

REPLACEMENT AGENDA

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



12 December 2012

at 4.00 pm

in Committee Room A,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor Paul Thompson, Cabinet Member responsible for Finance and Corporate Services will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

- 1.1 Accommodation Strategy – *Assistant Director (Resources)*
- 1.2 Former Henry Smiths School Site, King Oswy Drive – *Assistant Director (Resources)*
- 1.3 Potential Sale of Ward Jackson Park Lodge - *Assistant Director (Resources)*

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Irrecoverable Debts – Sundry Debtor Invoices – *Chief Finance Officer*
- 2.2 General Purposes (Appeals & Staffing) Committee – Redundancy Dismissal Appeals Procedure – *Human Resources Business Partners*
- 2.3 Childcare Vouchers – *Organisational Development Manager*
- 2.4 Registration Service Update and Annual Fees Review – *Assistant Chief Executive*
- 2.5 Throston Community Centre – *Assistant Director (Resources)*
- 2.6 Sale of Cargo Fleet Depot Middlesbrough – *Assistant Director (Resources)*
- 2.7 The West Hartlepool Technical Day School Old Boys RUFC – *Assistant Director (Resources)*
- 2.8 Single Status Agreement Appeals – *Organisational Development Manager*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 3.1 Employee Attendance 2012/13 2nd Quarter – *Human Resources Business Partners*

REPLACEMENT AGENDA

4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

6. EXEMPT KEY DECISIONS

No items

7. OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

7.1 Support for Business – *Chief Finance Officer (para 3)*



FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12th December 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Resources)

Subject: ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference No. RN 13/09.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To outline the next stage of the Council's accommodation strategy, note the programme to date and to seek approval for the marketing of Bryan Hanson House for expressions of interest.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council has delivered substantial savings in the improved use of property through rationalisation as part of the Business Transformation Programme.

3.2 There is a continuing need to make savings from property to contribute to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and this includes the requirement to achieve £4.5m of capital receipts over the next 2 ½ years.

3.3 The number of staff employed by the Council is reducing over time due to the ongoing savings programmes and services being delivered in different ways both in-house and with partners including co-location in a variety of properties.

3.4 Different ways of working, remote and mobile working and hot desking are being developed and this will reduce space requirements going forward. Improved use of ICT will be a key enabler.

3.5 The current position is that there are substantial areas within the Civic Centre and Bryan Hanson House that are vacant. It is now timely to

consider further rationalisation to achieve savings and maximize the use of the Council's assets.

4. PROPOSALS

Bryan Hanson House

- 4.1 This building contains a large part of the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department but has numerous vacant areas. When these areas are coupled with vacant areas in the Civic Centre and at the Church Street depot it is possible that over the next 1 to 2 years that Bryan Hanson House could be vacated.
- 4.2 There has been some initial interest from other organisations in relation to office space and student / residential accommodation but this has not been followed-up to date. It is suggested however that this building could be marketed either on its own or as part of a larger Central Area regeneration scheme taking in other land and property either vacant and / or the potential of the Church / Lynn Street Depot / Focus Building as part of a longer term project. It is proposed that we test the market for the sale of Bryan Hanson House as an individual building initially.
- 4.3 The market for disposal is difficult at present but a receipt of up to £1.5 million could be achieved. Running costs are approximately £130k per annum. It is proposed that expressions of interest are invited to test the market. Any potential disposal may take some time and therefore early marketing is required.
- 4.4 £100k p.a. saving in relation to revenue costs has been included in the current budget process as a target for 2014 /15. This is not the full cost at this point in time. There will be opportunity for further savings dependent on any residual costs and as detailed in paragraph 5.1 the ongoing saving may increase to £170k p.a. If this full saving is achieved the additional saving of £70k p.a. will be allocated towards reducing 2014/15 budget deficit. There may also be an opportunity for early savings in 2013/14 which will help fund the one off costs as detailed in paragraph 5.5.

Civic Centre

- 4.5 There is a need to maximize the use of space in the Civic Centre on all floors.
- 4.6 It is possible that substantially more space on Level 1 could be made available in 2013 / 14 depending on the outcome of the ICT contract. It is possible that there may only be a small presence from the new provider within the Civic Centre.
- 4.7 The Public Relations Team have already vacated their accommodation adjacent to the Committee Rooms and it is proposed that this space will be

designated for Members who would relocate from rooms elsewhere on Level 2.

- 4.8 As a result of ongoing rationalisation and the improved use of space by Child and Adults and the Chief Executive's Departments it will be possible to relocate the majority of staff from Bryan Hanson House to the Civic Centre and this could commence immediately on a phased basis.
- 4.9 Some staff could also move to the Church Street Depot and some economic regeneration staff could move to the Hartlepool Enterprise Centre.

Carnegie Building (former Northgate Library)

- 4.10 This building is currently occupied by Bibliographical Services and Sports and Physical Activity team.
- 4.11 The proposal is that to improve service delivery and integration Bibliographical Services will be relocated in part to the Central Library and part to Sir William Gray House. The Sports & Physical Activity Team will move to the Brierton site to link with the Sports Centre.
- 4.12 Carnegie Building had been refurbished several years ago with substantial and various grants some of which are subject to clawback if the Council sold the building. Therefore options are being considered to lease out part of the building as well as options for use by relevant Council staff.
- 4.13 The Joint Trade unions are currently accommodated in Church Street Depot but this is not ideal. They have expressed a strong interest to move into part of the Carnegie Building. This would be acceptable and they would provide a financial contribution.
- 4.14 It is possible therefore that the Council could make savings in the running costs of the building in future whilst retain the building in Council ownership.

Park Towers

- 4.15 The Council currently holds a lease on Park Towers until 2014 in relation to the Housing Options Centre. It is proposed that this operation could be relocated to the Civic Centre. The timing of this and space allocation are being examined.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The rationalisation programme is expected to have the following financial benefits:-

Running Costs

Bryan Hanson House	£130k p.a.
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Carnegie Building	£20k p.a.
Park Towers	£20k p.a.

Capital Receipts

Sale of Bryan Hanson House £0.5 million to £1.5 million.

- 5.2 There will be costs involved in the programme which are estimated as follows:-

Physical moves of staff	£25,000
ICT costs	£70,000
Minor adaptations	<u>£65,000</u>
Total	<u>£160,000</u>

- 5.3 These costs involve moves in relation to several buildings and a significant number of staff.

- Civic Centre
- Church Street
- Bryan Hanson House
- Central Library
- Sir William Gray House
- Hartlepool Enterprise Centre
- Park Towers

- 5.4 There is still a significant amount of work remaining relating to the detail of the moves which needs to be finalized and therefore at this stage it would be prudent to allow for an additional contingency of 15% increasing the total budget to £184,000.

- 5.5. The costs represent essentially one year savings in revenue costs which is a good return. Some of these could be advanced savings in 13/14 (Bryan Hanson House could be largely vacated in 13/14. The medium term financial strategy savings are not scheduled until 14/15).

- 5.6 The one-off costs will be phased over two years with the majority of costs being incurred in 2013/14. To enable ongoing savings to be taken towards reducing the 2014/15 budget deficit it is recommended that these costs should be funded from a combination of the current year's outturn and the 2013/14 part year savings as follows:

- £119k from the 2012/13 outturn
- £75k from the 2013/14 part year.

- 5.7 With regard to the use of the current year's outturn this proposal will slightly reduce the uncommitted resources available to help mitigate a higher actual grant cut for 2013/14 than anticipated in the budget forecasts. However, this proposal does enable ongoing saving to be secured towards addressing the 2014/15 budget deficit and in overall terms is beneficial in terms of the Council's medium term financial position.

6. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Consultation and forward planning required to ensure a smooth transition and minimising service disruption.
- 6.2 Car Parking arrangements for staff will need to be reviewed. In particular, the use of the shopping centre multi storey car park will need to be expanded for those staff moving from Bryan Hanson House to the Civic Centre on a pay-to-park basis.

7. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The attention of the portfolio Holder is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial, proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues, the proceeds of this transaction being a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 7.2 The decision to adopt a commercial approach to asset management requires the Council to realise the full value of any properties or property rights that it disposes of.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The relocation of staff will need to be completed in an open and transparent manner so that different groups of staff are not unfairly affected. This will include the consideration of access issues.

9. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Any legal implications from property issues will be considered by the Chief Solicitor.

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

- 10.1 Any implications will be addressed as rationalisation and relocation progresses.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 Portfolio Holder notes the progress on the next phase of the accommodation strategy including the marketing of Bryan Hanson House.
- 11.2 Note the proposed strategy for funding the one-off costs of achieving ongoing permanent savings towards the 2014/15 budget deficit from a combination of:

- The 2012/13 outturn - £119k
- The 2013/14 part year accommodation savings - £75k

And to note that this proposal will be referred to full Council in February 2013 as part of the 2013/14 Budget and Policy Framework proposal.

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

- 12.1 There are no appendices.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 There are no background papers

14. CONTACT OFFICER

Graham Frankland
Assistant Director (Resources)
Civic Centre
Victoria Rd
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY
Tel 01429 523211
Email: graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12th December 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Resources)

Subject: FORMER HENRY SMITHS SCHOOL SITE KING
OSWY DRIVE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference RN 1309.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for the transfer at nil consideration of land at King Oswy Drive to the Vela Group for the construction of 25 affordable housing bungalows.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The former Henry Smith School in King Oswy Drive (as shown hatched in **Appendix 1**) was closed and demolished in 2002/3. Since then the site has been unused except for parking for St Hilda's School and as temporary site compounds. The land is designated as a surplus asset on the Council's asset register and is identified in the disposals strategy as a potential development site.
- 3.2 The receipts from the site have been earmarked to meet shortfalls identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 3.3 In 2010 the Vela Group obtained funding from the HCA of £3.375m to build 45 new affordable homes and the King Oswy Drive land was identified as a suitable site in which to locate them. The Council therefore resolved to market the land for sale on the basis that the developer would build the new affordable homes together with new private market properties on the remainder of the site.
- 3.4 Marketing commenced in May 2012 on the basis of informal tenders to be submitted by 10th August 2012. Two tenders were received but neither was considered acceptable, primarily due to the amounts offered.

