are an award winning, environmentally friendly group of young people. They are aged between 5 and 12, and are run by HBC Countryside Wardens. Activities include litter picking, tree planting, and making bird and bat boxes. Due to the lack of a suitable local indoor venue, indoor activities take place at Summerhill, which requires parents/grandparents to transport them.

A Member of the Forum provided the following evidence from their site visit:

- (a) After school they: play football, play on the computer; visit their grandparents; play games/cards; watch a DVD if the weather is bad; go for walks with dad; and go to clubs.
- (b) The only things stopping them from accessing activities would be their age or size. Generally this group of young people access a wide variety of opportunities and activities provided across the town e.g. events/activities put on by the Library Service, Art Gallery etc.
- (c) In common with a number of groups of young people the Beck Buddies wanted to know why these questions were being asked and what would happen with the information.

### **Working Group Findings/Recommendations**

- 8.8 On 26<sup>th</sup> May 2005 Members of the Working Group met to discuss their findings following the site visits to schools and youth projects. The following comments were made at this meeting:

#### **General Feedback**

- Some of the primary school children questioned by Members during the site visits were aware of the problems older children were having. Consequently, some young people questioned by Members were more concerned with providing activities for their bigger brothers and sisters rather than for themselves. However, this should not be interpreted as these young people being uninterested in being involved in processes/activities themselves.
- A strong view emerging from the working group was that the young people who have been involved in this process should have an opportunity to feedback on the process. Members were conscious that 'involving young people' has been the primary concern of the scrutiny inquiry and were, therefore, keen to establish links to young people following the conclusion of the inquiry. Consequently, Members made the following recommendations:

#### **Recommendation 1:**

- a) The Forum sends its findings to all schools in the town, thanking those who were involved in the process, whilst asking each school how they would like us to follow up the scrutiny process.
- b) Six months after the Forum has completed its final report the young people involved in the scrutiny process should be consulted to see if anything has changed in their view.
- c) The young people involved in the process should be invited to meet the Chair of the Council.

- d) That the Forum holds a series of meetings with young people at venues (possibly in schools) outside of the Council in the north/central/south areas of the town.
- e) That the Forum should actively pursue the possibility of co-opting young people onto the Forum.

In relation to recommendation 1 (e) above the Forum may want to consider the likely impact that this will have on way in which the Forum works. For example, the Forum may not be able to discuss certain items with young people present, the format of meetings may need to be changed, as will the times. **Consequently, it is proposed that whilst the Forum supports the principal of co-opting young people onto the Forum it will undertake a further evidence gathering meeting to discuss the practicalities of this in more detail and receive evidence from bodies who have co-opted young people onto their membership – such as the Corporate Parent Forum.**

- In addition, young people also need to be aware of what we (as a Forum, and as a Council) can and cannot do, and why this is the case.
- Pupils at the Fens School were aware that there was not so much money in their area of the town, compared with other areas like NDC. The reasons for this need to be explained to the young people.

#### Recommendation 2

The nature of funding locally needs to be explained to young people so that they are aware of why something is built in one part of town but not in another. This could be achieved through the citizenship and PHSE strands of the schools' curriculum.

#### **Access to Activities**

- Children want to be in a safe environment. They want to do things, but sometimes it is hard because of a lack of transport. Consequently, activities need to be near to where young people live, or transport needs to be provided.
- The effects of divorce and separation were acknowledged as big issues for a number of children in terms of moving away from parents, friends and places/activities they are used to going to. Again transport is key.
- The West View project was cited as an example of good practice because they go out and pick young people up and take them to activities.
- The role of parents is key – they need to be aware of what is going on in the town, and in turn to make their children aware of these (this works both ways though, children need to inform parent too). Generally people need to be more aware of what is going on across the town, and the information about this needs to be improved.
- From a visit to Rossmere Youth Project Members felt that the girls seemed interested in beauty products, and were content to 'hang-out' and were not

generally keen to do too much. It was also noted that they could not afford to employ staff to monitor the computer room at night, which was a shame because of the large number of machines locked up and made unavailable at this time.

- From the site visits Members concluded that young people want local (neighbourhood) activities.

### Recommendation 3

It is recommended that the council develops a leaflet outlining all the activities for young people for the north, south and central areas, and consults with young people involved in producing the HYPE magazine about how this should be developed. It is important that the Council works in partnership to produce this.

In relation to recommendation 3 the Forum has been made aware that information sharing is a key consideration of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). Consequently, the Children's Services Department is developing an electronic directory to promote information sharing about activities and events across the town. The Forum welcomed this development.

### Recommendation 4

Given the evidence gathered by the Forum from its schools visits the Forum recommends that young people should be considered as much of a priority as the elderly when accessing public/community transport. The Forum suggests that this recommendation is extended to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum, which is currently undertaking an investigation into 'Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision'.

### **Libraries**

- A Member raised the issue that parents can be reluctant to allow young people to have library cards, for fear of them losing books and therefore having to pay for them. The example of the Brougham Library was given, where out of issue books are available for children to take out and do not have to be brought back – although the vast majority are.

### Recommendation 5

- a) It is recommended that all the town's libraries (including the mobile library) make out of issue books available to children without library cards.
- b) It is recommended that the Forum should liaise in future with schools and libraries, and explore best practice, to develop a strategy for issuing library cards to all young people.

- The Saturday and Sunday opening of libraries was felt to be very important by the Forum. It needs to continue (and possibly expand to some of the other libraries in the town) and young people need to be made more aware of it being open on these days.

## **FINDINGS SECTION 2 – COMMUNITY NETWORK CONSULTATION AND MECHANISMS TO INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING**

8.9 During the early stages of the scrutiny inquiry Members focused on the means and mechanisms by which young people could become involved in decisions, and expressed unanimous support for the principle of involving young people. During these meetings Members explored numerous areas of good practice, considered a snapshot of local involvement and heard evidence from officers and other interested organisations who are involved with young people at a local level. This included Hartlepool Community Network who were in the process of developing a consultation programme to ascertain whether there is the demand for youth participation and what form this may take. A representative of the Community Network indicated that the consultation would primarily focus on young people aged 16 and over and that they would be willing to feedback their results to the Forum.

8.10 Indeed, the Forum identified consultation with young people as a requirement of the scrutiny inquiry. During the meeting of the (then) Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2003 the:

*Community Network Officer confirmed that the consultation process, involving partners and groups of young people, would take approximately six months to complete.*

Consequently:

*Members of the Scrutiny Forum decided that at present the inquiry should be put on hold and recommendations to Council would not be submitted until the young people and the organisations sponsoring them had completed their consultation process.*

8.11 As a result the table below outlines the conduct of the first stage of the inquiry.

Date	Subject
3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 2004	Scoping Report presented by the Principal Strategy Development Officer
2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2004	Visit to Gateshead Youth Assembly

9 <sup>th</sup> March 2004	Mapping local involvement, initiatives, projects and activities and to hear evidence from officers involved in working with young people.
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2004	Visit to Abbey Street Community Centre
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2004	Feedback from GYA visit
13 <sup>th</sup> April 2004	Forum agrees Interim Report to Full Council. The Forum supported the principle of involving young people in local democracy but agreed to put the inquiry on hold and await the results of the Community Network Consultation to further inform the scrutiny process.
20 <sup>th</sup> May 2004	Council – approved Scrutiny's decision to put the inquiry on hold and report back at a later date.

8.12 On the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2004 the Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum was provided with a Progress Report and Action Plan from the Independent Consultant commissioned by the Hartlepool Community Network. The Forum was provided with an outline of the action to date, current partners and future potential partners.

8.13 The aims of the project at this stage were outlined as follows;

- To develop Citizenship within the Borough of Hartlepool through the development of a Youth Network.
- To promote, engage and progress young people's representative roles within the LSP and Local Authority frameworks and link with the Youth Network.
- To support and encourages staff to evidence their understanding of Citizenship and Citizenship activities through a jointly developed format.

8.14 To achieve these aims the Community Network aimed to ensure young people were proactively involved throughout the process, and involve stakeholders/partner organisations to enhance the links and inclusion of young people regarding the planning and development of services and activities.

8.15 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum made the following comments during the subsequent discussions of the presentation:

- a) Whilst the work carried out by the Community Network was welcomed by the Forum, the view amongst Members was that work should also be targeted at a much younger age range than 16 and over. Consequently, the Forum agreed to pursue its own consultation process with younger groups.
- b) Members of the Forum regarded the work that was being carried out by the Community Network as an important development towards mapping all



schemes and services available for young people. The work being carried out represented the beginning of a process to set a holistic framework to link/join together schemes and services for young people.

- c) A Member commented that the Council needs a *Citizenship Policy* for all age groups, and that the work being carried out by the Community Network could usefully feed into this.

