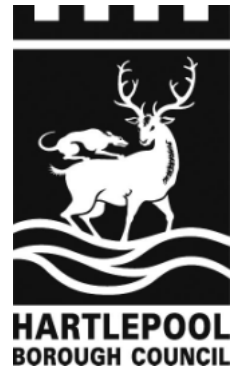


NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



27th July 2011

at 4.30 p.m.

in Committee Room 'B'

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors Cook, Fenwick, Gibbon, Ingham, A Lilley, Loynes, Robinson, Tempest, Thomas,

Resident Representatives:

John Cambridge, Iris Ryder and 1 vacancy

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 11th April 2011

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

4.1 Portfolio Holder's Response to the Investigation into Foreshore Management – Joint Report of the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism

4.2 Investigation into 20's Plenty - Traffic Calming Measures - Update Report - Scrutiny Support Officer

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

No items

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

6.1 Food Law Enforcement Service Plan - Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND WASTE MANAGEMENT BUDGET CONSULTATION

7.1 Neighbourhood Management and Waste Management Budget Consultation

- (a) Covering Report - Scrutiny Support Officer
- (b) Presentation - Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT BUDGET CONSULTATION

7.2 Scoping Report - Scrutiny Support Officer

7.3 Private Sector Housing Management Budget Consultation

- (a) Covering Report - Scrutiny Support Officer
- (b) Presentation - Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING SCHEMES INVESTIGATION

7.4 Scoping Report - Scrutiny Support Officer

7.5 Private Sector Housing Schemes Investigation - Setting the Scene

- (a) Covering Report - Scrutiny Support Officer
- (b) Presentation - Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning Services)

8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- i) **Date of Next Meeting 14th September 2011, commencing at 4.30 p.m.**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

11 April 2011

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Stephen Thomas (In the Chair)

Councillors: Alan Barclay, Mary Fleet, Steve Gibbon and Sheila Griffin.

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Brenda Loynes and Iris Ryder.

Also present: Councillor Mike Turner.

Members of the Public:

Gordon and Stella Johnson, John Maxwell and Alan Vale.

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Denise Ogden, Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)
Sylvia Pinkney, Public Protection Manager
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
Elaine Hind, Scrutiny Support Officer
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer.

80. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Rob Cook and Carl Richardson

81. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

82. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2011

Confirmed.

83. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

No items.

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

No items.

85. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

No items.

86. Draft Final Report – Foreshore Management (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Chair introduced the draft final report on the forum's investigation into 'Foreshore Management' and outlined to the forum the conclusions and recommendations.

A resident representative questioned the removal of the seaweed on the Block Sands as it had been said in the past that the flies that collected on the seaweed provided food for a range of wild birds. It was also indicated that some of the seaweed in that area was regionally quite rare. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods agreed with the comments and indicated that it would only be dead seaweed removed from the sands.

The meeting debate the issue of the problems caused by the vehicles accessing the beach through the Brus Tunnel and the proposal made at one of the meetings to block the tunnel to vehicle access permanently. The Director indicated that a discussion would need to be held with the North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum. The Forum agreed that vehicles accessing the beach did need to be restricted but it should be noted that there were horse riders regularly exercising their horses on the beach.

The continuation of the firework display at Seaton Carew was questioned and it was suggested that the forum may wish to add reference to the fire works in the report. The Director commented that Cabinet had already recognised the value of the display, particularly as an income generator for the traders in the town.

It was noted that the information requested from Northumbrian Water on sea water quality had not yet been received. The Chair indicated that officers were pursuing the information and it would be reported once received. However, the report would be submitted to Scrutiny Coordinating Committee for approval and submission to the Executive.

Recommended

That the draft final report, incorporating the comments made by Members, be approved for submission to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

87. Selective Licensing of Private Landlords – Landlord Accreditation Scheme and Good Tenant Scheme *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer reported that the Forum met on the 7 July 2010 to discuss their work programme for the 2010/11 Municipal Year. One of the suggested topics for investigation was the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. However, at this meeting Members decided that they did not have the capacity in their work programme for the current Municipal Year to investigate the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. Subsequently, Members requested a progress / update report on the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. At the meeting on Forum held on 27 October 2010 Members agreed to consider this progress / update report at this meeting, with a view to include it as a suggested work programme topic for inclusion in the Forum's 2011/12 work programme.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods gave a presentation to the forum outlining the current selective licensing scheme, the proposed extension of selective licensing, The Landlord Accreditation Scheme and Good Tenant Scheme. The Director explained the particular aspects of each scheme and how they operated in Hartlepool. The Director focussed on the Selective Licensing Scheme and gave a brief overview of how the first phase of the scheme had operated since its introduction. Cabinet had agreed in May 2008 to designate areas A to F (details of which were set out in the report) as the first phase of selective licensing in Hartlepool. This had subsequently been approved by the Minister for Communities and Local Government in December 2008 and the licensing became operational on 1 May 2009. The report set out in detail how the first phase of licensing had operated, the numbers of properties, landlords and tenants involved and the costs of operation.

The Director went on to outline the data that had been gathered through the first phase as evidence to support a second phase of selective licensing. Cabinet had considered this evidence and in February of this year had agreed to consultation with residents in nine defined areas for an extension of the licensing areas. This consultation was ongoing and a further report would be submitted to Cabinet in June that would detail the results of the consultation and seek Cabinet's approval to proceed with the designation of some or all of the areas. In addition Cabinet would be asked agree the order in which the scheme would be implemented. The new scheme would commence in late 2011. The Director highlighted that it was no longer a requirement to have a designation approved by a government minister.

The Director briefly outlined the current voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme was launched in August 2002. It was originally established as a joint venture with the Citizens Advice Bureau as part of a Housing Advice and Tenancy Support Service that expanded on the already successful SmartMove scheme operated by the CAB. Since the scheme was launched it

has attracted over 500 members. However due to changes in ownership and management this now stands at 257. Whilst the number of members has reduced, the number of properties within their control has increased to 1536.

The voluntary landlord accreditation scheme has been successful in a number of areas. In particular, the number of landlords agreeing to participate in the scheme has exceeded expectations. This has enabled proactive inspections to be carried out on a number of tenanted properties, resulting in an improvement to approximately 250. However, whilst there have been improvements they have generally taken place in properties that were of a reasonable condition to begin with as the landlords considered to be poor have either opted not to join the scheme or have withdrawn because of the conditions imposed.

The Good Tenant Scheme has been operational since 1st May 2008. This scheme was a referencing service for landlords that was set up with the express aim of reducing anti-social behaviour in the private rented housing sector, and as such is operated by the Anti-social Behaviour Unit. The Director referred to the evaluation of the scheme that had been carried out after the first 18 months of operation, which was set out in detail in the report, and which revealed evidence that the scheme had had some positive impact with landlords and tenants, though improvements were needed.

The Director reported to the forum that this area of service had not been immune to the recent cuts and the Tennant Referencing Officer post had been deleted.

Following the presentation by the Director, the Chair opened the issue to debate when the following key comments were made –

- The scheme relate only to private landlords and tenants.
- There was concern that while good tenants were going into good landlords property, as a result bad tenants don't apply and end up going to the bad landlords and ending up in poor accommodation.
- Scheme has been successful in changing some people's patterns of behaviour but if only getting 'green card' tenants going to good landlords doesn't always work particularly if they pay higher rent.
- There seemed to be mixed perceptions among residents in the areas where selective licensing had been introduced.
- The Director commented that there was a concern that when the authority became involved in housing market renewal area schemes there was also a need to invest in this kind of scheme at the same or there was the potential for the town to develop a doughnut affect. There needed to be investment in the streets around the renewal areas. There was a great dilemma in so far as it could take up to two years to compulsorily purchase properties and their conditions could deteriorate dramatically while new build was taking place.
- Members were concerned that the current financial situation could affect our ability to roll the schemes out to the new areas. The Director commented that this was an issue and there may be a need to think

differently as to how the council operated and invested.

- Members were concerned at the potential to cause blight in some areas. Some commented that in Dyke House we are creating another slum area around the renewal area; creating a worse situation than the one we were resolving. The Director indicated that in the past, when we knew funding was coming we could plan for the future over 5 to 10 years. Now, however, it was much more difficult to make such long term plans. Once the Headway scheme was finished we won't be able to deal with the area immediately around it. The Council couldn't rely on any government providing funding in the future. Building work in other areas won't start until the land value goes up; developers want profit.
- Members were concerned at the Housing Hartlepool homes built in some areas that were left empty because they couldn't sell them. People were still having problems getting mortgages, even on shared ownership schemes. Hartfields was a good example where the rental section of the development was nearing full occupancy but those for sale were moving slowly as people can't afford mortgages.
- Consultation process on new areas ran to end of May. Drop in sessions would be held and the Director encouraged people to feed into the consultation. Need the feedback.
- A Member referred to the number of new homes in the North that were still empty; why were they built if there wasn't the market. The Director commented there was at the time. The Market is picking up slightly and Hartlepool is retaining prices at the moment. Current government policy did mean that a larger proportion of properties built through supported schemes would be for sale rather than rent.
- Members raised the issue of the started but abandoned site on Mainsforth Terrace. The Director indicated that the developer still had a live planning permission and work on the site had commenced but would only be completed when the market improves.

The Chair thanked the Director for his presentation and report which put the issue of landlord accreditation in important context. The processes through which these three schemes could help to maintain the fabric of communities to avoid the downward spiral that has happened elsewhere were an essential tool that the council needed to utilise. There had been some success in phase one and also some problems. The main issue could be with finance and changing government policy.

The Chair considered that it would be timely to look at what has and hasn't gone well and new government policy. An investigation could look at finance and the staff resource that will be needed. It would also be worth investigating if this was the correct approach; would it achieve the targets we have set. Good tenants and good landlords make viable communities.

The Chair considered that the subject needed to be put on the list for potential investigation next year. There were real issues out there in the community and financial dilemmas that the council was facing.

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked the forum for its support and dedication to achieving its workload over the past year.

Recommended

That the report and members comments be noted and that the issue of Landlord Accreditation be included on the list of potential areas for investigation in the 2011/12 Municipal Year.

The meeting concluded at 5.30 pm

CHAIR

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

8 July 2011

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Stephen Thomas (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Mick Fenwick, Steven Gibbon Peter Ingham and
Sylvia Tempest.

Resident Representative John Cambridge.

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Denise Ogden, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services
Elaine Hind, Scrutiny Support Officer
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Robinson.

2. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2011

Confirmed.

4. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

No items.

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

No items.

6. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

No items.

7. The Role of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer reported on the role and functions of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum. The report outlined the role and function of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, the main functions of the five standing scrutiny forums of which Neighbourhood Services was one and the specific remit of this forum. The report also detailed the proposed dates of meetings in the 2011/12 Municipal Year. It was noted that the meeting in September would take place on 14 September.

Recommended

That the report be noted.

8. Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum Consideration of 2012/13 Budget Items – Scoping Report *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer reported that at the meeting of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 24 June 2011 Members determined their work programme for the 2011/12 Municipal Year. It was decided that each Scrutiny Forum would focus its attention on preparations for the 2012/13 budget during the current Municipal Year, given the extremely challenging financial situation facing the authority.

Each Scrutiny Forum was requested to consider the budget proposals identified in relation to the remit of that Forum, to formulate a view on those proposals and / or to suggest ways of achieving the required savings.

It was agreed at the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee work programming meeting on 24 June 2011 that the following budget proposals would be considered by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum:-

- Neighbourhood Management
- Waste Management

The Scrutiny Support Officer went on to highlight the proposed terms of reference for the investigation, the potential areas of enquiry and sources of information and a proposed timetable.

Members noted that this was the first year that the Forum's work programme had been determined in this way. Members did question if there was any

overlap between this investigation and that being undertaken by the Council Working Group. Members were advised that this was not the case. Members commented that it would be helpful if they had copies of the 2011/12 budget book.

Recommended

That the report be noted and that the Terms of Reference for the consideration of the 2012/13 budget proposals as set out in the report be approved.

9. Budget Consultation – Neighbourhood Management and Waste Management Presentation (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services gave a presentation to the Forum giving Members an overview of the key issues in Neighbourhood Management and Waste Management. The presentation set out the management structures, services provided, key information of staffing levels and budgets and the key pressures and areas of concern for 2012/13. In the discussions and questions around the debate, the following points were raised: -

Neighbourhood Management

- The introduction of a Police Commissioner for Cleveland from May 2012 would mean that Community Safety Budgets would transfer to the PCC which would mean Hartlepool having to fight its corner on Community Safety priorities. Members questioned how the Police and Crime panel may be constructed. The Assistant Director indicated that the guidance had not yet been received but it was clear that Community Safety grants would transfer to the new Police and Crime Commissioner.
- The current Neighbourhood Action Plan's NAPs while not 'planning' documents, may be utilised in the development of the new neighbourhood plans as encouraged through the Localism Bill.
- The proposals for Neighbourhood Plans and Forums as currently laid out in the Localism Bill only require five people to call for one to be established. It was unclear at this time as to what defined an area however, central government keep talking about Parish Councils as a neighbourhood.
- Members questioned the scope for increasing income. It was highlighted that a significant proportion of the £16m income was derived from fees/charges to other departments. Cuts in their areas would inevitably lead to cuts in income and in the past have led to redundancies in Neighbourhood Services. The continual push to increase income was going to be difficult to sustain in the current climate. Members asked for a breakdown in the income received and generated across the Neighbourhood Services Division.
- How would the new boundary changes affect the way the Neighbourhood Management was organised. The Assistant Director commented that the

town would still be the same size and the division would still be delivering the same front line services. How managers would be organised may need to change to provide more ward orientated services in line with Ward boundary changes. The Director suggested that Members may wish to look at managers being involved in ward surgeries to take issues straight from the public. Members commented that they did not feel this approach would work and in any event they could simply phone the appropriate manager after a surgery with the same effect.