- 3.5 In the circumstances (and particularly the level of grant being made available for the site), it was proposed to Vela that the Council would gift enough of the land to enable them to build the affordable housing under contract, as otherwise the grant funding would be lost. Further discussions have taken place with Vela subsequently at which it emerged that only sufficient land to build 25 affordable bungalows on the site was required, as opposed to the original 45 units, the majority of which would have been houses.
- 3.6 In order to progress this matter, Vela's architect has produced some proposed layouts. Agreement on the layout is required in order to agree which part of the land is to be transferred and to ensure that the form of the development does not detract from the future development of the remainder of the site. At present, discussions are ongoing to decide the layout and exact extent of the land to be transferred but it is clear that approximately 1 hectare (2.5 acres) will be required to accommodate the bungalows.
- 3.7 In order to facilitate later sale and development of the remainder of the site, it is proposed to apply in effect for outline planning permission on the remainder of the land as part of the application for the affordable housing. This will lead to a housing mix of approximately 30% affordable/70% private market housing on the site as a whole as the requirement for affordable housing will be more than met by the Vela development.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed to transfer a suitable part of the site to Vela at nil consideration to facilitate their proposed development of 25 affordable bungalows.
- 4.2 The transfer will be subject to a restrictive covenant restricting the use to affordable housing. In addition if the development is not begun within 12 months and completed by March 2015 the Council will be entitled to a transfer back of the whole or any undeveloped parts.
- 4.3 The Council will have 100% nomination rights in respect of the housing when complete.
- 4.4 As part of the project, a planning application will be made for the remainder of the site in order to maximise its value and future development potential.
- 4.5 Vela will be asked to pay the Council's reasonable legal and surveyor's costs involved in the transaction.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The original marketing of the whole site had already made allowances for the value related to this affordable housing element, to be delivered by Vela.

- 5.2 The expected value of the remainder of the site will be maximised by having no requirement for affordable housing (the Vela element covering this requirement) and therefore the expected capital receipt should still be in line with projections.
- 5.3 The market value of the remaining land is difficult to assess particularly in the light of recent bids but it is anticipated that by holding disposal for a period of time the value of the site will recover.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 As it is proposed to transfer land at less than best consideration, it will be necessary to give consent under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. As the transfer is to facilitate affordable housing, the consent can be given on the basis that it is in order to provide social, economic and well-being benefits to the town.

7. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The attention of the portfolio Holder is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial, proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues, the proceeds of this transaction being a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 7.2 The decision to adopt a commercial approach to asset management requires the Council to realise the full value of any properties or property rights that it disposes of.

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 Any issues on community safety will be addressed during the planning process.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 It is recommended that approval is given for the transfer of the land at nil consideration and on the basis of the other terms outlined in section 4 above.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The transfer will enable Vela to construct 25 affordable bungalows, of which there is a considerable shortage in the area.
- 11.2 It will ensure that Vela do not lose the HCA funding they have obtained, at least in respect of the units to be built. It is understood the remainder of the funding can be used on other sites which Vela will be able to develop.
- 11.3 The Council will have 100% nomination rights.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

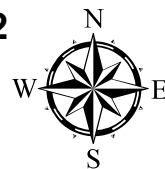
- 12.1 There are no background papers to this report.

13. CONTACT OFFICER

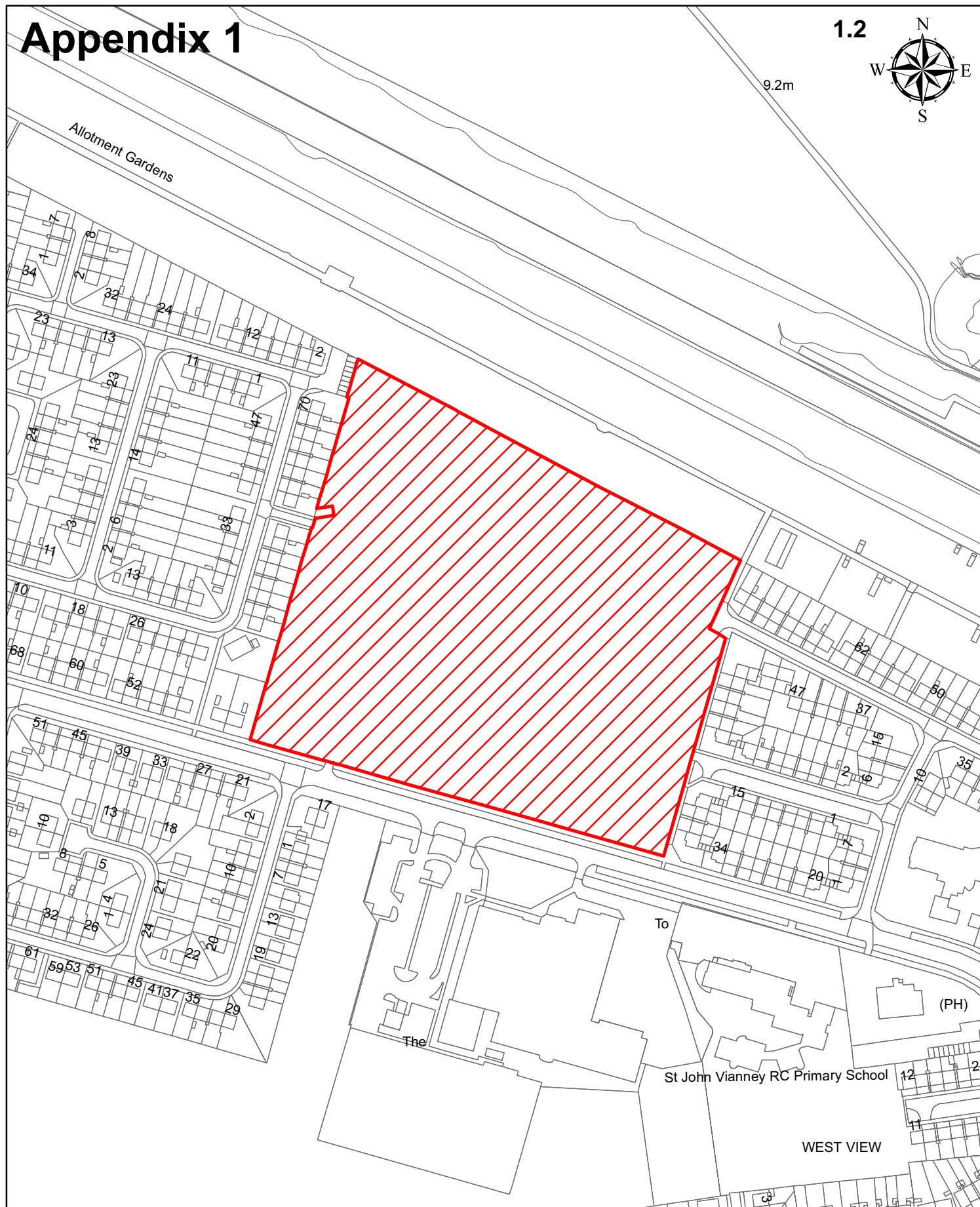
Graham Frankland
Assistant Director (Resources)
Civic Centre
Victoria Rd
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY
Tel 01429 523211

Appendix 1

1.2



9.2m



LOCATION	Land at King Oswy Drive (Ex Henry Smith's School), Hartlepool	DRAWN BY	CT	DATE	01/04/12
		SCALE	1:2500		
DEED PACKET	CE187340	OS MAP	NZ 4935		
		DRWG No	-		



Hartlepool Borough Council
Neighbourhood Services Department
Procurement & Property Services Division
Graham Frankland B.Eng(HONS)
Head of Procurement, Property & Public Protection
Leadbitter Buildings
Stockton Street
Hartlepool
TS24 7NU

C.Eng M.I.C.E
TEL: 01429 266522
FAX: 01429 523899

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FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

Date 12th December 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Resources)

Subject: POTENTIAL SALE OF WARD JACKSON PARK
LODGE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

- 1.1 Key Decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference No. RN 13/09.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To consider the potential sale of Ward Jackson Park Lodge subsequent to a marketing exercise.
- 2.2 To consider representations regarding the alternate future use of the Lodge and objections to its sale.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Approval was granted by Portfolio Holder at the meeting on 13th October 2011 to dispose of the former Lodge House at Ward Jackson Park. The property has been marketed for sale by informal tender and 3 tenders have been received as set out in **confidential Appendix 1 This item 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 (para 3), information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.**
- 3.2 During the marketing period a number of objections were received from members of the public on a local and national basis due to the publicity generated through social media.
- 3.3 There are a range of objections including the following key issues:

- The implications of separating the ownership of the lodge from the park including the potential loss of trees included in the lodge site.
- Concerns that any proposals to extend/alter the property by any new owner will change the character of the property. This may detrimentally impact on the amenity of the Park.
- Breaking up the park will have negative implications which would outweigh monetary considerations.
- Any proposal to create a new access from Elwick Road will be dangerous.
- That further sales of land for development within the Park will be identified by the Council and that this is 'the thin end of the wedge'.
- Suggestions that the Council should seek an alternate use for the property without the need to dispose.
- That there are covenants on the property restricting any sales.

3.4 The property has been marketed subject to a development brief prepared by the Council's Planning and Conservation teams setting out key requirements that will need to be complied with should any purchaser propose to develop/alter the Lodge. In particular any proposals would require planning permission and as the property is listed and falls within the Conservation area adequate provision is in place to control any proposals including highway alterations.

3.5 The History of Hartlepool in Images Group has submitted an application for Community Asset Transfer of the property for the display of historic artefacts of Hartlepool. The proposal is to house archive copies of the Hartlepool Mail, photographic images and paintings & drawings of local interest as well as being an educational resource for people across Hartlepool to explore local heritage and family histories.

3.6 The proposal has been considered by the Assistant Director of Community Services who has expressed a number of concerns in relation to the constitution, sustainability and viability of the proposal particularly:

a) There is a requirement within the Council's transfer of Community Asset protocol that any organisation has to be formally constituted and be able to demonstrate a track record of managing assets and delivering Community Projects. Currently the History of Hartlepool in Images Group is an on-line group. They do however express the intention to have a formal constitution in the future.

b) Similarly no evidence has been provided to demonstrate the current and future demand for the facility for this use as online membership is no guarantee of physical need.

c) Fundamentally the property concerned is a small lodge house with restricted access including, steps and small sized rooms at ground floor. First floor rooms are up a narrow domestic staircase. This is not a suitable property to be considered for the purposes suggested.

d) The outlined proposals which relate to family history support, photographic exhibitions and a home for the 12 bound copies of the Hartlepool Mail are all services which are highly developed within the town's Central Library Reference service and whilst any group could offer a similar service if they chose to do so it is considered that this venue is not a suitable one for such use.

e) The Library Service offers assistance for family history research, online genealogy access (currently running at 41,000 hours per annum of public use), and significant photographic images relating to the town, which in conjunction with the Museum collection, number tens of thousands. The Group could work with the Library Service to deliver their objectives.

- 3.7 The Group accept that their formation and proposals are in their infancy and have requested time to develop their proposals.
- 3.8 It is important to balance the Council's target for capital receipts with the requirements of the voluntary and community sector for buildings in which to operate. However, it is also important to ensure that any building that will be transferred under the policy is fit for purpose and is capable of complying with statutory requirements including access and is capable of long term sustainability and income generation in the long term.
- 3.9 The property has not been formally offered as a building for Community Asset Transfer due to its limitations but Portfolio Holder may wish to consider this as an option.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Unfortunately none of the bids in **confidential Appendix 1 This item 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 (para 3), information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.** represents market value and the values are substantially below that anticipated.
- 4.2 During the marketing period it has been highlighted by the Heritage Lottery Fund that a significant grant was awarded to enable the refurbishment of Ward Jackson Park and a proportion of this money

was expended on the Lodge House. As such there may be clawback provisions.

