

# CABINET AGENDA



**Monday 7 November 2011**

**at 9.15 a.m.**

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

MEMBERS: CABINET:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Councillors Brash, Hall, Hargreaves, Hill, Jackson, Payne, Simmons and H Thompson.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**3. MINUTES**

To receive the Record of Decision in respect of the meeting held on 24 October 2011 (previously circulated)

**4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

No items

**5. KEY DECISIONS**

- 5.1 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Pathfinder Programme – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
- 5.2 Common Allocations Policy Review – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*
- 5.3 Integrated Transport Unit and Highway, Traffic and Transport 2012/13 Savings – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

- 5.4 Property Related Services 2012/13 Savings – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*
- 5.5 Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2011-2015 – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

## **6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

- 6.1 Marketing of the Friarage Manor House Site – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*
- 6.2 Medium Term Financial Strategy / Business Transformation – *Acting Chief Executive*
- 6.3 Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny Functions – *Assistant Chief Executive*
- 6.4 Community Pool 2011/2012 – Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

## **7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/INFORMATION**

No items

## **8. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**

No items.

# **CABINET REPORT**

**7 November 2011**



**Report of:** DIRECTOR OF CHILD AND ADULT SERVICES

**Subject:** SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)  
PATHFINDER PROGRAMME

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## **SUMMARY**

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

The purpose of the report is to provide an outline of the SEN National Pathfinder Programme, to identify the implications for Hartlepool and to ask Cabinet to endorse the request by the Department for Education (DfE) to participate in the programme.

### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report details a brief outline of the National Pathfinder Programme.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

As a part of the Pathfinder, Hartlepool and Darlington will have the opportunity to:

- develop and test a new assessment process and a joined-up single plan;
- improve outcomes for disabled children and young people and those with SEN (including successful transition to post-16 education, health, independent living, higher education and employment and their parents;
- participate in a national evaluated pathfinder which will contribute to changes in the SEN framework;
- test the use of personal budgets in children's services;
- test the impact of NHS changes on commissioning for children's services.

**4. TYPE OF DECISION**

This is a key decision (CAS103/11) as it will attract an income of up to £150,000 annually (pro rata) for 18 months starting part way through 2011-12, with a possibility of extending for a further two years (2013-14 and 2014-15). The funding will be shared between Hartlepool and Darlington as this was a joint bid.

**5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

A response to the government's SEN Green Paper was submitted to the DfE in June 2011 following consultation with headteachers, school governors, SENCOs, parent groups and health colleagues. The application for Pathfinder status was submitted on 15 August 2011. The bid was supported by the Chief Executive of both Hartlepool and Darlington as well as the Director of Child and Adult Services for each local authority and the Chief Executive of NHS Hartlepool and NHS Durham & Darlington. Notification was received from the Department for Education on 9 September that the joint bid had been successful. The Portfolio Holder for children has been kept informed and will be regularly updated on progress following each visit to Hartlepool by the evaluation team.

**6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Cabinet are requested to endorse the request, by the Department for Education, to participate in the pathfinder programme.

**Report of:** DIRECTOR OF CHILD AND ADULT SERVICES

**Subject:** SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)  
PATHFINDER PROGRAMME

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide a brief outline of the SEN National Pathfinder Programme, its implications for Hartlepool and to ask cabinet to endorse the request by the Department for Education (DfE) to participate in the programme.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Government's green paper, support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs, makes wide ranging proposals to respond to the frustrations of children and young people, their families and professionals who work with them. It therefore aims to:

- better support life outcomes for children and young people;
- give parents confidence by giving them more control;
- transfer power to professionals on the front line and to local communities.

The aim of the pathfinder programme is to:

- help design a better, more transparent, less adversarial, system in which all agencies are fully engaged in the assessment and development of the child or young person's single plan and are committed to delivering the plan, including through the use of personal budgets.
- develop approaches built on what is already working, that are robust and can be applied to different local arrangements.
- test the extent to which arrangements work for disabled children and young people as well as those with SEN, who require support, across a wide range of circumstances.
- give parents and carers better choice and more control.
- explore how the changes can help to address inequalities in the access to and provision of services.
- explore how the reforms will impact on children and young people from birth to 25, particularly at key transition points.

As a part of the Pathfinder Hartlepool and Darlington will have the opportunity to:

- develop and test a new assessment process and a joined-up single education, health and care plan from birth to 25 years old, focusing on whether outcomes for disabled children and young people and those with SEN and their parents can be improved.
- participate in a national evaluated pathfinder which will contribute to changes in the SEN framework;
- test the use of personal budgets in children's services so that parents can choose which services best suit the needs of their children;
- test the impact of NHS changes on commissioning for children's services.
- Develop strong partnership working between all local services and agencies to help disabled children and those with SEN.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Cabinet are asked to endorse the request by the Department for Education (DfE) to participate in the Pathfinder programme.

### **4. CONTACT OFFICER**

- 4.1 Zoe Westley, Head of Social and Education Inclusion.

# CABINET REPORT

7<sup>th</sup> November 2011



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW

## SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update members on progress with implementing the approved changes to the Common Allocations Policy that governs the Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The following proposed amendments to the Tees Valley Choice Based Letting policy were presented to Cabinet at their meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011;

1) Clarification of why and how local lettings policies will be used	Agreed
2) The removal of cumulative need	Not Agreed
3) Restriction of Band 1+ to main householder only in regeneration schemes	Not Agreed
4) Clarification of Band 1 for HM forces applicants	Agreed
5) Removal of 'Property of the Week'	Agreed
6) Amendment of Local Connection definition	Agreed

Members approved, in principle, the proposed amendments to the Common Allocations Policy, with the exception of;

- Removal of 'cumulative need', members have indicated that this should be kept for applicants in band 1 and 2.
- Restricting the priority banding to main householder only for those affected by regeneration schemes i.e. point 3) were it is proposed the existing policy be retained as a local variation applicable only for rehousing in Hartlepool.

Members also agreed to delay implementation of these amendments until the outcome of the Government's proposals on social housing reform were known as further changes may be forthcoming and to reduce costs on any necessary IT amendments.

This report updates Members on progress with the implementation of the policy amendments and provide advice on the implications of varying the policy in Hartlepool on these two issues.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

The Common Allocations Policy governing Choice Based Lettings is a key factor in meeting the housing needs of the town.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Key Decision test ii applies Forward Plan Reference: RN88/11

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet decision 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011

### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 Members are requested to approve the implementation of the previously suggested policy amendments including the removal of cumulative need for the reasons highlighted in 5.3.
- 6.2 Members are asked to approve the implementation of the variation to the main Sub Regional Common Allocations Policy not to restrict priority band 1+ to the main householder only for regeneration schemes in Hartlepool as previously agreed.



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on progress with implementing the approved changes to the Common Allocations Policy that governs the Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At their meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011 Cabinet were presented with the following six areas of the Common Allocations Policy that were proposed for amendment;

1) Clarification of why and how local lettings policies will be used	Agreed
2) The removal of cumulative need	Not Agreed
3) Restriction of Band 1+ to main householder only in regeneration schemes	Not Agreed
4) Clarification of Band 1 for HM forces applicants	Agreed
5) Removal of 'Property of the Week'	Agreed
6) Amendment of Local Connection definition	Agreed

- 2.2 Members approved, in principle, the proposed amendments to the Common Allocations Policy, with the exception of;

- Removal of 'cumulative need', members have indicated that this should be kept for applicants in band 1 and 2.
- Restricting the priority banding to main householder only for those affected by regeneration schemes i.e. point 3) were it is proposed the existing policy be retained as a local variation applicable only for rehousing in Hartlepool.

- 2.3 Members also approved that implementation of these changes be delayed until the outcome of the Government's consultation paper, "Local decisions: a fairer future for social housing" is known in order to save on costs. Members were advised that any further necessary changes to the Common Allocation Policy would be referred back to Cabinet for approval.

## 3. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Members were previously advised that there is a legislative requirement for the Council to publish an allocations policy; it is considered, therefore, that it would benefit the Council to adopt the revised Common Allocations Policy to meet this requirement. Failure to agree the proposed amendments to the policy could result in the Compass partnership not being able to progress implementation of the revised policy, or to make the necessary alterations to the ICT system. This may affect the strategic partnerships that the Council has with the other partners involved in the scheme.
- 3.2 The most significant risk on any allocation policy is by legal challenge or judicial review. The policy changes reflect the latest guidelines and reduce risk of legal challenge and judicial review.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY REVIEW**

- 4.1 The sub regional Steering Group now want to implement the proposed policy changes and are currently developing a specification with the software supplier, including costs and timescales for the necessary amendments to the IT system. All of the other partners to the Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy have approved all of the 6 proposed changes without amendment
- 4.2 The sub regional CBL Steering Group has agreed not to defer the policy changes any longer as it's been nearly 1 year now and the Localism Bill has still not been enacted. Reforms proposed within the Bill will not impact any way on any of the policy changes already consulted upon. Any future effects on CBL will be considered and consulted on at the appropriate time, it is expected that this will take at least 15 months.

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS FOR HARTLEPOOL IN DIVERTING FROM THE SUB REGIONAL COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

- 5.1 Although Members had previously indicated that they would prefer that cumulative need be retained for applicants in bands 1 and 2 and not to restrict band 1+ priority to the main householder only in regeneration schemes, all other partners to the sub regional scheme have agreed for these amendments. Before giving final approval to implement the policy amendments Members need to be aware of the following implications for Hartlepool to vary from the main sub regional policy;
- 5.2 **Implications for retaining cumulative need for Bands 1 and 2;**
- IT capability – the software supplier has indicated that the system could be adapted to retain cumulative need for applications from Hartlepool residents but that this would incur additional costs that HBC would be solely responsible for.
  - Costs – initial estimates indicate that this variation for Hartlepool applicants would be in the region of £3000 to £4000 plus VAT.(NB

there is currently no budget provision). In addition there will be other resource issues for time taken to test the IT changes, changes that will need to be made to the Scheme Guide – printing costs – publicity about the difference in Hartlepool as this would be a fundamental change from the policy operating throughout the rest of the Tees Valley.

- Transparency – as a Common Policy for all the sub region any significant, fundamental variations will inevitably impact on the overall transparency and understanding of the scheme. Feedback from applicants has shown that cumulative need is not understood and diverting from the main policy will create further confusion and difficulty in explaining this. This lack of transparency creates the perception amongst applicants that the system is unfair
- Disparity – applicants currently living outside the Borough wanting to return to Hartlepool would be assessed under the overall general policy for the Tees Valley and would be disadvantaged.
- Case law has clarified that ‘cumulative need’ is not now an essential component in local authority allocation schemes; cumulative need is defined as compounded multiple housing needs, e.g. where is an applicant might be homeless, and might also have a physical disability. In R (Ahmad) v LB Newham (2009) the Court of Appeal held that allocation schemes were required to provide for cumulative preference, however the House of Lords overturned this judgment. It held that, in general, if a scheme complies with the requirements of section 167 of the Housing Act 1996, courts should not get involved in issues of how relative priority was determined. Removing the requirement to provide for cumulative preference gives scope for local authorities to develop simpler, more transparent, systems of applicant prioritisation which are easier for applicants to understand and for housing staff to operate.
- During consultation on the proposed policy changes 81% of respondents preferred to dispense with ‘cumulative need’ and use a date order system for ranking within each band as this would be easier to understand and avoid the perception that some applicants were ‘jumping the queue’. For example applicant A could be in band 1 due to being homeless and have been waiting since 1.8.2011 however if applicant B is given band 1 status today due to be being homeless and also has a medical need this cumulative need would put them above applicant A on the waiting list.
- As at August 2011 there were 2439 applicants on the Housing Register in Hartlepool and only 17 of these with cumulative need (0.69%);

Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4
147	433	86	1773
Inc. 6 with cumulative need	Inc. 11 with cumulative need		

5.3 During the past year only 2 applicants with cumulative need have been allocated accommodation, and effectively jumped ahead of other applicants with the same priority band. With such small numbers of applicants being affected Members may feel it is not necessary to divert from the main policy, especially taking into account the confusion to applicants, perception of transparency and potential costs to Hartlepool.

5.4 **Implications for not imposing the restriction of band 1+ to the main householder only for regeneration schemes in Hartlepool;**

- No IT changes necessary as manually input
- Scheme literature will refer to overall policy and any local variation will be noted in appendices, additional information/clarification will need to be available to Hartlepool residents affected by future regeneration schemes but this can be done as part of overall advice/information/assistance to those households affected by the scheme.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Members are requested to approve the implementation of the previously suggested policy amendments including the removal of cumulative need for the reasons highlighted in 5.3.

6.2 Members are requested to approve the implementation of the variation to the main Sub Regional Common Allocations Policy not to restrict priority band 1+ to the main householder only for regeneration schemes in Hartlepool as previously agreed.

**7. CONTACT OFFICER**

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## **CABINET REPORT**

7<sup>th</sup> November 2011



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT AND  
HIGHWAY, TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT 2012 /  
13 SAVINGS

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### SUMMARY

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

To inform Cabinet of the full review of all services carried out within the Integrated Transport Unit and Highway, Traffic and Transport Sections.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report summarises the proposals contained within each service area to achieve the efficiency savings.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

The report details one of the reviews which forms part of the 12 / 13 Savings Programme, and is therefore relevant for a Cabinet decision.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Key Decision (test (i) applies) Forward Plan reference Number RN97/11.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Cabinet are requested to agree the proposals for the achievement of the £524k Savings which are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT AND HIGHWAY,  
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT 2012 / 13 SAVINGS

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the full review of all services carried out within the Integrated Transport Unit and Highway, Traffic and Transport Sections.

**2. INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT FUNCTIONS**

- 2.1 Approval is sought in relation to the proposed options for the Integrated Transport Unit and Highway Traffic and Transport Service, located within the Transportation and Engineering Division.
- 2.2 The Integrated Transport Service includes the following key service areas:
- Passenger Transport Service
  - Fleet Service
  - Road safety Service

**3. SUMMARY OF PROJECT PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 Informal consultation with staff and the Trade Unions commenced in January 2011. This included Management Briefings, Courtesy Meetings. The financial chart (**Appendix 1**) provides a summary relating to potential savings

3.2 Passenger Transport

Staffing reduction affecting two posts and increased income generation.

3.3 Road Safety

Staffing reduction affecting two posts and increased income generation.

3.4 Options Appraisal

- 3.4.1 The development of the Integrated Transport unit has aimed to ensure that the key objective is to provide cost effective and quality service provision. Recent initiatives have demonstrated efficiencies in the region of 700k. In order to achieve the target set within the department as a whole, the above options will contribute to achieving

the forecast target efficiency. It is therefore recommended that approval is given to the options presented.

#### **4. HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT**

4.1 The Highways, Traffic and Transport Service has followed a similar consultation process in line with the ITU, and has identified the need to ensure the realignment of functions within four distinct areas which include:

- Traffic and Transport Planning
- Parking Services
- Asset Management
- Highway Services

#### **4.2 Traffic and Transport Planning**

This section has reconfigured the roles and responsibilities in order to meet the demands and pressures of changing service provision. This has credited budget savings of 60k.

#### **4.3 Parking Service**

The early retirement process has enabled a member of staff to leave the service. This has provided a further opportunity for redeployment within the Car parking section.

#### **4.4 Asset Management**

The review has enabled the formation of an Asset Management Function. This will concentrate on Asset Management, Highway Licensing, Inspection and reporting mechanisms. Inspection data, linked to Council insurance will determine robust controls and lessen risk. Income generation opportunities through licensing and monitoring of essential services will be enhanced.

#### **4.5 Highway Services**

Reconfiguration of both the Highways and Street lighting function has enabled greater collaboration and synergy. This will promote generic working practices, dual management and further enhance succession management opportunities.

The financial chart **Appendix 1** provides further information relating to the efficiency options

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Officers have been looking at potential areas of savings, income generation and streamlining and realigning of current functions for some time now and have discussed the issues with staff, trades unions and the Portfolio Holder.

- 5.2 If Members do not wish to support some or all of these recommendations then your Officers will need to re-examine these proposals as quickly as possible.
- 5.3 Whilst there may well be functions and areas of delivery about which Members have strong views, your Officers do believe that the proposals they are submitting whilst challenging do offer the best solution for the Division moving forward and makes us fit for purpose.

## 6. KEY RISKS

Within these proposals there are no “risks” in respect of sustainability but some of the proposals require increased income targets.

### Impact on Service Users

- 6.1 A Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached at **Appendix 2**.

### Impact on staff

- 6.2 Consultation with staff and Trade Unions has taken place.

### Other Key Risks

- 6.3 Significantly the proposals are dependent upon the technical resource sustaining income levels to achieve the savings. If some of the constraints and risks come to fruition then proposals would need to be revisited. This, however, is part of “normal business” in relation to fee earning staff.

## 7. COMMENTS FROM TRI-PARTITE MEETING

- 7.1 There were several questions but no adverse comments from the Tri-Partite meeting.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet are requested to agree the proposals for the achievement of the £524k Savings which are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

## 9. CONTACT OFFICER

Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
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## Financial Chart

### Integrated Transport Unit 12/13 Target Savings

Service Area	Service Description	£
Road Safety	Reduce by two posts and increase income generation	54,880
Passenger Transport	Reduce by two posts and increase income generation	20,154
<b>Highways Traffic &amp; Transportation SDO Target Savings</b>		
Highways	Condition Surveys are used to identify and justify the Highways Maintenance Programme. Current surveys can be accommodated on a reduced budget. The budget currently allows for more surveys than are required.	20000
	Scheduled Highway Maintenance non statutory contribution to Neighbourhood Forums used for non - maintenance purposes	75000
	Verge Maintenance generally used for works to Trees on the Highway. This was under spent last financial year.	17000
	Bus Shelter Maintenance. Used for repair and replacement of bus shelters. Loss of budget to be supported by additional deansing when required.	22496

Highways Insurance contribution reduced corporately owing to recent negotiation of policy.	38000
Savings in agreed staffing restructures	60000
Reduction in Highways Accident damage budget. within Unscheduled Highway Maintenance.	£ 10000
Gulley Cleansing Two squads are required to react to extreme conditions. A reduction in one squad will result in a reduced response during extreme weather conditions. Service may have to become reactive instead of pro-active .	80000
Highways Trading Account in previous years has exceeded overhead recovery rates and it is suggested that an additional £30K on existing overheads is readily achievable. This can be recovered through capital schemes thus spreading the recovery over several budget heads.	30000
Unscheduled Highway maintenance in conjunction with the reduction to two Neighbourhood Areas. It is proposed that the Highway teams are reduced to two, undertaking rapid response and neighbourhood related works, whilst 28 day responses revert back to Highway Maintenance Teams. Staffing can be funded through carrying out work for Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement schemes for at least two years.	46000
	<hr/> <b>398496</b> <hr/>

**Engineering Consultancy**

Flood & Watercourses Area Based Grant budget to be reduced for the four year period owing to in house provision	25000
Increase Fee activity through the Major Bus Scheme grant and Local Transport Plan.	15000
	<b>40000</b>
	£
<b>Management Account</b>	
Various expenditure heads	10000
	<b>10000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>524030</b>

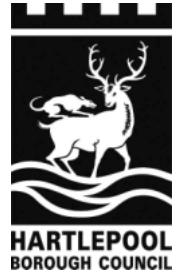
## Impact Assessment Form

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
<i>Regeneration and neighbourhoods</i>	<i>Transportation and Engineering</i>	<i>Integrated Transport Unit &amp; Highways, Traffic &amp; Transport</i>	<i>Paul Robson &amp; Mike Blair</i>
<b>Function/Service</b>	<p><i>The review covered all of the services and functions provided by the two following Sections</i></p> <p><i>Integrated Transport Unit</i></p> <p><i>The Integrated Transport Unit is a progression towards a fully integrated transport system and allows all users to move easily between different types of transport, regardless of their mobility needs. The service includes Passenger, Fleet and Road Safety Services, providing the most efficient long-term option for the people of Hartlepool. The service aim is to provide a single transport service that seamlessly joins a range of modes and operators, and which provides good links to a fully accessible 'mainstream' public transport.</i></p> <p><i>Highways Traffic and Transport</i></p> <p><i>The Highways, Traffic and Transport Section is responsible for the management of the highway network and the co-ordination of all activities that take place on it. This includes maintenance, co-ordination of works, the provision of a safe and effective transport system, maintaining safe and smooth traffic flows and the enforcement of parking offences. The section also provides reactive and scheduled maintenance and regeneration services on highways and public lights in Hartlepool. The aim of the section is to maintain the highway network in a manner that enables continuous and safe movement for all modes of transport.</i></p>		
<b>Information Available</b>	<p><i>All budget areas were considered as part of the whole service review in an attempt to achieve efficiency targets.</i></p> <p><i>Consultation has been undertaken with all affected staff to ensure the best possible options for the Integrated Transport Unit and the Highways, Traffic and Transport Service are achieved in meeting corporate target efficiencies.</i></p> <p><i>The review also supports sustainable cross-sector structures that ensure best value in meeting the diverse and changing needs of users accessing the services.</i></p> <p><i>The process involved a review of all related services giving consideration to existing equality assessments in each service area.</i></p> <p><i>Budgetary reductions in the Integrated Transport Unit were achieved by reducing staffing costs by generating additional income through trading activities, which does not result in the loss of any staff.</i></p> <p><i>Efficiencies have been achieved in the Highways, Traffic and</i></p>		

	<i>Transport Section through the reduction of revenue budgets. The reduction in service levels has not necessitated any staff losses.</i>		
<b>Relevance</b>  <i>Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing</i>	Age		
	N/A		
	Disability		
	N/A		
	Gender Re-assignment		
	N/A		
	Race		
	N/A		
	Religion		
	N/A		
	Sex		
	N/A		
	Sexual Orientation		
	N/A		
	Marriage & Civil Partnership		
N/A			
Pregnancy & Maternity			
N/A			
<b>Information Gaps</b>	<i>None</i>		
<b>What is the Impact</b>	<i>There will be no adverse affect on any of the protected groups or on staff and no posts will be lost as a result of the review</i>		
<b>Aim 1: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the act.</b>			
<i>No evidence of adverse impact</i>			
<b>Aim 2: Advance Equality of opportunity, between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't.</b>			
<i>No evidence of adverse impact</i>			
<b>Aim 3: Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.</b>			
<i>No evidence of adverse impact</i>			
<b>Addressing the impact</b>	<b>1. No Major Change-</b> The proposals are robust there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been utilised through the adoption of Corporate HR policy's.		
<b>Action identified</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>How will this be evaluated?</b>
Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing		17/11/2011	

## **CABINET REPORT**

7<sup>th</sup> November 2011



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** PROPERTY RELATED SERVICES 2012 / 13  
SAVINGS

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### **SUMMARY**

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

To inform Cabinet of the proposals to achieve savings in Property Related Services to contribute to the Departmental Budget Savings for 2012 / 13.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report outlines the current service areas and consider options and risks in achieving savings with proposals identified.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

The report details one of the reviews which forms part of the 12 / 13 Savings Programme, and is therefore relevant for a Cabinet decision.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Key Decision (test (i) applies) Forward Plan reference Number RN 91/11.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Cabinet are requested to agree the proposals for the achievement of the £220k Savings which are summarised in Section 6 (Financial Considerations) of the report.

**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** PROPERTY RELATED SERVICES 2012 / 13  
SAVINGS

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the proposals to achieve savings in Property Related Services to contribute to the Departmental Budget Savings for 2012 / 13.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Property Services are responsible for the maintenance and management of the Council's land and public buildings. The main areas of operation are:-

Estates and Asset Management

- Valuations / Acquisitions / Disposals
- Leased Estate
- Asset Management and Accommodation Planning
- Regeneration Site Assembly

Building Consultancy

- Architects, M&E, Quantity Surveyors
- CDM Coordination and Project Management
- Construction Procurement

Property Management

- Building Management and Maintenance
- Building Surveying
- Asbestos / Access Management
- Education Liaison

Carbon and Energy Management

- Energy Consumption, Procurement, Billing
- Energy Savings Projects

Associated Support Services

- Administrative and Financial Support to the Property Function

- 2.2 There are a number of statutory requirements within the scope of the services.



- Gas management (commissioning, testing, inspection)
- Electrical Testing and Inspection
- Legionella Management
- DDA and Access Audits
- Asbestos management
- Procurement and contract regulations
- Design statements for Planning and Building Control regulations and permissions
- Estate and Valuation requirements, asset valuations, acquisition, disposal and leasing / renting property
- Carbon Reduction Climate Change Adaptation requirements

2.3 The review of these services has been complex in that they operate very differently from other sections. Only some staff members within the Division are centrally funded although some staff fees for work on corporate property and education work can be charged to a central budget. Work undertaken by the service is funded from fees which we charge for given services to internal and external clients. Income generation is an integral part of the property “business”

Total Cost of Property Related Services	£1,528,282
--	------------

LESS BUDGET  
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:-

Corporate Property	£846,853	
Capped Child Services	<u>£85,000</u>	
		<u>£931,853</u>

<b>Net income Target</b>	<b><u>£596,429</u></b>
--------------------------	------------------------

2.4 There are a number of constraints and risks within the review:-

- Few budgeted areas (some already taken in previous year's SDO's)
- Reducing capital funding – corporate and education (n.b. Academy Schools)
- Capital receipts directed to budget shortfalls
- Reducing property – property costs / budgets already being taken out via business transformation asset management workstream.
- Limited revenue budgets for “cashable” savings opportunities.
- Fee earning nature of work (income risks)
- Temporary specialist staff requirements to deliver projects (Use of agency staff)
- Reliance on income generation
- Building Schools for the Future / Primary Capital Programme comes to an end March 2012.
- Risks of shrinking customer base – corporate and schools (e.g. Schools pursuing Academy status)
- Customers willingness and understanding to “buy into” services. It is important that all property / consultant related requirements comes through the teams.

- Double counting / duplication with other Council “savings” reviews

### 3. SUMMARY OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 **Combined Technical Team** – combine Senior Architectural Technicians, Building Surveyors and Asset Management Officer into generic team reducing overall numbers of staff to operate more efficiently in delivering services to a reducing estate and with a reduced capital programme.
- 3.2 **Construction Design and Management, (CDM) and Project Management** – combining the CDM capability into the Architects team, removing a Clerk of Works role and revising project management arrangements.
- 3.3 **Estates and Asset Management** – enhancing qualified capacity to concentrate on regeneration schemes and achieving capital receipts through the disposal strategy. In addition making the property advice, information and asset register service more efficient via better utilisation of valuers, finance staff capability and ICT via reduction of property information staff numbers.
- 3.4 **Support Services** – Reduction of a support officer serving energy management due to the introduction of electronic billing and other efficiencies. In addition the reduction of a support assistant where work can either cease or be allocated to a range of other staff to improve efficiency.
- 3.5 **Corporate budget for Property** – Changes and reduction in the maintenance and management budgets.
- 3.6 **Support Services Non-Pay Budget** – reduction in several budget headings.
- 3.7 **Energy Savings** – reduction in budget in public buildings and street lighting due to energy saving measures.

### 4. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

- 4.1 Each of the sections within the property function and the associated support services were reviewed and options considered in terms of:-
- Future accommodation strategy workloads
  - Combining teams and roles
  - Projected capital programme
  - Productivity and fee earning potential of teams
  - Business process efficiencies
  - Reducing property portfolio
  - Reducing maintenance and management of buildings budgets
  - Non-pay budgets

- The need to provide an improved resource to regeneration and disposal strategies (particularly to achieve capital receipts)
- Increasing income
- Energy savings
- Improved working with the Facilities Management delivery team.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Officers have been looking at potential areas of savings, income generation and streamlining and realigning of current functions for some time now and have discussed the issues with staff, trades unions and the Portfolio Holder.
- 5.2 If Members do not wish to support some or all of these recommendations then your Officers will need to re-examine these proposals as quickly as possible.
- 5.3 Whilst there may well be functions and areas of delivery about which Members have strong views, your Officers do believe that the proposals they are submitting whilst challenging do offer the best solution for the Division moving forward and makes us fit for purpose.

## 6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The proposals deliver the proposed nett savings:-

Area	Proposed Savings (nett)
Combined Technical Team	£56k
CDM and Project Management	£32k
Estates and Asset Management	£25k
Support Services (staffing)	£41k
Corporate Budget for Property	£16k
Support Services (non-pay budget)	£20k
Energy Savings	£30k
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£220k</b>

## 7. KEY RISKS

Within these proposals there are no “risks” in respect of sustainability but some of the proposals require increased income targets.

### Impact on Service Users

- 7.1 A Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached at **Appendix 1**.

**Impact on staff**

- 7.2 The impact on staff has been informally discussed with staff and trade union representatives and is currently being formally consulted upon. At the current time it is anticipated that 5 FTE posts will be affected. However there are potential voluntary redundancy applications emerging which may assist in minimising the affect. Discussions with Human Resources have identified those pools of staff that will be at risk. A Full consultation process will be undertaken with staff and trade unions and all alternative posts will be considered as any become vacant for the “at risk” members of staff. Should suitable alternative employment not be available there are redundancy costs associated with this proposal.

**Other Key Risks**

- 7.3 Other key project constraints and risks are detailed in section 2.4 of the report.
- 7.4 Significantly the proposals are dependent upon the technical resource sustaining income levels to achieve the savings. If some of the constraints and risks come to fruition then proposals would need to be revisited. This, however, is part of “normal business” in relation to fee earning staff.

**8. COMMENTS FROM TRI-PARTITE MEETING**

- 8.1 There were several questions but no adverse comments from the Tri-Partite meeting.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Cabinet are requested to agree the proposals for the achievement of £220k Savings which are summarised in Section 6 (Financial Considerations) of the main report.

**11. CONTACT OFFICER**

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TS24 8AY  
Email: [dave.stubbs@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dave.stubbs@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01429 523301

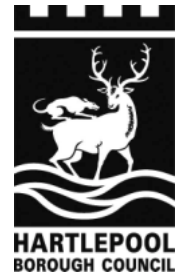
## Impact Assessment Form

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer																
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Resources	Resources	Graham Frankland																
Function/Service	Resources																		
Information Available	<p><i>Changes proposed to address the budget deficit and achieve targets set within the resources.</i></p> <p><b>Property Management</b> - Proposal to combine the buildings condition related function currently sitting in property management with the architectural technician function sitting with the building consultancy. The post of clerk of works will be deleted and those types of duties will be amalgamated in another post.</p> <p><b>Estates and Asset management</b> - proposal to delete one post from the existing structure and create a new post of one specialist FTE.</p> <p><b>Support Services</b> - Proposed changes around electronic utilities billing will streamline and make the service more efficient and this will enable a reduction of one post.</p> <p>A further reduction of one post has been identified within an area that has seen some decrease in workload demands over recent years as a result of efficiencies, automation of processes and some physical relocation of services.</p> <p>Information available that has been used to inform these proposed changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current structures and proposed structures</li> <li>• Staffing profiles across all areas</li> <li>• HR Procedures (Selection criteria is based on objective matters which are not related to any protected groups).</li> <li>• Job Descriptions</li> <li>• Job evaluation process</li> <li>• NEPO suppliers have responded to our requirements for billing changes</li> <li>• CICT's professional advice regarding the likelihood of being able to successfully develop IT systems to support our efficiency plans</li> <li>• Formal consultation process has commenced with staff and Unions.</li> </ul>																		
Relevance	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Age</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Disability</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Gender Re-assignment</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Race</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Religion</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Sex</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Sexual Orientation</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</td><td></td></tr> </table>			Age		Disability		Gender Re-assignment		Race		Religion		Sex		Sexual Orientation		Marriage & Civil Partnership	
Age																			
Disability																			
Gender Re-assignment																			
Race																			
Religion																			
Sex																			
Sexual Orientation																			
Marriage & Civil Partnership																			

	Pregnancy & Maternity		
Information Gaps	NONE		
What is the Impact	<p><i>No adverse equality impact has been identified.</i></p> <p><i>The profile of affected staff is not significantly different from the overall profile of the service.</i></p> <p><i>Support mechanisms are in place to minimise impact on all staff including those identified as at risk and those with protected characteristics.</i></p> <p><i>The staff identified as being at risk have been defined by reference to service areas or particular job role the process does not unfairly target individuals or discriminate against any protected groups. The selection criteria are based on objective matters which are not related to any protected groups.</i></p>		
Aim 1: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the act.			
No impact			
Aim 2: Advance Equality of opportunity, between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't.			
No impact			
Aim 3: Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.			
No impact			
Addressing the impact	<p><b>1. No Major Change</b> - <i>The Impact Assessment demonstrates that the proposed changes are robust and that there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact.</i></p> <p><b>2. Adjust/Change</b></p> <p><b>3. Continue as is</b></p> <p><b>4. Stop/Remove</b></p>		
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing	00/00/00		

## **CABINET REPORT**

7<sup>th</sup> November 2011



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** HARTLEPOOL HOUSING STRATEGY 2011-2015

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### **SUMMARY**

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

Cabinet is asked to approve the Housing Strategy for 2011 to 2015 and the adoption of the Action Plan. The Strategy details the key housing priorities for the Council and its partners for the period to 2015. The Action Plan is the delivery plan for the priorities which have been identified.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

This report provides the context within which the Strategy has been developed. The report contains background information and addresses the delivery arrangements for the Strategy's priorities. The report includes the draft Strategy, Action Plan, Consultation Report and Impact Assessment.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

The Housing Strategy has strategic relevance across a range of Portfolios, including Housing and Transition; Regeneration and Economic Development and Skills; and Community Safety and Planning.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Key Decision. Tests (i) and (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference Number 60/11.