- Members questioned what sort of guidance would be available for the new neighbourhood plans. The Assistant Director commented that the division had been successful in an application for a Neighbourhood Plan for Elwick and Greatham Parishes which had brought in £29,000. This would be the pilot for future Neighbourhood Plans and the Parishes would lead on its development with the Council having a duty to be involved. The development of the plan would be used as a pilot to help shape how the council responded to these plans in the future.
- Members agreed that having local response on Neighbourhood Services was key and should be retained..
- Members considered that Community Safety and the local provision and management of these services was key. It was considered that this should be examined further with the potential for any pooling of resources to target issues and provide a co-ordinated response..
- The Assistant Director commented that at this stage we could only consider broad principles and not structural detail. Members were concerned that this did mean that this would not get them to the point of discussing the details of exactly how savings would be made. The Director advised Scrutiny would have another opportunity as part of the budget round consultation in the outturn..
- Members supported the principle of the town being separated into two distinct areas for neighbourhood management and asked that any proposals be on that basis.

Waste Management

- A pilot project with a local company on further segregation of recyclable waste from the HWRC and Waste Transfer Station had saved £8000 in one month. This would need to be extended further before any proposal to to identify savings could be considered.
- Moving to a four-day working week was a possibility but there were obvious implications for staff. Hartlepool was the only Tees Valley authority not working in this way. It would require a change to public kerbside collection days.
- The Dry Recyclable Kerbside collections contract was due to be tendered later this year. The department was also looking at vehicle procurement across the Tees Valley to achieve savings.
- Cross boundary working was being examined. One area of potential was trade waste collection. Currently this service broke even, but with cross boundary working and a more business-like approach, there was potential growth.

- There were some health and safety issues with lifting waste bags, so the potential introduction of a new 'container' may bring benefits. The council was spending a significant amount on replacement bags and boxes each year. There was potential to bring in a new bin scheme without any cost to the council.
- Members while supportive of the potential for a third bin were concerned at the issues of space a lot of households had already in accommodating two bins. There were also still persistent complaints on the collections with spillages from bags and boxes and the lack of follow up cleaning. It was highlighted that the third bin could eradicate these issues. The transition to the separation of waste had had its problems but we have demonstrated it worked and people understood the benefits. This was a further step in that direction. In terms of follow up cleaning, the Big Society strongly hinted at people being responsible for their own environment.

The Chair concluded the item by thanking the Director and Assistant Director for their presentations and responses to Members questions. In relation to both areas, the Chair indicated that at the next meeting the Forum would look at further details of the proposals for both areas including the potential initial savings, the key process elements and timescales. Members of the Forum had also requested a breakdown of the department's income and the key internal pressures on income.

Recommended

That the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services be thanked for their very informative presentations and that Members comments be noted and the additional information requested be discussed at the next meeting of the Forum.

10. Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's Work Programme for 2011/12 *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer reported that at the meeting of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 24 June 2011; to which all Members of the Forum were invited; and as mentioned earlier in the meeting the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's Work Programme had been agreed for 2011/12 as follows:-

Forum Investigation:

Private Sector Housing Accreditation and Management Schemes

Budget Items:

Budget 2012/13

Neighbourhood Management

Waste Management

Private Sector Housing Management

Private Sector Licensing Income

Recommended

That the work programme as approved by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

at its meeting on 24 June 2011 be noted.

11. Issues Identified from the Forward Plan

No items.

The meeting concluded at 3.45 p.m.

CHAIR

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Joint Report of Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism.

Subject: PORTFOLIO HOLDERS RESPONSE TO
FORESHORE MANAGEMENT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum with feedback on the recommendations from the investigation into 'Foreshore Management' which was reported to Cabinet on 23 May 2011.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The investigation into Foreshore Management conducted by this Forum falls under the remit of the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department and is, under the Executive Delegation Scheme, within the service area covered by the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder.
- 2.2 On 23 May 2011, Cabinet considered the Final Report of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum into Foreshore Management. This report provides feedback from the Portfolio Holder following the Cabinet's consideration of, and decisions in relation to this Forum's recommendations.
- 2.3 Following on from this report, progress towards completion of the actions contained within the Action Plan will be monitored through Covalent; the Council's Performance Management System; with standardised six monthly monitoring reports to be presented to the Forum.

3. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND EXECUTIVE DECISION

- 3.1 Following consideration of the Final Report, Cabinet approved the recommendations in their entirety. Details of each recommendation and proposed actions to be taken following approval by Cabinet are provided in the Action Plan attached at **Appendix A**.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note the proposed actions detailed within the Action Plan, appended to this report (**Appendix A**) and seek clarification on its content where felt appropriate.

Contact Officer:- Denise Ogden, Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department
Hartlepool Borough Council
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E-mail – denise.ogden@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's Final Report 'Foreshore Management' considered by Cabinet on 23 May 2011.
- (ii) Decision Record of Cabinet held on 23 May 2011.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

NAME OF FORUM: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: Foreshore Management

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: May 2011

| | RECOMMENDATION | EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION | FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | LEAD OFFICER | DELIVERY TIMESCALE |
|-----|---|---|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (a) | That the Council co-ordinates its beach cleaning services with forthcoming public events in order to provide an improved public service. | The Quality and Safety Officer will liaise with Environmental Supervisors as and when events take place. | None | D Kershaw | 31 May 2011 |
| (b) | That the Council works with local businesses / industry and developers to explore and encourage investment opportunities to assist in the future development and restoration of foreshore activities. | Identify preferred developer to support the progression of the Seaton Carew master plan and development of key sites. | None | D Gouldburn | 31 May 2011 |
| (c) | That the Headland and Seaton Carew paddling pools be kept open and work undertaken to identify the most cost effective means of dealing with ongoing maintenance issues. | Quality and Safety Officer will explore effective and efficient means to keep the paddling pools open within existing resources. Subject to any proposals and/or requirements in respect of the budget process for 12/13. | None | D Kershaw | 31 August 2011 |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

NAME OF FORUM: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: Foreshore Management

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: May 2011

| | RECOMMENDATION | EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION | FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | LEAD OFFICER | DELIVERY TIMESCALE |
|-----|---|--|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| (d) | That the Council fully consults with residents on any improvements which are to be made to sites along the foreshore and ensures that residents are kept up to date on the progress of the improvements. | Neighbourhood Management Consultative mechanisms will be employed to ensure residents are consulted with regarding the development of the Foreshore. | None | D Frame | 31 May 2011 |
| (e) | That the Seaton Carew Residents Action Group is re-launched and the membership refreshed to provide a suitable forum to engage with local residents and business and encourage their input into the economic development of Seaton. | SCRAG will be used as a sounding board on emerging development proposals that flow from the overall master plan delivery process. Membership of SCRAG will be reviewed as and when required in relation to each regeneration issue, to ensure membership is appropriate and adds the most value to the process. | None | D Gouldburn | 30 June 2011 |
| (f) | That, in marketing areas of interest to tourists along the foreshore, in addition to traditional attractions, | To work with key internal (Parks & Countryside Teams, Cultural Services) and external partners to provide and deliver on information | Within existing resources | J Cole | 31 May 2011 |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

NAME OF FORUM: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: Foreshore Management

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: May 2011

| | RECOMMENDATION | EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION | FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | LEAD OFFICER | DELIVERY TIMESCALE |
|-----|--|--|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| | increased emphasis should be placed upon the promotion of Hartlepool's natural assets (i.e. Saltholme and other sites of special scientific interest). | collection to support marketing activity to promote Hartlepool's natural assets. | | | |
| (g) | That the promotion of tourist attractions / events in Hartlepool should continue to be undertaken through traditional means, in addition to web based approaches, in order to reach as wide an audience as possible. | Hartlepool's assets will continue to be promoted within the key piece of tourism print, the Hartlepool Mini Guide. | Within existing resources | J Cole | 30 June 2011 |
| (h) | That the Council provides guidance and support to local business and groups to access funding to improve the appearance of the foreshore. | Whilst funding opportunities are currently limited, as funding streams come on line, advice and support will be given to local businesses. | Some match funding may be necessary depending upon funding opportunity guideline. | A Golightly / A Steinberg | 31 May 2011 |
| | | Provide advice and guidance to tourism related businesses through | None | Jo Cole | 31 May 2011 |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

NAME OF FORUM: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: Foreshore Management

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: May 2011

| RECOMMENDATION | | EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION | FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | LEAD OFFICER | DELIVERY TIMESCALE |
|----------------|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| | | the two key networks – Hotels Group and Passport Group | | | |
| (i) | That concerns regarding the lack of formal response(s) to residents reports of vehicular access to the beach via the Brus Tunnel, and nuisance on / damage to the beach and dunes, be relayed to Cleveland Police. | Neighbourhood Managers and Community Safety Team will feed concerns to Hartlepool Neighbourhood Police | None | K Oliver | 31 May 2011 |
| (j) | That a permanent solution is explored to close the Brus Tunnel to vehicles, utilising funds obtained in relation to the vandalised camera on the site, giving consideration to:- (i) Professional advice from Network Rail, Cleveland Police, CCTV operators and Council Officers; and | Agencies will be involved in providing a permanent solution. | Dependent upon final design | C Scaife | 31 October 2011 |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

NAME OF FORUM: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: Foreshore Management

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: May 2011

| RECOMMENDATION | EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION | FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | LEAD OFFICER | DELIVERY TIMESCALE |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (ii) Views of local residents. | Special meeting of the North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum to be arranged. | None | K Oliver | 31 May 2011 |

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: UPDATE - 20's PLENTY – TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Neighbourhood Service Scrutiny Forum with an update on the progress of the recommendations from the investigation into '20's Plenty – Traffic Calming Measures'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 On 21 March 2011, Cabinet considered the Final Report of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum investigation into 20's Plenty – Traffic Calming Measures. This report provides an update to Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum following Cabinet's consideration of and decisions in relation to this Forum's recommendations.

3. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND EXECUTIVE DECISION

- 3.1 Following consideration of the Final Report, Cabinet determined that the following recommendation should be implemented:-

- (a) That the Council implements 20mph speed limits on all appropriate residential streets in Hartlepool, and in doing so:-
- (i) undertakes a full public consultation (before the scheme is rolled out) with Councillors, residents, the emergency services; schools; businesses and all other relevant bodies.

- 3.2 An extract of the Cabinet minute is detailed below:-

'That Cabinet approves a public consultation on the 20 mph zones proposals suggested in the Scrutiny Report, to be undertaken by the end of July and reported back to Cabinet before the beginning of September this year at

which time final consideration will be given to the remainder of the Scrutiny recommendations’.

- 3.3 The Portfolio Holders response to all the recommendations of the investigation into ‘20’s Plenty – Traffic Calming Measures’ will be presented at a future meeting of the Forum.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note the content of this report and Cabinet’s decision as outlined in 3.2.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) The Scrutiny Forum’s Final Report ‘20’s Plenty – Traffic Calming Measures’ considered by Cabinet on 21 March 2011.
- (ii) Decision Record of Cabinet held on 21 March 2011.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

27th July 2011



Report of: Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods

Subject: Food Law Enforcement Service Plan
2011/2012

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2011/2012, which is a requirement under the Budget and Policy Framework.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Food Standards Agency has a key role in overseeing local authority enforcement activities. They have duties to set and monitor standards of local authorities as well as carry out audits of enforcement activities to ensure that authorities are providing an effective service to protect public health and safety.
- 2.2 On 4 October 2000, the Food Standards Agency issued the document "Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement". The guidance provides information on how local authority enforcement service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service Plans developed under this guidance will provide the basis on which local authorities will be monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency.
- 2.3 The service planning guidance ensures that key areas of enforcement are covered in local service plans, whilst allowing for the inclusion of locally defined objectives.
- 2.4 The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2011/2012 is attached as **Appendix 1** and takes into account the guidance requirements.
- 2.5 The Plan will be considered by Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on 27th July 2011 and again by the Cabinet, prior to being considered by Council.

3. THE FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN

3.1 The Service Plan for 2011/12 has been updated to reflect last year's performance.

3.2 The Plan covers the following:

(i) Service Aims and Objectives:

That the Authority's food law service ensures public safety by ensuring food, drink and packaging meets adequate standards.

(ii) Links with Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Departmental and Divisional Plans:

How the Plan contributes towards the Council's main priorities (Jobs and the Economy, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Health and Wellbeing, Community Safety, Environment, Culture and Leisure and Strengthening Communities).

(iii) Legislative Powers and Other Actions Available:

Powers to achieve public safety include programmed inspections of premises, appropriate registration/approval, food inspections, provision of advice, investigation of food complaints and food poisoning outbreaks, as well as the microbiological and chemical sampling of food.

(iv) Resources, including financial, staffing and staff development.

(v) A review of performance for 2010/11.

4. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES RAISED IN THE PLAN

4.1 During 2010/11 the service completed 100% of all programmed food hygiene inspections planned for the year. As a result of prioritising resources in this area and additional work generated by the Tall Ships Event we were unable to achieve the targets set in respect of food standards and feeding stuffs inspections. In total 199/248 (80%) of food standards inspections were achieved and 13/47(27.7%) of feeding stuffs inspections. The outstanding inspections will be added to the programme for 2011/2012.

4.2 A significant amount of resource went into the planning stage leading up to the Tall Ships Event to ensure that it ran as smoothly as possible. Prior to the event, liaison took place with partner agencies including the HSE, Police, Defra and other local authorities to ensure that we were prepared to respond to any matters of evident concern.

