

# NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



**Wednesday 9 November 2011**

**at 4.30 p.m.**

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

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

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

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Iris Ryder and 1 vacancy.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2011 (*to follow*)**
- 4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.

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

No items.

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

- 6.1 Neighbourhood Services: Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTF) 2012/13 to 2014/15 - Initial Consultation Proposals – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

## **7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **Private Sector Housing Schemes Investigation**

- 7.1 Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition:-
  - (a) Covering report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*
  - (b) Verbal evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition
- 7.2 Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council Health Improvement Team:-
  - (a) Covering report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*
  - (b) Presentation - *Assistant Director Health Improvement*

## **8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

- 8.1 The Executive's Forward Plan - *Scrutiny Support Officer*

## **9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- i) **Date of Next Meeting 18 January 2012, commencing at 4.30 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

9 November 2011



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES: MEDIUM TERM  
FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTF) 2012/13 TO 2014/15 -  
INITIAL CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

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

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity, as part of the consultation process in relation to the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTF) for 2012/13 to 2014/15, for the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum to consider initial proposals in relation to those service areas of the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Department's budget that fall within its remit.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 23 September 2011 it was agreed that, as in previous years, consideration of the budget proposals would be split to enable each standing Scrutiny Forum to look in detail at the service areas that fall within their remit. Any comments / observations to then be fed back to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 2 December 2011, to enable a formal response to be presented to Cabinet on 19 December 2011.
- 2.2 As a starting point for the 2012/13 budget process, Cabinet on the 10 October 2011 considered a detailed report in relation to the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTF) for 2012/13 to 2014/15 and approved details of the consultation process and timetable for consideration of the Executives proposals. In addition to this, it was also brought to the Cabinet's attention that, over and above dealing with core budget issues, the Local Authority will also have to deal with:
- A number of one-off strategic financial issues, around redundancy/early retirement costs, housing market renewal, land remediation costs and capital investment requirements; and

- The impact of Government Proposals for changing Business Rates and Council Tax funding arrangements; and
  - Changes to Grant regimes.
- 2.3 Details of Cabinet's initial views on the pressures identified were expressed at the Cabinet meeting of 10 October 2011 and are attached as **Appendix A**.
- 2.4 Overview and Scrutiny involvement in the consultation process commenced at the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee meeting on the 14 October 2011, at which consideration was given to the report received by Cabinet on the 10 October 2011. The Committee looked in detail at the report and discussed at length the one-off strategic financial issues facing the Council and the impact of potential changes to Business Rate and Council Tax funding arrangements. The Committee also approved the submission of the initial proposals contained within the report to the relevant Standing Scrutiny Forums for further detailed consideration.
- 2.5 In accordance with the wishes of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum is today being asked to look in detail at the initial proposals in relation to those service areas within the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department that fall within its remit. Details of these initial proposals are contained within the following appendices:-
- Appendix B** - Business Transformation (BT) Programme Targets;  
**Appendix C** - Budget Pressures;  
**Appendix D** - Budget Pressures which it is not recommended to fund;  
**Appendix E** - Reserves; and  
**Appendix F** - Grants.
- 2.5 To assist Members of this Scrutiny Forum in the consideration of the initial proposals, arrangements have been made for the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods to be in attendance and an invitation to this meeting has also been extended to the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) (attendance subject to availability).

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum: -
- a) as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2012/2013, consider the (BT) Programme Targets, pressures, reserves and grants relating to the neighbourhood services areas of service provision within the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department; and
  - b) formulates any comments and observations in relation to each to be presented by the Chair of this Scrutiny Forum to the meeting of the

Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 2 December 2011 to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 19 December 2011.

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

- (i) Report of the Corporate Management Team entitled 'Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 To 2014/2015' presented to Cabinet on 10 October 2011
- (ii) Minutes from Cabinet 10 October 2011
- (iii) Report of the Chief Finance Officer entitled 'Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 To 2014/2015 – Initial Consultation Proposals' presented to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 14 October 2011

## 111. **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/13 to 2014/15** *(Corporate Management Team)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report is to update the MTFS and to enable Cabinet to commence the budget process for 2012/13.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Chief Financial Officer indicated that previous budget reports had advised Cabinet that the Government had provided detailed Local Government Grant allocations for only two years (2011/12 and 2012/13). For the second half of the spending review period (2013/14 and 2014/15) the Government had only provided details of the headline national cuts in Local Government funding. The consultation document published in July 2011 outlining the Government's proposals to re-localise Business Rates confirmed the headline cuts in Local Government funding for 2013/14 and 2014/15. Details of the cuts in individual councils funding for these years would not be known until after the Government had completed a review of the current funding system for councils.

For planning purpose the MTFS assumed that in 2013/14 and 2014/15 Hartlepool's grant would decrease in line with the National Grant cuts. As indicated previously this was likely to be an optimistic assumption and actual grant cuts were anticipated to be higher than the national cuts, for two reasons. Firstly, experience of the grant cuts in 2011/12 and 2012/13 indicated that local funding cuts were likely to be higher than the national average. Secondly, an assumption that the Government's review of the current funding system would have an adverse impact on areas with greater dependency on Government Grants and a lower proportion of expenditure funded from Council Tax, such as Hartlepool.

At this stage insufficient information was available to assess the potential impact of these changes. The position would need to be reviewed when more information was provided by the Government. In the meantime the known grant cut for 2012/13 and existing planning assumptions for 2013/14 and 2014/15 meant the Council would need to make further budget cuts before the start of 2014/15 (i.e. by March 2014) and in February 2011 these were estimated to total £14.7m.

The Chief Financial Officer stated that the forecast budget deficits also reflected the following planning assumptions:

- Council Tax is increased by 2.5% per year for 2012/13 to 2014/15.
- The national public sector pay freeze applies to Local Government employees in 2011/12 and from 2012/13 cost of living pay awards do not exceed the provision included in the MTFS.
- Demographic and unavoidable cost pressures do not exceed the

headroom provision of £1m per year included in the MTFS.

- Non-pay inflation pressures over the period of the MTFS do not exceed 2.5% per year.

The review of the MTFS needed to address the key financial issues and risks affecting the Council and the linkages between the following areas;

- The core revenue budget
- Funding of redundancy/early retirement costs and other decommissioning costs of reducing the core revenue budget
- Housing Market Renewal Exit strategy
- Capital receipts and potential capital investment
- Review of Reserves and financial risks

These issues needed to be considered as an overall strategic framework for developing a coherent financial strategy and short and medium term plans to address these.

