

REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



8th March 2013

at 10.00 a.m.

in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

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

1. KEY DECISIONS

- 1.1 Additional Highway Maintenance Funding 2013-14 & 2014-15 –
Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods)

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Building Control – Removal of Statutory Notification for Building Regulation Inspections – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.2 Coastal Community Funding 2013/14 – Round 2 – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.3 High Street Innovation Fund – Events, Specialist Markets and Business Support Package – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.4 North East Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.5 Community Pool – Category 5B – Emergency Contributions Fund – Red Dreams – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*
- 2.6 Quarterly Housing Report – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.7 Tees Valley Design Review Arrangements – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.8 Street Naming and Numbering Charges – *Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods)*
- 2.9 Town Centre Traffic Signals Improvements – *Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering)*



- 2.10 Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy and Protocols 2012-2015
Action Plan Update – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items



REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO

Report To Portfolio Holder
8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods)

Subject: ADDITIONAL HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE FUNDING
2013-14 & 2014-15

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision (test (i) & (ii)) Forward Plan Reference No.RN03/13

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide details of additional funding identified in the Chancellor's autumn statement and to seek approval for this to be used to enhance the five year highway maintenance program for 2013-14.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Chancellor's Autumn Statement on the 5th December 2012 announced an additional £1.5 billion of Government investment to improve the highway network and reduce congestion.

3.2 The Government recognises one of the best ways to foster job creation, encourage economic growth and support local communities, including those that have encountered flooding in recent months, is to ensure we have well maintained transport infrastructure.

3.3 This has led to them announcing an additional £333 million for a dedicated fund to provide for essential maintenance to renew, repair and extend life of the highway network in England.

3.4 £215 million of this funding has been allocated directly to local highway authorities split over the next two years (2013/14 and 2014/15) of which Hartlepool Borough Council have been allocated £142k and £79k respectively.

3.5 It has been left to the individual highway authorities to target the extra funding where it is most needed with a short statement published on the

authority's web site at the end of each financial year setting out on what and where (in terms of location) this additional funding has been spent and how it has complimented (rather than displaced) the planned highway maintenance expenditure.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It has been established that better value for money is achieved by undertaking permanent resurfacing schemes rather than repairing individual potholes.
- 4.2 It is proposed, therefore, that the additional annual funding should be added to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital funding for each year to enhance the five year program works.
- 4.3 This will enable additional schemes to be undertaken in each year than would be possible with the LTP funding alone.
- 4.4 The additional schemes will be identified and published as per the terms of the grant.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Local Transport Plan structural maintenance allocation for carriageways for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are £641k and £626k respectively (as previously approved).
- 5.2 Revised budgets including additional funding will be £783k and £705k respectively.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 7.1 There are no Section 17 Implications

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the additional highway maintenance allocations for 2013/14 and 2014/15 identified in the Chancellor's autumn statement are added to the existing highway maintenance capital funding to enhance works identified in the five year program.
- 8.2 That the additional works are identified within the program and published on the Council's web site at the end of each financial year

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 In order to comply with the grant conditions

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 There are no background papers.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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**REGENERATION AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO**
Report to Portfolio Holder
8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: BUILDING CONTROL – REMOVAL OF STATUTORY
NOTIFICATION FOR BUILDING REGULATION
INSPECTIONS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Portfolio Holder in respect of the recent changes made to the Building Control system by the Government in relation to 'improving the Local Authority Building Control processes' and in particular the change to Regulation 16 of The Building Regulations titled 'Notice of commencement and completion of certain stages of work' coming into force on the 6th April 2013.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As part of the changes implemented by the Government in relation to the Building Regulations, Statutory Instrument 2012 No. 3119 was made on the 17th December 2012 and Laid before Parliament on 19th December 2012. It amends The Building Regulations 2010 with 'The Building Regulations &c. (Amendment) Regulations 2012'
- 3.2 This amendment, in particular, dramatically alters Regulation 16 of the Building Regulations which covers the 'Notice of commencement and completion of certain stages of work'.
- 3.3 Currently the Council must be notified at various stages throughout the construction / building work. These stages are known as 'statutory notifications' and once notified by the builder / owner the Council should inspect these elements of construction to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations

- 3.4 The amendment removes the need for the current statutory notifications, (except for commencement and completion) and replaces these with a service plan to be determined by the Local Authority – this is generally being referred to as a risk assessment.
- 3.5 The Government does not currently have any set idea how it wishes or in fact expects the Local Authorities to implement these changes.
- 3.6 The umbrella body for all Local Authorities is the LABC (Local Authority Building Control). The LABC has suggested it produces suitable (national) documentation to assist all local authorities to implement the changes in a suitable manner and the Government are happy with their approach on this matter.
- 3.7 To date the LABC has produced a set of draft documentation in order to be ready to function on the introduction of the new legislation on the 6th April 2013. This documentation is currently in development and is highly sensitive and not for public production at this stage due to local authorities being in direct competition with private building control bodies.
- 3.8 Hartlepool Building Control has and is currently contributing toward the development of this documentation which will be finalised prior to the 'go live date' of the regulations on the 6th April 2013 so is well aware of the high quality of the product

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 In order to provide a suitable service plan for various building works in the borough, Hartlepool Council (Building Control) should adopt the use of the LABC guidance to assist in the provision of service plans.
- 4.2 This document allows the Council to risk assess projects and inspect accordingly to limit the risk of non-compliance.
- 4.3 Using the LABC guidance will give a sound basis for a service plan to be developed by Hartlepool Council's Building Control section for each application. This will ensure each project is suitably risk assessed and will set an appropriate inspection plan that will ensure the building / work complies fully with the Building Regulations.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The risk implication is, if it is decided not to visit certain aspects / stages of building work that the building work could be carried out in a manner contravening the Building Regulations. This could ultimately result in a building or buildings that are non compliant or worse still dangerous to use.

- 5.2 By following suitable documentation and assessing risks carefully it is expected that the risk to the Council will be removed or reduced to a minimum.
- 5.3 Worst case scenario by not having any requirement for notification and hence no inspections would most certainly result in unacceptable risks both to the Council and the public of Hartlepool.
- 5.4 It is imperative that as well as having suitable inspections that the Building Control section still ensures full cost recovery on the Building Control charges. This will need to be considered as part of the total package of Building Control.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Building Control charging system is based on the Council achieving full cost recovery for the chargeable element of the service each year (break even) in line with CIPFA guidance.
- 6.2 It is noted therefore that the new service plans will be based on the current charge which has been set at £56 / hour and as such this hourly rate should provide sufficient income for this full cost recovery bearing in mind the likely number of inspections required in the service plans.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

8. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1988 CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Portfolio Holder formally endorses that Hartlepool adopt the use of the LABC guidance documents that are being finalised ready for the introduction of the new regulations on 6th April 2013.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 By adopting the LABC methodology for the production of the service plans it will ensure that the Council is able to suitably check and appraise building work as it progresses on site to ensure it is to the set national standards of the Building Regulations.

- 10.2 By adopting the LABC methodology the Council is protecting the public of the Borough of Hartlepool and those visiting using such premises. Using the national LABC service plans will ensure Hartlepool Council are providing a comparable, consistent and suitable Building Control service to ensure that all building work complies fully with the Building Regulations.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 There are no background papers.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

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**REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS
PORTFOLIO**

8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: COASTAL COMMUNITY FUNDING 2013/14 –
ROUND 2

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update regarding Round 1 of Coastal Communities and a possible project idea for Round 2 funding.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In 2012 the Government introduced a new funding programme to benefit coastal communities called the Coastal Community Fund, to support economic development projects in coastal locations across the UK.

3.2 Grants in excess of £50,000 were available for projects which benefit coastal communities. The fund is equal to 50% of the revenues generated by the Crown Estate's marine assets, totaling £23.7 million in 2012/2013.

3.3 In Round 1, the Council submitted an expression of interest for a programme, that was aimed at complementing the Seaton Carew Masterplan work. It provided a comprehensive package that covered physical regeneration works including physical development and public realm improvements as well as job creation, enterprise support and extensive training opportunities.

3.4 In June 2012 we were informed that the expression of interest form submitted was unsuccessful and because of the number of applications no further detailed feedback was available from the funders. Table 1 provides a summary of the applications received and the considerable interest in the fund. The fund was approximately 15 times oversubscribed, meaning that less than 10 % of north east applications were approved.

	Total Number of bids received by region	Total Value of bids received by region (£)	Total number of bids received by region that have gone through to the second round	Total value of bids received by region that have gone through to the second round (£)	Success Rate of going through to the next round based on bids received %
Eastern England	53	30,300,564	4	2,569,150	7.5
East Midlands	29	12,651,743	4	939,555	13.7
North East	61	35,002,707	6	8,045,000	9.8
North West	66	39,054,177	5	3,171,745	7.6
South East	128	78,362,789	10	9,845,624	7.8
South West	129	86,590,624	14	13,081,340	10.9
Yorks/ Humber	32	18,205,181	4	5,410,000	12.5
London	2	985,000	0	0	0
Total	500	301,152,785	47	43,062,414	9.4

Table 1 – Summary of Coastal Communities Funding bids Round 1

- 3.5 The list of successful applicants, whose details have been made public, indicates that a range of projects were supported under Round 1. For example these included growth support programmes in Barrow, which incorporated employer/employment partnerships and supply chain forums. Apprenticeship programmes were supported in Norfolk and successful larger scale capital projects were also successful including Europe's first national Coastal Tourism Academy in Bournemouth and the National Lobster Hatchery in Padstow Cornwall.

4. COASTAL COMMUNITY FUNDING 2013/14

- 4.1 Funding for Round 2 has been confirmed, table 2 explains the funding available by country in the UK, it is expected that £21.7m will be available for England. As part of the CCF programme an evaluation of Round 1 was expected in December 2012. The aim of this exercise was to consider the applications that have been approved and if necessary re-draft or re-consider the funding criteria and eligibility, to date nothing has been published.