5. LEGAL & RISK CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Any future arrangements for the property will be subject to planning and relevant legal obligations imposed by the Council.

6. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The attention of the Portfolio Holder is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues, the proceeds of this transaction being a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.2 The decision to adopt a commercial approach to asset management requires the Council to release the full value of any properties or property rights that it disposes of.

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications

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

- 8.1 There are currently no implications under Section 17. Planning approval will consider any future implications.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Portfolio Holder rejects the bids submitted for the sale of Ward Jackson Park Lodge.
- 9.2 That the Portfolio Holder considers the objections raised and the representations regarding the alternative future use, including offering the building for Community Asset Transfer, and the objections raised.
- 9.3 That the Portfolio Holder receives a report to the next meeting to agree the way forward.

10 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The sale will not generate an adequate capital receipt.
- 10.2 If a sale is not pursued alternative action on the building needs to be considered.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None

12. CONTACT OFFICER

Graham Frankland
Assistant Director (Resources)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523211

E-mail: graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12 December 2012



Report of: Chief Finance Officer

Subject: IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS - SUNDRY DEBTOR
INVOICES

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To seek the Portfolio Holder's approval to write-out a number of Sundry Debtor Invoices, which are now considered to be irrecoverable.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's financial procedure rules provide that any debt due to the Council of £1000 or more can only be written-out with the express permission of the Portfolio Holder.
- 3.2 Each year the council issues sundry debtor invoices to the value of £23m and typically over 97% of debt is collected within 3 months. Whilst every effort is made to collect debts due to the Council, certain debts become irrecoverable and this report seeks the Portfolio Holder's agreement for their write-out. One of the cases listed involves an absconder who has been subject to comprehensive tracing checks without success, however, should at a future date any payment be secured from this individual the invoice will again be reinstated on the Integra Debtors system.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The council as part of its financial accounts preparation undertakes analysis and sets aside a provision for potential non collection of sundry

debt. The amounts identified for write out in this report can be accommodated within the assessed provision.

- 4.2. The appendices attached to this report details the individual Sundry Invoices over £1000, and the reasons why each invoice remains unrecovered:

Appendix A – Individual declared Bankrupt

Appendix B – Individuals deceased and no estate

Appendix C – Absconder

The appendices contain exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely (para 3), information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

All debts submitted for write-out from the accounting records have been comprehensively scrutinised by officers. The majority of the debts relate to individuals who have died and have no funds left in their estate to pay outstanding social care charges after the payment of funeral costs. In these cases a range of enquiries have been undertaken by officers to validate this position requiring the provision of funeral invoices, bank statements etc.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1. That the Portfolio Holder agrees to write-out debts to the value of £40,199.45.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 To ensure the appropriate accounting treatment of debtors within the council's financial systems.

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

- 7.1 Exempt information appendices attached.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

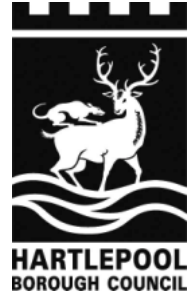
- 8.1. No background papers.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

John Morton
Assistant Chief Finance Officer
Email: john.morton@hartlepool.gov.uk
Contact: 01429 523093

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO REPORT

12th December 2012



Report of: Human Resources Business Partners

Subject: GENERAL PURPOSES (APPEALS & STAFFING)
COMMITTEE - REDUNDANCY DISMISSAL
APPEALS PROCEDURE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To review and agree a new appendix to the Reorganisation, Redundancy and Redeployment Policy to include the revised General Purposes (Appeals & Staffing) Committee Redundancy Dismissal Appeals Procedure.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Hartlepool Borough Council has a Reorganisation, Redundancy and Redeployment Policy. This references the redundancy dismissal appeals process and it would make sense to link the process to this policy as an appendix.

There is currently a section within the stand-alone Redundancy Dismissal Appeal process which indicates that if members uphold the appeal then a review is instigated which then needs to submit its findings back to the Committee. This need for a review has caused a number of issues, including a delay in a final decision to the employee, and therefore all parties involved in discussions on this process have agreed that the need for a review should be removed and should Members need further clarification before making a decision then they still have the option to adjourn the appeal.

4. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

4.1 The new Appendix is attached at Appendix 1 for information. However the main changes include:

- Ensuring clarity as to the decisions that can be made as a result of an appeal
- Removal of the need for a review process
- Introduction of flow chart for ease of reference
- Updated job title reference for those involved in the appeal

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 That a decision is made to approve the proposed new appendix so the policy can be updated.

6. CONTACT OFFICER

Rachel Clark
HR Business Partner
rachel.clark@hartlepool.gov.uk
Tel: 01429 284346

Appendix 1

General Purposes (Appeals & Staffing) Committee**Appeals against Redundancy Dismissal****Constitution of Appeals Committee**

Appeals against redundancy dismissal are heard by a duly convened and quorate General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) Committee of the Council. The Constitution defines the make up of the Committee and how many Members constitute a quorum.

Members who have had any direct prior involvement in the case will be excluded from sitting. A Human Resource Representative will attend appeals against redundancy dismissal to provide advice (including procedural and employment law advice) to the Committee and to assist Members generally in establishing the arguments and facts being presented to them.

Normal Council Democratic Services support will be provided to the Committee. The Democratic Services Officer shall record the decision of the Committee but is not present to provide any form of advice other than on administrative matters.

Written Statements

Both management and the employee will be invited to submit written statements of case which will be forwarded to Committee Members by the notified report deadline. Where both parties have provided statements these will also be exchanged at the same time. If one party does not produce a statement, they will receive the other party's statement as early as practicable or on the day of the hearing.

Within 3 days of the hearing both the management representative and the employee must notify the Human Resource Representative advising the Committee, of the names of any witnesses that will be called to support their case. The names of these individuals will be notified to both parties in advance of the hearing.

Representation and Attendance

The normal procedure will be for the Employee plus their Representative, and the dismissing Chief Officer, the relevant Service Manager, plus a Human Resources representative, to attend the hearing and present their cases. Witnesses will be called in turn, to give evidence and will then leave the hearing. It is at the discretion of the Committee to permit either party to bring additional representatives/managers and to decide whether they may attend in an observer or participant capacity.

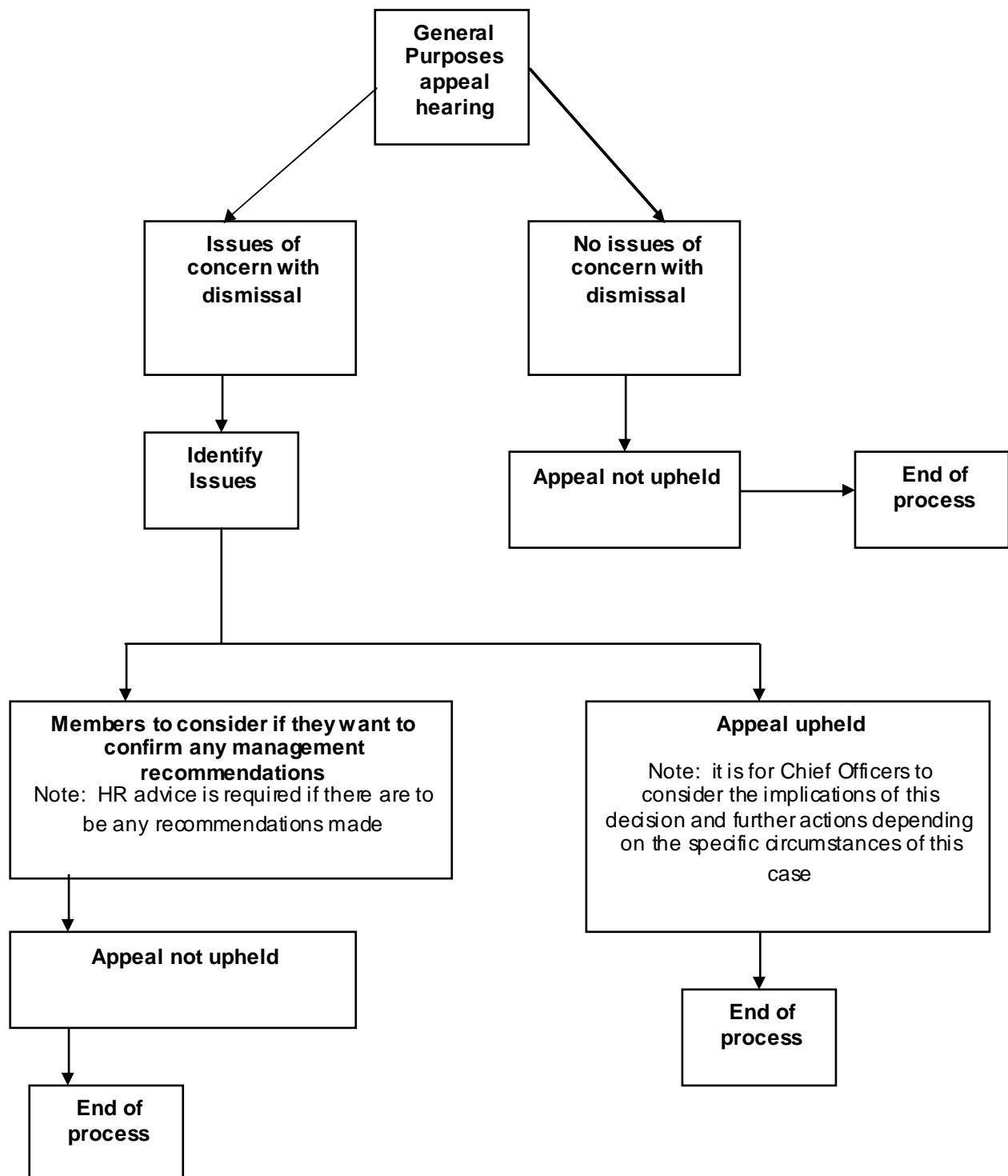
Decisions

Decisions generally will fall into two categories, namely:

- (a)** Appeal Not Upheld: not allowing the appeal in which case the employee's redundancy dismissal is confirmed.
- (b)** Appeal Upheld: allowing the appeal. Members should confirm on what basis the appeal is allowed.

Members should refer to the process flowchart in this procedure (Flowchart 1: Guide for Members / Appeals against Redundancy Dismissal Process) below.

The General Purposes (Appeals and Staffing) Committee shall give its decision in full detail in the presence of both parties and the Human Resources Representative advising the Committee, and clarification may be sought by any party.