The Chief Financial Officer reminded Cabinet that the existing planning assumptions indicated that the Council needed to make further budget cuts of £14.7m before the start of 2014/15 (this is on top of the £10m cuts implemented for the current year). As a result of the Government's decision to front load grant cuts the Council needed to make £6.6m of these additional cuts before the start of 2012/13 and this would be very challenging. If these cuts are not made in 2012/13 this would mean that cuts of £9.5m needed to be made in 2013/14. This situation needs to be avoided as the higher level of cuts in 2013/14 would be extremely challenging to manage and would significantly increase the financial risk the Council needs to manage. The remainder of the report therefore assumed that the Council would address the annual budget deficits by implementing permanent reductions in the budget over the next three years. This position is summarised below:

	2012/13 £'M	2013/14 £'M	2014/15 £'M
Gross Cumulative Deficit	7.8	11.7	18.2
Indicative Annual Council Tax increases of 2.5%	(1.2)	(2.2)	(3.5)
Gross Cumulative Deficit net indicative Council Tax increases	6.6	9.5	14.7
Ongoing cuts implemented in previous years	0	(6.6)	(9.5)
Annual deficit	6.6	2.9	5.2

The Chief Financial Officer outlined the revised budget pressures that the council faced from 2012/12 to 2014/15. For 2012/13 pressures total £1.711m, as detailed in Appendix B to the report. This was more than the £1m headroom included in the 2012/13 budget forecasts for potential pressures and therefore increased the budget gap as it was recommended these were funded. A number of other potential pressures had been identified, as detailed in Appendix C to the report and it was currently recommended that these items should not be funded.

For 2012/13 the revised planning assumptions provide a net benefit of £0.544m, which partly offsets the additional pressures identified above.

When account was taken of the increased pressures and the benefits of the revised planning assumptions the revised deficit for 2012/13 is £6.767m, compared to the original forecast of £6.6m. Assuming the planned departmental budget cuts of £5.387m were achieved the Council still needed to bridge a gap for 2012/13 of £1.38m.

The revised deficits for 2013/14 and 2014/15 assume that each year's budget would be balanced on an annual basis by making permanent cuts in expenditure. The 2012/13 pressures and revised planning assumptions marginally increase the overall deficit which needed to be addressed before the start of 2014/15 from £14.7m to £15.083m. The impact on annual deficits is summarised below:

	Original Deficits £'m	Revised Deficits £'m
2012/13	6.600	6.767
2013/14	2.900	3.118
2014/15	5.200	5.198
Total	14.700	15.083

The Chief Financial Officer moved on to outlining the strategy that would be required to manage the budget position of the council. The MTFS assumed that the 2012/13 budget was balanced on a sustainable basis through a combination of departmental cuts and project savings. The Council would then still face significant deficits in 2013/14 and 2014/15. There would not be a single approach to addressing these deficits and a range of measures would be required. Some proposals would have much longer lead in times running over more than one financial year. Some decisions would need to be taken by Cabinet and Council outside the traditional budget cycle to ensure financial benefits could be achieved within the required timescales.

Addressing future deficits would require the Council to adopt a range of measures including reassessing priorities and new ways of working. Details of these issues would be the subject of separate reports as more detailed proposals and issues for consideration were worked up to enable Cabinet to determine their agreed way forward.

In addition to managing cuts in the General Fund revenue budget the Council would also need to manage the following strategic financial issues:

- Redundancy and early retirement costs;
- Housing Market Renewal costs;
- Land Remediation costs;
- Capital investment requirements;

Given the scale of the budget deficits over the next three years of £15.083m reductions in the size of staffing establishments and staff would be unavoidable. The Council would continue to seek to minimise compulsory redundancies wherever possible.



The Government had now recognised that the complete withdrawal of HMR funding has left a number of councils with a difficult position to manage. In response the Government have decided to provide some transitional funding to assist councils to manage the position. The Government have stated that this funding was only designed to achieve a 'managed exit' not to complete schemes. Transitional funding is subject to a regional bidding process and Hartlepool's bid has been included in the Tees Valley submission. Nationally the Government are providing £30m and it is understood that bids significantly exceed this amount. If the bid was not successful the Council's funding shortfall will increase by £2m.

Officers from the Council and the Environment Agency have recently completed investigation of land contamination at the former Leathers chemical site. This investigation indicates some remediation works are needed to make this site safe, although there is no risk to public health. It is estimated these works will cost £1m. These costs are not eligible for Government funding and will need to be funded from the Council's own resources.

In previous years the Council has used Prudential Borrowing to provide an annual budget for a 'Council Capital Projects'. The repayment costs of using Prudential Borrowing had then been included as a budget pressure. Given the size of the budget deficits over the next few years this approach is less appropriate and an alternative strategy was needed to avoid an ongoing budget pressure. It was therefore suggested that a one-off 'Council Capital Projects' budget of £1m is established on a contingency basis from one-off resources.

The one-off Strategic Financial issues were in addition to the General Fund budget deficit and had a total value of £14m, which consisted of one-off revenue and capital items as summarised below:

	Revenue Costs £'m	Capital Costs £'m	Total Costs £'m
Redundancy/ Early Retirements costs	7.5	0.0	7.5
Housing Market Renewal	0.0	4.5	4.5
Land Remediation costs	0.0	1.0	1.0
Capital Investment Requirements	0.0	1.0	1.0
Total	7.5	6.5	14.0

As detailed in the following table the estimated one-off costs exceed available resources by £4.47m. The forecasts in the table assumed that costs would be phased over the next three years. For financial planning purposes redundancy and early retirement costs were expected to follow the annual budget deficits, although in practice there will be some variation between years.

**Summary one-off commitments and proposed funding**

	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	Total £'000
<b><u>Expenditure Commitments</u></b>				
<u>Revenue</u>				
Redundancy and Early Retirement costs	3,300	1,500	2,700	7,500
<u>Capital</u>				
Housing Market Renewal	1,400	2,700	400	4,500
Land Remediation costs	1,000	0	0	1,000
Council Capital Fund	1,000	0	0	1,000
Total forecast expenditure commitments	6,700	4,200	3,100	14,000
<b><u>Less Available Funding</u></b>				
<u>Revenue</u>				
Review of reserves	(2,250)	(1,100)	(2,700)	(6,050)
2011/12 Forecast Outturn	(1,650)	(330)	0	(1,980)
	(3,900)	(1,430)	(2,700)	(8,030)
<u>Capital</u>				
Capital Receipts already achieved	(1,500)	0	0	(1,500)
Total available funding	(5,400)	(1,430)	(2,700)	(9,530)
Unfunded forecast expenditure commitments	1,300	2,770	400	4,470

At this stage bridging the estimated residual gap would be wholly reliant on achieving capital receipts over the next three years. Achieving the required capital receipts would be based on the asset sales identified in Appendix E to the report. These proposals should begin to generate capital receipts in the current year and phasing in future years should ensure further capital receipts are achieved to fund the annual commitments

The Chief Financial Officer indicated that a review of the reserves and risks had been undertaken as an integral part of the process. At the 31st March 2011 the Council had total reserves of £39.023m. This included reserves held in trust for schools which could not be spent by the Council and capital reserves earmarked to fund capital expenditure commitments re-phased into 2011/12. When account is taken of these amounts and an amount that needed to be included back into the reserves to reflect the Transitional Grant that was used to meet redundancy costs, the net reserves available for review was £25.379m. Appendix F to the report provided an explanation of the risk individual reserves.

The review of reserves was based on a detailed re-assessment of the risks individual reserves were originally earmarked for. This re-assessment of risk identified which reserves need to be maintained, those that could be scaled back and those that were no longer needed. In total the re-assessment of risks had identified £6.044m of reserves which could be released to partly fund the forecast one-off strategic costs.

The Council needed to retain reserves with a total value of £19.335m at 31st March 2011 to manage specific risks and to fund existing commitments. This included reserves allocated to manage Equal Pay/Equal Value claims, demand led risks relating to Looked After Children and older people, the Insurance Fund and the uncommitted General Fund Balance – which needed to be maintained to address emergency situations and would need to be repaid if used on a temporary basis.

