REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



28 September 2012

at 10.00 a.m.

in Committee Room A, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond, Cabinet Member responsible for Regeneration and Neighbourhoods will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

1.1 High Street Innovation Fund & Town Centre Renovation – Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Catcote Road/ Elwick Road Junction Improvement Scheme Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering)
- 2.2 Linden Grove Resident Only Parking Scheme Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering)
- 2.3 Quarterly Housing Report Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

3.1 Safer Hartlepool Partnership – Team Around the Household Review – Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO 28th September 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: HIGH STREET INNOVATION FUND & TOWN

CENTRE REGENERATION

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision test (i) and (ii) Forward Plan Reference No 17 /12.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval from the Portfolio Holder to allocate £20k from the High Street Innovation Fund towards the Indoor Market Project and £5k to improve the directional signage for town centre car parks. The report also seeks approval in principle to develop a project that will provide specialist markets and events in the town centre.
- The report provides details of Government guidance aimed at improving town centres called "Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our High Streets" and highlights a new website that has been launched called "100 Ways to Help the High Street". The report also outlines details of the "Town Team Partners" initiative and the "Future High Street X-Fund".

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Hartlepool has recently been highlighted as the fourth worst performing medium sized centre in the country, with a vacancy rate of 28.8%, (Local Data Company 'Too Many Shops') (See table 1 below). This is compared with an average vacancy rate of 14.6% in Great Britain. As previously reported the town centre is facing many challenges which are impacting upon its performance.

Town	Vacancy Rate %	12 Month Change
Dudley	32.4	3.0
Dartford	30.8	4.5
Altrincham	30.0	4.9
Hartlepool	28.8	0.9
Newport,	28.6	2.6

Monmouthshire		
Dewsbury	28.2	0.6
Blackbum	27.7	1.4
Oldham	27.4	3.5
Stockton-on-Tees	26.8	-0.6
Dover	26.4	2.9

Table 1. Worst Medium Centre Performers- Local Data Company "Too Many Shops"

- 3.2 As reported to the Portfolio Holder on the 18th May 2012, Hartlepool has been awarded £100k through the Government's High Street Innovation Fund which aims to address empty properties on the high street.
- 3.3 The Economic Regeneration Forum has established a working group to develop projects for the High Street Innovation Fund. The working group consists of private sector representatives, the North East Chamber of Commerce and Cleveland College of Art and Design.
- 3.4 The High Street Innovation Fund was launched in response to the Portas Review which was commissioned by the Government to identify what the Government, Local Authorities, businesses and communities can do to develop prosperous high streets that are relevant to the modem consumer and will allow businesses and independent retailers to thrive.
- 3.5 The Government's response to the Portas Review sets out a challenge for partners to "re-imagine their town centres and high streets, ensuring they offer something new and different that neither out-of-town shopping centres nor the internet can match-an experience that goes beyond retail, with creative use of public spaces and a vibrant evening economy". Communities are encouraged to develop innovative ideas that address local issues.
- 3.6 The Economic Regeneration Forum Working Group agree that it is important for Hartlepool Town Centre to offer something different such as being known as a destination that develops independent trade. The working group is currently developing a number of projects for the High Street Innovation Fund.

4. INDOOR MARKET PROJECT

- 4.1 The first project that the working group have developed involves using six vacant market stalls within the Indoor Market at Middleton Grange Shopping Centre to provide the opportunity for individuals to start retail businesses with assistance from a package of dedicated support.
- 4.2 The working group identified that local producers often need an opportunity to trade and try their ideas before committing to a career in retail and moving onto larger more expensive premises. A gap in the business support available for retail businesses has also been identified. The project has been developed to promote the creation of successful retail businesses that will

- stay in the Market Hall beyond the end of the project and could eventually move onto other larger units within the town centre.
- 4.3 The support will consist of a pre-trading retail training programme covering specific aspects of retailing such as customer care, how to sell and online training. It is important that the support provides people with the skills to assist them in establishing successful, sustainable businesses.
- 4.4 The project will include funds for a marketing campaign which will use a range of measures to encourage people to use and support the indoor market. The marketing will include adverts in the Hartlepool Mail and Hartbeat in addition to more targeted measures. Funding has also been identified for a project evaluation which will chart the retailers progress and experiences from the pre-start phase so that the lessons learnt can be shared with other potential retailers. One way that this could be achieved could be through a diary or video diary.
- 4.5 It is proposed to start the project in October so that the businesses can be established before the busy Christmas trading period. Staff at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre will identify eligible people to support. It is important that the beneficiaries of the project will be committed to retailing to ensure the sustainability of the project. Every effort will be made to ensure that the new businesses complement the Market Hall offer and do not directly compete with existing businesses.
- 4.6 The project builds on the lessons learnt from the successful Hartlepool Indoor Market initiative together with the subsequent Enterprise Arcade project run by Hartlepool's Economic Regeneration Team in conjunction with Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton Councils.
- 4.7 PPG the owners of Middleton Grange Shopping Centre are supporting the project and have agreed to waive the rent, service charges and insurance charges for the stalls for the six month lifetime of the project. This equates to a £50k match funding contribution from PPG. The Portfolio Holder is requested to approve £20k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the project.

5. TOWN CENTRE SIGNAGE

- 5.1 The Economic Regeneration Forum Working Group have identified that there is a lack of signage directing visitors to the town centre car parks. This is particularly an issue when arriving from the north of the town. A plan to improve the directional and destination signage has therefore been developed by the Highways, Traffic and Transport Team. The plan has been designed to comply with the Council's de-dutter policy, therefore existing signage will be improved where appropriate. The Portfolio Holder is requested to approve £5k from the High Street Innovation Fund for additional town centre signage.
- 5.2 The potential for providing digital signage within the town centre is also being explored which could involve the installation a large format display screen

that could communicate with visitors and residents in an area of high-footfall. The screen would be used to promote the retail benefits and experiences of the town centre whilst highlighting other added-value activities elsewhere in the town. The project would seek to be self-financing in the medium-term moving into a position of profitability in the longer-term.