Flowchart 1: Guide for Members / Appeals against Redundancy Dismissal Process

Guide to the format of the Hearing

The procedure will be as follows: -

Management Case

1. The Management Representative and/or Human Resource Representative shall state the case.
2. The Management Representative and/or Human Resource Representative may call witnesses and the procedure for questioning each witness shall be:
 - Management and/or Human Resource Representative to question
 - Employee and/or Representative to question
 - Each Member of the Committee and the Human Resource Representative advising the panel, to be invited to ask any questions
 - Management and/or Human Resource Representative to re-examine
 - Witness to retire
3. The Employee or Representative may ask questions of the Management Representative and/or Human Resource Representative.
4. The Committee Members and the Human Resource Representative advising the panel may ask questions of the Management Representatives and/or Human Resource Representative

Employee Case / Response

5. The Employee or Representative shall state the case.
6. The Employee or Representative may call witnesses and the procedure for questioning each witness shall be:
 - Employee and/or Representative to question.
 - Management representative and/or Human Resource Representative to question.
 - Each Member of the Committee and the Human Resource Representative advising the panel to be invited to ask any questions.
 - Employee and/or Representative to re-examine.
 - Witness to retire
7. The Management Representative and/or Human Resource Representative may ask questions of the Employee.
8. The Committee Members and the Human Resource Representative advising the panel, may ask questions of the employee and/or representative.

Summing Up

9. The Management Representative and/or Human Resource Representative to have the opportunity to sum up the case, if they choose to.
10. The Employee and/or Representative to have the opportunity to sum up the case, if they choose to.
11. The Management Representative and Human Resource Representative, the Employee and Representative to withdraw.
12. The Committee to deliberate in private with only the Human Resource Representative to the panel, and Democratic Services Officer in attendance recalling the Management Representative, Human Resource Representative, the Employee and Representative only if clarification of evidence already given is required. In such instances all parties should be recalled even though clarification may be required from only one party.

Decision

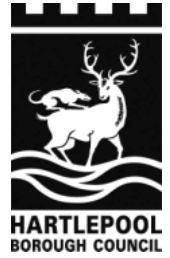
13. The Committee shall announce its decision to both parties unless further time for deliberation is needed; in which case both parties will be advised of this.
14. The decision of the Committee and the terms of this will be notified to both parties in writing within 7 calendar days of the hearing.

General Notes

1. The provision for summing up at (9) and (10) does not include the right to introduce new evidence at this stage in the procedure. If this becomes necessary, then the other party should be given the right of reply.
2. Any matters not covered by the above procedure will be for the Committee to determine.
3. The Employee Representative must be a Trade Union representative or colleague from work.
4. When advising the Committee, the Human Resource Representative shall not have had any involvement in the original decision to dismiss.

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12th December 2012



Report of: Organisational Development Manager

Subject: CHILD CARE VOUCHERS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To obtain Portfolio Holder authority approval to a contract extension of a further 3 years with the current provider of child care vouchers.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has provided a number of salary sacrifice schemes to employees, including child care vouchers, for a number of years.
- 3.2 Salary sacrifice schemes enable employees to have a deduction taken from their gross salary to make a payment for specific goods/services offered by their employer or by a third party. The employees benefit as the amount of their salary that is subject to tax and NI is reduced and employers benefit as they have reduced NI contributions for participating employees, although there is an administration fee to pay as well.
- 3.3 Child care vouchers have been provided by the current provider for a number of years and the arrangements have been 'trouble free'.
- 3.4 The current cost of the administration fee for the child care voucher scheme is £13.3k which is well below the threshold for undertaking a tender exercise.
- 3.5 Around 100 employees take advantage of the child care voucher scheme with the majority being employed in schools. This number has remained fairly constant for a number of years.
- 3.6 Some soft market testing has been undertaken over recent months.

4. PROPOSED FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The current provider has offered to substantially reduce the administration fee to a level comparable with other providers in exchange for a 3 year contract which will result in significant savings.
- 4.2 Information relating to the soft market testing is attached as **Confidential Appendix 1. This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3), information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**
- 4.3 Changing the provider of child care vouchers will result in some disruption to employees, may impact upon child care providers used by employees if they are not set up to take child care vouchers from the alternative provider and would not require changes to internal administration arrangements.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That a contract extension of a further 3 years with the current provider of child care vouchers be approved.
- 5.2 That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Solicitor concludes this 'contract extension' with the current service provider.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Significant additional savings are unlikely to be possible and any smaller savings would be outweighed by the potential disruption to employees, internal administrative processes and child care providers.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8. CONTACT OFFICER

Wally Stagg
Organisational Development Manager
01429 523476
wally.stagg@hartlepool.gov.uk

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12 December 2012



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: REGISTRATION SERVICE UPDATE AND ANNUAL
FEES REVIEW

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide an update on the Registration Service review and agree proposed fees for the financial year 2013-14.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As reported at the Finance & Corporate Services Portfolio meeting held on 12 August 2012, a review of the Registration & Nationality Service was scheduled to look at how the service could be improved and enhanced. That review is now complete and a number of changes have been made to the service including a recommendation from the General Register Office.

3.2 The north-east's General Register Officer Account Manager reviewed the proposals and endorsed the changes but recommended that, based on our level of business, we implement their single Superintendent Register, single Registrar of Births and Deaths model. This model has been introduced across a number of local authorities and has demonstrated service efficiencies such as a reduction in the number of statutory registers in use at the same time. This will streamline the current accounting procedures and reduce the need for 3 separate stock accounts. Each statutory postholder will appoint deputies to support service delivery.

3.3 The review identified that some activities could transfer to the customer service centre which would improve the resilience of the service and help to ensure that succession plans are in place which includes introducing a staff development scheme at Bands 5 to 6. Plans are being progressed to ensure that sufficient, well-trained staff are available to register straightforward births and deaths and undertake notice of marriage or civil partnership. Complex activities will be

undertaken by more senior staff across the team. All activities will be delivered in line with General Register Office's Good Practice Guide.

- 3.4 Non-statutory functions were reviewed particularly in relation to the nationality checking service (NCS) that is provided on behalf of the Immigration & Passport Office (IPS) together with Naming and Renewal of Vows ceremonies.
- 3.5 The nationality checking service is available to persons wishing to apply for British Citizenship and is similar to the passport checking service though the process is more complex as documentary evidence must be produced. The review identified that there was no financial business case to continue with this non-statutory service based on the costs of providing the service against the number of applications processed and in the light of ongoing pressures faced by the council. As an annual fee is payable to IPS to register to provide the NCS, we did not renew our subscription that was due in October this year and ceased offering the service with effect from 1 November 2012. The service is available from other local authorities in the region.
- 3.6 The fees in relation to the Registration Service are in 2 parts - the statutory fees and non-statutory fees. The statutory fees are set by the Registrar General following approval by government. The non-statutory fees are set by the local authority to reflect their reasonable costs of providing services.
- 3.7 Fees are reviewed on an annual basis and the current levels are attached at Appendix 1. The main fees that are non-statutory relate to the provision of ceremonies and nationality checking service. Those items marked with an asterisk are statutory fees and remain unchanged.
- 3.8 We took the opportunity when setting the fees for 2012-13 to overhaul the ceremony charges as there were a number of different fees for ceremonies held on different days and at different times of the week. The fees were simplified to reflect whether they are held during or outside office hours or on bank holidays.
- 3.9 Ceremony fees are also based on type of ceremony ie statutory or non-statutory and the venue.
- 3.10 A project has also been undertaken to consider provision of standard and enhanced ceremonies as highlighted in last year's fees review report. Some local authorities provide standard ceremonies with a limited choice of words and music and then offer an enhanced ceremony with a more personalised service at an additional cost. These enhanced ceremonies can include a discussion meeting prior to the ceremony, an extended choice of words and readings and an opportunity for couples to provide their own music, subject to copyright laws. We currently offer couples a discussion and some choices as part of our standard provision.

4. PROPOSALS FOR REGISTRATION FEE LEVELS FOR 2013-14

- 4.1 It is proposed that the existing non-statutory fee levels are increased by 2.5% (rounded to the nearest pound) in line with budget provision for 2013-14 as detailed at Appendix 2. There is one proposed exception relating to admin and postage costs for provision of certificates where the proposed costs have been set to cover the increased costs.
- 4.2 Across the north east region, authorities undertake a benchmarking exercise and our fees are comparable with those of neighbouring and regional authorities.
- 4.3 Ceremony provision has been reviewed and implementing standard and enhanced ceremonies at different fee levels will better reflect the costs of provision of the ceremonies service.
- 4.4 It is proposed that, in future, we offer 2 types of ceremonies – standard and enhanced with standard ceremonies only made available at the Middlegate Room at the Borough Hall, our decommissioned marriage room. Couples will have a set choice of music and words that will be identified via a pro-forma meaning that no discussion meeting is necessary.
- 4.5 For enhanced ceremonies, that will be available at the Middlegate Room and undertaken at all approved premises, couples will be able to choose their own music, readings with additional words inserted before and/or after the statutory vows. At these ceremonies, the couple may ask family members or friends to undertake a reading. For all enhanced ceremonies, a discussion meeting will be held.
- 4.6 The existing fee levels for all ceremonies have been increased by 2.5% and it is proposed that the existing fee level for ceremonies at the Middlegate Room remains as the fee for a standard ceremony. However, any couple wishing to have an enhanced ceremony at the Middlegate Room would be charged the same fee as one held at an approved premises. Enhanced ceremonies would be undertaken at all approved premises.
- 4.7 Currently very few children's naming ceremonies and renewal of vows ceremonies are requested. Plans are being developed to improve and market these ceremonies by introducing a similar style to the enhanced marriage or civil partnership ceremony. It is proposed that the fees for these ceremonies are adjusted to bring them in line with the fees for enhanced ceremonies that will better reflect the cost of provision.
- 4.8 There are no plans to increase the Approved Premises charges that relate to licences for private premises that offer wedding packages. Currently should a licensee wish to add a room to their existing approval, they would have to pay the full cost of a new application. The costs incurred in processing an application to add a room to an existing approval can be set at a lower level to reflect the reduced amount of work involved. It is proposed that a new fee is introduced based on around 50% of the full application cost.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Over recent years changes to hospital provision has meant a reduction in the number of births and deaths registered in with a resultant loss of income. Whilst the NCS has helped to meet income targets there is still a potential shortfall in income generation going forward.
- 5.2 The Registrars Review, which resulted in some staffing changes, will help to ensure that income targets are achieved whilst taking account of the loss of income from the NCS.
- 5.3 The number of marriages/civil partnerships between April and December this year has increased by just over 20% with the highest increase being for ceremonies held in approved premises.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The removal of the NCS will mean that residents wishing to apply for citizenship via a local authority will have to travel to another authority in the region. However, over the last year, almost 80% of applicants who applied to Hartlepool resided outside the borough.
- 6.2 Enquiries and requests from residents relating to the NCS will be recorded and monitored. Based on that feedback, consideration will be given to reintroducing the service if there is a robust financial business case based on costs that can be covered by sufficient service demand.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the increase in non-statutory of fees for the Registration Service proposed at Appendix 2 are approved to take effect on 1 April 2013 excluding ceremonies that have already been paid for in full.
- 7.2 That the changes to the Registration Service following the completion of the service review are noted.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To ensure that the fees remain competitive and achieve income targets for the financial year 2013-14.