2013/14	Total Crown Estate Marine revenues	50% Crown Estate Marine revenues
England	£43.4	£21.7
Scotland- Highlands & Islands	£4.8	£2.4
Rest of Scotland	£3.5	£1.75
Wales	£2.9	£1.45
N Ireland	£1.0	£0.5
Total	£55.6	£27.8

Table 2 – Coastal Communities Round 2 Funding 2013/14

- 4.2 There is currently no confirmation of the timetable for the submission and consideration of applications for 2013/14 but assuming the timetable will be the same as last year then expression of interest bids will need to be prepared and submitted by the end of April 2013.
- 4.3 Assuming that the eligibility criteria will not fundamentally change and considering the information that has been shared to date regarding bids that have been successful, it is suggested that a more focused, non-programme based approach should be taken if a bid is made to the second round of Coastal Communities. From the available information released to date very few 'programme' schemes were given approval in Round 1. The majority of successful bids have been more focused, single-faceted projects that can clearly demonstrate delivery of the programme aims and objectives. The Seaton Carew Masterplan could still be the focus for a Coastal Community bid given the wider project objectives and the good fit it already has with the funds criteria.
- 4.4 Officers in the Economic Regeneration Team therefore have been considering a project that will fit with the aims of the fund, the evolving plans for Seaton Carew and the wider area, that will deliver real lasting benefits to the town as a whole.
- 4.5 The promotion of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects within schools and education more broadly, continues to be very important to ensure that high value sectors of the local, regional and national economy can continue to grow and deliver attractive employment opportunities for young people. Currently, well paid career opportunities in these areas exist both locally and nationally but there is a shortage of qualified young people to meet the demand. This is partly because these science, technology, engineering and maths subjects are not perceived to be attractive subjects to take at school and in further education. Subsequently there is a shortage of qualified candidates with the right qualifications to fill these high value job opportunities.
- 4.6 In addition to the unpopularity of these subjects amongst young people, there is often a misapprehension that there are no jobs locally within these disciplines and a lack of understanding of the wider opportunities there currently are in these areas.
- 4.7 There is currently extensive work being undertaken nationally to address these issues, trying to enthuse young people about these academic choices, making young people and parents aware of what achieving qualifications in these subject areas can lead to and matching current employer needs with suitably qualified young people.
- 4.8 Linking this to the Seaton Carew masterplan could provide a number of further benefits and opportunities. A hub or centre promoting the opportunities and benefits of STEM subjects combined with interactive, fun practical, "hands-on" displays and educational activities for young people and families could provide a further route to promoting these educational

choices. Similar educational/leisure facilities such as the Centre for Life in Newcastle, demonstrates the model that the STEM Centre could follow. The Centre could also provide a base for specialist training for employers in the relevant sectors, engagement with schools, business community, and workforce development.

- 4.9 A coastal location such as Seaton Carew would also allow other links to be made given that the location is relatively close to the indigenous chemical, engineering oil, gas, petrochemical and nuclear industries forming a cluster of businesses representing regional business growth. In addition it could also act as a complementary centre and link to the visitor centres and attractions in Hartlepool such as the Nuclear Power Visitor Centre; Saltholme; and Hartlepool Maritime Experience. The coastal location of a STEM centre would also fit with the burgeoning wind and renewable energy sector which also relies on a workforce with the relevant STEM qualifications.
- 4.10 At this early stage officers have talked to partners and some STEM organisations to make an early assessment of the potential market and demand for a STEM Centre. These discussions have been positive but further discussions, research and viability work will be required to determine if a development would work, and to determine demand, and the extent of its operational requirements. As a next step it is suggested that further discussions between officers and partners, industry and educational organisations are carried out, with a view to carrying out some targeted viability work.
- 4.11 Such further work would begin to establish the likely sources of capital and revenue funding that may be available to support a project, including Coastal Community Funding, ERDF and a range of operational funding opportunities that could be targeted.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RISK

- 5.1 At this stage there are currently no further financial risks to the authority other than further officer time and resource to develop the project idea further.
- 5.2 Officers are aware that the current financial landscape means that any future physical development will have to demonstrate self sufficiency in terms of revenue finance going forward. This will need to be demonstrated in the detailed feasibility work.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications at this stage. Again these will be addressed should a future capital development be undertaken.

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

- 7.1 These issues will need to be considered at the relevant points if a scheme is agreed, designed and delivered.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder is requested to:
- i) Note the results of Round 1 of the Coastal Communities Fund;
 - ii) Offer views on the suggested focus of a second bid to Coastal Communities based on a possible STEM Hub; and
 - iii) Endorse officers to continue to assess the project idea with colleagues, partners and industry & educational representatives.

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**REGENERATION AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO**
Report to Portfolio Holder
8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: HIGH STREET INNOVATION FUND - EVENTS,
SPECIALIST MARKETS AND BUSINESS SUPPORT
PACKAGE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non- Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval from the Portfolio Holder to hold a series of events and specialist markets in the town centre using funding from the High Street Innovation Fund.

2.2 The report also seeks approval from the Portfolio Holder for a package of support aimed at attracting businesses to occupy vacant town centre units. It is proposed to provide financial assistance with rent and rates using funding from the High Street Innovation Fund.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As previously reported to the Portfolio Holder on the 18th May 2012 Hartlepool was awarded £100k through the High Street Innovation Fund which was launched by the Government in response to the Portas Review, an independent review into the state of the country's high streets and town centres. The High Street Innovation Fund provides an opportunity to implement innovative local projects that address empty properties on the High Street.

3.2 An additional £10k was also awarded to Hartlepool through the Government's Town Team Partners Initiative.

3.3 The Government's response to the Portas Review sets out a challenge for partners to "re-imagine their town centres and high streets, ensuring they offer something new and different that neither out-of-town shopping centres nor the internet can match- an experience that goes beyond retail, with creative use of public spaces and a vibrant evening economy".

- 3.4 A working group consisting of representatives from the North East Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Cleveland College of Art and Design and private sector businesses was established from the Economic Regeneration Forum to develop a series of projects for the funding. The aim of the group is to achieve the maximum impact with the limited funding available.
- 3.5 To date £20k has been approved from the High Street Innovation Fund for the "Grow your own retailers" enterprise project that enables individuals to start retail businesses in the Indoor Market at Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. £5k has also been allocated to improve the signage for town centre car parks.
- 3.6 The Indoor Market project has been successful in creating new businesses and jobs and has led to the occupation of a number of vacant market stalls. Six people are now trading within the indoor market after completing the pre-trading programme. They continue to receive financial assistance and business support from the project.
- 3.7 All but one of the original six people are continuing to trade. A replacement retailer was quickly found. There is strong demand for the project and there is currently a waiting list of people interested in support.
- 3.8 The businesses that have been established with support from the project include Curve Clothing selling outsized ladies clothing, Soap and Soul selling soaps, Cosy Craft selling Lithuanian hand made pottery and firestone ceramics, glass, earrings, glove and scarves etc. and Atlantique selling antique goods.
- 3.9 The project has helped to bring new vibrancy and renewed interest in the Indoor Market and has even resulted in new traders occupying vacant stalls outside of the project.

4. TOWN CENTRE SPECIALIST MARKETS AND EVENTS

- 4.1 In order to improve the retail offer of the town centre it is important to increase the footfall and amount of money that is spent in the town centre. Retailers look at these statistics as well as examining the socio-economic makeup of an area before deciding whether to locate to an area.
- 4.2 The Economic Regeneration Forum Working Group have therefore recommended the development of a series of events and specialist markets that will attract people to the town centre and raise awareness of the existing retail offer.
- 4.3 The benefits of holding specialist markets and events within town centres are widely recognized. They create the ability to attract shoppers from a wider geographical area, extend dwell times and encourage return visits. Events

can add vibrancy and colour to underutilized parts of the town centre whilst encouraging social interaction and creating positive perceptions of an area.

- 4.4 Recent guidance including the “Portas Review”, “High Streets at the Heart of our Communities”, the Government’s Response to the Portas Review” and “Re-imagining Urban Spaces to help Revitalize our High Streets” all highlight the benefits of holding events and markets within the town centre as a way of improving the area and bringing wider benefits to the community.
- 4.5 Specialist markets can become an important economic asset for a town centre as they can supplement the variety of goods and services available and encourage new visitors who may not otherwise have visited. They can also provide excellent enterprise opportunities by giving local people the opportunity to try retailing and start a business without too much upfront cost. In Hartlepool they offer the opportunity to link with the Buy Local campaign and promote local businesses.
- 4.6 The specialist markets will be designed so that they have a distinct offer and do not compete with or have an adverse impact on the existing town centre markets.

5. PROPOSED TOWN CENTRE EVENTS PROGRAMME

- 5.1 It is proposed to hold three main, anchor events throughout 2013 which will be supplemented by a series of smaller events throughout the year. The specific detail of the events will be subject to further project development and feasibility work.
- 5.2 The first anchor event is proposed for Thursday 6th to Saturday 8th June 2013 and will have a craft theme linking to Cleveland College of Art and Design’s Degree Show and exhibition at Hartlepool Art Gallery. The event will link to the “no naf crafts” campaign and will be filled with high quality crafters selling unique products. A series of craft demonstrations and workshops will be organised in addition to a programme of live events including theatre, poetry and storytelling.
- 5.3 The second anchor event “Street Revolution North East” is proposed for Thursday 12th to Saturday 14th September 2013. The event will be a mixture of both street art and street food. Church Square will be filled with stalls selling the finest local food supported by Street Food Vendors (which could also include local restaurants) organised by the Nationwide Caterers Association. Street Food is very fashionable at the moment however has not been seen within the North East before. A demonstration kitchen could be located at the event. The street art element will link to an Urban Art exhibition at Hartlepool Art Gallery with space being provided for street artists to produce their work in front of a live audience.
- 5.4 The third anchor event proposed for Wednesday 4th to Saturday 7th December 2013 will be a Christmas Market offering quality Christmas gifts.

The market will be supplemented by a series of live events such as an outdoor Panto, storytellers and performers. The event will link to Hartlepool Art Club's Christmas exhibition in Hartlepool Art Gallery.

- 5.5 The anchor events will be supplemented by a series of smaller events throughout the year aimed at attracting people to the town centre. The smaller events could consist of ice sculpture trails, creative workshops, pop-up shops, health events and performances from local schools and dance studios. Potential links to existing events and activities will be examined including the summer "Big One" in July which Hartlepool Arts Network and the Studio are planning. Appropriate regional and national initiatives will also be examined.
- 5.6 It is proposed to work closely with local businesses and retailers as it's important that they have an opportunity to become involved in and benefit from the events. A special pricing structure will be developed for stall fees so that local businesses and students can afford to trade. Enterprise and test trading opportunities will be developed. The Economic Regeneration Team will help to develop a realistic pricing structure and provide business support for the events. Consultation will also take place with Cleveland College of Art and Design and Hartlepool College of Further Education to investigate ways of involving them in the events.
- 5.7 The project team will work closely with Middleton Grange Shopping Centre and retailers within the town centre so that people are encouraged to move from the events to go and shop in other areas of the town centre. This could be achieved by holding smaller complementary events around the town centre and encouraging retailers to offer special promotions.
- 5.8 A comprehensive marketing and publicity strategy will be developed to raise awareness of the events and attract people to the town centre. The High Street Innovation Fund will supplement existing marketing budgets where appropriate. Special publications will be produced together with the use of social media and the internet. The events will be advertised on www.destinationhartlepool.com to help attract visitors from out of the town.
- 5.9 As no similar events have been held in Hartlepool town centre in recent times it is difficult to estimate visitor numbers, however it is thought that 8,000-10,000 people could be attracted over the three and four day events.

6. EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE

- 6.1 If the events are successful it is important that further events can be held beyond 2013 without the need for funding from the Council. The project has therefore been designed so that a sustainable programme of events can be delivered beyond the end of the High Street Innovation Fund.
- 6.2 It is therefore proposed to purchase key pieces of equipment that can be used in the future at very little cost. This approach will increase the initial set-

up costs but will create opportunities to bring income into the Council as the equipment could be rented out when not in use.