5.3 The working group have raised concerns about the lack of a sense of arrival in the town centre, which has been previously been highlighted through the Central Area Investment Framework. The sense of arrival and quality of environment in the town centre is difficult to address without significant investment. The working group is therefore looking at the feasibility of improving the main routes into the town centre through small scale improvements such as banners on lamp columns.

6. RE-IMAGINING URBAN SPACES TO HELP REVITALISE OUR HIGH STREETS

- 6.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government has released guidance for anyone involved in improving their high street and town centre called "Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our High Streets". The guidance has been published in response to the Portas Review and the recognition that public spaces are important elements of successful and vibrant town centres.
- 6.2 The guidance states that the potential of urban spaces is often overlooked even though good quality public spaces can be used to help revitalise town centres, boost economic performance and provide a venue and a reason for people to visit. The Government guidance encourages people to be creative about how they design and use the spaces in their town centres and high streets in order to add identity to a place and help make the high street a destination of choice.
- 6.3 The guidance highlights the opportunity for public spaces to be used for popup stalls, stands and markets to add interest to the street scene and to encourage people to move along from one part of the town centre to another or a less frequented place. The benefits of festivals and events within the public spaces to increase footfall are also highlighted.
- The guidance encourages towns to reduce and rationalise urban clutter such as signs, bollards and advertising boards to help improve the quality of the environment. The guidance states that security and safety features can often be built into designs.
- 6.5 The cost of maintenance of urban spaces is mentioned as a key factor in limiting the creative use and design of public spaces. The guidance recommends that one mechanism to assist with maintenance costs is the creation of a "business improvement district" where businesses in a defined geographical area vote to pay additional business rates to fund improvements in their area.

6.6 The quality of the walking environment is highlighted as a factor in people's shopping choices and it can be worth investing to ensure an obvious, accessible and enticing walkway from public transport hubs and the town centre.

7. MARKETS AND EVENTS

- 7.1 The Economic Regeneration Forum Working Group is investigating the feasibility of holding specialist markets and events in the town centre funded through the High Street Innovation Fund. The idea is to attract additional people into the town centre and help diversify the town centre offer.
- 7.2 There is a growing selection of niche and specialist markets such as farmers markets, craft, food and continental markets which can improve the retail offer, attract a wider catchment of consumers and add vibrancy to the town centre.
- 7.3 Markets can supplement the variety of goods and services available, provide enterprise opportunities and attract visitors who may not normally be attracted to the town centre. Many markets have high footfall and high growth rates. The aim is to supplement the town centre offer and not compete with the existing outdoor market. The markets could attract other events into the town centre and create some momentum.
- 7.4 The group agreed that a markets and events project should be developed within Church Square as this was recognised as one of the only suitable public spaces within the town centre.
- 7.5 Holding markets and events within Church Square offers the opportunity to attract footfall, support existing local businesses and increase interest in the growing number of vacant properties in the area. The location also offers the opportunity to work with Cleveland College of Art and Design, Hartlepool College of Further Education and Hartlepool Art Gallery.
- 7.6 Different markets and events could be held once a month which would support independent traders and could provide the opportunity for people to try retailing.
- 7.7 The rationale behind the Church Square project is that increasing footfall, momentum and interest in the town centre will make it easier to attract retailers. Improving the town centre will be an incremental process. An evaluation will be completed as part of the project to understand the impact that the markets and events have in improving the town centre.
- 7.8 A more detailed report will be presented to the Portfolio Holder following the completion of detailed feasibility work.

8. 100 WAYS TO HELP THE HIGH STREET

- A new website "100 Ways to Help the High Street" http://www.100ways.org.uk has been launched by the Association of Town Centre Managers with support from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills, Local Government Association and European Regional Development Fund. The website is a toolkit which lists a number schemes and case studies aimed at revitalising town centres.
- 8.2 The website covers topics ranging from enhancing the streetscape, creating a safe and secure high street, consumer marketing, animation and events, attracting investment, the night time economy and getting the business mix right.
- 8.3 Projects listed within the toolkit include reversing the decline of existing markets, the attraction of new markets to attract choice and vibrancy to the high street, using evidence to promote the town centre to potential investors, the creation of pop-up shops, provision of free wi-fi, the development of Business Improvement Districts, building a town centre website to expand communication, creating strong first impressions and a strong image, streetcare audits, design guides and maximizing gateway opportunities.
- 8.4 A range of other projects of various sizes, costs and complexity are also highlighted. Encouraging partnership working with retailers and landlords and determining local solutions is a key theme throughout the website.

9. RETAIL REVIVAL STRATEGY

9.1 The Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder approved the preparation of a brief for a Retail Revival Strategy on the 24th August 2012. The brief is currently being prepared and costs are being sought for the specialist elements of work. A detailed report will be presented to the Portfolio Holder in October.

10. FUTURE HIGH STREET X-FUND

10.1 Details of the £1m Future High Street X-Fund have been announced by the Government. The fund has been launched as part of the Government's response to the Portas review to reward those areas delivering the most effective and innovative plans to improve their town centres. The £1m prize fund will reward the location or locations that have undertaken the most outstanding transformations. One or more winning locations will be picked out by an advisory panel of independent judges. The deadline for applications is the 6th December 2012. Schemes could address a variety of issues, including (but not limited to) empty shops, parking, accessibility, public realm, and the evening economy. The assessment will be based upon the innovation and the effectiveness of the projects. Measures could include

increased footfall or turnover, improved skills or employment opportunities, or putting empty spaces back into use.