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

Appendix 1 – Hartlepool Register Office Fees – April 2012 – March 2013

Appendix 2 – Hartlepool Register Office Proposed Fees April 2013 – Mar 2014

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Performance Portfolio Meeting – 14 February 2012 – Register Office Fees
Finance & Corporate Services Portfolio Meeting – 12 August 2012 – Customer
& Support Services Annual Report

11. CONTACT OFFICER

Christine Armstrong
Customer & Support Services Manager
Chief Executive's Department
Email: christine.armstrong@hartlepool.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Hartlepool Register Office – Fees April 2012 to March 2013			
CIVIL CEREMONIES			
All ceremony fees include provision of 1 certificate			
	Office Hours	Evenings and weekends	Bank Holidays
Marriages and Civil Partnerships in Superintendent Registrar's Office	£49.00*	N/A	N/A
Marriages and Civil Partnerships in Middlegate Room, Borough Hall	£135.00	£230.00	£350.00
Marriages and Civil Partnerships in Approved Premises	£290.00	£390.00	£500.00
Alternative Civil Ceremonies, ie Naming Ceremonies, Renewal of Vows and Individual Citizenship Ceremonies	£135.00	£230.00	£350.00
Individual Citizenship Ceremony in Superintendent Registrar's Office	£78.00	N/A	N/A
OTHER FEES IN RELATION TO BOOKINGS AND PREMISES			
Notice of Intention of Marriage or Civil Partnership (each person)			£35.00*
Advance Ceremony Booking Fee - non-refundable to reserve Registrar for ceremony			£50.00
Inspection of other premises for Naming Ceremonies, Renewal of Vows and Citizenship Ceremonies			£50.00
Approval of Premises as venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships	Initial Application		£970.00
	Renewal		£970.00
	Appeal against Refusal		£260.00
NATIONALITY CHECKING SERVICE			
Initial Application			£65.00
Each Minor application (jointly or separately)			£20.00
CERTIFICATES			
New Registrations			
Certificates issued by a Registrar of Birth and Deaths at the time of registration			£4.00*
Certificates issued by a Registrar of Birth and Deaths after registration			£7.00*
From Archived Registers			
Certificates issued and available for collection (target production within one week)			£10.00*
Certificates issued and sent 'Recorded Delivery' (target production within one week)			£12.00
Certificates issued and available for collection within 24 hours			£16.00
Certificates issued and posted within 24 hours via 'Recorded Delivery'			£18.00
Postage and Handling Charges			
Guaranteed Next Day Delivery Service is available at cost where an application is made before 11 am (details available on request)			
Requests for certificates to be issued using standard mail services will attract postage and handling charge of £1 - Note that no responsibility can be accepted for non-delivery of certificates if using standard service.			

* Statutory Fees

APPENDIX 2 HARTLEPOOL REGISTER OFFICE – FEES APRIL 2013 TO MARCH 2014			
CIVIL CEREMONIES All ceremony fees include provision of 1 certificate			
	Office Hours	Evenings and weekends	Bank Holidays
Marriages and Civil Partnerships in Superintendent Registrar's Office	£49.00*	N/A	N/A
Marriages and Civil Partnerships in Middlegate Room, Borough Hall – Standard Ceremony	£138.00	£236.00	£359.00
Marriages, Civil Partnerships, Naming, Renewal of Vows and Citizenship in Middlegate Room and Approved Premises – Enhanced Ceremony	£297.00	£400.00	£512.00
Individual Citizenship Ceremony in Superintendent Registrar's Office	£80.00	N/A	N/A
OTHER FEES IN RELATION TO BOOKINGS AND PREMISES			
Notice of Intention of Marriage or Civil Partnership (each person)			£35.00*
Advance Ceremony Booking Fee – non-refundable to reserve Registrar for ceremony			£50.00
Inspection of other premises for Naming Ceremonies, Renewal of Vows and Citizenship Ceremonies			£50.00
Approval of Premises as venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships	Initial Application	£995.00	
	Renewal	£995.00	
	Additional Rooms added during licensed period	£500.00	
	Appeal against Refusal	£266.00	

CERTIFICATES	
New Registrations	
Certificates issued by a Registrar of Birth and Deaths at the time of registration	£4.00*
Certificates issued by a Registrar of Birth and Deaths after registration	£7.00*

From Archived Registers	
Certificates issued and available for collection (target production within one week)	£10.00*
Certificates issued and sent 'Recorded Delivery' (target production within one week)	£14.00
Certificates issued and available for collection within 24 hours	£18.00
Certificates issued and posted within 24 hours via 'Recorded Delivery'	£20.00

Postage and Handling Charges
Guaranteed Next Day Delivery Service is available at additional cost where an application is made before 11 am (details available on request)
Requests for certificates to be issued using standard mail services will attract a postage and handling charge of £1.50 - Note that no responsibility can be accepted for non-delivery of certificates if using standard service.

* Statutory Fees

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12th December 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Resources)

Subject: THROSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To obtain consent to an extension of the lease and option to purchase already granted over the premises.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following a decision made at Portfolio Meeting on the 26th January 2012, a lease and option to purchase was granted to Hartlepool Stage Society in respect of Throston Community Centre. The centre had previously been offered up for Community Asset Transfer but there had not been any interested parties, and the centre had subsequently been marketed to let. The property is shown hatched on the plan at **Appendix 1**.

3.2 When the centre was marketed to let there were 2 interested parties, one of which was Hartlepool Stage Society and ultimately they made a higher rental bid. However, the real interest of the Stage Society was in purchasing the property, albeit that they were not in a position to proceed with a purchase at that point as they had not yet sold their premises in Osbourne Rd and did not have the funds to make the purchase without this sale. Following the decision of Portfolio Holder in January 2012 an option to purchase was incorporated in the lease.

3.3 The lease and option were subsequently granted for a period of 12 months from 1st May 2012.

- 3.4 In September 2012, the Society wrote to Portfolio Holder requesting an extension of the lease and option, as they anticipated not being able to sell the Osbourne Road property in time to fund the purchase of the centre. A price reduction was also requested. Subsequently an extension for a further 12 months from May 2013 has been provisionally agreed on the same terms as the existing lease.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed to extend the lease and option for a further 12 months from May 2013 on the same terms as the existing lease and option to allow the Society more time to dispose of its own property in order to be able to complete the purchase of the Community Centre. The existing lease and option terms are set out in the **Confidential Appendix 2 (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

5. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The Chief Solicitor will advise on the lease and purchase arrangement.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The continued letting of the centre will produce a small income stream and substantial revenue savings as the running costs are borne by the tenant. Sale of the centre would produce a capital receipt which is considered a reasonable reflection of the market value of the property but the property has not been offered for sale on the open market. It should also be noted that the property adjoins two other Council owned properties, Throston library and Exmoor Grove Children's Home, and its sale could limit future use or redevelopment of these sites (shown cross hatched on the Plan at **Appendix 1**).

7. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The attention of the portfolio Holder is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial, proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues, the proceeds of this transaction being a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 7.2 The decision to adopt a commercial approach to asset management requires the Council to realise the full value of any properties or property rights that it disposes of.

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 implications under Section 17.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 It is recommended that the existing lease and option terms be extended for a further 12 months from the end of the current lease arrangement.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The continued letting of the centre will produce a small income stream and substantial revenue savings as the running costs are borne by the tenant.
- 11.2 The Stage Society have not been able to sell their existing property in Osbourne Road as yet and therefore need more time to achieve this in order to be able to purchase the Community Centre.

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

- 12.1 Plan enclosed as **Appendix 1**.
Existing lease and option terms enclosed as **Appendix 2**.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 There are no background papers to this report.

14. CONTACT OFFICER

Graham Frankland
Assistant Director (Resources)
Civic Centre
Victoria Rd
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY
Tel 01429 523211

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

Date 12th December 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Resources)

Subject: SALE OF CARGO FLEET DEPOT
MIDDLESBROUGH

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval to the sale of the Council's interest in Cargo Fleet Depot Middlesbrough.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 When Cleveland County Council were abolished in 1996, all operational properties were transferred to the new unitary, however certain non-operational properties were retained in the joint ownership of the four new unitary authorities.

3.2 These properties were vested in the ownership of the unitary Council within whose boundary they were located who had both user rights if they occupied them directly or if not they had an obligation to manage them to maximise returns.

3.3 Any surplus income or receipts are shared between the successor authorities in accordance with the following percentages;

Stockton 31.75
Hartlepool 16.5%
Middlesbrough 25.9%
Redcar & Cleveland 25.9%

3.4 Middlesbrough & Redcar & Cleveland Councils have occupied Cargo Fleet Depot on a joint basis for a number of years however Redcar &

Cleveland have now vacated and Middlesbrough have requested if they can purchase the property for the continued use as a depot.

- 3.5 The site extends to 6.8 acres and includes a range of aging industrial buildings and offices extending to 67,500 sq ft.
- 3.6 An independent valuation has been undertaken by GVA Grimley who have valued the land and buildings.
- 3.7 It is proposed that the Council dispose of its interest to Middlesbrough subject to an overage arrangement in the sale that if the site is sold in the future for an alternate more valuable use then Hartlepool receive an additional payment in accordance with the distribution schedule reflecting the difference in value between a depot and the higher value use.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Council sells its share in Cargo Fleet Depot Middlesbrough to Middlesbrough Council subject to overage arrangements.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The sale price represents market value and the capital receipt will contribute towards the Council's medium term financial strategy target to achieve £4.5m Capital receipts in next 2½ years.
- 5.2 The Council's share of the sale proceeds are set out in confidential **Appendix 1. This item 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 (para 3), information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.**

6. LEGAL & RISK CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The property will be sold freehold subject to overage provisions

7. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no staff issues.

8. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The attention of the Portfolio Holder is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues, the proceeds of this transaction being a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 8.2 The decision to adopt a commercial approach to asset management requires the Council to release the full value of any properties or property rights that it disposes of.

9. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 9.1 There are no equality or diversity implications

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

- 10.1 There are currently no implications under Section 17. Planning approval will consider any future implications.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 That the Portfolio Holder approves the sale of Hartlepool's interest in Cargo Fleet Depot.

12 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 The sale will generate a capital receipt.

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

- 13.1 Sale proceeds details enclosed as **Appendix 1**.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 There are no background papers to this report.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

Graham Frankland
Assistant Director (Resources)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523211
E-mail: graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12th December 2012



Report of: Assistant Director (Resources)

Subject: THE WEST HARTLEPOOL TECHNICAL DAY
SCHOOL OLD BOYS RUFC

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To consider an approach from the Club to review the lease payments on land at Grayfields.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Club have leased land at Wiltshire Way from the Council since 1983, the site they occupy is divided into two elements, comprising;

- a) land on which the club house is sited (shown crossed hatched in **Appendix A**) and;
- b) land used for sports pitches (shown hatched in **Appendix A**).