- 4.3 Officers carried out advisory visits to nearly 100 existing traders to discuss the potential impact on their businesses and how potential problems could be overcome. During the event a total of 112 inspections and 16 revisits were undertaken on the Tall Ships site and surrounding Marina area, with a further 20 inspections undertaken at the Headland Carnival, which was also taking place. As the event went without any major hitches thankfully no formal enforcement action was necessary.
- 4.4 A total of 227 microbiological samples were taken during 2010/11, of which 44 were regarded as unsatisfactory; mainly due to high bacterial counts. Only 6 of these results related to food samples; 5 of which were resampled and reported to be satisfactory. A significant number of wiping cloths sampled were found to be unsatisfactory (13/19). This trend has been mirrored across the region. Advice was given to the food business operators and a guidance note is currently being prepared by the Health Protection Agency.
- 4.5 Relatively few food standards samples failed to meet statutory requirements (13/178); with the majority of failures relating to labelling declarations. Advice was given to the businesses concerned and where appropriate referrals were made to the Home Authority.
- 4.6 On 1st April 2007 the Council launched the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme. Each business is awarded a star rating which reflects the risk rating given at the time of the last primary inspection. The star rating is made available to the public via the Council's website and the business is provided with a certificate to display on their premises.
- 4.7 The table below shows the results of the star ratings awarded to businesses at the start of the scheme on 1 April 2007, as compared with after 12, 24, 36 and 48 months:

| No. of Stars | Number of Premises (1/4/07) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/08) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/09) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/10) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/11) | % |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 5 | 24/759 | 3% | 85/762 | 11.1% | 163/721 | 22.6% | 237/709 | 33.4% | 289/718 | 40.2% |
| 4 | 155/759 | 20% | 217/762 | 28.5% | 233/721 | 32.3% | 205/709 | 28.9% | 200/718 | 27.9% |
| 3 | 226/759 | 30% | 294/762 | 38.6% | 237/721 | 32.9% | 195/709 | 27.5% | 152/718 | 21.2% |
| 2 | 262/759 | 35% | 137/762 | 18.0% | 65/721 | 9% | 60/709 | 8.5% | 62/718 | 8.6% |
| 1 | 60/759 | 8% | 26/762 | 3.4% | 17/721 | 2.4% | 12/709 | 1.7% | 13/718 | 1.8% |
| 0 | 32/759 | 4% | 3/762 | 0.4% | 6/721 | 0.8% | 0/709 | 0% | 2/718 | 0.3% |

- 4.8 Whilst the number of premises awarded 3 stars and above is similar to the previous year (89.3% compared to 89.8% in 2009 -10) it is pleasing to note that there has been a significant increase in the proportion of 5 star ratings (a 6.8% increase from 2009 -10) .
- 4.9 As at the 1st April 2011, 94% of businesses in the borough were “Broadly Compliant” with food safety requirements (in 2008-09 the figure was 89.3%, and in 2009-10 it was 91.5%). For food standards 94% of businesses achieved broad compliance (in 2008-09 the figure was 93.3% and in 2009-10 it was 96.3%). We aim to concentrate our resources on carrying out interventions at those businesses which are deemed not to be ‘broadly compliant’ (those achieving 2 stars or less). In the current financial climate we anticipate that it may become increasingly difficult to secure improvements and will where necessary take enforcement action.
- 4.10 In November 2010, The Food Standards Agency launched a national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) however in spite of incentives being offered there were very few early adopters of the scheme. One of the main reasons why Hartlepool, in common with other councils, have chosen not to migrate to the FHRS scheme is that under this system, food premises will receive a higher rating than they did under our existing scheme. This could mean that some premises given three stars would receive a rating of four under the new system without improving their performance. Also under the new FHRS system there is a requirement to offer re-inspection for free, which has a manpower implication.
- 4.11 The FSA is currently undertaking a review of how food safety regulations are enforced in the UK and has announced that it is currently pursuing a programme of work to introduce legislation which will require local authorities to adopt the FHRS scheme. Whilst we support the idea of a national scheme, as our current scheme is working very successfully and there would be resource implications to change, we have no plans to migrate to the FHRS at this time.
- 4.12 During 2010/11 no Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices were served on businesses however an offer of a voluntary closure was accepted and officers worked with the business to ensure that food safety was not compromised. A total of 6 Hygiene Improvement Notices were served; these were issued in respect of two businesses to ensure compliance with food safety legislation. No prosecutions or Simple Cautions were undertaken.
- 4.13 During 2011/12 there are 360 programmed food hygiene interventions, 269 programmed food standards inspections and 31 feed hygiene inspections planned. (The number of premises liable for inspection fluctuates from year to year as the programme is based on the risk rating applied to the premises which determines the frequency of intervention).

An estimated 80 re-visits and 70 additional visits to new/changed premises will be required during the year.

- 4.14 During 2011/12 resources remain challenging. The Public Protection section lost 21% of its overall budget in 2010/11 as part of a Service Delivery Option review and efficiency savings and the service is anticipating further cuts (expected to be in the region of 10%) during 2011/12. Although so far we have not lost any additional posts which directly enforce food legislation due to the implications of previous losses of posts within the section we are having to distribute the workload amongst the remaining workforce to ensure that we make best use of our resources. We anticipate further pressures on the budget in subsequent years.
- 4.15 We will review and update our premises database to ensure it is accurate and reliable so that we can target our resources effectively.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members comments on the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2011/2012 are invited prior to submission to Council.



Hartlepool Borough Council

Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2011/12

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2011/12

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INTRODUCTION

This Service Plan details how the food law service will be delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council. The food law service covers both food and feed enforcement.

The Plan accords with the requirements of the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement, and sets out the Council's aims in respect of its food law service and the means by which those aims are to be fulfilled. Whilst focussing primarily on the year 2011/12, where relevant, longer-term objectives are identified. Additionally, there is a review of performance for 2010/11 and this aims to inform decisions about how best to build on past successes and address performance gaps.

The Plan is reviewed annually and has been subject to Portfolio Holder approval.

1 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Service Aims and Objectives

Hartlepool Borough Council aims to ensure:

- that food and drink intended for human consumption which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed in the borough is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer;
- food and food packaging meets standards of quality, composition and labelling and reputable food businesses are not prejudiced by unfair competition; and
- the effective delivery of its food law service so as to secure appropriate levels of public safety in relation to food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.

In its delivery of the service the Council will have regard to directions from the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Approved Codes of Practice, the Regulators' Code of Compliance and other relevant guidance.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

This service plan fits into the hierarchy of the Council's planning process as follows:

- Hartlepool's Community Strategy - the Local Strategic Partnership's (the Hartlepool Partnership) goal is to "*regenerate Hartlepool by promoting economic, social and environmental wellbeing in a sustainable manner*".
- Corporate Plan
- Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Departmental Plan
- Food Law Enforcement Service Plan - sets out how the Council aims to deliver this statutory service and the Consumer Services section's contribution to corporate objectives

The Council's Community Strategy, called Hartlepool's Ambition, looks ahead to 2020 and sets out its long-term vision and aspirations for the future:

‘Hartlepool will be an ambitious, healthy, respectful, inclusive, thriving and outward-looking community, in an attractive and safe environment, where everyone is able to realise their potential.’

This Food Law Service Plan contributes towards the vision and the Council's main priorities in the following ways:

Jobs and the Economy

By providing advice and information to new and existing businesses to assist them in meeting their legal requirements with regard to food law requirements, and avoid potential costly action at a later stage;

Lifelong Learning and Skills

By providing and facilitating training for food handlers on food safety as part of lifelong learning, and promoting an improved awareness of food safety and food quality issues more generally within the community;

Health and Wellbeing

By ensuring that food businesses where people eat and drink, or from which they purchase their food and drink, are hygienic and that the food and drink sold is safe, of good quality and correctly described and labelled to inform choice;

Community Safety

By encouraging awareness amongst food businesses of the role they can play in reducing problems in their community by keeping premises in a clean and tidy condition;

Environment

By encouraging businesses to be aware of environmental issues which they can control, such as proper disposal of food waste;

Culture and Leisure

By exploring ways to promote high standards of food law compliance in hotels, other tourist accommodation, public houses and other catering and retail premises.

Strengthening Communities

By developing ways of communicating well with all customers, including food business operators whose first language is not English, and ensuring that we deliver our service equitably to all.

This Food Law Enforcement Service Plan similarly contributes to the vision set out in the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department Plan *“to work hand in hand with communities and to provide and develop excellent services that will improve the quality of life for people living in Hartlepool neighbourhoods”*.

Within this, the Commercial Services team has a commitment to ensure the safe production, manufacture, storage, handling and preparation of food and its proper composition and labelling.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity. The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan consequently aims to ensure that the same high standards of service is offered to all, and that recognition is given to the varying needs and backgrounds of its customers.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Hartlepool is situated on the North East coast of England. The Borough consists of the town of Hartlepool and a number of small outlying villages. The total area of the Borough is 9,390 hectares.

Hartlepool is a unitary authority, providing a full range of services. It adjoins Durham County Council to the north and west and Stockton on Tees Borough Council to the south. The residential population is 90,161 of which ethnic minorities comprise 1.2% (2001 census).

The borough contains a rich mix of the very old and the very new. Its historic beginnings can be traced back to the discovery of an iron-age settlement at Catcote Village and the headland, known locally as “Old Hartlepool” is steeped in history. On the other hand, the former South Docks area has been transformed in to a fabulous 500-berth Marina.

In August , Hartlepool welcomed an estimated 800,000 visitors for the finale of the prestigious 2010 Tall Ships' Races; an internationally acclaimed annual competition held every summer in European waters. The 4 day event provided a rare chance to get ‘up close and personal’ with 60 of the world’s most impressive sailing vessels with the Tall Ships Village offering an amazing variety of attractions, including live bands, street theatre, a folk festival and a World Market, where a range of exotic foods were available.

The tourist industry impacts upon recreational opportunities, shopping facilities and leisure facilities, including the provision of food and drink outlets that include restaurants, bars and cafes. There are currently 853¹ food establishments in Hartlepool, all of which must be subject to intervention to ensure food safety and standards are being met.

2.2 Organisational Structure

Hartlepool Borough Council is a democratic organisation. It comprises of 48 elected Councillors who are responsible for agreeing policies about provision of services and how the Council's money is spent. The key decision making body is the Cabinet. Members of the Cabinet are appointed by the elected Mayor, and each has a portfolio of responsibility for particular services that the Council provides.

The Portfolio Holder for Adult & Public Health Services provides political oversight for food law enforcement. The Management Organisation is led by the Chief Executive. The Council is made up of three Departments:

Chief Executive's
Child & Adult Services
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods

The food law service is delivered through the Regeneration & Planning Division of the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Department.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The Council's Commercial Services team is a constituent part of the Regeneration & Planning Division and is responsible for delivery of the food service. The food service covers both food and feed enforcement.

Service delivery broadly comprises:

- programmed inspections of premises for food hygiene, food standards and feed hygiene;
- registration and approval of premises;
- microbiological sampling and chemical analysis of food and animal feed;
- food & feed Inspection;
- checks of imported food/feed at retail and catering premises;
- provision of advice, educational materials and courses to food/feed businesses;
- investigation of food and feed related complaints;
- investigation of cases of food and water borne infectious disease, and outbreak control;
- dealing with food/feed safety incidents; and
- promotional and advisory work.

¹ This figure includes a number of low risk premises which fall outside the intervention programme i.e. which have no inspectable risk (NIR).

Effective performance of the food law service necessitates a range of joint working arrangements with other local authorities and agencies such as the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Health Protection Agency (HPA), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) & the Animal Medicines Inspectorate (AMI). The Council aims to ensure that effective joint working arrangements are in place and that officers of the service contribute to the on going development of those arrangements.

The service is also responsible for the following:

- health and safety enforcement;
- the provision of guidance, advice and enforcement in respect of smoke free legislation;
- water sampling; including both private and mains supplies & bathing water;
- port health and
- provision of assistance for animal health and welfare inspections, complaint investigation and animal movement issues.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

The Council is responsible for 853 food premises within the borough mostly comprising retailers, manufacturers and caterers. The food businesses are predominantly small to medium sized establishments and the majority of these are liable to food hygiene and food standards inspections.

In addition there are 88 registered feed businesses for which the Council is the enforcing authority.

The delivery point for the food enforcement service is at:

Bryan Hanson House
Hanson Square
Hartlepool
TS24 7BT

Telephone: (01429) 266522
Fax: (01429) 523308

Members of the public and businesses may access the service at this point from 08.30 - 17.00 Monday to Thursday and 08.30 - 16.30 on Friday.

A 24-hour emergency call-out also operates to deal with Environmental Health emergencies which occur out of hours. Contact can be made via Hartlepool Housing's Greenbank Offices on (01429) 869424.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

The Council has signed up to the Enforcement Concordat and has in place a Food Law Enforcement Policy, which was approved by the Adult & Public Health Services Portfolio Holder on 21 March 2005.

This policy has recently been revised and incorporated into the Public Protection Enforcement Policy, which is scheduled to be approved by the Adult & Public Health Services Portfolio Holder in June 2011.

3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1.1 Interventions Programme

The Council has a wide range of duties and powers conferred on it in relation to food law enforcement.

The Council must appoint and authorise inspectors, having suitable qualifications and competencies for the purpose of carrying out duties under the Food Safety Act 1990 and Regulations made under it and also specific food regulations made under the European Communities Act 1972, which include the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 and the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009.

Authorised officers can inspect food at any stage of the production, manufacturing, distribution and retail chain. The Council must draw up and implement an annual programme of risk-based interventions so as to ensure that food and feeding stuffs are inspected in accordance with relevant legislation, the Food Law Code of Practice and centrally issued guidance.

The Code allows local authorities to choose the most appropriate action to be taken to drive up levels of compliance with food law by food establishments. In so doing it takes account of the recommendations in the 'Reducing Administrative Burdens: Effective Inspection and Enforcement'.

Interventions are defined as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment. They include:

- Inspections / Audit;
- Surveillance / Verification;
- Sampling;
- Education, advice and coaching provided at a food establishment; and
- Information and intelligence gathering.

Other activities that monitor, promote and drive up compliance with food law in food establishments, for instance 'Alternative Enforcement Strategies' for low risk establishments and education and advisory work with businesses away from the premises (e.g. seminars/training events) remain available for local authorities to use.

3.1.2 Broadly Compliant Food Establishments

The Code established the concept of 'Broadly Compliant' food establishments. In respect of food hygiene, "broadly compliant", is defined as an establishment that has an intervention rating score of not more than 10 points under each of the following components;

- Level of (Current) Hygiene Compliance;
- Level of (Current) Structural Compliance; and
- Confidence in Management/Control Systems

"Broadly Compliant", in respect of food standards, is defined as an establishment that has an intervention rating score of not more than 10 points under the following:

- Level of (Current) Compliance
- Confidence in Management/Control Systems

Local Authorities are required to report the percentage of "Broadly Compliant" food establishments in their area to the FSA on an annual basis through the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS). The Agency will use this outcome measure to monitor the effectiveness of a local authority's regulatory service.