11. TOWN TEAM PARTNERS

11.1 Over 400 towns applied to be Portas Pilots and 27 were selected. The unsuccessful towns including Hartlepool have been invited by the Government to become Town Team Partners. Town Team Partners need to have the commitment of their MP, which Hartlepool has, in order to access a package of support. In return they will be supported by the Association of Town Centre Management who will run information events, provide an advice line and offer a network of advisors to help improve local towns. To support local activity, the Government will provide £10,000 to help put elements of their plan into action. The Portfolio Holder is therefore requested to approve the development of a Town Team Partner Programme.

12. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RISK

- Funding for the Indoor Market project (20k) and the town centre signage project (£5k) has been identified from the £100k High Street Innovation Fund that was awarded to the Council to address empty properties on the high street. The indoor market project has been developed with support and £50k match funding from PPG, the owners of Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.
- There is a risk that the individuals supported through the indoor market project are not able to develop a sustainable business following the end of the project, however this risk will be minimised by the package of comprehensive support and the identification of appropriate individuals by staff from Hartlepool Enterprise Centre.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

14. **SECTION 17**

14.1 Reducing the number of vacant shops within the town centre will reduce the opportunity for vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 The Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder is requested to:
 - Note the contents of the report.

- Approve £20k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the Indoor Market project.
- Approve £5k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the town centre signage project.
- Approve in principle the development of a Marketing and Events project for the Town Centre.
- Approve the development of a Town Team Partner Programme.
- Accept the High Street Innovation Fund grant of £100k from Central Government.

16. APPENDICES

- ACTM 100 Ways to Help the High Street http://www.100ways.org.uk
- Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our high streetshttp://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/urbanspace
- Future High Street X-Fund <u>http://www.communities.gov.uk/regeneration/economicgrowth/highstreet</u> sportas/x-fund/

17. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO 28th September 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering)

Subject: CATCOTE ROAD/ ELWICK ROAD JUNCTION

IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for the junction improvement scheme at Catcote Road/ Elwick Road, as shown in **Appendix 1**.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As a result of under spends on previous schemes from the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements project, a number of other proposals are being developed, to ensure that the original allocation is spent within Hartlepool.
- 3.2 One such scheme is improvements to the Catcote Rd/ Elwick Rd junction, used by Stagecoach Service 3, which can experience delays in both directions that the service runs (northbound on Catcote Rd, and westbound on Elwick Rd).

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The scheme involves the widening of Catcote Road on its northbound approach to create a right turn lane. This will prevent traffic travelling straight ahead from being held up by vehicles waiting to turn right, giving much improved traffic flows through the junction.
- 4.2 The junction will also be widened on the Elwick Road approach, which again will reduce delays experienced as a result of right turning traffic.
- 4.3 A pedestrian island will be installed on the north side of the junction, to improve road safety and make crossing easier

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation has taken place with Ward councillors and local residents, and no concerns have been raised by any of the consultees.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The TVBNI project is funded jointly between the Department for Transport and Hartlepool Borough Council's Local Transport Plan, with a 65%/35% split respectively. The scheme has been approved in principle by the TVBNI Project Board, subject to Portfolio approval, and is estimated to cost around £95,000.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

8. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 There are no Section 17 Implications

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the junction improvement scheme be approved.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To improve traffic flows through the junction, and increase bus journey time efficiency.

11. APPENDICIES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ONLINE

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

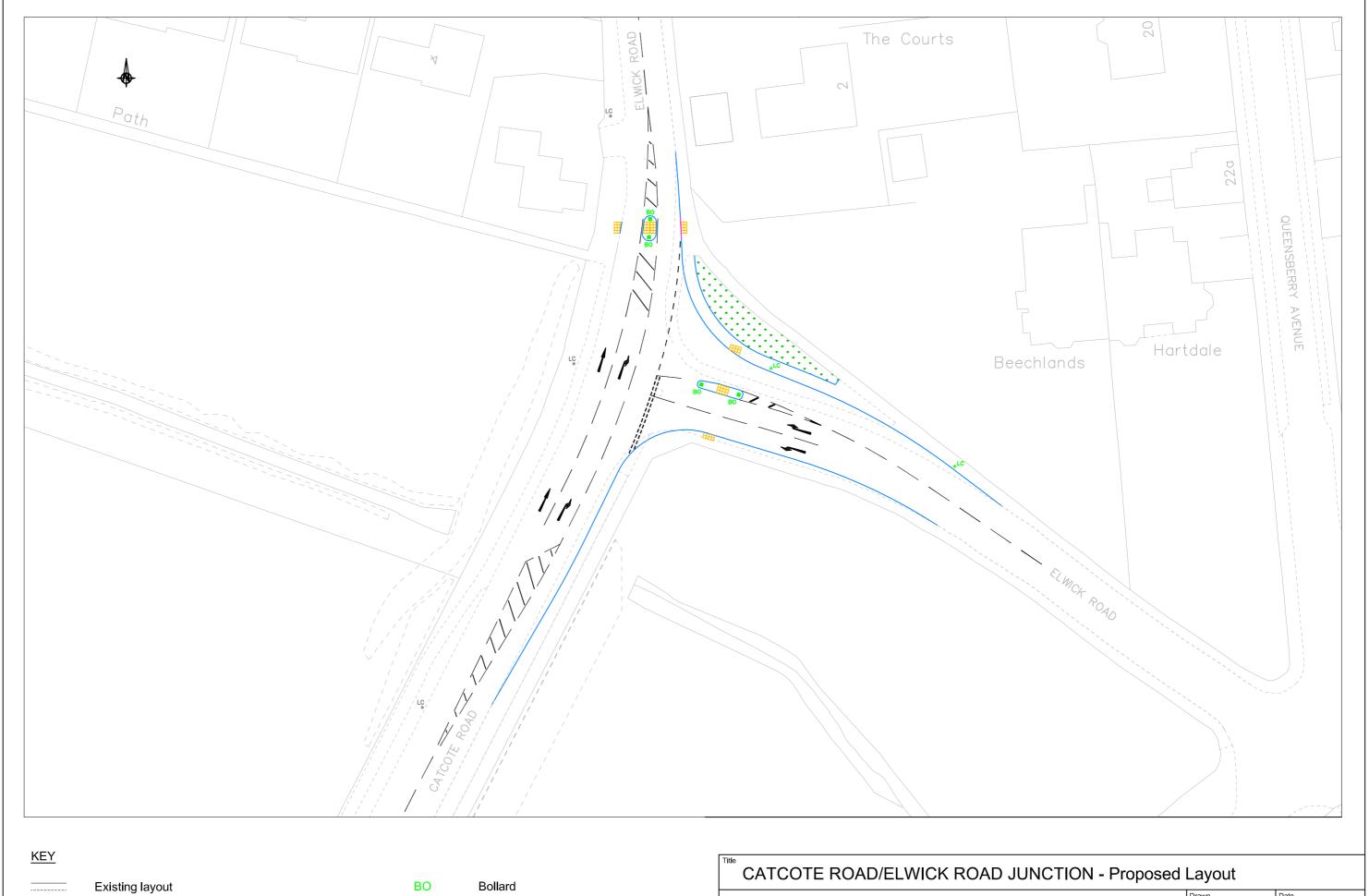
12.1 There are no background papers.