#### Recommendation 6

The Council needs a *Citizenship Policy* for all age groups, and the work carried out by the Community Network could usefully link into this. Furthermore, representatives of each of the Council's departments should be involved in the development of a council-wide strategy, and the involvement of the LSP should be sought in relation to adopting this policy. Through a strategy of promoting citizenship young people will be encouraged to become more involved in the running of their local communities.

- 8.16 The (draft) findings of the work commissioned by the Community Network, *The Involvement of Young People in Decision Making in Hartlepool*, are attached at **Appendix A**. The recommendations of the report are listed below.

1. The creation of an overarching youth forum/council where young people play an integral role in the overall direction of the process. Such a body should have an 'arms length' relationship with major service providers, if it is perceived to have a degree of independence.
2. Consideration should be given to how a network for schools councils feed into an overarching youth forum/council.
3. Elected representatives on partnerships should have defined lines of accountability and role.
4. Hartlepool Community Network to continue to support the current young people representatives involved with the Local Strategic Partnership.
5. That the election process for representation on Strategic Partnerships should involve the widest possible number of young people through the active involvement of all relevant agencies and fora e.g. through the Participation Workers Network.
6. Hartlepool Community Network and partner agencies should use good practice as recommended in this report when engaging with young people.
7. Hartlepool Community Network and other agencies need to ensure that there is a two-way dialogue with young people who become involved with consultation/participation/engagement.

8. The importance of feedback cannot be overstated, without proper feedback there can be further alienation from decision-making.
  9. Where possible the need to fast-track decision-making and consequent feedback to young people must be considered.
  10. To establish a database of consultation to avoid duplication of effort.
  11. A web based consultation system, set up with links to youth projects, schools and colleges in the Borough could play an important role in providing opportunities for feedback about strategic decision making. This could include a database, which outlines the consultation events and outcomes carried out within the Borough.
  12. Examine the use and adaptation of the Post 16 Citizenship Programme Course, instigated by the Community Network as a training programme for those who sit on partnerships. Basic awareness raising and induction may also necessary.
  13. Consider resourcing initiatives such as Hype, a youth magazine owned, managed and written by young people, which can act as a conduit for young people's views and issues.
  14. The development of a Participation Strategy created and owned by all partner agencies and young people.
  15. The positive role played by the Youth Participation Workers Network in providing a focus for professionals entrusted in youth participation needs to continue.
  16. The need for consultation to be targeted at specific age ranges.
  17. Co-ordination of funding opportunities between agencies work with young people.
  18. To make information of available resources available to those who undertake consultation work.
- 8.17 During the meeting of the Forum on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 Members thanked the Community Network for their report. The Forum was broadly supportive of the recommendations of the Community Network and sought to support them. Furthermore, during the Working Group meeting of the Forum on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005, Members were informed that the Community Network's findings were due to be presented to Hartlepool Partnership on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2005. Consequently, it was agreed that the Chair should write a letter to the Partnership to express the Forum's support for the Community Network's report.

#### Recommendation 7

That the Forum supports the recommendations of the Community Network (outlined in section 8.16) and commends them to the Council as a whole.

- 8.18 Members were broadly supportive of the notion of creating a Youth Council/Forum. This has to be effective, be seen to be effective and have an end result for those involved. It was agreed that this should be one part of a number of formal and informal mechanisms through which young people can become involved. There was broad agreement that all young people were different, had different needs and therefore a variety of mechanisms are required to involve them. These needs can be reflected in a broader Participation Strategy currently under development and discussed below.

#### Recommendation 8

The Forum supports the development of a Youth Forum/Council, and requests that this is included in the development of the Council's Participation Strategy. The Forum would like the opportunity to comment on this aspect of the Participation Strategy when it is complete.

- 8.19 During the course of the inquiry Members of the Forum became aware of a youth magazine made by young people, for young people called HYPE. This was compared to the youth magazine called STREET produced by the Hartlepool Mail, which is not made by young people. It was suggested that the Council could usefully support and empower young people by transferring its advertising in STREET magazine to the HYPE magazine.

#### Recommendation 9

- a) That the Council transfers its advertising in youth papers to HYPE magazine so that it is supportive of the principle of involving young people in decisions that affect their lives.
- b) The Forum recommends that the Council should support positive publicity about children and young people across the town, including in the Council's own Hartbeat magazine.

### FINDINGS SECTION 3 – CO-ORDINATING PARTICIPATION

- 8.20 Over the course of the inquiry the Forum has identified the need for the Council, and town as a whole to develop a co-ordinated approach to working with young people. On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 the Forum stressed the need for participation officers in the Council's Departments to be connected with a strategy for involving young people. The Forum's views reinforced emerging views amongst Council Officers in terms of the need to bring together participation workers (within and outside the local authority) to avoid duplication amongst these workers and share information.

- 8.21 The Forum expressed a desire to establish a mechanism to bring together key workers at a similar time to which a Participation Network was being established. Consequently, a working group of the Forum was established, on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2005, to explore the relationship between the Involving Young People Inquiry and the newly established Participation Network. The working group met on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2005 to discuss these matters with the officers responsible for the Participation Network. The working group indicated that it supported the early stages of development of the Participation Network, and suggested that a progress report on the Participation Network was presented to the Forum at the same time as the Community Network presented its findings to the Forum (i.e. 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005).

#### Recommendation 10

The Forum was supportive of the continued development of the Participation Network, and would like further links to be explored between this network, the participation strategy and the Children's Services Forum. It is also recommended that a Member of the Children's Service Scrutiny Forum be appointed as Chair of this body.

- 8.22 A number of related themes have emerged during the course of the inquiry that have highlighted the importance of the Council developing a holistic framework for joined-up activities in which (and through which) young people can become involved. Indeed, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 Members stressed the need to develop a co-ordinated approach to joined-up working in the town in relation to involving young people, which has been a recurrent theme in the Forum's inquiry ever since.
- 8.23 On the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 the Forum was provided with a presentation on Co-ordinated Hartlepool Youth Provision (CHYP). This body has evolved over the years (and was formerly known as YAG) and brings together partners from the statutory and voluntary sectors. It is a partnership group for the adolescent age groups (predominantly 13-19). CHYP is seeking to develop participation networks, open to all agencies in the town who work with young people. By bringing together the representatives from various agencies that work with young people the intention is to group together the themes identified by practitioners working with young people and link into Council departments and back to the various agencies involved in service delivery.
- 8.24 It should be noted that Members have highlighted the need to focus on young people from a primary school age so that young people do not become hard to reach by the time they are 13. However, Central Government has defined a number of age-group guidelines, which often acts as a focus for local practice, i.e. Connexions for 16-19 year olds, youth work provision for 13-16 year olds, Children's Fund for 5 - 11 with sign-posting for 11 upwards to others, and Sure Start for Under 5s. The green paper "Youth Matters", identifies local authorities as the key player, in coordinating responses to teenagers (and all young people 0-19 as part of Every Child

Matters). So, whilst the Youth Service has a statutory responsibility to provide services across the 13-19 age range.

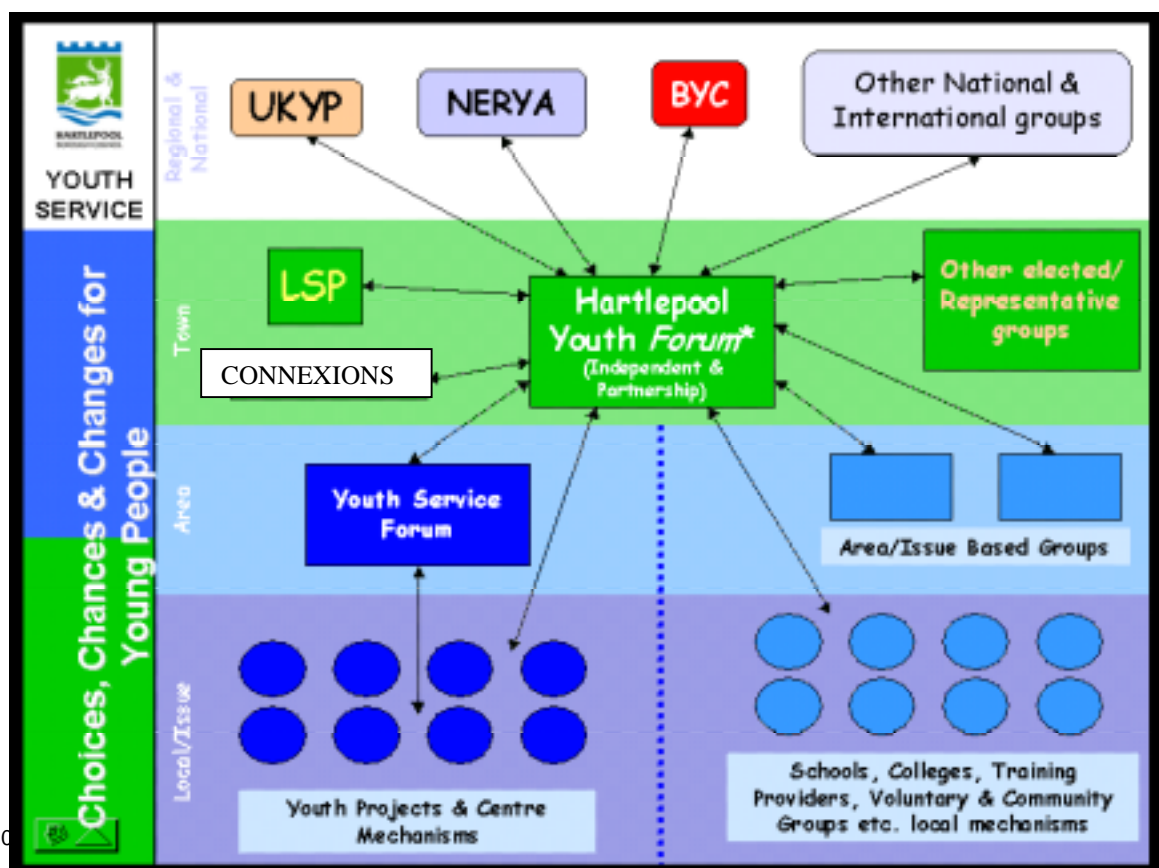
8.25 On 25<sup>th</sup> February 2005 the Forum was presented with a report by the Children's Fund Manager on Participation for 5-13 year olds. Three key issues emerged from this report:

- (a) All Children's Fund services get constant feedback from children about their services. The outcomes of peer evaluations are fed back to the Children's Fund Partnership by children and young people;
- (b) Child friendly tools have been developed to allow children to provide the feedback on services; and
- (c) The Children's Fund has received positive reports from inspectors in terms of the involvement of children and young people, and this has been recognised as good practice.

*Members commented that the success of the Children's Fund was due to young people being consulted with and listened to.*

8.26 A further mechanism for co-ordinating the involvement of young people discussed by the Forum was the Youth Service's vision for involving young people (see **figure one** below). It was suggested by some Members on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 that the (then) Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum could add its weight to this vision by supporting it.

**Figure 1: Choices, Chances and Changes for Young People**



Key to acronyms: LSP – Local Strategic Partnership  
UKYP – United Kingdom Youth Parliament  
NERYA – North East Regional Youth Assembly  
BYC – British Youth Council

- 8.27 On 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 the Forum reconsidered the proposed framework in **Figure 1** and made the following recommendation.

Recommendation 11

That the 'Choices, Chances and Changes for Young People' Framework should be developed, where possible, as a basis for involving young people in the democratic process. Furthermore, links should be made between this framework and the Council's Participation Strategy where possible.

- 8.28 A further proposal from Forum on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 was that links between school councils and the Neighbourhood Forums should be incorporated into the framework in **Figure 1**. Consequently:

Recommendation 12

The Council should seek to make links between the school councils and the Neighbourhood Forums and that funding streams developed by, and, for young people should be explored through this route.

- 8.29 At the meeting of the Forum on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 the Forum discussed the development of a Participation Strategy for the Children's Services Department. This strategy was broadly welcomed by the Forum and it was felt that a number of the recommendations of the Forum could be linked into the future development of this strategy. Consequently:

Recommendation 13

The Forum supports the development of a Participation Strategy and would like to see linkages developed between this and the Forum's recommendations, and that this strategy should be developed across the town.

- 8.30 Furthermore, given that involving young people has been identified as a key principle of the 'Every Hartlepool Child Matters' document. This document is currently being prepared by the Council, with the co-operation of partners, under a new duty stemming from the Children's Act 2004. Members of the Forum were keen to see the findings of this report incorporated into this document where possible. Consequently:

Recommendation 14

The Forum would like to see the findings of this report submitted as a response to the consultation process for the 'Every Hartlepool Child Matters' report.

- 8.31 It was recognised that the Council is not the only local agency with a responsibility for involving young people, and that connections should be made to other agencies when developing and funding strategies.

Recommendation 15

That the Council should approach outside bodies, for example the PCT, Police and Fire Service in relation to making links to the Council's participation work. Furthermore, given the responsibilities of the Police and PCT for involving young people the Council should seek to approach them for additional funding for developing a participation strategy.

- 8.32 The Forum was supportive of the work being carried out by CHYP and felt that the Council should seek to hold an annual youth conference through which information could be shared amongst young people and youth practitioners (in the Council and voluntary/community sectors).

Recommendation 16

The Forum recommends that the Council should organise an 'annual youth conference' through which information can be shared by young people and youth practitioners, and that connections should be made with the Participation Network here.

- 8.33 At the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 a Member drew attention to a pilot project launched by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) geared towards giving young people the skills to become involved in decision making. Four pilot projects have been chosen in New Deal for Communities (NDC) areas, including in Middlesbrough. Between four and six young people have been selected in each area aged between 15 and 20 to take part in the project and be trained as 'young advisers'. These young advisers will then show community leaders and decision-makers how to engage other young people in community life, regeneration and renewal.

Recommendation 17

The Forum recommends that the Council and Hartlepool NDC explore the possibility of entering into future projects geared towards training 'young advisers'.

- 8.34 It has been suggested during the Involving Young People Inquiry that Councillors and Resident Representatives (in their capacity as representatives on the Neighbourhood Forums) should adopt the role of 'Children's Champions'. Thereby 'championing' young people and acting as voices for them in the Council and on the Neighbourhood Forums. It was,

however, recognised by the Forum at its meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005 that adopting this role has a number of complexities that need to be explored in more detail. Consequently:

#### Recommendation 18

The Forum supports the notion of making all Councillors and Resident Representatives 'Children's Champions'. However, the Forum would like to receive further information about the practicalities of developing this role at the same stage as further information is provided to the Forum about the development of a Youth Council/Forum in conjunction with the Participation Strategy.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 As a result of the evidence gathered by the Forum and the findings it has reached, Members may wish to approve/amend the list of draft recommendations outlined below:

#### Recommendation 1:

- a) That the Forum sends its findings to all schools in the town, thanking those who were involved in the process, whilst asking each school how they would like us to follow up the scrutiny process.
- b) That six months after the Forum has completed its final report the young people involved in the scrutiny process should be consulted to see if anything has changed in their view.
- c) That the young people involved in the process should be invited to meet the Chair of the Council.
- d) That the Forum holds a series of meetings with young people at venues (possibly in schools) outside of the Council in the north/central/south areas of the town.
- e) That the Forum should actively pursue the possibility of co-opting young people onto the Forum.

#### Recommendation 2

That the nature of local funding needs to be explained to young people so that they are aware of why something is built in one part of town but not in another. This could be achieved through the citizenship and PHSE strands of the schools' curriculum.

#### Recommendation 3



It is recommended that the council develops a leaflet outlining all the activities for young people for the north, south and central areas, and consults with young people involved in producing the HYPE magazine about how this should be developed. It is important that the Council works in partnership to produce this.

#### Recommendation 4

Given the evidence gathered by the Forum from its schools visits the Forum recommends that young people should be considered as much of a priority as the elderly when accessing public/community transport. The Forum suggests that this recommendation is extended to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum, which is currently undertaking an investigation into 'Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision'.

#### Recommendation 5

- a) That all the town's libraries (including the mobile library) make out of issue books available to children without library cards.
- b) It is recommended that the Forum should liaise in future with schools and libraries, and explore best practice, to develop a strategy for issuing library cards to all young people.

#### Recommendation 6

That the Council needs a *Citizenship Policy* for all age groups, and the work carried out by the Community Network could usefully link into this. Furthermore, representatives of each of the Council's departments should be involved in the development of a council-wide strategy, and the involvement of the LSP should be sought in relation to adopting this policy. Through a strategy of promoting citizenship young people will be encouraged to become more involved in the running of their local communities.

#### Recommendation 7

That the Forum supports the recommendations of the Community Network (outlined in section 8.16) and commends them to the Council as a whole.

#### Recommendation 8

That the Forum supports the development of a Youth Forum/Council, and requests that this is included in the development of the Council's Participation Strategy. The Forum would like the opportunity to comment on this aspect of the Participation Strategy when it is complete.

#### Recommendation 9

- a) That the Council transfers its advertising in youth papers to HYPE magazine so that it is supportive of the principle of involving young people in decisions that affect their lives.
- b) The Forum recommends that the Council should support positive publicity about children and young people across the town, including in the Council's own Hartbeat magazine.