As at the 1st April 2011, 94% of businesses in the borough were "Broadly Compliant" with food safety requirements (in 2008-09 the figure was 89.3%, and in 2009-10 it was 91.5%). For food standards 94% of businesses achieved broad compliance (in 2008-09 the figure was 93.3% and in 2009-10 it was 96.3%). We aim to concentrate our resources to increase our current rate by the end of 2011/12 however given the current financial climate this will be extremely challenging.

Since April 2008 local authorities are required to report the same information to the National Audit Office under National Indicator 184.

The Food Law Enforcement Plan will help to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement that will improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens. The term enforcement does not only refer to formal actions, it can also relate to advisory visits and inspections.

3.2 Service Delivery Mechanisms

3.2.1 Intervention Programme

Local Authorities must document, maintain and implement an interventions programme that includes all the establishments for which they have food law enforcement responsibility.

Interventions carried out for food hygiene, food standards and for feeding stuffs are carried out in accordance with the Council's policy and standard operating procedures on food/feed premises inspections and relevant national guidance.

Information on premises liable to interventions is held on the APP computerised system. An intervention schedule is produced from this system at the commencement of each reporting year.

The food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs intervention programmes are risk-based systems that accord with current guidance.

The current premises profiles are shown in the tables overleaf:

Food Hygiene:

| Risk Category | Frequency of Inspection | No of Premises |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A | 6 months | 2 |
| B | 12 months | 37 |
| C | 18 months | 274 |
| D | 24 months | 203 |
| E | 36 months or other enforcement | 205 |
| Unclassified | Requiring inspection/risk rating | 0 |
| No Inspectable Risk (NIR) | | 132 |
| Total | | 853 |

Food Standards:

| Risk Category | Frequency of Inspection | No of Premises |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A | 12 months | 2 |
| B | 24 months | 132 |
| C | 36 months or other enforcement | 585 |
| Unclassified | | 2 |
| No Inspectable Risk (NIR) | | 132 |
| Total | | 853 |

Feed Hygiene

| Risk Category | Frequency of Inspection | No of Premises |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A | 12 months | 0 |
| B | 24 months | 21 |
| C | 60 months | 43 |
| Unclassified | | 24 |
| Total | | 88 |

The intervention programme for 2011/12 comprises the following number of scheduled food hygiene and food standards interventions:

Food Hygiene:

| Risk Category | Frequency of Inspection | No of Interventions |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| A | 6 months | 2 |
| B | 12 months | 35 |
| C | 18 months | 161 |
| D | 24 months | 89 |
| E | 36 months or alternative enforcement strategy | 41 |
| Unclassified | | 32 |
| Total | | 360 |

Approved Establishments:

There are 2 approved food establishments in the borough; a fishery products establishment and a manufacturer of food ingredients. These premises are subject to more stringent hygiene provisions than those applied to registered food businesses. These premises require considerably more staff resources for inspection, supervision and advice on meeting enhanced standards.

Primary Producers:

On 1 January 2006 EU food hygiene legislation applicable to primary production (farmers & growers) came into effect. On the basis that the local authority officers were already present on farms in relation to animal welfare and feed legislation, the responsibility was given to the Commercial Services team to enforce this legislation. The service has 52 primary producers. Targets have been set for Councils to inspect 25% of farms classified as high risk and 2% of low risk premises. We currently do not have any high risk premises.

Food Standards:

| Risk Category | Frequency of Inspection | No of Interventions |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| A | 12 months | 2 |
| B | 24 months | 63 |
| C | 36 months or alternative enforcement | 154 |
| Not classified | | 50 |
| Total | | 269 |

Feed Hygiene :

| Risk Category | Frequency of Inspection | No of Interventions |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| A | 12 months | 0 |
| B | 24 months | 16 |
| C | 60 months | 0 |
| Unclassified | | 15 |
| Total | | 31 |

An estimated 10% of programmed interventions relate to premises where it is more appropriate to conduct visits outside the standard working time hours. Arrangements are in place to visit these premises out of hours by making use of the Council's flexible working arrangements, lieu time facilities and, if necessary, paid overtime provisions. In addition, these arrangements will permit the occasional inspection of premises which open outside of, as well as during standard work time hours. The Food Law Code of Practice requires inspections of these premises at varying times of operation.

As a follow-up to primary inspections, the service undertakes revisits in accordance with current policy. For the year 2011/12, the inspection programme is expected to generate an estimated 80 revisits. A number of these premises revisits will be undertaken outside standard working hours and arrangements are in place as described above to facilitate this.

It is anticipated that consistent, high quality programmed inspections by the service will, over time, result in a general improvement in standards, reducing the frequency for recourse to formal action.

The performance against inspection targets for all food hygiene and food standards inspections is reported quarterly to the Adult & Public Health Services Portfolio Holder as part of the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Department plan update and recorded on Covalent.

Port Health

Hartlepool is a Port Health Authority although currently no food or feed enters the port. Work in relation to imported food control can therefore ordinarily be accommodated within the day-to-day workload of the service, however if circumstances were to change whereby food or feed was imported/exported additional resources would be required which would have an effect on the programmed inspection workload and other service demands.

Fish Quay

There is a Fish Quay within the Authority's area which provides a market hall although it is not currently operational and there are associated fish processing units, one of which is an approved establishment.

3.2.2 Registration and Approval of Premises

Food and feed business operators must register their establishments with the relevant local authority. This provision allows for the service to maintain an up-to-date premises database and facilitates the timely inspection of new premises and, when considered necessary, premises that have changed food/feed business operator or type of use.

The receipt of a food/feed premises registration form initiates an inspection of all new premises. In the case of existing premises, where a change of food/feed business operator is notified, other than at the time of a programmed inspection, an assessment is made of the need for inspection based on the date of the next programmed intervention, premises history, and whether any significant change in the type of business is being notified. It is anticipated that approximately 70 additional food premises inspections will be generated for new food businesses during 2011/12.

A competent authority must with some exceptions, approve food business establishments that handle food of animal origin. If an establishment needs approval, it does not need to be registered as well.

Food premises which require approval include those that are producing any, or any combination of the following; minced meat, meat preparations, mechanically separated meat, meat products, live bivalve molluscs, fishery products, raw milk (other than raw cows' milk), dairy products, eggs (not primary production) and egg products, frogs legs and snails, rendered animal fats and greaves, treated stomachs, bladders and intestines, gelatine and collagen and certain cold stores and wholesale markets.

The approval regime necessitates full compliance with the relevant requirements of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and Regulation (EC) 853/2004.

There are 2 premises in the Borough which are subject to approval; a fishery products establishment and a manufacturer of food ingredients.

From 1 January 2006 feed businesses were required be approved or registered with their local authority under the terms of the EC Feed Hygiene Regulation (1831/2003).

This legislation relates to nearly all feed businesses. This means, for example, that importers and sellers of feed, hauliers and storage businesses now require approval or registration. Livestock and arable farms growing and selling crops for feed are also within the scope of the provisions of the regulation.

3.2.3 Microbiological and Chemical Analysis of Food/Feed

An annual food/feed sampling programme is undertaken with samples being procured for the purposes of microbiological or chemical analyses. This programme is undertaken in accordance with the service's Food/Feed Sampling Policy.

All officers taking formal samples must follow the guidance contained in and be qualified in accordance with relevant legislative requirements and centrally issued guidance, including that contained in the Food Law Code of Practice/Feed Law Enforcement Policy and associated Practice Guidance. Follow-up action is carried out in accordance with the service's sampling policy.

Microbiological analysis of food and water samples is undertaken by the Health Protection Agency's Laboratory based at Leeds. Chemical analysis of informal food/feed samples is undertaken by Tees Valley Measurement (a joint funded laboratory based at Canon Park, Middlesbrough) and formal samples are analysed by Durham Scientific Services, who the Authority has appointed as their Public/Agricultural Analyst.

From April 2005 sampling allocations from the Health Protection Agency (HPA), which is responsible for the appropriate laboratory facilities, has been based on a credits system dependant on the type of sample being submitted and examination required.

The allocation for Hartlepool is 8,300 credits for the year 2011/12. Points are allocated as follows:

| Sample type | No of credits |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Food Basic | 25 |
| Food Complex | 35 |
| Water Basic | 20 |
| Water Complex | 25 |
| Dairy Products | 10 |
| Environmental Basic | 20 |
| Environmental Complex | 25 |
| Certification | 15 |

A sampling programme is produced each year for the start of April. The sampling programme for 2011/12 includes national and regional surveys organised by Local Government Regulation (LGR) and the HPA/Local Authority Liaison Group.

Sampling programmes have been agreed with the Food Examiners and Tees Valley Measurement. These have regard to the nature of food/feed businesses in Hartlepool and will focus on locally manufactured/processed foods/feed and food/feed targeted as a result of previous sampling and complaints.

In 2007 the Food Standards Agency, the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) and the Association of Port Health Authorities set a national target that imported food should make up 10% of the food samples taken by local and port health authorities. The service shall therefore aim to meet this target.

Microbiological Food Sampling Plan 2011/12

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| April 2011 Re-samples from previous Sandwich Shop Survey | May 2011 LGR/HPA Cleaning Standards Survey Local Hot Cabinet Survey | June 2011 LGR/HPA Cleaning Standards Survey Local Hot Cabinet Survey Local Mayonnaise Based *RTE Foods Survey |
| July 2011 LGR/HPA Cleaning Standards Survey Local Hot Cabinet Survey Local Mayonnaise Based RTE Foods Survey **LGR/HPA Reactive Study tbc | August 2011 LGR/HPA Cleaning Standards Survey Local Hot Cabinet Survey Local Mayonnaise Based RTE Foods Survey **LGR/HPA Reactive Study tbc | September 2011 LGR/HPA Cleaning Standards Survey Local Hot Cabinet Survey Local Mayonnaise Based RTE Foods Survey **LGR/HPA Reactive Study tbc |
| October 2011 LGR/HPA Pennington 3 Survey LGR/HPA Imported Meats Survey | November 2011 LGR/HPA Pennington 3 Survey LGR/HPA Imported Meats Survey | December 2011 LGR/HPA Pennington 3 Survey Local Cream Cakes Survey |
| January 2012 LGR/HPA Pennington 3 Survey **LGR/HPA Reactive Study tbc LGR/HPA Herbs and Spices Survey | February 2012 LGR/HPA Pennington 3 Survey **LGR/HPA Reactive Study tbc LGR/HPA Herbs and Spices Survey | March 2012 LGR/HPA Pennington 3 Survey **LGR/HPA Reactive Study tbc |

* RTE = Ready to Eat Foods

Composition and Labelling Sampling Plan 2011/12

| MONTH | TEST | SAMPLES |
|-----------|--|----------|
| April | Floral origin of honey | 12 |
| May | Sodium declaration of canned vegetables Labels of above products | 12 12 |
| June | Added water in cooked meats Labels of the above products | 6 6 |
| July | Fish species from local fish and chip shops | 15 |
| August | Feed sampling – Mycotoxins | 2 |
| September | Meat content of pies from local suppliers | 3 |
| October | Feed sampling – Statutory Statement Meat content of pies from local suppliers | 2 3 |
| November | School meals survey | 6 |
| December | ABV – alcohol in restaurant Spirit testing | 15 |
| January | Sugar profile of jams and preserves Labels of the above products | 12 12 |
| February | Joint sampling – meat species | 10 |
| March | Feed sampling - supplements | 2 |

Total samples = 130

Feeding Stuffs

At present feeding stuffs sampling is being given a low priority due to the lack of local manufacturers and packers. An annual feeding stuffs sampling plan however has been drawn up to carry out sampling at the most appropriate time of the year in respect of farms, pet shops and other retail establishments. It is planned that six animal feedingsuffs samples will be taken; two of which will be taken as part of a regional sampling programme.

Together with four other members of the North East Trading Standards Authorities (NETSA) Feed Group we have also submitted a regional bid for funding from the FSA to sample feedstuff as part of the National Co-ordinated Risk-Based Food and Feed Sampling Programme 2011-12. We aim to take samples of any imported feed entering local ports of entry between April to August 2011 and/or samples of feed which has been dried on farm.

Feeding stuffs Sampling Plan 2011/12

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| April - June | 0 |
| July - September | 2 samples from grain stores for mycotoxins |
| October - December | feed samples (statutory statements) |
| January - March | 2 supplements |

Private Water Supplies

A local brewery uses a private water supply in its food production. Regular sampling is carried out of this supply in accordance with relevant legislative regulations.

3.2.4 Food inspection

The purpose of food inspection is to check that food complies with food safety requirements and is fit for human consumption, and is properly described and labelled. As such, the activity of inspecting food commodities, including imported food where relevant, forms an integral part of the food premises inspection programme. Food inspection activities are undertaken in accordance with national guidelines.

3.2.5 Provision of advice and information to food/feed businesses

It is recognised that for most local food businesses contact with an officer of the service provides the best opportunity to obtain information and tailored advice on legislative requirements and good practice. Officers are mindful of this and aim to ensure that when undertaking premises inspections sufficient opportunity exists for food business operators to seek advice.

In addition, advisory leaflets including those produced by the Food Standards Agency are made available.

In February 2006 the Food Standards Agency introduced Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) aimed at assisting smaller catering businesses to introduce a documented food safety management system. Since this time significant resources have been directed towards assisting businesses to fully implement a documented food safety management system.

Guidance is also prepared and distributed to food businesses relating to changes in legislative requirements. The service also encourages new food/feed business operators and existing businesses to seek guidance and advice on their business. It is estimated that 35 such advisory visits will be carried out during the year.

On 1st April 2007 the Council launched the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme. Initially each business was awarded a provisional star rating which reflected the risk rating given at the time of the last primary inspection. Since then businesses have been re-inspected and their risk and star rating reviewed in accordance with our intervention programme. The business' current star rating is made available to the public via the Council's website and the business is provided with a certificate to display on their premises. The service has made a commitment to work with businesses to improve their rating, in particular those awarded less than 3 stars.

Feeding stuffs advice is available via the Council's web site.

A limited level of promotional work is also undertaken by the service on food safety, with minimal impact on programmed enforcement work.

3.2.6 Investigation of Food / Feed Complaints

The service receives approximately 36 complaints, each year concerning food/feed, all of which are subject to investigation. An initial response is made to these complaints within two working days. Whilst many complaints are investigated with minimal resource requirements, some more complex cases may be resource-intensive and potentially affect programmed inspection workloads.