13. CONTACT OFFICER

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Proposed kerb line alterations Buff-coloured blister tactile paving LC LC Lighting column



BOROUGH OF HARTLEPOOL REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS DEPARTMENT TRANSPORTATION & ENGINEERING DIVISION ENGINEERING MANAGER: David Wilson BSc(Hons), CEng, MICE

June 2012 NTS PR289/H45/003

REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO 28th September 2012



Report of: Assistant Director – Transportation and Engineering

Subject: LINDEN GROVE – RESIDENT ONLY PARKING

SCHEME

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To report the outcome of a consultation with residents of Linden Grove regarding the possible removal of this location from the existing resident only permit parking controls.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Linden Grove is currently within Zone A of the Hartlepool Borough Council Resident Permit Parking Scheme. Restrictive permit parking controls apply to part of Linden Grove (the section being between Grange Road and Wilton Avenue) as the remaining properties opted out of the scheme following an earlier consultation in 2008.
- Those properties still covered by the restriction expressed a desire to remain in the scheme predominantly as a result of the Grange Road Nursery which is located in close proximity. The short and long stay parking requirements that this business indirectly generates had led to a number of complaints, reported instances of inconsiderate parking and cases of driveway obstruction.
- 3.3 The parking issues predominantly affect those residents of Linden Grove who are located closest to Grange Road and as a result, a report was submitted to Cabinet to consider requests from residents for those properties located between Grange Road and Wilton Avenue to remain within the permit controlled zone. This decision was approved in May 2008.
- 3.4 The annual permits in Zone A, expire in October 2012 and several residents had indicated that once permit restrictions were removed in Grange Road, the need to protect Linden Grove residents from the parking issues had

diminished. As a result there was a perception that the views of the residents may have significantly changed and there was now no longer residential support to continue in the permit zone. Consequently residents have been consulted for their views on this proposal.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 A consultation letter was sent to all properties in Linden Grove (between Grange Road and Wilton Avenue), to gauge the level of support of retaining the permit controlled parking restrictions. The results of which are shown in the table below.

	Number of	Number of	% of returned forms in	% of returned forms
Location	properties	returned	favour of permit	opposed to permit
	consulted	forms	scheme	parking
Linden Grove 1-23 (odd) 2-32 (even)	27	21(77%)	81% (17)	19%(4)

4.2 The results show that the vast majority of residents who responded to the consultation indicated that they would prefer to remain within the permit controlled zone.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 This location is already included within the current residential permit Zone A. As such there are no additional financial considerations in retaining Linden Grove in the controlled zone.
- 5.2 The annual permits for Zone A are due for renewal on 1st October 2012. The £20 cost per permit has already been determined by Cabinet and is consistent with the charge for non central residential parking zones within the town centre.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The Legal Orders are already in place for this location and the bays have been marked and signed in accordance with the requirements of the

necessary legislation. The Orders will be enforced under the powers and jurisdiction of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

7 STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The Traffic Regulation Order will be enforced by Civil Enforcement Officers from the Parking Services Team

8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

9. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 There are no Section 17 Implications

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Consultation regarding preferred options has taken place with those residents of Linden Grove currently within the permit controlled zone. The local Ward Councillors were also consulted as part of this process.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 That the Porfolio Holder notes the responses from residents and that properties 1-23 (odd) Linden Grove and 2-32 (even) Linden Grove continue to be included within the current resident permit controlled restrictions.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 To reflect the views of the majority of residents who completed and returned the consultation responses.

13. APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

13.1 A plan identifying the properties involved in the consultation and the subsequent resident response / preferred options will be made available at the Portfolio meeting.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

14.1 Cabinet report of 27th May 2008.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO

28th September 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: QUARTERLY HOUSING REPORT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To update the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder about progress across key areas of the Housing Service relating to empty homes, enforcement activity, Selective Licensing, Disabled Facilities Grants, housing allocations and housing advice & homelessness prevention during the first quarter of 2012/13.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This report provides an update on progress and benchmarking across key areas of the Housing Service during Quarter 1 2012/13 and updates the last report presented to the Portfolio Holder on 29 June 2012.