- 6.3 The equipment includes the purchase of a number of wooden cabins that will offer traders a safe and secure environment that is protected from the elements. The cabins are more durable than other affordable options and will minimise the disruption to the events if it rains. The cabins can be constructed and maintained by the Council's own in-house team therefore creating an opportunity to bring funding into the Council. There is also the potential to rent the cabins out to other events.
- 6.4 Lighting equipment will be purchased as part of the project so that Christ Church can be illuminated and dramatic lighting effects can be created. The lighting will help draw people to the area and help advertise when the events are taking place. The lighting will create unique sponsorship opportunities as sponsors will be able to display their logos on buildings.
- 6.5 As the main infrastructure items (cabins and lighting) will already have been purchased, events of a similar nature could easily be run beyond 2013 at a relatively low cost. It is estimated that each further event could cost in the region of £4K - £5K and could be covered by site trader fees and sponsorship.

7. PREFERRED VENUE FOR TOWN CENTRE EVENTS

- 7.1 Church Square has been chosen as the preferred location for the events as it is the one of the only suitable public spaces within the town centre. Church Square offers the opportunity to work with Cleveland College of Art and Design, Hartlepool Art Gallery and local traders whilst being close to Middleton Grange Shopping Centre and other town centre facilities. Church Square is currently under-utilised and is surrounded by an increasing number of vacant premises although it does have the potential to add to the town centres visitor appeal.
- 7.2 Government guidance encourages more creative use of public spaces and highlights the need for improved design to make them more attractive, accessible and safe as a way of reinvigorating town centre's. Quality shared and public spaces can in themselves provide a reason for people to visit. The potential for urban spaces to support growth in the evening economy is widely recognised. Night markets if sensitively done can bring economic benefits to an area.
- 7.3 The feasibility of using Victory Square and other locations within the town centre for smaller scale spin-off events will also be examined.
- 7.4 The Council's licensing team have expressed an interest in using the events to promote new licensing times, aimed at changing the perception of the night time economy in Church Street.

8. FARMERS MARKET

- 8.1 Given the challenges that the town centre is facing it is important to be proactive and identify any further opportunities to enhance the town centre.
- 8.2 It is therefore important to examine all existing events and activities that could attract people into the town centre. It is therefore proposed to examine the feasibility of re-locating the Farmers Market to the town centre, specifically Church Square or Victory Square as its current location does not support the town centre.

9. BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGE

- 9.1 The working group identified that rent, rates and occupational costs are the main barriers for retailers when occupying new premises. A package of support has therefore been developed to provide an incentive for businesses to move into vacant town centre premises.
- 9.2 Eligible businesses will be entitled to a maximum of £3k support with rent, rates and occupational costs. Landlords will be encouraged to provide match funding by offering rent discounts or other support for new tenants as it is in the landlord's interest if it means their empty property becomes occupied.
- 9.3 It is proposed to allocate £25k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the package of support. The funding will be targeted at vacant premises in Church Square, Church Street, York Road (between Lowthian Road and Lister Street) and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.
- 9.4 Eligibility criteria will be developed so that the funding will only be awarded to financially sustainable businesses that require the most support and can achieve the greatest impact. The funding will be limited to businesses opening new premises and not those relocating from existing town centre premises. Business support and mentoring will be offered to the successful tenants to help with the sustainability of the project.
- 9.5 Pop-up shops could also be supported if suitable schemes and premises can be identified. Pop-up shops are temporary shops that are created in vacant units that can either provide an entrepreneur or independent retailer a chance to test the market with a short flexible lease without any long term commitment. They can also offer the opportunity to diversify the town centre's visitor appeal with temporary events and exhibitions, product launches, or other attractions.

10. HIGH STREET X-FUND

- 10.1 An application has been submitted to the Government's £1m High Street X-Fund which provides awards to the areas delivering the most effective or innovative schemes to revitalize the High Street. Hartlepool's application was

based around the success of the “Grow Your Own Retailers” project in the Indoor Market. The result of this application is expected to be known in March.

11. NATIONAL HIGH STREETS FORUM

- 11.1 A new national Future High Streets Forum, bringing together leaders across retail, property and business to better understand the competition town centre's across the country face and to drive forward new ideas and policies, building on the work of the Portas Review of the High Street has recently been established.
- 11.2 The Future High Streets Forum will advise the Government on the challenges facing high streets and help develop practical policies to enable town centres to adapt and change. It will look at issues including:
- Promoting parking solutions and good practice to help high streets attract more visitors.
 - Making it easier for redundant empty spaces to be used as pop-up shops to bring new business onto the High Street.
 - Allowing commercial landlords to turn part of their building into a residential property to bring more people into town centres.
 - Reinforcing the Town Centre First planning rules.
 - Rolling out pop-up shops across the 330 Town Team Partner high streets.
- 11.3 It is proposed to work with retailers to find suitable solutions to help improve Hartlepool Town Centre.

12. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RISK

- 12.1 The total cost of the Events project is £60k. It is proposed to fund this by allocating £50k from the High Street Innovation Fund and £10k from the Government's Town Team Partners Initiative.
- 12.2 The project will be managed by the Council's Events team who have the relevant experience and knowledge of organizing such events. The Council's Economic Regeneration Team will provide business support and will help to develop the pricing structure and site fees for the events.
- 12.3 The events team will be responsible for investigating sponsorship, marketing and income generation opportunities. Income raised through site fees and sponsorship will go into the event budget and will enhance the entertainment programme.

- 12.4 There is a risk that the events will not continue beyond 2013 once the identified funding has been spent. If the project is unsuccessful and does not create the anticipated benefits the equipment such as the lighting and cabins would be sold or rented out and the money re-allocated to alternative town centre projects. It is anticipated that future town centre events could be held for £5k-£6k each.
- 12.5 It is proposed to allocate £25k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the business support package. There is a risk that the businesses that are supported will not continue trading, however this risk will be reduced as mentoring and business support will be available. Only businesses with a sustainable business plan will be supported.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 14.1 The final scheme will be designed with the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour in mind.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 The Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder is requested to:
- Approve £50k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the specialist markets and events project within the town centre.
 - Approve £10k from the Town Team Partners Initiative for the specialist markets and events project within the town centre.
 - Approve the delivery of three anchor events in Church Square including a craft event, a street art and food event, and a Christmas event in addition to a series of smaller supplementary events.
 - Approve £25k from the High Street Innovation Fund for the delivery of a package of support for vacant town centre premises.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 There are no background papers.

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REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: NORTH EAST PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING
RENEWAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder's approval to adopt the updated version of the North East Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The current North East Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy was formally approved by Cabinet on 14 December 2009. Since then the policy has been revised on two occasions and we are seeking approval to adopt the latest version (version 20) (**Appendix 1**).

3.2 The existing Financial Assistance Policy currently has the following products on offer:

- Repayment loans up to £15,000 maximum
- Equity Loans up to 80% of the available equity to a maximum £35,000
- Interest Free Loans to fund a maximum of 50% of the value of the works up to £35,000
- Area/Theme Based Assistance to enhance confidence and perception of specific neighbourhoods

3.3 The existing key eligibility criteria are:

- Owner must be over 18 years old
- Applicant must have owned the property for 12 months (except Area/Theme Based Assistance

- One loan per client in five years, although a second loan may be made where appropriate
- Empty for over six months
- Owner cannot afford works required and cannot access a commercial loan on reasonable grounds OR works are not financially viable without assistance
- Applicants must not be in arrears to the Council
- Building must be insured

3.4 Loans are offered on a hierarchical basis from Repayment Loan → Equity Loan → Interest Free Loan

4. REVISED POLICY CHANGES

4.1 The key changes from the previous policy adopted in Hartlepool are:

- To introduce a specific Empty Property Assistance loan product alongside existing products
- To remove the existing hierarchical approach to the offer of loans which can restrict the type of loan that can be offered
- To allow authorities the ability to work with owners of multiple empty properties with the flexibility to lift the restriction on the number of loans that can be made if appropriate
- To restrict loans to UK residents
- To make loans available to landlords
- To remove the condition that the applicant must have owned the property for more than 12 months to assist with stimulating the housing market
- To introduce a new condition to exclude discharged bankrupts from the offer of financial assistance to improve the level of protection to Local Authorities
- The ability to allow Local Authorities to reject applicants that have County Court Judgements against them
- Flexibility to offer loans to bring empty properties back into use without a full test of financial resources where the empty property is having a negative impact on the community, subject to conditions
- Removing the limit to the number of loans available. However, further loans will not be provided if they compromise the homeowners availability to repay an original loan
- An increase in the interest rate to 2% above the Bank of England Base Rate or 5%, whichever is the higher rate at the time the loan is approved

4.2 At the 3 January 2013 Hartlepool had approximately £75k of unallocated funding in the regional loans pot, a proportion of which will be used to administer the loans. Each Local Authority is expected to pay a fee per loan administered. This was estimated at £6,000 at the start of April 2012 and was based on the number and type of loans expected to be offered.

- 4.3 The breakdown of loans made to 10 December 2012 is shown in table 1. The average value of loans made was £6,537.94.

Table 1 - Breakdown of Loans Made

Type of Loan	Value of Loans Made
Repayment	34,515
Equity	61,338.47
Interest Free	22,972.99
Total	118,826.46

- 4.4 On the basis of previous expenditure, we expect a further 11 loans to be made, of which 3 could be repayment, 6 equity and 2 interest free. The remaining budget will be used to assist some of the home owners already on the waiting list and any additional funding identified will continue to be used to assist owner occupiers.
- 4.5 We will not be affected by the proposed policy changes with regards to the administration of empty homes loans as we have opted to administer separate incentive schemes.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The increase in interest rates will generate more income for the Council at the same time the overall cost to the client will increase although the 5% rate remains below the rate of personal lending, and is approximately equal to the rate that would be currently offered by a high street lender in the form of secured lending to someone with a clean credit history.
- 5.2 The balance of funding outstanding and the expected distribution of loans suggests that whilst there will be an increase in income generated from interest, that this will not be significant.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

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

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

- 7.1 Section 17 does not apply to this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS/ REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Portfolio Holder to approve the adoption of version 20 of the North East Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy to bring it in line with the rest of the partner authorities across the region.

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

- 9.1 North East Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy 1 July 2012 – 31 March 2014.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Cabinet Report (item 5.3) of the Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods on 14 December 2009 – North East Regional Loans Scheme for Private Sector Housing Improvements.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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North East
Private Sector Housing Renewal
Financial Assistance Policy

1 July 2012 – 31 March 2014

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Introduction

Background

- 1.1. This document sets out the approach in the North East to the provision of financial assistance. The Policy complements the range of measures employed by the Council, aimed at improving and maintaining healthy and safe living conditions within the existing housing stock and specifically seeks to help homeowners to improve, repair and adapt their properties. Whilst the Policy will target assistance at those who are elderly, disabled or on a low income, assistance will also be targeted at preventing decline within neighbourhoods in need of support.
- 1.2. The Policy has been produced to reflect the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. This Order repealed much of the existing prescriptive legislation governing the provision of grants and replaced it with a more general power to provide a range of forms of assistance.
- 1.3. The Policy includes financial assistance for housing related purposes that is provided by the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000. This is sometimes referred to as the 'Wellbeing Power'.
- 1.4. The Policy includes a range of loan assistance types, and places emphasis on testing a client's ability to contribute to the cost of works. This is in line with the Governments view that "*it is primarily the responsibility of homeowners to maintain their own property*"¹, and with the Councils commitment to ensure that limited public resources are used responsibly. The Policy follows the principles of loan first, grant last resort, and focuses on providing financial options for those who are excluded from mainstream sources of finance whilst supporting both national and local initiatives to bring empty properties back into use. The combination of loan and grant products and the ability of the policy to tailor financial assistance to meet individual needs, will contribute to the sustainability of the Financial Assistance Policy in the longer term.
- 1.5. This Policy sets out the advice, practical support, and loan and grant assistance, that is available, together with the eligibility criteria and the conditions that will be applied and brings together assistance which is made under alternative statutory powers such as the provision of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants under the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended).
- 1.6. Include here reference to regional and sub regional Housing Strategy, illustrate linkages with relevant local policies including Community Safety Strategy, Older Person Strategy, those relating to Sustainable Communities, any local corporate plan, or Council 'Vision'.

¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 05/2003 "*Housing Renewal*".

Funding

2.1 The award of any loan or grant under this Policy is subject to the availability of funding having regard to the capacity of the Capital Investment Programme approved budget and this may vary on an annual basis. All loans and grants (excluding Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant) are provided at the discretion of the Council. Priority for assistance will be given to those households living in the poorest economic circumstances, in the worst housing conditions, or in areas specifically designated by the Council which may be in line with wider Regeneration priorities.

Delivery

3.1 This policy has effect from 1st July 2012. The Council is a member of the NE Home Loans Partnership, with each of the other 11 north east councils. Together the Councils have put in place a mechanism for the delivery of loans that takes advantage of scale, to facilitate the increased recycling and reinvestment of funds into remedying poor housing conditions. Through effective joint delivery across the region, and the building of a worthy track record of the provision of loan assistance, the Policy will become increasingly self-sustaining over time, and will seek to attract private finance. This will enable the scale of help offered by the council to grow.

3.2 In relation to helping those affected by Council plans for demolition to relocate, where programmes of private property acquisition have already begun and not been completed at the time of approval of this Policy, the Council may use discretion to continue to apply the financial assistance principles that were applicable prior to the approval of this policy for existing acquisition programmes to ensure that affected residents are treated fairly and equally. The assistance available within acquisition programmes will be made clear to residents affected.

3.3 The policy will be subject to continuous monitoring and an annual review to ensure that it remains suitable and is contributing to achieving strategic housing objectives in the most effective way. An assessment of the outputs and the outcomes achieved by the Policy will be made. These will include, among others; the number of households supported in carrying out repairs, improvements or adaptations using their own resources, and an examination of whether their increased confidence as a result of practical support through the process would make them more likely to carry out further works, and the number of households who have been able to continue living independently after receiving assistance. Where certain changing circumstances have a significant impact on the operation of the policy, necessary changes will be made to the policy. Changes could include financial limits, changes in legislation, and changes in local or national housing policies. Changes that will affect the financial assistance types, eligibility for financial assistance, or the conditions associated with assistance and that will prevent local authorities across the NE Home Loans Partnership from operating on an equal footing will be examined at a regional level. All changes will be subject to local Cabinet approval.

Where assessment shows that the Policy is operating satisfactorily and that no changes are required, the relevant Council Cabinet Member will be provided with a progress update.

Consultation

- 4 The policy has been produced following consultation with...
Consultation will be tailored to each Local Authority's local requirements.

Objectives of the Policy

5 The Policy has a number of objectives, which are:

5.1 To improve and maintain healthy living conditions within private sector housing, specifically helping homeowners on limited incomes to repair, improve or adapt their properties and so facilitate independent living;

This may include;

- Advice, guidance and financial assistance to tackle the existence of Category 1 Hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS); the minimum standard for housing and to improve homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard, giving priority to people with disabilities, older people and those who are on low incomes, who are otherwise excluded from accessing reputable forms of finance. Assistance towards a Standard that is either higher or lower than the Decent Homes Standard may sometimes be appropriate. For details of the Decent Homes Standard, and works that may be assisted see Appendix A.
- The provision of mandatory disabled facilities grants, and financial help for people with impairments to move to alternative private or affordable housing when their existing homes are unsuitable for adaptation or to assist with the funding of adaptations that exceed the mandatory disabled facilities grant limit.
- Financial Assistance towards the conversion of properties into larger family homes to meet local housing need

5.2 To contribute to the regeneration of areas suffering from market vulnerability, and to tackle poor housing conditions in areas where these may contribute to neighbourhood decline;

This may include;

- Tackling low confidence in neighbourhoods through the provision of financial assistance towards works to improve the visual appearance or security of homes
- The provision of financial assistance towards works that will enable problematic empty homes to be brought back into use.
- Financial assistance to encourage tenure change in areas where the number of rented properties is disproportionately high, and where this is linked to a poor perception of the area. This may include provision of assistance to first time buyers.
- Financial assistance to help those affected by the Council's plans for property clearance to relocate to a more suitable home and to improve the replacement home to a Decent Standard if this is required.
- Financial assistance to encourage the improvement of privately rented properties beyond statutory minimum standards.

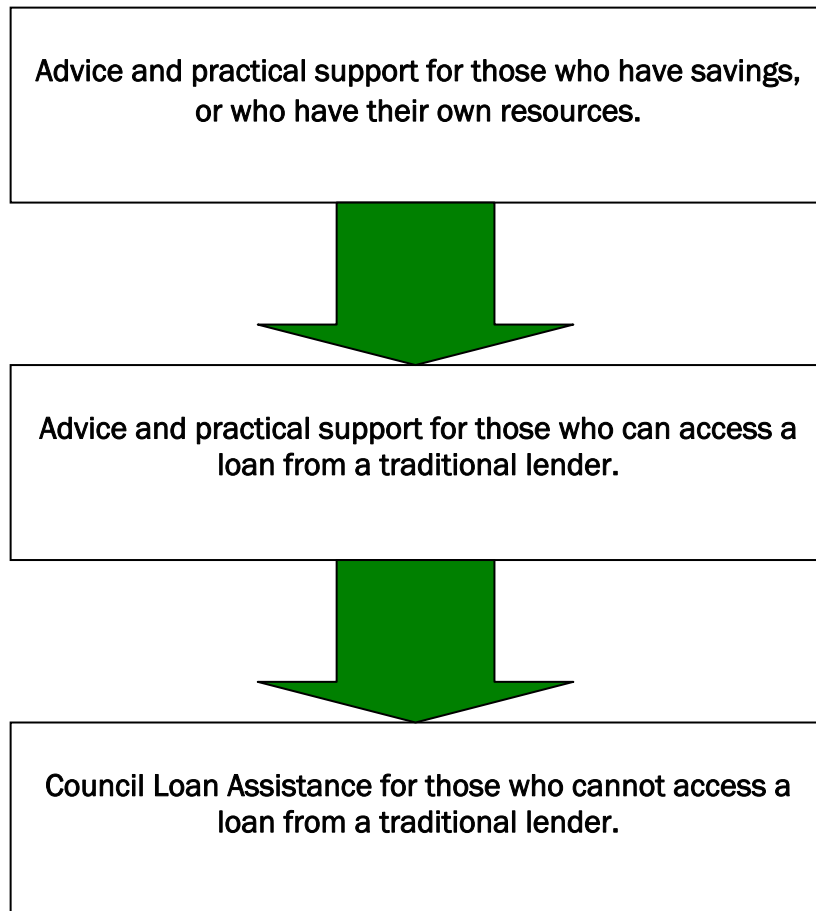
5.3 To encourage owners to undertake works that will make their homes more energy efficient and to reduce the number of people affected by fuel poverty.

This may include;

- Contributing to the costs of measures that will enhance thermal comfort through local 'Warmzone' or other Energy Efficiency schemes where these exist, particularly where a client is eligible for assistance from 'Warm Front', but is unable to afford their Client contribution.

Advice, Practical Support and Financial Assistance

- 6 This chapter of the policy sets out the types of assistance that are available, and explains in more detail the ‘hierarchy of assistance’ around which this Policy is based;



6.1 Advice and Practical Support

6.1.1 In Partnership with local Home Improvement Agencies where these exist, advice is available to all Clients to enable them to make informed choices about the options available to them for home improvements, adaptations and relocation. Specifically in relation to how to;

- Identify what works are required to repair or improve the home
- Personally carry out home maintenance, preventative and improvement works or access the local ‘Handy Person’ Service where this exists and they are eligible for help;
- Understand what the work may cost if a contractor is required, and consider the options for funding the work, this may include helping to consider charitable or family funding, use of insurance cover, or how an Independent Financial Advisor may be able to help, and sign posting to suitable local firms;
- Select a contractor to carry out the works, including the provision of a list of suitable designers, contractors and agents.
- Decide whether staying put or relocation offers the better solution for their circumstances

6.1.2 Where a Client is eligible for financial assistance toward the cost of work (this is explained in Chapters 7 and 8), the Council in partnership with the Home Improvement Agency will make sure that all work is carried out to a high standard, by inspecting the work and communicating with the contractor.

6.1.3 If a Client is able to fund the cost of the work, but requires further support to obtain and assess estimates, and to select, appoint and manage a contractor, a Project Management Service may be available for a small fee.

6.2 Financial Assistance

6.2.1 Information from the client relating to their finances and the works they require financial assistance towards will be used to determine the type and level of assistance (if any) that would be most appropriate to suit their personal circumstances.

6.2.2 This affordability test includes consideration of income, such as any salary and benefits that are received, and outgoings, such as an existing mortgage, any loan repayments as well as living costs. Living costs may include the cost of household bills and running a car. These costs will help the Council to calculate whether the Client might be able to access a loan from a bank or building society or whether the Client could reasonably make repayments on any loan that the Council may be able to provide. A property valuation may also be undertaken in order to assess the potential for releasing the value of any equity.

6.2.3 Where the test determines that a client has sufficient income or equity to meet the cost of the works from a mainstream source they will be offered information and practical assistance to help them to carry out any works that are required, or to move home if appropriate. They will not be eligible for financial assistance from the Council.

6.2.4 Clients whose financial circumstances exclude them from accessing finance from a mainstream source shall, subject to the availability of funds, be considered for the forms of financial assistance from the Council contained within sections 7 and 8 below. In order to ensure that any lending is responsible, access to Independent Financial Advice may also be made available to help a client to choose the most suitable means of funding the cost of work required.

6.2.5 In order to increase the number of empty homes brought back into use Councils are encouraged to work with property owners to offer appropriate advice and financial assistance to make it a viable proposition for properties to be brought back into use. Where empty properties are having a negative affect on the community and it is not financially viable to bring the property back into use financial assistance may be provided without a full test of financial resources.

6.2.6 The hierarchy of assistance will not apply to the following forms of assistance, though they each have specific eligibility criteria;

- Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant.
- Area/Theme Based Assistance.
- Empty Property Assistance.

Loan Assistance

7 Financial Assistance Loans

The Council offers 3 types of loans: -

- Repayment Loan (Capital and Interest)
- Equity Loan
- Interest Free Loan

A combination of loans, or a combination of loan and other assistance may be required to suit a Client's individual financial circumstances.