All investigations are conducted having regard to the guidance on the 'Home Authority Principle'.

The procedures for receipt and investigation of food/feed complaints are set out in detailed guidance and internal policy documents.

3.2.7 Investigation of Cases of Food Poisoning and Outbreak Control

Incidents of food related infectious disease are investigated in liaison with the North East Health Protection Unit and in the case of outbreaks in accordance with the Health Protection Unit's Outbreak Control Policy.

Where it appears that an outbreak exists the Principal EHO (Commercial Services) or an EHO, will liaise with the local Consultant in Communicable Disease Control and, where necessary, the North East Health Protection Unit, to determine the need to convene an Outbreak Control Team. Further liaison may be necessary with agencies such as the Food Standards Agency, the Health Protection Agency, Hartlepool Water and Northumbrian Water.

It is estimated that between 100-150 food poisoning notifications are received each year, a large proportion of which are confirmed cases of *Campylobacter*. As relatively little benefit has been demonstrated from the investigation of individual sporadic cases of *Campylobacter* only those who are food handlers or live/work in a residential care home will now be routinely investigated.

Any cluster or outbreak identified by the HPA or Environmental Health will be investigated following the agreed outbreak investigation arrangements. In the event of any major food poisoning outbreak a significant burden is likely to be placed on the service and this would inevitably impact on the performance of the inspection programme.

3.2.8 Dealing with Food / Feed Safety Incidents

A national alert system exists for the rapid dissemination of information about food and feed hazards and product recalls, this is known as the food/feed alert warning system.

All food and feed alerts received by the service are dealt with in accordance with national guidance and internal quality procedures.

Food and feed alert warnings are received by the service from The Food Standards Agency via the electronic mail system, and EHCNet during working hours. Several officers have also subscribed to receive alerts via their personal mobile phones.

The Principal EHO (Commercial Services) or, if absent, the Public Protection Manager ensures that a timely and appropriate response is made to each alert.

Out of hours contact is arranged through Hartlepool Housing's Greenbank Offices, telephone number 01429 869424.

In the event of a serious local incident, or a wider food safety problem emanating from production in Hartlepool, the Food Standards Agency will be alerted in accordance with guidance.

Whilst it is difficult to predict with any certainty the number of food safety incidents that will arise, it is estimated that the service is likely to be notified of 50 food alerts, product recalls or withdrawals during 2011/12, a small proportion of which will require action to be taken by the Authority. This level of work can ordinarily be accommodated within the day-to-day workload of the service, but more serious incidents may require additional resources which may have an effect on the programmed inspection workload and other service demands.

3.2.9 Complaints relating to Food/Feed in Premises

The service investigates all complaints that it receives about food/feed safety and food standards conditions and practices in food/feed businesses. An initial response to any complaint is made within two working days. In such cases the confidentiality of the complainant is paramount. All anonymous complaints are also currently investigated.

The purpose of investigation is to determine the validity of the complaint and, where appropriate, to seek to ensure that any deficiency is properly addressed. The general approach is to assist the food/feed business operator in ensuring good standards of compliance, although enforcement action may be necessary where there is failure in the management of food/feed safety, or regulatory non-compliance.

Based on the number of complaints in 2010/11 it is estimated that approximately 21 such complaints will be received in 2011/12.

3.3 Complaints Against Our Staff

Anyone who is aggrieved by the actions of a member of staff is encouraged, in the first instance, to contact the employee's line manager. Details of how and who to make contact with are contained in the inspection report left at the time of an inspection.

Formal complaints are investigated in accordance with the Council's corporate complaint procedure.

3.4 Liaison Arrangements

The service actively participates in local and regional activities and is represented on the following:

- Tees Valley Heads of Public Protection Group
- Tees Valley Food Liaison Group
- Tees Valley HPA/Local Authority Sampling Group
- Tees Valley Public Health Group
- North East Public Protection Partnership
- North East Trading Standards Liaison Group, which incorporates the
- North East Trading Standards Animal Feed Group

There is also liaison with other organisations including the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Trading Standards Institute, the Health Protection Agency, Defra / Animal Health, OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission.

Officers also work in liaison with the Council's Planning, Development Control and Licensing teams.

3.5 Home Authority Principle / Primary Authority Scheme

The introduction of the Primary Authority Scheme in April 2009 under the provisions of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 placed a statutory obligation on the Council to provide a significantly expanded range of Home Authority services to local businesses when requested by that business. There are opportunities for local authorities to recover costs from businesses to provide this premium service.

The Authority is committed to the LACORS Home Authority Principle, although at present there are no formal arrangements with food/feed businesses to act as a Primary Authority. The Authority does however act as Originating Authority for a brewery and a food manufacturer. Regular visits are made to these premises to maintain dialogue with management and an up to date knowledge of operations.

4 RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Resources

The annual budget for the Consumer Services section in the year 2011/12 is:

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| | £ 000.0 |
| Employees | 513.3 |
| Other Expenditure | 142.1 |
| Income | (34.4) |
| Net Budget | 621.1 |

This budget is for all services provided by this section including Health & Safety, Animal Health, Trading Standards and resources are allocated in accordance with service demands. The figures do not include the budget for administrative / support services which are now incorporated into the overall budget.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods has overall responsibility for the delivery of the food/feed law service. The Assistant Director Regeneration & Planning has responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the Council's Public Protection service, including delivery of the food/feed law service, in accordance with the service plan.

The Public Protection Manager, with the requisite qualifications and experience, is designated as lead officer in relation to food safety and food standards functions and has responsibility for the management of the service.

The resources determined necessary to deliver the service in 2011/12 are as follows:

1 x 0.20 FTE Public Protection Manager (with responsibility also for Health & Safety, Licensing, Trading Standards & Environmental Protection)

1 x 0.35 FTE Principal EHO (Commercial Services)(with responsibility also for Health & Safety and Animal Health)

3 x FTE EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience and with responsibility also for Health & Safety)

1 x 0.56 FTE Part-time EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience and with responsibility also for Health & Safety)

1 x FTE Technical Officer Food (with requisite qualifications and experience)

The Public Protection Manager has responsibility for planning service delivery and management of the Food Law service, Health & Safety at Work, Licensing, Public Health, Water Quality, Trading Standards, Animal Health & Welfare, Environmental Protection and I.T. as well as general management responsibilities as a member of the Regeneration & Planning Management Team.

The Principal EHO (Commercial Services) has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the Food/Feed Law Service, Health & Safety at Work, Public Health, Water Quality and Animal Health & Welfare. The Principal EHO (Commercial Services) is designated as lead officer in relation to animal feed and imported food control.

The EHO's have responsibility for the performance of the food premises inspection programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the food law service, particularly more complex investigations. In addition these officers undertake Health & Safety at Work enforcement.

The Technical Officer (Food) is also responsible for inspections, as well as revisits, investigation of less complex complaints and investigation of incidents of food-borne disease.

Authorised Trading Standards Officers have responsibility for the performance of the feed premises intervention programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the feed law service.

Administrative support is provided by Support Services based within the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods department.

All staff engaged in food/feed safety law enforcement activity are suitably trained and qualified and appropriately authorised in accordance with guidance and internal policy.

Staff undertaking educational and other support duties are suitably qualified and experienced to carry out this work.

4.3 Staff Development

The qualifications and training of staff engaged in food/feed law enforcement are prescribed and this will be reflected in the Council's policy in respect of appointment and authorisation of officers.

It is a mandatory requirement for officers of the food/feed law service to maintain their professional competency by undertaking a minimum of 10 hours core training each year through attendance at accredited short courses, seminars or conferences. This is also consistent with the requirements of the relevant professional bodies.

The Council is committed to the personal development of staff and has in place Personal Development Plans for all members of staff.

The staff Personal Development Plan scheme allows for the formal identification of the training needs of staff members in terms of personal development linked with the development needs of the service on an annual basis. The outcome of the process is the formulation of a Personal Development Plan that clearly prioritises training requirements of individual staff members. The Personal Development Plans are reviewed six monthly.

The details of individual Personal Development plans are not included in this document but in general terms the priorities for the service are concerned with ensuring up to date knowledge and awareness of legislation, building capacity within the team with particular regard to approved establishments, the provision of food hygiene training courses, developing the role of the Food Safety Officer, and training and development of new staff joining the team.

Detailed records are maintained by the service relating to all training received by officers.

4.4 Equipment and Facilities

A range of equipment and facilities are required for the effective operation of the food/feed law service. The service has a documented standard operating procedure that ensures the proper maintenance and calibration of equipment and its removal from use if found to be defective.

The service has a computerised performance management system, the Authority Public Protection computer system (APP). This is capable of maintaining up to date accurate data relating to the activities of the food/feed law service. A documented database management standard operating procedure has been produced to ensure that the system is properly maintained, up to date and secure. The system is used for the generation of the inspection programmes, the recording and tracking of all food/feed interventions, the production of statutory returns and the effective management of performance.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Council is committed to quality service provision. To support this commitment the food law service seeks to ensure consistent, effective, efficient and ethical service delivery that constitutes value for money.

A range of performance monitoring information will be used to assess the extent to which the food service achieves this objective and will include on-going monitoring against pre-set targets, both internal and external audits and stakeholder feedback.

Specifically the Principal EHO (Commercial Services) will carry out accompanied visits with officers undertaking inspections, investigations and other duties for the purpose of monitoring consistency and quality of the inspection and other visits carried out as well as maintaining and giving feedback with regard to associated documentation and reports.

It is possible that the Food Standards Agency may at any time notify the Council of their intention to carry out an audit of the service.

6 REVIEW OF 2010/11 FOOD SERVICE PLAN

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

It is recognised that a key element of the service planning process is the rational review of past performance. In the formulation of this service plan a review has been conducted of performance against those targets established for the year 2010/11.

This service plan will be reviewed at the conclusion of the year 2011/12 and at any point during the year where significant legislative changes or other relevant factors occur during the year. It is the responsibility of the Public Protection Manager to carry out that review with the Assistant Director Regeneration & Planning.

The service plan review will identify any shortfalls in service delivery and will inform decisions about future staffing and resource allocation, service standards, targets and priorities.

Following any review leading to proposed revision of the service plan Council approval will be sought.

6.2 Performance Review 2010/11

This section describes performance of the service in key areas during 2010/11.

6.2.1 Intervention Programme

Our target is to complete 100% of the inspection programme for food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs. These are extremely challenging targets.

During the year we successfully completed all planned food hygiene inspections, however as a result of prioritising resources in this area and the additional work generated by the Tall Ships Event, we were unable to achieve our targets in respect of food standards and feeding stuffs inspections; 80% of food standards inspections were achieved and 27.7% of feeding stuffs. The outstanding inspections (none of which are high risk) will be added to the programme for 2011/12.

We met our 2 working day response time for all complaints.

6.2.2 Registration and Approval of premises

Premises subject to approval were inspected and given relevant guidance.

6.2.3 Advice and Enforcement in relation to the Tall Ships Event

In addition to the programmed work discussed above a significant amount of resource went into the planning stage leading up to the Tall Ships Event to ensure that it ran as smoothly as possible. Prior to the event, liaison took place with partner agencies including the HSE, Police, Defra and other local authorities to ensure that we were prepared to respond to any matters of evident concern.

Officers carried out advisory visits to nearly 100 existing traders to discuss the potential impact on their businesses and how potential problems could be overcome.

Throughout the 4 day event EHOs and support staff worked a rota system so that we always had experienced personnel on site to tackle problems as they arose. This approach seemed to work well throughout the event. In particular contact with the companies operating the catering operations on site proved invaluable, establishing working links including the presence of a gas safety engineer on site for the whole weekend.

With over 100 separate food stalls on site, gas safety was a major issue, while ensuring good food hygiene practices was also vitally important. An event like this could be ruined by a food poisoning or safety incident, so a constant presence on site was considered essential.

In total 112 inspections and 16 revisits were undertaken on the Tall Ships site and surrounding Marina area, with a further 20 inspections undertaken at the Headland Carnival, which was also taking place. As the event went without any major hitches thankfully no formal enforcement action was necessary.

6.2.4 Food Sampling Programme

The food sampling programme for 2010/11 has been completed. The microbiological results are as follows:

Results for Microbiological Sampling Programme 2010/11

| <u>Bacteriological Surveys</u> | <u>Total no.</u> | <u>Number of Samples</u> | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>of samples</u> | <u>Satisfactory</u> | <u>Unsatisfactory</u> |
| <u>Take Away Premises Survey</u> | | | |
| Premises visited: | 11 | | |
| Rice | 15 | 14 | 1 |
| Cloths | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| <u>Follow Up Butchers Survey</u> | | | |
| Premises visited: | 3 | | |
| Meat | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Sw abs | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Cloths | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| <u>Imported Honey Survey</u> | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| <u>Local Mobile Survey</u> | | | |
| Premises visited: | 7 | | |
| Food | 13 | 13 | 0 |
| Sw abs | 7 | 3 | 4 |
| <u>LACORS / HPA Pennington Study</u> | | | |
| Premises visited: | 7 | | |
| Sw abs | 18 | 9 | 9 * |
| Cloths | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| <u>Local Ice Cream Survey</u> | | | |
| Premises visited: | 6 | | |
| Ice cream | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| Swabs | 6 | 2 | 4* |
| <u>Salmonella in Fresh Herbs</u> | 30 | 30 | 0 |
| <u>Local Survey of Sandwich Shops</u> | | | |
| Premises visited: | 19 | | |
| Sandw ich fillings | 39 | 34 | 5* |
| Sw abs | 40 | 33 | 7* |
| Cloths | 6 | 0 | 6* |
| LACORS / HPA Survey of Listeria in RTE Food | 18 | 18 | 0 |
| Total | 227 | 183 | 44 |

* Re-sampled and found to be satisfactory.

The results of the food sampled as part of this years sampling programme were generally satisfactory, however those of the environmental samples were disappointing.

Two surveys, the takeaway food and butchers survey were continued on from last year. A significant number of wiping doths taken from takeaway premises were found to be unsatisfactory. This trend has been mirrored across the region. Advice has been given and a guidance note is currently being prepared by the Health Protection Agency.