4. EMPTY HOMES UPDATE

4.1 The Housing Services team along with partners Housing Hartlepool are progressing with the implementation of an Empty Homes Pilot scheme as part of the incentive approach to bringing empty homes back into use. Work has been completed on the first 19 properties (phase 1) and new tenants found in most cases. Local employment and training outputs have been delivered by Opening Doors and they completed the works on two properties in Mapleton Road to a high standard. Housing Hartlepool will manage these properties on the owner's behalf on a lease arrangement for up to ten years. The properties will be let at an affordable rent. The second phase of this scheme (funding of which has been secured from the HCA) has commenced with 24 owners of empty homes expressing an interest. The process of inspecting these

- properties and producing a specification of works is underway. Works are due to commence in September 2012.
- 4.2 The Housing Services team in partnership with Building Consultancy and Estates are beginning the implementation of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme as approved by Cabinet in March 2012. To be considered for the scheme properties must be empty for a minimum of 6 months, owners of all long term empty properties within Hartlepool have been contacted. An application was submitted to the HCA Clusters of Empty Homes Fund with the intention of furthering this scheme, the Council was successful in securing this funding and secured £2.6 million from the HCA to be match funded by the Council. The scheme will result in the acquisition of 100 empty homes over 2 years. Refurbishment works will be completed by facilities management and Housing Hartlepool will manage the properties into the future. The properties will be let at an affordable rent. Within Quarter 1 of 2012/13, 5 properties had been acquired through this scheme and refurbishment works on these properties are due to commence in September 2012.
- 4.3 A key action within the Empty Homes action plan was to bring 10% of empty properties back into use and to identify properties suitable for enforcement action. In order to demonstrate this ongoing work a table of the top 20 empty properties has been developed and this will monitor progress and assist in implementing the most appropriate form of enforcement action. The table includes properties which have been empty for the longest time and those in key strategic locations (identified within the empty homes strategy). Each individual case is assessed on its merits and appropriate informal action taken followed by enforcement action. All properties have been inspected, photographed and an empty property assessment form completed.
- 4.4 All owners have been contacted and have either brought their property back into use, have firm plans to do so or enforcement action has been identified. During this quarter the Empty Homes Officer has sent out a further 28 letters to owners on the 'top 20' list and conducted 12 on site visits. Of the properties identified in the original top 20 list, three properties have no solution to return to use therefore appropriate enforcement action has been identified and separate reports will be presented to the Portfolio Holder in respect of each of these to approve suggested enforcement action. The table providing an update on the 'top 20' is attached as **Appendix 1**. This appendix contains exempt information under schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and Information which reveals that the authority proposes –(a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
- 4.5 In total 19 empty properties have been brought back into use this quarter 1. This figure records any intervention by the Council which has resulted in a property being brought back into use. This can range from informal discussions and awareness raising, with owners through to enforcement

- action. The work of the Housing Standards officers has contributed significantly to this achievement.
- 4.6 The Council is also piloting the pro-active use of s215 planning enforcement powers to improve the visual appearance of residential properties. Within the first quarter of 2012/13 three notices were served which could result in direct action if the owner does not comply. An additional 7 properties were identified as requiring s215 action and the process of dialogue with owners has commenced.
- 4.7 As part of the Empty Homes Strategy, the regeneration of Baden Street is also being progressed by the Council. All of the owners of the qualifying empty properties who are actively engaged in the scheme have received priced schedules from the Council for consideration. The owner who failed to engage in the scheme initially, who was referred to the Empty Homes Officer for enforcement action, as previously reported, has since come forward and work has commenced to undertake the survey of the property.
- 4.8 To date, there has been a positive response to the information presented to the owners concerned regarding the scheme. So far, one owner has opted to proceed with the Council as the preferred contractor; a date for this work to commence on site is currently being arranged and over half of the remaining owners have already indicated that they are in the process of seeking additional, independent quotations for the work.
- 4.9 To complement the ongoing process to bring the empty homes back into use, the partnership work continues to progress the broader aims of the scheme to assist with the regeneration of the street. This has included various improvements to security provision, supporting owner occupiers, existing tenants, landlords and agents with an extensive range of issues, including mediation between a tenant and their landlord in order to sustain the tenancy, arranging workshops tailored to identified needs (for example, financial management, employability and skills), identifying and assisting new tenants to move into the street who have made a successful application to the Good Tenants Scheme, and averting the re-letting of properties to those who have not. The road has also been resurfaced as part of the Council's Highway Resurfacing Programme for 2012.

5. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

- 5.1 This section relates to the work carried out in relation to a number of key areas, including housing conditions, housing related statutory nuisance and problematic empty properties.
- 5.2 Table 1 sets out the service requests that have been received by the enforcement team during the first quarter of this year. The total number of requests is comparable with the same quarter of 2011/12. Previous year's figures are shown in brackets for comparison purposes.

5.3 In addition to the reactive work carried out, the team undertakes proactive work in relation to identifying problematic empty and nuisance properties through area based targeting in the HMR areas and Baden Street. Officers continue to undertake proactive inspections of selectively licensed properties (as detailed in table 2).

Table 1 – Enforcement Team Service Requests

	Number and % of Total Number by Quarter 2012/13							
Request Type	Quarter	1	Quarter	2	Quarter 3	3	Quarte	r 4
Disrepair	(65) 52	19%	(56)		(61)		(60)	
Empty & Insecure Property	(30) 53	20%	(58)		(48)		(40)	
Empty property report	(0) 0	0%	(0)		(2)		(0)	
Empty property Nuisance	(31) 44	16%	(23)		(16)		(4)	
Unauthorised Encampment	(4) 1	0.5%	(5)		(0)		(0)	
Nuisance from Adjacent Property	(13) 6	2%	(3)		(7)		(60)	
Nuisance from Occupied Property	(86) 92	34%	(83)		(42)		(20)	
Filthy & Verminous	(3) 0	0%	(0)		(5)		(0)	
Defective Drainage	(23) 14	5%	(16)		(6)		(5)	
HMO Advice	(3) 3	1%	(4)		(1)		(1)	
Immigration Visit	(5) 2	1%	(2)		(4)		(7)	
Total Number of Requests	(263) 267		(250)		(192)		(197)	

- 5.4 The majority of service requests fall into three main areas:
 - Disrepair
 - Empty Properties
 - Nuisance
- 5.5 The first quarter of the year showed a 20% reduction in the number of disrepair cases reported to the team when compared to the previous year. In this quarter three Housing Act 2004 improvement notices were served and three Environmental Protection Act 1990 notices were served in relation to premises which were prejudicial to health.
- 5.6 Complaints regarding empty properties were relatively high when compared to the same quarter last year. The reason for this is undear but it may be as a result of officers having an increased presence in some areas and increased awareness by the public and Members. Eight notices were served to require the securing of empty dwellings and seven notices were served requiring the abatement of nuisance associated with empty properties e.g. to remove rubbish from within the property boundaries.
- 5.7 The overall number of service requests relating to nuisances (both occupied and empty) accounted for more than half of the cases and was comparable with the first quarter of last year.