**5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

**6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- a) Approve the adoption and publication of the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015 contained at **Appendix 1**
- b) Approve the associated Action Plan contained at **Appendix 2**
- c) Note the Impact Assessment contained at **Appendix 3**



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** HARTLEPOOL HOUSING STRATEGY 2011 to 2015

---

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the Housing Strategy for 2011 to 2015 and the adoption of the Action Plan. The Strategy details the key housing priorities for the Council and its partners for the period to 2015. The Action Plan is the delivery plan for the priorities which have been identified.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In 2003, the Government placed a legal duty on all local authorities to develop housing strategies. The current Strategy expires at the end of 2011 and it is therefore necessary to prepare a new Strategy incorporating an Action Plan for the next four years.
- 2.2 The Housing Strategy for 2011 to 15 reflects on what has been achieved since the 2006 to 11 Housing Strategy was developed and details the actions required for the next four years. It takes into account the Housing Partnership's aim to "***Ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in sustainable neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live***".
- 2.3 This new strategy replaces the Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2006 to 11, which identified a range of priorities to meet housing needs within Hartlepool. Many of these priorities still remain relevant and are reflected in the 3 Priorities that have been identified and developed as a result of extensive consultation.
- 2.4 The strategy sets out high level priority outcomes that have been developed using a robust evidence base and reflects the issues identified through consultation.
- 2.5 To enable delivery of the strategy's objectives, the Council will work with a range of agencies and organisations. Strong relationships will be forged with the regulatory authority, the Homes and Communities Agency, to make best use of resources and best practice. Local residents' views will also be sought throughout the life of the strategy to measure whether the housing offer within Hartlepool is improved and meets local needs.

- 2.6 The Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan have been developed during a period of very challenging economic conditions and within a changed political environment. Therefore, while the Strategy sets out a longer term vision it also recognises that short and medium term actions are needed to address issues facing the housing market now.
- 2.7 The vision builds upon the existing Housing Partnership's aim and is to:

***Develop and maintain successful communities where people want to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.***

To achieve this vision the Housing Strategy has been developed under three main priority outcomes which will contribute towards achieving the vision:

1. **Delivering new homes, contributing to sustainable communities.**
2. **Improving existing homes, supporting sustainable communities.**
3. **Meeting specific housing needs.**

### 3. HOUSING STRATEGY 2011 – 2015 DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE

- 3.1 The new Housing Strategy for 2011 to 2015 has been developed in consultation with the Council's partners and stakeholders, including local residents.
- 3.2 The consultation for the Housing Strategy was completed in various stages.
- **Stage 1** - During December 2010 and January 2011, 3 consultation workshops were held at the Civic Centre and were attended by Members, Housing Partnership, Council Officers, Registered Providers, Private Landlords, Developers, Police and the voluntary sector.
- The issues raised across the 3 topic areas were used as a basis for further consultation and as background for development of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the new Housing Strategy.
- **Stage 2** - During February 2011 a questionnaire was posted on the Council's website as a mechanism for consulting with residents about the priorities that emerged during the 3 workshops.

- **Stage 3** - The results from the 3 workshops and the on-line community consultation were used to develop the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015.

The draft Strategy was formally consulted on during May, June and July 2011 with Members, Housing Partnership, workshop attendees, Council Officers, residents and external partners.

- **Stage 4** – following the consultation stages above the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the Housing Strategy and associated Action Plan were developed during August 2011. These documents reflect the formal feedback received and the views, suggestions and issues that were raised at the community events.

- 3.3 A number of action planning meetings were held with the key respondents to the 1<sup>st</sup> draft document and their knowledge was used to develop the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the Action Plan.
- 3.4 The 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the Housing Strategy 2011 to 15 and Action Plan was consulted on for a 2 week period from 13.9.11 until 27.9.11 with all of the organisations and partners listed previously. The feedback received from this final stage of consultation was used to make minor amendments to the final Draft Housing Strategy (attached at **Appendix 1**). The final draft of the Action Plan (**Appendix 2**) was further developed as a result of the consultation and in liaison with key officers and organisations who will be responsible for its delivery; Performance Indicators have been identified for each of the Priority Outcomes; clear outcomes have been stated above each set of actions and achievable timescales for delivery have been agreed.
- 3.5 Further information about the consultation is detailed within **Appendix 3** of the Draft Housing Strategy document.

#### 4. **ROLE OF THE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP**

- 4.1 Hartlepool's Housing Partnership brings together a range of partners with the common aim of improving housing provision within Hartlepool. The partnership includes representatives from the Council, Registered Providers (RPs), private sector developers, estate agents and representatives of local residents and the Voluntary and Community Sector.
- 4.2 The focus of the Housing Partnership will be on ensuring the delivery of the Housing Strategy. The Partnership will co-ordinate and facilitate multi-agency and private sector involvement and provide a link between housing and wider policies for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area, including the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. The Partnership will be responsible for

agreeing and monitoring the Housing Strategy action plan, addressing areas of underperformance and promoting achievements.

## **5. THEMES FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND THE 3 MAIN PRIORITY OUTCOMES**

5.1 The Draft Housing Strategy 2011 to 15 recognises how existing housing in the borough and the construction of new housing can have a profound effect on health, the economy, education and the environment. These themes underpin the 3 priority outcomes.

### **5.2 Priority 1 - Delivering New Homes, Contributing to Sustainable Communities**

This priority details how the Council will work with partners to deliver new homes and help to develop sustainable communities. The challenges faced in achieving this priority revolve around delivering new housing which supports the development of sustainable communities; delivering affordable housing that meets identified need and continuing to deliver Housing Market Renewal. The outcomes identified for this priority include:

- Deliver new and affordable homes that will meet current and future housing needs
- Ensure high quality design and construction of new housing
- Continue to regenerate priority neighbourhoods

### **5.3 Priority 2 – Improving Existing Homes, Supporting Sustainable Communities**

This priority details how the Council aims to improve existing homes, help to support sustainable communities and tackle issues around empty homes. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring housing quality across all tenures. Particular challenges include raising standards within the private rented sector, improving energy efficiency, improving conditions in the older housing stock, reducing the high levels of empty homes and delivering housing regeneration. The outcomes identified for this priority include:

- Improve property conditions and management standards in the private rented sector
- Ensure homes maintain good conditions and high levels of management in the social rented sector
- Ensure all homes across tenures offer a decent living environment
- Continue to bring empty homes back into use
- Improve energy efficiency and affordable warmth across all tenures

### **5.4 Priority 3 – Meeting Specific Housing Needs**

This priority details how the Council will work with partners to meet the specific housing needs of vulnerable people. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are particular pressures for finding suitable housing solutions for people with learning and other disabilities, as well as housing for a growing older population, addressing Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs and funding housing adaptations to enable independent living. Preventing youth homelessness and providing effective advice and solutions for those affected by mortgage repossessions are also important issues to be addressed. The outcomes identified for this priority include:

- Prevent and tackle homelessness, including youth homelessness and mortgage repossessions
- Improve access into appropriate accommodation
- Improve financial inclusion of vulnerable people
- Improve housing options for people with disabilities<sup>1</sup> and support independent living
- Improve housing options for older people
- Improve housing and housing-related services for older people
- Respond to the housing needs of the BME community, including Gypsies and Travellers

## **6. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council has housing responsibilities that provide opportunities to improve the town and our resident's lives and there are risks associated if the Council does not manage housing strategically. Funding and regulatory changes have reinforced the need to have a robust Housing Strategy. Without a Strategy that has been agreed with the Council's partners, funding and support from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) will not be achievable. Without a clear vision it will be more difficult to attract developers and funding; tackle homelessness; tackle empty properties and improve housing quality. Without a Housing Strategy and a clear approach to strategic housing the Council will be restricted from identifying opportunities and responding quickly to initiatives.

## **7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial risks to the Council within the Housing Strategy itself, however, as delivery against the identified actions is progressed resources may be required and these requests will be reported through the appropriate channels.

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<sup>1</sup> Disabilities includes people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, people on the autistic spectrum and people with mental health needs

## 8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Strategy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to identify any unmet needs / requirements in line with the three aims of the Equality Duty. This is attached at **Appendix 3**.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:-
- a) Approve the adoption and publication of the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015 contained at **Appendix 1**
  - b) Approve the associated Action Plan contained at **Appendix 2**
  - c) Note the Impact Assessment contained at **Appendix 3**

## 10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The recommendations ensure that there is a Housing Strategy and supporting Action Plan in place to deliver the 3 identified priority outcomes and the vision to “develop and maintain successful communities where people want to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future”.

## 11. CONTACT OFFICER

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# Hartlepool Housing Strategy

2011 – 2015

Final Draft



**“Develop and maintain successful communities where people want to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.”**

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## **Foreword by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition**

Housing plays a central role in virtually all the major challenges facing Hartlepool now and in the future. It has a direct and measurable impact on people's health, education and financial wellbeing and it is crucial to the development of a successful and vibrant local economy.

It is because of these factors that Hartlepool's Housing Strategy will take on an even greater significance over the coming years.

It is both our ambition and our duty to develop and maintain strong, successful communities where people want to live and that support their housing needs.

We can only deliver on this duty and achieve this ambition if we are all prepared to put aside short-term considerations and instead commit to delivering new homes, on new sites (including green belt) that create mixed communities and which support people of all backgrounds.

The number of affordable homes being built in Hartlepool has risen, but will need to rise further and more quickly if we are to fulfil our promise that no family will be without a decent home. In the absence of public funding, which has been so drastically cut, we will need to demand more from private sector developers if we are to meet our targets for new affordable homes.

We must look also at our existing housing stock and do everything possible to bring empty properties back into use and improve the living conditions of those most in need so as to end the disgrace that 21% of our borough are suffering fuel poverty and other problems.

Finally, we need to ensure that those with specific housing needs, like the elderly, the vulnerable and the disabled have those needs met with no-one left behind.

This strategy sets out our priorities for Housing in Hartlepool and points towards how we will achieve our goals going forward.

**Cllr Jonathan Brash**

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

### 1.1 Why a new Housing Strategy?

In 2003, the Government placed a legal duty on all local authorities to develop housing strategies. The current Strategy expires at the end of this year and it is therefore necessary to prepare a new Strategy incorporating an Action Plan for the next four years.

It is also an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved over the past five years and what actions are required in the following four years taking into account the Housing Partnership's aim to "***Ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in sustainable neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live***".

This new strategy replaces the Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2006-11, which identified a range of priorities to meet housing needs within Hartlepool. Many of these priorities still remain relevant. However, the new Housing Strategy 2011-15 is a more strategic document, showing clear links to other strategies and plans and setting challenging but deliverable actions.

The strategy sets out high level priority outcomes and is an over-arching document developed using a robust evidence base and reflecting issues identified through consultation.

To enable delivery of the strategy's objectives, the Council will continue to work with a range of agencies and organisations. Strong relationships will be forged with the regulatory authority the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to make best use of resources and best practice. Local residents' views will be sought throughout the life of the strategy to measure whether the housing offer within Hartlepool is improved and meets local needs.

This strategy has been developed during a period of very challenging economic conditions. Therefore, while the Strategy will set out a longer term vision it also recognises that short and medium term actions are needed to address issues facing the housing market now.

### 1.2 Consultation

In order to ensure that the development of this Strategy reflects the views, needs and priorities of our community and stakeholders, detailed consultation was undertaken at various stages in its development.

Methods of consultation included:

- Workshops
- On-line questionnaire

- Attendance at Neighbourhood Consultative Forums
- Attendance at Residents' Groups, including Neighbourhood Action Plan Forums
- Meeting with Resident's Representatives
- Engagement with the Housing Partnership and Elected Members

In addition, research was commissioned in February 2011 on the specific housing needs of the Black and Minority Ethnic communities within Hartlepool.

For further information about the consultation see Appendix 3.

### **1.3 Equality and Diversity**

This Strategy is aimed at improving housing services for all residents with housing or housing-related support needs. As such, no group in Hartlepool should be adversely affected or disadvantaged as a result of the Strategy.

The Council is committed to equality and diversity issues and will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

A Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this Strategy.

### **1.4 Vision and Priority Outcomes**

The vision for this strategy builds upon the existing Housing Partnership's aim and is to:

***Develop and maintain successful communities where people want to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.***

To achieve this vision the Housing Strategy has been developed under three main priority outcomes:

- 1. Delivering new homes, contributing to sustainable communities.**
- 2. Improving existing homes, supporting sustainable communities.**
- 3. Meeting specific housing needs.**

Each of the above will contribute towards delivering the vision for housing in Hartlepool.

### **1.5 Why housing matters**

Existing housing in the Borough and the construction of new housing can have a profound effect on health, the economy, education and the environment.

## Sustainable Communities

Good quality, appropriate housing contributes to sustainable communities. The Council strives to support and develop sustainable communities - places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services to all.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Egan Review seven key components have been identified for a sustainable community that formulate a framework for delivery. It is believed that all of these components need to be addressed in order to plan, deliver and maintain sustainable communities – there is no hierarchy and all are essential to make a place sustainable.

Figure 1 - The Egan Wheel



The Housing Strategy relates specifically to the Housing and Built Environment theme but cuts across all of the other elements highlighted in the Egan Wheel.

<sup>1</sup> Egan Review of Skills for Sustainable Communities

Each of these themes can also be linked to the strategies detailed in Table 1 – Key Strategic Links.

The following paragraphs offer further detail on four specific aspects of a sustainable community which have direct links to housing: health, education, the economy and climate change.

### Housing and Health

Links between good-quality housing and improved physical and mental health have been documented. Poor health can affect an individual's ability to access and maintain accommodation. Poor housing conditions and a lack of housing-related support can affect people's health in a number of ways:

- Children and young adults living in poor housing conditions are up to 25% more likely to suffer from severe ill-health or disability than those in good quality housing.
- Homeless children are up to four times more likely than other children to have mental health problems<sup>2</sup>
- Safe, healthy and accessible housing is essential in enabling older and disabled people to live independently.
- Mental health is frequently cited as a reason for tenancy breakdown and people with mental health problems are twice as likely to be unhappy with their housing

The successful delivery of the Housing Strategy and close working with health colleagues, should contribute to reduced levels of health inequality within Hartlepool. Life expectancy in Hartlepool is lower than the national average and there are disparities between wards. For example, data in 2006 showed people born in Stranton live, on average, 13 years less than those born in Hart.

### Housing and Education

Links can be made between housing conditions and levels of academic achievement:

- Children who live in poor quality housing and overcrowded homes miss school more frequently due to illnesses and infections.
- Homeless children are more likely to have behavioural problems, which affects academic achievement and relationships with peers and teachers.
- Poor housing and homelessness can result in children finding it difficult to do their homework and struggling to concentrate and listen.
- Many children in homeless families have lower levels of academic achievement that cannot be explained by differences in their levels of ability.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Shelter, Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives, 2006

The successful delivery of the Housing Strategy and preventative work by the Council should contribute to a reduction in educational inequality in Hartlepool.

### Housing and the Economy

The housing available in a community can contribute to the economic success of that community:

- The ability of a community to attract and retain people, especially wealth creators, and provide support for those who need it relies on good housing and attractive, inclusive neighbourhoods.
- Achieving the right housing offer, including executive, family and affordable housing, is vital in attracting and retaining skilled people, which will encourage inward investment

The long-term health problems and low educational attainment that are associated with poor quality housing increase the likelihood of a person being unemployed or working in a low-paid job.<sup>3</sup>

### Housing and Climate Change

Existing housing stock accounts for a significant proportion of all carbon emissions. To avoid further climate change in the future we need to change the way we live including the homes in which we live now and how we develop new houses. The role of housing in relation to climate change includes:

- Developing new houses which are as energy efficient and close to existing/newly provided services and public transport routes as is possible;
- Improving the energy efficiency of existing dwellings; this has a knock-on benefit of helping to tackle fuel poverty.
- Ensuring new and refurbished houses do not contribute to increased surface water run-off during the more intense storm weather expected to occur as a result of climate change.

Climate change is likely to result in more changeable and intense weather patterns so homes will need to provide energy efficient solutions to these conditions.

The Council will work closely with Registered Provider (RP) and developer partners to contribute towards mitigating against further climate change and adapting to the likely impacts of climate change in Hartlepool. Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3<sup>4</sup> is the current minimum requirement for all new

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<sup>3</sup> Shelter, Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives, 2006

<sup>4</sup> The Code for Sustainable Homes is an environmental assessment method for rating and certifying the performance of new homes. It is a national standard for use in the design and construction of new homes with a view to encouraging continuous improvement in sustainable home building.

publicly funded housing developments. However, Hartlepool strives for higher levels of sustainability.

draft

## **Chapter 2 – National and Sub Regional Context**

The Government has introduced a range of new policies and measures as part of the shift towards the Big Society and Localism.

### **2.1 National Housing Policy Context**

The national policy drivers for housing are to:

- Increase the number of houses available to buy and rent, including affordable housing
- Improve the flexibility of social housing (increasing mobility and choice) and promote homeownership
- Protect the vulnerable and disadvantaged by tackling homelessness and support people to stay in their homes
- Make sure that homes are of high quality and sustainable.

A number of announcements have been made since the Government was formed in May 2010 and during the lifetime of the Strategy the Council will respond flexibly to emerging policy ideas. In addition to the main proposals summarised below there have been Supporting People Service cuts; the abolition of the Regional Assemblies, Regional Housing Boards and Regional Spatial Strategies; abolition of the Tenant Services Authority and Audit Commission. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has been established as the government's national housing delivery and enablement partner and from 2012 it will also include the regulatory function of Registered Providers (RPs).

#### **Localism Bill**

The Localism Bill was introduced in Parliament on 13 December 2010. The Bill will devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions. The main provisions that the Council will need to address include:

- A new form of flexible tenure for social housing tenants
- Power for local authorities to discharge their duties to homeless people by using private sector accommodation
- The power for local authorities to limit who can apply for social housing within their areas
- Requirement on each local authority to produce a tenancy strategy
- The power for local communities to take forward development in their area without having to apply for planning permission. This would occur if 50% of the community support a Neighbourhood Plan through a referendum
- Introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework which will supersede all previous planning policies



### **Affordable Rent**

The introduction of the Affordable Rent product from April 2011 is the Government's new way of funding affordable housing. Affordable rent will be the main type of new housing supply and introduces a new flexible form of social housing.

Affordable rented homes will be made available to tenants at a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is as present. RPs will have the flexibility to offer affordable rent properties on a flexible tenancy of at least two years. The main issues for the Council include:

- The gap between local market rents and current RP social rents
- Monitoring of revenue raised in Hartlepool to ensure it is used by the RP to deliver new affordable social housing in Hartlepool
- Any decision to introduce higher affordable rents needs to take account of the needs and circumstances of local communities
- A decision on the proportion of social housing re-lets converted to this new tenure

### **Welfare Reform Bill and Housing Benefit Reform**

The Welfare Reform Bill was introduced in Parliament on 16 February 2011. The bill introduces a wide range of reforms designed to make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler. The main challenges for landlords, tenants and the Council to consider include:

- Household cap on benefits
- Housing benefit for working age claimants in the social rented sector will be limited for households deemed to be under-occupying
- Local Housing Allowance and the housing element of Universal Credit will be linked to inflation rather than to the cost of rent
- Increased age threshold from 25 to 35 under which single claimants are entitled only to the shared room rate

### **Health and Social Care Bill**

The Health and Social Care Bill was introduced in Parliament on 19 January 2011. The Bill is a crucial part of the Government's vision to modernise the NHS and move health towards an outcomes-focused preventative service.

Features of the Bill include:

- A duty on local authorities, partners and Clinical Commissioning Consortia to prepare a joint health and wellbeing strategy with regard to needs identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Responsibility for public health transferred to local authorities

### **New Homes Bonus**

The New Homes Bonus is a government scheme designed to provide incentives and rewards for local authorities to build new homes and bring empty homes back into use. The bonus commenced in April 2011 and match funds the additional council tax raised for six years. However, local authorities are only paid the bonus for the increase in net effective stock and this will be

an issue that needs consideration as Hartlepool continues its regeneration activity.

During the lifetime of the Strategy the related action plan will be monitored and kept up-to-date to reflect adopted national policy and priorities.

## **2.2 Sub Regional Context**

The Tees Valley has a good record of partnership working between the five local authorities (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton) and since the last Housing Strategy a number of sub- regional schemes and initiatives have been established.

### **Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)**

TVU is a partnership of public, private and voluntary bodies which coordinate activities, appropriate to a city region level, designed to improve the economic performance of the entire Tees Valley.

TVU put forward a bid to Government to form a LEP which was approved in 2010. The LEP is designed to encourage investment in Tees Valley through the delivery of regeneration, housing and economic development priorities detailed in the Tees Valley Economic Regeneration Plan. Government funding and private sector investment is to be channelled through the LEP which encourages joint working between public and private agencies in the Tees Valley.

### **Tees Valley Economic Regeneration Investment Plan (TVERIP)**

The first Economic Regeneration and Investment Plan for the Tees Valley was developed by TVU in consultation with the five Tees Valley local authorities, the HCA, One NorthEast, the North East Chamber of Commerce and a range of other public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

The Investment Plan sets out how the Council will build on the Tees Valley's economic assets to unlock private sector investment and employment growth in key sectors of the economy. The TVERIP aims to:

- Show how the Tees Valley economy will be driven out of recession and stimulate private sector investment and growth.
- Put into operation the Statement of Ambition through a detailed action plan covering priority housing, economic regeneration and transport investments over the next five years, to coincide with the timeframe of the October 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review;
- Set out an ambitious but realistic programme of public sector investment which recognises the significant reductions in public spending over the period to 2014/15;

Tees Valley has also been awarded enterprise zone status by the government and Hartlepool has received a share of this at the Queens Meadow, Port Estates and Oakesway areas of the town.

### **Tees Valley Statement of Housing Ambition**

This document supports the principles within the TVERIP and sets out the future priorities for housing in the Tees Valley. The document sets out how partnership working in the Tees Valley can achieve the housing aims and objectives and improve the local economy. The key aim is to make Tees Valley a better place to live through promoting new sustainable housing development, achieving the right mix of new homes to meet needs, tackling affordability, regenerating communities, meeting specific needs, preventing homelessness and addressing private sector stock condition. The key aims within the document form part of a detailed action plan to be delivered through partnership working between local authorities, Registered Providers, HCA, housing developers and landowners and private landlords.

### **Tees Valley Housing Market Renewal Programme**

This programme aims to tackle the areas of housing market failure in the Tees Valley through a comprehensive approach of acquisition, demolition and redevelopment to revitalise the housing offer in some of the most deprived areas. Tees Valley became a Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder in 2008 and was successful in securing funding from government to deliver housing market renewal schemes. Funding for housing regeneration remains a key issue in the Tees Valley and is evident within the TVERIP and recent Regional Growth Fund bids following the abolition of the Pathfinder programme by central government. Some schemes remain partially delivered and require significant funding to complete.

### **Tees Valley Design, Heritage and Sustainability Guide**

This document was produced jointly by TVU and the Tees Valley local authorities and sets out the broad principles which will be applied to new housing developments in Tees Valley. It establishes overarching design and heritage principles across the Tees Valley. The document was aimed at promoting and establishing common standards of design and improving design of new build properties across the Tees Valley.

### **Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy**

The Council is a member of the Tees Valley Climate Change Partnership which has a vision of "creating prosperous and resilient communities in a low carbon economy." The partnership produced the Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy which prioritises substantial and measurable emissions reductions, adaptation to the impacts of climate change, and developing the economic

opportunities associated with climate change. The strategy states that, for instance, in future all homes in the Tees Valley should be 'insulated to the best possible standards and are resilient to impacts such as flooding and heat waves' and that 'new homes are designed to maximum possible sustainability standards'.

### **Compass Choice Based Lettings (CBL)**

This scheme was introduced in 2009 and is currently a partnership between the five local authorities and its housing provider partners Housing Hartlepool, Erimus Housing, Coast & Country Housing, Tristar Homes and Tees Valley Housing. It is the system through which social housing is let throughout Tees Valley and it operates a common allocations policy. Private landlords are also able to advertise their vacant stock via Compass and this is an expansion area for the scheme.

## Chapter 3 - Hartlepool Local Context

### 3.1 Key Strategic Links

The Housing Strategy does not stand alone. It is linked into a number of other documents as demonstrated below.

Figure 2 - Key Council Strategies

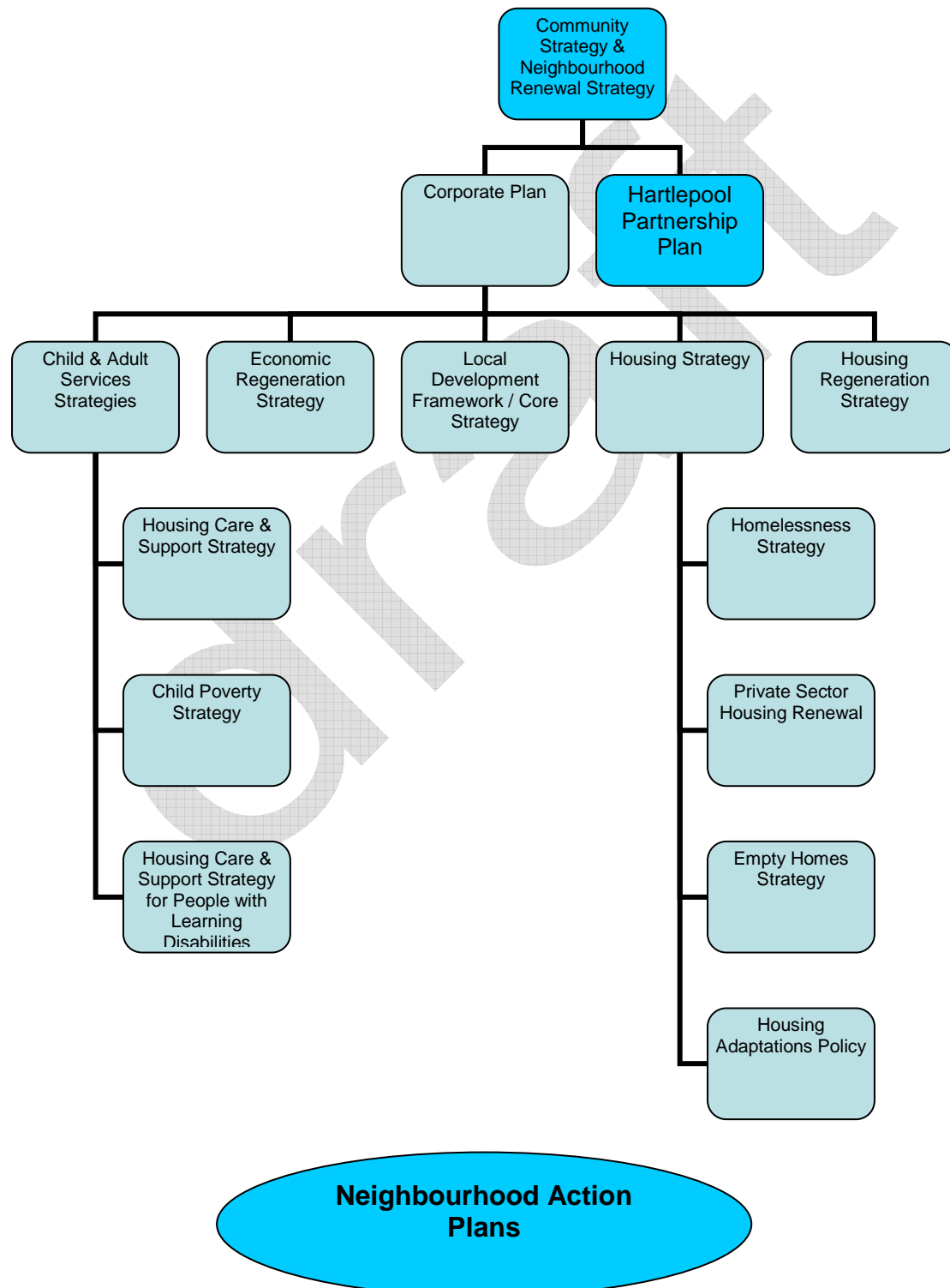


Table 1 below, details the key strategic links that exist between the Housing Strategy and the other Council documents and strategies identified in figure 2 above.

**Table 1 – Key Strategic Links**

Strategy	Date	Key Strategic Links	Comment
Community Strategy and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy	2008-20	Sets out a long term vision for the town and explains how the Council and its partners will improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the community.	
Hartlepool Partnership Plan	2011-12	Includes targets and actions in relation to the following outcomes:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hartlepool has a more balanced housing provision</li> <li>• The quality of existing housing has been improved</li> <li>• Vulnerable people have improved access to accommodation which meets their needs</li> </ul>	
Economic Regeneration Strategy	2011 - 2021	Sets out the vision, priorities and actions for the delivery of economic development and physical regeneration programmes to improve the environment and attract businesses to invest and grow in Hartlepool.	
Homelessness Strategy	2010-15	Sets out the vision and direction for reducing homelessness within Hartlepool.	
Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy	2006-08	Sets out how residents in the private sector are able to be assisted to maintain their homes and have adaptations carried out to enable independent living.	This is the current Strategy still being used and is due for revision
Empty Homes Strategy	2010-15	Provides an effective framework for bringing private sector empty homes back into use which will improve availability of suitable housing and supports sustainable communities.	
Housing Adaptations Policy	2010-13	Provides a policy for supporting people to live as independently as possible through adaptations or rehousing to more appropriate long-term accommodation.	
Older Persons	2008	This strategy was published in	This Strategy is

Housing Care and Support Strategy		partnership with Housing Hartlepool and the PCT and considers how to provide a holistic service to the elderly.	currently being updated for 2011-2014 and will be called the Housing, Care and Support Strategy
Child Poverty Strategy	2011-14	Provides the strategic priorities which aim to improve the life chances of all children, young people and their families.	
Housing Market Renewal (HMR) / Regeneration	ongoing	Provides a framework for HMR activity within Hartlepool and establishes priority areas. This is supplemented by individual masterplans.	
Hartlepool Local Plan	2006	Establishes a spatial strategy together with strategic policies.  It sets out the planning policy framework to enable ongoing HMR, provide new housing sites and ensures an appropriate mix of housing is delivered.	The Local Plan will be replaced by the Core Strategy <sup>5</sup>
Core Strategy	2012-27	The Core Strategy will replace the local plan when adopted. It establishes a spatial strategy together with strategic policies, guiding development over the next 15 years.  Sets out the planning policy framework to enable ongoing HMR, provide new housing sites, ensure an appropriate mix of housing is delivered and affordable housing is provided.	
Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs)	ongoing	NAPs have been developed for the most deprived wards in Hartlepool and prioritise housing as a key issue.	

### 3.2 Key Facts:

Key facts and statistics relating to Hartlepool are set out below:

- There are currently 40,100 households in the town<sup>6</sup>
- Hartlepool has a population of 91,800 and this is expected to rise to 93,900 by 2029<sup>6</sup>
- 23.8% of the population have a limiting long-term illness compared to 17.6% in England and Wales<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> The title Core Strategy may be subject to change under emerging government policy

<sup>6</sup> Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, 2008

- The average house price in Hartlepool remains considerably below the national average<sup>8</sup>.
- Open market prices are least affordable to older people and lone parents<sup>9</sup>.
- Levels of owner occupation in Hartlepool remain lower than the national average and levels of social and private renting are higher than the national average<sup>7</sup>.
- Social renting remains the most affordable option for Hartlepool residents<sup>7</sup>.
- 2.3% of households are overcrowded and 34.6% of households are under-occupied. Under-occupation is most prevalent in the owner-occupied sector<sup>7</sup>.
- In April 2011 2,824 applicants in Hartlepool were registered on the Compass CBL Waiting List of which 766 were in the Priority Bands 1-3<sup>10</sup>.
- The percentage of empty properties in Hartlepool's private sector exceeds the national and Tees Valley average<sup>7</sup>.
- The affordable housing requirement calculated by the Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was calculated at 244 net additional units. This was revised down to 193 by the Sub Regional SHMA.
- 34.8% of the private sector stock is non decent and there is estimated to be 21.2% of households in fuel poverty<sup>11</sup>.
- The average energy efficiency rating using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure is 51 which is slightly above the England average<sup>11</sup>.
- 7.3% of Hartlepool's working age population is unemployed, compared to 5.1% in the North East and 3.9% in Great Britain<sup>12</sup>.
- 9,236 people commute out of Hartlepool for work<sup>13</sup>
- The IMD 2010 identifies that just over a third of the population of Hartlepool live in the 10% most disadvantaged areas nationally.

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<sup>7</sup> Hartlepool Strategic Market Assessment, 2007

<sup>8</sup> Land Registry, 2011

<sup>9</sup> Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2008

<sup>10</sup> Priority Bands contain the applicants who have been identified as in the greatest housing need

<sup>11</sup> Private Sector House Condition Survey, 2009

<sup>12</sup> NOMIS, August 2011

<sup>13</sup> Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, 2008



- On average 320 new homes are built a year in Hartlepool.

### 3.3 Hartlepool's Housing Partnership and Registered Providers (RPs)

Hartlepool's Housing Partnership brings together a range of partners with the common aim of improving housing provision within Hartlepool. The partnership includes representatives from the Council, Registered Providers (RPs), private sector developers, estate agents and representatives of local residents and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The focus of the Housing Partnership will be on ensuring the delivery of this Strategy. The Partnership will co-ordinate and facilitate multi-agency and private sector involvement and provide a link between housing and wider policies for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area, including the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. The Partnership will be responsible for agreeing and monitoring the Housing Strategy action plan, addressing areas of underperformance and promoting achievements.

12 RPs currently operate in Hartlepool. The largest of these is Housing Hartlepool with approximately 70% of the social housing stock.

**Table 2 – Registered Providers operating in Hartlepool**

<b>Registered Provider (RP)</b>	<b>Stock Number (at June 2011)</b>
Housing Hartlepool	6961
Home	884
Guinness Northern Counties	364
Three Rivers	344
Anchor	333
Tees Valley	329
Endeavour	271
JRF	97 rented 48 shared ownership
Accent	103
Housing 21	45
Railway Housing	12
Places for People	3

### 3.4 Local Economic Downturn

The aftermath of the recession and plans for the economic recovery, provides the backdrop to the Strategy and will continue to present challenges in terms of unemployment, cutbacks in housing led regeneration programmes, cuts in public spending and restraints on affordable mortgage finance.

The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (October 2010) will have an impact on available resources for the Strategy and may impact on the capacity of the private sector to contribute to the strategic objectives.