The Pennington study, local ice-cream survey and sandwich shop survey produced similar poor results relating to cloths and swabs. Advice was again given relating to cloth use and reminders given relating to cleaning practices. Sandwich fillings were sampled in the sandwich shop survey. Investigations into the poor results indicated that the most likely cause was due to mayonnaise not being refrigerated or poor food handling practices.

The composition and labelling results are shown below:

Results for Food Standards Sampling Programme 2010/11:

| Nature of Sample | Reason for Sampling | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Cooked Meats | Added Water | 6 | |
| | Labelling | 6 | |
| Tinned Meals | Fat / Total sugars | 10 | 2 |
| | Labelling | 12 | |
| *Honey (Formal) | Moisture/Sugars / Labelling | 6 | |
| *Imported Chicken | Added Water / Salt | 4 | |
| *Crab Meat (Formal) | Cadmium content | 2 | |
| Local Ham Sandwiches | Reformed Meats | 19 | |
| Local Pork Sausage | Meat Content | 6 | |
| Tinned Fruit | Mercury, Lead, Cadmium | 11 | 1 |
| | Labelling | 12 | |
| Breakfast Cereal Bars | Sodium content | 12 | |
| | Labelling | 12 | |
| Gluten Free Products | Gluten Products | 12 | |
| | Labelling | 11 | 1 |
| Sweet Mincemeat | Fats / Sugars | 4 | 2 |
| | Labelling | 6 | |
| Takeaway Meals | Meat Species | 8 | 2 |
| Ready Meals | Fish Content | 4 | 2 |
| | Labelling | 6 | |
| Bottled Mineral Water | Declared Minerals /Nitrate / Nitrite Content | 9 | 3 |
| | | | |
| Totals: | 191 | 178 | 13 |

* The Authority participated in a FSA funded survey, in conjunction with other North East Authorities, to sample food originating from outside the EU (Honey, Chicken and Crab Meat were sampled).

Overall there were relatively few food standards samples which failed to meet statutory requirements. Locally produced takeaway meals were sampled for meat species and two lamb dishes were found to contain beef. Advice was given to the businesses concerned.

Other follow up work carried out in respect of failures to comply with composition and Food Labelling Regulations 1996 involved resampling products or referral to the Home Authority for further investigation.

Routine sampling of animal feeding stuffs has been given a low priority due to the lack of local manufacturers and packers. We were unable to complete the feeding stuffs sampling programme due to other service demands and the temporary absence of a member of staff during the year.

6.2.5 Food Inspection

The service undertook no formal seizure of unfit food in the year.

6.2.6 Promotional Work

Food safety promotion whether by advice, education, training or other means is a key part of the food team's strategy in changing behaviour and increasing compliance in businesses.

In February 2006 the Food Standards Agency (FSA) introduced Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) aimed at assisting smaller catering businesses to introduce a documented food safety management system. Since this time our resources have been directed towards continuing to assist businesses to fully implement a documented food safety management system.

The team has continued to offer tailored advice and information on request with 35 advisory visits to businesses being carried out during the year.

A variety of information leaflets, some in foreign languages, are available. Circular letters are issued as required to inform food business operators of food safety matters relevant to their operations e.g. changes in legislation, food alerts.

6.2.7 Food Hygiene Award Scheme

On 1 April 2007 the Authority in conjunction with the other Tees Valley authorities launched the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award scheme.

In accordance with the 'Food Law Code of Practice', following every 'primary' inspection a risk rating is undertaken which is used to determine the frequency of inspection for the business. Of the seven main categories used to determine the overall rating score the following three factors are used to create a star rating:

1. Food Hygiene and Safety
2. Structure and Cleaning
3. Management and Control

These ratings are the only ones that are directly controllable by the business and are the reason they have been used to obtain the food businesses star rating.

The total score from the 3 categories is then used to derive the star rating ranging from 0 (major improvements needed) through to 5 stars (excellent).

The table below shows the results of the star ratings awarded to businesses at the start of the scheme on 1 April 2007, as compared with after 12, 24, 36 and 48 months:

| No. of Stars | Number of Premises (1/4/07) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/08) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/09) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/10) | % | Number of Premises (1/4/11) | % |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 5 | 24/759 | 3% | 85/762 | 11.1% | 163/721 | 22.6% | 237/709 | 33.4% | 289/718 | 40.2% |
| 4 | 155/759 | 20% | 217/762 | 28.5% | 233/721 | 32.3% | 205/709 | 28.9% | 200/718 | 27.9% |
| 3 | 226/759 | 30% | 294/762 | 38.6% | 237/721 | 32.9% | 195/709 | 27.5% | 152/718 | 21.2% |
| 2 | 262/759 | 35% | 137/762 | 18.0% | 65/721 | 9% | 60/709 | 8.5% | 62/718 | 8.6% |
| 1 | 60/759 | 8% | 26/762 | 3.4% | 17/721 | 2.4% | 12/709 | 1.7% | 13/718 | 1.8% |
| 0 | 32/759 | 4% | 3/762 | 0.4% | 6/721 | 0.8% | 0/709 | 0% | 2/718 | 0.3% |

Whilst the number of premises awarded 3 stars and above is similar to the previous year (89.3% compared to 89.8% in 2009 -10) it is pleasing to note that there has been a significant increase in the proportion of 5 star ratings (a 6.8% increase from 2009 -10) .

The service is committed to focussing its resources on carrying out interventions at those businesses which are deemed not to be 'broadly compliant' and has written to businesses that have been awarded 2 stars or less offering advice and support. Where necessary enforcement action will be taken to secure compliance.

In November 2010, The Food Standards Agency launched a national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) however in spite of incentives being offered there were very few early adopters of the scheme (only 29 local authority partners had signed up meaning that the results of only 15,013 of the 406,398 inspected food premises in the UK were being displayed).

At the same time 124 councils (including Hartlepool) were displaying ratings for 149,067 outlets on the rival commercial website www.scoresonthedoors.co.uk In addition rather than adopting the FHRS scheme a further 17 London boroughs had opted to keep their own website. Both use a five-star rating system, which the FSA has dropped claiming it is misunderstood by the public.

By 16 May, 90 councils in England had signed up to the FHRS (only three of which are in the North East or London), this compares with 126 councils on the Scores on the Doors rating system. An additional 34 councils were also running their own scheme independently.

One of the main reasons cited as to why councils have chosen not to migrate to the FHRS scheme is that under the FHRS system, food premises will receive a higher rating than they did under the old system. This could mean that some places given three stars will receive a rating of four under the new system without improving their performance.

Also under the new FHRS system there is a requirement to offer re-inspection for free, which has a manpower implication. There have also been concerns raised about the lack of public awareness of the FHRS scheme and the opinion that the website is not as user friendly as the Scores on the Doors website which has been running for several years.

Despite numerous discussions having taken place between the FSA and representatives of the Scores On the Doors User Group no agreement has been reached. The FSA is currently undertaking a review of how food safety regulations are enforced in the UK and has announced that it is currently pursuing a programme of work to introduce legislation which will require local authorities to adopt the FHRS scheme.

Whilst we support the idea of a national scheme, as our current scheme is working very successfully and there would be resource implications to change, we have no plans to migrate to the FHRS at this time.

6.2.8 Complaints

During the year the service dealt with 8 complaints relating to the condition of food premises and/or food handling practice. In addition, 7 complaints were received regarding unfit or out of condition food or extraneous matter and 5 complaints concerning the composition or labelling of food items. One complaint was received regarding animal feeding stuffs.

Investigations into the above were undertaken within our target of 2 working days.

6.2.9 Food Poisoning

The service received 148 notifications of food borne illness during the year, this figure was significantly higher than the previous year (100 notifications were received during 2010/11). The majority (123) of these notifications related to cases of *Campylobacter*; all of which appeared to be sporadic (isolated) cases. *Campylobacter* is the most common bacterial cause of food poisoning in England and Wales. National data shows that while the incidence of *Salmonella* infections has steadily declined since the late 1990s those caused by *Campylobacter* are showing an upward trend.

6.2.10 Food Safety Incidents

The Service received 51 food alerts, product withdrawal and recall notices from the Food Standards Agency during the year. All food alerts requiring action were dealt with expeditiously. No food incidents were identified by the Authority that required notification to the Food Standards Agency.

6.2.11 Enforcement

During 2010/11 no Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices were served on businesses however an offer of a voluntary closure was accepted and officers worked with the business to ensure that food safety was not compromised.

A total of 6 Hygiene Improvement Notices were served; these were issued in respect of two businesses to ensure compliance with food safety legislation. No prosecutions or Simple Cautions were undertaken.

6.2.12 Improvement Proposals/Challenges 2010/11

The following areas for improvement/challenges were identified in the 2010/11 Food Service Plan.

1. We aim to visit all established food businesses which may be affected by the Tall Ships event beforehand to offer advice. We also aim to inspect all food vendors trading as part of the Tall Ships Event and Headland Carnival.
2. Resources challenging. The section lost 3 posts due to budget pressures during 2008/09. Although none of these posts directly enforced food legislation their workload has had to be distributed to the remaining workforce. Allocating targets for 2010/11 with existing resources will be extremely challenging with the additional workload associated with the Tall Ships Event.

In total officers carried out advisory visits to nearly 100 existing traders prior to the Tall Ships Event and a further 112 inspections and 16 revisits during it, with a further 20 inspections being undertaken at the Headland Carnival, which was taking place at the same time. This work placed a significant demand on resources.

3. Review the Food Enforcement Policy and produce a summary.

The Food Enforcement Policy was revised and has been incorporated into the Public Protection Enforcement Policy, which is scheduled to be approved by the Adult & Public Health Services Portfolio Holder in June 2011.

7. Key Areas for Improvement & Challenges 2011/12

In addition to committing the service to specific operational activities such as performance of the inspection programme, the service planning process assists in highlighting areas where improvement is desirable. Detailed below are specifically identified key areas for improvement that are to be progressed during 2011/12.

1. Resources remain challenging. The Public Protection section lost 21% of its overall budget in 2010/11 as part of a Service Delivery Option review and efficiency savings and the service is anticipating further cuts (expected to be in the region of 10%) during 2011/12.

Although so far we have not lost any additional posts which directly enforce food legislation due to the implications of previous losses of posts within the section we are having to distribute the workload amongst the remaining workforce to ensure that we make best use of our resources. We anticipate further pressures on the budget in subsequent years.

Whilst officers attained the 100% target to complete all food hygiene inspections it was not possible to complete all planned food standards and feeding stuffs inspections. The outstanding inspections will be added to the inspection programme for 2011/12.

2. We will review and update our premises database to ensure it is accurate and reliable so that we can target our resources effectively.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: BUDGET CONSULTATION – NEIGHBOURHOOD
MANAGEMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT
PRESENTATION – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) have been invited to this meeting to provide information in relation to the Neighbourhood Management and Waste Management budget consultation items.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on Friday 24 June 2011, it was agreed that the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum would consider the following budget items at its meetings of 8 and 27 July 2011:-
- Neighbourhood Management;
 - Waste Management.
- 2.2 Consequently the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) have agreed to attend this meeting to provide further information in relation to each budget area outlined above.
- 2.3 Following discussion of the budget items at the meeting of the Forum on 8 July 2011 Members requested that further information be provided to the Forum as follows:-
- Further details of the proposals for both areas;
 - Initial Savings;
 - Key process elements; and

– Timescales.

- 2.4 Members also requested that a breakdown of Neighbourhood Services Income and key internal pressures relating to this income were provided.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum consider the information provided by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) from Hartlepool Borough Council in attendance at this meeting and seek clarification on any relevant issues where required.

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Chief Executive's Department – Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) Report of the Assistant Chief Executive entitled 'Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12 – Selection and Timetabling of Project / Service Areas to feed into the 2012/13 Budget Process' delivered to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 June 2011.
- (ii) Minutes of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum 8 July 2011.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: **FUTURE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on the future approach to Neighbourhood Management, the report includes proposals to end the current arrangements of North, Centre and South. The Forum is requested to consider the proposals put forward regarding the redesign of the service and how the proposals contribute towards the overall allocated savings target.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Regeneration & Neighbourhood Management Service Delivery Options review carried out in 2010/11 achieved the savings target set but fell short of making any recommendations regarding the future of Neighbourhood Consultative Forums and Neighbourhood Action Plans and their associated Forums due at the time to the uncertainty of the Comprehensive Spending Review and impending Localism Bill.
- 2.2 The Council's Community Involvement and Engagement review includes proposals to redesign the current Neighbourhood Consultative Forums and re-focus Neighbourhood Action Plans onto the most highly disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Hartlepool. The Forums are valued by many as they provide an opportunity for Ward Councillors to engage with residents from their area and work with others to improve services. At the time of writing this report Cabinet had deferred its decision regarding the future of the LSP, NCFs, NAPs and Resident Representatives due to the recent announcement regarding the Health & Wellbeing Board. NB This area of work is outside this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.3. The Environmental Services SDO review resulted in a reduction in street cleansing and horticultural resources which impacted upon the services delivered under the umbrella of Neighbourhood Management.

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Management is about the intrinsic management of an area, it is not just about getting people to meetings, or coordinating street cleansing and highway related services, it is about developing and delivering prospects for the local community e.g. Youth Forums, Neighbourhood Policing and JAGs, Health audits and Private Sector Housing.
- 3.2 Hartlepool's Neighbourhood Management structure provides the Authority with an established and robust mechanism to respond to communities regarding neighbourhood planning. However we should be mindful of ward boundary changes and the financial position facing the Authority. As such a number of options have been discussed at Mayor's briefing over the last 10 months regarding the LSP review, Neighbourhood Consultative Forums and Resident Representatives, which has subsequently led to discussions over the future shape of Neighbourhood Management.
- 3.3 The Forum will recall Neighbourhood Management was commented on as an area to be explored regarding identifying efficiencies during the CSR budget scrutiny investigations. Three options have been considered, they are:-
- 3.4 **Option 1** - Retain existing Neighbourhood Management geographical arrangements and staffing structures with three neighbourhood areas. Under this option Community Regeneration Officers and Neighbourhood Development Officers would also be able to spend more time in the community responding to the Localism Bill, enabling and developing local voluntary and resident groups to grasp the Big Society and assist their capacity to regenerate the area and support them in the development of Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.5 There would be no savings to be made in terms of staff costs over and above those already achieved through recent restructures and SDO review. However added value would be provided through the expansion of engagement and empowerment activity at local level. Savings would therefore have to be sought from environmental services which would impact upon service performance and go against Cabinet's desire to protect front line services.
- 3.6 **Option 2 (preferred option)** - Change existing Neighbourhood Management arrangements by reducing geographical neighbourhoods to two. Under this option Neighbourhood Managers would be given an expanded geographical area. This option would create significant savings if the Neighbourhood Management Service was to be reduced by a full staff team, which from the last meeting is something the Forum would not advocate as this would weaken the Council's ability to respond to Neighbourhood Planning, the Localism agenda and Big Society. This option strengthens local governance and accountability arrangements, providing resources within each area to support wards in the development of Neighbourhood Plans and provides a level of efficiencies.