#### Recommendation 10

That the Forum was supportive of the continued development of the Participation Network, and would like further links to be explored between this network, the participation strategy and the Children's Services Forum. It is also recommended that a Member of the Children's Service Scrutiny Forum be appointed as Chair of this body.

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### **COUNCILLOR JANE SHAW CHAIR OF THE CHILDREN’S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- i. *Disaffected Youth* – MORI 2003
- ii. *Child Focused Scrutiny: A Guide to Scrutinising Education and Children’s Services* – Faiza Chaudary, TEN, 2005.
- iii. 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *The development of mechanisms to involve young people in decision-making processes - Initial Scoping* - Principal Strategy Development Officer.
- iv. 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes.
- v. 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Involving Young People in Decision-making Processes* – Principal Strategy Development Officer
- vi. 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes

- vii. 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Involving Young People in Decision Making Processes* - Scrutiny Manager
- viii. 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- ix. 13<sup>th</sup> April 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Interim Report to Council - Involving Young People* - Scrutiny Support Officer
- x. 13<sup>th</sup> April 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xi. 21<sup>st</sup> October 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Involving Young People* – Scrutiny Manager
- xii. 21<sup>st</sup> October 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xiii. 18<sup>th</sup> November 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum *Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme* - Presentation from Independent Consultant commissioned by Hartlepool Community Network
- xiv. 18<sup>th</sup> November 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xv. 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Involving Young People - Youth Service and Partners* - Director of Community Services
- xvi. 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Involving Young People - Progress Report* (deferred) - Scrutiny Support Officer
- xvii. 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xviii. 27<sup>th</sup> January 2005 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum– *Involving Young People - Progress Report* - Scrutiny Support Officer
- xix. 27<sup>th</sup> January 2005 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xx. 25<sup>th</sup> February 2005 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum– *Involving Young People - The Children's Fund* - Director of Community Services
- xxi. 25<sup>th</sup> February 2005 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xxii. 24<sup>th</sup> March 2005 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum – *Involving Young People - Citizenship in the Primary School - Physical, Social and Health Education (Presentation)* - Assistant Director (Educational Achievement)
- xxiii. 24<sup>th</sup> March 2005 Culture and Learning Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xxiv. 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum - *Involving Young People - Covering Report* - Scrutiny Support Officer
- xxv. 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum Youth Consultation Community Network Report - *Community Network Officer (to follow)*
- xxvi. 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum Participation Network – *Involving Young People – Hartlepool Children's Fund Manager*
- xxvii. 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum Minutes
- xxviii. 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum *Involving Young People Scrutiny Inquiry:- Covering Report* - Scrutiny Support Officer
- xxix. 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum *Report of the Consultation Exercise: Involvement of Young People in Decision Making in Hartlepool* - Representatives from the Community Network
- xxx. 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005 Children's Services Scrutiny Forum Minutes

**DRAFT**

# **The Involvement of Young People in Decision Making in Hartlepool**

**Commissioned  
by  
Hartlepool Community Network**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Community Network and partner agencies about the most appropriate strategies for engaging with young people in Hartlepool in the consultative process. The report draws on a range of work undertaken by the Hartlepool Community Network, around the issues of consultation with young people and information collected from two recent successful consultation events, from which a range of recommendations arise.

What was apparent through the research was that young people are keen to be involved in and are happy to be engaged with, participation and consultation in Hartlepool. The term 'difficult to reach' is often used with young people, whereas the reality is that what is required is tailor made approaches to the client group.

The findings in this report indicate clearly that the young people of Hartlepool have a willingness and intention to actively engage in participation. There are good examples in Hartlepool of listening to young people and of talking and effectively communicating with young people. However, there does need to be some real change in terms of feed-back to young people.

Not all young people have the same interests and aspirations. Young people differ by age, by neighbourhood, by academic or vocational aspirations. There are young people in employment, young people in education and training; finally there are young people not in education, employment and training (NEET). Not all young people are the same, however they share the common experience that they are at the margins of decision-making.

### **Recommendations**

1. The creation of an overarching youth forum/council where young people play an integral role in the overall direction of the process. Such a body should have an 'arms length' relationship with major service providers, if it is perceived to have a degree of independence.
2. Consideration should be given to how a network for schools councils feed into an overarching youth forum/council.
3. Elected representatives on partnerships should have defined lines of accountability and role.
4. Hartlepool Community Network to continue to support the current young people representatives involved with the Local Strategic Partnership.
5. That the election process for representation on Strategic Partnerships should involve the widest possible number of young people through the active involvement of all relevant agencies and fora e.g through the Participation Workers Network.

6. Hartlepool Community Network and partner agencies should use good practice as recommended in this report when engaging with young people.
7. Hartlepool Community Network and other agencies need to ensure that there is a two-way dialogue with young people who become involved with consultation/participation/engagement.
8. The importance of feedback cannot be overstated, without proper feedback there can be further alienation from decision-making.
9. Where possible the need to fast-track decision-making and consequent feedback to young people must be considered.
10. To establish a database of consultation to avoid duplication of effort.
11. A web based consultation system, set up with links to youth projects, schools and colleges in the Borough could play an important role in providing opportunities for feedback about strategic decision making. This could include a database, which outlines the consultation events and outcomes carried out within the Borough.
12. Examine the use and adaptation of the Post 16 Citizenship Programme Course, instigated by the Community Network as a training programme for those who sit on partnerships. Basic awareness raising and induction may also necessary.
13. Consider resourcing initiatives such as Hype, a youth magazine owned, managed and written by young people, which can act as a conduit for young people's views and issues.
14. The development of a Participation Strategy created and owned by all partner agencies and young people.
15. The positive role played by the Youth Participation Workers Network in providing a focus for professionals entrusted in youth participation needs to continue.
16. The need for consultation to be targeted at specific age ranges.
17. Co-ordination of funding opportunities between agencies work with young people.
18. To make information of available resources available to those who undertake consultation work.



## 2. Introduction and Background

Children and young people in Hartlepool make up 26% of Hartlepool's total population, with a breakdown being as follows:

- Under 5's – 5,301
- 5 years to 15 years – 13,801
- 16 years to 24 -10,208

A total of 29,310 children and young people out of total population of 90,161. The purpose of highlighting such statistics at the beginning of this report is to show the significant number of children and young people in Hartlepool. It demonstrates the importance of responding effectively to the needs and aspirations of children and young people. This report focuses on young people, there is no exact distinction between the two groups; but one definition would be that young people refers to those of secondary education age and upwards, up to the age of 25.

The purpose of this report is to inform the Community Network and partner agencies about the most appropriate strategies for engaging with young people in Hartlepool in the consultative process. The report investigates the opportunities for engaging young people in democratic decision making processes and how to encourage enhanced engagement in the future.

Although there has been consultation in Hartlepool in the past, there has been no clear agreed format for the process of consultation with young people at a strategic level. To address this, the Community Network was keen to ensure they find out how young people want to be consulted with and what factors could encourage their involvement in decision making, currently and for the future. The Community Network wanted a report, which would outline a series of recommendations, which would lead towards a more strategic approach to youth participation and consultation and the use of 'good practice' when carrying out such work.