In Hartlepool funding for housing and regeneration priorities has been significantly reduced and in some instances cut altogether within the spending review of 2010. HMR Funding, Single Housing Investment Pot and other such capital schemes have ceased. Funding opportunities remain in the form of the National Affordable Housing Pot, New Homes Bonus, Empty Property funding and Regional Growth Fund. A sub-regional approach to these funding streams is likely and work is underway to develop schemes to deliver on these agendas.

This Strategy is aligned to the emerging TVERIP which seeks to deliver a thriving place with a more resilient economy.

The recession has also had an impact on people in existing homes across the Borough. Statistics from the Council's Housing Advice Team demonstrate an increase in people approaching the service who are experiencing mortgage difficulties and potential repossession. During 2010 -2011 these cases have increased four fold compared to previous years and this trend is expected to continue in the foreseeable future. The Mortgage Rescue Scheme introduced in 2009 has provided some limited assistance however the current level of funding available for the scheme is unable to meet the present demand.

Access to home ownership has become an issue and information gathered from developers suggests that there has been significant interest in their new build sites but mortgage availability is preventing first time buyers from purchasing these homes. Intermediate tenure schemes such as shared ownership and shared equity are proving popular within Hartlepool and house builders have developed their own initiatives to encourage the sale of properties. This strategy will look to address the issue of access to home ownership.

## Chapter 4 - Local Housing Need

The Housing Strategy, along with other key strategies will address current and future housing need and demand in the Borough. As a result a comprehensive and robust evidence base has been established, including the following documents and sources detailed in table 3 below:

**Table 3 - Housing Need Evidence Source**

Evidence Source	Information
Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007) <sup>14</sup>	Local housing need and demand
Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008) <sup>14</sup>	Sub-regional and local housing need and demand
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2009)	Specific housing need with regard to the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show persons groups
Hartlepool Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2010)	Identification of sites with housing land capacity.
Housing Need over the Next 15 Years (2011)	Housing provision needed over the next 15 years
Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)	A detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector.
Homelessness Statistics	Data relating to housing advice and homelessness cases
Compass Housing Register	Social housing need and demand
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	The JSNA analyses the health needs of the population to inform and guide commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services.
Land Registry	Provides information about land and property. For example, the average house prices in specific areas of England and Wales and details about ownership and who the mortgage lender is.

### 4.1 Current Housing Need

Housing need is affected by a variety of factors. Evidence on the overall housing market in Hartlepool, established in table 3, can be summarised in that:

- Hartlepool is a self-contained market with most people tending to remain in the Borough, with small in-migration to new housing areas.

<sup>14</sup> The Strategic Housing Market Assessment is scheduled for updating and revision during 2012 and the new evidence will be used for delivery of the Housing Strategy Action Plan

- Market demand exceeds supply in most areas.
- Strong demand for private rented accommodation and limited capacity of social rented accommodation.
- Relatively affluent western and southern suburbs.
- Relatively deprived central area.
- New housing market areas at the Marina (central) and at Middle Warren (northwest).
- In 2006 the median house price in Hartlepool was £165,000 and the lower quartile price was £120,000.
- 80% of newly forming households are finding it very difficult to access open market accommodation.

Evidence on the key demographic drivers that affect housing need and demand, established in table 3, can be summarised as being:

- A modestly growing population through natural growth and net in-migration.
- A modestly growing population but with smaller household sizes.
- A broad diversity of existing household types.
- Decline in working age populations and increase in elderly population.
- A growing minority ethnic population.

Current economic drivers include:

- A lower proportion of economically active residents compared to regional and national averages.
- A higher proportion of employees in lower-skilled jobs.
- The proportion of residents with higher level qualifications is lower than the regional and national average.
- Median incomes are lower than the national median but slightly higher than the regional figure.

The current stock of dwellings include:

- 37% of existing dwelling stock is terraced housing; only 9% are bungalows.
- 58% of the housing stock was built before 1965.

- 85% of the housing stock has 3 bedrooms or less, with 36% having 2 bedrooms or less.
- Significant levels of new build have helped to diversify the dwelling stock profile.
- Housing stock tenure is owner occupiers 66%, social rented 27% and private rented 7%.
- A strong private rented sector, but poor stock condition remains an issue.

All of the above drivers affect the amount and type of households that are classed as being in housing need. Through evidence established in the documents listed in table 3, it is demonstrated that there is in excess of 2,800 households in current housing need. Of the households in need, they comprise primarily homeless, overcrowded and concealed households. The current housing need can be used as baseline with which to estimate the future housing need.

## **4.2 Future Housing Need**

Using evidence identified in the documents listed in table 3 it is possible to draw together a comprehensive picture of what the future housing need could be over the period of the Housing Strategy.

The homeless, overcrowded, concealed and newly forming households will define the nature of and drive the housing need and therefore create housing demand in the housing market. Again, using evidence in the documents listed in table 3, of these categories, it is estimated that approximately 320 additional newly forming households each year will need to be accommodated in the borough over the next 15 years.

With regard to the future housing market, it is expected that there will continue to be demand for dwellings of all types and tenures. However it is expected that there will be a greater need for:

- Family houses
- Bungalows
- Elderly persons accommodation

The current housing stock cannot effectively accommodate this future housing need. In considering this, there is a need to restructure the existing housing stock in the borough and build a substantial amount of new housing in the borough, which will provide a broad housing mix. The Housing Strategy will help deliver and guide this new housing provision alongside the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).

## **Chapter 5**

### **Priority 1: Delivering New Homes, Contributing to Sustainable Communities**

This chapter will detail how the Council will work with partners to deliver new homes and help to develop sustainable communities. The challenges faced in achieving this priority revolve around delivering new housing which supports the development of sustainable communities; delivering affordable housing that meets identified need and continuing to deliver Housing Market Renewal.

#### **5.1 Summary of Outcomes:**

- Deliver new and affordable homes that will meet current and future housing needs
- Ensure high quality design and construction of new housing
- Continue to regenerate priority neighbourhoods

#### **5.2 Achievements since the last Housing Strategy**

- There has been continued delivery of affordable housing with in excess of 450 affordable houses delivered over the last 4 years.
- An effective housing delivery monitoring system has been developed.
- 82 new build social rented properties have been delivered through the HCA Local Authority New Build programme.
- Successful completion of new build on Trinity Square and Trinity Court regeneration schemes following a successful Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).
- Continued delivery on the Headway regeneration scheme following a successful CPO which is TaylorWimpey's best selling site during the recession in the North East.
- Excellent track record of housing delivery on brownfield sites with 83% of homes being built on brownfield land in 2009/10 and 64% in 2010/11.
- Delivery of executive and family homes at Wynyard and Middlewarren.

### 5.3 The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 4 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

**Table 4 – Priority 1: Key Facts**

Key Facts		Source									
Tenure Mix											
<table><tr><th>Tenure</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Owner-Occupier</td><td>65.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Housing Association</td><td>27.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Private Rented</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>0.2%</td></tr></table>	Tenure	%	Owner-Occupier	65.5%	Housing Association	27.3%	Private Rented	7%	Other	0.2%	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007
Tenure	%										
Owner-Occupier	65.5%										
Housing Association	27.3%										
Private Rented	7%										
Other	0.2%										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Owner occupied properties in Park, Seaton and Hart wards exceeds 90%</li><li>Social rented properties accounts for more than half of the stock in Owton and Brus wards</li><li>Private rented properties account for 21.7% of properties occupied in Stranton, 18.8% in Burn Valley and 13% in Grange wards</li><li>There is a small number of intermediate tenure dwellings in Throston, Rift House, Grange and Burn Valley wards</li></ul>	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007										
Housing Costs											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In February 2011 the average house price in Hartlepool was £91,441 compared to £102,180 in the North East and £162,215 in England and Wales.</li><li>Since the last Housing Strategy was written average house prices in Hartlepool peaked in August 2008 at £112,675 and dipped to £89,554 by July 2009.</li></ul>	Land Registry, 2011										
<p>Income levels in Hartlepool are relatively low compared to the median national household income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 2006, the median income for people in employment living in Hartlepool was £21,315 per year compared with £20,467 for the North East and £23,379 for Great Britain.</li><li>Median incomes exceed £30,000 per year in Elwick and Park wards and are lower than £10,000 in Brus, Dyke House, Owton and Rift House wards.</li><li>Owner-occupiers with a mortgage have the highest incomes (£24,700 per year) and social renters the</li></ul>	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007										

lowest incomes (£6,500 per year). The median income of private renters is £9,100 per year.	
<b>Population Changes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proportion of residents aged 75 and over will increase by 50.7%, from 7.5% of the population in 2007 to 11.3% by 2028</li> <li>In the same time period the proportion of residents aged 60-74 will increase by 28.8%</li> <li>The proportion of residents aged under 40 will fall, with the 0-19 age group contracting by 10.8% and the 20-39 group declining by 5.3%</li> <li>Over the next few decades the population is going to age in Hartlepool and this will put increasing strain on resources directed at the housing and support needs of older people.</li> </ul>	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007
<b>New Housing Requirements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an affordable housing shortfall of 193 units (net)</li> </ul>	Tees Valley 2008 Local Assessment Update and Strategic Housing Market Assessment Report
<b>Land Availability</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has identified a five year housing land supply.</li> <li>The Core Strategy is in development and will provide a 15 year housing land supply prioritising land in locations which are well served by public transport and other services.</li> </ul>	Strategic Land Availability Assessment 2010
<b>Housing Regeneration</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2000 obsolete terraced properties identified as oversupply in 2002.</li> <li>Demolition of 700 obsolete properties has already taken place.</li> <li>The oversupplies of terrace properties remain an ongoing priority at Belle Vue, Carr/Hopps and Perth Street.</li> </ul>	Housing Regeneration Strategy 2002

## 5.4 The Issues

### 5.4.1 The Local Planning Context

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the existing Hartlepool Local Plan. The Core Strategy is the main document that allocates strategic sites for housing, employment, retail, leisure and infrastructure and safeguards assets in the borough such as the natural environment. Once



adopted the Core Strategy will replace policies established in the Local Plan. In terms of housing, over the next 15 years the Core Strategy seeks to:

- (i) continue the HMR programme;
- (ii) plan for a total net additional 4,800 new homes; allocate new land for housing;
- (iii) outline the mix of housing that is required; and
- (iv) establish a minimum 10% affordable housing requirement on private housing developments of 15 units or more.

It is anticipated that the Core Strategy document will be adopted in 2012.

#### **5.4.2 Delivery of New Housing**

In planning for new housing within Hartlepool a number of issues have been identified that need to be taken into consideration. People's realistic aspirations need to be understood fully to be able to match need and demand with provision. The local market and demographics need to be understood and in particular awareness of Hartlepool's growing population.

The development of sustainable communities is integral to the new Housing Strategy. This means local implementation of sustainable communities as defined earlier in the document (see page 6). This approach includes future proofing new properties to make sure they are adaptable to a household's changing needs, the development of mixed tenure communities, ensuring high quality design and build, consideration of affordability, and reducing carbon emissions. All of these will be a challenge for this Strategy, but should create places where people will choose to live.

New housing needs to be developed in the right locations encouraging development on previously used (brownfield) land and on the most sustainable greenfield sites, taking into account the associated costs with acquiring and building on both. Significant community involvement is underway with the development of the Core Strategy which will allocate land for 15 years of housing development. The Council is committed to community engagement and this will be strongly encouraged through the Localism agenda and in emerging neighbourhood plans.

In Hartlepool funding and land issues need to be considered, particularly the low value of land and the reluctance of owners to sell compounded by the lack of Council owned land. There is insufficient previously used land in the town centre available for all of the new housing development required so there is a need to strike a balance between developing further away from the town centre and the detrimental impact this may have.

Despite the current weak housing market, house building in the borough has continued at around 300 net additional dwellings each year. However, this has been primarily due to the success of publicly funded housing developments supporting ongoing private developments. The Housing Strategy will seek to support current and future private and public developments to help to ensure an adequate supply of new houses.

The current housing market condition has not only affected new house building, but has also resulted in even attractive new build flats remaining vacant. This is particularly evident within flat developments at the Marina. The Housing Strategy will seek to address this issue.

When planning new housing developments links to infrastructure, services, health and the economy need to be considered. In particular they need to be responsive to the recently approved sites within the enterprise zones. Links need to be made between job creation, in migration of wealth creators and new homes. This may involve employing local people in all stages of house building; creating training opportunities and attracting people into Hartlepool to live and work.

#### **5.4.3 Delivery of Affordable Housing and Access to New Housing Developments**

Affordable housing is defined as housing available to those who are unable to access accommodation suitable for their family's needs, at a price that they can reasonably afford on the open market, whether for rent or home ownership. Affordable housing includes social rented housing and intermediate housing. Intermediate housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents.

As detailed in Chapter 2 the affordable rent product was introduced by the Government in April 2011. Affordable rented homes will be made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and this will be the key way in which new affordable housing will be funded. Tenancies will be offered through the CBL scheme and are eligible for housing benefit. Affordable rented properties will be owned by RPs and retained in perpetuity in the same way that social rented properties are.

In Hartlepool all RPs also operate in other local authorities and the Council will need to ensure that revenue raised through the introduction of higher affordable rents locally is not used by RPs to fund the delivery of new affordable social housing in another area. It will also be important to assess the impact of potential rent increases on affordability for local residents in housing need.

It is important that through the Housing Strategy the supply of affordable homes is increased and homelessness continues to be prevented in Hartlepool. Work needs to continue with developers to make new homes more affordable. Reductions in funding will necessitate the ongoing use of policies in the Hartlepool Local Plan and emerging Core Strategy to secure affordable housing provision or financial contribution as part of private housing developments; working with the HCA and developing smarter and more affordable building techniques. In addition to the new affordable rent product affordable housing will continue to be delivered, albeit on a smaller scale, through the National Affordable Housing Programme.

As outlined, perhaps the most important way of securing the delivery of affordable housing in the future is through the use of planning obligations.

Affordable housing policies are included in the Core Strategy, and seek to secure 10% to 30% on-site affordable housing as part of all private housing developments (over 15 units). The level of provision is dependent on the economic viability of an individual scheme and, in some instances, can be provided off-site or as a commuted sum to benefit housing regeneration elsewhere in the Borough. On executive housing sites an off-site contribution will be required.

When building new affordable housing, consideration should also be made to reducing potential service charges as far as possible. This will be achieved through developing self-contained accommodation wherever possible and low maintenance communal facilities where this is unavoidable. Service charges should be avoided completely on shared ownership products where these costs could be going towards more equity purchase.

Since the recession, mortgage availability has been reduced, higher deposits are required and it is becoming increasingly difficult for first time buyers to get on the housing ladder. Increasing housing costs will impact on household's spare income for food, fuel bills, leisure and recreation. The Strategy will need to be responsive to the potential for increased crime, anti social behaviour, homelessness, fuel poverty and put in place measures to mitigate this.

The central area of Hartlepool where first time buyers traditionally bought is increasingly vulnerable because people who can get a mortgage are now choosing 'estate houses' rather than terraced properties.

The overall health of a housing market relies on a steady flow of first time buyers, particularly as the market is largely based on a system of trading up in the value, type and size of a home. New purchasers need to be encouraged and supported through initiatives to access a first home. Access to home ownership for first time buyers will be partly addressed through house-builders own initiatives such as shared equity, deposit match and the government backed FirstBuy scheme to encourage the sale of properties. The opportunity for council backed mortgages and deposits will also be explored during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy.

#### **5.4.4 Housing Regeneration**

HMR is an important element in providing new and affordable housing within Hartlepool and it is integral to the success of the Housing Strategy.

Housing market failure persists in some parts of the town, particularly in the central area. This failure is fuelled by:

- Low demand in certain housing sectors including a collapse in the market for terraced properties in the central area;
- Imbalance between demand and supply in the local housing market;
- Relatively low house prices;
- Decline in owner-occupation, together with increased concentrations of private landlords;
- Housing management issues, including absentee private landlords;

- High levels of household moves and anti-social behaviour in areas of low demand;
- High levels of dissatisfaction with housing provision reflecting changing aspirations and outdated layouts.

Since the last strategy the Council's HMR programme has continued with the acquisition of private properties on the key strategic sites in the town funded by central government:

- Raby Road Corridor
- Belle Vue
- Carr/Hopps Street

Through the Strategy it is imperative that HMR is continued. Funding for regeneration has been significantly reduced as a result of abolition of the national HMR programme. The Council must therefore find new ways of delivery and partnership working will be crucial. It will aim to explore new and innovative methods of funding and delivery with partners. It is also essential that the areas which adjoin the identified HMR areas are also monitored as they are vital to the success of the town centre. A map detailing the Council's priority housing regeneration sites is shown in Appendix 1.

In particular, funding to deliver the Carr/Hopps Street area is a priority and there is Council commitment to deliver this scheme following the conclusion of the New Deal for Communities programme. Although the Council has considerable stake holdings on the site, significant funding is required to deliver this scheme and innovative means of delivery of HMR is required in the future. The Strategy aims to support the regeneration activity of the Council's RP partners, such as the acquisition, clearance and redevelopment of the Raby Estate by Housing Hartlepool. These schemes contribute to the overall improvement of the private sector stock in the central area of town and delivery of new build affordable and private sale houses. The programme links closely to the problem with empty properties within the borough and an improvement project for private sector properties will be beneficial to protect investment and continue the momentum of regeneration.

The ability to continue with our plans for HMR will be assisted, primarily through the use of planning obligations. As part of the affordable housing policies in the Core Strategy, off-site provision may be advocated on some private residential developments. The off-site provision could take the form a commuted sum of money paid by the developer which could be used to support a specific HMR site elsewhere in the Borough.

## **BY 2015 WE WILL HAVE:**

*An improved and more balanced housing offer within Hartlepool that will meet the needs of residents and be of high quality design.*

During the 4 years of this strategy we will:

- Maintain an understanding of the current housing needs in the Borough
- Ensure all new residential developments meet local housing need
- Ensure where appropriate all new developments are linked to the creation of job opportunities and training
- Ensure all relevant residential developments include an affordable housing provision
- Continue to work with Registered Providers and developers in the provision of affordable housing
- Monitor and assess the impact of new affordable rents and other emerging products on tenure choice across the Borough
- Ensure new build houses are flexible to the changing needs of future residents
- Ensure a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 on all new publicly funded homes, increasing to level 5 from 2013
- Ensure a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 on all new privately funded homes, increasing to Level 4 from 2013
- Tackle the imbalance of supply and demand through co-ordinated programmes including Housing Market Renewal
- Ensure housing regeneration contributes positively to economic development

## **Chapter 6**

### **Priority 2: Improving Existing Homes, Supporting Sustainable Communities**

This chapter will detail how the Council will aim to improve existing homes, help to support sustainable communities and tackle issues around empty homes. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring housing quality across all tenures. Particular challenges include raising standards within the private rented sector, improving energy efficiency, improving conditions in the older housing stock, reducing the high levels of empty homes and delivering housing regeneration.

#### **6.1 Summary of Outcomes:**

- Improve property conditions and management standards in the private rented sector
- Ensure homes maintain good conditions and high levels of management in the social rented sector
- Ensure all homes across tenures offer a decent living environment
- Continue to bring empty homes back into use
- Improve energy efficiency and affordable warmth across all tenures

#### **6.2 Achievements since the last Housing Strategy**

- Introduction of Selective Licensing in May 2009 in 6 designated areas
- Introduction of Sub Regional CBL in June 2009
- Introduction of the Good Tenant Scheme in 2008
- Production of the Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan 2010-15
- Appointment of a dedicated Empty Homes Officer from April 2011
- Year on year increase in the number of empty homes brought back into use
- Continued strong partnership working with RP partners
- All RP partners have achieved 100% Decent Homes Standard
- 345 obsolete properties demolished at Mildred and Mayfair Streets and replaced with 145 new build properties at the Trinity Square/Trinity Court development
- 280 obsolete properties demolished at Chester Road being replaced with the Headway development of 177 new build properties, of which approximately half have been completed

- 72 properties demolished at Easington Road currently replaced with 62 pioneering new properties constructed off-site
- 127 properties demolished at Belle Vue being replaced with 97 new properties
- A successful CPO on Raby Road Corridor site
- 458 Home Plus Grants and Grant/Loans used to improve private sector properties during 2007-11

### 6.3 The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 5 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

Table 5 – Priority 2: Key Facts

Key Facts		Source																								
Private Renting Costs																										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The minimum entry-level price is around £300-£325pcm and this would be sufficient for a one-bedroom property or a two bedroom property in the central area of Hartlepool. Larger, higher quality properties in more desirable areas command a minimum of around £500-£550pcm.</li><li>Within Hartlepool the private rented sector is an important provider of accommodation.</li></ul>		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007																								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Private renting in Hartlepool and income required to be affordable</li></ul> <table><tr><th rowspan="3">Property size (No. of bedrooms)</th><th rowspan="3">Price range</th><th colspan="2">Min. income required for rent to be affordable</th></tr><tr><th colspan="2">(based on 25% of gross income)</th></tr><tr><th>Monthly</th><th>Weekly</th></tr><tr><td>One</td><td>£295-£305</td><td>£1,180</td><td>£272</td></tr><tr><td>Two</td><td>£325-£450</td><td>£1,300</td><td>£300</td></tr><tr><td>Three</td><td>£400-£595</td><td>£1,600</td><td>£369</td></tr><tr><td>Four or more</td><td>£750+</td><td>£3,000</td><td>£692</td></tr></table> <p>Source: Internet search of lettings agents May 2007</p>		Property size (No. of bedrooms)	Price range	Min. income required for rent to be affordable		(based on 25% of gross income)		Monthly	Weekly	One	£295-£305	£1,180	£272	Two	£325-£450	£1,300	£300	Three	£400-£595	£1,600	£369	Four or more	£750+	£3,000	£692	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007
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Four or more	£750+	£3,000	£692																							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Without any housing benefit receipt, this would render the private rented sector unaffordable to many household types. Only couples under 60, couples with families and other household types could comfortably afford entry-level private rented prices.</li></ul>																										
Social Renting Costs																										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Social renting remains the most affordable housing option for Hartlepool residents. However, without housing benefit receipt, social renting is still unaffordable to most singles, couples over 60 and lone parents.</li></ul>		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment																								

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The cost of renting from a social landlord in Hartlepool and income required for property to be affordable</li></ul>		2007																											
<table><tr><th rowspan="3">Property size (No. of bedrooms)</th><th rowspan="3">Weekly Rent</th><th colspan="2">Min. income required for rent to be (based on 25% of gross income)</th></tr><tr><th>Monthly</th><th>Weekly</th></tr><tr><td>One</td><td>£49.97</td><td>£866</td><td>£200</td></tr><tr><td>Two</td><td>£54.33</td><td>£942</td><td>£217</td></tr><tr><td>Three</td><td>£55.18</td><td>£956</td><td>£221</td></tr><tr><td>Four</td><td>£56.26</td><td>£975</td><td>£225</td></tr><tr><td>All</td><td>£53.84</td><td>£933</td><td>£215</td></tr></table>		Property size (No. of bedrooms)	Weekly Rent	Min. income required for rent to be (based on 25% of gross income)		Monthly	Weekly	One	£49.97	£866	£200	Two	£54.33	£942	£217	Three	£55.18	£956	£221	Four	£56.26	£975	£225	All	£53.84	£933	£215	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007	
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All	£53.84	£933	£215																										
Overcrowding and Under-Occupation																													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The scale of overcrowding and under-occupation in Hartlepool is illustrated below. Under-occupation has been calculated as two or more spare bedrooms available.</li></ul>		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007																											
	% households overcrowded	% households under-occupied																											
Hartlepool	2.3%	34.6%																											
Tees Valley	3.2%	39.8%																											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In Hartlepool owner-occupiers are most likely to be under-occupying their homes, including smaller households comprising singles and couples.</li></ul>		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007																											
Tenure	No. Overcrowded Households	% Overcrowded	Total Households																										
Owned (no mortgage)	58	0.6	10524																										
Owned (with mortgage)	329	2.2	15200																										
Rented from Housing Hartlepool	326	4.0	8061																										
Rented from another Housing Association	97	3.6	2673																										
Private Rented (furnished)	26	5.0	519																										
Private Rented (unfurnished)	56	2.6	2156																										
Total	892	2.3	39270																										
Vacancy Rates																													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Within Hartlepool the percentage of empty properties in the private sector exceed the national average and also the Tees Valley average</li></ul>		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007																											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>As at April 2011 there were 579 properties which had been empty for more than 6 months in the private sector.</li></ul>		Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix																											
Housing Conditions (Private sector)																													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An estimated 11,300 dwellings in Hartlepool (34.8% of the stock) are</li></ul>		2009																											



<p>classed as non decent. The majority of dwellings are non decent because of Category 1 Hazards<sup>15</sup> (18.5%) and thermal comfort failure (15.4%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Hartlepool non decent dwellings are most associated with low rise purpose built flats, the private rented sector and properties built pre-1919. Non decency is also associated with heads of households aged 16 to 24 and those aged 75+.</li> <li>• The highest non decency score by sub-area is recorded in the Central sub-area at 44.1%.</li> <li>• At present 6,000 (18.5%) dwellings are estimated to have at least one Category 1 Hazard.</li> <li>• The highest proportion of Category 1 hazards was found in the Central sub-area followed by the Rural sub-area.</li> <li>• The total requirement for repair in all dwellings that fail under the repair criterion of the Decent Homes Standard is £21.2 million, an average cost of £4,500 per dwelling.</li> </ul>	<p>Private Sector House Condition Survey</p>
<b>Housing Conditions (Social sector)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ALL RP stock in Hartlepool has achieved the Decent Homes Standard</li> <li>• RPs are working towards raising the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) ratings of their stock</li> </ul>	
<b>Energy Efficiency</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are estimated to be 6,900 (21.2%) dwellings which contain households in fuel poverty within Hartlepool. This is significantly above the 11.5% found in the English House Condition Survey 2006.</li> <li>• The survey indicates that the highest rate of fuel poverty was found in the Central sub-area at 25.8% followed by the South sub-area at 19.1%.</li> <li>• The average energy efficiency level in Hartlepool, using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure, is 51 (on a scale of 1 to 100). This is slightly above the all England average of 49 from the English House Condition Survey 2006.</li> </ul>	<p>2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey</p>

<sup>15</sup> The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard, each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having Category 1 (serious) or Category 2 (other).

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/hhsrsoperatingguidance>

## **6.4 The Issues**

### **6.4.1 The Rented Sector**

The private rented sector (PRS) accounts for 7.4% of housing stock in Hartlepool and has an important role to play in the housing market. It provides homes for a variety of people at different stages in their lives, including would-be first time buyers who cannot afford to take the first step onto the property ladder, people who enjoy the flexibility of short tenancies and those who the Council has helped into the sector to prevent them from becoming homeless. Developing products and services that will respond to those households is also an integral part of the town centre regeneration and underpins regeneration activity.

It is recognised that the PRS presents a number of challenges. For it to become a viable third option as a housing tenure of choice, a variety of issues must be tackled through this Strategy. These include housing quality, housing management and the unsecure nature of tenancies in the sector.

In order to meet the challenge of increased choice, it needs to be recognised that landlords and agents in the PRS need to be engaged as key partners in the process. Limited land availability, pressure on the availability of social rented sector homes and the impact of the economic recession means that it is essential to support people to consider all available housing options.

The long term aspiration is one of a town with a variety of accommodation which is balanced to ensure communities can have a greater choice in where they live and if applicable move up the housing market rather than move out of the Borough.

Through the Strategy the aim is to develop a healthy PRS with improvements in property conditions and management standards supported through the enhanced tenant/landlord service operating from the Housing Options Centre. This service manages the voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme, which works with landlords to improve the condition of private sector housing throughout the town; the Selective Licensing Scheme, which aims to improve the management standards and improve the quality of privately rented accommodation and the Good Tenant Scheme, a referencing service for tenants which has the express aim of reducing anti social behaviour in the PRS.

The responsibility for maintaining private property rests with the homeowner. However the Council recognises that intervention and assistance is necessary where areas are in decline, owners are in financial hardship (a problem which is increasing as the impact of the economic recession continues) or landlords refuse to undertake essential repairs or improvements. The Council will take appropriate action where it finds landlords failing in their responsibilities.

The objective of the Strategy is to improve access and improve information on the PRS which is needed together with work being undertaken with landlords to promote the sector. The strategy will aim to bring together the package of

tools available to the Council and its partners to improve the overall private sector housing offer. This includes the enhanced tenant/landlord liaison service.

A challenge for the future will be the impact of Government changes to Housing Benefit (HB), Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and introduction of Universal Credit on people's ability to afford a home in the rented sector.

- The proposed household cap on benefits of £500 per week. This will impact most significantly on larger households and could potentially include some minority ethnic groups with larger families and where more than one generation live in the same household.
- Caps on LHA and linking both this and the housing element of Universal Credit to inflation rather than to the cost of rent will exacerbate the shortfall between payments and the rent people have to pay. A potential impact of this could be private landlords housing people on benefit deciding to exit the market which will result in extra pressure on social landlords. Those who remain might drop services and accommodation standards to offset more interruption to their income streams. There are concerns that homelessness may increase as a result of this and this will be monitored.
- The increase of the age threshold from 25 to 35 under which single claimants are entitled only to the single room rent will see more rent shortfalls and an increased need for decent and suitable single person's accommodation in both the private and social rented sector.
- HB for working aged claimants in the social rented sector is proposed to be restricted for households deemed to be under-occupying. It is estimated that this will impact on 32% of claimants nationally in this sector. This will impose extra pressure on families to meet rent commitments and extra pressure on RPs to support balanced communities. An indirect result may be to encourage overcrowding in order to protect income streams for both tenants and landlords.

It is important that the Council works with partners to minimise the impact of the above reductions in peoples income, particularly if this means people are at risk of being made homeless and unable to afford to maintain their home.

The social rented sector (SRS) accounts for 19.8% of housing stock in Hartlepool. Since the last Strategy the Decent Homes Standard has been met by all RP partners. Through the Strategy all RPs operating in Hartlepool will be encouraged to consider 'decent homes plus', continue to offer well managed and good quality housing and participate actively in the Housing Partnership.

With the numbers of applicants registering on Compass for social housing increasing ongoing work with partners will need to continue to both make best use of existing homes as well as identify opportunities to increase the provision of suitable housing to meet needs.

Changes in regulation for RPs will also mean significant changes to the way that business is conducted, along with the new funding regime through affordable rents and flexible tenancies. The Council will monitor and respond carefully to ensure that the needs of local people are not adversely impacted by these measures.

#### **6.4.2 Empty Homes in the Private Sector**

In order to make the best use of existing housing, efforts are focussed on bringing long-term empty properties back into use. As at April 2011 there were 579 properties which had been empty for six months or more. Bringing empty homes back into use can be an effective method for increasing housing supply, whilst helping to reduce the need to build new homes. A map detailing empty homes at April 2011 is shown in Appendix 1

The Council's specific plans for bringing empty properties back into use are set out in the Empty Homes Strategy, which is reviewed regularly.

Through the Housing Strategy it is important that there is a concentration on linking housing need and demand more strategically to existing homes and innovative solutions developed to bring these issues together.

The Council will target work which helps owners who want to bring empty properties back into use and it will utilise a wide range of enforcement powers where needed. This will have a positive impact on Hartlepool's economy through increased income generation for the Council and the increased use of local labour and supplies through improvement works.

Tackling empty properties and the use of enforcement powers is a key challenge for the Council which will need to be sufficiently resourced in the future if it is to make a significant impact and a real difference is to be made in local neighbourhoods. However, the numbers of empty properties may increase in Hartlepool as a result of the economic downturn and this will have repercussions for the amount of funding delivered through the New Homes Bonus.

Whilst tackling empty properties across all sectors is important, the biggest challenge for the Council is to concentrate its resources towards the private sector. Responding to empty properties in the social sector will be carried out in partnership with RPs.

Issues of oversupply of terraced properties will continue to be tackled through the HMR programme.

#### **6.4.3 Housing Conditions**

The Strategy acknowledges the essential role that good quality housing plays in promoting health, well-being, educational attainment and independence for residents, maintaining quality of life and vibrant local communities.

The private sector in Hartlepool accounts for a large proportion of residential accommodation. A Private Sector Stock Condition Survey was undertaken in Hartlepool in 2009. The survey identified that 34.8% of stock did not meet the government's Decent Homes Standard. It also found that the poorest housing conditions are concentrated in the oldest housing stock. The challenge for the Strategy is to work to improve conditions within the owner-occupied and private rented sectors, targeting the most vulnerable residents including encouraging reporting of poor property conditions.

Where substantial work is required to remedy Category 1 hazards (HHSRS), all available options will be fully considered including assistance, housing options advice or enforcement action, as appropriate.

A further challenge will be the lack of available funding for grants and loans which have previously been available for improvement works.

#### **6.4.4 Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty**

A fuel poor household is one which cannot afford to keep adequately warm at reasonable cost. This is defined by Government as when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its disposable income to adequately heat the home.

A key challenge is to tackle energy efficiency of homes to help reduce fuel poverty. The Private Sector House Condition Survey 2009 found that 21.2% of dwellings contain households in fuel poverty in Hartlepool and that this is above the national average.

The average energy efficiency rating for homes in Hartlepool has increased since the last Strategy, most significantly in the social sector as a result of national schemes such as the Decent Homes Programme for existing homes and the Code for Sustainable Homes for new homes.

Locally, RPs operating in Hartlepool are investigating photovoltaic systems (these use daylight to generate electricity for use in the property) for their stock. This is to assist residents with their fuel bills and goes some way to reducing fuel poverty for some people. Through the decent homes programme RP stock has already had works done to improve thermal efficiency and heating systems' performance. Renewables are the next step to take with regards to reducing energy consumption and cost. It is estimated that around 60% of the stock will be suitable for solar technologies. The progression of this will be monitored through the lifetime of the Strategy.

The Government incentive scheme established to increase the number of installations of small scale renewable sources of energy (the Feed in Tariff scheme) is starting to have an impact. This scheme provides a payment for all electricity generated by small scale renewables installed by approved companies; it also provides some free electricity for the homeowner. This incentive is available to all homeowners including RPs.

The Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) is another Government initiative to improve energy efficiency and reduce household bills. CESP is an obligation on the bigger gas and electricity suppliers to deliver energy saving measures to households. The programme specifically targets areas of low income using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Homes owned by Tees Valley Housing in Hartlepool are being improved through this programme. However, this programme is due to end in December 2012.

The emerging Core Strategy also has a requirement for a minimum of 10% of the energy on new housing developments (of 10 dwellings or more) to be supplied from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources.

#### **6.4.5 Responding to the challenges of climate change**

As a service provider the Council needs to plan ahead to be ready to deal with the likely impacts of climate change. It must consider the risks from intense weather events such as heavy rainfall causing surface water flooding and heat-waves causing homes to overheat as well as the potential for flooding from the sea caused by anticipated sea level rise.

There is a need to reduce carbon emissions and prevent further climate change in the future through better design and building techniques and the re-use and recycling of building materials. New developments must be encouraged to incorporate renewable energy generation whether on-site or remotely.

The Government has committed to reduce targeted emissions which cause climate change by 80% by 2050 (based on 1990 levels) including an interim target to reduce emissions by 26% by 2020. The Council has also signed up to the European Covenant of Mayors which commits it to reducing carbon emissions by more than 20% by 2020.

The benefits of improving the energy efficiency of existing homes includes reduced energy bills, reduced fuel poverty, warmer homes, health improvements and reduced carbon emissions.

Retrofitting existing homes to improve insulation levels, enable them to generate their own electricity and better cope with the impacts of climate change are all important parts of climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is vital homes continue to be healthy, comfortable places to live and wherever possible do not suffer from the effects of flooding, water shortages during droughts, or from over-heating.

## **BY 2015 WE WILL HAVE:**

*An improved housing stock in Hartlepool where all homes across tenures offer a decent living environment*

During the 4 years of this strategy we will:

- Maximise the broad range of tools to make the private sector more accountable
- Increase the use of all enforcement powers in accordance with the Enforcement Policy
- Improve the attractiveness of the private rented sector as a real housing option
- Introduce a managing agent scheme to landlords with occupied properties
- Provide an integrated tenant/landlord liaison service
- Ensure all Registered Providers maintain the decent homes standard
- Continue housing liaison with all Registered Providers and seek to achieve more effective local management
- Seek to provide an efficient, co-ordinated response to reports of Anti-Social Behaviour
- Encourage investment into neighbourhoods
- Support investment into areas that are adjacent to housing regeneration
- Bring 10% of the total number of empty homes back into use annually
- Improve the energy efficiency of existing stock

## **Chapter 7**

### **Priority 3: Meeting Specific Housing Needs**

This chapter will detail how the Council will work with partners to meet the specific housing needs of vulnerable people. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are particular pressures for finding suitable housing solutions for people with learning and other disabilities, as well as housing for a growing older population, addressing Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs and funding housing adaptations to enable independent living. Preventing youth homelessness and providing effective advice for those affected by mortgage repossessions are also important issues to be addressed.

#### **7.1 Summary of Outcomes:**

- Prevent and tackle homelessness, including youth homelessness and mortgage repossessions
- Improve access into appropriate accommodation
- Improve financial inclusion of vulnerable people
- Improve housing options for people with disabilities<sup>16</sup> and support independent living
- Improve housing options for older people
- Improve housing and housing-related services for older people
- Respond to the housing needs of the BME community, including Gypsies and Travellers

#### **7.2 Achievements since the last Housing Strategy**

##### **7.2.1 Homelessness**

- Production of the second Homelessness Strategy in 2010
- Reduction of the level of homelessness acceptances from 268 in 2002/02 to 17 in 2010/11
- 8 completed cases under the Mortgage Rescue scheme during 2010/11
- Establishment of the multi agency Supported Housing Panel
- Development of a supported housing scheme for 6 people with alcohol dependency issues at Richard's House
- Development of the Housing Options Centre and relocation of the Housing Advice and Homelessness Service to the Housing Options Centre in September 2009

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<sup>16</sup> Disabilities includes people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, people on the autistic spectrum and people with mental health needs



## 7.2.2 Independent Living

- Production of The Housing Adaptations Policy 2010 – 13 and Implementation Plan
- Establishment of an Adaptations Operations Panel
- Development of over 450 units of extra care housing at Hartfields, Laurel Gardens and re-provision at 3 Housing Hartlepool schemes
- Reduction of 105 bedsits due to decommissions at 3 Housing Hartlepool schemes

## 7.2.3 BME Housing Needs

- Regular BME lettings monitoring meeting established with Housing Hartlepool
- Detailed study on BME housing needs completed
- Positive links with the Salaam Centre established

## 7.3 The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 6 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority

Table 6 – Priority 3: Key Facts

Key Facts	Source				
<b>Population Changes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proportion of residents aged 75 and over will increase by 50.7%, from 7.5% of the population in 2007 to 11.3% by 2028;</li> <li>• In the same time period the proportion of residents aged 60-74 will increase by 28.8%;</li> <li>• The proportion of residents aged under 40 will fall, with the 0-19 age group contracting by 10.8% and the 20-39 group declining by 5.3%.</li> </ul> <p>Over the next few decades the population is going to age in Hartlepool and this will put increasing strain on resources directed at the housing and support needs of older people.</p>	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007				
<b>Waiting List</b> <p>As at April 2011 there were 17,681 active applicants on the Tees Valley housing register, of which 2,824 were registered in Hartlepool. 766 were banded in Priority Bands 1-3.</p> <p>Across the sub region the age profile of active applicants is:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Under 25</td><td>20%</td></tr> <tr> <td>25 – 59</td><td>60%</td></tr> </table>	Under 25	20%	25 – 59	60%	Compass Housing Register
Under 25	20%				
25 – 59	60%				

	60+	20%	
82% of current applicants are registered as White British.			
<b>Homelessness</b>			
<p>In 2009/10 homelessness acceptance figures reduced to 18 from 28 the previous year.</p> <p>The causes of homelessness were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asked to leave by family/friends (8)</li> <li>• Domestic violence (3)</li> <li>• Mortgage repossession (2)</li> <li>• Rent arrears (2)</li> <li>• Other (2)</li> <li>• Loss of assured short hold tenancy (1)</li> </ul> <p>Homelessness acceptances are highest amongst young people</p>			Hartlepool Homelessness Strategy 2010-15
<b>Demographics</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proportion of the population 60+ will increase and the rate of increase highest in the 75+ age group</li> <li>• 81% of older people would prefer to stay in their own home with support if needed</li> <li>• 39% of households contain someone with an illness/disability</li> <li>• The proportion of households containing someone with an illness/disability is highest amongst social renters (58.2%)</li> <li>• The largest identified group are people with a physical disability (43.3%) followed by age related illness/disability (24%)</li> <li>• At July 2010 there were 320 applicants on Compass needing a certain property type due to their disability</li> <li>• Since 2005/06 the numbers of people re-housed into adapted accommodation has doubled from 53 to 117 in 2009/10</li> </ul>			Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007
<b>Disabled Facilities Grant</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2004 funding for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) has been inadequate to cover the referrals from Occupational Therapy</li> <li>• During 2009/10 152 DFGs were completed at a value of £643,455</li> <li>• The average waiting time from referral from Occupational Therapy to a DFG application is 259 days due to lack of funding and the waiting list.</li> <li>• In addition RPs continue to fund adaptations for tenants in their properties. During 2009/10 Housing Hartlepool spent £447,774.</li> </ul>			Hartlepool Housing Adaptations Policy Review 2010

Ethnicity		
		Census 2001
White British	98.8	
Other Ethnicity	1.2	
Mixed	0.4	
Indian	0.2	
Pakistani	0.2	
Bangladeshi	0.1	
Chinese	0.1	
Other Ethnic Group	0.2	
TOTAL	100.00	
Base (All People)	88,610	

## 7.4 The Issues

### 7.4.1 Preventing and tackling Homelessness

The Council is working towards its long term vision to end homelessness within Hartlepool and to ensure all residents have access to a safe, secure and suitable home.

The Council prevents homelessness by providing advice and help to people when they are at risk of becoming homeless, including referral to specialist agencies which may enable them to stay where they are living, and debt advice to avoid eviction through arrears.

Since the last Strategy, a range of services and products have been developed for households to help resolve their housing situation. A common allocation policy has been adopted across Tees Valley and Compass CBL has been implemented. Compass is currently being expanded for more RP properties to be advertised, to include more private rented properties, low cost home ownership products and mutual exchange.

The Council has a strong record in tackling and preventing homelessness in Hartlepool. An important priority of the Strategy is to focus on prevention measures, where possible, to enable people to remain in the homes they already occupy, either through negotiation with private landlords and Housing Benefits team, or through negotiation with mortgage lenders or families. Close working will continue with the private sector to secure alternative accommodation for clients. Prevention also depends on good partnership working, and on organisations sharing information about the local housing market and economy, and maintaining their knowledge of each other's respective services. Severe budget pressures and cuts to Housing Related Support will impact further on homelessness prevention.

There is a significant challenge faced in improving homelessness prevention. Young people continue to be over-represented amongst those presenting as homeless and often have complex needs that require additional and on-going support. Young people leaving care and those aged 16 or 17 will also be assisted by joint working within the Council.

The Council's housing advice service has been further challenged by the economic recession, which has had repercussions for people dealing with personal debt. In extreme cases this has led to people facing homelessness when they have no longer been able to keep up rent or mortgage payments.

The Council has also responded to the increased demand for housing advice relating to debt issues. During January to June 2010 additional assistance was commissioned from the Housing Options Centre via the Citizens Advice Bureau using grant funding from DCLG. However the funding available for this enhanced debt advice has ceased. Similarly Mortgage Rescue Scheme funding has been dramatically reduced and it is anticipated that regardless of how many apply and meet the eligibility criteria there is only funding available during 2011 - 2012 for an estimated three applications.

Housing Benefit (HB) reforms will also impact upon the delivery of the Strategy. Restrictions for people under the age of 35, due to be implemented in January 2012, has already seen landlords expressing concern and refusing this age group. This has resulted in increasing numbers of people presenting to the Housing Advice Team who are not classed as priority but genuinely homeless with no-where to go.

Further changes reducing the amount of HB households will be eligible for and a reduction in the funds available for Discretionary Housing Payments will also impact heavily on people's ability to afford the accommodation they currently occupy and as a result it is anticipated that more households may face potential homelessness.

The Council, in partnership with Housing Hartlepool, has developed an Eviction Protocol to act as a final safety net to try and avoid homelessness wherever possible for social housing. It has been agreed that this initiative should be expanded to all RPs. The Council is also hoping to reach agreement with private sector landlords to expand this into their tenure.

Further challenges for the Council include improving access to housing and services for young people leaving care and addressing the complex issues of socially excluded adults.

Through the lifetime of the Housing Strategy the impacts of the Social Housing Reforms<sup>17</sup> on affordability, security of tenure and the new power to discharge homelessness duty to the private rented sector will need to be carefully considered. Specific attention will need to be made to minimise any adverse effects of the reforms on vulnerable groups. The potential impacts of the benefit reforms have been addressed previously in section 6.4.1.

The Localism Bill proposes that new social tenants can be offered a flexible tenancy – a secure tenancy of a fixed term not less than two years. The Council will need to understand how this affects residents and ensure that disincentives are not created for those who wish to progress through employment.

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<sup>17</sup> Local Decisions: A Fairer Future for Social Housing, DCLG, 2011

The Bill also proposes that local authorities can discharge their statutory duty to homeless families by placing them in settled accommodation in the private rented sector for a fixed term of at least 12 months. Issues associated with this include affordability and suitability of this tenure given the planned changes to Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

#### **7.4.2 Supporting People to live independently**

During 2010 the Council prioritised a review into the way housing adaptations, Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and rehousing options are utilised to enable people to live independently in their current or future homes. The subsequent policy aims to deliver the vision of supporting people to live as independently as possible in homes that are safe and comfortable. This Strategy reinforces the key principles of improving services for people with disabilities and improving the standard of living, health and well-being of communities.

The Council recognises that health, housing, social care and support are inextricably linked. Appropriate support and care services can help people to remain independent and enjoy living in their homes for as long as possible. Well maintained, warm, secure and suitable housing can help prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital or institutional care.

It is recognised that the Council has a valuable contribution to make to this priority through the provision of: new housing appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people; an effective advice service; and housing related support. The Council can also help by assisting people to maintain their current home, or making it more suitable for their needs.

Housing Related Support provided by the Council's Commissioned Services team offers vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by giving them access to the support they need to live more independent lives. The ongoing delivery of Housing Related Support services is therefore vital to the strategy's aim of improving housing options and supporting independent living.

The housing needs of vulnerable people have to be balanced against other priorities. However, the Council supports people to remain in or work towards independent living, helping them to participate in mainstream society and make a contribution to the local economy. This will be achieved through looking at a range of opportunities to help improve access to different types of housing, delivering services to peoples homes and where appropriate developing purpose built specialist accommodation to meet needs. In the future, work will be focussed on assisting people to live independently with support. Affordability issues for people to move into appropriate accommodation will also need consideration.

The challenge is to meet the needs of individuals by providing more housing choice. To do this the focus will be on developing new homes where feasible but primarily making best use of the existing homes available. A number of options will be utilised to support this approach, ranging from carrying out

home adaptations to providing low level support to people to help them maintain independent living. This needs to be considered in the context of what future funding will enable the Council to do.

The Council works with partners to ensure the housing needs of people with disabilities are addressed. When available, affordable rented accommodation that has been specifically designed or adapted is prioritised for people with disabilities. This is achieved through Compass CBL where vacancies are advertised specifically for people with a mobility problem.

It has been identified that there is a lack of suitable accommodation for people under the age of 55 with a disability and this gap needs to be addressed through the Strategy.

A further challenge is to work towards ensuring the Lifetime Homes Standard is applied to all suitable housing sites. When new homes are built the Council will, where there is identified need on a site by site basis, encourage that a percentage of all housing is able to be adapted for households with a disability.

### **7.4.3 Supporting People with Learning Disabilities**

There are approximately 1.5% of people living with a learning disability in Hartlepool, a number that is predicted to remain steady in the years to 2020. 65% of people with a learning disability in Hartlepool live in settled accommodation such as the family home, own tenancy, etc. The aim over the next 3 years is to improve this figure to 70%. In Hartlepool there has been a reduction in residential care as the housing model of choice.

In 2009 a local needs analysis was undertaken and this informed the Housing, Care and Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities 2009 – 2012 and was approved by the Disability Partnership Board. The analysis identified 6 key recommendations and these were used to develop the Housing Care and Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities' Action Plan.

While residential care is the preferable option for some people, it is not the solution for everybody. Promoting choice and independence are key themes in national and local priorities, and reflect what many people with learning disabilities want.

Comprehensive planning for housing need is integral to the Housing Strategy. Work is needed to ensure that a variety of options, including different forms of Supported Living, exist. This will enable people to live as independently as possible, if that is the option they choose.

The Council will work with partners to improve housing options for people with learning disabilities. However, it is recognised that there is still work to be done to ensure that people with learning disabilities do not face unnecessary barriers in accessing homes that meet their needs. Work is being developed through the Council's Working Together for Change

process to increase the understanding of future housing needs for this group.

#### **7.4.4 Supporting People on the Autistic Spectrum**

In Hartlepool 1% of the population is identified on the autistic spectrum. In 2011 a self-assessment was undertaken in line with the recommendations from the Autism Act 2009. The Department of Health<sup>18</sup> identified essential quality outcomes for local delivery. Quality Outcome 3 is that adults with autism live in accommodation that meets their needs. For people in this client group the design of light and sound within the property is an important issue and through the Housing Strategy the housing needs of people with autism needs to be considered.

#### **7.4.5 Supporting People with Mental Health Needs**

In 2009 there were 9007 18-64 year olds in Hartlepool with a mental health disorder. Over the period to 2030 this is expected to rise to 9195, an increase of 1.07%.<sup>19</sup>

In 2006 and 2008 Hartlepool Integrated Mental Health Services hosted two day-long events to gather the views of people (and their families) who use mental health services. These consultations confirmed the view that accommodation is a significant issue for people with mental health issues.

#### **7.4.6 Housing Related Support**

In Hartlepool, Supporting People funding has been absorbed into mainstream Council funds and therefore the Supporting People programme no longer exists. However, the Council continues to have responsibility for contracting with providers and monitoring performance.

Supported housing providers continue to provide support to over 2000 people within Hartlepool, including older people with support needs, offenders, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, people with alcohol problems, single homeless people, teenage parents, women at risk of domestic violence and young people at risk.

Since the last Housing Strategy, two new services have been commissioned including supported accommodation for people with alcohol problems and a supported lodgings service for young people. However, a number of services have been decommissioned due to funding limitations.

In Hartlepool, supported housing providers have been challenged with reducing costs for their services and services have been prioritised in order of risk. Some services have been decommissioned or will be remodelled to ensure better value for money. The impact of this will present a challenge for the delivery of this Strategy due to the instability of funding for these services.

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<sup>18</sup> Towards "Fulfilling and rewarding lives", Department of Health, 2010

<sup>19</sup> Source: PANSI: Project Adult Needs and Service Information System

Throughout these changes and challenges the Council will continue to work with supported housing providers to assist the most vulnerable in communities to access the correct services and that such services are able to react to change.

#### **7.4.7 Older People**

The Council produced an Older Person's Housing, Care and Support Strategy in 2008, which was developed in consultation with local older people, carers and stakeholders and sets out the strategic direction in terms of the support and services provided by adult social care. In terms of the housing options for elderly people, the Council will be modernising services with an emphasis on moving from commissioning residential and nursing care and instead providing home based support and preventative work to enable people to live at home for longer. The overall strategy will aim to improve the current quality, range and type of housing available for older people.

The Council aims to ensure that older people are enabled to remain in their own home if that is what they choose, including specialist accommodation such as extra care housing. It is recognised that a greater number of support services will be required to achieve this. Investment will be required in a range of innovative solutions and services including aids and adaptations.

Over the next few decades the older population in Hartlepool is expected to rise and this will present significant challenges in terms of ensuring access to housing choice. The Council will seek to identify and deliver a range of alternative accommodation and support models, in order to improve the housing options available to older residents. Providing older people with sufficient information and advice to make informed choices about their housing, care and support needs is critical.

Since the last Strategy 457 units of extra care accommodation has been developed in Hartlepool. Work will continue with specialist housing providers to deliver additional extra care housing in the borough, where appropriate. In addition over 105 units of bedsit accommodation have been decommissioned in the town by Housing Hartlepool and Anchor Trust.

It will also be encouraged that where there is identified need, on a site by site basis, a percentage of all new affordable houses, bungalows and ground floor flats are built to mobility standards. This will help to ensure that the Council can focus on helping people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible and ensure those who can not, have access to a suitable home to meet their needs.

It is recognised, however, that meeting the housing needs of older people cannot happen only through new provision. A greater understanding is needed of what housing and related support provision will be required.

#### **7.4.8 Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Needs**

Previously, there has been a lack of baseline data and information regarding BME housing needs across Hartlepool. However, recent initiatives and



targeted work has resulted in key developments in identifying housing provision and identified need for BME communities. Significantly, the following interventions have been developed to ascertain the needs of the changing BME communities and how their needs can be met through accurate information being available to appropriate housing services.

### BME Lettings

Partnership work between Housing Hartlepool and the Council has resulted in identifying the barriers BME communities face in accessing housing across the town. This has also resulted in greater involvement with the local community and representative structures and networks across Hartlepool.

Advice and sign-posting has also been identified through the local BME community. To address this, outreach advice and support is currently being provided through Housing Hartlepool's CBL team. This collaborative partnership approach has contributed to the increase in BME lettings and currently the March 2011 year end figure of 3% demonstrates the achievement of meeting the previous 1.6% target in line with the BME community profile.

### BME Housing Study

Across Hartlepool, there is little evidence available to quantify our understanding of BME housing needs. Although a few surveys have identified basic household information and ethnicity, the current understanding of the housing needs of minority groups is based on informal consultation mechanisms and perceived need. This need is validated by allocations and lettings statistics but does not really uncover barriers, identify actual need or identify issues for those individuals who require a specific type of tenure based on cultural or religious need.

The need for this research was identified through the BME Lettings Group. This Group was developed to improve access to all housing services, raise awareness of these services and develop an understanding of BME housing needs and aspirations in order to inform longer-term strategic planning.

A town wide consultation with BME communities was undertaken in May 2011 and the findings of this research will inform the planning of future housing provision and associated services which meet the needs and aspirations of the changing BME communities across Hartlepool. Key findings of the study are outlined as follows:

- BME groups still desire to be homeowners
- Shared ownership schemes are an option for the younger, working aged community (20-44)
- There is a lack of understanding of eligibility for social housing and a negative image of the CBL system
- There is limited knowledge of available housing products, eligibility and access

- The options for social housing are limited due to size and location of properties
- There are poor standards of accommodation for participants living in private rented accommodation
- Overcrowding issues among BME communities are evident in the private rented sector and in owner-occupation
- Neighbourhood problems exist in relation to anti-social behaviour and racial harassment

### Migration Partnership

The Migration Partnership was a Government Office funded programme which identified key issues facing migrating communities. Results show there is a significant gap in the knowledge on the eligibility criteria for housing provision, property allocation process and sources of information available to migrant communities living across the town. The migration report suggests the situation is caused mainly because of insufficient level and knowledge of the English language but also because of past experience from other countries where the housing system varies significantly. The two main barriers for this were language and lack of knowledge in accessing housing related information. The majority of the respondents interviewed were not even aware where the housing office was placed. However, evidence suggested those who possessed sufficient knowledge on eligibility, demonstrated high confidence and self-reliance in obtaining information and managing their application, either themselves or with assistance of the Salaam Centre. Nevertheless this is still a very small proportion of people compared to the number of people declaring lack of knowledge and awareness on eligibility as well as overall information on services provided by housing services in Hartlepool.

### **Gypsies and Travellers**

In 2009 a Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was carried out which estimated that there are 1320 Gypsies and Travellers in Tees Valley. The assessment proposed that 6 pitches need to be provided over the next 15 years in the Borough. Hartlepool currently has no authorised residential provision.

## **BY 2015 WE WILL HAVE:**

*Housing services and housing options which respond to the specific needs of all communities within Hartlepool*

During the 4 years of this strategy we will:

- Tackle the barriers to permanent housing
- Meet the needs of vulnerable people through existing housing supply
- Maintain preventative services for all client groups
- Ensure good quality private sector accommodation for homeless households
- Assess the impact of changes to Housing Benefit, Local Housing Allowance and Universal Credit on the affordability of the rented sector
- Respond to and monitor the impacts of Social Housing Reforms on vulnerable people
- Develop a greater understanding of the housing and housing support needs of older/disabled people
- Develop a range of housing options to meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities
- Reduce the number of people in residential and nursing care
- Promote the health, wellbeing and independence of older and disable people through housing related services
- Monitor the current housing needs of the BME community
- Undertake a review of Choice Based Lettings uptake and satisfaction from BME communities
- Strengthen the work of the BME Lettings Group in service planning, delivery and performance review

## **Chapter 8 - Monitoring and Resourcing the Housing Strategy**

This chapter considers how the strategic priorities will be achieved, how progress will be monitored and the work resourced. An action plan has been produced that details how the aims and objectives of the Strategy will be achieved.

### **8.1 Performance and Monitoring**

It is imperative that progress made against the Housing Strategy is managed and monitored. This will be overseen by the Housing Partnership. The action plan will be monitored quarterly and reviewed annually to ensure that delivery is being achieved as well as to ensure that it is kept up-to-date with any changes in national or local policy.

### **8.2 Development**

During the lifetime of the Strategy best practice will be considered and services and processes adapted as a result of experience. Improvement will also be sought through sharing information and ideas with partners, both locally and sub-regionally.

### **8.3 Value for Money**

Local Authorities are responsible for public funds and need to demonstrate value for money. The Council will continue to work with partners, both locally and sub-regionally, to procure services, make savings and provide a consistent approach.

The outcomes of the Strategy will be monitored to ensure they are cost efficient and effective.

### **8.4 Resources**

There are considerable pressures on the amount of resources that are available to deliver the aims of the Strategy and resources are likely to be further reduced in the future. Budgets are limited as the Council has to achieve considerable savings. There is also increased demand on budgets such as Disabled Facilities Grants.

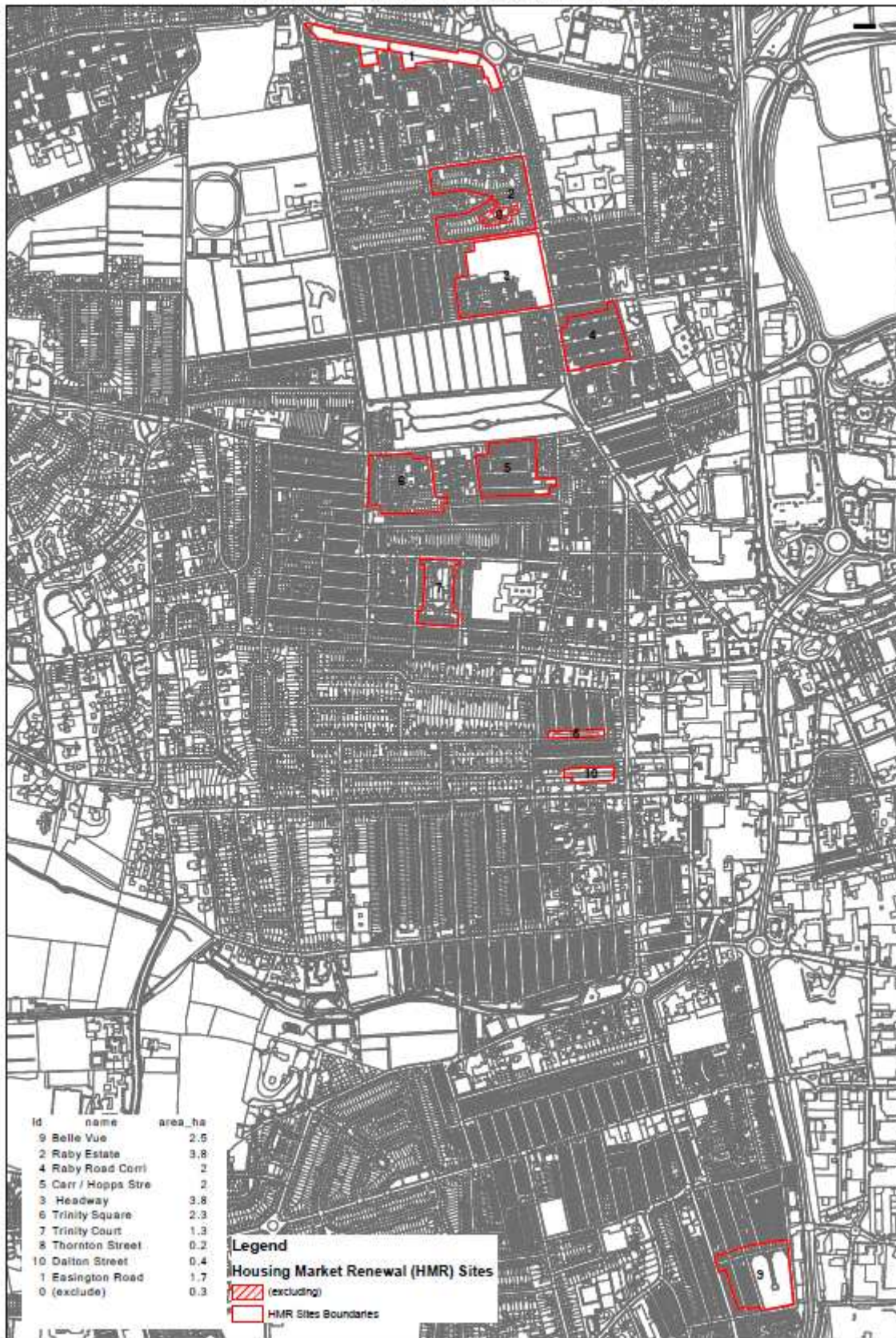
Priorities have been outlined for investment in housing, associated infrastructure and the economy to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) through the Tees Valley Economic Regeneration Investment Plan (TVERIP).

Innovative solutions to attracting funding will be sought and this will involve close partnership working to look for opportunities to combine resources and bid for funding.

The key sources of funding for the Strategy have been identified as:

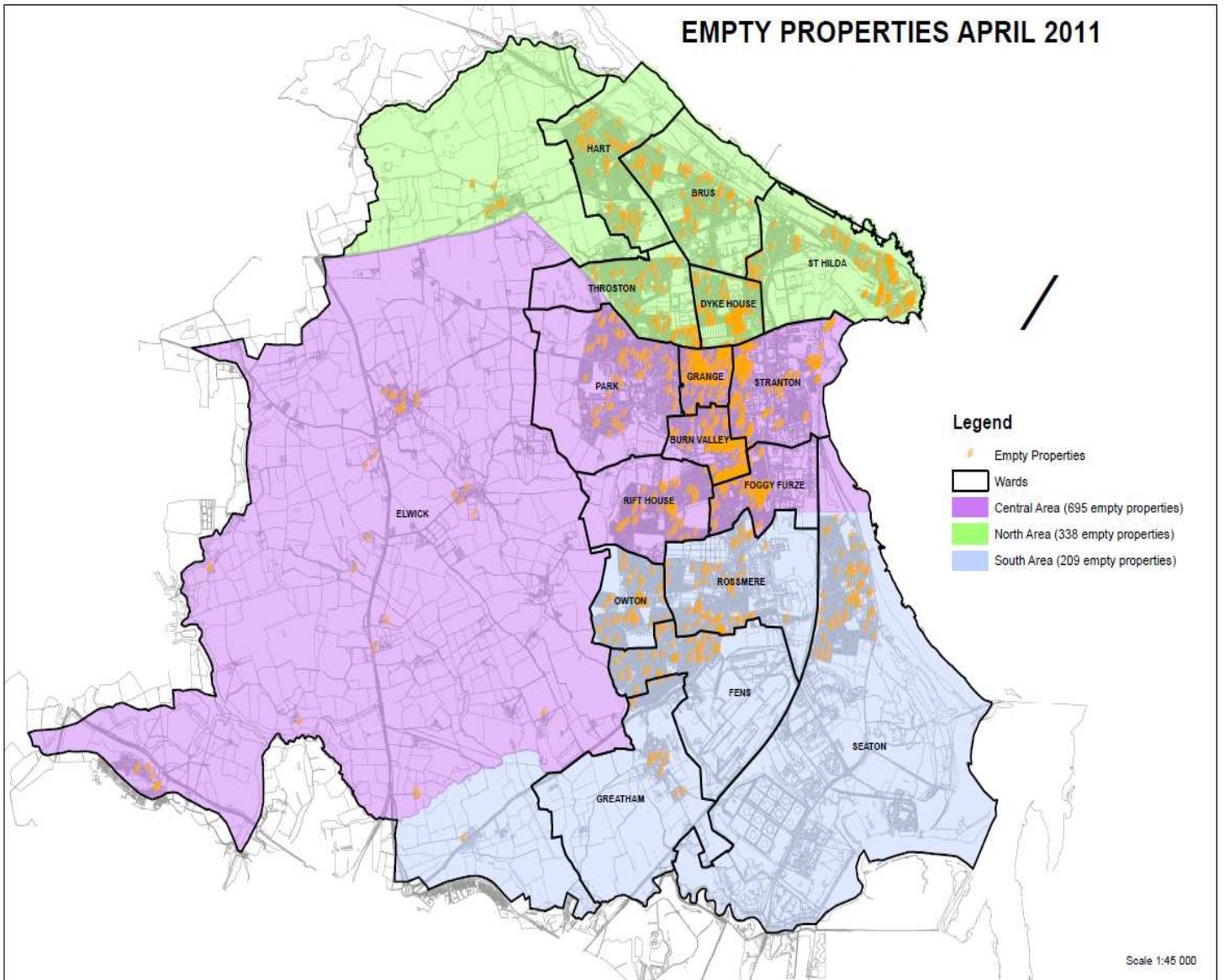
- Developer contributions delivered through a Section 106 Legal Agreement
- HCA funding for affordable homes through National Affordable Housing Programme
- HCA funding for empty homes through National Affordable Housing Programme
- DCLG Disabled Facilities Grant for adaptations
- DCLG funding for housing advice and homelessness activity
- DCLG funding for mortgage rescue
- DCLG funding for housing-related support
- Registered Provider (RP) investment to continue improvements in social housing stock
- Regional Growth Fund
- The sale and efficient use of Council assets and potential borrowing subject to income streams to cover repayments

## Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Sites





## EMPTY PROPERTIES APRIL 2011



## GLOSSARY

<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Housing options available to residents who cannot afford to rent or buy a home in the private market. Includes social rented housing, affordable rented housing and intermediate housing solutions such as shared ownership. The Council will be widening this current definition to include the Affordable Rent Model.
<b>Affordable Rent</b>	Homes made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is at present. Registered Providers (RPs) will have the freedom to offer Affordable Rent properties on flexible tenancies tailored to the housing needs of individual households.
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)</b>	Activity that impacts on other people/communities in a negative way.
<b>Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)</b>	A term to describe someone who is said to belong to an 'ethnic minority'. Most often used to refer to groups or policies that affect people from non-white-UK ethnic backgrounds.
<b>Brownfield Land</b>	A site which has previously been developed
<b>Category 1 Hazard Failures</b>	Hazards identified using the method of assessment as set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System upon which the local authority has a duty to act.
<b>Choice Based Lettings (CBL)</b>	Scheme for the allocation of social housing designed to offer more choice and involvement for customers in selecting a new home. Social rented housing is advertised allowing customers to 'bid' (register an interest) for those homes.
<b>Code for Sustainable Homes</b>	A national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. New homes are assessed for their sustainability and are graded from code 1 to 6, with code 6 being the highest and most sustainable level with zero carbon emissions.
<b>Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)</b>	The Spending Review is the HM Treasury led process that allocates public expenditure.
<b>Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)</b>	The process that a public authority (such as the council or a central Government department) can use to take land and/or property from the owner. The owner is paid, but cannot refuse to sell.
<b>Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)</b>	The UK Government department for communities and local government in England and has responsibility for housing policy.
<b>Decent Homes</b>	Homes which meet or exceed specified minimum standards and state of repair.
<b>Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)</b>	Government funding provided to local housing authorities to provide adaptations and other facilities to disabled people enabling them to live independently.
<b>Energy Efficiency</b>	The energy output of a product, e.g. a house, at a given



	point in time.
<b>Extra Care Housing</b>	Housing for elderly and disabled people, where individual care needs are provided for on-site.
<b>Feed in Tariff (FiT)</b>	A government scheme designed to encourage the installation of small scale renewable energy sources.
<b>Flexible Tenancy</b>	A new power for Registered Providers to offer a new 'flexible' tenancy with a minimum term of two years that ends the automatic 'home for life'.
<b>Fuel Poverty</b>	Where a household cannot afford to keep adequately warm at reasonable cost.
<b>Good Tenant Scheme</b>	A service for prospective tenants to obtain references to enable them to access private rented accommodation in Hartlepool.
<b>Greenfield Land</b>	Grassed or previously undeveloped land.
<b>Hartlepool Housing Partnership</b>	A group of public, private and voluntary agencies that work in partnership together to ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live.
<b>Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)</b>	The national housing and regeneration agency for England. A non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It provides funding for affordable housing and is the social housing regulator.
<b>Homelessness</b>	The 1996 Housing Act states that a person is homeless if: there is no accommodation that they are entitled to occupy; or they have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy this accommodation.
<b>Housing Benefit</b>	An allowance to people on low or no income to meet whole or part of their rent.
<b>Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)</b>	A risk based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in residential dwellings.
<b>Housing Market Renewal (HMR)</b>	An approach to tackle low demand in areas where the housing market has collapsed.
<b>Housing Needs</b>	The requirements that individuals and households have for housing.
<b>Housing Related Support</b>	The system for funding the support that is provided for people with care needs to go alongside their housing needs.
<b>Indices of Multiple Deprivation</b>	A defined set of indicators used to measure the level of deprivation in an area.
<b>Intermediate Tenure</b>	<p>Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rent. This can include shared equity, shared ownership, other low cost homes for sale, and intermediate rent.</p> <p><b>Shared equity</b> - a new form of joint ownership/ joint mortgage that the Government is promoting as a way of</p>

	<p>helping first time buyers to get on the property ladder.</p> <p><b>Shared ownership</b> - Where a person buys part of the value of a house from a Registered Provider and pays rent on the other part, and the Registered Provider keeps part ownership.</p> <p><b>Intermediate rent</b> - new build homes to rent at 80% (or less) of typical market rents.</p>
<b>Landlord Accreditation</b>	A voluntary scheme which landlords in Hartlepool may join that aims to improve management and condition standards in the private rented sector.
<b>Lifetime Homes</b>	Homes fit for a lifetime by virtue of design, enabling easy adaptation as required.
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF)</b>	A raft of local development documents that together form the Development Plan for the Borough.
<b>Local Housing Allowance (LHA)</b>	The Local Housing Allowance is used to work out how much Housing Benefit is received for renting from a private landlord. The amount of Benefit will depend on the area, property type and household size.
<b>Localism</b>	This concept aims to give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.
<b>Mortgage Rescue Scheme</b>	A government funded scheme to assist the most vulnerable families facing repossession, delivered through local authorities.
<b>New Homes Bonus</b>	The Bonus commenced in April 2011, and match funds the additional council tax raised for new homes and properties brought back into use, with an additional amount for affordable homes, for the following six years.
<b>Private Landlord</b>	A company or individual (e.g. not a local authority or registered provider) who owns and lets properties for an income.
<b>Property Developer</b>	A company or individual who secures planning permission for the development of residential property.
<b>Regional Growth Fund (RGF)</b>	This is a £1.4bn fund operating across England from 2011 to 2014. It supports projects and programmes that lever private sector investment creating economic growth and employment. It aims particularly to help those areas and communities currently dependent on the public sector to make the transition to private sector-led growth and prosperity.
<b>Registered Provider (RP)</b>	Also known as Housing Associations / Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). They are not for profit organisations that provide social housing and are regulated through Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
<b>Section 106 Agreements (S106)</b>	An agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regarding the use or development of land. Such planning obligations are often used as a legally binding agreement between a local authority and developer to deliver a percentage of affordable social housing within a development.