- 3.7 There is a risk under this option that insufficient focus is given to our deprived neighbourhoods. To address this risk, and ensure the continued regeneration of these neighbourhoods, the proposal presented to Cabinet as part of the Community Involvement & Engagement Review, recommends a reduction of NAP's through merging some NAP areas or by focusing on the 5% most disadvantaged areas. This would acknowledge the need for greater resources in these neighbourhoods in relation to our empowerment activity whilst at the same time recognising the need to create efficiencies.
- 3.8 Following the outcome of the Ward Boundary review efforts could also be made to ensure NAP areas remain co-terminus with ward boundaries. This would limit as far as possible the number of meetings that Ward Councillors may be asked to attend who, post March 2012, will be responsible for a larger geographical area. If NAPs were co-terminus with ward boundaries the production of performance data would also be made easier and the current confusion over ward boundaries/ NAP boundaries/ and Consultative Forum areas and the awaited Neighbourhood Plans, avoided. Rationalisation of current engagement and empowerment mechanisms would also assist other Agencies currently under pressure to make savings such as the Police.
- 3.9 This option would result in savings of between £45k and £90k, from existing revenue budgets, depending upon the final structure.
- 3.10 Options as to how the town could be split are provided in Appendix A complete with population information.
- 3.11 **Option 3** - This option would involve changing neighbourhood management arrangements by effectively operating on a Town-wide geographical basis with one Manager taking responsibility for Community Development & Empowerment for the whole of the town. The function would change to focus on Community Cohesion, Development and Empowerment and support diverse groups. Front line services currently delivered by the Neighbourhood Manager would transfer to other service managers, i.e. street cleansing, highways and grounds maintenance. The Forum has recommended the retention of front line services within Neighbourhood Management.
- 3.12 The main risk with this option is resilience; such a structure would be incapable of delivering all aspects of the current Neighbourhood Management function. It is doubtful whether such a model could deliver good quality engagement without bolstering the number of development workers, we would not have the resources or skills base to deal with Neighbourhood Plans and other aspects, e.g. the environmental and neighbourhood co-ordination function would not be deliverable on a Neighbourhood basis leading to fragmentation of services and the inability to provide quick co-ordinated responses to issues as they arise within the community in relation to immediate quality of life issues.
- 3.13 This option would result in greater savings than identified above, but the full outcome would be dependent upon the final structure.

4. POLICE & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY BILL

- 4.1 The benefits of integrating services at a neighbourhood level that support the empowerment of local communities and improve quality of life for local residents through joined up working have been well documented and acknowledged. Environmental services are a key priority across all communities, one of the key functions of Neighbourhood Managers is to promote safer, cleaner and greener public spaces and there is a need to ensure that Neighbourhood Managers have the necessary tools to deliver this. The co-location of basic neighbourhood services alongside Policing and Community Safety services at accessible locations within communities has contributed to delivering a community focused approach resolving immediate quality of life issues.
- 4.2 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Bill currently passing through Parliament is now approaching the end of the Report Stage in the House of Lords. This Act will see the Police Authority in its current form being replaced with Police and Crime Commissions from May 2012. The basic principle is to increase the accountability of the police and strengthen the link between police and communities.

The Commissioner will:

- Be responsible for appointing their Chief Constable and holding them to account
 - Determine local policing priorities, publish the Police and Crime Plan, set a local precept and force budget
 - Have the power to determine Community Safety Grants
- 4.3 Commissioners will not be a responsible Authority on Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) but they will have the following powers and duties relating to community safety.
- Reciprocal duty for Commissioners and responsible Authorities to co-operate with each other for the purposes of reducing crime and disorder
 - Power to bring a representative of any of all CSPs in their area to discuss priority issues
 - Power to require reports from CSPs about issues of concern
 - Power to approve mergers of CSPs on application of the CSPs concerned
 - Power to commission community safety work from a range of local partners including, but not limited to CSPs

What will this mean for the Safer Hartlepool Partnership?

- A new line of accountability and a duty to co-operate.
- PCC representation on CSP Strategic Groups i.e. SHP Executive.
- CSP strategies should align with PCC plans, although retaining a local focus
- Funding streams currently going to CSPs will go to Police and Crime Commissioners

- 4.4 In order to retain local focus the Safer Hartlepool Partnership have recognised the merit in integrating Community Safety Services with Neighbourhood Management and Neighbourhood Policing, and discussions have commenced with Hartlepool's District Commander regarding the potential to integrate Community Safety which will provide greater resilience across the two agencies, enable the Council and the Police to prioritise service provision in light of reduced grants in preparation of new Police & Crime Commissioner which will see the transfer of Community Safety Grants to the PCC. This approach should also reduce duplication and has the potential to identify further efficiencies.

5. VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT

- 5.1 Community Regeneration transferred to Neighbourhood Management as part of the CSR budget review in preparation of the Localism Bill which proposes the introduction of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Forums. There may also be opportunities to explore the relationship between the Voluntary Sector Strategy and the Compact, and the confusion which has arisen as to who leads and drives forward the Strategy and the Compact and whether or not they should be one and the same.
- 5.2 If the Council chose to move to two neighbourhood areas, and support the integration of Community Safety into Neighbourhood Management, as it has Community Regeneration, a Neighbourhood Manager could take on a strategic lead for Community Safety, with the other leading on Community Regeneration and the Voluntary Sector Strategy and Compact.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood Management structure provides the Council with a strong mechanism for responding to communities. Whilst ward boundaries have little relevance to most communities, for the purposes of Neighbourhood Management there is a view that they provide a coherent basis for ensuring a coherent fit with wider local governance, including access to resources and political representation.

- 6.2 The proposals should be considered within the context of changes in the national picture including the introduction of the Localism Bill, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill, the development of the Big Society, as well as the proposed changes to ward boundaries from 2012, the Council's review regarding Community Involvement and Engagement and the Council's financial position.
- 6.3 The front line services managed by Neighbourhood Management will be redesigned accordingly, the details of which will be worked up following agreement to the proposals presented on Neighbourhood Management
- 6.4 In essence the £45k saving set against Neighbourhood Management for 2012/13 can be achieved by moving to two neighbourhood areas. At previous meetings of the NS Scrutiny Forum and the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Executive it has been agreed that the time is right to consider the integration of Community Safety and explore the opportunities to review the Voluntary Sector Strategy and the Compact that would support the Council's Community Involvement & Engagement review.
- 6.5 The options presented regarding the split of Neighbourhood areas will be a Cabinet decision following consultation with other statutory organisations ie Hartlepool Police, Fire Brigade and PCT.

7. REPORTING PROCESS

- 7.1 CMT July 2011
Scrutiny July 2011
Cabinet in August 2011

8. WHO WILL BE CONSULTED AND HOW?

- 8.1 Consultation will take place with Elected Members and Resident representatives via Scrutiny, residents will be informed at the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums regarding the redesign of the forum areas, due to the ward boundary changes and Community Involvement and Engagement review.
- 8.2 Employees and Trade Unions will be kept informed through various meeting

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum are asked to comment on the report and recommend:-
 - (i) The end of the current arrangements of North, Centre and South and move to two areas,

- (ii) The preferred option regarding neighbourhood area boundaries
- (iii) Integration of Community Safety with Neighbourhood Management and Hartlepool District Police
- (iv) Exploration of the relationship between the Voluntary Sector Strategy and Compact

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27th July 2011



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: **WASTE MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on the options presented at the meeting on the 8th July 2011. The Forum is requested to consider and comment on the proposals put forward regarding the redesign of the service and how the proposals contribute towards the overall allocated savings target.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of the Council's overall budget strategy efficiency targets have been set against each Department / Division and Waste Management has a target of £90,000.
- 2.2 The waste management service was one of the first Service Delivery Option reviews carried out during 2009/10 with a target of £265,000 which it achieved. A further £95,000 was also identified during the 2010/11 Comprehensive Spending Review and the loss of WNF grant had a significant impact on the Environmental Education and Enforcement section which resulted in a reduction in the number of Enforcement officers the Council employed and £75,000 of staff costs being absorbed by the section.
- 2.3 In addition to this as part of the Business Transformation Management work-stream Waste Management, Environmental Enforcement and Environmental standards came together under one Strategic Manager resulting in further savings of £110,000
- 2.4 In summary, savings made in this area over the last two years are £545,000.
- 2.5 Next year's target of £90,000 has been set against the waste management service for 2012/13, which will be achieved through introducing the improvements to further segregation of waste materials at the Household Waste Recycling Centre and Waste Transfer Station, reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill.

- 2.6 In addition a the route optimisation ICT programme is being introduced which will enable the collection service to move towards zonal working, balancing collection rounds, reducing fuel usage and the level of resources required to collect waste plus other operational changes. However as this could impact upon collection days, it makes sense to wait until the recycling kerbside collection contract has been retendered and introduce the revamped service as a whole.
- 2.7 Members supported the above and requested further information on future potential efficiencies.

3. WASTE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL EFFICIENCIES

Procurement of Vehicles, Equipment and Supplies

- 3.1 Waste Management services are a critical and visible activity for the Local Authority. The scope of opportunity to achieve efficiencies is in the collection of waste from residential and business properties and the transportation to recycling and disposal outlets.
- 3.2 Fleet management is a critical function that supports the delivery of waste management services along with a number of other front line services. Operating this service collaboratively can provide greater operational flexibility and resilience as well as provide stakeholders/ partners with the opportunity for cost reduction.
- 3.3 The procurement of vehicles, equipment and appropriate supplies includes the purchasing and leasing of vehicles of a variety of specifications from suppliers from the market. The purchasing of vehicles can be on a spot or block purchase basis depending upon the individual service area requirement. The standardisation and aggregated purchasing requirements should deliver larger reductions in unit cost, and additional savings would be expected through a reduction in the number of vehicles purchased and replaced.
- 3.4 In principle, savings can be achieved through jointly procuring vehicles between one/two or more Local Authorities and potentially with other organisations who participate. However, due to high price competition in this market, demanding substantially lower prices may be challenging and it will be key to produce economies of scale through standardised specifications and standards. Further savings could be achieved in vehicle utilisation and there may be opportunities to explore with neighbouring Authorities what scope there is to increase that utilisation, thereby reducing the number of vehicles required.

Integration of Enforcement Activities

- 3.5 The Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services Department provides a number of Enforcement services aimed at improving the quality of life for Hartlepool residents. These services include the Council security contract, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, the issuing of litter, dog foul and Stop Search and Seize Fixed Penalty notices CCTV (both overt and covert) and Car Parking enforcement.

- 3.6 Discussions have taken place with the Transportation and Engineering Division and it is felt that car parking enforcement is intrinsic to the overall car parking strategy of the town and as such it would be detrimental to break up this service.
- 3.7 However there may be merit in integrating Anti-Social Behaviour into Neighbourhood Management and entering into discussions with the Police regarding the integration of Community Safety services and devolving powers to the Police and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) to issue fixed Penalty notices.
- 3.8 The provision of CCTV is strictly regulated and the Authority has to follow strict guidelines in how it deploys cameras. The integration of Community Safety into the Neighbourhood Services Division has produced closer working relationships providing more joined up and co-ordinated responses.

Bulky Waste – VCS/Social Enterprise

- 3.9 As part of the SDO review an independent study was undertaken by Waste Action Resources Programme to consider the feasibility of a furniture re-use shop and examine the options for re-using material from the bulky waste collection service and Household Waste Recycling centre, as well as provide suggestions for improvement to the quality of the service and value for money.
- 3.10 Charging for the collection of bulky household waste was recently introduced at £15 for 3 items. The actual cost per collection is around £40. There has been no negative feedback regarding the introduction of a charge. However what has been experienced, and in fairness was anticipated, is a reduction in the number of collections, and more importantly this has not resulted in an increase in fly tipping.
- 3.11 We could look to outsource to a charity or social enterprise.

Trade Waste – Joint Service across Tees Valley

- 3.12 Due to the competitive market it is difficult to make efficiencies in this operational area, without looking at reducing service standards or increasing prices which in turn will make us less competitive and reduce our customer base. The service currently breaks even so cessation of the service would not create any significant savings.
- 3.13 The existing customer base determines the collection resource which at present is two operatives and one vehicle, which would need to continue as it is the minimum resource required to carry out the service which is currently running at capacity.

- 3.14 If we commissioned the service through another Authority, or considered joint service delivery with neighbouring Authorities, opportunities may be available in terms of route optimisation and reduced costs across the participating Authorities.
- 3.15 Should we approach the Tees Valley Local Authorities to explore the opportunity of setting up a Tees Valley service with one Authority providing the service and the remainder commissioning.

Recycling Kerbside Collection Service

- 3.16 The kerbside recycling collection contract is due to be re-tendered this financial year, and a number of options are available to the Authority e.g.

- (i) Bring the existing dry recyclable collection service (paper, glass, cans and textiles) in house and continue to use the existing blue box and bags. Residents would continue to pre-sort their household waste in the existing containers. This cost of replacing boxes and bags is £66,000 per annum.

Plastic, cardboard and garden waste would continue to be collected on the second week. The materials would be collected and mixed in the existing refuse freighters and disposed of at a local recycling outlet for the materials to be re-segregated. This method involves double handling, i.e. pre-sort, mixed and re-segregation and could generate efficiencies of around £100k. Residents would not experience any change however this would be a public relations disaster.