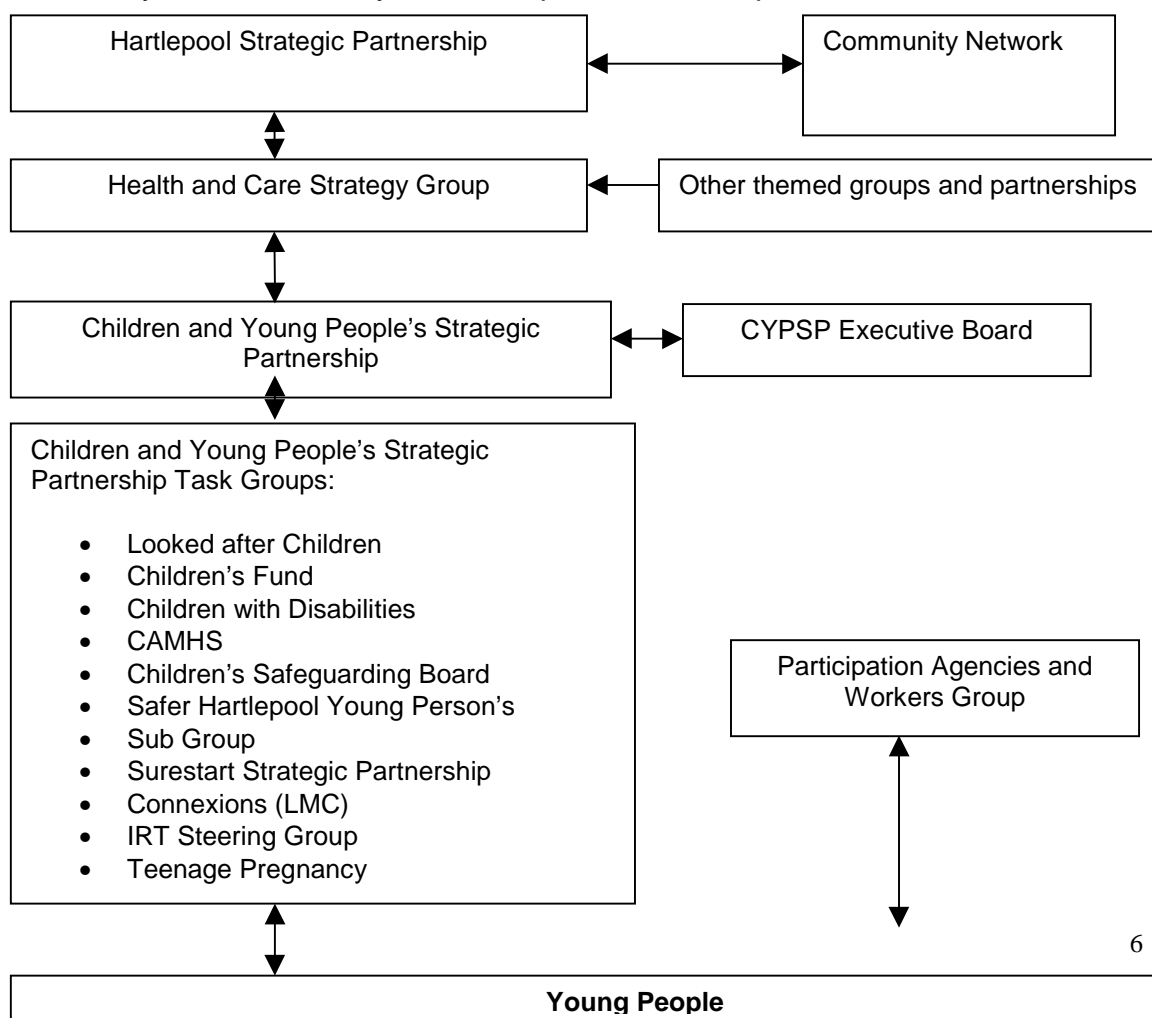
The Community Network was also anxious to be informed by the 'front line', Youth Participation Workers and those agencies and organisations who are the 'experts in the field'. The Community Network wanted to gain the service providers perspective on youth participation and consultation and be advised by those who have a background in successful engagement strategies with young people. In Hartlepool there is an active Participation Workers Group, whose aims are:

- a) To promote an increased understanding of 'participation' work throughout the town by providing clear definitions and working examples of participation work.
- b) To generate a set of principles for good practice in 'involving young people'.

- c) To operate these principles acting as role models for other parties and to disseminate these principles as widely as possible using a range of methods.
- d) To support participation work across Hartlepool by jointly organising and delivering training, development and experiential learning opportunities around participation methods and skills both for young people and staff supporting young people's participation.

As well as national, regional and local planning regarding working with young people, which has stemmed from the Government's strategic document 'Every Child Matters' (November 2004), Hartlepool has a number of examples of effective engagement and participation with young people, in its direct service provision. However, it is only latterly, as a result of documents such as 'Every Child Matters', that agencies in Hartlepool are now looking at youth engagement/consultation and the decision making process, in a more strategic and structured way.

The main role of the Community Network is to represent the communities of Hartlepool as a whole, to the Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership. The aim is to enable them as a network, to represent a wider range of community interests and wishes. From its onset the Community Network recognised that Hartlepool is not one homogeneous community, but is comprised of a range of communities of interest, young people being one such defined group. The diagram below attempts to show some current relationships between partner agencies which seek the views of young people. However the structure is currently under review by the Hartlepool Partnership.



### **3. Methodology**

The methodology for the collection of data for this report has centred on direct facilitated consultation with two groups – young people and Stakeholders (i.e. agencies and organisations who are working directly with young people around consultation and participation. The report also incorporates previous consultation work undertaken with young people by the Community Network.

#### **3.1 The Community Network's Involvement With Young People**

This was initiated with the election of two Representatives to the Hartlepool Partnership during 2002, to represent 11-17 and 18-25 year olds. The 11-17 Representative was elected through the mechanism of schools and youth clubs and the 18-25 through the voluntary/community sector to encourage the widest spectrum of views. A wider youth group was developed to support the two representatives and undertake consultation and engagement around particular issues highlighted by the Partnership, or raised by young people involved with the group. The reference group for young people was named **fc4u** (Future Crew For Youth). This group undertook some wide-ranging consultation with young people.

#### **3.2 Young Peoples Event: 'What Ever You Want'**

This consultation event was structured as an event, offered at no cost to young people, which involved opportunities for activities and discussion. Taking place in an appropriate venue, Café 177, the activities were selected to engage young people – art, computers, decks, and video. Within these activities Participation Workers were able to structure discussion relating to the themes of 'Every Child Matters' and the Local Strategic Partnership. Originally the target number of participants for this event was 100; there were 73 young people at the event, aged between 13 - 23yrs, from all areas in Hartlepool.

#### **3.3 Stakeholder Event**

The Stakeholder event involved a morning of discussion with agencies and organisation carrying out consultation and participation with young people. In total, 10 agencies from all over Hartlepool attended. The agencies represented young people aged 7 years and upward with no agency being there representing under 7's (see Appendix 1 for list of agencies participating).

The structure of this consultation involved agencies and organisations performing three tasks:

- a) Mapping current good practice of youth consultation and participation.
- b) Identification of changes that the practitioners would like to see in next two years and identify who would be the leaders of such change.
- c) Exploration of how agencies see the role of Hartlepool Community Network role's in relation to young people.

This event was facilitated by independent consultants who collected the data. As well as this action-based research, the researchers also looked at desk research and examples of good practice in the area.

### **3.4 Desk Research**

There have been a range of strategic documents, which have informed national, regional and local working with young people and participation. It is not possible to execute a comprehensive literature review of all strategic resources due to the volume of material available, so this review will be concentrated on several of the main, most pertinent documents.

The findings from this desk research are explained in the next two sections of this report, entitled the National Agenda and Examples of Best Practice.

## 4. The National Agenda

### 4.1 Every Child Matters: Change for Children – November 2004

Every Child Matters: Change for Children is a Governmental approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The Government suggests that this be achieved through organisations that are involved with providing services to children - from hospitals and schools, to police and voluntary groups - teaming up in new ways, sharing information and working together, to protect children and young people from harm and to help them achieve what they want in life. The Government suggests that by adopting this method, children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively.

The document sets out that over the next few years, every Local Authority will be working with its partners, through Children's Trusts, to find out what works best for children and young people in its area and act on it. They will need to involve children and young people in this process, and when inspectors assess how local areas are doing, they will listen especially to the views of children and young people themselves.

In March 2005, the first Children's Commissioner for England was appointed, to give children and young people a voice in Government and in public life. The Government suggests that the Commissioner will pay particular attention to gathering and putting forward the views of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and will promote their involvement in the work of organisations whose decisions and actions affect them.

In addition, the Children's Fund was launched in November 2000 to tackle disadvantage among children and young people. The programme aims to identify at an early stage children and young people at risk of social exclusion, and make sure they receive the help and support they need to achieve their potential.

In terms of engagement with young people, PK Research Consultancy and the National Children's Bureau have researched the most effective ways of involving children and young people in services. A useful handbook has been produced for practitioners, backed up by a research report.

The handbook draws on the findings of a research study that explored the experiences of 29 organisations in seeking to listen to young people and take action on what they said. The research points to this being most likely to succeed where organisations had worked to sustain and embed their participation activity.

The handbook and the accompanying research report both aim to stimulate thinking and provide useful ideas about how to actively involve children and young people within services and policy making.

The handbook focuses on how to listen to children and young people so that their views bring about change. It aims specifically to:

- a) Identify and illustrate the benefits of child and youth participation.
- b) Guide organisations in thinking about how to create appropriate environments in which children and young people can be involved in meaningful ways, so that their views are listened to and acted upon.
- c) Help organisations explore how they can develop cultures and infrastructures which sustain and embed participation throughout all their activity.
- d) The documents that Every Child Matters signposts include:
  - Handbook - Building a Culture of Participation
  - Research Report – Building a Culture of Participation
  - Learning to Listen – Core Principles for the Involvement of Children and Young People
  - The Evaluator's Cookbook – Participatory Evaluation Exercises: A Resource for Work with Children and Young People

#### **4.2 The Youth Democracy Report: The Electoral Commission-March 2004**

This report outlines the challenges of engaging with young people and also of dispelling the 'myth of apathetic youth'. It suggests that young people care passionately about the issues that affect their lives. They get involved in political issues ranging from signing petitions to going on marches from donating money to causes to discussing current affairs with their friends. The Electoral Commission has been working with 16 – 24 year olds to give young people a greater understanding of the role of democratic institutions and to enthuse them to take action.