<b>Selective Licensing</b>	A compulsory scheme where an area has been designated under part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, as a licensing area for privately rented dwelling houses. Local Authorities have discretion to adopt a scheme subject to meeting one of two sets of conditions: that the area is, or is likely to become an area of low demand; or, that the area is experiencing a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour.
<b>Social Housing</b>	A general term for subsidised rented and intermediate tenure housing provided by Registered Providers (RPs).
<b>Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)</b>	The Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for energy rating of dwellings.
<b>Sustainable Communities</b>	Communities that can meet the needs of existing and future residents, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice in areas such as housing, health, education and jobs.
<b>Tenure</b>	Type of property a person resides in. There are 3 main types of tenure; owner-occupied, private rented and social rented.
<b>Universal Credit</b>	Universal Credit is set to replace the present benefit structure and it will simplify the benefits system by bringing together a range of working-age benefits into a single streamlined payment.

**Consultation Report**  
**Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015**



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## **1. Consultation Timetable**

Hartlepool Borough Council developed its new 4 year Housing Strategy for 2011 to 2015 in consultation with its partners and stakeholders, including local residents.

The consultation for the Housing Strategy was completed in various stages.

### **Stage 1**

During December 2010 and January 2011, 3 consultation workshops were held at the Civic Centre. Invitations to the workshops were sent to a range of organisations across Hartlepool including members of the Housing Partnership; colleagues within Housing Advice, Private Sector Housing, Child and Adult Services, Community Safety, Neighbourhoods; Planning and Regeneration; Members; Registered Providers; Private Landlords; Police; Developers and the voluntary sector.

The purpose of these workshops were to gather views and identify issues from a range of key partners, colleagues and stakeholders on the 3 main topics that will comprise the new Housing Strategy:

- New Homes / New & Sustainable Communities
- Existing Homes / Ensuring Sustainable Communities
- Meeting Specific Needs

The workshops also aimed to seek views on what we have done well as a strategic housing authority, identify the areas for improvement and explore where we want to be by 2015.

The issues raised across the 3 topic areas were used as a basis for further consultation and as background the development of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the new Housing Strategy.

### **Stage 2**

During February 2011 a questionnaire was posted on the Council's website as a mechanism for consulting with residents about the priorities that emerged during the 3 workshops

The purpose of the questionnaire was to seek residents' views in Hartlepool before the draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan was written. This was promoted to all staff at Hartlepool Borough Council via the intranet and email; an article in the Hartlepool Mail and an article in Hartbeat.

### **Stage 3**

The results from the 3 workshops and the on-line community consultation were used to develop the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015.

The draft Strategy was formally consulted on during May, June and July 2011.

This took the following format:

9.5.11 All members of the Housing Partnership were emailed a copy of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft document

10.5.11 A copy of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft document was emailed to all Members who are on email; the questionnaire respondents; all workshop attendees and relevant colleagues not included in other circulation lists.

The draft document was also posted to all Members not on email and to other respondents to the previous consultation who do not have email.

The 1<sup>st</sup> draft and consultation questions were also posted on Hartlepool Borough Council's website.

7.6.11 – 20.7.11

During these dates each of the 9 Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) Forums were attended and presented with the consultation document by Amy Waller, Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer or Karen Kelly, Housing Strategy Officer.

All 3 Neighbourhood Consultative Forums were attended and presented with the consultation by Karen Kelly, Housing Strategy Officer.

On 17.6.11 a meeting was also arranged for all Chairs of Residents Groups to attend and be presented with the consultation document.

#### **Stage 4**

Following the extensive consultation period the final draft of the Housing Strategy and the associated Action Plan were written during August 2011. These documents reflect the formal feedback received and the views, suggestions and issues that were raised at the community events.

A number of action planning meetings were also held with the key respondents to the 1<sup>st</sup> draft document and their knowledge was used to develop the final draft of the Action Plan.

The final draft of the Housing Strategy 2011 – 15 and Action Plan were further consulted on for a 2 week period from 13.9.11. This took the following format:

13.9.11 All members of the Housing Partnership were emailed a link to access the draft documents.

A link to the draft documents were emailed to all Members who are on email; all workshop attendees; relevant colleagues not included in other circulation lists; organisations and individuals who responded to the 1<sup>st</sup> draft consultation.

A letter was sent to all Members not on email and to other respondents to the previous consultation who do not have email.

The draft documents were also posted on Hartlepool Borough Council's website.

Draft

## **2. Stage 1 and Stage 2 Consultation Findings**

### **2.1 Housing Strategy Workshops, December 2010, January 2011**

In total, 49 different people attended the workshops with some people attending all

3. The organisations represented were:

- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Housing Hartlepool
- Bellway Homes
- FHM
- Ben Bailey Homes
- Yuill
- Endeavour Housing Association
- Harveston
- Police
- Salaam Centre
- Harbour
- Tees Valley Housing

There was also good representation at each workshop from Members.

All three workshops were very positively received and feedback indicated that 90% of attendees were totally and very satisfied with the events. Feedback demonstrated that attendees appreciated the opportunity to discuss the issues in an interactive and well organised forum with good debate from a cross section of organisations and agencies. It also offered the opportunity to network and share experience.

The main issues identified at the workshops were used to develop the 1<sup>st</sup> draft document of the Housing Strategy.

#### **2.1.1 Workshop 1 held on 14.12.10: New Homes / New & Sustainable Communities**

The issues that were identified around new homes were:

- Greater understanding of people's housing aspirations
- Creation of mixed tenure developments (mixed social, private, part rent)
- Building of homes for life
- Creation of sustainable communities
- Development of sustainable homes
- Availability of land



- Linking with proposals in Planning Policy
- Working with developers to make new homes more affordable
- Attract developers to Hartlepool
- Improved design quality
- Affordability: Ability to secure mortgages
- Affordability: Increased housing costs
- Affect on town centre with new build developments occurring elsewhere
- Popularity of “estate” houses over the town centre
- Improved infrastructure (roads, facilities, services)
- Make links with job creation
- Issues for young people including first time buyers
- Funding: finding new ways of funding affordable housing
- Funding: future funding for housing regeneration
- Impact of new build homes lying empty

### **2.1.2 Workshop 2 held on 13.1.11: Existing Homes – ensuring sustainable communities**

The issues that were identified around existing homes were:

- Growth of the private rented sector to meet housing needs
- Quality of private rented housing stock
- Quality of management of the private rented sector
- Affordability: cost of private sector rents
- Greater use of private sector enforcement powers
- Engaging out of town landlords
- Engaging other landlords and managing agents within Hartlepool
- Recent legal changes

- Continuation / expansion of Selective Licensing
- Continuation / expansion of Good Tenants Scheme
- Continuation / expansion of Landlord's Accreditation Scheme
- Greater support for private landlords
- Bring empty homes back into use
- Greater work on external appearance of empty homes
- Reduce empty new build flats (Marina)
- Improve demand for empty homes
- Changes to Housing Benefit rules
- Ability of young people to live independently
- Use developer funding through planning to improve problem areas
- Finance: lack of grants / loans for improvements
- Property improvements rather than demolition
- Reduce energy costs
- Install Solar Panels / Feed in tariffs
- Investment in areas surrounding regeneration areas

### **2.1.3 Workshop 3 held on 19.1.11: Meeting Specific Needs**

The issues that were identified around meeting specific needs were:

#### **Homelessness:**

- Young homeless people including care leavers
- Hidden homeless (sofa surfers)
- Homeless prevention
- Impact of Housing Benefit reforms
- Increasing mortgage repossessions

- Anti social behaviour
- Support for young people to live independently
- Improved working with other Council departments
- Affordability of the private rented sector
- Funding: loss of supported people funding
- Temporary Accommodation / Quality of B&B accommodation
- Mediation for young people leaving home

### **Independent Living:**

- Time taken to install major adaptations
- Costs to install major adaptations (e.g. ramps, stairlifts)
- Affordability for older people
- Lack of accommodation for under 55s with learning and physical disabilities
- Setting social landlords targets to build Lifetime adaptable homes
- Funding for adaptations from social landlords
- Matching housing and care needs
- Affordability: Shared and outright ownership; market rent; service charges
- Telecare / telehealth
- Older carers
- Improved Disabled Facilities Grant information
- Maintaining adaptations once installed
- Recycling adaptations when no longer needed
- Quality of older people's accommodation
- Ensuring adapted social rented properties are re-let to people who meet the needs of the property

### **Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Needs:**

- Quality of private rented stock
- Fear of hate crime
- Lack of larger properties to house extended families
- Isolation issues for new families / certain BME groups
- Length of time to access social housing
- Difficulty in using Choice Based Lettings (language / internet barriers)
- Barriers in accessing social housing
- BME landlords
- Ignorance of cultures and backgrounds
- Whole packages of support for rehousing

In relation to the 3 objectives the workshops also considered a vision for 2015 and what the Strategy should aim to deliver. Attendees were requested to consider a “wish list” in addition to their professional knowledge about what can and can not be achieved.

These results of these were as follows:

#### **New Homes/New and Sustainable Communities:**

- Attract more funding for new build
- Improve partnership working with public and private organisations
- Balance community ambition and what is deliverable
- Achieve level 4 of Code for Sustainable Homes for all new homes
- Link new build developments to job creation
- ‘Future’ proof new build houses for adaptability
- Ensure mixed tenure developments (mixed social, private, part rent)
- Ensure information on financial products is easily understood and available
- Undertake a realistic housing needs survey
- Ensure continued housing regeneration at the pace we have planned for
- Banks must be prepared to invest to developers and be paid back over a longer term
- Neighbourhoods continue to be well managed
- Improved local economies – vibrant shopping parades
- Better connectivity across Hartlepool

## Existing Homes/Ensuring Sustainable Communities:

- Have the private rented sector as a real option and not last resort
- More accountable private sector
- More co-ordinated and appropriate enforcement activity
- Ensure drive for private sector improvements does not lead to increased rents
- Private sector landlords actively help to deliver the housing strategy
- Increased tenant participation
- Improved communication between social and private landlords and tenants
- Introduce a new Landlords Accreditation Scheme that links quality of landlords / quality of accommodation to a maximum weekly rent
- Increased participation in the Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- Behaviour change in those who engage in Anti Social Behaviour activity
- Introduce a tenants association for the private rented sector
- Police / Landlords partnership for data sharing (who owns what and where)
- Consolidation of agents that are from and about Hartlepool
- Reduce the numbers of empty properties
- Develop strong partnerships / Big Society
- By 2015 the Dyke House development will be complete
- Greater affordable and decent housing
- Strategy in place to improve specific areas
- More attractive environment
- Maximise funding opportunities across all tenures (social, private, part rent, full ownership)
- Improvements in property conditions
- Increased investment from landlords and owner occupiers
- Continued investment by social landlords
- Reduce fuel poverty

## Meeting Specific Needs:

### Homelessness:

- Tackle barriers to permanent housing
- Engage hard to reach groups
- Good preventative services in place
- Understand the true figures that have need / are homeless
- Meet people's expectations
- Good quality private sector accommodation for homeless households

### Independent Living:

- Older Peoples Strategy for less bedsits and more Extra Care Housing
- Greater understanding of the needs for older/disabled people
- Improved information for BME communities
- More options for working age adults
- More options for young people and links developed between housing, work, training and education

- More options for older people
- Reduced waiting time for major adaptations
- Ensure new build homes are adaptable
- Reduce the number of people in residential and nursing care

#### BME Housing Needs:

- Right housing in the right areas – meeting needs and aspirations
- Integration of communities
- Ability to access housing

### 2.1.4 Emerging themes from the Workshops

It can be demonstrated from the three workshops that took place that some themes emerged and also overlapped between the main topic areas.

In summary, the emerging themes included:

- Understanding needs and aspirations
- Matching needs and demands with provision
- Requirement for Lifetime Homes and meeting future needs
- Sustainable communities – reducing anti social behaviour, preventing homelessness
- Sustainable / environmental homes – installing solar panels, feed-in tariffs
- Affordability – rents; cost to buy homes; cost to build / renovate homes; financial inclusion / fuel poverty
- Funding – reduction in grants / loans; reduction in Supporting People funding
- Adapting to new Government Policy directions and responding to proposals such as Housing Benefit Reforms, Social Housing reforms, tenure policy
- Partnership working between the Council and its key partners
- Making links between housing, health, education, planning, transport, services
- Drive for innovation and new methods of delivery
- Dealing with the issue of empty homes and how to drive demand
- Effective management of the private rented sector and use of enforcement powers
- Expansion of schemes such as Selective Licensing, Landlord Accreditation, Good Tenants Scheme
- The need to communicate effectively various housing options and services

## **2.2 On-line Questionnaire Results**

In total, 79 people completed the on-line questionnaire. Not all respondents answered all the questions and this explains why some of the results do not add up to 100%.

Of the 79 respondents, 68% were female and 32% male.

The majority of respondents fall into the age range 35-49 (42%) and 93% indicated their ethnicity to be white with 1% black and 3% mixed race.

Responses were received from people living in all wards in Hartlepool, although the majority were received from people living in Seaton (9), Fens (7), Hart (7) and Burn Valley (6).

80% of respondents said that they own their own home, 9% are living in the private rented sector and 10% rent from a social landlord.

The questionnaire asked respondents to prioritise all the issues identified at the 3 workshops and the results for each objective are as follows:

### **Objective 1 – New Homes / New & Sustainable Communities**

The top 5 priorities that were identified were:

- Affordability: Ability to secure mortgages
- Improved infrastructure
- Issues for young people including 1<sup>st</sup> time buyers
- Working with developers to make new homes more affordable
- Impact of new build lying empty

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Availability of land
- Affect on town centre with new build developments occurring elsewhere
- Popularity of “estate” houses over the town centre
- Linking with proposals in Planning Policy

### **Objective 2 – Existing Homes / Ensuring Sustainable Communities**

The top 4 priorities that were identified were:

- Bring Empty Homes back into use
- Quality of management of the private rented sector
- Reduce empty new build flats (Marina)
- Quality of private rented housing stock

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Growth of the private rented sector to meet needs
- Continuation / expansion of Selective Licensing
- Greater support for private landlords
- Recent legal changes

### **Objective 3 – Meeting Specific Needs**

This was divided into 3 parts and people were asked to identify their priorities for homelessness, independent living and BME housing needs.

The top priorities that were identified for homelessness were:

- Homelessness prevention
- Anti Social Behaviour

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Impact of Housing Benefit Reforms
- Temporary Accommodation / Quality of B&B accommodation

The top priorities that were identified for independent living were:

- Matching housing and care needs
- Ensuring adapted social rented properties are re-let to people who meet the needs of the property

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Funding for adaptations from social landlords
- Telecare / telehealth

The top priorities that were identified for BME housing needs were:

- Fear of hate crime
- Ignorance of cultures and backgrounds

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- BME landlords
- Lack of larger properties to house extended families

People were also asked to prioritise from the “wish list” of aspirations that were considered at the 3 workshops in December and January.



The top 2 priorities that were identified for each of the sub sections were:

**New Homes:**

- Undertake a realistic housing needs survey
- Improved local economies – vibrant shopping parades

**Existing Homes:**

- Reduce numbers of empty properties
- Behaviour change in those who engage in anti-social behaviour activity

**Homelessness:**

- Understand the true figure that have need / are homeless
- Tackle barriers to permanent housing

**Independent Living:**

- Greater understanding of the needs of older / disabled people
- More options for working age adults

**BME Housing Needs:**

- Right housing in the right areas meeting needs and aspirations
- Integration of communities

79% of respondents agreed that the 3 objectives will address the housing issues in Hartlepool during 2011 – 2015.

### **3. Stage 3 Consultation Findings**

The results from Stages 1 and 2 of the consultation were used to develop the writing of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Housing Strategy document for 2011 – 2015.

In total, formal responses to the 1<sup>st</sup> draft consultation were submitted by:

Natalie Hodgson  
Fens Residents Association  
Paul Walker  
Karen Oliver  
Andy Powell  
Neil Harrison  
Val Hastie / Andrew Carter

Catherine Frank  
Phil Hornsby

Resident in Hartlepool  
  
Fabrick Housing Group  
Neighbourhood Management SMT  
Housing Hartlepool  
Learning Disabilities (HBC)  
Planning Policy / Sustainable Development (joint response)  
LSP Manager  
Child & Adult Services – Head of Service

The specific comments, issues and suggestions received from the above individuals and organisations were incorporated into the final draft of the Strategy and into the Action Plan as appropriate.

A meeting of the Chairs of Residents Groups was organised for 17<sup>th</sup> June and was attended by representatives from Fens and Rossmere. Apologies were received from Rift House. The main issues discussed at this meeting were planning issues about the numbers of new homes needed, concerns over the increasing numbers of private rented homes on the Fens estate and neighbourhood management issues.

Notes were made at each of the consultation events attended by Amy Waller and Karen Kelly – 9 Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) meetings and 3 Neighbourhood Consultative Forums. The Neighbourhood Consultative Forums also produced formal minutes.

The main issues that were discussed at the NAPs and the Consultative Forums are summarised below:

- Affordability of new build homes
- Youth homelessness
- Housing Benefit changes
- Lack of adapted properties
- A need to prioritise private landlords and private rented accommodation management and issues over new build
- Allocations and lettings of new build social housing
- Empty homes
- A requirement for the strategy to cater for everybody, not just those in housing need
- Choice Based Lettings autobids are confusing
- A need for more bungalows and 1 bed roomed accommodation
- Social housing reforms and under occupancy issues
- Communication and publicity of housing services
- Concerns about demolishing more affordable housing than is being built
- Quality of new build
- Raising of the age for the single room rent
- Under 18's being placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation outside of Hartlepool
- Accommodation for families with disabled children
- Balancing affordable housing with the developers economic viability
- More housing options for older people in owner occupied properties
- Concerns regarding vacant new build housing
- The evidence base on housing need requires updating
- Concerns over effectiveness of the Good Tenant Scheme
- Selective licensing
- Concerns over private sector stock condition
- Anti social behaviour issues
- Use of photo voltaic tiles

Again, these issues have been considered and, where appropriate, have been reflected in the final draft Strategy and Action Plan.

Noticeable changes that were made to the draft strategy are as follows:

- Rewording of the main priority outcomes
- Inclusion of the Egan Wheel in Chapter 1
- Updated information Chapter 2 about National Housing Policy
- Removal of the Hartlepool Wards map as the boundary changes are expected during 2012
- A new chapter included (Chapter 4) detailing Local Housing Need
- Priority 1 outcomes amended
- Updated planning information
- Priority 2 outcomes amended
- Inclusion of updated and detailed information about benefit changes
- Priority 3 outcomes amended
- Updated information about Housing Related Support
- Inclusion of a section on people on the autism spectrum
- Inclusion of a section on people with mental health needs
- Inclusion of the main findings from the BME Housing Study
- Inclusion of 'where we want to be by 2015' statements at the end of chapters 5,6,7

#### 4. Stage 4 Consultation Findings

Formal responses to the last stage of consultation on the housing strategy were received from:

Damien Wilson	Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning
Catherine Frank	LSP Manager
Valerie Hastie	Principal Policy Officer – Urban Regeneration and Planning Policy
Joanne Burnley	Senior Environmental Health Officer

Changes that were made to the final draft strategy include:

- Revision of the 'where we want to be by 2015' from a broad statement to also include a list of 'what we will do during the 4 years of the strategy'
- Priority 1 outcome amended to 'ensure high quality design **and construction** of new housing'
- Some updated definitions in the glossary

## 5. Contact Details

For further information about this report or the Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015 please contact:

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# Hartlepool Housing Strategy Action Plan

2011 – 2015

3<sup>rd</sup> Draft



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## SECTION 1: DELIVERING NEW HOMES

### PRIORITY 1 – DELIVERING NEW HOMES, CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

#### A OUTCOME – DELIVER NEW HOMES THAT WILL MEET CURRENT AND FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Affordable homes delivered (gross)	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Quarterly	80
Number of jobs and training opportunities achieved on developments (over 20 units)	HANLON Database HBC	Quarterly	10% of the workforce on each scheme should be Hartlepool residents who are trainees/apprentices or unemployed gaining work experience

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
1A1	Produce a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment that will identify housing need, including affordable housing need, across the borough for now and the future	<b>Urban &amp; Planning Policy Manager</b> <b>Derek Gouldburn</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	June 2012
1A2	Ensure all developments over 20 units are linked to job opportunities and training	<b>Principal Economic Development Officer (Employment)</b> <b>Diane Martin</b>	March 2015
1A3	Ensure development briefs for housing renewal	<b>Urban &amp; Planning Policy</b>	March 2015

	projects and sale of council assets include a requirement for local employment and training	<b>Manager</b> <b>Derek Gouldburn</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	
1A4	Liaise early with Registered Providers on affordable housing proposals on new residential schemes to deliver an appropriate mix of affordable housing	<b>Developer Partners</b> All Registered Providers	March 2012
1A5	Liaise at annual meetings with Registered Providers to ensure revenue raised through affordable rents funds new developments in Hartlepool to maintain the successful delivery of affordable housing	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning</b> <b>Damien Wilson</b> All Registered Providers	December 2012
1A6	Produce an annual assessment and evidence based housing need document using information obtained from Registered Providers	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered providers	December 2012
1A7	Collate information about the distribution of all Registered Provider tenure types across the town and use this to assess the impact of new products on tenure choice across the borough	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered Providers	March 2015

**PRIORITY 1 – DELIVERING NEW HOMES, CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

**B OUTCOME – ENSURE HIGH QUALITY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HOUSING**

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
New homes constructed to lifetime homes standard	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Quarterly	50
Sustainable homes constructed	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Quarterly	50

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
1B1	Achieve an improvement in the number of private sector homes constructed to lifetime home standards and relevant government energy efficiency levels.	<b>Urban &amp; Planning Policy Manager Derek Gouldburn</b>	March 2013
1B2	Ensure 100% of new social housing built to minimum energy efficiency levels set by Government (currently Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3)	<b>All Registered Providers</b>	March 2012
1B3	Develop a system for monitoring the quality standards of privately developed homes to understand how many homes are being built to lifetime homes and high levels of energy efficiency	<b>Urban &amp; Planning Policy Manager Derek Gouldburn</b>	September 2012



**PRIORITY 1 – DELIVERING NEW HOMES, CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

**C OUTCOME – CONTINUE TO REGENERATE PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS**

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of new homes built on regeneration schemes	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Quarterly	None – this is for overall monitoring purposes only. However, individual schemes will have targets identified as they are developed

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
1C1	Implement the General Vesting Declaration on the Perth Street regeneration site	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller	March 2012
1C2	Identify funding opportunities for the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration area	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b>	March 2012
1C3	Commence implementation of the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration scheme	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller	March 2015
1C4	Ensure Housing Strategy priorities are reflected in the Economic Regeneration Strategy	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2012

		Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller	
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## SECTION 2: IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES

### PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

#### A OUTCOME – IMPROVE PROPERTY CONDITIONS AND MANAGEMENT STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of properties where identified HHSRS Category 1 and actionable Category 2 hazards are dealt with through formal or informal enforcement action	Authority Public Protection (APP) System HBC	Quarterly	None – the number of complaints received on an annual basis will vary
Number of properties improved through the grants or loans schemes	Authority Public Protection (APP) System HBC	Quarterly	None – the numbers of properties improved will depend on funding – the overall aim to reduce waiting list

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2A1	Publish the Council's Enforcement Policy	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b> Legal Services Manager Alyson Carman	December 2011
2A2	Increase the use of all enforcement powers in	<b>Housing Services Manager</b>	March 2013

	accordance with the Enforcement Policy	<b>Nigel Johnson</b>	
2A3	Review all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) stock within 5 years of the date of issue and ensure that licences are up to date	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Senior Environmental Health Officer Joanne Burnley	March 2013
2A4	Extend the managing agent scheme developed for empty homes work to private landlords of occupied properties	<b>Housing Hartlepool Mark Dutton</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	March 2013
2A5	Review the operation of the voluntary landlord accreditation scheme in line with the internal audit review	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2012
2A6	Implement identified improvements to the voluntary landlord accreditation scheme	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2013
2A7	Increase the number of landlords working towards an accreditation standard through education and promotion of the standard	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2015
2A8	Undertake a review of the tenant/landlord liaison service to assess the impact of the service on improving management standards and conditions	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2012
2A9	Implement identified improvements to the tenant/landlord liaison service	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2013
2A10	Review the performance of the current selective licensing scheme by obtaining baseline data and use this review to inform a decision to expand the scheme	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2013

		Lynda Igoe	
2A11	Ensure all licensable properties within the current 6 designated selective licensing areas have a licence	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2012
2A12	Expand the tenant / landlord newsletter to twice yearly and make available for all landlords and tenants using appropriate communication methods	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2012

**PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

**B OUTCOME – ENSURE HOMES MAINTAIN GOOD CONDITIONS AND HIGH LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT IN THE SOCIAL RENTED SECTOR**

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Percentage of Registered Provider properties meeting 'decent homes plus' standard	RP Management Systems All Registered Providers	Quarterly	100% by 2015

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2B1	Registered Providers complete an annual stock condition survey of a proportion of their overall stock	<b>All Registered Providers</b>	March 2012
2B2	Registered Providers to improve their stock to 'decent homes plus' standard	<b>All Registered Providers</b>	March 2015
2B3	Registered Providers demonstrate delivery of their local offer through an Annual Report	<b>All Registered Providers</b>	March 2012

## PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

### C OUTCOME – ENSURE ALL HOMES ACROSS TENURES OFFER A DECENT LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of properties visually improved through the implementation of a Section 215 notice	Authority Public Protection (APP) System and iLAP Planning System HBC	Quarterly	None – the numbers of properties visually improved will be recorded

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2C1	Review the operation of the Good Tenant Scheme	<b>Community Safety Manager Sally Forth</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2012
2C2	Implement identified improvements to the Good tenant Scheme	<b>Community Safety Manager Sally Forth</b> Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe	March 2013
2C3	Registered Providers sign up to and adhere to the national RESPECT – ASB Charter for Housing	<b>All Registered Providers</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	March 2012
2C4	Explore investment opportunities to identify public realm initiatives	<b>Neighbourhood Managers Karen Oliver, Clare Clark, David Frame</b>	December 2012

## PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

### D OUTCOME – CONTINUE TO BRING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of long term (over 6 months) empty homes brought back into use	Authority Public Protection (APP) System and Council Tax data HBC	Quarterly	10% of long term (over 6 months) empty homes brought back into use annually

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2D1	Establish procedures for implementation of the Baden Street project	<b>Principal Regeneration Officer Gemma Day</b> Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller	March 2012
2D2	Complete improvements works in partnership with landlords on 11 properties	<b>Principal Regeneration Officer Gemma Day</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	December 2012
2D3	Establish policies and procedures for the Empty Homes project in partnership with Housing Hartlepool	<b>Housing Hartlepool Mark Dutton</b> Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller	March 2012
2D4	Complete improvements works to and re-occupy 15 long term empty homes	<b>Housing Hartlepool Mark Dutton</b> Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer	October 2012



		Amy Waller	
2D5	Identify suitable incentive or enforcement actions for each of the top 20 empty properties in order for them to be brought back into use	<b>Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller</b>	April 2012
2D6	Contact the owners of all properties which have been empty over 2 years to establish suitable incentive or enforcement actions for bringing them back into use	<b>Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer Amy Waller</b>	April 2012
2D7	Agree, prepare and submit a bid for HCA empty homes funding for 2012-2015	<b>Housing Hartlepool Mark Dutton Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b>	April 2012

**PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

**E OUTCOME – IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND AFFORDABLE WARMTH ACROSS ALL TENURES**

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of social rented houses fitted with renewables such as Photo Voltaic panels and/or cells, solar hot water and air source heat pumps	RP Management Systems All Registered Providers	Annually	50
Number of excess cold HHSRS Category 1 hazards rectified	Authority Public Protection (APP) System HBC	Quarterly	None – the number of complaints received on an annual basis will vary

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2E1	Identify available schemes and funding to undertake energy efficiency work across tenures	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A)</b> <b>Phil Hornsby</b>	March 2012
2E2	Support landlords to carry out energy efficiency works to deal with excess cold hazards through education and promotion of the benefits	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2015
2E3	Increase the amount social rented houses fitted with renewables such as Photo Voltaic panels and/or cells solar hot water and air source heat pumps	<b>All Registered Providers</b>	March 2015
2E4	Explore opportunities and options for encouraging property owners to retrofit homes with renewables such as Photo Voltaic panels and/or cells solar hot water and air source heat pumps	<b>Principal Policy Officer</b> <b>Valerie Hastie</b>	March 2015

### SECTION 3: MEETING SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

#### PRIORITY 3 – MEETING SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

<b>A</b>	<b>OUTCOME – PREVENT AND TACKLE HOMELESSNESS, INCLUDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS AND MORTGAGE REPOSSESSIONS IMPROVE ACCESS INTO APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION IMPROVE FINANCIAL INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE</b>
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Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of households where homelessness has been prevented through Local Authority action	Homelessness Database HBC	Quarterly	None – this PI is for monitoring

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
3A1	Identify barriers to permanent housing through Choice Based Lettings (CBL)	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered Providers	December 2012
3A2	Work with Registered Provider partners to minimise any barriers identified through CBL	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered Providers	December 2013
3A3	Increase the number of homelessness applicants applying for a Good Tenant Scheme card to enable them to have more housing options available to them	<b>Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe</b>	March 2013
3A4	Monitor the appropriate re-letting of all social housing for vulnerable client groups to ensure that their needs are met and that their tenancies are sustained	<b>Housing Strategy Officer Karen Kelly</b> All Registered Providers	March 2013