Loan	Eligibility	What can the loan be used for?
<p>7.1 Capital and Interest Repayment Loan</p> <p>This is a loan, for Clients who are able to make monthly repayments. The interest rate will be fixed, so that the monthly repayment will always be the same, and the amount of interest that will be charged will be known to the Client at the beginning of the loan. The monthly repayment will consist of an interest payment, and a reduction in the amount of capital owed. This means that with each payment the interest is recalculated, the fairest way of charging interest.</p> <p>Clients can borrow between £500 and £15,000, over a term of 1-15 years.</p> <p>The repayment period will depend upon the circumstances of the individual, and the amount borrowed. The Council will use the affordability test to make sure that monthly repayments will be affordable – no more than one third of the monthly disposable income, and will provide help and support should the client experience difficulty in meeting repayments.</p> <p>Loans will be secured with a legal charge against the home.</p>	<p>This loan is available to Clients who own their own homes but who are unable to access a loan from a commercial lender, but who are able to make regular repayments.</p> <p>The loan will also be available to landlords for the following purposes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To carry out works of repair to privately rented properties, where the landlord is unable to access a commercial loan on reasonable terms, but who is able to make regular repayments. The landlord's financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To carry out works that will contribute to the Decent Homes Standard.• To assist a Client to make their contribution towards works funded by a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, to pay for works which are eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where their cost exceeds the maximum limit of £30,000, to pay for works which facilitate independent living, but which are not eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, or to purchase a home that meets their needs, or can be more easily adapted. For more detail on using the loan to move house see Appendix B.• To assist a Client who is not able to make their contribution towards a Government funded Energy Efficiency

<p>There will be no penalties should the client be able to overpay, or repay the loan early in full. This means that repaying the loan early will reduce the amount of interest paid, and so the total amount paid back.</p>	<p>circumstances will be taken into account in determining his eligibility. These will include an assessment of disposable income and the value of any assets. This may be made available to help to improve homes only within specific neighbourhoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 loan will be available to a client for each of these purposes within a five year period. 	<p>Scheme. The loan may also be made available as part of a locally operating energy efficiency scheme, but may be subject to restrictions in the amount that is available to borrow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out works of repair to privately rented properties.
<p>7.2 <u>Equity Loan</u></p> <p>This loan will meet the needs of Clients who do not have sufficient income to make monthly repayments on a loan, but have equity in their property. No monthly repayments are required.</p> <p>For the purposes of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repairing, improving or adapting the home, Clients can access 80% of the available equity in their home • relocating to a replacement home, Clients can access 50% of the available equity in the replacement home. <p>Subject to the value of the available equity, Clients can borrow between £500 and £35,000.</p> <p>In certain circumstances, particularly where Clients are relocating to a replacement home, may have been living in overcrowded conditions, or wish to move into a home which had previously been empty for more</p>	<p>This loan is available to Clients who own their own homes and who;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are unable to access a loan from a commercial lender on reasonable terms, • are unable to make monthly repayments on a Capital and Interest Repayment Loan and • have equity in their homes. <p>The loan will also be available to landlords for the following purposes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out works of repair to privately rented properties, where the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out works that will contribute to the Decent Homes Standard. • To bridge the gap between the value of the current home and the cost of a replacement where the Client is affected by Councils plans for property demolition (see Grant Assistance for other Relocation Support). The Equity Loan may not be available should the Client choose to move outside of a set geographical area. This area will be clearly defined by the Council and the information made available to affected residents • To assist a Client to make their contribution towards works funded by a mandatory Disabled Facilities

<p>than 6months, and was in a poor condition, a larger loan than the maximum of £35,000 may be available at the discretion of the Council, subject to the amount of available equity in the replacement home.</p> <p>Repayment of the Loan: The amount of loan will be translated into a percentage of the property value at the time the loan is approved. This percentage will be used to calculate the amount to be repaid, at the time that the property is sold and the loan repaid. This will require the property to be valued at the beginning, and at the end of the loan period.</p> <p>The following rules apply in relation to calculating the amount to be repaid, but would be subject to review at the time the loan is repaid should they cause the Client to be placed in unreasonable hardship;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minimum amount repayable will be the amount borrowed. This may cause difficulty should the property have decreased in value. • There will be no cap on the amount to be repaid. Should the property value increase significantly, so will the amount to be repaid. Any appreciation in value of the property will be shared with the Council in accordance with the original loan as a percentage of the property value at the time that the loan is repaid. <p>Repayment will be required on sale, disposal of the property, or upon the death of the Client. (For more information see 'Financial Assistance Conditions')</p> <p>Should the Client wish to repay the loan (or part of the loan) at any time before the property is sold, the amount to be repaid will be calculated using the value of the home at that time. There will be no early redemption charges.</p>	<p>landlord is unable to access a commercial loan on reasonable terms, is unable to make monthly repayments on a Capital and Interest Repayment Loan, but that has equity in the rented property. The landlord's financial circumstances will be taken into account in determining his eligibility. These will include an assessment of disposable income and the value of any assets. This may be made available to help to improve homes only within specific neighbourhoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 loan will be available to a client for each of these purposes within a five year period. 	<p>Grant, to pay for works which are eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where their cost exceeds the maximum limit of £30,000, to pay for works which facilitate independent living, but which are not eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, or to purchase a home that meets their needs, or can be more easily adapted. For more detail on using the loan to move house see Appendix B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist a client who is not able to make their contribution towards a Government funded Energy Efficiency Scheme. The loan may also be made available as part of a locally operating energy efficiency scheme but may be subject to restrictions in the amount that is available to borrow. • To carry out works of repair to privately rented properties
<p>7.3 Interest Free Loan</p> <p>This loan will meet the needs of clients who do not have sufficient income to make monthly repayments on a loan, and do not have</p>	<p>This loan is available to Clients who: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are unable to access a commercial loan on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out works that will contribute to the Decent Homes Standard. • To assist an applicant to make their contribution towards works funded

<p>sufficient equity in the home. No interest is charged and no monthly repayments are required.</p> <p>The loan is secured against the home and repaid to the Council when the home is sold.</p> <p>The maximum loan is £35,000.</p>	<p>reasonable terms and for whom a Repayment and Equity Loan from the Council is also either unsuitable, or insufficient to cover the cost of the works that are required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This assistance will not be available to properties affected by Council plans to demolish homes. <p>The loan will also be available to landlords for the following purposes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out works of repair to privately rented properties, where the landlord is unable to access a commercial loan on reasonable terms, is unable to make monthly repayments on a Capital and Interest Repayment Loan, but that has no equity in the rented property. The landlord's financial circumstances will be taken into account in determining his eligibility. These will include an assessment of disposable income and the value of any assets. This may be made available to help to 	<p>by a Disabled Facilities Grant, to pay for works which are eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where their cost exceeds the maximum limit of £30,000, to pay for works which facilitate independent living, but which are not eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, or to purchase a home that meets their needs, or can be more easily adapted. For more detail on using the loan to move house see Appendix B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist a client who is not able to make their contribution towards a Government funded Energy Efficiency Scheme. The loan may also be made available as part of a locally operating energy efficiency scheme but may be subject to restrictions in the amount that is available to borrow. • To carry out works of repair to privately rented properties
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	<p>improve homes only within specific neighbourhoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 loan will be available to a client for each of these purposes within a five year period. 	
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For Examples of how the loans work, see Appendix C.

Other Assistance

8. Other forms of assistance are available for the purposes detailed below. In most circumstances these will be subject to a financial test of resources, and will always be subject to the budget that is available.

Type of assistance	Eligibility	Conditions
<p>8.1 <u>Disabled Facilities Grant</u></p> <p>This mandatory grant can be used for works that enable a client to live independently in their own home by providing suitable adaptations to meet their specific needs. The needs will be assessed by an Occupational Therapist and works agreed. For more guidance on works that may be eligible for assistance see Appendix B.</p> <p>A maximum of £30,000 is available.</p>	<p>This grant is available to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All owner-occupiers and tenants (private, Council or Housing Association), licensees or occupiers who are able to satisfy the criteria in sections 19 to 24 of the Housing Grant, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. • Landlords may apply for a DFG on behalf of a disabled tenant but must satisfy the requirements in the relevant sections of the above Act. • A grant is available when the cost of the works required exceed the value of a contribution that the applicant must make following a means test. • For those disabled people whose conditions are degenerative, further adaptations to the home to cater for their deteriorating condition may become necessary at a later date. In such cases and depending on the time lapse between the successive applications, the amount of an applicant's current contribution may be reduced by the amount paid towards previous grant assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Client must undergo a means test, unless the grant is for a disabled child. This will take into account the resources of the disabled occupant, and their partner. • Should the grant have been used to carry out works that increase the size of the living accommodation in the property, and should the property be sold within a period of 5 years following the completion of the work, part of the grant must be repaid to the Council. (For more information see conditions.) • In some cases the cost of the works may be covered either by an insurance payment or a claim against a third party. The Council believes that it is appropriate for the authority to give grant aid to ensure the works are completed at the earliest opportunity. However where the grant applicant subsequently receives a payment from an insurance or damages claim in

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properties where planning and conservation restrictions and architectural and structural characteristics allow works to be carried out. • Council or Housing Association tenants where no offer has been made of an alternative property that meets their needs. 	<p>respect of the grant aided works then he should repay the authority the grant, so far as is appropriate, out of the proceeds of any claim.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the grant has been used to provide specialist equipment such a stair lift, temporary ramps and hoists, the Council shall be given the option to recover the equipment for re-use where appropriate if the applicant no longer has a use for it.
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<p>8.2 Relocation Assistance</p> <p>This package of assistance consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market value compensation for both owner-occupiers and for landlords • A Home Loss payment based on 10% of the property value for owner-occupiers with a minimum payment of £4,700 (or the current statutory minimum payment) and a maximum of £47,000 (or the current statutory maximum payment). • A home Loss payment of £4,700 for all Tenants whose homes are purchased by the Council. • A Disturbance Payment that should cover all reasonable expenses arising from re-location. Payment is based on proof of purchase provided by the resident. • A Basic Loss payment of 7.5% of the property value for landlords. • A discretionary Relocation Grant to enable a person affected by relocation to move to a suitable home. The maximum relocation grant available is £25,000. 	<p>The assistance is available to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residents and property owners affected by the Councils plans to demolish homes. • This discretionary Relocation Grant is available to Clients who own their own home but who are unable to access the Equity Loan to assist them to relocate. A Discretionary Panel will take into account all or a combination of the following factors; • The availability of suitable housing. • The current market value of the existing property to be demolished. • The current market value of the proposed new property, identified by the Client • The existing mortgage terms and conditions. • The cost of funding any alterations to the new property. • The funding of any shortfall between the new and old property. • The equity in the existing property. • The mortgage rearrangement costs. • Any other exceptional circumstances deemed necessary by the Discretionary Panel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assistance is available at the time that the Council purchases the property. • Relocation Grant may be unavailable should the Client choose to move outside of a set geographical area. This area will be clearly defined by the Council and the information made available to affected residents.
<p>8.3 Area/Theme Based Assistance</p> <p>Financial Assistance is available for works which will enhance confidence and perception of specific Neighbourhoods within the area.</p> <p>As the needs of each area are identified, a</p>	<p>Assistance will usually be available;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within specific neighbourhoods that require support, in accordance with the Councils plans, produced in conjunction with local people, for comprehensive improvement of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grant/loan condition period is up to 5 years, and will begin upon approval of the financial assistance. If the property is disposed of during this period, then payment of the financial assistance will be required to be paid back in accordance with a

<p>range of renewal assistance may be available which may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schemes designed to tackle specific issues, such as prevention of crime, or particular housing defects affecting a number of homes • Block improvement or Facelift schemes <p>A contribution from the owners towards the works is normally required. The contribution will be specified for each scheme.</p> <p>A financial test of resources may be available to owner occupiers to assess their ability to make a contribution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both owner occupiers and, within block schemes, landlords who employ good management practices. • The assistance will be based upon the type of works involved, the tenure of the property and financial resources available to the owner occupier. 	<p>sliding scale of repayment. (For more information see conditions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the property is let to a tenant, the landlord must ensure that the property meets any local 'Accredited Standard' and that he becomes a member of any local Landlord Accreditation Scheme. This standard and membership should be maintained throughout the grant condition period of 5 years. This standard will be agreed with the landlord prior to approval of the financial assistance.
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8.4 Empty Property Assistance

Financial Assistance may be available to owners of empty properties for works which will bring the property up to a Decent standard, Accreditation standard or as a minimum to remove all category one hazards present. (See appendix A).