The report includes a selection of case studies of successful engagement strategies as well as a useful resource list for tools for democracy projects.

#### **4.3 Stronger Links Final Report: The National Youth Agency – 2004**

The Stronger Links project was established to further develop a regional infrastructure for youth work in England. This was in response to a growing regional dimension being promoted by Government across a number of public policy areas. It is funded by DfES and managed by a steering group of national youth bodies. This report puts forward the term 'regional platform' as an ideal model of regional youth infrastructure. The platforms will involve what they call the 4 P's:

- Purposes for which they might be established.
- Principles from which they will work.
- Practices they might adopt in undertaking their key functions.
- Positioning they will need to consider if they are to have maximum impact.

In addition to this model, the Stronger Links Report offers an 'agenda for action' which covers 7 key proposals:

- a) Endorsement of the model of regional platforms.
- b) An annual programme of joint action to be agreed which would include the development of overarching strategies to support specific themes within and across the regions.
- c) An annual planning and evaluation cycle for regional and national collaborative initiatives to be established based on annual conferences.
- d) Securing of regional platforms via:
  - Regional units – to carry out audits and share good practice
  - Regional Government offices – encourage coherent picture across the regions
  - National bodies – make the process better
- e) Annual programme of joint action, which would attract resources and involve young people.
- f) Development of resourcing strategy for the next 3-5 years.
- g) The National Youth Agency to provide secretariat function.

#### **4.4 Youth Matters: Consultation - DfES 2005**

This document sets out the Government's new strategy for providing opportunity, challenge and support to teenagers. Within the document it sees as important that young people have more influence over what is being provided in each locality. They should have more opportunities to be involved in the planning and delivery of services and have more opportunities to express their views during local inspections. The proposals outlined in the document aim to address four key challenges:

- a) How to engage more young people in positive activities and empower them to shape the services they receive.
- b) How to encourage more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities.
- c) How to provide better information advice and guidance to young people to help them make informed choices about their lives.
- d) How to provide better and more personalised intensive support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble.

The Government states that this approach to reform is based on six underlying principles:

- a) Making services more responsive to what young people and their parents want.
- b) Balancing greater opportunities and support with promoting young people's responsibilities.
- c) Making services for young people more integrated, efficient and effective.
- d) Improving outcomes for all young people, while narrowing the gap between those who do well and those who do not.
- e) Involving a wide range of organisations from the voluntary community and private sectors in order to increase choice and secure the best outcomes and;
- f) Building on the best of what is currently provided.

As well as the plethora of Governmental strategies that are about, there also exists various quango's and Government departments publishing reports and findings (e.g. Regional Youth Work Unit) and other research bodies looking into subjects such as young people and E-democracy using new technologies and the Internet as a useful mechanism for engaging young people in citizenship programmes.



## **5. Examples of Best Practice Elsewhere**

There are examples of good practice, which are local to the North East, specifically Gateshead, Middlesbrough and Easington.

### **5.1 Gateshead**

Gateshead has had a Youth Council since 1998 (originally the Gateshead Youth Information Service). It is seen to be a leader in the field of youth participation having had national recognition. This area has been instrumental in getting young people into partnership and acts as an umbrella organisation for youth projects and young people in Gateshead by providing training information and advice to youth workers, volunteers, management committees and young people. It empowers young people in the facilitation and organisation of the Gateshead Youth Assembly, which is managed and overseen by young people themselves. It offers a 'one stop shop' information and advice service to young people and works in partnership with other organisations in a local regional and national level to deliver the best possible service to young people and to raise the profile of young people in the region.

### **5.2 Middlesbrough**

Middlesbrough set up a Youth Parliament in 1997, so that young people could be listened to and taken more seriously. Through the Youth Parliament more young people's issues are being seen as important and young people in Middlesbrough have a forum of young people's opinions. The Youth Parliament meets as a large group and smaller groups have been set up to discuss specific issues of interest to those attending the meetings, conferences and events including making their newsletter and being involved in Peer Education Projects.

### **5.3 Easington**

Easington's approach was to form a Young People's Task Group, which mapped service provision and identified a youth needs analysis. This group came up with four key strategic areas, which they state are crucial in the lives of young people: Community safety; Health; Leisure and Environment; Education and Training.

The conclusion of the work was the creation of a youth strategy which has five clear aims:

- a) Development of current and future youth provision in the district.
- b) Establishment of youth needs and provision.
- c) Correlation of youth service provision with the needs of young people in the district, identifying strengths and weaknesses in provision.
- d) Development and facilitation of action plans to identify young people's needs concerns and priorities, ensuring that young people are at the forefront of service delivery.

- e) Review and evaluation of action plans annually to promote youth inclusion and community regeneration within the district.

Easington used enhanced IT approaches to consult with young people as they recognised that this form of electronic feedback was favoured by the youth group. It also allowed for quicker analysis and dissemination of results to the young people.

## **6. Previous Work Undertaken to Engage with Young People by the Community Network**

**6.1** The **fc4u** (Future Crew for Youth) youth group undertook an awareness raising/consultation event in Middleton Grange Shopping Centre during the Easter holidays of 2003 which featured a blown up map of Hartlepool, upon which the thoughts and ideas of potential facilities/services and their geographical location were placed by over 200 young people.

**6.2** Hartlepool Community Network undertook a piece of work with young people to produce a video documenting their views and the views of other young people about their home town; what they like/dislike about it and what they would change. The 'Youth Action' video, which was finished in August 2003, was recorded, edited and produced by young people. Much of the footage recorded and interviews conducted, were with young people invited from the street, the town centre, the cenotaph or from workshops taking place during the Youth Arts Festival in the summer of 2003. The video, which highlights several issues relating to personal safety, was shown as part of the Council's Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's enquiry into anti-social behaviour and to the Hartlepool Partnership. The Hartlepool Partnership agreed that the Community Network should lead on consultation around the issues of participation and representation mechanisms. It is this decision, which has informed the production of this piece of work.

**6.3** September 2005 saw **fc4u** take part in the Headland Eco Festival, hosting their own 'Caribbean Tent' specifically for young people. The event was planned and organised by volunteers between the ages of 11 to 26 and attracted c.300 young people and their families over two days. Young people could take part in everything from salsa dancing to steel band workshops, beach volleyball and 'hoola hooping' or relax making Caribbean garlands and drinking non-alcoholic, fruit cocktails (which at 20p a cocktail, made £160 for the group). Again, the purpose of the event was to raise awareness of the existence of the Hartlepool Partnership and the role young people can play in it, either by becoming representatives on partnerships or through the youth newspaper and the youth group. Many visitors to the tent signed a petition for an elected youth council for Hartlepool.

**6.4** **HYPE** (Hartlepool Young People's Editorial) is a town wide newspaper developed by the Community Network to give young people the opportunity to discuss issues that are important to them. It has provided an invaluable insight into which issues are important at any given time, this has been useful for both agencies working with young people or agencies providing services for them. The paper has been written, edited and produced by young people for young people. Three editions have been prepared to date. HYPE has been circulated through community buildings, schools, colleges, youth clubs and other places that young people tend to hang out. There are currently 14 contributing members ranging from 16 to 25.

**6.5** **fc4u** petitioned for a town-wide elected Youth Council. Putting forward the view that a Youth Council would allow all Council departments and other service delivery agencies to consult with young people at a much earlier stage and in a much more organised way. It will also extend to young people the opportunity to discuss and raise awareness about issues, which are important to them at the time that they are important. The petition, with over a 100 signatures was raised at the Mayor's 'State of the Borough' debate in 2003. The issue was raised at the full Council meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2003 and obtained written support from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum. As a result of the above, an investigation was initiated by the Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Forum.

**6.6** The young people involved in promoting a Youth Council articulated the view that a formal mechanism to engage with young people was required to ensure that their voices could be heard through the development of an elected Youth Council for the whole of Hartlepool. This would require open elections, advertised through schools, colleges, community buildings and youth clubs etc for any youth representatives elected to partnerships.

**6.7** The Community Network has good links with other fora in the town, such as the 50+ Forum and the All Ability Forum. The Network has developed systems of accountability for representatives such experience is highly relevant in the development of a representative Youth Forum/Council.

## **7. Youth Consultation Event**

The data collected from the event was largely recorded on flip charts in bullet point format, which have been reproduced here. The responses are related to the themes identified in 'Every Child Matters'.

### **7.1 Staying Healthy**

- Young people are clear about areas of consultation they require.
- There is confusion about information that is currently provided.
- Consultation event made us aware of anomalies of law and support required.