3A5	Monitor the appropriate allocation of adapted social housing stock to ensure that needs are met and clients are housed appropriately	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered Providers	March 2013
3A6	Review the Hospital Discharge Policy to include reference to the role of housing services	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A) John Lovatt</b>	March 2012
3A7	Implement identified processes in line with the review of the Hospital Discharge Policy	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A) John Lovatt</b>	March 2013
3A8	Conduct the Rough Sleeper Count in accordance with government guidance	<b>Principal Housing Advice Officer Lynda Igoe</b>	December 2011
3A9	Develop procedures for discharging the homeless duty to the private rented sector <sup>1</sup>	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2013
3A10	Conduct inspections of individual properties before using for homeless households to ensure good quality private sector accommodation is used for homeless households	<b>Senior Environmental Health Officer Joanne Burnley</b>	December 2013
3A11	Fulfil the Corporate Parenting Role for young people leaving care by improved access to housing and services through developing partnerships with housing providers	<b>Business Unit Manager (C&amp;A) Jane Young</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	June 2012
3A12	Review the impact of Welfare and Social Housing reforms on tenancy sustainability, homelessness, tenancy satisfaction and vulnerable people on the housing waiting list	<b>All Registered Providers</b>  <b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2013

<sup>1</sup> This action will be undertaken if the current government proposals within the Localism Bill carry forward into legislation

### PRIORITY 3 – MEETING SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

<b>B</b>	<b>OUTCOME – IMPROVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES<sup>2</sup> AND SUPPORT INDEPENDENT LIVING</b> <b>IMPROVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR OLDER PEOPLE</b> <b>IMPROVE HOUSING AND HOUSING RELATED SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE</b>
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Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Average waiting time for a Disabled Facilities Grant to be completed	Time Monitoring Spreadsheet HBC	Quarterly	None – monitoring PI to reduce the time taken and set a baseline for future targets

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
3B1	Contribute to the refresh of the Housing Care and Support Strategy 2011-14	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Head of Service (C&A) Phil Hornsby	March 2012
3B2	Improve partnership working with health and social care in service planning and delivery for older people through the Housing Care and Support Strategy Steering Group	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> Head of Service (C&A) Phil Hornsby	March 2013
3B3	Identify and understand the particular housing needs for older BME people	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A) Phil Hornsby</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	March 2012
3B4	Improve the information base on people with learning disabilities' to support the planning of future services through a housing needs and demand survey	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A) Neil Harrison</b> Housing Services Manager	March 2015

<sup>2</sup> Disabilities includes people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, people on the autistic spectrum and people with mental health needs

		Nigel Johnson	
3B5	Monitor access to new and existing housing care and support schemes for people with disabilities	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A)</b> <b>Neil Harrison</b>	March 2012
3B6	Improve the range of information and advice available to people with a learning disability and their carers on housing related issues	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A)</b> <b>Neil Harrison</b>	March 2014
3B7	Assess, using the new Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the need for an increased supply of supported housing and extra care housing and complete a report	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b>	December 2012
3B8	Monitor and evaluate the use and demand for extra care housing on existing schemes	<b>Head of Service (C&amp;A)</b> <b>Phil Hornsby</b> All Registered Providers	December 2012
3B9	Monitor and review the waiting time for major adaptations to ensure that the health, well-being and independence of older and disabled people is improved	<b>Housing Strategy Officer</b> <b>Karen Kelly</b>	March 2012
3B10	Increase the use of Assisted Technology by case finding as a preventative measure	<b>All Registered Providers</b>  <b>Head of Service (C&amp;A)</b> <b>Phil Hornsby</b>	March 2014

### PRIORITY 3 – MEETING SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

<b>C</b>	<b>OUTCOME – RESPOND TO THE HOUSING NEEDS OF THE BME COMMUNITY, INCLUDING GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS</b>
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Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Percentage of applicants on the CBL housing register indicating they are from a minority ethnic origin	COMPASS CBL system Housing Hartlepool	Quarterly	To achieve a % that is equal to the overall % BME population in Hartlepool Census 2001 – 1.2% Census 2011 – data expected in 2012

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
3C1	Develop and deliver information sharing protocols between housing agencies for refugee groups who receive a positive decision to stay	<b>Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered Providers	March 2013
3C2	Identify through the Tees Valley CBL Steering Group any adverse effects on CBL uptake and satisfaction for BME groups	<b>All Registered Providers Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson</b>	March 2013
3C3	Establish appropriate opportunities BME housing advisors to engage with strategic housing plans through contacts made via the BME Housing Study	<b>Housing Strategy Officer Karen Kelly</b>  <b>All Registered Providers</b>	March 2012
3C4	In partnership with BME housing advisors improve the range of information and advice available to people from BME groups – specifically information on shared ownership, disabled adaptations grants; welcome packs for refugee groups	<b>Housing Strategy Officer Karen Kelly</b>	March 2013
3C5	Host 2 training sessions to ensure diversity training	<b>Workforce Development</b>	March 2013

	and cultural awareness training is provided to all front-line housing staff	Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	
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## SECTION 4: COMMUNICATION AND GOVERNANCE ACTIONS FOR DELIVERY OF THE 3 PRIORITIES

### COMMUNICATION AND GOVERNANCE

**OUTCOMES -**

- CONTINUE TO PROMOTE THE IMPORTANCE OF HOUSING WORK WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**
- ENSURE THAT THE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP RECOGNISES THE CHALLENGES IN DELIVERING THE HOUSING STRATEGY**
- CONTINUE TO ENGAGE WITH HARD TO REACH GROUPS**
- DEVELOP A LOCAL STRATEGIC TENANCY POLICY**

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
4.1	Produce an annual performance report to highlight progress against the key actions and promote the importance of housing work within the Local Authority. Ensure that housing services are adequately resourced to respond appropriately to and deliver all housing activity.	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning</b> <b>Damien Wilson</b>	March 2015
4.2	Undertake a review of the Terms of Reference and Membership of the Housing Partnership to reflect the role of the Partnership in monitoring the Housing Strategy	<b>Local Strategic Partnership Manager</b> <b>Catherine Frank</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	March 2012
4.3	A member of the Housing Services Team to attend meetings, where appropriate, and be available to comment on residential planning applications and policy issues	<b>Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer</b> <b>Amy Waller</b>	March 2015
4.4	Actively promote and publicise all services and organisations operating from the Housing Options Centre through information and engagement with	<b>Principal Housing Advice Officer</b> <b>Lynda Igoe</b>	March 2012

	hard to reach groups	Housing Strategy Officer Karen Kelly	
4.5	Provide advice, assistance and information to private sector tenants about their tenancy rights	<b>Principal Housing Advice Officer</b> <b>Lynda Igoe</b> <b>Senior Environmental Health Officer</b> <b>Joanne Burnley</b>	March 2013
4.6	Work in partnership with Registered Providers, tenants and all stakeholders to develop a Local Strategic Tenancy Policy <sup>3</sup> in partnership with the other Tees Valley Local Authorities	<b>Housing Services Manager</b> <b>Nigel Johnson</b> All Registered Providers	January 2013
4.7	Develop and promote good communication within HMR and adjacent areas via a number of methods such as websites, social networking and text messaging	<b>Neighbourhood Managers</b> <b>Karen Oliver, Clare Clark,</b> <b>David Frame</b>  <b>Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer</b> <b>Amy Waller</b>	March 2015

<sup>3</sup> This action will be undertaken if the current government proposals within the Localism Bill carry forward into legislation

**SECTION5: FINANCIAL / FUNDING ACTIONS FOR DELIVERY OF THE 3 PRIORITIES**

**FINANCIAL AND FUNDING ISSUES**

**OUTCOMES -** EXPLORE POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR COUNCIL INTERVENTION IN THE HOUSING MARKET  
 ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES ARE IN PLACE TO CONTINUE THE COUNCIL'S HMR ACTIVITY  
 ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES ARE IN PLACE FOR PRIVATE SECTOR RENEWAL  
 ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES ARE IN PLACE TO IMPLEMENT THE ENFORCEMENT POLICY  
 MAXIMISE THE AMOUNT OF NEW HOMES BONUS AWARDED TO THE COUNCIL  
 MONITOR AND ASSESS THE IMPACTS OF CUTS IN HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
5.1	Evaluate funding to continue the shared equity scheme (Headway scheme)	<b>Chief Finance Officer Chris Little</b> Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson	March 2013
5.2	Evaluate the feasibility of providing council mortgages	<b>Chief Finance Officer Chris Little</b> Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson	March 2013
5.3	Evaluate the feasibility of buying empty properties which have been repossessed	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b> Chief Finance Officer Chris Little	March 2013
5.4	Identify sources of funding to undertake mortgage rescue initiatives	<b>Chief Finance Officer Chris Little</b> Assistant Director of	March 2013

		Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson	
5.5	Establish funding for the completion of the HMR programme	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b> Chief Finance Officer Chris Little	March 2012
5.6	Establish funding to support adjacent areas including improvement works	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b> Chief Finance Officer Chris Little	March 2013
5.7	Establish funding for the continuation of the regional loans scheme	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b> Chief Finance Officer Chris Little	March 2012
5.8	Establish funding for grants to undertake emergency works for owner-occupied properties	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b> Chief Finance Officer Chris Little	March 2012
5.9	Identify funding to implement the Enforcement Policy for undertaking Works in Default; Enforced Sale; CPO; Section 215; Housing Act 2004 work	<b>Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning Damien Wilson</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	March 2012
5.10	Introduce charges for appropriate enforcement work	<b>Senior Environmental Health</b>	March 2013

		<b>Officer Joanne Burnley</b>	
5.11	Liaise with debt recovery to implement a more robust system to recover debts related to carrying out works in default of legal notices	<b>Senior Environmental Health Officer Joanne Burnley</b>	March 2012
5.12	Ensure that the information presented to government for New Homes Bonus is up to date (including demolition, empty homes figures)	<b>Assistant Chief Finance and Customer Services Officer John Morton</b>	March 2012
5.13	Monitor the impact of cuts in housing related support services by Commissioned Services	<b>Commissioned Services Manager Brian Ayre</b> Housing Services Manager Nigel Johnson	March 2013

## CONTACTS LIST

Theme	Name	Job Title	Organisation	Email
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Corporate Strategy	Catherine Frank	Local Strategic Partnership Manager	Hartlepool Borough Council	<a href="mailto:Catherine.frank@hartlepool.gov.uk">Catherine.frank@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Economic Development	Diane Martin	Principal Economic Development Officer (Employment)	Hartlepool Borough Council	<a href="mailto:Diane.Martin@hartlepool.gov.uk">Diane.Martin@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Disabled Facilities Grant & Rehousing	Karen Kelly	Housing Strategy Officer	Hartlepool Borough Council	<a href="mailto:Karen.kelly@hartlepool.gov.uk">Karen.kelly@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Empty Homes	Amy Waller	Principal Housing and Regeneration Officer	Hartlepool Borough Council	<a href="mailto:Amy.waller@hartlepool.gov.uk">Amy.waller@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
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Homelessness & Housing Advice	Lynda Igoe	Principal Housing Advice Officer	Hartlepool Borough Council	<a href="mailto:Lynda.igoe@hartlepool.gov.uk">Lynda.igoe@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
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# Impact Assessment

## Supporting you to review or make changes to services

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### Purpose

If you are reviewing or implementing a change in service, you are required as part of the decision making process to consciously think about the three aims of the Equality Duty.

This is only one of a number of factors you need to consider, (See Service Review Guidance) the weight given to the Equality factors will depend on how much that function affects the three aims of the Equality Duty e.g. giving greater consideration where there is likely to be substantial adverse effects and less consideration when the potential effect on equality is slight.

Real consideration must be given prior to decisions being made with an open mind in such a way that influences the final decision.

You must consider what information you already have and what information you need in order to give proper consideration to the Equality Duty

Although there is no explicit requirement to keep a record of how decisions are reached, it is best practice and will help you to demonstrate how you have complied with the Equality Duty.

The Impact Assessment form can be used to assist you in this process.

#### The Equality Duty three aims:

**Eliminate Unlawful discrimination,** harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the act

**Advance Equality of Opportunity,** between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't

**Foster Good Relations,** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.



## Impact Assessment

### Assessing the Impact of reviewing or changing services

Owner/Responsible Officer	Nigel Johnson, Housing Services Manager		
Service/Policy /Function	Housing Strategy 2011 - 2015 (replaces the 2006 - 2011 Strategy) and Action Plan		
Relevance	Age		X
	Disability		X
	Gender Re-assignment		
	Race		X
	Religion		X
	Sex		
	Sexual Orientation		
	Marriage & Civil Partnership		
	Pregnancy & Maternity		
	The Housing Strategy and Action Plan for 2011 - 2015 is relevant to all residents living in Hartlepool. The strategy objectives are applicable to all residents.		
Information	You should consider what information you hold and what further information you need in order for you to give proper consideration to the Equality Duty. You must also ensure any third parties which carryout functions on you behalf comply.		
	Information Available		Information Gaps
	<b>Evidence Source</b>	<b>Information</b>	The SHMA will updated during 2011/2012 as part of the Sub Regional update
	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007)	Local housing need and demand	
	Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008)	Sub-regional and local housing need and demand	
	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2009)	Specific housing need with regard to the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show persons groups	
	Hartlepool	Identification	

	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2010)	of sites with housing land capacity.	
	Housing Need over the Next 15 Years (2011)	Housing provision needed over the next 15 years	
	Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)	A detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector.	
	Homelessness Statistics	Data relating to housing advice and homelessness cases	
	Compass Housing Register Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Social housing need and demand An in-depth look at the full range of health and social care services available in Hartlepool to try to ensure they respond to the needs and aspirations of local people	
	Land Registry		

	Wales and details about ownership and who the mortgage lender is.		
What is the Impact	Race - accessibility of housing services to BME communities and migrant workers - <b>No Major Change</b>  Religion - certain communities may not be able to access loans “with interest” i.e. for empty homes work, mortgages, property renovation, energy efficiency - <b>No Major Change</b>  Disability - positive impact for disabled people, including those with learning disabilities and mental health issues - Disabled Facilities Grants are targeted at this group - <b>No Major Change</b>  Age - positive impact on the prioritisation of needs for the growing elderly population - <b>No Major Change</b>		
Addressing the impact	<i>The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following outcomes;</i>		
	<b>1. No Major Change</b> - <i>It is clear that there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact on the above Protected Characteristics. All opportunities to promote Equality have been taken and no further analysis or action is required.</i>		
	<b>2. Adjust/Change</b> - <i>You may have to make adjustments to address potential problems or missed opportunities that impact adversely on those with protected characteristics.</i>		
	<b>3. Continue as is</b> - <i>Your decision may be to continue without making changes, this may be the right outcome even if your assessment identifies the potential for adverse impact. (E.g. Cabinet decision to withdraw a service). Clearly set out your justification for this outcome.</i>		
	<b>4. Stop/Remove</b> - <i>Your assessment reveals unlawful discrimination it must be stopped and removed or changed.</i>		
Actions			
<i>It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.</i>			
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Identify barriers	Nigel Johnson	Dec 2012	Monitored

to permanent housing through CBL			through the Housing Strategy Action Plan
Identify any adverse effects on CBL uptake and satisfaction for BME groups	Nigel Johnson / Registered Providers	March 2013	Monitored through the Housing Strategy Action Plan
Develop opportunities for BME individuals to engage with strategic housing plans; establish BME advisors	Nigel Johnson / Registered Providers	March 2012	
Improve the range of information and advice available to people from BME groups - on shared ownership; disabled adaptations grants; welcome packs for refugee groups	Nigel Johnson	March 2013	Monitored through the Housing Strategy Action Plan

# **CABINET REPORT**

**7<sup>th</sup> November 2011**



**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** MARKETING OF THE FRIARAGE MANOR HOUSE SITE

---

## **SUMMARY**

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

The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the intention to secure the restoration and re-use of the Friarage Manor House on the Headland alongside the creation of a be-spoke housing development on adjacent land and seeks Cabinet's approval to the revised Friarage Manor House Planning Development Brief.

### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report outlines the background and ownership of the Friarage Manor House site, provides details of the revised Planning Development Brief and the proposed marketing plan for the site.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

The report is relevant to Cabinet as the proposals cut across a number of Portfolios.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

## 6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Cabinet is requested to:

- Approve the payment of £3,000 to fund the Marketing costs as outlined in 4.1 and 5.0 if the Trusts are unable to obtain the funding.
- Endorse the revised Planning Development Brief for the Friarage Manor House site and adjacent land.

**Report of:** Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** MARKETING OF THE FRIARAGE MANOR HOUSE SITE

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the intention to secure the restoration and re-use of the Friarage Manor House on the Headland alongside the creation of a be-spoke housing development on adjacent land and seeks Cabinet's approval to the revised Friarage Manor House Planning Development Brief.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Grade II Listed Friarage Manor House occupies part of a wider 0.8Ha site owned in two separate ownerships by the Henry Smith Education Trust and the Henry Smith Non Education trust. (See site plan in **Appendix 1**). For some time the Trusts have been working with Officers of the Council and before that the North Hartlepool Partnership to identify solutions that would achieve the restoration of the Manor House and the redevelopment of the wider site with a bespoke housing development.
- 2.2 To secure this objective the two Trusts have recently agreed to jointly market their respective land ownerships to potential developers. Officers from Regeneration, Estates and Planning are providing support to facilitate this process.

## **3. FRIARAGE MANOR HOUSE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

- 3.1 A planning development brief was produced in 2006 (and later updated in 2009) to provide planning advice and guidance on the restoration of the Friarage Manor House and the development of the adjacent land. Any proposals from potential developers will be assessed against the requirements of the brief. The brief has previously been through a public consultation exercise, however developers will also be encouraged to consult with local people about any proposals.
- 3.2 In order to increase the viability of the site and to improve the chances of achieving the restoration and re-use of the Manor House (the cost of which is likely to be significant) it is proposed to revise the Planning Development Brief.

- 3.3 The original brief included a requirement for 20-25 public car parking spaces to be provided on site to cater for anticipated increased visitor numbers resulting from SRB programme investment, and to serve local sports and recreational facilities. It was originally anticipated that the Council would acquire the land and lay out the car park using Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funds. This programme has however, now ceased and it is unlikely that the Council could find the resources to carry out the scheme.
- 3.4 In planning terms it would be difficult to sustain a requirement to provide a visitor car park within the site if it cannot be delivered within a reasonable time period. In addition the requirement to provide a car park on the site would also adversely affect the viability of the site particularly given the cost of restoring the Manor House.
- 3.5 Although visitor numbers on the Headland have not increased as much as originally anticipated, the Highways section and the North Neighbourhood Manager have suggested that there is still a need for additional car parking spaces within this part of the Headland. It would therefore still be desirable to secure some improvements on the back of this development. The brief has therefore been revised to seek developer contributions as part of a S106 agreement for nearby off site enhancements e.g. Moor Terrace or near the Heugh Lighthouse, in recognition of the additional traffic that the new development would generate. Officers are continuing to explore the details of this option. (See **Appendix 3** for the revised Planning Development Brief).

#### **4. MARKETING EXERCISE**

- 4.1 In terms of marketing the land and building, the Trusts are keen to move forward and officers from Planning, Regeneration and Estates are continuing to provide support to facilitate this process. A site marketing plan has been prepared and although the land is in two separate titles it is proposed to market them together in order to improve the chances of securing a developer. Whilst most of the support has been provided “in-kind” there will be a small cost associated with advertising and marketing the sites which has been estimated in the region of £3,000. The Trusts have limited resources available and would need to seek the approval of the Charities Commission to use their resources to fund expenditure of this nature. In order to deliver the regeneration of the site there may therefore be a need to provide Council funding through a loan facility, repayable upon sale of the land. The marketing would consist of a number of activities including direct approaches to suitable developers, press releases and adverts in local, regional and national publications. (See Marketing Plan in **Appendix 2**).

#### **5. FINANCE**

- 5.1 There are no financial costs to the Council as the Trusts will fund the marketing out of their own resources.



## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

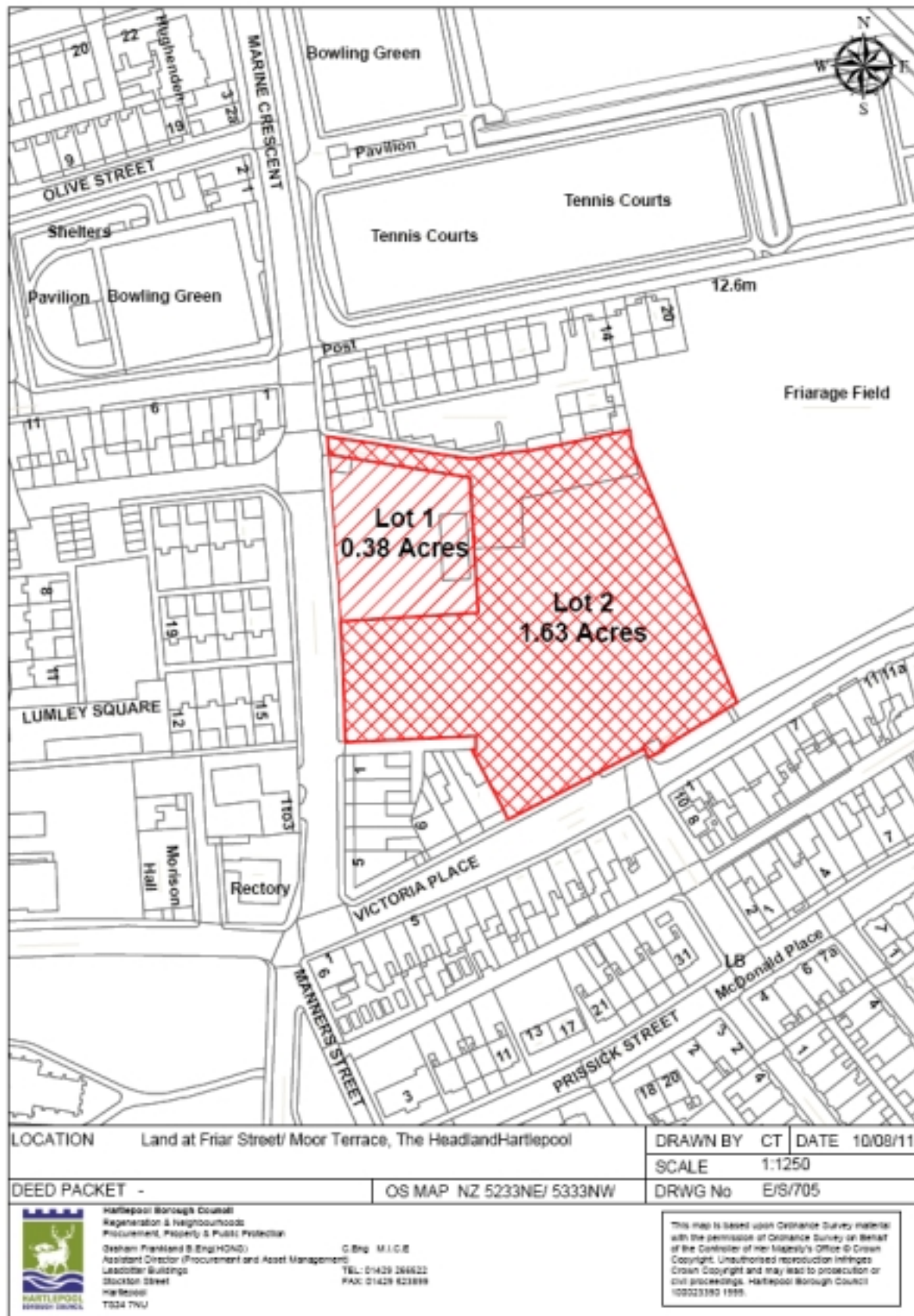
### **6.1 Cabinet is requested to:**

- Approve the payment of £3,000 to fund the Marketing costs as outlined in 4.1 and 5.0 if the Trusts are unable to obtain the funding.
- Endorse the revised Planning Development Brief for the Friarage Manor House site and adjacent land.

## **7. CONTACT OFFICER**

Damien Wilson  
Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)  
Civic Centre Level 3  
Victoria Road  
Hartlepool  
TS24 8AY  
Tel: 01429 3400  
Email: [damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**APPENDIX 1- FRIARAGE MANOR HOUSE SITE PLAN**



**APPENDIX 2- FRIARAGE MANOR HOUSE MARKETING PLAN****Manor House, The Headland: Marketing Plan**

The property consists of 2 titles in separate ownership but they adjoin and would clearly be most usefully marketed together. Given the separate ownerships it is however proposed to market the properties as lots 1 and 2 on one set of particulars etc.

The marketing will be directed at residential developers. The most likely buyers will be north east based firms but possible buyers will be canvassed on a national basis. Buyers are likely to require planning consent as a condition of purchase, particularly bearing in mind the Grade II listing of the Manor House itself. The house requires a full renovation / conversion and thus builders with experience of this type of building are likely to be the most suitable purchasers. The house lot may also appeal to the more adventurous end of the owner-occupier/self build market.

The following marketing plan is thus proposed:

No.	Action	Cost	Time
1	Sales particulars to be drafted and approved by client including Property Misdescription Act clearance.	-	Pre-start
2	Marketing period to tender closing date to be agreed with clients.	-	Pre-start
3	List property on Showcase (Internet site)	-	Week 1
4	List on SAVE website	-	Week 1
5	Initial mailshot to potential buyers (mainly by email)	-	Week 1
6	Erect For Sale Board on land – Wording Grade II listed house and 1.95 acres For Sale	Approx £250 ex VAT	Week 2/3
7	Press release in Hartlepool Mail	-	Week 2/3
8	Regional Advert eg Newcastle Journal	Approx £750 ex VAT	Week 4 – 6 dependent on interest to date
9	National Advert eg Estates Gazette/Property Week/Commercial Property Monthly	Approx £1800 ex VAT	Week 6- 12 dependent on interest to date
10	Receive tenders	-	Provisionally Week 12

## **Land at the Friarage Planning Development Brief**



**October 2011**

**1. PURPOSE OF BRIEF**

- 1.1 This brief is intended to assist in the marketing of the Friarage Manor House site by indicating the Borough Council's policies and design requirements for development.

**2. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

- 2.1 The Borough Council together with the landowners the Henry Smith Education Trust and the Henry Smith Non Education Trust are looking to encourage a suitable redevelopment of this important 0.8 hectare site on the Headland. It is seen as a key location within Headland, the redevelopment of which should complement and support the ongoing regeneration of the area.
- 2.2 In recent years the Headland has received major investment largely through the government's Single Regeneration Budget programme, which is targeted at developing the local economy and the historic core of Hartlepool. Major investment has been recently made in upgrading the local environment, which includes a refurbished promenade and public squares, improvements to a shopping parade and wider tourism focused activities. Amongst these tourism features are interpretation facilities at St Hilda's Church the restoration of the Heugh Gun Battery and visitor centre proposals. The Headland regeneration programme has also included the construction of a new sports centre and community facilities and extensive grant investment in private buildings.
- 2.3 Investment in this site is seen as important within the overall context of regeneration at the Headland. The key objective is to secure the restoration and active re-use of a listed building (the Friarage Manor House), which currently occupies part of the site. The brief is intended to provide advice, guidance and information on the development of the site and the restoration of the Manor House. Any proposals from potential developers will be submitted to and should be assessed by the landowners against the development requirements. Developers will be encouraged to consult with local people.

**3. LOCATION / SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 3.1 The development site is situated in a prominent location on the Hartlepool Headland, within the Headland Conservation Area (designated in 1969 and extended in 1974). It is positioned approximately midway between the historic St Hilda's Church and the Heugh Gun Battery (a scheduled ancient monument) which are 200 metres to the south and east respectively.
- 3.2 The site itself covers an area of 0.8 hectares as shown on the attached plan Site Plan No. 1. It is situated near the junction of Friarage Gardens and Victoria Place and consists predominantly of level land. The site is surrounded on three sides by residential properties. On the south side is the Victorian Terrace of Victoria Place and Moor Terrace whilst to the west and north are more modern terrace dwellings. Abutting the site in the southwest

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### 6.1

corner is a small group of Victorian terraced buildings. To the east, between the brief site and the Heugh Gun Battery is a sports field, which formed part of the original Friarage site, but which is excluded from the brief area.

- 3.3 Slightly further afield to the north east is the Town Moor, a large area of open space which is used as a venue for the annual Headland Carnival. The sea is three hundred metres from the eastern curtilage of the site.
- 3.4 Apart from the Manor House itself, the only other building on the site is a small operational electricity substation, which is located on the northwest tip of the development site.



## 4. HISTORY

- 4.1 The Headland is the original settlement of Hartlepool and was established during the 7<sup>th</sup> Century as a religious centre and later becoming a port.
- 4.2 The Manor House site forms the site of a former Franciscan Friarage established around 1240 and dissolved in 1538 under the general dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. Part of the monastic buildings are believed to have been incorporated into a Manorial dwelling in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the remains of which are still present in the form of the Manor House, which is a Grade II Listed building. The surviving Manor House structure is the original east range of the mansion. In 1634 the Manor House Site was acquired by the Henry Smith Trust, a charity aimed at helping the poor. The Trust was subsequently sub-divided into The Henry Smith Hospital Trust and the Henry Smith Education Trust, the latter which still exists today and owns approximately two thirds of the development site. The Henry Smith Hospital Trust no longer exists and the Council is currently seeking confirmation of ownership of this part of the site.
- 4.3 Subsequently in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Manor House building became the northeast wing of the hospital, which was built mid-way through the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and was known as the Friarage Hospital, and more recently St Hilda's Hospital. The hospital was closed in 1984 and demolished in 1987.

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**6.1**

with the current Manor House retained due to its historic interest. Since this time the building has been disused.

- 4.4 The property has a gross internal floor area of 94.5 sq. m. (1,017 sq. ft.) per floor on two floors, totalling 189.1 sq. m (2,035 sq. ft.).



## 5. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 An imaginative but sensitive approach to the development of the Friarage Manor House site, which respects the maritime and Christian heritage of the area, will be actively encouraged. It is important that any new buildings whatever their potential use reflect the scale and character of the historic buildings immediately surrounding the brief area.
- 5.2 The land of the brief area is suitable for a variety of uses and is allocated as a mixed-use area in the local plan. This could take the form of a small-scale housing development. This should resemble the traditional dwellings of the Headland with two to three storeys and for example built in a small mews or a courtyard form.
- 5.3 Alternatively appropriate leisure uses, small-scale retail or specialist offices would be supported. Community consultation has highlighted the desire for elements of the Manor House and surrounding land to be developed for various community uses. These could be appropriate but ultimately it is for the landowners, potential developers and end users to decide on the viability of desired uses of the site, subject to the appropriate statutory consents.
- 5.4 The land is within two separate ownerships as identified in **Appendix 3**, however for the proper planning of the area the site should be considered as a whole.

## 6. LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

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6.1

- 6.1 The 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan has identified several key sites on the Headland, which offer opportunities for mixed-use development including tourism related and community facilities, housing and some specialist retail and small workshop development. Development Proposals for the site need to take account of the following policies contained in the 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan:

<b>Hsg6</b>	<b>Mixed Use Areas</b> - Housing Development will be approved as part of mixed-use developments.
<b>Com16</b>	<b>Headland Mixed Uses</b> - the Borough Council will encourage proposals for development to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Strengthen tourism and established economic activities to increase local employment;</li> <li>•Widen the mix of housing investment to meet local needs and;</li> <li>•Conserve and renew the environmental heritage of the area to protect and reinforce its historic identity.</li> </ul>
<b>To2</b>	<b>Tourism at the Headland</b> – Visitor related developments would be approved where they are sensitive to the setting, character and Maritime and Christian heritage of the area.
<b>HE1</b>	<b>Protection or Enhancement of Conservation Areas</b>
<b>HE2</b>	<b>Environment Improvements in Conservation Areas</b>
<b>HE8</b>	<b>Works to Listed Buildings</b>

- 6.2 The entire Manor House site is protected by Conservation Area status. This development brief recognises the architectural and historical importance of the Manor House and seeks to enhance the Manor House and the setting by appropriate sensitive treatment.

## 7. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1 Although the site is currently in two separate ownerships, in the interests of the proper planning of the area, it would be preferable for it to be treated as one, in order to ensure a cohesive and effective development of the site. Notwithstanding this preference however any separate development on part of the site should not prejudice the effective treatment of the remainder of the land.
- 7.2 The Friarage Manor House is a Grade II Listed building. The Friarage Manor House site is located in a very important part of the Headland Conservation Area as mentioned in the last chapter and any new built development needs to be very sensitively treated. Any development of the site should seek to preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area and also ensure that the design and layout is sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 7.3 Proposed developments within the site should respect the setting and status of the Friarage Manor House as a Listed building and the character of surrounding residential properties. Any development should not have an



*Cabinet – 7 November 2011*

**6.1**

adverse impact on the character, appearance and amenity of the building. This is particularly important on the southern boundary, which faces a traditional Victorian terrace, and around the southwestern corner of the site that borders the traditional housing at Friarage Gardens and Victoria Place. Early contact should be made with the Borough Council's Conservation Officer to discuss the conservation and preservation of the Friarage Manor House building. Contact Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager.

**8. DESIGN**

- 8.1 Recent Government guidance has highlighted the importance of design quality in order to achieve urban renaissance. New development must display a high standard of urban design, which raises the architectural quality of the area in a way that reflects the existing character of the Conservation Area.
- 8.2 It is vital that the new development connects with the surrounding buildings in architectural style and design. This is particularly important around the older surrounding buildings at Victoria Place to the southwest corner of the brief area and to Moor Terrace on the southern boundary.
- 8.3 New buildings should reflect the style of the wider Conservation Area with two to three storeys and a strong urban form. Traditional materials common to the Conservation Area would be encouraged such as slate roofs and brick walls with or without render. One notable feature of the Headland Conservation Area are public or semi public squares overlooked by housing.
- 8.3 The layout of the development should relate to the scale, location and setting of the Friarage Manor House in particular any new development should respect its orientation, aspect, scale, height, materials and character.
- 8.4 Any development should retain appropriate space around the Manor House thus maintaining the physical prominence of the Manor House building, which reflects and enhances the buildings scale and character. In practice, the brief suggests any new development should adopt the following principles:

- Where closest to the Friarage Manor House, should be orientated towards it, not presenting backs or service areas to it;
- The Friarage Manor House should not be surrounded on all sides by hard surfacing;
- Buildings should be no higher than and preferably lower than the height of the Manor House in order to respect the prominence of this building;
- Roofs should be dual pitched, of a minimum pitch of 40° and of slate or eternit slate material;
- Where possible new buildings should present a strong frontage towards the existing buildings to the west and south;
- The use of traditional materials found in the Conservation Area;
- Care should be taken to avoid the over development of the site.