5.8 From 2007, when mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was introduced, to 31 March 2012 were 15 premises licensed as HMOs in Hartlepool. These licences remain in force for five years, unless there are circumstances that require a variation or revocation. Five licences became due for renewal during May and four renewal applications were received. The fifth licence holder had unfortunately passed away.

6. SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE

- 6.1 In order to ensure licence applications are made for any properties which remain unlicensed within the designation, intense enforcement work was undertaken by officers. This resulted in a substantial number of new applications being received which are now undergoing assessment. There remains a small proportion of outstanding applications for which formal enforcement is now being considered.
- 6.2 A review of all working policies, procedures and associated documentation was completed and the phased implementation of these has ensured that all licensing processes are fully compliant with the requirements of the legislation.
- 6.3 Officers have continued to offer advice and guidance to landlords of licensable properties as well as to those outside of these areas.
- 6.4 Table 2 summarises the Selective Licensing activities undertaken. 27 properties were licensed in this quarter bringing the total number issued to 605.

Table 2 – Selective Licensing Activity

Licensed Properties	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 Q1
Total number of properties licensed	44	482	52	27
Licences revoked	0	0	6	1
Gas/Electrical Safety				
Reminder Letters sent for Gas or Electrical safety Certificates		395	673	183
Notice Served for non supply of satisfactory Gas or Electrical Safety Certificate		139	422	93
Final Warning of court proceedings	0			53
Certificates Supplied following Reminder or Notice sent		257	492	149
Additional Enforcement				
Referred for legal action to commence		N/A	112	37
Called in for office interview and			12	3

Licensed Properties	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 Q1
informal caution				
Telephone interview and informal caution			88	24
Conditions complied with following contact			99	28
Housing Standards Inspections				
Inspection of Licensed Property completed	0	86	220	14
Schedule of Works Sent with recommendation for action for Licensed property	0	10	140	6

7. TRAVELLERS AND MIGRANTS

- 7.1 The Council collects information on unauthorised gypsy and traveller encampments. During Quarter 1 2012/13 1 unauthorised traveller encampment stayed for 1 day at the rear of Old Customs House. This encampment comprised of five caravans. During the financial year 2011/12 there was 1 unauthorised encampment at the rear of B&Q. This had comprised of 3 caravans belonging to the same family and they stayed four days.
- 7.2 Information on migrants who have been rehoused through the Compass CBL scheme will be tabled at the meeting.

8. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG) BENCHMARKING DATA

- 8.1 The Council continues to benchmark its service against other Local Authorities in the North East as part of the North East Adaptations Group.
- 8.2 The benchmarking is undertaken by monitoring the overall time taken from first contact (the date a person first approaches social services with a need for help and assistance) to certified date (date that the works are confirmed as completed).
- 8.3 During 2011/12 the Council's overall time taken averaged at 154 days. At the end of Quarter 1 2012/13 the Council completed 24 DFGs and took 129 days from first contact to certified date.
- 8.4 At the end of Quarter 1 there were 69 applicants on the waiting list for a DFG. Applicants continue to wait less than 1 month for a means test visit.

9. ALLOCATIONS SUMMARY

- 9.1 Choice Based Lettings (CBL) activity and performance continues to be monitored on a quarterly basis and compared with our sub regional partners by the Sub Regional CBL Steering Group.
- 9.2 The number of applicants who are 'live' on the system and able to bid (shown in table 3) decreased during 2011-2012 and at the end of the year was 2180 in Hartlepool. At the end of Quarter 1 this number increased to 2340.

Table 3 – Total number of 'live' applicants (able to bid)

	Hartlepool	Sub Regional Total
Quarter 4 (2011-12)	2180	16193
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	2340	16615

During Quarter 1 the number of Housing Hartlepool applicants on the waiting list wanting a transfer (from one Housing Hartlepool property to another) has increased from 25% to 29% as a result of the number of current Housing Hartlepool tenants who under-occupy their property and need to move so that they are not affected by the under occupation charge that will be introduced in April 2013.

9.3 To ensure that applicants in the greatest need are given preference for an allocation of accommodation, levels of housing need are categorised into five bands. The numbers of applicants within each band demonstrates that since the end of Quarter 4 (2011-12) the number of applicants that fall within Band 4 – No or low level housing need – has reduced from approximately 75% of the whole waiting list to 68%. This means that there are an increased percentage of applicants whose level of housing need has put them into a 'priority' band (Table 4).

Table 4 – Total number of 'live' applicants (able to bid) within each Band

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total
Quarter 4	145	425	60	1550	2180
(2011-12)					
Quarter 1	190	512	54	1585	2340
(2012-13)					

- 9.4 Within Hartlepool, during Quarter 1, the number of decant applicants has also increased. For the purposes of the CBL policy, a decant applicant is defined as one who is losing their home through a recognised regeneration scheme and they are awarded the greatest priority. This number has increased from 14 at the end of Quarter 4 (2011-12) to 44.
- 9.5 Some applicants within the three Priority Bands (1, 2 and 3) may also have cumulative needs (more than one housing need). This figure has increased significantly since 2011-12. Applicants with cumulative need due to a

housing need in addition to under occupation have increased to 59 within Band 2 and 34 within Band 1.