3.2 In 2005 the lease was renewed for a further term of 25 years subject to 5 year rent reviews, details of which can be found in the **confidential Appendix B. (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

3.3 Previously the Club had approached the Council seeking a review of the lease arrangements to support them during a difficult phase of transition due to the demise of a rugby team playing out of the club.

- 3.4 The Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder at his meeting on 6th January 2011 agreed to suspend lease payments for a year, but recover the money over a 5 year period. This period has expired and the Club is paying the original lease payments in addition to the repayments.
- 3.5 A further approach has been received from the Club requesting a review of the ground rent on the basis that the rent should be reduced to reflect the change of emphasis to providing community facilities.

4. CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Details of the Club's approach including financial and operational details are included in **confidential Appendix C. (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**
- 4.2 Over the last few years there has been a dramatic reduction in the amount of rugby teams that use the pitches which has had a major impact on the revenue generated. The Club has changed the emphasis of its operation to hosting a variety of sporting and community groups in an attempt to increase sustainability of the Club's facility.
- 4.3 Progress since opening

Installed floodlights on the playing area (all at Club's expense)

- Fenced off the main pitch and provide posts
- Installed new fence around the playing area, (£5k grant from Council provided some help)
- Complete new roof installed
- Upgraded the internal fixtures and fittings a number of times.

The Club has provided support to a range of clubs and societies.

- The whole of West Hartlepool junior section during their "nomad" times.
- Hartlepool Community Football sessions
- George Colley Singers
- Health, fitness and diet clubs
- Hartlepool FC
 - Range of teams and juniors
 - Saturday morning soccer school
- Allotment Association
- Friends of Grayfields
- Continued support to Rugby

- Town rugby clubs when pitches and facilities are short
- Hosting Durham County Finals

4.4 The Club are adopting a far more commercial approach to income generation through a number of initiatives including:

- Increasing social events at the club
- Hiring out rooms for functions and conferences
- Allowing members the opportunity to use the building for private functions
- Support to local soccer teams and retain rugby through links with the District and County Unions.

The Club has also looked at ways of reducing the overheads at the premises as well such as:

- Aligning staff hours with club operating times and reducing staff wages
- Reviewing all service contracts
- Reviewing bar pricing structure.

The review of these matters has resulted in reduced operating costs/revenue generation but the sustainability of the Club remains difficult and the Club have requested urgent assistance to address the situation.

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 There are a number of options for the Portfolio Holder to consider; these are as follows:

- Allow the club a rent free period, length to be agreed.
- Reduce the rent payments in recognition of the greater emphasis on community facilities provided.
- Continue the lease arrangement in its present form.
- Or a combination,

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The risk associated with either granting a rent free period or reducing the rent is that if the transitions have limited effect, the Council may have to consider additional support.

6.2 A rent free period or a reduced rent will result in a budget pressure as this income contributes to the management of Grayfields.

7. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no staff issues.

8. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The attention of the portfolio Holder is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial, proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues, the proceeds of this transaction being a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 8.2 The decision to adopt a commercial approach to asset management requires the Council to realise the full value of any properties or property rights that it disposes of.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 10.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 Portfolio Holder to consider the proposals discussed in this report and provide direction on a preferred package of support.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

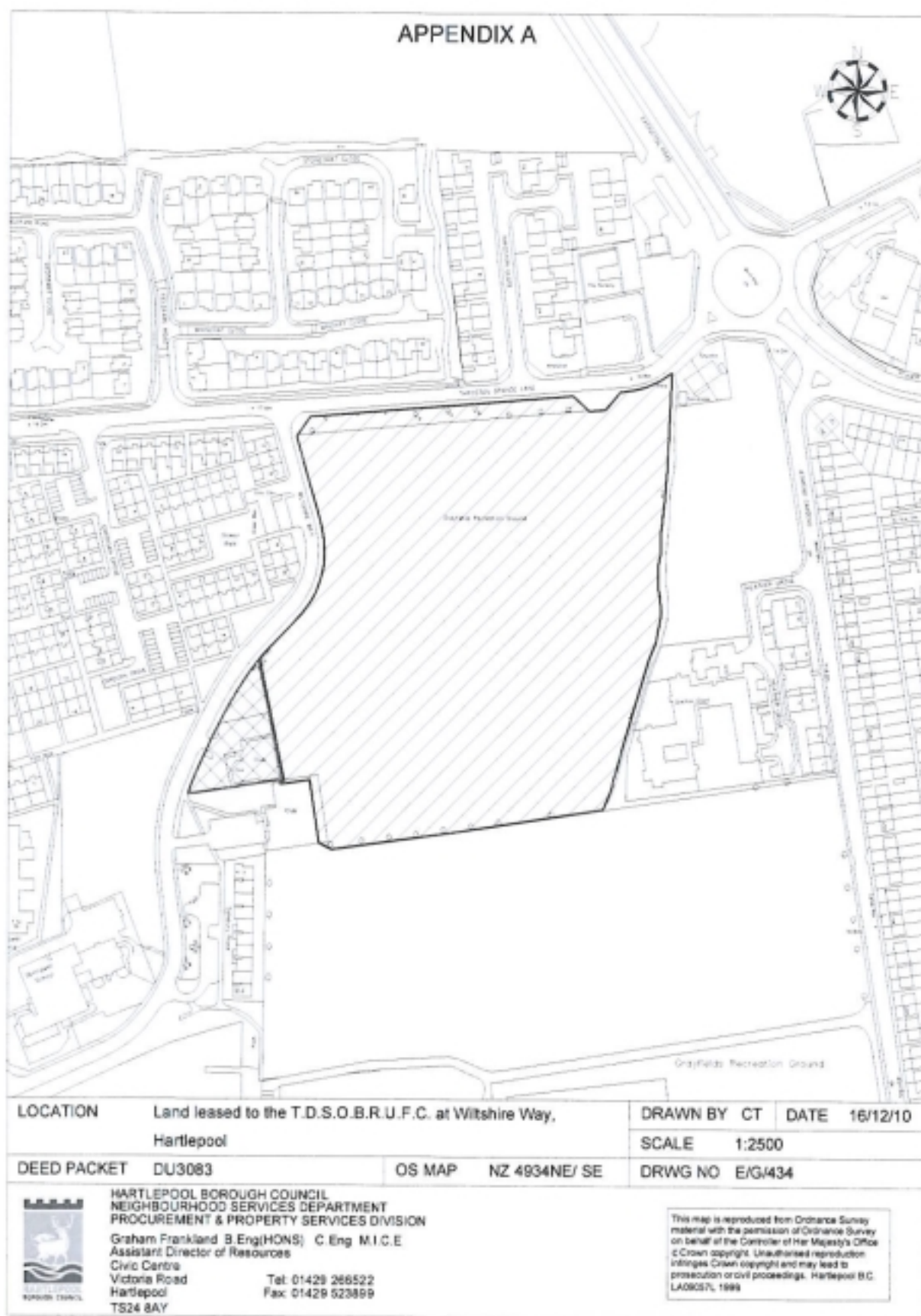
- 12.1 There are no background papers to this report.

13. CONTACT OFFICER

Graham Frankland
Assistant Director (Resources)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

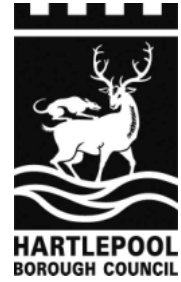
Tel: (01429) 523211

E-mail: graham.frankland@hartlepool.gov.uk



FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12 December 2012



Report of: Organisational Development Manager

Subject: SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT APPEALS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To obtain ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of appeals arising from the implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Single Status Agreement was formally agreed in May 2010 and implemented with effect from 1 April 2007. The Appeals Procedure for appeals submitted in relation to the implementation of the Single Status Agreement (i.e. between 1 April 2007 and 30 June 2012) was originally agreed at the Performance Portfolio Holder meeting on 27 June 2008. This has been reviewed in the light of experience of operating it for High Priority Appeals and a revised Appeals Procedure has been implemented following Performance Portfolio ratification.

- 3.2 The revised procedure provides:

- “The Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services will be regularly advised of appeals received and progress made in dealing with them” and;
- “All Appeal Panel outcomes must be ratified by the Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services or Governors (Governing Body, Pay Review Committee or Appeals Committee), as appropriate, prior to any changes being implemented.

- the Appeals Panel comprises 1 management representative, 1 trade union official and an independent chair”

3.3 Appeals are prioritised in accordance with the Single Status Agreement as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

Priority	Type of Appeal
High	Appeals received from current employees who are continuing to receive protection at 1 July 2008/Appeals which do not need an Appeals Panel to meet/ Appeals from employees who leave the Council from areas where job losses are needed/ Appeals from employees who retire from the Council due to ill health and the Teesside Pension Fund Doctor (for LGPS members) or the Council's Occupational Health Advisor (for non LGPS members) has determined that they meet the Local Government Pension Fund Tier 3 Ill Health criteria
Medium	Appeals received from current employees who were receiving protection prior to 1 July 2008/Appeals received from current employees who do not gain initially
Low	Appeals received from current employees who gained initially
Very Low	Former employees

3.4 In order to ensure equality of treatment, as far as possible, the revised Appeals Procedure, as detailed in 3.2 above, made provision for employees whose high priority appeals were considered under the original Appeals Procedure to

- receive the same documentation (i.e. Directors comments on the appeal, including the sore-thumbed factors and any subsequent clarification provided to the Appeals Panel by the Director) as appellants whose appeals have been considered since April 2011
- challenge, clarify or expand upon information already provided by the Director or appellants but not provide new information in respect of appealed factors
- provide new evidence in respect of the sore thumbbed factors
- attend the Appeals Panel to present their case (in which case the Director or representative will also present their case to the Appeals Panel)

3.5 There was no obligation on appellants to do anything in respect of 3.4 a) - d) above. For example they may decide

- to do nothing

- ii) to receive the documentation and then not submit any additional information
- iii) to receive the documentation and submit additional written information and subsequently decide not to proceed at any time up to the day before the Appeals Panel actually meeting to consider any additional information provided to them in writing and/or verbally and review the appeal outcome in light of the additional information provided.
- iv) to receive the documentation and submit additional written information and decide not to attend the Appeals Panel
- v) to receive the documentation and submit additional information and decide to attend the Appeals Panel.

- 3.6 The outstanding appeals have arisen
- following the implementation of the implementation of the Single Status Agreement and
 - following reviews of posts/restructures after the implementation of the Single Status Agreement

- 3.7 At your last meeting you deferred consideration for one outcome.

4. **CURRENT POSITION ON APPEALS ARISING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT**

- 4.1 All appeals arising from the implementation of the Single Status Agreement have now had an initial outcome ratified and all but one revisited appeals have had the revisited outcome ratified as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2

	Pay band increased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	8 (12)	21 (36)	1 (1)
Child and Adults	12 (25)	37 (89)	6 (7)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	22 (29)	58 (73)	7 (11)
Schools	2 (4)	8 (8)	0 (0)
Total	44 (70)	124 (206)	14 (19)

- 4.3 A summary of previously ratified revisited Appeal panel Outcomes is set out in Table 3 overleaf.