This form of assistance may also be available for conversion works to the same standard for;

- A pair of vacant flats into a single property
- A vacant shop with a flat attached, to a single property

Assistance towards the cost of eligible works may be available in the form of;

- Repayment Loan (Capital and Interest) up to a maximum of £15,000
or,
- Equity Loan up to a maximum of £35,000 (maximum of 80% of available equity). *Note – Where an applicant is unable or unwilling to demonstrate an ability to make repayments required for a Repayment Loan only an Equity Loan can be offered*
- In addition, Interest Free Loans to fund a maximum of 50% of the cost of works up to £35,000 may be offered.

Assistance will usually be available where the property has been empty for at least six months and;

- The property owner cannot afford the works from their own finances, and cannot access a loan from a bank, building society or other reputable lender to help pay for the works, or
- The works would not be financially viable without assistance from the Council.

In determining eligibility the Council may also consider;

- Evidence of local need and the negative affect of the long term empty property.

Where the property is to be let preference may be given to;

- Existing members of approved local Landlord Accreditation Schemes
- Landlords offering low rental charges
- The offer of nomination rights to the Council

To fund works that will enable an empty property to be brought back into use, or to help to reduce high density housing through conversion works to provide larger family homes.

Where the property is to be let to a tenant, the landlord must ensure that the property meets any local 'Accredited Standard' and that he becomes a member of any local Landlord Accreditation Scheme. This standard and membership should be maintained throughout the loan condition period. This standard will be agreed with the landlord prior to approval of the financial assistance.

Financial Assistance Costs

The Council charges a local authority fee for the administration of financial assistance. This is associated with the professional, technical and administration charges incurred in providing advice, preparing schedules, supervision and project management of successful enquiries for financial assistance. This fee is a percentage of the cost of the works required, and will be made clear to the Client prior to approval of the financial assistance. Subject to the Clients individual financial circumstances, financial assistance may be available toward the cost of the fee

10 Conditions that apply to all forms of Financial Assistance

- Financial Assistance will not be paid for works that have already begun prior to approval.
- Where the word 'sold' appears in relation to a change of ownership of the property and a condition applies, the condition will also apply should the property be disposed of, assigned, transferred or otherwise, including the transfer to family members, or is no longer occupied by the Client as principal residence.
- There is a limit to the number of loans available to a client within a particular time period, these are set out in section 7 above. However should multiple enquiries be received from the same client, the council may make further a second loans available to a client if it is appropriate to do so. The council will not provide a second loan that compromises the ability of the homeowner to repay an original loan provided by the council.

11 Prior to the Works

11.1 The Applicant

- a. The applicant must be the homeowner, i.e. be the person named on the mortgage or deeds of the property at the time the assistance is received and in relation to assistance for the purposes of Disabled Facilities must sign either an;
 - "Owner-occupation Certificate". This document certifies that the applicant intends that he or a member of his family will live in the property as his (or that member's) only or main residence until the assistance is repaid (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance), or a;
 - "Certificate of Intended Letting". This document certifies that the applicant intends that the property will be let or available for letting, for use as a residence (and not for a holiday) to a person who is not a member of the owner's family until the assistance is repaid, (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance).
- b. The applicant must have owned the property for a period of 12 months prior to the date of the application for assistance. This will not apply to applicants for 'Area/Theme Based Assistance', Empty Property Assistance, Disabled Facilities Grants, or to loans or discretionary Grant Assistance for the purposes of Disabled Facilities.
- c. The applicant must be aged 18 years or over on the date of application;
- d. A loan or other form of financial assistance under this Policy will only be available to people who have a right to live in the United Kingdom, whether as a citizen of the UK or a person with indefinite or exemplary leave to remain. An applicant who has leave to remain in the Country subject to a condition that they do not have recourse to public funds will **not** be eligible for assistance under this policy.
- e. The applicant must not be discharged bankrupt.

- f. County Court Judgements will be taken into account when determining eligibility for assistance.
- g. The Applicant must not be in arrears to the Council at the time of application. The nature of the arrears and progress being made by the Applicant to repay these will be taken into consideration. Arrears may include those that result from a failure to pay Council Tax, or charges incurred by the Council through the carrying out of works in default following enforcement action.

11.2 The Property and the Works

- a. The property must be registered with Land Registry prior to approval of the application for assistance.
- b. The works that are eligible for assistance, the Client Contribution, and the contractor that will carry out the works must be agreed with the Council. Should the Council have in place any local 'approved contractor' system, then financial assistance will only be provided in accordance with this system. Should this system be in place, the Client Contribution will be required to be paid to the Council prior to commencement of any works.
- c. Should works that were unforeseen at the time of the approval of the financial assistance be identified while the works are being undertaken, financial assistance towards the additional cost will be considered in accordance with the hierarchy of assistance included within Section 6 (except for mandatory DFG Grant or a loan for the purposes of disabled facilities). This means that the Clients will be required to pay for such works themselves unless they are able to demonstrate that they do not have the resources available. Should additional financial assistance be appropriate, the hierarchy of Repayment Loans first, Equity Loan second, and Interest Free Loan last principle described in section 7 will be applied. Should the additional financial assistance required cause the maximum amount of financial assistance available to be exceeded, the Council may use discretion through normal decision making processes to approve the increased amount.
- d. Should works that were unforeseen at the time of the approval of the financial assistance be identified during delivery of assistance for disabled facilities, financial assistance in the form of further mandatory DFG, or Interest Free Loan towards the additional cost will be considered. Other Loan Assistance will not be considered.

11.3 The Application

- a. An application must be made on the application form provided for that purpose. The Council will only consider a valid application for assistance. A valid application is one where the following documents are submitted:
 - o A correctly completed application form and any supporting documentation
 - o in relation to assistance for the purposes of Disabled Facilities either a certificate of owner occupation, or a certificate of intended letting or a tenant's certificate
 - o Proof of title where applicable
 - o Authorisation from the owner of the property if a third party is acting agent in the application. This can be in the form of an authorisation letter, power of attorney or similar
 - o Completed form of Technical and Administrative Services Charges (except in cases where either a home improvement agency, such as XXX, is assisting the application or where scheme waiver is in existence)
 - o Any relevant reports as requested by the Schedule giving the particulars of the relevant works
 - o At least two sets of estimates (assistance to obtain these may have been provided by the Council or its Home Improvement

Agency Partner). Should the Council have in place any local 'approved contractor' system, then estimates should have been obtained using this system.

- Details of preliminary or ancillary services or charges
 - Other prescribed particulars
- b. The applicant shall be required to enter into a contract with the Council.
- c. The Council will determine an application within 6 months of receipt of a valid application. The applicant will be informed in writing of the approval or refusal of the application.

12 Carrying Out and Completing the Works

- 12.1** The eligible works should be completed within six months from the date of approval of the application. The Council may extend this period if they feel it is necessary, upon written request from the applicant;
- 12.2** Where the work has begun and not been completed within the time allowed in accordance with terms of the approval of the assistance and the Council has incurred costs including any interim payments or additional costs, the Council may recover these from the applicant. Where the applicant fails to fully reimburse the Council, and a charge was not already in place the Council shall place a charge on the property for any outstanding amount plus any interest accrued from that date;
- 12.3** The works that are eligible for assistance must be completed to the satisfaction of the Council and carried out in accordance with any specification imposed by the Council
- 12.4** The council should be provided with an acceptable invoice, demand or receipt for payment from the agreed contractor. For this purpose an invoice, demand or receipt is acceptable if it satisfies the Council and is not produced by the applicant or a member of his/her family.
- 12.5** It will be a condition of assistance that the property must be insured and properly maintained. If this condition is not met or adhered to during the period until the assistance is repaid, (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance) it will be a breach of the conditions of assistance; a copy of the buildings insurance certificate may be requested annually by the council.

13 After the works

- 13.1** The property should be kept properly maintained. If this condition is not met during the period until the assistance is repaid, (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance) - the Council may treat this as a breach of conditions.
- 13.2** It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that the conditions of the financial assistance are being adhered to. If the Council requests any information in relation to the conditions in writing and the applicant fails to supply the information, then the Council may deem this as a breach of the financial assistance conditions; in particular the Council may by written notice require the owner to provide within 21 days a statement showing how the property is occupied;
- 13.3** The property must not be left empty for any appreciable length of time until the assistance is repaid, (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance). An extended period of vacancy may be construed as a breach of conditions and the council may recover the financial assistance from the applicant. In relation to Empty Property Assistance the property must be occupied within three months of the works being completed and must not remain unoccupied for any more than three months in each year of the term of the loan. The applicant should notify the Council in writing of any extended period of vacancy of over 6

weeks in duration;

- 13.4** Should the application have been on the basis that the applicant was an owner occupier, the property should remain the principal residence of the Client (or a member of his family in accordance with the terms of the owner occupation certificate) until the financial assistance is repaid (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance). Should the property be subsequently let to a tenant before the assistance is repaid (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance) the Client will be required to carry out any works required to ensure that the property meets at least the minimum 'accreditation standard' as set by any local Landlord Accreditation Scheme. The Client will also be required to become a member of any local Landlord Accreditation Scheme. This property standard and membership of this scheme should be maintained until the assistance is repaid (or until the end of the Grant Condition Period for Area Based Assistance). A tenant is a person who is not a member of the owner's family.

14 The Legal Charge and Local Land Charge

- 14.1** Once an application for financial assistance is approved, the assistance will be registered as a legal charge and in relation to assistance for the purposes of Disabled Facilities a local land charge on the property. This will be carried out before any assistance is paid.
- 14.2** In relation to Disabled Facilities Grants, the charge will apply for a period of up to 5 years from the date at which the Council certifies that the eligible works have been carried out to their satisfaction ("the certified date").
- 14.3** In relation to Area Based Assistance, the charge will apply for a period of 5 years from the date of approval of the assistance.
- 14.4** For all other forms of financial assistance the charge will remain on the property until the financial assistance is repaid.
- 14.5** In relation to the Capital and Interest Repayment Loan, should the Client wish to make a relevant disposal of the property before repayment of the loan is complete, the loan amount that is outstanding must be repaid to the Council upon the disposal of the property.
- 14.6** Reducing the priority of the charge or removing the charge will only be undertaken in exceptional circumstances.
- 14.7** A charge is binding on the person who is for the time being an owner of the premises concerned.
- 14.8** Where a condition is broken, the Council has all the usual remedies in law to secure repayment including enforcement of the charge.