- (ii) Bring the existing dry recyclable collection service in-house and provide residents with an additional wheeled bin. Residents would co-mingle all dry recyclables in an additional bin, glass could be collected in an insert in the bin. These would be collected by the Council in the existing dual split refuse freighters and disposed of at a local recycling outlet for the materials to be segregated. Residential waste and garden waste would continue to be collected on the second week. The costs of additional wheeled bins for 40,000 properties would be circa £1million, and would be funded over 15 years at a cost of £66,000 per annum, this would reduce the need to fund replacement boxes and bags at a cost of £30,000 and would achieve efficiencies in the region of £100,000.
- (iii) Re-tender the recycling collection service to include plastic and cardboard. Residual and garden waste would continue to be collected in-house. This could generate efficiencies in the region of £150,000. This option would result in either TUPE transfer.
- (iv) Hybrid of the above.
- (v) Market-test the whole service.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The waste management service has achieved significant savings over the last two years, as part of the Business Transformation Programme and in response to the comprehensive spending review.
- 4.2 There are further significant savings that could be generated from pursuing any of the above options. However this will take time.
- 4.3 The key financial benefits relate to procurement and utilisation of vehicles, supplies and equipment, bulky waste collections and the re-tendering of the kerbside dry recyclable collection service.

5. REPORTING PROCESS

- 5.1 Scrutiny July 2011
CMT August 2011
Cabinet in August 2011
Neighbourhood Consultative Forums (for information) autumn 2011

6. WHO WILL BE CONSULTED AND HOW?

- 6.1 Consultation will take place with Elected Members and Resident representatives via Scrutiny and Cabinet. A full consultation programme will be developed regarding changes to services which may affect residents, staff and the trade unions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum are requested to comment on the report and potential options.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM
CONSIDERATION OF 2012/13 BUDGET ITEMS –
SCOPING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum regarding their consideration of the 2012/13 budget items chosen as part of the Work Programming process on the 24 June 2011.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 June 2011 Members determined their work programme for the 2011/12 Municipal Year. It was decided that each Scrutiny Forum would focus its attention on preparations for the 2012/13 budget during the current Municipal Year, given the extremely challenging financial situation facing the authority.
- 2.2 Each Scrutiny Forum was requested to consider the budget proposals identified in relation to the remit of that Forum, to formulate a view on those proposals and / or to suggest ways of achieving the required savings.
- 2.3 It was agreed at the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee work programming meeting on 24 June 2011 that the following budget proposals would be considered by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum:-
- Neighbourhood Management
 - Waste Management
 - Private Sector Housing Management
 - Private Sector Licensing Income

- 2.4 In accordance with the timetable agreed at the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 24 June 2011, consideration is to be given to the below proposal / project at today's meeting:-

- Private Sector Housing Management

3. OVERALL AIM OF SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET ITEMS

- 3.1 To provide views and / or alternative suggestions for savings, regarding the 2012/13 budget proposals presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum in relation to 'Private Sector Housing Management'.

4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF 2012/13 BUDGET PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference are proposed:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of the service area in relation to:
- i) The current budget (as detailed in the budget book);
 - ii) Staffing information;
 - iii) Budgetary and operational pressures / challenges / priorities and statutory responsibilities (where applicable);
 - iv) The level of savings required.
- (b) To explore the budget requirements in relation to:-
- i) The required savings (including areas where provision of services could be ceased, reduced or changed to improve efficiency);
 - ii) The potential impact of proposals / options on future service provision; and
 - iii) How the provision of service could look in the future.
- (c) To formulate the Forum's comments on the budget proposals to feed in to the decision making process;
- (d) To provide details of, and consider, any alternative suggestions the Forum may develop to achieve the required savings in the areas identified.

5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY / SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 5.1 Members of the Forum can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the budget process. However, Members may wish to be mindful of the need to deal with budget proposals in an efficient and timely manner and the impact on the department responsible for the budget area, when considering such requests.

5.2 The 2012/13 budget will be discussed at a number of public meetings including Scrutiny Forums, Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, Cabinet and Council. Elected Members, representatives of groups who provide and use services, residents and members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings, where consideration will be given to their views in relation to the budget proposals.

5.3 Evidence to be provided:

- (i) Details of the current budget (as detailed in the budget book);
- (ii) Staffing information;
- (iii) Details of budgetary and operational pressures / challenges / priorities and statutory responsibilities (where applicable);
- (iv) The level of savings required; and
- (v) Details of potential options identified for the delivery of required budget savings.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

6.1 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the Scrutiny process and diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. Paragraph 5.2 identifies the budget process route. Further details regarding the public meetings to be held to discuss the 2012/13 budget can be found on the Council's website.

7. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE BUDGET PROCESS

7.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the budget consultation to be undertaken in relation to the areas identified in paragraph 2.4, which may be changed at any stage:-

27 July 2011

Setting the scene and evidence gathering in relation to 'Private Sector Housing Management' budget proposals including:-

- (i) A detailed overview of services currently provided in relation to 'Private Sector Housing Management';
- (ii) Details of the amount of required savings;
- (iii) Details of how the required efficiencies may be delivered;
- (iv) The potential effect of efficiencies on future service provision / what the service will look like in the future.

Formulation and consideration by the Forum of suggestions to achieve the required savings.

Formulation of comments by the Forum to feed into the 2012/13 budget decision making process.

12 September 2011 – Consideration of the ‘Private Sector Housing Management’ budget proposal by the Cabinet (tentative date).

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Members are recommended to agree the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum’s remit for consideration of the 2012/13 budget proposals as outlined in paragraph 4.1.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper(s) was/were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Presentation by the Assistant Chief Executive entitled ‘Budget Position 2012/13’ - delivered to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of 24 June 2011.
- (ii) Report of the Assistant Chief Executive entitled ‘Selection and Timetabling of Project / Service Areas to feed into the 2012/13 Budget Process’ – delivered to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of 24 June 2011
- (iii) Minutes of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee 24 June 2011.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: BUDGET CONSULTATION – PRIVATE SECTOR
HOUSING MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION –
COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning) have been invited to this meeting to provide information in relation to the Private Sector Housing Management budget consultation item.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on Friday 24 June 2011, it was agreed that the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum would consider the following budget item at its meeting of 27 July 2011:-
- Private Sector Housing Management.
- 2.2 Consequently the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning) have agreed to attend this meeting to provide information in relation to the budget area outlined above.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum consider the information provided by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning Services) from Hartlepool Borough Council in attendance at this meeting and seek clarification on any relevant issues where required.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) Report of the Assistant Chief Executive entitled 'Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12 – Selection and Timetabling of Project / Service Areas to feed into the 2012/13 Budget Process' delivered to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 June 2011.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO PRIVATE
SECTOR HOUSING SCHEMES – SCOPING
REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for their forthcoming investigation into 'Private Sector Housing Schemes'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 June 2011 Members determined their work programme for the 2011/12 Municipal Year. The topic of Private Sector Housing Schemes was selected by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum as its topic of investigation to run from July until November 2011.
- 2.2 A number of private sector housing schemes are currently operated by Hartlepool Borough Council, these include the Selective Licensing, Landlord Accreditation, Good Tenant and Empty Homes schemes. The schemes aim to improve the areas in which they operate in a number of ways, including improving the condition and management of properties in the private rented sector, reducing anti social behaviour and developing stronger more sustainable communities where landlords, tenants and community members enjoy the benefit of good dwelling conditions, competent management and considerate neighbourly behaviour.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

- 3.1 To explore and evaluate private sector housing schemes in place in Hartlepool, specifically Selective Licensing, Landlord Accreditation, Empty Homes and the Good Tenant Scheme.

4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation are proposed:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of private sector housing schemes in operation in Hartlepool to include:-
- Selective Licensing;
 - Landlord Accreditation;
 - Empty Homes Scheme;
 - Good Tenant Scheme.
- (b) To explore / evaluate the following:-
- (i) the effectiveness of current private sector housing schemes operating in Hartlepool in achieving desired outcomes;
 - (ii) schemes which have proven successful in other areas (giving due consideration to the areas demographics, housing types and nature of the housing problems in Hartlepool when considering the transferability of such schemes).
- (c) To gain an understanding of the impact of current and future budget pressures on the way in which private sector housing schemes are provided in Hartlepool;
- (d) To explore and consider the following (giving due regard to *term of reference (c)*) :-
- (i) how private sector housing schemes/services may be provided in the future;
 - (ii) if there are alternative ways to achieve the desired outcomes of low levels of anti-social behaviour and active thriving communities.

5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY / SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

- 5.1 Members of the Forum can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the Scrutiny review.

5.2 The Forum can invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations as follows:-

- (a) Member of Parliament for Hartlepool;
- (b) Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Housing (Elected Mayor);
- (c) Director and / or appropriate officers of the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department;
- (d) Local residents, private sector housing tenants and private sector landlords;
- (e) Another Local Authority as an example of 'good practice';
- (f) Appropriate national/regional organisations and partner agencies;
(i.e. Cleveland Police, Private Sector Landlord Steering Group);
- (g) Representatives of minority communities of interest or heritage (expressions of interest to be sought from such groups through the HVDA) [mailto:k.bayley@hvda.co.uk];
- (h) Ward Councillors.

5.3 The Forum may also wish to refer to a variety of documentary / internet sources, key suggestions are as highlighted below:-

- (a) http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/file/6398/landlord_accreditation_scheme-code_of_conduct
- (b) http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/100007/housing/1403/selective_licensing
- (c) http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/100007/housing/409/empty_homes
- (d) http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/98/anti_social_behaviour_and_nuisance/1072/anti-social_behaviour_unit/12

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

6.1 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the Scrutiny process and diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. Based upon the research undertaken, paragraph 5.2 includes suggestions as to potential groups which the Forum may wish involve throughout the inquiry (where it is felt appropriate and time allows).

7. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE DEDICATED OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUDGET

- 7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report, to the need to request funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry. At this stage no additional funding has been identified as being necessary to support Members in their investigation. Members, however, may wish to seek additional funding over the course of the investigation and the pro forma attached at **Appendix A** outlines the criteria on which a request to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will be judged.

8. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 8.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the review to be undertaken, which may be changed at any stage:-

27 July 2011

‘Setting the Scene’ – Presentation covering *term of reference (a)* to include;

- (i) An overview of private sector housing schemes currently operating in Hartlepool detailing:-
 - The overall aim of each scheme;
 - How each scheme operates;
 - The links between the schemes;
 - The areas of the town each scheme covers.

14 September 2011

Evidence gathering – Reports / presentations covering *Term of Reference (b)*

- (i) An analysis of the private sector housing schemes currently in operation in Hartlepool detailing what has and hasn’t worked and reasons identified for this;
- (ii) Challenges facing the provision of private sector housing schemes in the future;
- (iii) Details of forthcoming legislation which may affect the way private sector housing schemes are delivered in the future;
- (iv) Invitation to be extended to another authority to give evidence as an example of good practice in this area;

- (v) Invitation to hear the views of national, regional and partner organisations;
(i.e. Cleveland Police, Private Sector Landlords Steering Group);
- (vi) Evidence from the Portfolio Holder (subject to availability);
- (vii) Evidence from the M.P. (subject to availability).

Between 14 September 2011 and 26 October 2011 –

Hold focus group(s) for Tenants to seek views on private sector housing schemes in Hartlepool.

26 October 2011

Evidence gathering – Reports / presentations covering *Terms of Reference (c) and (d)*.

- (i) To gain an understanding of the impact of current and future budget pressures on the way in which private sector housing schemes are provided in Hartlepool;
- (ii) Feedback from Tenant focus groups;
- (iii) Identification by the forum of suggestions for improvements to private sector housing schemes or alternatives ways to achieve the desired outcomes, including how such services could be delivered in the current economic environment (to cover *Term of Reference (d)*).

9 November 2011 – Consideration of Draft Final Report.

2 December 2011 - Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

9 January 2012 – Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet/Council (tentative date).

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Members are recommended to agree the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's remit of the Scrutiny investigation as outlined in paragraph 4.1.

Contact Officer: - Elaine Hind – Scrutiny Support Officer
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper(s) was/were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Hartlepool Borough Council Landlord Accreditation - Scheme Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX A

**PRO-FORMA TO REQUEST FUNDING TO SUPPORT
CURRENT SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

| |
|--|
| Title of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: |
| Title of the current scrutiny investigation for which funding is requested: |
| To clearly identify the purpose for which additional support is required: |
| To outline indicative costs to be incurred as a result of the additional support: |
| To outline any associated timescale implications: |
| To outline the 'added value' that may be achieved by utilising the additional support as part of the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation: |

To outline any requirements / processes to be adhered to in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules / Standing Orders:

To outline the possible disadvantages of not utilising the additional support during the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any possible alternative means of additional support outside of this proposal:

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 July 2011



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO PRIVATE
SECTOR HOUSING SCHEMES – SETTING THE
SCENE PRESENTATION - COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Housing Services Manager has been invited to attend this meeting to provide information in relation to the investigation into Private Sector Housing Schemes.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 June 2011, Members determined their work programme for the 2011/12 Municipal Year. The topic of Private Sector Housing Schemes was selected by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum as its topic for investigation.

- 2.2 The Private Sector Housing Schemes operating in Hartlepool are as follows:-

- Selective Licensing;
- Landlord Accreditation;
- Empty Homes; and
- The Good Tenant Scheme.

- 2.3 In accordance with the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry / Sources of Evidence for this Scrutiny investigation, as outlined in the scoping report detailed at item 7.4 on today's agenda, the Housing Services Manager from Hartlepool Borough Council has agreed to attend this meeting to provide a presentation to outline the following in relation to the private sector housing schemes operating in Hartlepool:-

- (i) The overall aim of each scheme;
- (ii) How each scheme operates;

- (iii) The links between the schemes; and
- (iv) The areas of the town each scheme covers.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum consider the evidence of the Housing Services Manager from Hartlepool Borough Council in attendance at this meeting and seek clarification on any relevant issues where required.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Private Sector Housing Schemes – Scoping Report' Presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on 27 July 2011.
- (ii) Minutes of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee 24 June 2011.