The Chief Financial Officer reported that work is ongoing to estimate the first forecast outturns for the current year and details would be reported to a future Cabinet meeting. These initial outturns will be based on the financial position for the first six months of the financial year. At this stage a number of issues were beginning to emerge and initial outturns have been prepared. It is anticipated that these issues could provide a one-off net benefit in the current year of £1.980m, as detailed in Appendix G to the report.

The Chief Financial Officer highlighted the potential impact of Government proposals for changing Business Rates and Council Tax benefit funding arrangements. The existing MTFS forecasts take no account of these proposed changes as details had only recently been issued by the Government. These changes would have a fundamental impact on the system for funding local authorities and the financial positions of individual councils. Reports later on the agenda set out the significant implications of these two arrangements.

The Government introduced changes to a number of grant regimes from April 2011 covering the transfer of specific grants into the main Formula Grant and the introduction of the Early Intervention Grant, funded from existing grants. These arrangements were accompanied by reductions in the level of grants received by the Council. A separate report would be submitted to Cabinet detailing the draft Early Intervention Strategy and priority commissioning intentions. A second report would be submitted in November covering the outcome of consultation and restructures within services.

The Chief Financial Officer indicated that the report identified the key financial risks which would affect the Council. Internally these cover a range of issues and the report outlines proposals for managing and funding these risks, which cover:

- Implementing significant sustainable budget reductions in each of the next three years;
- Managing significant one-off costs, including redundancy/early retirement costs and HMR commitments;
- Continuing demand lead and demographic pressures.

External financial risks also arose from the Government's proposals to re-localise Business Rates and to transfer responsibility for Council Tax Benefits to councils. These proposals were fundamental changes in the

system for funding local authorities and would have a significant impact for 2013/14 and future years. The exact impact would not be known until the Government issue final proposals.

There were also potential external financial risks from other organisations seeking to maximise income, as part of their strategy for managing cuts in expenditure, which could pass costs on to councils. Non-financial risks were equally significant and would also need to be managed. These included the capacity of the organisation to manage the budget position over the next few years and the unavoidable budget reductions. This also includes capacity to set up new ways of working, such as trust and partnership working with other councils. Also, the capacity of the organisation to manage legislative changes, such as implementing a local Council Tax Benefit system and responding to other Government initiatives.

In concluding, the Chief Financial Officer stated that the financial challenges facing the public sector and councils were greater now than anything which had existed in the past 50 years. In recommending the initial questions to be put forward for consultation, the Chief Financial Officer also highlighted that government had announced in the past few days that there would be a Council Tax freeze for 2012/13. The grant for this was, however, only for one year, unlike the grant the government had given councils for the council tax freeze in 2010/11 which would be paid over the four years of the government. In light of this the question arose as to whether the authority took the grant for the council tax freeze or raised council tax by the 2.5% initially as projected in the MTFS. If the grant was taken, the Chief Financial Officer stressed that savings would need to be made in 2013/14 to replace the income not being generated from the forecast council tax rise.

Cabinet questioned what level of deficit gap would there be if the council tax increase was not approved and the grant taken. The Chief Financial Officer stated that the deficit gap would increase by a further £1m in 2013/14.

Cabinet commented that the capital receipts strategy would need to be developed and managed in the next few years to bring the additional income the authority needed. There were, however, risks to this, particularly in buying strategic land/property for future disposal. It may, however, be one way to bring additional income into the council.

The additional pressure on concessionary fares was also highlighted by Cabinet as a concern. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods commented that government had set the increase in this grant above inflation to cover the increasing fuel costs but the grant simply wasn't high enough to cover the costs which were increasing mainly due to out of town travel.

Cabinet was aware of the issues surrounding Equality Impact Assessments that had also been included in the report and questioned if these were all completed. The Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer all the assessments had been completed.

There was concern at some of the properties that were/would incur costs for the authority in the next financial year. The rent increase for the offices in Park Towers was seen as unsustainable when the council had property of its own that could be utilised instead. The Director commented that a contribution towards the rent at Park Towers had been achieved from Housing Hartlepool.

The Brierton Sports Centre was a major concern and it was suggested that a partner organisation could be brought on board as soon as possible. Officers stated that this and other options were already being explored.

Concern was also voiced at the pressure on the Healthy Eating Grant which was considered to be short sighted in light of the national campaigns against child and adult obesity. The Director commented that the duty and allocations on this were being passed back to the schools though it was up to them how they spent the money. The wider issue of service buy-back from the schools was a major issue that could have significant implications should certain services reach a 'tipping point' through schools not buying them back from the authority. Most schools did understand the value they received from council services and at times came back to the authority after testing private sector provision.

The Mayor indicated that the report contained proposals that were appropriate at this point in time. Further work would continue on developing the MTFs and any ideas that could come forward for saving money would be welcomed. Through the consultation, while timescales were tight, as many people and groups should be consulted as possible. The Council was at the point where it was going to cut significant sections of service to the public and make lots of staff redundant. The public doesn't always accept the excuse that these cuts are due to the governments decisions and we need to explain to them why we were cutting some services while protecting others; not everyone understands the things the Council did in their community and what it had to spend on them.

There was a view in Cabinet that whatever consultation was undertaken, the backlash would be against the Council. Some groups had no intention of doing anything other than criticising the council so it had to be questioned as to what value there actually was in the consultation.

In promoting the consultation it was suggested that utilising case studies may assist in giving more understandable information to the public in particular.

### **Decision**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the issues/questions set out below, be approved for consultation –
  - Do you support the proposals to fund the pressures detailed in Appendix B?

- Do you support the proposal not to fund the issues detailed in Appendix C?
  - Do you support the proposed strategy to partly fund one-off strategic costs of £14m detailed in paragraph 4.31 by earmarking funding of £9.6m from a combination of:
    - (i) Review of Reserves £6.050m;
    - (ii) Forecast 2011/12 Outturn £1.980m as detailed in Appendix G;
    - (iii) Capital Receipts already received £1.500m
  - Do you support the proposal to fund the residual one-off strategic costs of £4.47m from planned capital receipts to be achieved over the next three years as detailed in Appendix E?
  - Are there any proposals you wish Cabinet to include in the final budget report to Council in February 2012 on the use of the saving from the establishment of a temporary post of 'Acting Chief Executive' and associated backfilling arrangements (minimum net savings of £70,400 as detailed in paragraph 5.24)? For example should this funding be allocated towards the one-off costs referred to above?
  - Do you have any comments on the Governments proposal to re-localise Business Rates (paragraph 6.5)?
  - Do you have any comments on the Governments proposal to transfers responsibility for Council Tax Benefits to councils (paragraph 6.12)? Note detailed consultation on this issue and the design of a local Council Tax Benefit scheme will be undertaken if the Government implement this change and provide further details of how this will operate.
  - Should the Council look to increasing Council Tax by 2.5% as originally anticipated under the MTFS or take the government's one-year grant to maintain a council tax freeze accepting the consequent savings that would be required in 2013/14.
3. That the Corporate Management Team and Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer be authorised to proceed with formal redundancy consultations on the basis of the proposals set out in this report. The outcome of consultations to be incorporated into further reports presented to Cabinet;
  4. Cabinet notes that a without prejudice voluntary redundancy sweep will be undertaken to determine the level of employee interest and whether there is scope for this to help manage the position for 2012/13;
  5. That the development of a capital receipts disposal strategy be approved, including the purchase of land for resale within the next three years where there is a robust business case and this does not increase financial risk to the authority, based on the proposed land sales detailed in Appendix E to the report and officers be authorised to progress these sales, subject to the Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder approving individual land sales.