Table 3

	Pay band increased when appeal revisited and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Child and Adults	3 (4)	3 (14)	0 (0)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	4 (5)	4 (4)	0 (0)
Schools	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	9 (11)	7 (18)	0 (0)

- 4.4 A summary of previously ratified outcomes of the Appeals Panels which have been revisited but not subsequently ratified is set out in Table 4.

Table 4

	Pay band increased when appeal revisited and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Child and Adults	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Schools	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)

5. PROGRESS ON APPEALS ARISING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT

- 5.1 In determining the appeal outcome, the Appeal Panels have considered the submissions made by the appellant as well as 'sore-thumbing' the original evaluation. This is essential to ensure the robustness of individual evaluations and the job evaluation scheme as a whole. Whilst there are three possible overall outcomes (pay band increases, pay band remains the same or pay band decreases), this may mask changes to particular factor levels and/or 'tidying up' of evaluations which does not affect overall pay bands.
- 5.2 The programme for addressing appeals arising from the implementation of the Single Status Agreement will be complete once the process for the outstanding appeal has been completed.
- 5.3 In reconsidering the appeals, the Appeals Panel has only considered those factors potentially affected by any additional information presented to the Appeals Panel.
- 5.4 As indicated above, the Portfolio Holder is responsible for ratifying the outcomes in respect of Council employees whereas Governors are responsible for ratifying the outcomes in respect of school employees. Similarly, the Council is responsible for any changes in employee costs for Council employees whereas schools are responsible for any changes in employee costs for school employees.
- 5.5 Further details of the revisited outcome of the individual appeal not ratified is included in the "Not for Publication" **Appendix A** attached to this report.

This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of the Council (para 1).

- 5.7 The lower than expected cost of appeals has been reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts and now that the appeals arising from the implementation of the Single Status Agreement have all been processed these figures need to be updated to reflect the above outcomes. At this stage it is not expected that there will be any significant change from the current forecast.

6. APPEALS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT

- 6.1 The appeals received subsequent to the implementation of the Single Status Agreement are detailed in Table 4 overleaf.

Table 4

	Appeals received (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	2 (3)
Child and Adults	1 (3)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	3 (4)
Schools	2 (2)
Total	8 (12)

- 6.2 It is envisaged that the outstanding appeals will be considered by the Appeals Panel around Easter 2013.
- 6.3 The appeals procedure to be followed is similar to the procedure which applied in respect of appeals arising from the implementation of the Single Status Agreement, although the composition of the Appeals Panel changes. There will no longer being an independent chair and the Appeals Panel will comprise 2 management and 2 trade union members. Where, exceptionally, the Appeals Panel has a "Failure to Agree", the Regional Joint Secretaries will be requested to assist. If no agreement can subsequently be reached, the original match and pay band will apply.
- 6.4 The composition of the appeals panel was raised at Council through the Chief Executive's Business Report, following earlier consideration by the Constitution Committee (General Purposes Committee members also being invited to participate in those discussions). It was resolved by Council to refer this item back to the Constitution Committee for further consideration. It should be noted that any changes to the appeals procedure will require consultation with the trade unions and thereafter ratification by the Finance & Corporate Services Portfolio Holder.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Portfolio Holder ratifies the Appeals Panel Outcomes in respect of Council employees (as detailed in the "Not for Publication" schedule attached to this report) and notes the situation in relation to appeals.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Appeals Procedure is an integral part of the Single Status agreement and requires that the Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services be regularly advised of progress made in dealing with appeals received and ratifies the outcomes of Appeals Panels in respect of Council employees.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet report 23 December 2007.

Cabinet report 27 May 2008.

Performance Portfolio report 27 June 2008

Performance Portfolio report 26 September 2008

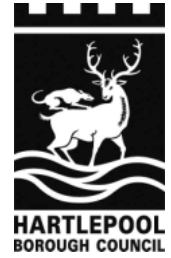
Performance Portfolio report 2 February 2009
Performance Portfolio report 26 February 2009
Performance Portfolio report 16 April 2009
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 14 July 2009
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 5 November 2009
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 23 February 2010
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 23 March 2010
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 30 April 2010
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 18 May 2010
Cabinet report 16 August 2010
Performance Portfolio report 26 October 2010
Cabinet report 21 February 2011
Performance Portfolio report 22 February 2011
Performance Portfolio report 23 March 2011
Performance Portfolio report 14 September 2011
Performance Portfolio report 8 November 2011
Performance Portfolio report 7 December 2011
Performance Portfolio report 18 January 2012
Performance Portfolio report 14 February 2012
Performance Portfolio report 25 April 2012
Finance and Corporate Services Portfolio report 15 August 2012
Constitution Committee report 22 August 2012
Council report 13 September 2012
Constitution Committee report 4 October 2012
Finance and Corporate Services Portfolio report 21 November 2012

10. **CONTACT OFFICER**

Wally Stagg
Organisational Development Manager
01429 523476
wally.stagg@hartlepool.gov.uk

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
12 December 2012



Report of: Human Resources Business Partners

Subject: EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE 2012/13 –
2nd QUARTER

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

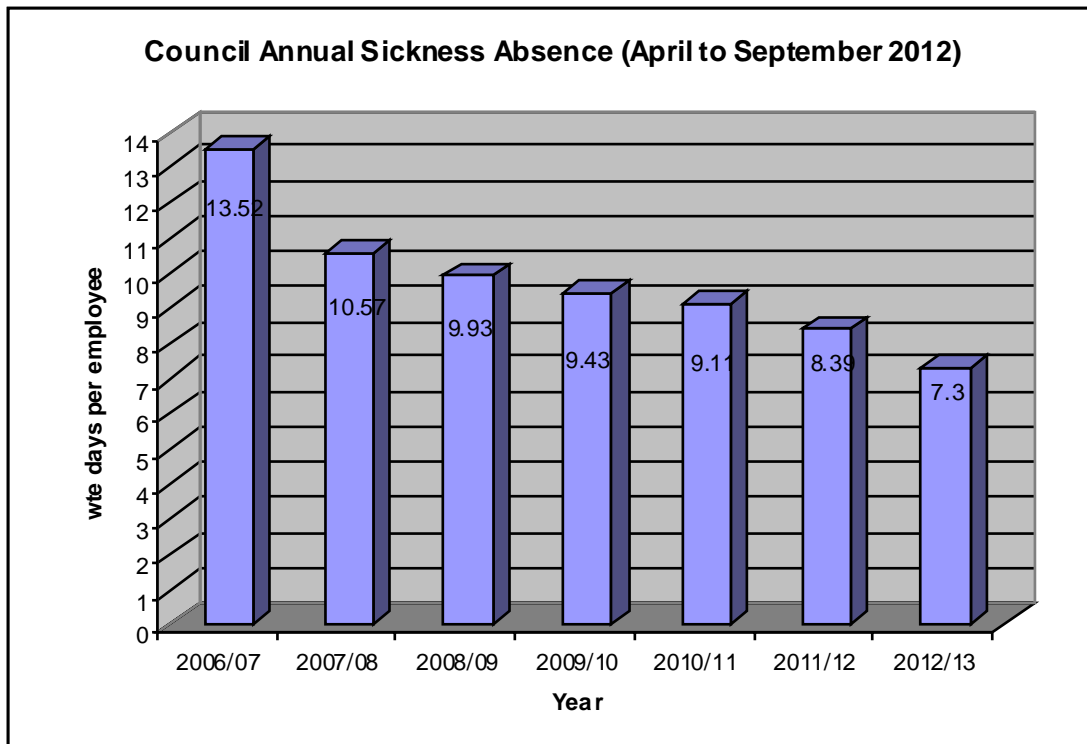
- 2.1 To update the Portfolio Holder on sickness absence performance up to the second quarter of 2012/13.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The extent to which employees are absent from work due to illness has a direct impact on the quality, level and cost of the provision of services. As such the Council have included this as a Local Performance Indicator (HRPI 5A) – The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence in its group of Corporate Health Performance Indicators.

4. THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE UP TO THE 2nd QUARTER OF 2012/13

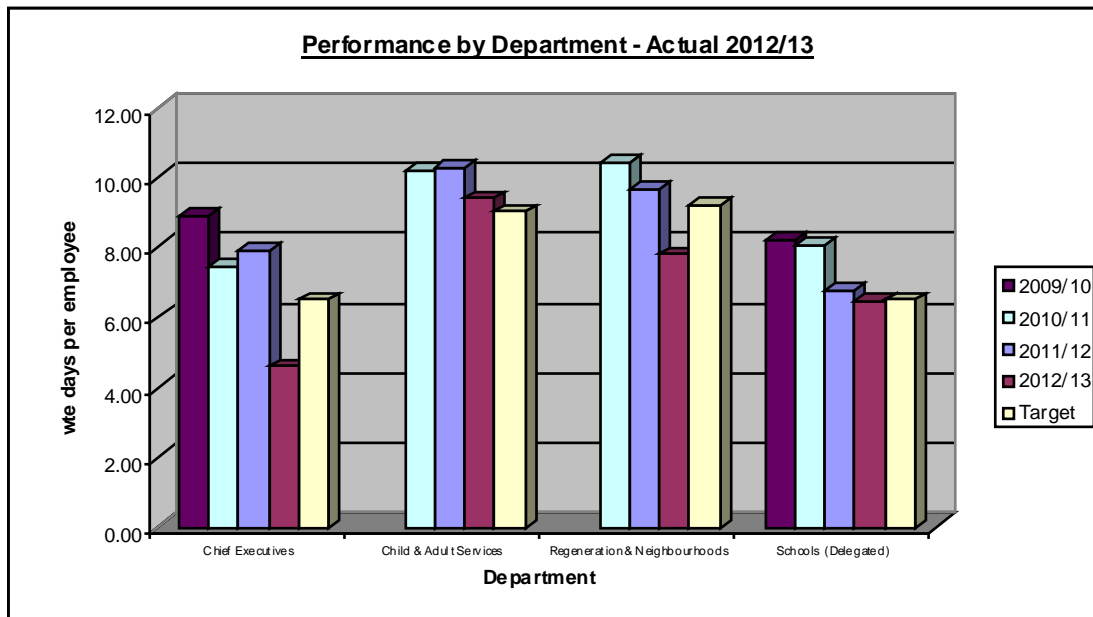
- 4.1 The target figure for 2012/13 for the Council is 7.70 days absence per wte employee (whole time equivalent). The actual sickness rate at the end of the 2nd quarter shows the Council's performance is under target at 7.30 days per wte per employee per annum as illustrated in Figure 1 below. The Council continues to focus on sickness absence management to ensure achievement of its 7.70 wte average sickness per employee target.

Figure 1

- 4.2 Figure 2 below illustrates the actual performance for each Department and Schools as at 30th September 2012. This can be compared to performance over the last three years for Chief Executives and Schools. The data for Child & Adult Services and Regeneration & Neighbourhoods shows the last two years rates due to the corporate restructure that formed the new Departments and therefore the lack of comparable data for 2009/10. The final column shows the 2012/13 annual target set by each Department and Schools.