### **7.2 Staying Safe**

- Young people are clear about danger areas throughout the town.
- Young people have views on policing and local knowledge of areas of risk.

### **7.3 Economic Well-Being**

- Clear about things that do not work e.g. Job Fair.
- Have other ideas/suggestions about information about opportunities and choices related to overseas work, volunteering etc.
- Support for accessing training related to job readiness.

### **7.4 Enjoy and Achieve**

- Clear about what they want and how they would like to use leisure facilities in Hartlepool.
- Young people need decision makers to know they are 'active and mobile'.
- Young people know about specific activities that they would like to do and be involved with.
- Critical of advertising and its appropriateness.

### **7.5 Making a Positive Contribution**

- Understand what contribution that they make.
- Willing to make a contribution but want to be heard.
- Want feedback from adults as to whether there are any actions from their contribution.

Responses were also collated on how young people wanted to be consulted:

**7.6 Web-Based Activity**

- Want to use ICT to gather information.
- Using the Internet to vote on issues.
- Mass use of Young people's e-mails to share information.
- Willing to put time in to develop a web site.
- Chat rooms and forums on computers.
- Database of participation projects, meetings, events etc (Access to all workers/stakeholders).

**7.7 Possible Development of Youth Forum**

- Want meetings organised for them.
- Small-organised groups for discussion work.

**7.8 Development of Participation Strategy**

- Want to contribute to improving Hartlepool.
- Young people want a voice; adults need to know how to listen, through with action and feedback.
- Adults and Workers to be fun and light – with the right attitude.
- Project based consultation.
- Access to learning materials e.g.: Video's, Drugs case, camera's, recording equipment, audio equipment.

**7.9 Use of HYPE – Young People's Magazine to Disseminate Information**

- Identified places to advertise activities, events etc.
- Want more advertising and information of places and things on offer.

**7.10 Additional Comments:**

- More drop in facilities required – may link to improving advertising.
- Want transport for young people to get to events, clubs and other activities.
- One to one interaction – young people need to be recognised as having the need more privacy when discussing issues.

## **8. Recommendations from the Consultation Event**

### **8.1 Recommendations Identified Through the Consultation Event**

Overall, the consultation event was successful, with some useful information gathered. As it stands, the consultation was a good example of the participation process. The following recommendations draw on the experiences of the young people involved in this event.

### **8.2 Age Sensitivities**

It is recommended that when planning consultation events with young people, events are banded by age group to address the differing issues and approaches needed.

### **8.3 Venue Staff**

It is advisable that all staff are briefed as thoroughly as possible to ensure young people are supported as thoroughly as possible. There should be attention paid to the language that it is used as language can often be a barrier for young people to relate to participation and consultation.

### **8.4 Material Feedback**

As a result of consultative exercises with young people, the resources, footage and documentation produced from the consultations need a system for presenting this to strategic decision-making bodies.

### **8.5 Results**

It is imperative to have a system of structure and communication to indicate to young people if issues raised in consultation are to be followed through.

### **8.6 Attention**

Adults need to be aware of the attention spans of young people; many consultation activities are too long to retain engagement.

### **8.7 Dissemination**

There needs to be more access to school's, to enable effective dissemination of findings to inform young people that their views are being valued and heard.

### **8.8 Artists as Consultation Agents**

Artists and other professionals, who are not youth participation workers, are often perceived as 'neutral' and more accessible.

### **8.9 Promotion**

Advertising outside of the usual publicity mechanisms e.g. postcards advertising, are important to reach young people as well as using activities to engage in the consultative process.

### **8.10 Venue**

Using youth friendly venues designated youth space and respecting young people's leisure time. A mixture of activities was used throughout the event to counteract issues identified as stemming from class-based attitudes. Traditional routes/activities tend to attract middle class young people e.g. young people newsletter/ Citizenship Programme, whereas more non-traditional routes tend to attract working class young people e.g. Rave, MC, participation events. It was hoped that by using a wide range of activities would open the event to as many young people as possible.

### **8.11 Issues Which Require Consideration**

Action planning must involve the direct contribution of young people, and as such the following actions identified and timescale can only be a guide to what could be achieved, if there is to be avoidance of adults deciding young people's priorities.



## **9. Stakeholder Consultation – Key Findings**

The structure of this consultation involved agencies and organisations performing three tasks:

- a) Mapping current good practice of youth consultation and participation.
- b) Identification of changes that the practitioners would like to see in next 2 years and identify who would be the leaders of such change.
- c) Exploration of how agencies see the role of Hartlepool Community Network role in relation to young people.

The mapping exercise of good practice, which has or is taking place in Hartlepool is set out in the following table:

## 9.4 Appendix A

**Current Models of Good Practice**

<b>Who</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Where and When</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>What were the outcomes</b>
<b>UK Youth Parliament</b>	National organisation to represent young people views to Government	Election for youth representatives in August 2004	Packs were sent to schools and elections took place	Two young people were chosen to represent Hartlepool
<b>Co-ordinated Hartlepool Youth Provision</b>	Meeting for Officers and Workers to discuss common areas of work	Held on a quarterly basis	Meetings co-ordinated by Sean Harte	
<b>Hartlepool Participation Network</b>	Meeting for Participation Workers to discuss their work and future developments	Held on a bi-monthly basis	Meetings co-ordinated via Sean Harte/John Robinson	
<b>NDC Youth Forum</b>	Youth Forum developed	New Deal area – meet at Belle View Centre	Participatory activities with young people	Committed to move forward to develop a Youth Parliament
<b>Looked after Young People</b>	Young people involved in interview for Children Services Director	Early 2004		Successful appointment of champion for children and young people
<b>Hyped Group</b>	Employing new staff	Involvement in staff interviews	Young people were supported on the day of interviews Guidance developed for adults involved Young people had input to interview questions Young people in interview process	Young people receive interview/recruitment training and are involved in staff selection  Young people support peers around substance use Young people inform peers about process
	Small group of mixed age range  Part of project planning group	Meeting held at Hyped base		

## 9.4 Appendix A

Who	What	Where and When	How	What were the outcomes
<b>Hartlepool Community Network</b>	Community Network Officer supports LSP young people's representatives	Preparation, minute taking and talking through issues	Pro-actively coach young people's representatives	Two young people representatives on LSP
	Community Network Officer and young people have designed training programme for other youth representatives	Meetings arranged at appropriate time for young people "formal venue" better to be young people friendly		Development of training programme for young people who want to become representatives
	Community Network Officer and fc4u (Youth Group) involved in mapping of young people's ideas for improving Hartlepool	Event held in Shopping Centre.	Stall set up by young people, who enrolled other young people to discuss issues and views	Information presented to LSP
	DVD produced	Hartlepool in 2003	By being visual and inviting all young people to contribute  Video Booth: loan of cameras and youth editing of video	Video shown at Local Strategic Partnership and Learning and Scrutiny Forum
	Community Network Officer organised young people's meeting	Held at Dyke House 2003/04 via CAT Young Movers Sub - Group Venue: Belle View Centre, Hartlepool and visits to House of Commons	Facilitation of young people discussions and ideas, including visits to areas of interest	Engaged with young people in the Dyke House area – regarding what they wanted in their area
	Development of citizenship programme			Designed and delivered Post 16 a citizenship course

## 9.4 Appendix A

Who	What	Where and When	How	What were the outcomes
<b>Regeneration (Neighbourhood Action Plans)</b>	Initial consultation with children and young people via primary and secondary schools, youth groups etc  NAP follows 7 theme areas of local strategic partnership (LSP)	Ideas and consultation methods fed into Hartlepool participation Network	Discussion about priority concerns and issues in the local area in which they live  Consultation in school; and leisure time in each NAP area	Ideas are incorporated into neighbourhood action plan. Priority concerns and issues are identified for the area in which the young people live  LSP receives copies of neighbourhood action plans and NAP is put forward for endorsement by LSP  In process of setting up young people's forum to contribute to spending priorities for NRF spending
<b>B76</b>	A project which aims to build confidence through video and drama work  Young people create educational resources (usually a video) around the issue they would like to raise awareness of  Barnado's UK Advisory Group	Youth Advisory Group meet on a bi-monthly basis to give feedback about services offered at B76. Meetings held at B76  Group meet with Project Manager and other project representatives  Various locations throughout the North East	Groups meet with Children's Services Manager      Young people from Barnado's services consulted on a regular basis. This is feedback at national meetings	Groups asked for opening hours to be extended to evenings through summer months    Young people create educational resources around issues they would like to raise awareness of Videos produced on issues e.g. bullying, substance misuse, exclusion from school etc