Dept	Project name (Title)	Target savings (£K)	Project scope (Description)	Final decision point * (Cabinet)
R&N	Neighbourhood / Facilities Management	£90,000	Review of existing Heads of Service within Neighbourhood Services Division	Cabinet
R&N	Waste Management	£90,000	Review of Waste Service Operations	Cabinet
R&N	Management Restructure and Service Review	£300,000	Management Restructure and Service Review of the Regeneration & Planning Division.	Cabinet
R&N	Private sector housing management	£95,000	Review Management arrangements	Cabinet
R&N	Review of Property Related Services	£130,000	Review of future service requirement / delivery and structures of the division including Carbon and Energy Management	Cabinet
R&N	Review of Public Protection	£65,000	Operational service review of Public Protection.	Cabinet
R&N	Business Transformation Programme - Assets	£340,000	BT Asset Management workstrand - property rationalisation and income from the Council's estate (including review of "centralisation" and potential link with Children's Services asset management)	Largely approved with individual "projects" going to CMT and Cabinet
R&N	Traffic and Transportation/ITU Service Review	£640,000	Review of staffing. Amalgamation of street lighting and Highways DSO's/Review of vehicle usage etc.	Cabinet
R&N	Project unallocated Department to identify	£58,000	Project unallocated Department to identify	Cabinet
R&N	Park Towers Rent Review	£20,000	Discussions with occupiers	Cabinet

**SCHEDULE OF 2012/13 BUDGET PRESSURES - Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department**

Budget Area	Value of Pressure £'000	Description of Pressure	Comment
Concessionary Fares	113	Above inflation increase in the cost of providing Concessionary Fares.	
Waste Collection DERV	25	Projected costs for 2012 /13 based on 189,000 litres @ £1.18/litre = £223,000. Budget for 2012 / 13 (current +2.5%)	
Street Cleansing DERV	33	on same basis as above	
Waste Disposal (other)	165	Increase in Landfill Tax and gate fee, which includes rateable value increase and legislative change of law increase.	
	336		



**SCHEDULE OF 2012/13 BUDGET PRESSURES WHICH IT IS RECOMMENDED ARE NOT FUNDED - Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department**

Budget Area	Value of Capital Pressure £'000	Value of Revenue Pressure £'000	Description of Pressure	Comment
Coast Protection	750	0	Coast Protection: £750k capital contribution may be needed from HBC towards Phase 2 of Seaton Carew Northern Management Unit Coast Protection Scheme.	To be paid from coast protection revenue budget to service prudential borrowing.
Housing Hartlepool Contribution toward Environmental Operatives in the North	0	70	Funding expires March 2012	Will impact on service delivery and neighbourhoods and will involve 3 operatives.
Housing Hartlepool Contribution toward Environmental Enforcement	0	77	Funding expires March 2012	Will impact on service delivery and neighbourhoods and will involve 3 operatives.
School Catering	0	146	Potential loss of healthy eating grant transferred to individual schools.	Without other sources of funding / income this service is in danger of not being provided by the Local Authority.
Waste Disposal (Green waste)	0	19	Projected tonnages of green waste 6,750 tonnes @ £21.00 = £141,750. Budget for 12 / 13 = £123,000 (current = 2.5%)	Route optimisation will help to towards funding this pressure.
	750	312		

**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL - RESERVE BALANCES AS AT 31 MARCH 2011**

RESERVES TO BE REVIEWED (NOT COMMITTED NOR HELD IN TRUST)

Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy £'000	Department	Reserve	Actual Balance 31/03/2011 £'000	Reason for/purpose of the Reserve	Total Value of Reserve to be released for Redundancy Costs £'000	Value of Reserve to be retained £'000	Reason for retention of reserve
£000			£000		£000	£000	
144	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Selective Licensing	144	Income generated from fees required to fund the scheme over a 5 year period.	0	144	Needed to fund running costs for the scheme over 5 years.
100	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Property Services and Facilities Management	100	Use of some of the surplus generated by Trading Accounts to cover the costs of potential remedial works and protect against future income volatility.	100	0	N/A
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Housing Reserve	96	Various housing expenditure including, selective licensing, IT costs and CADCAM.	0	96	Includes Selective Licensing which requires funding for staff for a further 4 years, Housing IT system upgrades and funding set aside to cover future CADCAM liabilities.
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Empty Homes	80	To implement / match fund a TV wide pilot to bring empty homes back into use.	0	80	Funding to deliver phase 1 in partnership with HH and match funding Towards bid for HCA funding previously approved by Members.
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Stranton Nursery	70	Expand and improve retail facilities as previously agreed by Members.	0	70	Work already underway.
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Baden Street	55	Balance required to fully implement phase 1 of scheme approved by Members.	0	55	Not possible to reduce scheme. To scale back the scheme at this stage would not have the desired effect on reducing antisocial behaviour and would not address the issue of inadequate management of privately rented housing stock.

Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy £'000	Department	Reserve	Actual Balance 31/03/2011 £'000	Reason for/purpose of the Reserve	Total Value of Reserve to be released for Redundancy Costs £'000	Value of Reserve to be retained £'000	Reason for retention of reserve
£000			£000		£000	£000	
50	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Cemetery & Crematoria	50	Planned use of additional income carried forward to partly fund new cremators as previously agreed by Members as part of funding strategy for this project.	0	50	Funding to reduce prudential borrowing costs.
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Winter Maintenance	50	Purchase of winter maintenance equipment.	0	50	Replace existing equipment.
46	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	ITU	46	Carry forward of grant set aside to support the running costs of the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU).	0	46	Needed to support staffing costs.
37	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Urban & Planning Policy	37	Relates to the part carry forward of funding identified to support major regeneration projects such as the Innovation and Skills Quarter (ISQ) Gateway and development of Church Square. The reserve is to support feasibility costs and contribute match fundi	0	37	Church Square capital refurbishment commitment.
35	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Social Housing New Build	35	Relates to the surplus generated by the New Social Housing which needs to be set aside to cover future maintenance costs in accordance with the approved business case for this project.	0	35	Contractual requirement of Housing Grant.
31	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Management	31	Carry forward of NDC (New Deal for Communities) funding to continue scheme.	4	27	£4k released to redundancy pot - remainder needed for salary costs.
27	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Economic Development	27	Carry forward of Income generated by Graffiti Project which is required to meet ongoing running costs associated with future income generation opportunities.	13	14	Scheme currently under review, funding required to fund ongoing staffing costs and exit costs.
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Building Maintenance Remedial	22	Traditionally all building projects require remedial work following their completion and this is a quarter of the figure spent last year.	0	22	Without this reserve there will be a pressure on the trading account.

Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy £'000	Department	Reserve	Actual Balance 31/03/2011 £'000	Reason for/purpose of the Reserve	Total Value of Reserve to be released for Redundancy Costs £'000	Value of Reserve to be retained £'000	Reason for retention of reserve
£000			£000		£000	£000	
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Greatham Community Centre	20	Remedial works necessary upon surrender of lease.	0	20	Complete.
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	H & S Training	20	Legislative requirements for operational staff to be trained to HSE set standards.	0	20	Legal requirement.
18	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Property Services and Facilities Management	18	Completion of various commitments under the Invest to Save programme.	0	18	Previously agreed to fund further invest to save projects.
16	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Speed Cameras	16	Relates to the funding ring fenced for the Tees Valley Camera Partnership.	0	16	Ring Fenced funding.
11	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Tree Works	11	Tree Works - completion of planned programme.	11	0	N/A
0	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Community Development Projects	10	With loss of WNF funding needed to support neighbourhood meetings.	0	10	Unavoidable costs which would have to be borne by revenue account.
7	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Housing	7	Committed for Housing Condition Survey/Strategic Housing Market Assessment.	0	7	Has to be carried out.
5	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Management	5	NDC (New Deal for Communities) Cohesion project - reserves allocated to complete project in 2011/12.	0	5	Needed to complete project in 11/12.
3	Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Dog Warden	3	Dog Warden - earmarked for funding of new bins which were not received by year end.	3	0	N/A
<b>529</b>			<b>952</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>821</b>	

**Schedule of Grants which transferred into Formula Grant**

	Specific grant or ABG	ABG and Specific Grants transferred into Formula Grant £'000
<b>Formula Grant</b>		
Concessionary Travel	Specific	582
Local Transport Services	Specific	118
Animal Health & Welfare		5
<b>Adjusted Formula Grant</b>		<b>705</b>

2011/12 Approved allocation £'000	Reduction in Funding £'000
350	0
102	16
4	1
<b>456</b>	<b>17</b>

2012/13 Proposed allocation approved by Council 10.02.11 £'000	Reduction in Funding £'000
350	0
95	7
4	0
<b>449</b>	<b>7</b>

## NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

9 November 2011



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO PRIVATE  
SECTOR HOUSING SCHEMES - EVIDENCE FROM  
THE AUTHORITY'S PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR  
HOUSING AND TRANSITION – COVERING  
REPORT

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition has been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Private Sector Housing Schemes'.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 27 July 2011, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry / Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation into 'Private Sector Housing Schemes'.
- 2.2 Following the recent Cabinet restructure the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition has been invited to this meeting to provide evidence to the Forum in relation to their views on 'Private Sector Housing Schemes'.
- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session with the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition, it is suggested that responses should be sought to the key questions below:-
- (a) What are your views on the Private Sector Housing Schemes operating in Hartlepool and how effective do you feel the current schemes are in improving homes in the private rented sector?

- (b) What are your views on the effectiveness of legislation in this area and do you see the levels of enforcement action undertaken in Hartlepool changing in the future?
- (c) What in your view are the key challenges facing the provision of private sector rented accommodation in Hartlepool and how do you envision these being addressed in the future?
- (d) Do you have any views as to how current or future services can be delivered more effectively and efficiently within the resources available in the current economic climate?
- (e) Do you have any other views / information which you feel maybe useful to Members in forming their recommendations?

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Transition in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.3.

**Contact Officer:-** Elaine Hind – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523647  
Email: elaine.hind@hartlepool.gov.uk

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer titled 'Scrutiny Investigation into 'Private Sector Housing Schemes' – Scoping Report,' presented at the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 July 2011.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

9 November 2011



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO PRIVATE  
SECTOR HOUSING SCHEMES – EVIDENCE FROM  
THE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT TEAM - COVERING  
REPORT

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

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Assistant Director of Health Improvement has been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the investigation into Private Sector Housing Schemes.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 June 2011, Members determined their work programme for the 2011/12 Municipal Year. The topic of Private Sector Housing Schemes was selected by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum as its topic for investigation. The Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry / Sources of Evidence for this Scrutiny investigation were approved by the Forum at its meeting on 27 July 2011.
- 2.2 Consequently, the Assistant Director of Health Improvement from Hartlepool Borough Council has agreed to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the links between poor housing standards and poor health, any work that may have been carried out in conjunction with the PCT in other areas in relation to this, and how work in this area could be funded.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum consider the evidence of the Assistant Director of Health Improvement



from Hartlepool Borough Council in attendance at this meeting and seek clarification on any relevant issues where required.

**Contact Officer:-** Elaine Hind – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department – Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council

Tel: 01429 523647

e-mail: elaine.hind@hartlepool.gov.uk

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

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

## NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

9 November 2011



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD PLAN

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum to consider whether any item within the Executive's Forward Plan should be considered by this Forum.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 One of the main duties of Scrutiny is to hold the Executive to account by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Executive's Forward Plan) and to decide whether value can be added to the decision by the Scrutiny process in advance of the decision being made.
- 2.2 This would not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.3 As you are aware, the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee has delegated powers to manage the work of Scrutiny, as it thinks fit, and if appropriate can exercise or delegate to individual Scrutiny Forums. Consequently, Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee monitors the Executive's Forward Plan and delegates decisions to individual Forums where it feels appropriate.
- 2.4 In addition to this, the key decisions contained within the Executive's Forward Plan (November 2011 – February 2012) relating to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum are shown below for Members consideration:-

### **DECISION REFERENCE: RN57/11 – DOG CONTROL ORDERS**

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

To seek approval to implement changes to the current series of Dog Control Orders in force across the Borough of Hartlepool.

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

The decision will be made by the Community Safety & Housing Portfolio Holder.

### **Ward(s) affected**

All wards throughout the borough of Hartlepool.

### **Timing of the decision**

The decision will be made by the Portfolio Holder in November 2011.

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

The review process will follow a similar course to that taken at the time the orders were introduced in 2008. Members of the public will be consulted in the following ways:

- Attendance at central neighbourhood forums, resident/community groups etc;
- Media coverage, including news articles and public notices in the Hartlepool Mail and the council's Hartbeat magazine;
- Information on the council's website.
- Letters/e-mails/etc.

Relevant bodies/organisations will also be consulted.

Council Members and the media will be consulted via executive reports.

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

Five Dog Control Orders were introduced in Hartlepool in 2008, which apply to many parts of the town, but essentially parks, open spaces and some of the beaches and foreshores. Specifically, the Orders are:

- The Fouling of Land by Dogs (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs on Leads (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs on Leads by Direction (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs Exclusion (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs (Specified Maximum) (Borough of Hartlepool) Order.

Since the introduction of the Orders, Hartlepool Borough Council has received a number of requests from council members and members of the public for amendments to be made to designated areas; Natural England has also requested that an order is placed on the SSSI area of North Sands, Headland.

The review will therefore seek to establish the following:

- areas of land where new orders are to placed;
- areas of land where existing orders will be removed;
- areas of land where existing orders will be replaced with a different order.