9.6 Table 5 demonstrates that the majority of lettings continue to go to those on the waiting list rather than to Housing Hartlepool transfer applicants. However, the higher number of lets to transfers reflects the increased number of transfer applicants on the whole waiting list. One of the reasons for this increase is as a result of the number of current Housing Hartlepool tenants who under-occupy their property and need to move so that they are not affected by the under occupation charge that will be introduced in April 2013.

Table 5 – Lettings Information for Hartlepool

	Total no. lets	Direct Lets	Transfers
Quarter 4 (2011- 12)	108	2	12 (11%)
Quarter 1 (2012- 13)	151	0	22 (15%)

9.7 Within the sub region the number of lets within each Band as shown in table 6, shows that approximately one-third of lettings have gone to applicants within Band 4.

Table 6 – Percentage lets to each Band (within Hartlepool)

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Decants	Total no. lets
Quarter 4	33%	25%	9%	33%	4%	108
(2011-12)						
Quarter 1	34%	26%	6%	34%		151
(2012-13)						

9.8 The Sub Regional CBL Policy allows for cross boundary mobility as shown in table 7.

Table 7 – Cross Boundary Mobility

	Area applicant moved from:	Area applicant rehoused to:	Number
Quarter 1	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Stockton	Hartlepool	2

- 9.9 The percentage of properties let on 1st offer is also monitored across the sub region. During Quarter 1 (2012-13) this percentage has decreased from 73% in Quarter 4 (2011-12) to 44%. The reason for this will be monitored through regular liaison meetings that take place with Housing Hartlepool.
- 9.10 The current CBL Policy (revised January 2012) is undergoing review and consultation has taken place following a range of measures contained in the

Localism Act 2011 and the subsequent Code of Guidance issued by Department of Communities and Local Government in June 2012.

The review of the Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy is centred on the main elements of the guidance:

- Eligibility to join the housing register;
- Additional preference for Armed Forces Personnel;
- Adoption of a modern measure of overcrowding and prioritising tenants who are under occupying; and
- Flexibility to award preference to those in paid employment / voluntary workers / prospective adoption or foster parents.

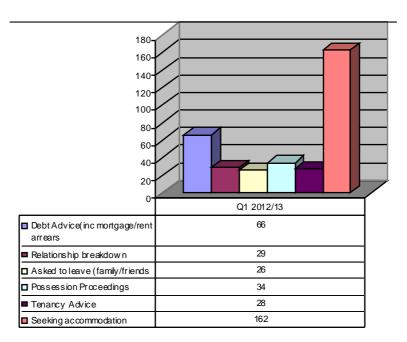
In addition the review will also consider other amendments to the policy that may be required as a result of the impact of welfare reforms

Consultation on the policy review closed on 24th September 2012.

10. HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ACTIVITY

10.1 The Housing Advice and Homelessness service carries out the Council's statutory duties in relation to homelessness and housing advice. During the first quarter of this year active casework has been carried out for 345 clients needing detailed advice and assistance and homelessness has been prevented for a further 70 households. Two households facing mortgage repossessions were accepted as homeless and in priority need as all options had been exhausted to save their homes. Table 8 provides a breakdown of the enquiry types clients presented with during this first quarter.

Table 8 – Breakdown of Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention Activity



- There has been an increase in the number mortgage related advice cases during this quarter and the reduction of housing benefit entitlement for single people under 35 has seen increasing numbers being unable to afford their existing accommodation. Although we have continued to keep homelessness to very low levels to date it is likely that we will see a significant increase over the coming months as further benefit changes begin to take effect.
- 10.3 The Housing Advice Team also administers the Council's Good Tenant Scheme. An update on Good Tenant scheme activity will be tabled at the meeting.

11. HOUSING REPORTS ON FORWARD PLAN

11.1 RN 16/12 Sub Regional Tenancy Strategy. A key decision report to implement the Sub Regional Tenancy Strategy. The Localism Act gained Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. In January 2012 the provision in the Act (Section 150) requiring local Housing Authorities to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy within 12 months of this came into force. This means that local authorities have a statutory duty to produce a strategy by January 2013. The Tees Valley local authorities, following consultation with Registered Providers, have decided to adopt a Sub Regional Tenancy Strategy.

Cabinet on 15th October will be asked to consider how the Sub Regional Tenancy Strategy will complement Hartlepool's Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy; the Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy and meet current and future housing priorities for Hartlepool.

11.2 RN 22/12 Choice Based Lettings Policy Review 2012. A Key decision report to approve changes to the Tees Valley Choice Based Letting (CBL) policy. In November 2011, the Government published its Housing Strategy for England. This contains policies and initiatives already in place because of the Localism Act 2011. One of the principles set out in the Strategy is the reform to make better use of social housing.

A range of measures contained in the Localism Act 2011 make changes to the way people access social housing (including flexible/shorter tenancies; changes to homelessness; ending of 'open' waiting lists).

Cabinet will be asked to consider how changes to the Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy will meet current and future social housing needs for Hartlepool.

11.3 RN 23/12 HCA Cluster of Empty Homes Funding Outcome. A key decision report to update Cabinet on the outcome of Hartlepool's bid to the Homes and Communities Agency Cluster of Empty Homes Funding and

seek approval for scheme financial arrangements and for project implementation proposals.

Cabinet will consider the proposal for the implementation of a further phase of the Hartlepool Borough Council Empty Property Purchasing scheme, following the announcement of HCA 'Cluster of Empty Homes Funding'. The original scheme was approved by Cabinet on the 19th March 2012, this included approval to submit a bid for HCA 'Cluster Funding'. If the scheme proves successful the report will propose the implementation of a wider empty homes purchasing scheme. The financial implications and proposals for match funding will be demonstrated and project delivery and phasing arrangements will also be considered. An update on the Empty Homes Strategy overall will also be presented.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 Impact Assessments have been carried out on all housing services strategies that are relevant to this report.