## 9.4 Appendix A

Who	What	Where and When	How	What were the outcomes
<b>Connexions Shadow Board</b>	Central participation group for Connexions. All 5 locality groups meet to discuss Connexions work with service users  Video made by young people about the Local Management Committee	Third Monday of every month  Various locations in Hartlepool July 2004	5 members are elected from Local Youth Forum to sit on Central Forum  Young people involved in writing scripts, music and taking part in video	To inform young people of relationship between workers and young people  To inform young people about the Local Management Committee  Video shown in schools on a regular basis to inform young people of connections local users groups  Outcomes are ongoing young people discuss matters relevant to connections and the way personal advisors work with young people
<b>Youth Clubs</b>	Peer mentoring  Planning their own activity programme	During youth club sessions  During youth club sessions	Weekly outreach and group work	All involved in planning were engaged in process
<b>Young People at Café 177</b>	Held a dance event in September 2004  Venue for holding youth consultation events	Series of meetings – multi-agency  Café 177 – utilising all areas of the building	Greater access to sports facilities and change of attitudes Through multi-agency contacts	Reporting back findings from young people to Sports England Vast amount of information from young people particularly around "ECM"
<b>Best Value Review Group</b>	Best value review – family resource worker and community support worker roles	Various venues in the Easter holidays	Focus group with young people including those with disabilities	Currently writing improvement plan Involvement of teenage parents in the development of Anna Court which is now open and has just won a National Award

## 9.4 Appendix A

Who	What	Where and When	How	What were the outcomes
<b>Children's Fund</b>	Mentoring and activity centres  Weekly activity one to one and issue based work	Fully developed set of participation tools		Activity programmes, issue work amended and altered accordingly

## **10. Youth Consultation/Participation – The Way Forward**

### **10.1 Broader Consultation**

There is a need for a much broader based strategic approach to consultation. Wider town wide consultation and in one which schools are included. The option of young people leading on some of this work should be explored.

### **10.2 Strategic Planning**

The importance of focussed consultation, targeted with specific groups will always be necessary and useful, but this is not a substitute for broad based consultation with large numbers of young people. Any action plan arising from this report needs to be reviewed annually, against identifiable measures of success.

In the past it has not been clear who has taken the lead in improving young people's involvement and engagement at a strategic level across agencies. The advent of the Children and Young People's Partnership presents an opportunity for this to change. There has been a considerable amount of individual consultation by agencies. Strategically there needs to be a clear strategy, plan and policy in relation to young people's participation and one that is inclusive of young people's views and wishes. Rather than being solely led by adults either in a political role (strategic partnerships) or a providers role (agencies and organisations working with young people). There needs to be a degree of control and ownership by young people themselves.

Within the strategic decision making process, attention needs to be drawn to the disenfranchising effect of long bureaucratic decision making processes on the engagement of young people.

If young people are to be included in participation, this needs to be real and respectful rather than a tokenistic gesture. In terms of representation we need to be at the top of the representation staircase. (See the ladder of Participation taken from Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship by Roger Hart, published by UNICEF 1992). See Appendix 2.

### **10.3 Information**

More attention needs to be paid to the dissemination of information post – consultation if young people are not to become disaffected with the democratic process. Ideally an access point for young people to put their views forward could be created. Lack of feedback can result in disinterest if the young people perceive that their views are getting lost.

More weight could be attributed to Peer Information/Groups. What is being produced needs to be shared, made more presentable and accessible to young people – just as alternative strategies for engagement in consultation need to be employed, so do alternative and engaging strategies for dissemination of findings need to be sought.

### **10.4 Consultation**

Consultation must involve real partnerships between young people and adults. This requires those adults who do engage with young people to listen, hear, acknowledge and accept what children and young people say, even if they do not agree with the points that young people are putting forward. It may be necessary to review and put into place some fast tracking decision-making processes.

### **10.5 Training**

There is a need to value the role of the young people and does not attempt to turn them into ‘mini adults’ customised training is required.

### **10.6 Engagement**

It is important that young people bring stakeholders together to meet and present their views. The differing needs of varying age groups needs to be taken into consideration and age group issues related to consultation/participation need to be addressed.

There needs to be a culture shift in relation to young people. Stereotyping of young people needs to be challenged, as well as agencies perceptions of children and young people who can participate i.e. do not marginalize. There was seen to be a real need for a Youth Forum/Council, which would empower young people and act as a mechanism for ‘captivating passion’ and which fosters leadership, consistency and learning.

### **10.7 Resources**

Some resources are already in place. The exact level of resourcing for a more structured approach will be dependant upon the approach adopted.



### **10.8 Possibilities for Overall Co-ordination**

In relation to working with young people around consultation and engagement there could be a number of strategies adopted to inform and direct use with a requirement for everyone with young people. The following recommendations would contribute to ensuring that the Community Network and other agencies work collaboratively.

**a) The bringing together of agencies working with young people together as a Network such as through the Participation Network and the CHYP Group.**

Possible actions - mapping, of all youth provision. Recognising that not everyone with an interest in this area of work is currently involved e.g. the exclusion of small groups in Hartlepool. There exists the possibility of bringing together groups for joint funding initiatives related to work around consultation and participation.

**b) To bring together information and related directories of resources related to youth participation and consultation work**

Possible Actions - Directory of workers, artists, facilitators, toolkits, general resources, venues etc.

**c) Continued support for individual Young People's Representatives on Partnership**

Possible Actions - Regular discussions/briefings, developing an appraisal system and linking work with other initiatives.

**d) Training for Representatives**

Look at the possibility of customising training using the experience of the Post 16 Citizenship Programme for Representatives on Partnerships and Reference Groups.

## **11. Conclusion**

What was apparent through the research that was undertaken to inform this report was that young people are keen to be involved in and happy to be engaged with participation and consultation in Hartlepool. However, most young people were also disenfranchised around the mechanisms and structures of decision making i.e. they had little interest in the role of Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership. For these young people, the important people 'making things happen' were the participation workers working with them in a more direct way.

Young people perceive that there is a mismatch between young people's priorities and the priorities of bodies such as the Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership. Young people's issues and priorities are adult led, rather than young people led, and these adult priorities are often justified and promoted over young people's priorities because of mandatory responsibilities - whether this is accurate or not.

The strategic framework for the Local Strategic Partnership is grounded in a set format of tiers of responsibility. It needs to be considered how do young people gain access to those tiers even within the Participation Workers group there is currently no place for a young person's representative and this is with a group who probably have the most realistic view of the perspective of young people.

Although on the face of it, partnerships express the desire to consult and engage with young people, existing structures mitigate against this. This sets up confusion for young people and creates the perception of young people not being listened to.

This situation is further compounded by the lack of any clear feedback mechanisms being in place for young people to know that what they have had to say, has been listened to, heard and considered, respectfully. There is also no mechanism for young people to know that what they have had to say, that had made a difference and that they have had an input in affecting change. This lack of feedback further exacerbates disenfranchisement with the tiers of local Governance. Young people see the decision making process as remote and irrelevant to their spheres of influence.

Young people have differing needs dependant on their age and interests, it is important not to generalise about young people and not to fall into stereotyping and myth making of 'how young people are'. It is important to recognise that by and large the readers of this research and interpreters of its findings are going to be adults and therefore filter our understanding of the issues from our adult perspective. As adults we also need to be brave enough to accommodate and value other perspectives, which will not always sit easily within our framework of reference.

The findings in this report indicate clearly that the young people of Hartlepool have a willingness and intention to actively engage in participation. However, if this enthusiasm and energy is to be capitalised on, there needs to be some radical change in the communication systems and understanding of the nature of engaging with young people at all levels of local Governance.

Consultation and representation need to be genuine partnerships and not tokenistic box ticking exercises. The Community Network could develop a mechanism to take this challenge forward with partners and act as a real and vital conduit for youth representation within the Hartlepool Local Strategic Partnership framework. A Youth Forum/Council, which was genuinely directed by young people could play a leading role in such a process, no one group can represent the views of all young people, but this should not be used as an excuse to not create such a representative structure. A wide ranging Youth Forum/Council would not be a substitute for the specific consultation work, which may be required with very specific groups of young people. For those aged 11 –16 an Inter School's Youth Forum/Council may be an appropriate mechanism to develop.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Agency Participants in Stakeholder Event**

Tracy Foster	Hartlepool Community Network
Kay Porritt	Hyped
Helen Sewell	Children's Services Department HBC
Rebecca Wise	West View Project
Chris Wise	West View Project
Mally Priddy	Hartlepool Youth Ltd
Lindsay Gould	B76
Ronnie Rowbotham	Barnados Hartbeat
Beth Hawkrige	Barnados Hartbeat
James Sinclair	Connexions
Gemma Clough	Regeneration HBC
Francesca Magog	Children's Services Department HBC

## Appendix 2

## The ladder of participation

(Taken from "Children's Participation: from Tokenism to Citizenship", by Roger Hart, published by UNICEF, 1992)