## **9. ACCESS AND PARKING**

- 9.1 Vehicular access may be provided from Friar Street and / or Moor Terrace / Victoria Place. Consultation should be made with the Borough Council's Highway Engineers regarding suitable access points contact Mike Blair on 01429 523252.
- 9.2 The road along the northern boundary currently serves the site and Jacques Court and is not adopted highway. Access to the Jacques Court residential dwellings needs to be maintained as part of any redevelopment proposals.

## **10. FEATURES TO BE RETAINED**

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6.1

- 10.1 **BOUNDARY WALL** – Boundary walls run around part of the site as well as the adjacent playing field. This demarks part of the boundary of the Franciscan Friarage. Those boundary walls which form part of the development site although not listed are an essential feature of the Conservation Area and are to be retained and restored wherever possible.
- 10.2 **ARCHAEOLOGY** – It is known that archaeological remains of national importance exist on the Headland. The Borough Council and Tees Archaeology will offer advice to developers at the pre-application stage where archaeological remains are likely to be affected.

### 11. **SERVICES**

- 11.1 It is assumed that services are available to the site although potential developers should check with the public utility providers, particularly Northumbrian Water, regarding the drainage of the site, and Hartlepool Water Company regarding the adequacy of water supplies.

- 11.2 Contact details for utilities:

**Electricity** – Northern Electric Distribution Limited (NEDL) owns and maintains the underground electricity apparatus. Correspondence with NEDL should be directed to Manor House, Station Road, New Penshaw, Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 7LA.

**Gas** - Transco maintains the network of gas mains. A plan of gas mains can be found in **Appendix 1**. The local address for Transco is Dunedin House, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Riverside Quay, Columbia, Stockton-On-Tees, TS17 6YH.

**Water** - The on site water is provided by the Hartlepool Water Company. Hartlepool Water is based at 3 Lancaster Road, Hartlepool, TS27 8LW.

**Surface and foul drainage** - The sewers are owned and maintained by Northumbrian Water. A plan of the sewer system for the site and surrounding area is provided in **Appendix 2**. Correspondence with Northumbrian Water and should be directed to Leat House, Pattison Road, District 15, Washington, Tyne & Wear, NE38 8LB.

### 12. **BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Hartlepool Borough Council offers a service of inspection under the Building Regulations. For further details please telephone the Borough Council's Building Control Manager (Telephone: 01429 523290).

### 13. **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

- 13.1 Contributions may be necessary for play and green infrastructure and will be considered against the proposals that we receive.

- 13.2 With regard to the play provision and green infrastructure, continuing monitoring and the Council's PPG17 Open Space Assessment will be used to identify local areas most in need of investment. If a proposed scheme can demonstrate a significant improvement in the local environment then the contribution for Green Infrastructure would be unnecessary.
- 13.3 The developer will be required to make a contribution towards public visitor parking within the area along Moor Terrace and near the Heugh Lighthouse. Discussion should be held with HBC Highways regarding the details of this contribution.
- 13.3 All financial developer contributions will be secured and delivered through a Section 106 Legal Agreement.

#### **14. SUMMARY**

This brief sets out guidance for prospective developers with an indication of potential uses. It should be recognised that potential purchasers will need to assess the economic viability of the potential uses set out in this brief. However, the brief is not intended to be over prescriptive and therefore they may be opportunities to consider alternative solutions to the redevelopment of the site, provided that they adhere / conform to the following key points:

1. The retention, restoration and re-use of the Manor House.
2. That any new development provides an appropriate setting to the Manor House site.
3. The design is to be of a high quality, which reflects the sites setting within the Headland Conservation Area.

#### **15. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY**

- 15.1 The Council will not be bound to accept any proposals made by any developer responding to this document. The Council shall not under any circumstances be responsible for any costs incurred by developers in relation to their submission in response to the invitation arising from this document. The information supplied within this document is given for the guidance of prospective developers only. Whilst reasonable care has been taken in compiling this document, neither the Council nor its officers, employees or consultants guarantee its accuracy and the selected developer will be entirely responsible for verification of the information and for obtaining any additional information that may be required.

#### **Useful Hartlepool Borough Council contacts**

Highways

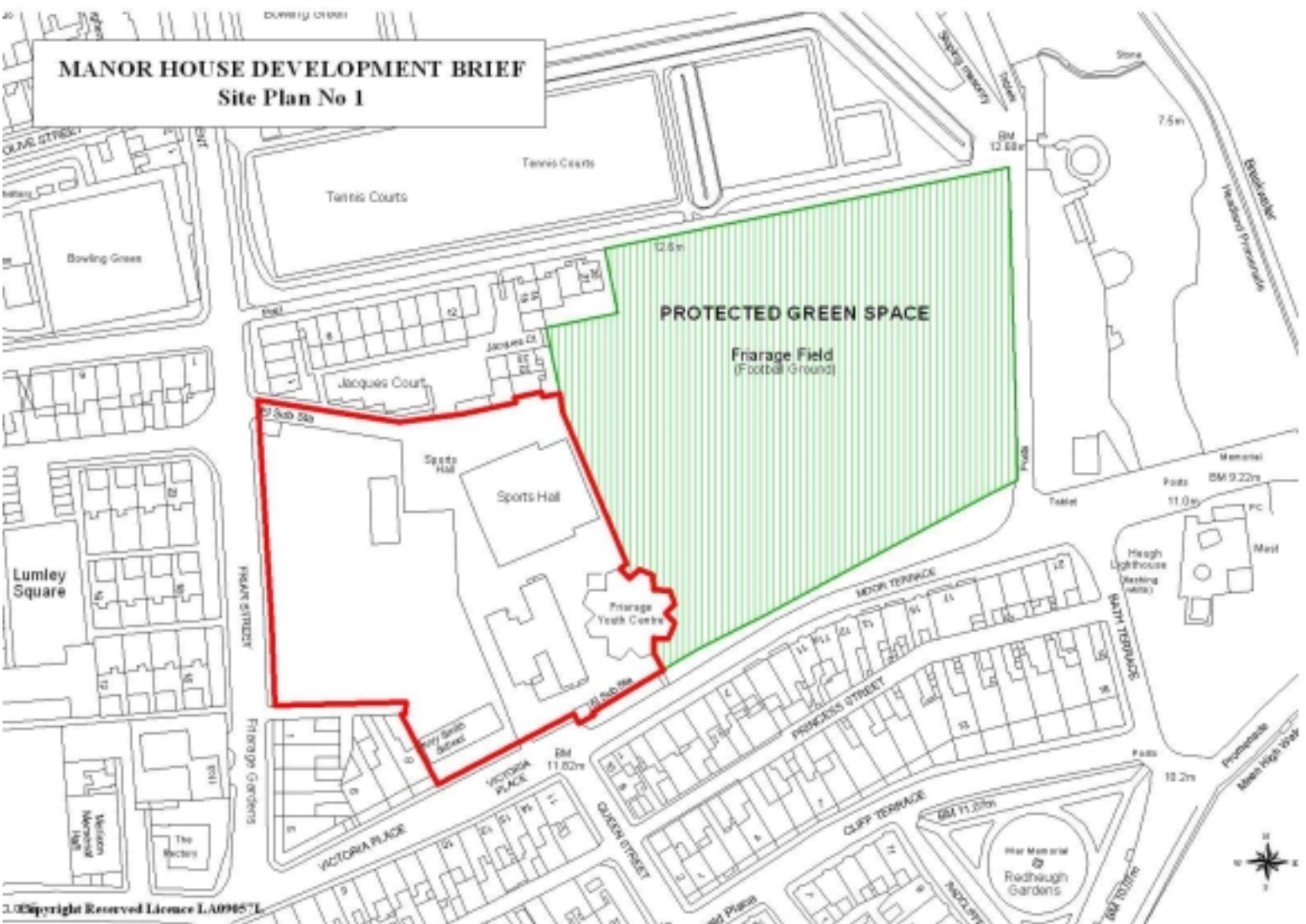
Mike Blair

01429 523252

[mike.blair@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:mike.blair@hartlepool.gov.uk)

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Planning Policy	Tom Britcliffe	01429 523532	<a href="mailto:tom.britcliffe@hartlepool.gov.uk">tom.britcliffe@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Planning- Development Control	Richard Trow	01429 523537	<a href="mailto:richard.trow@hartlepool.gov.uk">richard.trow@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Leisure	John Mennear	01429 523417	<a href="mailto:john.mennear@hartlepool.gov.uk">john.mennear@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Tourism	Jo Cole	01429 523508	<a href="mailto:joanne.cole@hartlepool.gov.uk">joanne.cole@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Economic Development	Antony Steinberg	01429 523503	<a href="mailto:antony.steinberg@hartlepool.gov.uk">antony.steinberg@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Legal	Alyson Carman	01429 523182	<a href="mailto:alyson.carman@hartlepool.gov.uk">alyson.carman@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Estates	Dale Clarke	01429 523386	<a href="mailto:dale.darke@hartlepool.gov.uk">dale.darke@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>
Conservation	Sarah Scarr	01429 523275	<a href="mailto:sarah.scarr@hartlepool.gov.uk">sarah.scarr@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>





**Appendix 1: Gas Mains**



Origin = (3462850.0533712) MapRef = NZ5333 Extent = (300m, 170m) - This map view is not to scale. Data extracted on 10/12/2004 Printed on 10/03/2006  
 Plant Owner = Transco or the relevant Gas Distribution Network MAPS Viewer V4.10.1

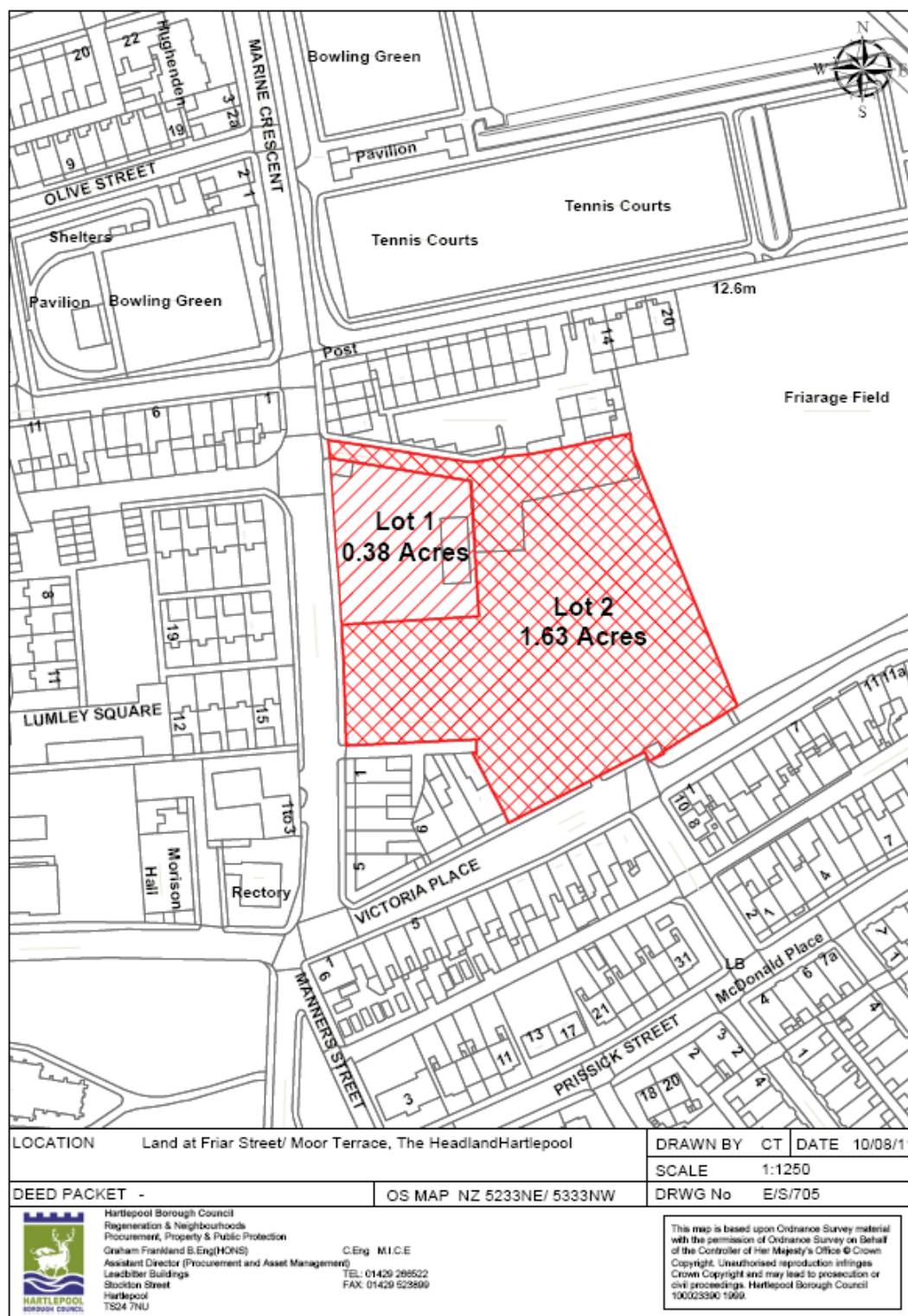
This plan shows those pipes owned by Transco plc or the relevant Gas Distribution Network in their roles as a Licensed Gas Transporter (GT). Gas pipes owned by other GTs, or otherwise privately owned, may be present in this area. Information with regard to such pipes should be obtained from the relevant owners. The information shown on this plan is given without warranty, the accuracy thereof cannot be guaranteed. Service pipes, valves, appurtenances, stub connections, etc. are not shown but their presence should be anticipated. No liability of any kind whatsoever is accepted by Transco plc, the relevant Gas Distribution Network, or their agents, servants or contractors for any error or omission. Safe digging practices, in accordance with HSG47, must be used to verify and establish the actual position of mains, pipes, services and other apparatus on site before any mechanical plant is used. It is your responsibility to ensure that this information is provided to all persons (whether direct labour or contractors) working for you on or near gas apparatus.

It is not permitted to use this plan for any purpose other than showing the location of Transco or other relevant Gas Distribution Network plant unless the appropriate Ordnance Survey mapping has been purchased. This plan is reproduced from (or based on) the Ordnance Survey map by Transco plc, with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.  
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**Appendix 2: Public Sewers**





**Appendix 3: Approximate site locations.**

# CABINET REPORT

7th November 2011



**Report of:** Acting Chief Executive

**Subject:** MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY /  
BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

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## SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to enable Cabinet to consider options which may be available to the authority in respect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and plans for addressing the budget deficit.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The nature and expectations on local government are constantly evolving no less so in a changing political context nationally. In order to effectively consider the range of options that may be available to assist in managing the balance between local priorities and the implications of nationally driven financial constraints Hartlepool and Darlington Councils embarked on a feasibility study to evaluate the potential for strategic collaboration.

Both authorities face significant reductions in budgets over the next three years and on this basis, and to ensure that as part of these considerations there was appropriate “challenge”, funding from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) was secured to ensure independent and external support was available.

It is important in considering the feasibility of change to be aware of both the drivers of this change but also the guiding principles which should act as a guide at a locality level. In outline these included;

- Each Local authority will retain their individual identity and sovereignty
- Collaboration is not limited to Darlington and Hartlepool
- The authorities enter this process with a positive view of collaboration
- Collaboration must deliver demonstrable additional benefits to working separately

There are a number of key challenges that need to be taken into account in determining any such collaboration model and these would need to be considered and planned for as part of any next stage should this be agreed and these are detailed in the main report.

The evaluation study identifies that the potential for strategic collaboration is a real option and offers the potential to significantly reduce the cost base of the two local authorities (whether this collaboration was with each other or with other authorities) but it is not, nor was it ever intended to be, a fully established business case.

It is important to note that the work which has been undertaken to date has been in establishing the potential for collaboration, the extent to which this potential may deliver savings and, at the same time, provide protection to front line services by avoiding reductions in front line provision.

The initial feasibility study has identified that the potential scale of the opportunity (subject to detailed business cases and due diligence) is between £5.3m and £8.4m but that these are estimates at this stage and require further more detailed work.

This report considers the strategic and operational issues in respect of

- Child and Adult Services
- Corporate Services
- Culture and Leisure Services
- Environmental Services
- Regeneration, Policy, Planning and Infrastructure

The exploration of the opportunities for collaboration has inherent in it a number of issues which require addressing at the outset. Such considerations do not impact on the ability to determine a business case for specific areas of activity but are important to address and understand to ensure that the best interest of the authority are protected and managed and these are covered in more detail in report but include.

- Governance and accountability
- Finance
- Legal and Human resources considerations

The work to date has identified that there is significant potential from investigating in detail the options available through the preparation of full business cases as detailed elsewhere in the report. The scale of the opportunity is such, when allied with the need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and expertise to deliver on them, that to ensure there are resources available to deliver on them is critical if there is to be progress to support the MTFS for 2013/14.

The preparation of a detailed business case based on previous experience is likely to take 12 months and will involve the secondment of key staff to work on the project, the purchase of external support and advice to develop appropriate governance models and ways of working. There will be significant involvement of HR, finance and legal teams as well as employees across the authority.

The initial feasibility work was funded through an application to the REIP (as outlined earlier in this report). It is proposed that a bid for funding the development of the detailed business cases be submitted to access this funding to a maximum value of £75,000. Should such a bid not be successful the potential benefits from the collaboration identified in this report are significant and on this basis it would be

proposed that the funding to support this come from Social Care Reform Grant. This would be established to cover potential costs associated with the purchase of advice and support and to cover temporary staffing costs for those employees seconded to the project

Given the information provided in the main body of the report the following is proposed :-

- That the authorities take a phased and staged approach to the consideration, and determination, of more detailed and robust business cases for collaboration across the range of services identified including issues in respect of governance, accountability, resourcing and the financial benefits from collaboration
- the implementation and ongoing review of a roadmap for collaboration over the next 3 years
- the prioritisation of the service areas identified commencing with detailed business case and benefits plan for Child and Adult services for consideration by Cabinet prior to progression

The report also provides an outline of the proposed phased approach to this work

### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

The report considers strategic issues of relevance to Cabinet.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Non Key

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet 7th November 2011

### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Cabinet are recommended to agree

- (i) The development of a detailed business case for collaboration in respect of Child and Adult services and to receive this for decision prior to any implementation
- (ii) That Hartlepool review the work being undertaken by Darlington in respect of the options available for environmental services, building services, highways in terms of efficiency and alternative models of delivery and receive a report back on options prior to the consideration of more detailed Business cases
- (iii) That a more detailed business case an option in respect of the development of a Cultural trust be progressed and reported to Cabinet for decision
- (iv) That an application be made for REIP legacy funding for the anticipated project costs and should this prove unsuccessful that this be funded from Social Care reform Grant
- (v) That consideration be given and work undertaken in respect of the options and key considerations around potential governance models and this be considered as part of the development of options

- (vi) That officers undertake development work in respect of the financial, Human Resource and legal and technical issues underpinning Cabinet to be reported to Cabinet for consideration and decision prior to the potential implementation of any completed business case
- (vii) That Cabinet receive for consideration a more detailed work programme and plan (assuming agreement to the other recommendations in this report
- (viii) That any further opportunities for any tactical collaboration outside of the scope identified in this report are developed for Cabinet consideration and approval

**Report of:** Acting Chief Executive

**Subject:** MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY /  
BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

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## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is to enable Cabinet to consider options which may be available to the authority in respect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and plans for addressing the budget deficit.

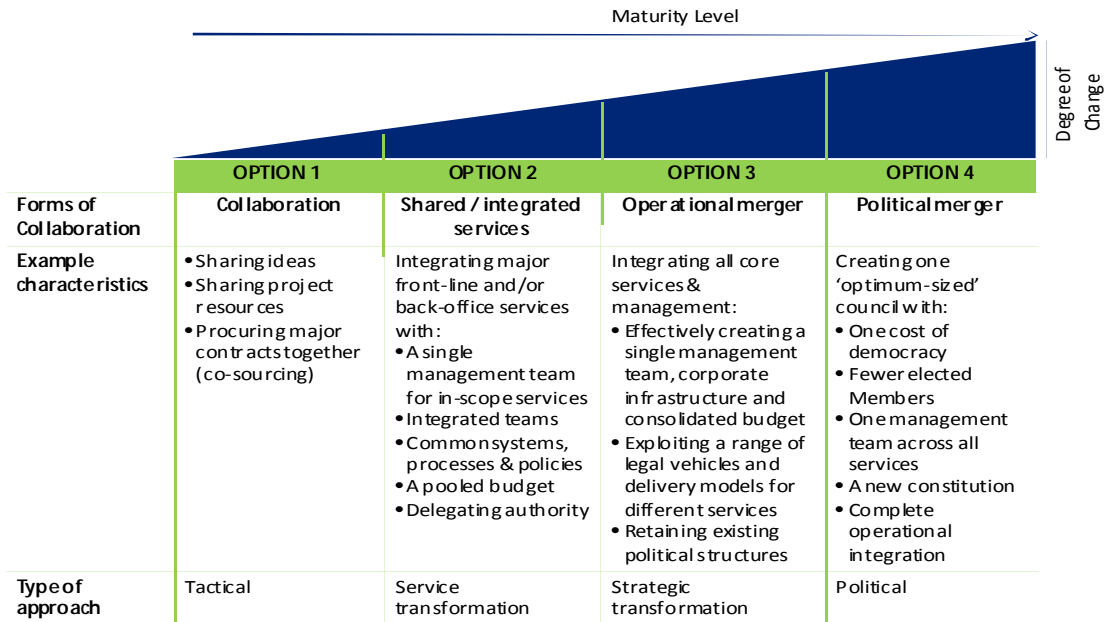
## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The nature and expectations on local government are constantly evolving no less so in a changing political context nationally. Every change brings with it a challenge to the role of local authorities, the manner in which they may look to address these and the necessity to reconsider the environment within which they operate and the most effective ways to address these challenges.
- 2.2 The extent to which these challenges require a significant shift in the model of operation for authorities varies significantly however the current scale and nature of change means that any option which is based on maintaining the status quo is unlikely to succeed and enable local authorities to continue to deliver services which meet the needs and aspirations of the locality and elected members.
- 2.3 In order to effectively consider the range of options that may be available to assist in managing the balance between local priorities and the implications of nationally driven financial constraints Hartlepool and Darlington Councils embarked on a feasibility study to evaluate the potential for strategic collaboration. In doing this we have looked to reduce the cost of overheads, improve our collective buying power and save management costs. Underpinning this has been the hypothesis that council services can be more efficiently managed at greater scale but that at the same time, this cannot compromise the sovereignty and political autonomy of the Councils, and must respect existing contractual obligations.
- 2.4 Both authorities face significant reductions in budgets over the next three years (Darlington £7.8m and Hartlepool £14.7m). In the context of the reductions that have already been made in the preceding three years (Darlington £9m and Hartlepool £10m) this provides for the most challenging financial environment that either council has faced since their creation. It is on this basis that it is important to ensure that a range of options are actively considered to enable these challenges to be met.
- 2.5 On this basis, and to ensure that as part of these considerations there was appropriate “challenge”, funding from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) was secured to ensure independent and external support was available.

- 2.6 Collaboration is not a new concept to Local Authorities or to either Hartlepool or Darlington. Both authorities already have in place examples where they collaborate with other local authorities and other public sector bodies to successfully deliver services. These examples tend to be based around specific services and vary significantly in both scale and import.
- 2.7 The scope and scale of the potential strategic collaboration which has been explored through this evaluation does not have a direct comparison to date other than when considering, at it's most extreme end, local government reorganisation although there are an increasing number of authorities exploring collaboration (or shared arrangements) for Chief Executives, management teams and significant service collaborations.
- 2.8 Historically the literature on the subject of collaboration points to relatively low levels of success with 30% at worst and 50% at best being considered successful. It should be noted however that in recent years, lessons have been learned and organisations have become more adept at planning and executing collaboration. This experience has shown that collaboration based on a clear and aligned strategy, with a focus on outcomes and delivery of benefits, have a greater chance of success. It is also important to note that the imperative and context will have been different. The financial situation of both authorities (and those others currently considering such change) is radically different to that of 5 years ago.

### 3.0 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 It is important in considering the feasibility of change to be aware of both the drivers of this change but also the guiding principles which should act as a guide at a locality level. A number of factors were identified at the outset of this evaluation to provide this balance. In outline these included;
- Each Local authority will retain their individual identity and sovereignty
  - Collaboration is not limited to Darlington and Hartlepool
  - The authorities enter this process with a positive view of collaboration
  - Collaboration must deliver demonstrable additional benefits to working separately
- 3.2 The respective Corporate Management Teams from each organisation have been working with the external advisors and this report identifies the conclusions of this first stage of this work.
- 3.3 In summary this feasibility study has concluded the following:
- That there are no fundamental legal barriers to pursuing an option for strategic collaboration though some further research is required in respect of a number of statutory posts.
  - That collaboration, whilst it could be pursued in respect of the four options detailed below would best pursued in respect of options 2 and 3 below if it were to deliver savings of a significant level. For the purposes of this paper option 4 has been discounted



- That the potential scale of the savings, subject to a full business case and due diligence are potentially in the range of £5.4m to £8.4m
- That this range of savings can be delivered and largely protect front line services
- That underpinning issues such as the respective human resources policies, practices and agreements and underpinning ICT infrastructure ideally need to be aligned to ensure for effective progression.
- The work which has been undertaken to date is a feasibility study and not a detailed business case which fully explores the complexities and requirements. To pursue the options outlined in this paper would require investment in a full business case and this should be noted at the outset.

3.4 The ongoing issue of capacity, the availability of specialist skills and expertise is a factor that all smaller authorities are grappling with. The change in the financial situation does not decrease reliance on these, it merely exacerbates the impact of change and reducing budgets and does suggest that opportunities to address this whilst looking to maintain sovereignty and reduce reliance on external resources is an important consideration.

3.5 It is important to be clear that a change such as this is not a short term fix. It is unlikely, and indeed not feasible, to assume that real savings from any implementation of larger scale collaboration will be achievable until the 2013/14 budget. This should not discount it from forming a key part of any medium term strategy for the organisations, integrated as part of the medium term financial strategy, for addressing the budget deficit whilst aiming to protect front line services.

#### 4.0 CHALLENGES AND MANAGING RISK

4.1 There are a number of key challenges that need to be taken into account in determining any such collaboration model and these would need to be considered and planned for as part of any next stage should this be agreed. In summary and this is not intended to be an exhaustive list they include ;

4.2 **There is not a history of this type of strategic collaboration without central government mandate** - A number of authorities (for example, Oldham &



Rochdale; Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster; Salford and Manchester) are exploring strategic collaboration opportunities, historic models of major service integration have been either mandated, through LGR, or are relatively small scale (such as specific shared service ventures). The primary difference between past integration programmes and the Darlington / Hartlepool proposal is the importance of retaining political sovereignty and local priorities.

- 4.3 **Existing contractual commitments** - Currently, both authorities have existing contractual commitments in place with private suppliers and other public sector organisations for a variety of services. Before any full integration between services takes place, an agreement of a common strategy to converge these commitments will need to take place to fully realise the intended benefits.
- 4.4 **Cost of systems/process convergence** - In addition to redundancy, the authorities will need to evaluate the cost of merging core applications and IT infrastructure (e.g., e-mail, calendars, storage, etc). This will need to be costed and planned.
- 4.5 **Timescales**. It is important to note that net savings from integration activity are likely to take between 18-24 months, from now. In reality, it is unlikely that significant savings will start to be achieved prior to the financial year commencing April 2013. An informed decision making process and consultation will be key to implementation, and this will take time and will need to be factored as part of a detailed planning exercise from the outset.
- 4.6 **Planned projects that could influence the strategy** - In a number of areas, each authority is proposing to significantly reduce its operating costs and potentially reduce service levels. It will be important for any integration project to distinguish between existing service reduction initiatives and genuinely new cost containment and optimisation opportunities.
- 4.7 **Cost of redundancy** - As part of any business case development process should it be agreed to proceed to the next stage the cost of voluntary redundancy or compulsory redundancy will need to be calculated. This is expected to be a significant proportion of the annual savings.
- 4.8 **Capacity for change** – Any transformation of this nature is a long term commitment upon any authorities participating and given the priority to minimise service disruption, both organisations will need to continuously balance business as usual cost reduction initiatives, while also driving a programme of service integration.

## 5.0 SCALE OF OPPORTUNITY

- 5.1 It is important in considering the potential for strategic collaboration that this is assessed in the context of the policy and service drivers at a national and locality level, the medium term financial requirements of the authorities, the sovereignty and identity of the respective localities and ultimately the feasibility and practicality of implementing wholesale change in the light of a radically different operating model.
- 5.2 The evaluation study identifies that the potential for strategic collaboration is a real option and offers the potential to significantly reduce the cost base of the two local authorities (whether this collaboration was with each other or with other authorities) but it is not, nor was it ever intended to be, a fully established business case.

- 5.3 The proposals which are included in this report are potentially part of a longer term plan to enable any council involved in this to manage a radical programme of change for the future. The financial settlements which all local authorities are facing are bleak, the scale of the savings in the context of what has already been delivered are becoming increasingly difficult. The options provided in this report provide an opportunity to manage this and minimise the potential impact on front line services.
- 5.4 It is important to note that the work which has been undertaken to date has been in establishing the potential for collaboration, the extent to which this potential may deliver savings and, at the same time, provide protection to front line services by avoiding reductions in front line provision.
- 5.5 The initial feasibility study has identified that the potential scale of the opportunity (subject to detailed business cases and due diligence) is as follows;

Service Cluster	Combined Net Budget	% of Total Net Budget	Potential Cost Saving Range		Potential Saving as %	
			Min	Max	Min	Max
Strategic Management	3,572,448	2%	1,100,000	1,600,000	30.8%	44.8%
Children & Young People & Adult Services	81,123,000	52%	1,640,000	1,950,000	2.0%	2.4%
Corporate Services	22,881,693	15%	1,630,000	2,820,000	7.1%	12.3%
Culture & Leisure	8,148,010	5%	200,000	250,000	2.5%	3.1%
Environment	22,999,871	15%	780,000	1,560,000	3.4%	6.8%
Regeneration, Regulatory, Planning & Infrastructure	9,243,569	6%	30,000	180,000	0.3%	1.9%
Out of scope expenditure	8,529,455	5%				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>156,498,046</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,380,000</b>	<b>8,360,000</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>

- 5.6 It is important to note the following when considering the above figures :-
- The savings are only estimates with a range expressed.
  - The savings represent a total for both Councils the split between the two Councils as yet to be determined.
  - The savings assume 100% integration of services, lesser integration will reduce savings and the reduction in integration is unlikely to have a pro-rata reduction in savings.
  - The savings represent the amount achievable when fully implemented and do not include any costs for implementation and decommissioning costs.
  - Corporate Services savings at the level above are dependent on front line service collaboration if this is not the case, savings will reduce.
  - To deliver the level of savings, services may have to be standardised
- 5.7 In the context of the financial situation of the respective organisations it would be advisable to continue to pursue such efficiencies as part of an overall strategy within each organisation for managing the medium term financial strategy.

## **6.0 POLICY PERSPECTIVE**

### **6.1 Child and Adult Services**

- 6.1.1 Chid and Adult Services in both authorities are currently delivered through a largely commissioned approach for the delivery of a significant portion of service provision. This approach has been in response to a range of nationally driven policy directives. These service areas are also responsible for the single greatest area of spend in both authorities and have been under significant demographic and demand led pressure in recent years for which there has been no directly related increase in funding. It is an area under increasing pressure and one which is felt offers significant potential through collaboration in management and commissioning.
- 6.1.2 Large portions of services are currently commissioned from external organisations and given the emerging national policy framework this is unlikely to change. The requirements on all authorities are clearly defined through nationally driven frameworks and the extent to which authorities have significant flexibility on the delivery of services is lessened by these frameworks. The commissioning aspect of provision is expected to expand and given the changes implemented in each organisation over the last few years, in response to budget challenges, is an area where there is potential to strengthen management, commissioning and delivery through collaboration. Greater access, through collaboration, to the skills required to effectively commission services, with enhanced market presence through larger scale commissioning to an agreed framework offers significant benefits both in terms of management costs, capacity, access to specialist skills and reduced cost. It is vitally important in the consideration of this area that issues of risk are effectively considered and mitigated, particularly given the nature of the client group these services are designed to support.

### **6.2 Corporate Services**

- 6.2.1 The shape and function of corporate services, by their very nature is dependant upon the shape of any organisation, or organisations, which they are designed to support. On the basis of taking a phased approach, with evaluation and consideration of a decision to proceed further, other than opportunities which may be relevant as part of a tactical approach to change, it is not appropriate to consider opportunities for wide scale collaboration until earlier phases of implementation have been considered and the opportunities explored further.
- 6.2.2 Whilst Corporate Services do provide an opportunity for collaboration they are in the context of an overall strategic direction and clear understanding of the overall additional benefits that may be delivered. This should not dissuade the authorities concerned with considering opportunities as they present themselves including any which provide the authorities to deliver savings without any direct affect on the front line ( such as joint posts or jointly commissioned services which may deliver financial or capacity benefits). The “sovereignty” of Corporate Services, particularly considering any potential legal and financial implications of change in other areas, is key at the early stages of any potential collaboration to ensure that the interests of each authority are protected.