13. **SECTION 17**

13.1 Hartlepool Borough Council recognises that Community Safety affects all our lives, people, communities and organisations. The key areas of Housing Services are all developed with the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour in mind.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS/ REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 Portfolio Holder to note the contents of the report and the progress made across key areas of the Housing Service for information purposes.
- To decide which, if any, other key areas need to be included in future reports, for information purposes.

15. APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

15.1 Appendix 1 - Top Twenty Empty Properties Action Plan.
This appendix contains exempt information under schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and Information which reveals that the authority proposes –(a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 There are no background papers.

17. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO 28th September 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP – TEAM

AROUND THE HOUSEHOLD REVIEW

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

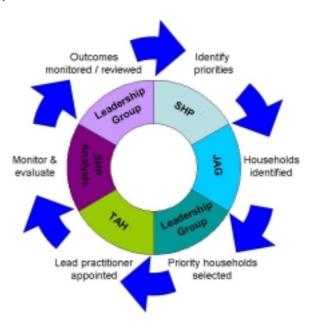
2.1 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the intention to review the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Team Around the Household (TAH) initiative. The outcomes of which will feed into the Troubled Families Programme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) is a statutory Community Safety Partnership (CSP) made up of representatives from Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police and Cleveland Police Authority, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Hartlepool PCT and Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust (the 'responsible authorities').
- 3.2 These responsible authorities work together in Hartlepool to develop and implement strategies to protect the local community from crime and disorder related issues including; anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and re-offending.
- Following their annual strategic assessment in 2010 the Safer Hartlepool Partnership piloted a new initiative called 'Team around the Household' (TAH) that adopted a multi-agency approach to identify and address the behaviour of persistently problematic households that have a negative impact upon community safety in Hartlepool.
- 3.4 The aim of the TAH as originally conceived by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership was to 'Break the Cycle' of households engaging in crime and disorder related problems which have a detrimental affect on communities,

with the longer term goal being to prevent this unruly behaviour reoccurring across future household generations.

3.5 To assist in achieving this objective the SHP adopted the following intelligence led process:



- 3.6 In light of the economic climate and cuts in public services, using this process, and based upon learning from elsewhere, it was anticipated that the initiative would yield efficiencies and improve performance, and, in August 2011the Safer Hartlepool Partnership identified eight families to participate in the pilot TAH initiative.
- This review/evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the TAH initiative. The evaluation will examine the extent to which the initiative has achieved its stated aim of breaking the cycle in terms of the direction of travel for each household; it will assess the initiative's contribution to Safer Hartlepool strategic objectives and annual priorities; highlight any barriers to progress, recommend areas for improvement, and review and conclude for each household involved whether or not they should continue to receive support through the initiative. The report will in turn assist in informing the services needed to support delivery of the much broader Troubled Families Programme for which the Safer Hartlepool Partnership is the lead organisation in Hartlepool.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The evaluation will combine qualitative insights of the activities that have taken place through the TAH process including the views of those delivering services and members of the households involved, along with statistical

analysis of related data including levels of crime and disorder. Information will be gathered through the following methods:

a. Quantitative Data Analysis

Analysis of crime levels, and incidents of anti-social behaviour.

b. Qualitative Data Analysis

In depth semi-structured interviews with key players including:

- Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)
- SHP Chair/NLB Chair
- Community Safety Manager
- Neighbourhood Manager
- Community Safety Research and Development Co-ordinator
- Several Lead Practitioners
- Several members of the TAH team including Police, health, adults and children's teams
- TAH Family Members

Online surveys (Survey Monkey) could also be considered to assess local agency knowledge and perceptions of the initiative in relation to a broader audience not participating in interviews.

Focus groups could also be used for service areas/lead practitioners

Consideration will be given to the use of community **face to face/postal** surveys to test public confidence/feelings of safety in areas where the households reside.

5. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Analysis of action plans and any other relevant management information including minutes of meetings, attendance records etc.
- This methodology will gather information from a sufficiently broad range of sources to ensure that an accurate, balanced, and impartial representation of the initiative is produced. The approach will also ensure that the final report will document both the achievements of the initiative and any shortcomings it may have. The questions to be asked and methods used to find the answers are set out in the table below.

	Research Methods			
Key Evaluation Questions	Quantitative	Qualitative	Documentary Evidence	
Has the initiative achieved its aim of breaking the cycle	*	*	*	
What SHP outcomes has the initiative contributed towards?	*	*	*	
Has the initiative contributed towards unidentified outcomes?		*	*	
What other achievements or consequences of the project, above and beyond those originally identified have been realised		*	*	
Has the initiative successfully engaged with households		*	*	
Have relevant key stakeholders/agencies been involved?		*	*	
What has been the significance of the role of lead practitioner in the TAH process		*		
Are there examples of joined up working?		*	*	
Are there any particular interventions used in the TAH process that have worked/not worked Provide evidence of feedbackfrom: (a) Household members (b) Key stakeholder (c) Broader community		*	*	
To what extent has the TAH approach become embedded in terms of reshaping service delivery, evidence of a more effective joined up/partnership approach		*	*	
Have the governance/management arrangements for the initiative been effective and responsive		*		
Have there been any changes to the governance management arrangements		*	*	
Has a cost effectiveness tool been used and if so to what extent is the initiative providing value for money and achieving efficiencies	*	*		
How has the initiative been communicated and promoted?		*	*	
What are the barriers to performance?		*	*	
What lessons have been learned?		*	*	

- 5.3 Data gathered will be analysed and put together in an evaluation report that will
 - Describe how the evaluation has been conducted
 - Summarise the initiative explaining why it was established and what it has achieved
 - Provide information gathered as per the above table
 - Draw some broad conclusions
 - Set out recommendations for consideration by the Families and Communities Board
- 5.4 The estimated timescale for the evaluation to be completed is two months.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATION

6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

7. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Portfolio Holder notes the content of the report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 SHP Exec Group - Team Around the Household Report – 13th July 2011 SHP Exec Group – Team Around the Household/ Breaking the Cycle.

10. CONTACT OFFICER

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