The figure identifies that there is an overall downward trend in sickness absence rates across all Departments and Schools compared with the last three years. It shows, at this stage in the year, the Council are just under the challenging target set for this year but expect, through robust sickness absence management over the remaining months, will meet its overall sickness absence target for the year.

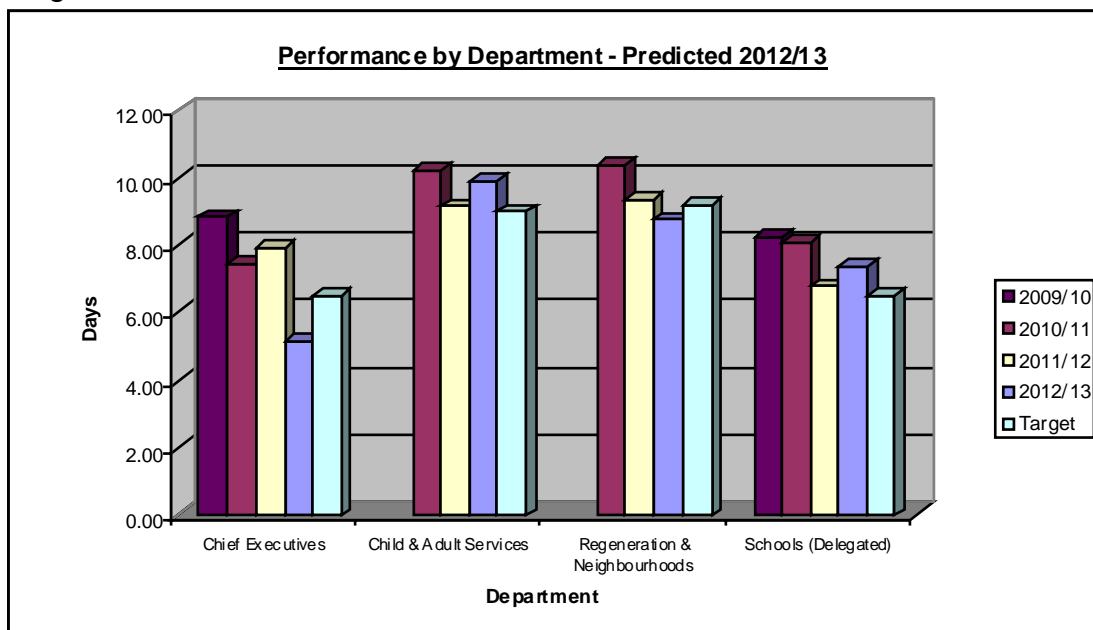
Figure 2



4.3 Figure 3 below identifies the end of year prediction figures for each Department and Schools as at 30th September 2012 and forecasts the performance as at 31 March 2013. This can be compared to the actual performance over the last three years. The final column shows the approved 2012/13 annual target for each Department, and Schools.

These figures illustrate that a decrease in sickness rates is needed for Child & Adult Services and Schools to meet their targets set for 2012/13, as the current predicted levels of sickness are higher.

Figure 3



4.4 Long, Medium and Short Term Sickness Absence Analysis

Figure 4 below shows a breakdown of long, medium or short term sickness absence in the Council for the past 6 years and up to 30th September 2012 for the 2012/13 year. The final column shows the impact this had on the overall Council sickness absence figure.

In 2012 there is a decline in long, medium and short term sickness absence which accounts for the overall downward trend for the Council. The Council ensures it targets resources to the management of long terms sickness absence cases which accounts for the majority of sickness. Overall this shows a year on year improvement in the management of sickness absence for the Council to date.

Figure 4 Council Long Medium and Short Terms Sickness 2nd Quarter Analysis 2012/13

Long term = 20 days plus
Medium term = 5 to 20 days
Short term = under 5 days

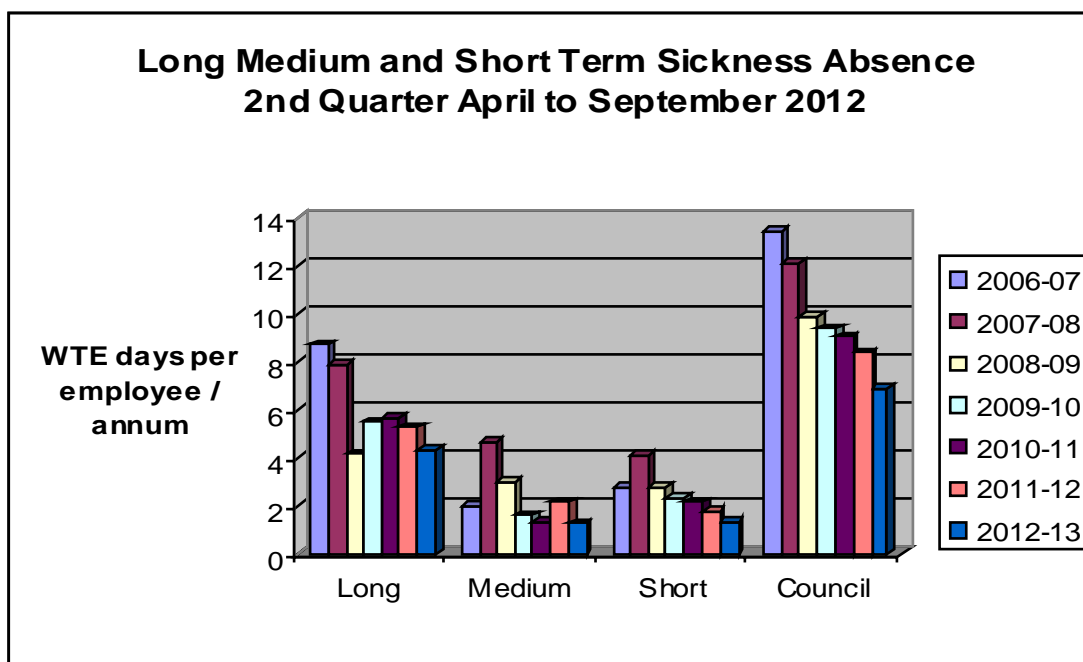
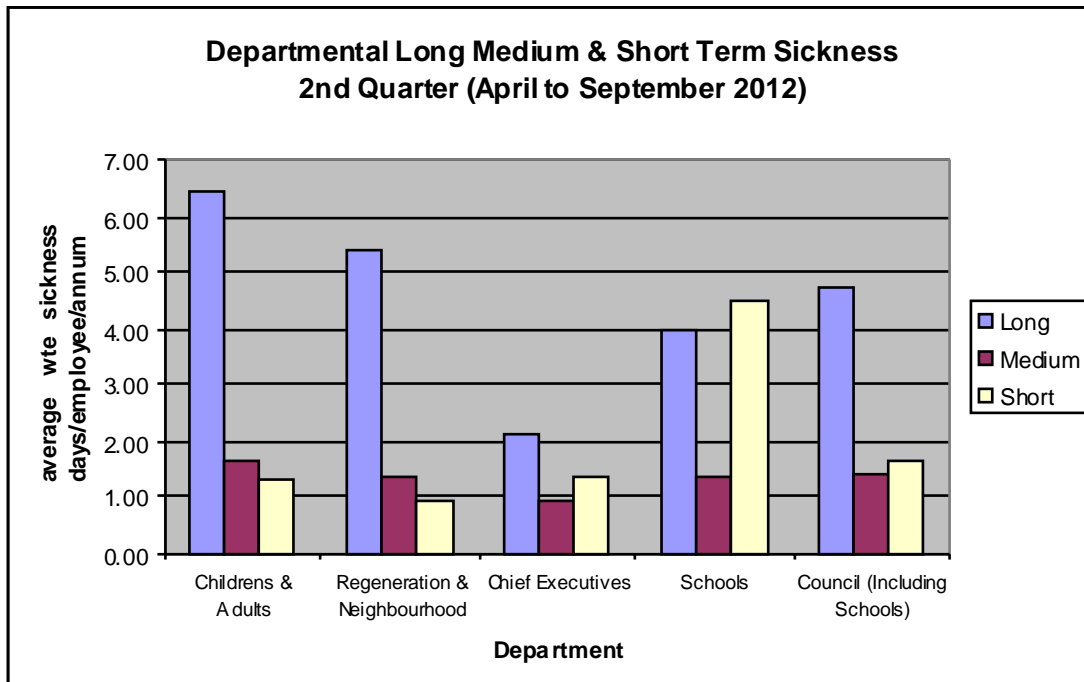


Figure 5: Departmental Long, Medium and Short Term Sickness 2012/13 (April to September 2012 figures)



As we can see from the information in Figure 5, long term sickness absence continues to account for the majority of the Council's sickness absence. The Council are focusing resources to support managers on the long term cases through individual case management and early intervention to support employees to return to work as quickly as possible.

5.1 Corporate Actions for 2012/13

A number of actions are ongoing for 2012/13 and they are expected to help in achieving sickness targets in the future. These are set out below and it should be noted that many are long term strategic actions so they will remain valid over time.

Policy Actions

- Continued review of the Council's Wellbeing Strategy to promote the health, safety and general wellbeing of the Council's employees. The Council continues to be very active for the healthy workforce from fast track physiotherapy, wellbeing sessions, weight management groups, non-smoking groups, health checks, and the introduction of the cycle salary sacrifice scheme
- Continue to proactively promote and market Occupational Health Services and employee support initiatives to positively increase

the options for employees who fall ill and in turn, impact on the sickness absence rates

- Ongoing development of the Council's commitment to managing stress at work as part of a wider Mental Health strategy across the Council
- Continuous review of the Council's sickness absence policy and management arrangements
- Explore withholding or deducting an employee's annual pay spine increments for poor sickness absence records
- Review and development of statistics and monitoring information as a result of the plans for the implementation of a computerised Human Resources Information System (Resource Link)
- Continue to promote flexible working measures, including home working, may impact on the rates in the future
- Maintain the close partnership with trade unions to work together to manage sickness absence in the Council

Departmental Actions / HR Business Team Actions

- Continued attendance of HR Business Officers to senior departmental and management team meetings updating them of sickness cases and management performance for sickness absence management
- Monitoring of sickness at lower trigger points of 3 sickness occasions / 10th day of sickness in previous 12 months
- Continued provision of absence management tool kit for line managers
- Continued provision of Sickness Absence Management training for all managers developed and facilitated by the HR Business Team
- Focus on early intervention home visits for those employees likely to be suffering from medium / longer term illness to ensure contact is made at the earliest opportunity to offer support and if appropriate to discuss a return to work plan or referrals triggered where appropriate
- Director / Assistant Director reinforcement of key messages to managers and employees for effective sickness absence management of cases and the need for early notification to HR Business Teams of potential long term sickness cases

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That employee absence rates up to the second quarter of 2012/13 are noted.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

8. CONTACT OFFICER

Rachel Clark,
HR Business Partner
Tel: 01429 284346
Email: rachel.clark@hartlepool.gov.uk