### **6.3 Culture and Leisure Services**

- 6.3.1 Cultural and Leisure services across the two authorities are largely delivered in house (although there are aspects of partnership working and commissioned services). Whilst the core nature of such services is largely common the detailed nature of the service provision (and their method of delivery) can vary significantly. There are a range of models available for their delivery (some with associated financial and resilience benefits attributable to them) but the scale and value of such models is largely dependant upon the models considered. There are a number of key models which include as a primary opportunity the creation of a trust and the external delivery of services. The trust model is one which a number of authorities have pursued on the basis that this provides both financial benefits and resilience (in conjunction with the potential for investment) but this is very dependant upon the current service and asset base and the preferred models of control and / or management for authorities participating. In the context of collaboration further exploration of the potential for such a model would be the most appropriate consideration at this stage.

#### 6.4 **Environmental Services**

- 6.4.1 The concept of “Place” and the current policy and service standards in operation for Environmental Services is a short term barrier to any detailed collaboration at an extensive level. The geographic barriers to delivering collaboration at an operational level mitigate against any significant savings for authority based partnership working at this stage. The policy and service drivers, in conjunction with varying delivery mechanisms, models and standards, require significant consideration of both the options available at an authority level and the extent to which radically different methods of delivery, including broader partnering and external delivery may offer. The likely scale of investment required to align, and collaborate, on provision is significant and a contrary influence on the scope for such collaboration in the short term.

#### 6.5 **Regeneration, Policy, Planning and Infrastructure**

- 6.5.1 The services encompassed in this group are directly related to the sense of place in any individual authority. The priority given to the regeneration of any area is directly related to the priorities of an area and council and is a reflection of the challenges that they face, which can be peculiar to that area, as are the solutions that are required. The policy drivers can be disparate and, as has been mentioned the required solutions “unique” to that area. The considerations to date have identified that to retain the current arrangements but to explore any potential smaller scale opportunities for collaboration provides a balance between priorities and deliverable opportunities

### 7.0 **OTHER AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 7.1 The exploration of the opportunities for collaboration has inherent in it a number of issues which require addressing at the outset. Such considerations do not impact on the ability to determine a business case for specific areas of activity but are important to address and understand to ensure that the best interests of the authority are protected and managed.
- 7.2 The areas that have been identified for consideration for any form of collaboration of this nature are as follows :

- Governance and accountability – In the context of any large scale collaboration it is important to ensure that the governance and accountability frameworks are established and clear from the outset. This includes the governance at a locality level and importantly the role of elected members and decision making.
- Finance – the options and opportunities in respect of the potential implementation of any business case including financial management, costs of transition and savings and the allocation and management of these in the best interest of the authority but equitable in terms of those involved in the collaboration.
- Legal and Human resources considerations – including statutory officer posts, governance in respect of the constitutional arrangements of those participating in any collaboration, staff terms and conditions, human resources policies and practices

## **8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The work to date has identified that there is significant potential from investigating in detail the options available through the preparation of full business cases as detailed elsewhere in the report. The scale of the opportunity is such, when allied with the need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and expertise to deliver on them, that to ensure there are resources available to deliver on them is critical if there is to be progress to support the MTFS for 2013/14.
- 8.2 The preparation of detailed business cases based on previous experience is likely to take 12 months and will involve the secondment of key staff to work on the project, the purchase of external support and advice to develop appropriate governance models and ways of working. There will be significant involvement of HR, finance and legal teams as well as employees across the authority.
- 8.3 Whilst the exact scope of the work to be undertaken will still need to be determined following Cabinet consideration of this report it is proposed that this work be funded in accordance with the following strategy. The initial feasibility work was funded through an application to the REIP (as outlined earlier in this report.) It has become clear that there is still an element of REIP funding available and that this will be made available to authorities on the Tees Valley for, amongst other things, work such as this in respect of the opportunities for innovation through collaboration. On this basis it is proposed that a bid for funding the development of the detailed business cases be submitted to access this funding to a maximum value of £75,000. Investigations and developments such as this are closely aligned to the requirements for REIP funding and will enable the authority to progress such investigations in a timely manner. Should such a bid not be successful the potential benefits from the collaboration identified in this report are significant and on this basis it would be proposed that the funding to support this come from Social Care Reform Grant. This would be established to cover potential costs associated with the purchase of advice and support and to cover temporary staffing costs for those employees seconded to the project.

## **9.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 The initial work that has been undertaken identifies that there is potential to provide significant savings to both authorities through the more detailed examination of the opportunities provided by closer collaboration and the development of full business cases.

- 9.2 Savings from greater collaboration are unlikely to manifest themselves as part of the MTFS until 2013/14 as the work required to determine and agree the detailed business cases is significant if all service, financial, legal and Human resources issues are to be adequately addressed.
- 9.3 This phased development and implementation should follow some basic principles that allow for both the benefits and opportunities of collaboration to be realised in the context of the potential, though not predetermined, opportunity that greater collaboration may bring. To achieve this the phasing of any implementation in conjunction with some basic design principles is key. It is proposed that the design (and subsequent evaluation) criteria for each phase should be as follows;
- Each Local authority will retain their individual identity and sovereignty with clear accountability
  - That phased solutions are capable of operating as part of separate or merged organisations and are scalable to allow for additional benefits from other participants
  - Collaboration must deliver demonstrable additional benefits to working separately
- 9.4 Given the information provided above the following is proposed :-
- That the authorities take a phased and staged approach to the consideration, and determination, of more detailed and robust business cases for collaboration across the range of services identified including issues in respect of governance, accountability, resourcing and the financial benefits from collaboration
  - the implementation and ongoing review of a roadmap for collaboration over the next 3 years
  - the prioritisation of the service areas identified commencing with detailed business case and benefits plan for Child and Adult services for consideration by Cabinet prior to progression
- 9.5 In respect of the detailed work to be progressed and for clarity in terms of the next stages
- (i) Child and Adult services to commence work immediately on producing a detailed business case for collaboration with Hartlepool and other Tees Valley Councils should other Councils wish to join the collaboration proposals.
  - (ii) Chief Executives Department. Work be undertaken to understand the implications of the strategic options in Child and Adults and any other collaboration options on services and costs of those areas in the Chief Executives Department.
  - (iii) Darlington are investigating the options available in respect of services which include environmental services, building services, highways in terms of efficiency and alternative models of delivery. This is considering internal options, partnering and the private sector. It is proposed that Hartlepool review the findings of this work before determining a way forward.
  - (iv) Initial investigations have been undertaken of the viability of Cultural Trusts, either for Hartlepool alone, in establishing a trust with other organisations or joining an already established trust. It is proposed that this work be

progressed to a conclusion for recommendations to be made to members on the options available.

- 9.6 In addition to the options outlined in the report above and in this conclusion there may also be other opportunities which are potentially smaller in scale or more tactical but which may provide benefit to the authority. On this basis it would be prudent to ensure that where these opportunities arise they are considered and developed for Cabinet consideration.

## 10 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 10.1 Cabinet are recommended to agree

- (i) The development of a detailed business case for collaboration in respect of Child and Adult services and to receive this for decision prior to any implementation
- (ii) That Hartlepool review the work being undertaken by Darlington in respect of the options available for environmental services, building services, highways in terms of efficiency and alternative models of delivery and receive a report back on options prior to the consideration of more detailed Business cases
- (iii) That a more detailed business case an option in respect of the development of a Cultural trust be progressed and reported to Cabinet for decision
- (iv) That an application be made for REIP legacy funding for the anticipated project costs and should this prove unsuccessful that this be funded from Social Care Reform Grant
- (v) That consideration be given and work undertaken in respect of the options and key considerations around potential governance models and this be considered as part of their development
- (vi) That officers undertake development work in respect of the financial, Human Resource and legal and technical issues underpinning Cabinet to be reported to Cabinet for consideration and decision prior to the potential implementation of any completed business case
- (vii) That Cabinet receive for consideration a more detailed work programme and plan (assuming agreement to the other recommendations in this report)
- (viii) That any further opportunities for any tactical collaboration outside of the scope identified in this report are developed for Cabinet consideration and approval

## 5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Evaluating the potential for Strategic Collaboration between Darlington & Hartlepool Borough Councils - Executive Summary

Collaborative Opportunities – Service Clusters

- Environmental Services
- Culture and Leisure Services
- Regeneration and Planning Services
- Corporate Services
- Child and Adult Services

## 6. CONTACT OFFICER

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# CABINET REPORT

7 November 2011



**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Subject:** DELIVERY OF SUPPORT TO MEMBERS AND TO THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE, NON EXECUTIVE AND SCRUTINY FUNCTIONS.

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## SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider options and potential changes to the delivery of support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny functions.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report sets out a number of options and potential changes in respect of the delivery of support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny functions. The options and changes reflect the budget deficits that the Council is continuing to face, the consequent reduced officer base to support the identified functions and the cessation or scaling down of a number of services and activities. The report reflects a reduction in the Council size to 33 Councillors, in 2012, as a result of Electoral review recommendations. The outcomes of a range of consultation research to inform the 2011 budget process are also recognised.

The report details a number of arrangements and practices which have been categorised into those areas which are considered appropriate for immediate review, those that could be agreed for implementation for Municipal Year 2012-13 as well as other areas that could be considered.

### 3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

The options and potential changes arising from the review impact upon Executive functions.

### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-Key



**5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Cabinet

**6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Cabinet is recommended to consider and determine their decisions in respect of the following NB for clarity in decision making the portfolio holder view in respect of a number of the recommendations has been incorporated for Cabinets consideration:

- (i) That Members' Seminars be deleted from the council diary and replaced with ad hoc briefing / training sessions, to be organized following identification of issues by Members/Officers and be held immediately in advance of meetings of full Council.
- (ii) That the introduction of Task and Finish Groups be monitored to ensure it is resourceable.
- (iii) Cabinet to give consideration to the constitution being reviewed annually and consideration to be given to the abolition of the Constitution Committee as a significant number of authorities review the constitution through the Monitoring officer, as indicated through the modular constitution.
  - Portfolio holder view  
That the constitution is reviewed (and any amendments therein made) once a year. That the constitution committee remains in place to make recommendations to the annual council.
- (iv) For Cabinet to identify preferred mechanism for managing the number of meetings which are held.
- (v) A 'freeze' to be introduced in respect of attendance at conferences where conference costs are incurred. In exceptional circumstances that attendance at conference is justified, the Member attending the Conference is required to feedback to all Members of the Council in either written or verbal form.
- (vi) That consideration be given to extending the functions of the Standards Committee to include monitoring attendance of Members at induction and training sessions.
- (vii) Consideration to be given to the potential of options outlined in 3.1.1 (v) in the main report and the reconfiguration of the committees identified, including the potential for their merging. This will also need consideration in terms of best practice, legal and constitutional matters.
  - Portfolio holder view
    - i. That the General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) be a stand alone committee with a fixed membership.
    - ii. That the remaining GP functions be rolled into the functions of the Audit Committee and the Contract Scrutiny Committee to form one expanded "Operations Committee", with exclusively backbench membership.

- (viii) Consideration be given to the composition of the General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) Committee being a fixed membership rather than being selected from a rota.
  - Portfolio holder view  
As above.
- (ix) consideration is given to the review of Members accommodation
- (x) Members to consider the options for the number and configuration of Scrutiny Forums and identify potential preferred options.
  - Portfolio holder view
    - i. That the number of Scrutiny forums be reduced from 6 to 4 through the merging of neighbourhood services and regeneration and planning and Health to be rolled back into adult services to reflect the council's new public health role.
    - ii. That the 2 SRA savings be allocated to scrutiny to assist its work.
- (xi) It is not recommended that all current committees be maintained with reduced membership with Cabinet to identify any preferred options to be considered.
- (xii) The mayor to consider the potential options for the size of the Cabinet and any associated savings
- (xiii) That consideration be given to improving access to Members' ICT and an ICT 'offer' be worked up that significantly reduces costs and then becomes a pre-requisite of holding office from 2012 onwards
- (xiv) That the practice of producing summary sheets for reports cease and appendices are not printed but available electronically.

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Subject:** DELIVERY OF SUPPORT TO MEMBERS AND TO THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE, NON EXECUTIVE AND SCRUTINY FUNCTIONS.

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider options and potential changes to the delivery of support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny functions.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report sets out a number of options and potential changes in respect of the delivery of support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny functions. The options and changes reflect the budget deficits that the Council is continuing to face, the consequent reduced officer base to support the identified functions and the cessation or scaling down of a number of services and activities. The report reflects a reduction in the Council size to 33 Councillors, in 2012, as a result of Electoral review recommendations. The outcomes of a range of consultation research to inform the 2011/12 budget process are also recognised.
- 2.2 The report is set out against a background of the agreed budget for 2011/12 and the deficits faced over the next 3 years. As Members are aware detailed analysis of the figures in the CSR demonstrates the actual DCLG cut is not evenly spread over this period and is actually “front loaded” over the first 2 years. The Business Transformation Programme and the contribution it can make to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been revisited in the light of the new financial position the authority faces. The MTFS indicates that even after reflecting the Business Transformation Programme, increasing the savings delivered by this programme (from £1.3m to £2.9M for 2011/12) and a range of other measures the Council still faces a budget deficit for 2012/13 of £6.6m and a cumulative figure of over £14m over the next 3 years. As part of the budget process for 2011/12 there has been a reduction in the staffing resource in respect of the democratic support functions (the reduction of one post in democratic services and the reallocation of current workloads), the reduction in Member Support resources and in administration teams in departments supporting the production of reports. There has been no commensurate reduction in the actual workload and essentially we have the same or increased requirements to support with fewer resources. This position, the further budget reductions that are required and the reduction in the number of

members means that this position requires review and will not be sustainable in the medium term.

- 2.3 A draft of this report has been offered for consideration to the political groups. The Portfolio Holder for Performance (as was) has attended a number of meetings in respect of this.
- 2.4 The report covers a number of areas of potential change and Cabinet are, as part of their consideration of the options and questions posed, asked to identify their preferred or proposed solutions.
- 2.5 The changes to the size of the Council will require a review of the Constitution and this process has commenced through a Constitution working group. The issues raised in this report, Cabinet considerations and any decisions of Cabinet will need to form part of these considerations.

### **3. AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to the delivery of support to Members, Council, Executive, non executive and Scrutiny functions. The outcomes of these considerations are set out in the report in terms of the following potential categories:-

- Immediate review – areas that are appropriate to review immediately due to the nature of the recommendations.
- To be agreed for implementation for Municipal Year 2012-13

The areas comprising each of the four categories are set out below:-

#### **3.1.1 Immediate Review**

##### **(i) Members' Seminars**

Members' Seminars have formed part of the briefing arrangements for the authority for some considerable period of time. They are scheduled monthly and are held twice for each seminar. Over the last year there have been a number of members seminars organised. For those Members who don't attend a seminar a summary of the content is sent to members for their information.

It is recognised that it is important to ensure that members are informed of new and developing areas and major programmes that the authority is either involved in or undertaking on its own behalf. However, statistics relating to attendance at Seminars indicate that the current mechanism does not appear to be working and attendance is generally very low. There is no direct and accountable saving in respect of this change but it will release some capacity from officers currently supporting or involved in these seminars. It is important to note that the Planning Code of Practice,

Licensing Policy calls for Member training and these regulatory areas of competency to be given priority.

**Recommendation** - That Members' Seminars be deleted from the council diary and replaced with ad hoc briefing / training sessions, to be organized following identification of issues by Members/Officers and be held immediately in advance of meetings of full council.

## **(ii) Constitution Review**

The Model Constitution acknowledged that Local authorities may wish to adopt procedural rules for when they wish to propose to Council that the constitution is changed. Following consideration of the legitimacy of the Constitution Working Group, it has been agreed recently that the operation of the Constitution Working Group no longer continue. The Constitution Committee will continue and have Task and Finish Groups arranged on an ad hoc basis to enable particular issues to be considered on a time-specific basis. These Task and Finish Groups would then report to the Committee for any further action required. A significant number of authorities review the constitution through the Monitoring Officer, as indicated through the Modular Constitution

It is noted that of those Authorities who have replied to a benchmarking survey, the majority review their Constitution annually. Annual review is an option to be considered. During the previous Municipal Year, there were 19 reports considered at Constitution Working Group and Constitution Committee meetings covering 5 topics agreed as part of the annual work programme for 2009/10 and an additional 8 items of Any Other Business also considered.

**Recommendation** – That the introduction of Task and Finish Groups be monitored to ensure it is resourceable. Cabinet to give consideration to the constitution being reviewed annually and consideration to be given to the abolition of the Constitution Committee as a significant number of authorities review the constitution through the Monitoring officer, as indicated through the modular constitution.

## **(iii) Scheduled Meetings**

At the start of each municipal year a meetings calendar is organised by the Democratic Services Team which covers all of the committees encompassed by the Constitution. As an example in 2008/09 Municipal Year 450 meetings were held of which 305 were scheduled. Almost 50% were, therefore, not scheduled meetings. Whilst it could be argued that the additional meetings are required, this is a high proportion of unplanned meetings which has a significant impact on planning of work, impact on the Democratic Services Team in terms of arrangements and servicing but also on other officers (particularly in respect of report writing and attendance at these meetings but

also on a slightly less significant scale in terms of printing costs). The number of unscheduled meetings varies across different categories of meetings. In terms of scrutiny, which tends to be the area with most additional meetings, there were 104 meetings serviced and 56 of those were additional meetings (a 117% increase in meetings over those scheduled).

NB – since May of this year there have been 222 meetings in total (of which 145 were scheduled and 77 unscheduled, an increase of 35%)

Whilst recognising that elected Members retain the right to agree as many meetings as they consider necessary, the number of unscheduled meetings has to be balanced by a recognition that there are less resources to support the democratic function. A reduction in the number of meetings overall may result in identifiable efficiencies.

**Recommendation** – To identify preferred mechanism for managing the number of meetings which are held.

#### **(iv) Attendance at Conferences**

If a Member is interested in attending a conference, approval is required from Mayor and Chief Executive. At a time when resources are tight, the value of attending conferences, where conference fees are involved, has to be questioned as it is with officers and the possibility of 'freezing' attendances has to be considered. In the exceptional event that a conference is approved, a Member attending a conference or seminar should be required to either give a five minute oral presentation or present a written report to Council to demonstrate the value of attendance at the Conference – this is procedure which was previously introduced by Council in 2005.

**Recommendation** – A 'freeze' to be introduced in respect of attendance at conferences where conference costs are incurred. In exceptional circumstances that attendance at conference is justified, the Member attending the Conference is required to feedback to all Members of the Council in either written or verbal form.

#### **(v) Standards Committee/ Contract Scrutiny Committee / General Purposes / Audit Committee**

The functions of the Standards Committee includes 'advising, training or arranging to train the mayor, councillors, co-opted members and governor representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct. It is proposed that consideration be given to extending the functions of the Committee to include monitoring attendance of Members.

Contract Scrutiny Committee has recently changed remit and function following consideration by Constitution Committee and Constitution Working group. The functions of this Committee now encompass a range of functions which are included in the constitution. Recognition needs to be given to the

work of the Committee. However, whilst not significant in terms of time and resource is, along with the range of other areas covered in this note, part of an overall picture. We are the only Council in the Tees Valley which has this Committee. If this is to be progressed it will need to be investigated in more detail, including legal advice.

In addition consideration could be given to the potential for a number of currently existing Committee arrangements to assess the extent to which their functions may be potentially combined to increase efficiency and provide a clear a focused role. Included in this could be the potential to combine the roles of Audit Committee and Contract Scrutiny Committee ie., Audit and Governance approach.

In terms of GP (Appeals and Staffing) Committee, a lot of time is spent organising these meetings and convening those meetings from a rota of Members it would be potentially beneficial to giving consideration to a fixed membership of this Committee and to meetings being scheduled monthly in the Democratic Services diary.

### **Recommendations**

- That consideration be given to extending the functions of the Standards Committee to include monitoring attendance of Members at induction and training sessions.
- Consideration to be given to the potential of options outlined above and the reconfiguration of the committees identified, including the potential for their merging and a change in remit. This will also need consideration in terms of best practice, legal and constitutional matters.
- Consideration be given to the composition of the General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) Committee being a fixed membership rather than being selected from a rota.

### **vi) Reports/Minutes/Decision Records for Members**

The reports, minutes and decision records that are provided to members are generally comprehensive and detailed and provide both information relating to the decision required and contextual information. There is an inherent resource requirement in reports of this nature and they are effective in providing sufficient information (in most cases) for members to make the decisions required – although the decisions are not always taken. An assessment suggests 29 full time equivalents (FTEs) supporting this process. One area which could easily be reduced relates to summary sheets which accompany executive reports. This system has been in place a number of years (pre 2002) and was initially intended for the benefit of those Members who did not receive actual reports – they received just the summary sheet to give them a flavour of what the report was about. There are, however, no Members who only receive the summary sheet and their use is therefore questionable.

**Recommendation** – That the practice of producing summary sheets for reports cease and that appendices are made available electronically.

### 3.1.2 To be agreed for implementation for Municipal Year 2012 - 13

#### (i) Scrutiny Forums

Under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, Authorities operating executive arrangements must appoint one or more overview and scrutiny committees. In assessing future overview and scrutiny arrangements consideration needs to be given to the number of members required to effectively fulfill the scrutiny function. There is no statutory requirement for every non executive member to be involved in overview and scrutiny meetings.

On the basis of the financing of the authority and the number of Members attending Scrutiny Forums, there is merit in considering reducing the number of scrutiny forums to coincide with the change in departmental organisation and reducing budgets overall of the Council. In addition, reports have been submitted to Members on the White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' which includes the health scrutiny and referral function where guidance is currently unclear on how this should be taken forward.

There are a number of options available in respect of scrutiny forums:

- To maintain the current 6 forums (including SCC)
- To realign them to the departments and merge i) Children's and Adult and Community Services and ii) Neighbourhood Services and Regeneration and Planning (thereby reducing the number to 4)
- As above and add incorporate Health scrutiny into either one of the above or SCC (reducing the number further to 3)
- Amalgamate functions of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum and Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum and maintain other 5 Forums (including Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee)
- As above and combine the Health and Adult Services forums to reflect the role of the local authority in public health
- Or other permutations from the above

There are a number of issues to consider in such a proposal. If the budget of the authority, as expected, is to reduce significantly then there should be a commensurate reduction in the scale of scrutiny to ensure there is an effective balance with the shape and size of the authority and the balance of resources is maintained in respect of delivery and scrutiny. To date through the current budget exercises there has been no direct impact on the scrutiny support function (although there has been a limited reallocation of tasks).

The detailed financial implications of this have not been fully quantified, but there would be a potential reduction required in SRA's for scrutiny chairs, as well as reductions in democratic services (already achieved) and scrutiny functions. NB it should be noted that such a reduction in staffing resources cannot be achieved without the cooperation of members.



**Recommendation** – members to consider the options for the number and configuration of Scrutiny Forums and identify potential preferred options.

## ii) Size of Committees

Any consideration of the options included here should be considered in conjunction with the considerations above in respect of the number of scrutiny forums (and potentially in respect of Cabinet as well).

In the light of the reduction of the number of elected members there is the option to consider a commensurate and proportionate reduction in the size of all committees, essentially reducing the membership by approximately one third across all committees. Essentially this would provide for a proportionate reduction in membership but would not necessarily result in any reduction in the number of meetings, staffing resources required to support and service these or SRA's.

**Recommendation**- it is not recommended that all current committees be maintained with reduced membership and Cabinet are requested to identify any preferred options to be considered.

## iii) Cabinet

The Constitution states that the Executive will consist of the Mayor and at least 2 but may not exceed 10 Councillors appointed to the Executive by the Mayor. The Mayor's first Cabinet comprised 6 Members. Cabinet currently consists of 9 elected members and this has been increased by 2 from the previous municipal year when it was 7. In the same way as consideration is being given to other areas of operation and whether they can be more efficient and effective and yet still deliver the required results then the make up and number of Cabinet members should be given consideration. The reduction of the size of the Cabinet (dependant on whether the Cabinet member is also a group leader) by 1 reduces the costs by £5.7K.

**Recommendation** - The mayor to consider the potential options for the size of the Cabinet and any associated savings

#### iv) Members ICT

At the meeting of the Constitution Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009 and again at the meeting on 11 June 2010, Members discussed issues associated with the provision of Members ICT NB this was also highlighted as part of the Telphony call in. Discussion took place regarding the increasing reliance of Members on ICT and current ICT contract arrangements.

Democratic Services Team have worked with Officers, press and resident representatives to encourage receipt of agendas and supporting documentation electronically. This has resulted in a number of efficiencies. The one area where progress has not been made over years relates to Members receiving papers electronically which is preventing additional efficiencies and changes of working practices including printing multiple copies of diary. There would also no longer be need for papers to be delivered by courier.

**Recommendation** – That consideration be given to improving access to Members' ICT and an ICT 'offer' be worked up that significantly reduces costs and then becomes a pre-requisite of holding office from 2012 onwards.

#### v) Accommodation

Members' accommodation is an area which could also be considered. There have been a number of changes over the last 4 – 5 years in respect of rationalising this accommodation and it would be appropriate to reconsider the current allocations, the use of these, improvements where appropriate and whether there are appropriate alternatives which could be considered. These could be considered in a similar manner to those changes which are occurring in the broader accommodation strategy and space use.

Recommendation – consideration is given to the review of Members accommodation

### 3.0 Conclusion

There are a wide range of possible changes to the delivery of support to Members in terms of executive and non executive functions. As a consequence, a number of arrangements and practices have been categorised into those areas appropriate for immediate review, those which require a phased approach, those that should be reviewed in 2012 in conjunction with the implementation of the Electoral Review recommendations as well as other areas that could be considered.

### 4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to consider and determine their decisions in respect of the following NB for clarity in decision making the portfolio holder

view in respect of a number of the recommendations has been incorporated for Cabinets consideration:

- (i) That Members' Seminars be deleted from the council diary and replaced with ad hoc briefing / training sessions, to be organized following identification of issues by Members/Officers and be held immediately in advance of meetings of full Council.
- (ii) That the introduction of Task and Finish Groups be monitored to ensure it is resourceable.
- (iii) Cabinet to give consideration to the constitution being reviewed annually and consideration to be given to the abolition of the Constitution Committee as a significant number of authorities review the constitution through the Monitoring officer, as indicated through the modular constitution.
  - Portfolio holder view  
That the constitution is reviewed (and any amendments therein made) once a year. That the constitution committee remains in place to make recommendations to the annual council.
- (iv) For Cabinet to identify preferred mechanism for managing the number of meetings which are held.
- (v) A 'freeze' to be introduced in respect of attendance at conferences where conference costs are incurred. . In exceptional circumstances that attendance at conference is justified, the Member attending the Conference is required to feedback to all Members of the Council in either written or verbal form.
- (vi) That consideration be given to extending the functions of the Standards Committee to include monitoring attendance of Members at induction and training sessions.
- (vii) Consideration to be given to the potential of options outlined in 3.1.1 (v) in the main report and the reconfiguration of the committees identified, including the potential for their merging. This will also need consideration in terms of best practice, legal and constitutional matters.
  - Portfolio holder view
    - i. That the General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) be a stand alone committee with a fixed membership.
    - ii. That the remaining GP functions be rolled into the functions of the Audit Committee and the Contract Scrutiny Committee to form one expanded "Operations Committee", with exclusively backbench membership.
- (viii) Consideration be given to the composition of the General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) Committee being a fixed membership rather than being selected from a rota.
  - Portfolio holder view  
As above.
- (ix) consideration is given to the review of Members accommodation
- (x) Members to consider the options for the number and configuration of Scrutiny Forums and identify potential preferred options.
  - Portfolio holder view

That the number of Scrutiny forums be reduced from 6 to 4 through the merging of neighbourhood services and regeneration and planning and Health to be rolled back into adult services to reflect the council's new public health role.

That the 2 SRA savings be allocated to scrutiny to assist its work.

- (xi) It is not recommended that all current committees be maintained with reduced membership with Cabinet to identify any preferred options to be considered.
- (xii) The mayor to consider the potential options for the size of the Cabinet and any associated savings
- (xiii) That consideration be given to improving access to Members' ICT and an ICT 'offer' be worked up that significantly reduces costs and then becomes a pre-requisite of holding office from 2012 onwards
- (xiv) That the practice of producing summary sheets for reports cease and appendices are made available electronically.

## **5.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations reflect the budget deficits that the Council is continuing to face, the consequent reduced officer base to support the identified functions and the cessation or scaling down of a number of services and activities. The report reflects a reduction in the Council size to 33 Councillors, in 2012, as a result of Electoral review recommendations. The outcomes of a range of consultation research to inform the 2011 budget process are also recognised.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers to this report

## **7.0 CONTACT OFFICER**

Andrew Atkin

# CABINET REPORT

7 November 2011



**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

**Subject:** COMMUNITY POOL 2011/2012 -  
BELLE VUE COMMUNITY SPORTS & YOUTH  
CENTRE

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## SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise and seek approval for the level of grant award to Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre from the Community Pool for the period October 2011 to March 2012.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The Community Pool budget for the 2011/2012 financial year has been set at £457,024. However, the roll forward of the balance of the 2010/2011 Community Pool budget was approved by Grants Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 making the total available to commit during the 2011/2012 financial year £516,034.
- 2.2 In rounds 1, 2 and 3 awards have been approved totalling £232,106. With the balance of the Directed Lettings allocation being added back to the budget and an under-spend on an award for 2010/2011 which has been deducted from the groups award for the current year, also added back, before Round 4 there was a balance of £286,232.32 to be committed.
- 2.3 At a meeting of the Grants Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 Members approved funding for 24 voluntary and community groups for the first half of the current financial year. As the Community Pool was being reviewed, Members took a cautious approach and therefore only agreed funding up until the end of September 2011. As the review has not yet concluded Officers are recommending approval of funding for the second half of the financial year for those groups who were awarded funding for the period April to September.

- 2.4 At a meeting of the Grants Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 a report was presented recommending approval of awards to 24 voluntary sector groups including Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre. All of the other applications were approved by Grants Committee but as two members of Grants Committee declared an interest in the Belle Vue application a decision could not be made and so approval for the award to Belle Vue is requested from Cabinet.
- 2.5 An application for funding is being presented from Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre. Officers are recommending that an award of £10,171.50 is approved as a contribution to the core costs of the group, including the salary costs of a Finance Officer and a Caretaker.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET**

- 3.1 A report was presented to the Grants Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 however, two members of Grants Committee declared an interest in the Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre so therefore the grant application could not be heard at that meeting and was therefore referred to Cabinet for their consideration.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

- 4.1 Non-key

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

- 5.1 Cabinet on 6 September 2010.

### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 Members of Cabinet are requested to approve:
1. Grant aid to Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre of £10,171.50 for the period October 2011 to March 2012 as recommended and detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.
  2. Any allocation of grant aid to groups known to be experiencing financial difficulties to be released in monthly/quarterly instalments, as appropriate, in order to safeguard the Council's investment and minimise risk.
  3. The balance of the Community Pool, £65,726.32 to be considered for allocation against bids at future meetings within the 2011/2012 financial year.

**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

**Subject:** COMMUNITY POOL 2011/2012  
BELLE VUE COMMUNITY SPORTS & YOUTH  
CENTRE

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

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**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Community Pool budget for the 2011/2012 financial year has been set at £457,024. However, the roll forward of the balance of the 2010/2011 Community Pool budget was approved by Grants Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 making the total available to commit during the 2011/2012 financial year £516,034.
- 2.2 In rounds 1, 2 and 3 awards have been approved totalling £232,106. With the balance of the Directed Lettings allocation being added back to the budget and an under-spend on an award for 2010/2011 which has been deducted from the groups award for the current year, also added back, before Round 4 there was a balance of £286,232.32 to be committed.
- 2.3 At a meeting of the Grants Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 Members approved funding for 24 voluntary and community groups for the first half of the current financial year. As the Community Pool was being reviewed, Members took a cautious approach and therefore only agreed funding up until the end of September 2011. As the review has not yet concluded Officers are recommending approval of funding for the second half of the financial year for those groups who were awarded funding for the period April to September.
- 2.4 At a meeting of the Grants Committee on 27th September 2011 Officers presented a report for Members consideration requesting approval for funding from the Community Pool for 24 voluntary sector groups including Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre. However, two members of the Committee declared an interest in the application from Belle Vue therefore it could not be heard by the Grants Committee and consequently it was referred to Cabinet for consideration.

### **3. APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM BELLE VUE SPORTS AND YOUTH CENTRE (BVCS&YC).**

- 3.1 In relation to the Community Pool criteria, BVCS&YC fall into category iv: *other organisations/groups who provide valuable services with measurable outcomes for the benefit of Hartlepool residents living in the most disadvantaged wards*. It is recognised that Category iv organisations do contribute to the overall community activity and do address some of themes of the Community Strategy.
- 3.2 BVCS&YC submitted an application for the 2011/2012 financial year for a contribution towards core costs including the salary costs of two key posts: a Finance Officer and a Caretaker. An award of £10,171.50 was approved for the first half of the financial year and Officers are recommending approval of an award of the same amount for the second half of the financial year.
- 3.3 During the 2011/2012 financial year BVCS&YC will facilitate training for 50 young people enabling them to obtain qualifications raising their aspirations resulting in them becoming more employable.
- 3.4 BVCS&YC will work with in excess of 500 young people each week, to reduce issues experienced by young people such as bullying, teenage pregnancy, crime and anti-social behaviour and obesity.
- 3.5 BVCS&YC will also provide sporting facilities for in excess of 1,000 members on a monthly basis.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The approval of the second half year grant to this organisation is within the funding envelope available within the Community Pool.
- 4.2 Officers are therefore recommending that a grant of £10,171.50 be approved for Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre for the period October 2011 to March 2012 as a contribution to the organisations core costs including a contribution to the salary costs of a Finance Officer and a Caretaker.

### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 Members of Cabinet are requested to approve:
1. Grant aid to Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre of £10,171.50 for the period October 2011 to March 2012 as recommended and detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.
  2. Any allocation of grant aid to groups known to be experiencing financial difficulties to be released in monthly/quarterly instalments, as appropriate, in order to safeguard the Council's investment and minimise risk.



3. The balance of the Community Pool, £65,726.32 to be considered for allocation against bids at future meetings within the 2011/2012 financial year.

**6. CONTACT OFFICER**

John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)

**7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Application to Community Pool 2011/2012: Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre
- Report to Cabinet Grants Committee 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011