Following this review, the outcome and recommendations will be reported to a subsequent meeting of the Portfolio Holder. At this meeting, permission will be sought to introduce any changes, which shall then be made in accordance with statutory guidelines.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Denise Ogden, Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department,

Hartlepool Borough Council, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, TS24 8AY. Tel: 01429 523201 Email: [denise.ogden@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:denise.ogden@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Craig Thelwell, Waste & Environmental Services Manager, 1 Church St, Hartlepool, TS24 1DS. Tel: 01429 523370 Email: [craig.thelwell@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:craig.thelwell@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 61/11 SELECTION OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER FOR SITES IN SEATON CAREW**

**Nature of the decision**

Given the reduction in government regeneration funding and reduction in future opportunities to regenerate areas such as Seaton Carew, alternative ways to deliver investment need to be explored. One option is to utilise existing Council assets to generate funding to secure improvements which encourage tourism, support business investment and deliver community benefits.

Expressions of interest have therefore been sought from developers regarding Council owned sites in Seaton Carew. Developers have been asked to respond to a development brief with their initial proposals for the identified sites. It is envisaged that the development of these sites will enable the wider regeneration of Seaton Carew, releasing funding to deliver improvements to The Front, community facilities and contribute toward renewed sea defences. As part of the next phase of the procurement process shortlisted developers will be interviewed during June 2011 and asked to provide more detailed information to support their proposals. A report will be brought to Cabinet in August 2011 to seek endorsement for the appointment of a preferred development partner. The appointed partner would then work with the Council to develop, refine and deliver the proposals in accordance with an agreed masterplan for the area.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet

**Ward(s) affected**

Seaton Ward will be directly affected by the proposals.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

A number of consultation exercises have been carried out already in Seaton Carew in relation to the regeneration of the area. Further consultation is expected as part of the selection process.

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

Within the report, Cabinet will be requested to consider information submitted by the shortlisted developers, regarding their proposals for development on the sites identified. The developers will be asked for more detailed information regarding their proposals for both residential and commercial development, in line with the development brief. They will also be asked for a valuation of the identified sites and an estimated sum that will be available through the development of sites, in order to deliver the regeneration priorities in Seaton Carew. This information along with draft plans and layouts for the suggested sites will form the basis upon which Cabinet will be asked to confirm the selection of a development partner.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Damien Wilson, Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool. Telephone: 01429 523400. E Mail: [damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk).

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Damien Wilson, as above.

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN62/11 SEATON CAREW COASTAL STRATEGY NORTHERN MANAGEMENT UNIT PHASE 2****Nature of the decision**

To note:-

- the progress made on developing a detailed business case for the construction of a new coastal seawall from Station Lane Access Ramp down to the former Coach Park site (Northumbrian Water Headworks);
- the proposed funding package for the scheme involving Hartlepool Borough Council, the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water.

To approve:-

- a financial contribution to the funding package for the scheme from Hartlepool Borough Council.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Cabinet / Council.

**Ward(s) affected**

Coastal erosion and flooding are Borough wide issues, however the proposed works to be carried out are located in the Seaton Ward.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Public consultations and presentations, stakeholder meetings and press releases were all undertaken as part of the wider Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy. Consultation will be carried out through the formal Planning process.

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

A Detailed Project Appraisal Report for the proposed coastal works setting out the justification, funding package and business case for carrying out the works (an essential requirement to secure Government Grant from the Environment Agency).

**How to make representation**

Formal representations can be made in writing to:-

Formal representations can be made in writing to Alastair Smith, Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering Services), Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY, Tel: 01429 523802. [alastair.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Copies of the wider strategy documents are available at the Civic Centre, Bryan Hanson House and the Town Centre and Seaton Libraries. Further information can be obtained from Dennis Hancock. Principal Engineer (Environmental Issues), Hartlepool Borough Council, Bryan Hanson House, Lynn Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT. [dennis.hancock@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dennis.hancock@hartlepool.gov.uk) Tel No: 01429 523207.

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 68 / 11 - COMMUNITY COHESION FRAMEWORK****Nature of the decision**

The Portfolio Holder is asked to approve the adoption of a Community Cohesion Framework.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Housing

**Ward(s) affected**

The Community Cohesion Framework covers all Wards of the Town

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in December 2011

**Who will be consulted and how?**

The Draft Community Cohesion Framework will be presented to the following:

- SHP Executive
- Community Safety and Housing Portfolio
- Both the Statutory and Voluntary Organisations : including - HVDA, Salaam Centre, Hart Gables, Access Group, Places of Worship, Police Adult and Child Services, Fire Brigade, Health and Social Housing

Providers. After consultation on the Draft Framework the final document will be ratified by the relevant Portfolio Holder.

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

The issue of Community Cohesion has risen up the national political agenda in recent years. Equality and diversity are key concepts for all of us as they aim to ensure a fair society where everyone has the same opportunities, and their different needs and aspirations are recognised and respected. The framework will be a resource which keeps developing and whose elements are constantly renewed as our knowledge and understanding continues to develop in relation to building well integrated and cohesive communities.

There are already lots of strategies and plans, locally and nationally, which talk about how the Council and others will work to promote Community Cohesion. To strengthen the overall approach it will be essential that this framework and the issues involving community cohesion must be specifically addressed by drawing on the strategies already in place, such as Neighbourhood Management and Community Empowerment, SHP Crime and Disorder Strategy and Volunteering etc. The aim is that cohesion is not seen as an 'add on' to these existing strategies but as an integral part of everything that we do. Nationally it also will reflect the Coalition's recent initiatives around 'Big Society' and the Localism Bill.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Denise Ogden Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department, Hartlepool Borough Council, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, TS24 8AY. Tel: 01429523201 Email: [denise.ogden@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:denise.ogden@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Karen Oliver, Neighbourhood Management (North), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department, Hartlepool Borough Council, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool. TS24 7BT. Telephone 01429 523860. E-mail: [karen.oliver@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:karen.oliver@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 74/11 – FORMER LEATHERS CHEMICAL SITE****Nature of the decision**

To consider a report containing the outcome and recommendations of the Environment Agency following a Contaminated Land Special Site investigation into the former Leathers Chemicals site situated off Zinc Works Road and how this may impact on the Council.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Cabinet.

**Ward(s) affected**

The former Leathers Chemicals site is situated in the Seaton Ward.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Statutory consultees including land owner, leasee, land occupier, adjacent land owners and other public bodies will be consulted as part of the process following consideration of the report and these will be consulted in writing.

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

Following a site investigation including sampling and testing of soils, the Environment Agency will advise the Council of their recommendations following the Contaminated Land Special Site investigation into the former Leathers Chemicals Site and adjacent sand dunes. The Cabinet report will present these recommendations and discuss how the Council must then proceed in terms of the legislation (Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) and the potential options available.

**How to make representation**

Formal representations can be made to Alastair Smith (Assistant Director Transportation and Engineering), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department, Civic Centre, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523802 or e-mail [alastair.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be sought by contacting Stephen Telford (Senior Engineer – Environmental Issues) on 01429 523245 or [stephen.telford@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.telford@hartlepool.gov.uk).

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 78/11 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

**Nature of the decision**

Key decision

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Joint Portfolio Holders (The Mayor and Cllr Robbie Payne).

**Ward(s) affected**

All, it is a Council wide policy.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

The draft policy has been discussed and agreed by the Corporate Management Team Support Group.