15 Repayment of Financial Assistance - Owner occupiers

It is a condition of all forms of assistance that repayment is received in accordance with the terms of approval of the financial assistance. Specifically that;

- 15.1** In relation to Capital and Interest Repayment Loans, repayments are received in accordance with financial assistance approval and the 'Loan Offer' made.
- 15.2** In relation to Equity Loans and Interest Free Loans, repayment is received when the property is sold, disposed of, assigned, transferred or otherwise, including the transfer to family members, or is no longer occupied by the Client as principal residence. Family members include both immediate and extended family. Should family members or other persons be living in the property

at the time of death of the Client, there will be no automatic right of succession. Should repayment of the loan require the property to be sold, in this circumstance the Council can exercise discretion through formal decision making processes if appropriate.

15.3 It is a condition of all forms of assistance that, where an owner makes a relevant disposal of the property, other than an exempt disposal, they will be required to repay the financial assistance to the Council. (For details of both relevant and exempt disposal, see explanatory notes below)

15.4 It is a condition of the 'Area/Theme Based Assistance' that, where an owner makes a relevant disposal of the property, other than an exempt disposal, within a period of 5 years from the date on which the Council approves the financial assistance they will be required to repay the financial assistance to the Council, on demand, and in accordance with the following sliding scale: -

Year 1	100% repaid
Year 2	80% repaid
Year 3	60% repaid
Year 4	40% repaid
Year 5	20% repaid

15.5 It is a condition of the 'Disabled Facilities Grant' that, where an owner makes a relevant disposal of the property, other than an exempt disposal, and where a legal charge has been applied, that within a period of up to 5 years from the date on which the Council certifies that the eligible works have been carried out to their satisfaction ("the certified date") he will be required to repay the financial assistance to the Council, on demand. This is subject to certain restrictions imposed by the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008. The Council may demand the repayment of such part of the grant which exceeds £5,000, but may not demand in excess of £10,000.

15.6 Where any condition is breached, the Council may decide not to make any demand for whole or part repayment. Each case will be considered on its merits. A decision will primarily be based on the financial hardship that will be experienced by the Client as a result of repayment of the assistance. Should financial hardship be experienced in conjunction with any of the following, the Council may decide not to make demand for whole or part repayment;

- **Provision of care** - where the Council is satisfied that the owner is elderly or infirm and is disposing of the property with the intention of being cared for by relatives or going to live in sheltered housing or a residential care home, or where the owner is moving to care for an elderly or infirm family member.
- **Repossession** - where a mortgagee exercises a power of sale.
- **Employment** - where an applicant is making a disposal further to the need to move following acceptance of employment where they would otherwise become unemployed.
- **Health and Well-being** - where the disposal is connected with the physical or mental health or well being of a relevant person.
- **Disposal to the local authority or Registered Social Landlord**

- **Sale to a disabled person on the Councils Disabled Facilities Grant waiting list** – where the Council would otherwise have assisted the buyer to adapt their current home.

16 In More Detail - Repayments of Financial Assistance – Landlords

It is a condition of all forms of assistance that repayment is received in accordance with the terms of approval of the financial assistance. Specifically that;

- 16.1** In relation to Capital and Interest Repayment Loans, repayments are received in accordance with financial assistance approval and the 'Loan Offer' made.
- 16.2** In relation to Equity Loans and Interest Free Loans, repayment is received when the property is sold, disposed of, assigned, transferred or otherwise, including the transfer to family members.
- 16.3** It is a condition of the 'Area/Theme Based Assistance' that, where an owner makes a relevant disposal of the property, other than an exempt disposal, within a period of 5 years from the date on which the Council approves the financial assistance he will be required to repay the financial assistance to the Council, on demand, and in accordance with the following sliding scale: -

Year 1	100% repaid
Year 2	80% repaid
Year 3	60% repaid
Year 4	40% repaid
Year 5	20% repaid

- 16.4** It is a condition of all types of assistance that the property will be let as a residence, and not for a holiday, on a tenancy which is not a long tenancy (except in the case of a disabled facilities grant), by the owner for the time being of the property, to a person who is not connected with him (generally speaking, this means not a member of his family)
- 16.5** It will be a requirement for the Landlord to maintain the property to at least the minimum 'accreditation standard' as set by any local Landlord Accreditation Scheme and for the Landlord to become and remain a member of any local landlord Accreditation Scheme in existence at the time that the assistance was approved. This will have been made clear to the landlord in advance of making an application for the assistance. Failure to do so may be construed as a breach in conditions.
- 16.6** In the event of a breach of conditions, the Council may demand the repayment of the assistance with interest. The Council has the discretion either not to demand repayment, or to require payment of less than the full amount.
- 16.7** At the time that the property is sold, or in the event of the breach of conditions, the Council may decide not to make any demand for whole or part repayment. . A decision will primarily be based on the financial hardship that will experienced by the Client as a result of repayment of the assistance. In addition, the Council may consider the following;
 - a) **Disposal to the local authority or a Registered Social Landlord**
 - b) **Inability to let the premises** – where the landlord has not been able to let one or more of the flats contained in the building.

General Notes:

- i. If the property is occupied by a person who is a protected occupier under the Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976 or is occupied under an assured agricultural occupancy, within the meaning of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988, the condition will not be breached.
- ii. In a case where personal representatives or trustees are the owner, the letting must not be to a person who has a beneficial interest under the will, intestacy or trust, in the property or the proceeds of its sale.
- iii. A "RELEVANT Disposal" is where the whole or part of a property undergoes either a conveyance of the freehold or an assignment of the long lease or the grant of a long lease, which does not qualify as an exempt disposal.
- iv. An "EXEMPT disposal" means a disposal that is:
 - a. Of the whole of the property to the owner or one of the joint owners of the dwelling
 - b. Of the whole of the property by Court order in the course of a domestic breakdown;
 - c. Compulsorily, or by agreement, to a public body with compulsory purchase powers;
 - d. Of land which is "included land" under Section 184 of the Housing Act 1985;

An owner's interest is:

- an estate in fee simple absolute in possession, or
- "a term of years absolute of which not less than five years remain unexpired at the date of application". This included a long lease of seven years or over granted under deed where the leaseholder has a repairing obligation. There must be at least 5 years remaining on the lease. Whether held by the applicant alone or jointly with others.

A person is a member of another's family if that person is:

- the other's wife or husband or that person lives with the other as wife, husband or civil partner
- a son or daughter or son-in-law or daughter-in-law of the other, or of the other's wife or husband ("son" or "daughter" includes any step son or step daughter and any illegitimate son or daughter, and "son-in-law" and "daughter-in-law" are to be construed accordingly) or, a parent, grandparent, grand child, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece of the other, or of the other's wife or husband, whether the relationship is by blood or marriage.

Equal Opportunities Statement

- 17** The Council fully endorse the removal of all barriers to its services arising from ethnicity, religion, geographic location, special needs, language differences, learning difficulties, sexual orientation, gender, age or disability. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but is intended to show some of the areas where it is believed discrimination could occur.
- 17.1** In order to ensure that this policy provides equal access to all, a comprehensive impact assessment has been undertaken to consider the effect of the policy on all the residents of the area.
- 17.2** The assessment showed overall that implementation of the revised policy would generally enhance the beneficial effect on the health, safety and welfare of residents by raising housing standards and community vitality.
- 17.3** This document can be produced in other formats, such as in Braille; large print; on audiotape; CD-ROM or in other languages. Contact XXX on XXX for help.

Confidentiality and Data Protection Statement

- 18** When providing assistance the Council will require information relating to the personal and financial circumstances of the client.
- 18.1** This personal information will be handled in a manner, which meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998). The Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that personal data is kept secure against unauthorised access, loss, disclosure or destruction.
- 18.2** Sometimes it may be in the interest of the client to have personal information passed to one of the Council's partners, so that the client can receive further help. The Council will always request a clients permission prior to sharing information with partners.
- 18.3** In certain circumstances the information provided may be used to prevent and detect fraud, as a result of the Council's obligation to protect the public funds it handles.
- 18.4** The Freedom of Information Act enables anyone to request information from a public authority. When a request is made the Council has a duty to respond to the request within 20 days as well as providing advice and assistance to people who have requested information.

Contact Details

19 If you would like more information, or would like to discuss any part of this Policy contact XXX who will be happy to help.

19.1 If you would like to make an enquiry for assistance contact:

- By post or in person at XXX
- By telephone on XXX
- By email to XXX
- By fax on XXX

19.2 Alternatively go to our website at XXX where you will find advice and guidance on home repairs and maintenance, and the help that is available.

Complaints, Compliments and Appeals

20 The Council operates a Corporate Complaints procedure. If you are not satisfied with the service that you have received please contact us. Your comments help the Council to improve the service provided:

- By post or in person at XXX
- By telephone on XXX
- By email to XXX
- By fax on XXX

20.1 Equally if our Clients are satisfied with the service they receive we would also like to hear about it

20.2 Should a Client wish to appeal about any decision taken in relation to their enquiry for financial assistance, such as disputes relating to eligible works, or levels of assistance, appeals will first of all be dealt with by the Home Improvement Manager (or equivalent). Clients will be informed of the outcome of their appeal in writing. Should the issue not be resolved, the appeal will be referred to the Head of Housing. The decision of the Head of Housing will be final in this respect.

Appendix A - Guidance - Decent Homes Standard

A Decent Home must;

- a) **Meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing** – The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), states that all dwellings should be free from category 1 hazards. (Those hazards which are most likely to occur and to cause serious harm)
- b) **Be in a reasonable state of repair** – If one or more of the key building components are old and/or need major repairs or need replacing then the property would not meet the standard. Key building components could include; external walls; roof structure and covering; windows and doors; chimneys; central heating boilers; gas fires; storage heaters; plumbing and electrics. This list is not exhaustive.
- c) **Have reasonably modern facilities and services** – A dwelling is considered not to meet the decent standard if it lacks three or more of the following facilities: -
 - A kitchen which is 20 years old or less;
 - A kitchen with adequate space and layout;
 - A bathroom which is 30 years old or less;
 - An appropriately located bathroom and WC;
 - Adequate external noise insulation; and
 - Adequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats
- d) **Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort** – The standard requires all dwellings to have both efficient heating and effective insulation. Efficient heating is defined as any gas or oil programmable central heating; or
 - Electric storage heaters; or
 - Warm air systems; or
 - Underfloor systems; or
 - Programmable LPG/solid fuel central heating; or
 - Similarly efficient heating systems which are developed in the future

It may sometimes be appropriate to provide financial assistance towards works, to a lower or higher standard than the Decent Homes Standard. For example;

A lower standard; To assist Clients to make their contribution towards a Government Energy Efficiency Scheme. Providing assistance towards works contributing to thermal comfort alone may be important to help a Client to take advantage of such a scheme, where an application for more complex works would slow the process and put their participation in such a scheme at risk. Similarly, an elderly Client may prefer only to have serious hazards remedied, to avoid prolonged inconvenience in the home.