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

There is an increasing requirement in tenders and pre-qualification questionnaires the Council is responding to, for the Council to confirm the existence of its environmental or sustainability policies. The draft sustainability policy has been produced to cover both requirements. The existence of this new policy does not alter the way the Council operates, it summarises the Council's long standing commitment to sustainable development.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Damien Wilson, Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning), 01429 523400, [damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Damien Wilson, Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning), 01429 523400, [damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN87/11 CONSULTATION ON  
DENOMINATIONAL HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND POST 16  
COLLEGE TRANSPORT**

**Nature of the decision**

The report describes why it is timely to amend current policy and has been drafted to provide a summary of the legal framework relating to home to school transport and explains how the local authority discharges its duties in meeting statutory obligations to provide transport for children and young people travelling to and from schools or colleges within Hartlepool Borough Council. Consultation is to be carried out on a revised Policy for Post 16 Transport travel support and the provision of Denominational Transport

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet.

**Ward(s) affected**

All wards.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in December 2011

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Consultation will take place with Schools, Colleges, Transport Champions Group, Neighbourhood Forums, Head Teachers, Colleagues in Child and Adult Services and other relevant agencies

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

**Post 16 Transport** - There is no statutory requirement to provide free transport for students who are beyond statutory school age, including

students with special educational needs. There is a statutory duty to ensure that students are not denied access to education because of a lack of transport. If a local authority identifies a need to provide transport for post 16 students, it does not have to be provided free of charge. Unlike the travel arrangements for children of statutory school age, the legislation does not specify what must be provided. The decision to determine what is necessary falls to the local authority. In determining what transport or support should be provided, local authorities should note the following points:

- that the education or training a student is undertaking must be full time;
- that the arrangements apply equally to students attending maintained schools and those attending other establishments, e.g. colleges; and
- students of sixth form age have access to transport and financial support for transport from other sources, including the school, college or other establishment they attend.

**Denominational Transport** - Section 509AD of the 1996 Act places a duty on local authorities in fulfilling their duties in relation to travel, to have regard to the wish of the parent for their child to attend a school on the grounds of the parent's religion or belief. The key phrase in Section 509AD is: "*A local authority in England must have regard, amongst other things ..... to the parents' religion or belief based on preference.*" Thus, arrangements for transport under Section 509AD are discretionary and need not be implemented or can be discontinued. There is a statutory duty to make travel arrangements for secondary school children from low income families who are attending the nearest suitable school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief, where they live more than 2 miles, but not more than 15 miles from that school.

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

Representations should be made to Paul Robson, Consultant Integrated Transport Unit Manager, Integrated Transport Unit, 1 Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7DS. Telephone: 01429 284163. Email: [Paul.robson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.robson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

#### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Paul Robson as above

### **DECISION REFERENCE: RN88/11 – IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES TO THE COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY GOVERNING THE TEES VALLEY CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME**

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

To update members on progress with implementing the approved changes to the Common Allocations Policy that governs the Tees Valley Choice based Lettings scheme.

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

The decision will be made by Cabinet

**Ward(s) affected**

All wards in Hartlepool will potentially be affected by the changes to this policy.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011, to ensure the revised policy can be implemented across all Tees Valley authorities by 1st April 2012.

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Consultation has been carried out throughout the Tees Valley by all partners to the Common Allocation Policy; this has included tenants, applicants, stakeholders and elected members. Various methods of consultation have been used including workshops, questionnaires, members' seminars and stakeholder events.

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

The following proposed amendments to the Tees Valley Choice Based Letting policy were presented to Cabinet at their meeting of 7th 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 with the exception of;

- The removal of 'cumulative need', members indicated that they would like to see this retained for applicants in bands 1 and 2.
- Restriction of band 1+ to main householder only in regeneration schemes, members proposed the existing policy be retained as a local variation applicable only for applicants from Hartlepool needing to be rehoused in Hartlepool. Members also agreed to delay implementation of these amendments until the outcome of the Governments proposals on social housing reform were known as further changes may be forthcoming and to reduce costs on any necessary IT amendments.

This report will update 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.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Damien Wilson, Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning) Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Department, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY. Tel: 01429 523400. Email: [damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Lynda Igoe, Principal Housing Advice Officer, Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Department, Park Towers, Park Road, Hartlepool. Tel.01429 284177. Email: [lynda.igoe@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:lynda.igoe@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 91/11 – PROPERTY SERVICES PROPOSED BUDGET SAVINGS**

**Nature of the decision**

Following conducting a review of property and support related services, recommendations will be made to Cabinet regarding future changes and proposed budget savings.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet

**Ward(s) affected**

Property Services relate to public buildings across most wards in the town although the service changes will have minimal impact on the community.

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Consultation will take place with staff, Human Resources and Trade Unions

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

In line with the Council's requirement to identify savings in the order of £5.3m for the coming financial year, the Resources Division is exploring ways in which it can achieve savings which will contribute towards this overall target.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Graham Frankland, Assistant Director (Resources), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523211. E Mail [graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Graham Frankland as above.

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 93/11 ADDITIONAL HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE WORKS 2011-12**

**Nature of the decision**

To agree additional highway maintenance works for 2011-12 funded by an under spend to the original Local Transport Plan Capital allocation

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder

**Ward(s) affected**

To be confirmed prior to final report but initially, Seaton, St Hilda's, Stranton and Dyke House

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in December 2011

**Who will be consulted and how?**

There will be no direct consultation. The works have been identified through the latest condition surveys that have identified three areas which are in immediate need of maintenance works to prevent costly reconstruction at a later date. The remaining schemes have been previously prioritised through the 5-year programme

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

The report will identify the individual schemes proposed for maintenance works together with an explanation for inclusion.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Mike Blair, Highways, Traffic and Transport Manager, 1 Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7DS. Telephone: 01429 523252. Email: [mike.blair@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:mike.blair@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Mike Blair as above.

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN94 /11 - REVIEW OF CONCESSIONARY FARE PAYMENTS TO BUS OPERATORS FOR 2012-2013**

**Nature of the decision**

To agree a revised payment structure for the provision of free concessionary travel for the over 60's and disabled for the 2012-2013 period with the bus operators.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet

**Timing of the decision**

The decision will be made in February 2012

**Who will be consulted and how?**

Consultation will take place with the bus operators and will be coordinated on a Tees Valley level in the first instance with a local agreement determined from this dialogue.

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

The statutory minimum travel concessions for all local residents aged 60 and over and disabled people to travel free of charge on registered off-peak local bus services throughout England (off-peak travel is from 9.30am to 11pm on weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays) Authorities are able to operate an enhanced scheme based on a judgement of local needs and circumstances. Such enhancements that have previously been approved by Cabinet include allowing travel at all times of the day, and from last year, the payment of a fixed fare of 30p prior to 9:30am. The Government has recognised that the concession imposes a significant funding burden on local authorities because they will be obliged to reimburse operators for journeys and pay costs for issuing new passes. Bus operators must be 'no better and no worse off' as a consequence of carrying eligible pass holders. The Government stated, when free national travel was introduced in 2008, that the net additional costs of new burdens placed on local authorities will be fully funded.

The cost to the Council for the national bus concession from the 1st April 2012 will be determined following negotiation with all bus operators operating services in Hartlepool.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Mike Blair, Highways, Traffic and Transport Manager, 1 Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7DS. Telephone: 01429 523252. Email: [mike.blair@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:mike.blair@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Mike Blair as above.

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 95/11 PROPOSED MIGRATION FROM THE TEES VALLEY FOOD HYGIENE AWARD SCHEME TO THE NATIONAL FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME****Nature of the decision**

To seek approval and support to implement changes which will result in the migration from the 'Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme' to the new national 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' (FHRS).

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by the Portfolio Holder for Adult & Public Health Services

**Ward(s) affected**

All wards in Hartlepool Borough

**Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011

**Who will be consulted and how?**

A report will be presented to the Portfolio Holder for Adult & Public Health Services in November 2011. This will provide information on the reasons behind the proposal to migrate from the local 'Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme' to the new national 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' (FHRS). The report will address the implications/benefits for the Council and members of the public.

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

In November 2010 the Food Standards Agency (FSA) launched the 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme', which is a FSA/local authority partnership initiative to help consumers choose where to eat out or shop for food. This scheme is supported by Central Government and it was developed with the aim that it would become the single national scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in time for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. Local Authorities with existing food hygiene rating schemes are being strongly encouraged to migrate to the national scheme. The FSA has acquired the software rights for the IT platform which we currently use to host our local data and do not intend to maintain the system. To minimise any burdens on local authorities the FSA has set up a support fund to ensure that set-up and ongoing costs associated with operating the new scheme are minimised.

**How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Damien Wilson, Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool. Telephone: 01429 523400. E Mail: [damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Sylvia Pinkney, Public Protection Manager, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool. Telephone: 01429 523315. E Mail: [sylvia.pinkney@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:sylvia.pinkney@hartlepool.gov.uk)

**DECISION REFERENCE: RN 97/11 – TRANSPORTATION AND ENGINEERING SERVICES PROPOSED BUDGET SAVINGS****Nature of the decision**

Following conducting a review of Transportation and Engineering services, recommendations will be made to Cabinet regarding future changes and proposed budget savings.

**Who will make the decision?**

The decision will be made by Cabinet

**Ward(s) affected**

Transportation and Engineering Services provide services across most wards in the town although the service changes will have minimal impact on the community.



### **Timing of the decision**

The decision is expected to be made in November 2011

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

Consultation will take place with staff, Human Resources and Trade Unions

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

In line with the Council's requirement to identify savings in the order of £5.3m for the coming financial year, the Resources Division is exploring ways in which it can achieve savings which will contribute towards this overall target.

### **How to make representation**

Representations should be made to Alastair Smith, Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering), Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523802. E Mail [alastair.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

Further information can be obtained from Alastair Smith as above.

- 2.5 A summary of all key decisions is attached as **APPENDIX A** to this report.
- 2.6 Copies of the Executive's Forward Plan will be available at the meeting and are also available on request from the Scrutiny Team (01429 523647) prior to the meeting.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum:-
- (a) considers the Executive's Forward Plan; and
  - (b) decides whether there are any items where value can be added to the decision by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum in advance of the decision being made.

**CONTACT OFFICER –** Elaine Hind – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523647  
Email: [elaine.hind@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.hind@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- (a) The Forward Plan – November 2011 – February 2012



## **TIMETABLE OF KEY DECISIONS**

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

### **1. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN NOVEMBER 2011**

CE 44/11 (page 6) Workforce Arrangements Cabinet  
CE45/11 (page 7) Strategy for Bridging the Budget Deficit 2012/13 – ICT, Revenues and Benefits Service Cabinet  
CE 48/11 (page 13) Corporate Strategy Service Review Cabinet  
CAS 95/11 (page 16) Hartlepool Community Pool Grants review Cabinet  
CAS 102/11 (page 20) Early Intervention Strategy: Service Restructure Cabinet  
CAS 103/11 (page 22) Special Educational Needs (SEN) Pathfinder Cabinet  
CAS 104/11 (page 24) Moving Forward Together: The Vision for Adult Social Care in Hartlepool Portfolio Holder/Cabinet  
CAS 106/11 (page 27) Priority Schools Building Programme Cabinet  
CAS 108/11 (page 30) Cost of Care for Older People's Care Homes Cabinet  
RN 13/09 (page 41) Disposal of Surplus Assets Cabinet / Portfolio Holder  
RN 53/11 (page 44) Sustainable Construction Strategy Portfolio Holders  
RN 57/11 (page 46) Dog Control Orders Portfolio Holder  
RN 58/11 (page 48) Allotments Portfolio Holder  
RN 60/11 (page 51) Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2011-2015 Cabinet  
RN 61/11 (page 53) Selection of Preferred Developer for sites in Seaton Carew Cabinet  
RN 62/11 (page 55) Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy Northern Management Unit Phase 2 Cabinet / Council  
RN 74/11 (page 63) Former Leathers Chemical Site Cabinet  
RN 77/11 (page 65) Wynyard Master Plan Cabinet  
RN 78/11 (page 67) Sustainability Policy Portfolio Holders  
RN 88/11 (page 70) Implementation of Changes to the Common Allocations Policy Governing the Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings Scheme Cabinet  
RN 89/11 (page 72) Former Brierton School Site Cabinet / Council  
RN 91/11 (page 76) Property Services Proposed Budget Savings Cabinet  
RN 95/11 (page 82) Proposed Migration from the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme to the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Portfolio Holder  
RN 97/11 (page 86) Transportation and Engineering Services Proposed Budget Savings Cabinet  
RN 98/11 (page 87) Acquisition of Assets Cabinet / Portfolio Holder / Council

### **2. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN DECEMBER 2011**

CE 47/11 (page 12) Customer and Support Services – Service Review Cabinet  
CE 49/11 (page 14) Financial and Transactional Shared Services – Business Transformation 2 Programme Savings Cabinet  
CAS 97/11 (page 17) Community Services Service reviews Cabinet  
CAS 101/11 (page 18) Review of Children's Social Care Commissioning and 2012/13 Savings Proposal Cabinet  
CAS 107/11 (page 29) Adult Social Care 2012/13 Savings Cabinet  
CAS 109/11 (page 32) Support Services Savings Cabinet  
CAS 110/11 (page 33) Home to School Transport Savings Cabinet  
CAS 111/11 (page 34) Education Services and Out of School Activities Savings Cabinet  
RN 29/10 (page 43) Hartlepool Domestic Violence Strategy Cabinet  
RN 68/11 (page 57) Community Cohesion Framework Portfolio Holder  
RN 69/11 (page 59) Flexible Support Fund Cabinet  
RN 70/11 (page 60) Innovation Fund Cabinet  
RN 71/11 (page 61) Families with Multiple Problems Cabinet  
RN 87/11 (page 68) Consultation on Denominational Home to School Transport and Post 16 College Transport Cabinet  
RN 92/11 (page 77) Asset Management Proposed Budget Savings Cabinet  
RN 93/11 (page 79) Additional Highway Maintenance Works 2011-12 Portfolio Holder

### **3. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN JANUARY 2012**

RN 90/11 (page 74) Mill House Site Development and Victoria Park Cabinet / Executive Committee

RN 96/11 (page 84) Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy and Compact Cabinet

### **4. DECISIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN FEBRUARY 2012**

CE 46/11 (page 9) Review of Community Involvement and Engagement (including LSP Review): Update on decisions taken 'in principle' Cabinet / Council

CAS 105/11 (page 26) Hartlepool School Admission Arrangements fir 2013/14 Portfolio Holder

RN 94/11 (page 80) Review of Concessionary Fare Payments to Bus Operators for 2012-2013