A higher standard; Where work is being carried out to replace rotted windows, financial assistance may be provided to replace all windows in an elevation rather than only those that are in poor condition.

Appendix B - Guidance – Disabled Facilities

The purposes for which mandatory DFGs may be given are set out below.

- facilitating access to and from the dwelling or the building in which the dwelling or flat, as the case may be, is situated, e.g. by widening doors or installing ramps;
- facilitating access to a room used or usable as the principal family room;
- facilitating access to a room used or usable for sleeping, or alternatively providing such a room for the disabled occupant;
- facilitating access to a room in which there is a lavatory, a bath or shower (or both) and a wash basin or providing a room in which there is such a facility or facilities;
- facilitating access to the garden
- facilities for the preparation and cooking of food.
- adaptations to the dwelling or building to make it safe for the disabled person and other persons residing with him. This may include improvements to access and movement around the home to enable the disabled person to care for another person who lives in the property, such as a spouse, child or another person for whom the disabled person cares.
- improvement of an existing heating system in the dwelling to meet the disabled occupant's needs. Where there is no heating system or where the existing heating arrangements are unsuitable to meet their needs, a heating system may be provided. The installation of central heating to the dwelling will only be considered where the well-being and mobility of the disabled person would otherwise be adversely affected.
- to enable a disabled person to have full use of heating, lighting and power controls in the dwelling. Such work includes the relocation of power points to make them more accessible, the provision of suitably adapted controls where a disabled person has difficulty in using normal types of controls and the installation of additional controls.

Common parts

The purposes for which grant is available for works to the common parts of buildings such as blocks of flats are, limited to works to facilitate access to the dwelling through the common parts, or facilitating the use by the disabled person of a source of power, lighting or heating in the common parts.

Determination of whether works are necessary, appropriate reasonable and practicable

The Council will satisfy itself that the works are necessary, appropriate reasonable and it is practicable to carry out the relevant works having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building. The Council will have regard in determining this to the guidance and good practice issued from time to time by the Government.

Loan eligible works

The following works are those which may not necessarily be eligible for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, but which enable a disabled person to live independently at home. Loan assistance may be available for these.

- The provision of a safe play area for a disabled child.
- Works or arrangements to allow a disabled child who has parents who are separated to live for part of the time with each parent should this be appropriate.
- To provide a complete solution to the needs of the disabled person.

When assessing the availability of loan assistance for such works, beyond the maximum mandatory DFG limit of £30,000, the Council must ensure that the maximum amount of money spent on any one client remains reasonable, and that funding available is used to help as many disabled people as possible.

Using the Grant of Loan for moving to a more suitable home

The Council will consider providing assistance to enable a disabled person to move to a more suitable home where it is more cost effective than adapting the current home to make it suitable for the person's current or future needs, even if the new home requires some adaptations.

However, when assessing the availability of loan assistance beyond the maximum mandatory DFG limit of £30,000, the Council must ensure that the maximum amount of money spent on any one Client remains reasonable, and that funding available is used to help as many disabled people as possible.

In order to calculate the amount of loan assistance that is available beyond the mandatory DFG limit of £30,000 the Council will consider the following factors;

- The eligibility of the applicant
- the nature of the works i.e. relocation will only be available where mandatory works are required to the existing home.
- Whether the current property is not reasonably suitable for adaptation, or the cost of the works exceeds the maximum assistance for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant
- Whether the disabled person expresses a preference to move to a more suitable property.
- The existing support networks assisting the applicant.
- The availability of suitable housing.
- Consideration of social housing as an alternative.
- The cost of alternative care arrangements, home support residential care, etc.
- Entitlement to benefits and advice from the Benefits Agency
- The current market value of the existing property

- The current market value of the proposed purchase property
- The existing mortgage and terms and conditions
- The cost of funding and practicality of carrying out any alterations to the new property
- The funding of any shortfall between the new and old property
- The equity in the existing property
- The mortgage rearrangement costs
- The amount of financial assistance the Council may need to provide
- How the mortgage and interest payments will be financed

Appendix C – How the Loans work

Capital and Interest Repayment Loan

Interest will be charged at a rate that is 2% above Bank of England Base Rate or at 5%, whichever is the higher rate at the time that the loan is approved. The interest rate will be fixed for the life of the loan, so that the monthly repayment will always be the same, and the amount of interest that will be charged will be known to the Client at the beginning of the loan.

The following example shows repayments based on an interest rate of 5%;

Amount Borrowed	Term	Monthly Repayment	Total Cost
£1000	2 years	£43.87	£1,052.91
£5,000	5 years	£94.36	£5,661.37
£10,000	10 years	£106.07	£12,727.86

The Equity Loan

Using the Equity Loan to improve or adapt the home:

Value of the home	£ 90,000
Value of outstanding mortgage and any other secured loans	£ 50,000
Available Equity	£ 40,000
Maximum Equity Loan available (80% of Available Equity)	£ 32,000
Loan required	£ 12,000
Loan as a percentage of the property value	13%
House Value on sale (when the loan must be repaid)	£ 100,000
Loan amount repaid (13% of the property value at the time of loan repayment)	£ 13,000

Using the Equity Loan to move home:

Value of existing home	£60,000
Cost of replacement home	£80,000
This is paid for with:	
• Value of existing home	£60,000
• Equity Loan	£20,000
The loan is equal to a quarter of the value of the new home	25%
House value on sale	£90,000
Repayment 25% of £90,000	£22,500

**REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS
PORTFOLIO
8th March 2013**



Report of: Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods

Subject: COMMUNITY POOL - CATEGORY 5B – EMERGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS FUND - RED DREAMS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to present an application received from Red Dreams through Category 5B of the Community Pool to the Portfolio Holder for ratification further to the grant approval made on 5th February 2013.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following the review of the Community Pool, the approach to the commissioning of the budget this financial year has been significantly different to the approach taken in previous years.

3.2 On 21 November 2011, Cabinet agreed that the overall value of the Community Pool Grant Fund 2012 / 2013 would be £403,000. Cabinet also agreed that this funding would be allocated via the following five categories:

- Category 1 – The provision of universal welfare benefits and advice;
- Category 2 – The provision of universal credit union support;
- Category 3 – Capacity and resource building in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS);
- Category 4 – The provision of universal specialist support; and
- Category 5 – The provision of development / investment and emergency funding.

3.3 Following the allocation of funds through Categories 1, 2 and 3 using a formal procurement process and allocation of grants through Category 4, there was

£51,863 total funding available for Category 5; this is a combination of the remaining budget and reserves. Of this £21,055.28 remains unallocated prior to the approval of this grant.

- 3.4 Category 5B is specifically for Emergency Contributions. The aim of these grants is to assist organisations that find themselves in temporary difficult financial situations, and is designed for emergency assistance in the following situations:
- To fill a funding gap in the interim where funding has been secured but not yet administered;
 - To allow groups who are awaiting funding decisions to continue running a project until the outcome of a decision is known; and
 - To allow groups who have been unsuccessful in securing funding time to look for alternative funding options.
- Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, all applications are considered on the information provided.
- 3.5 Funding support through this grant scheme is not designed as a long term funding solution and it is explicit within the guidelines that applications must clearly outline what has been done and how they are planning to secure additional funding. Any grants awarded through this scheme are for one off support only.
- 3.6 The maximum grant that an organisation can apply for through this scheme is £8,000. The eligibility criteria is outlined below:
- Available to all voluntary and community organisations;
 - The applicant must be constituted, allowing the delivery of services, for example a registered charity, community interest company etc;
 - The applicant must be non- profit distributing;
 - The organisation must deliver services in Hartlepool Borough;
 - The organisation must have been in existence for more than 12 months;
 - Need to be able to evidence that the short term investment is viable; and
 - Applicants must have been actively applying for alternative funding to continue their project / service.
- 3.7 Changes to the Community Pool Grants Programme for 2013/14 were agreed by Cabinet on 7th January 2013. These changes will come into effect from April 2013; therefore this application will be considered against the criteria and eligibility outlined above.
- 3.8 Red Dreams have previously received a Development and Investment grant through Category 5A of the Community Pool, £7,040 was approved by Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio in August 2012. This funding was to assist Red Dreams to move into larger premises, enabling them to offer a broader range of services to the young people accessing the charity. The project has also enabled the charity to invest in themselves through the purchase of equipment, training of staff and volunteers and achieving a quality assurance mark which will assist in the future sustainability of the charity. An update on this project funded by Category 5A was received as part of the application process, the funding has been spent in accordance with the offer

letter and a full project monitoring visit will take place in April 2013.

4. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 4.1 Red Dreams is a registered charity based in Hartlepool that works with young people aged 19 and under within all areas of creative and performing arts and media. The aim of the charity is to build confidence and self-esteem, knowledge and skills of the young people they work with to enable them to excel at their art form and prepare for their future.
- 4.2 The organisation has been established for 5 years and has recently moved premises on Whitby Street South; this move was assisted through funding from the Development and Investment grant, as outlined in 3.8. This expansion of the charity into new premises will equate to approximately 3 times the current level of space and lead to increased capacity, which will enable them to accommodate more young people wanting to use the services available.
- 4.3 The move to the new premises has taken longer than expected and resulted in a delay in the new premises opening, which is planned for the 28th February 2013. This delay has resulted in a reduction of income to the charity and therefore an application has been submitted for emergency grant funding from Category 5B of the Community Pool to sustain the organisation in the short term. The application submitted is for £4,012.28, the grant funding will cover the cost of 2 salaries (of a Technical Manager and Administration Officer) for 18 weeks, 3 months of insurance and marketing and publicity.
- 4.4 The charity employs two part time staff and 30 volunteers are involved in the projects delivered by the Charity resulting in giving over 65 volunteer hours per week. The organisation have been working to raise the profile of the new premises and facilities available, there has been a high level of interest and bookings have been confirmed for use of the services in advance of the opening.
- 4.5 The application was submitted at short notice. Within the formal reporting timetable the application should have had to be submitted for consideration by Portfolio Holder at the March meeting, however given the nature of the application, this timeframe would not have been appropriate in this case, therefore legal advice was sought (outlined in 8.2).

5. PROJECT AIMS

- 5.1 This short term, one off grant towards capital and revenue costs will enable the organisation to cover core costs until the next installment of Children in Need funding is made available in May 2012.
- 5.2 The services provided by the organisation link closely with priorities within Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Strategy. Red Dreams have a 3 year (January 2013 – December 2015) Strategic Business Plan for the expansion

into new premises which includes a funding strategy.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The total unallocated budget for Category 5 (Development & Investment Grants and Emergency Contributions Grant) of the Community Pool is currently £21,055.28. Following the approval of this application the remaining unallocated budget is £17,043 which will be available for future applications.
- 6.2 Red Dreams was in receipt of a development and investment grant through the Community Pool programme this financial year, totalling £7,040.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Risk implications to the Council will be managed through the organisation agreeing to terms and conditions of a grant offer letter and monitoring requirements.
- 7.2 In addition, Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Regeneration and Development Team are working with Red Dreams to assist the organisation with any support or development needs.
- 7.3 Should the organisation cease operation funding previously secured through Category 5A would also be at risk.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Legal implications will be managed through the requirements outlined in an offer letter.
- 8.2 Legal advice was sought from the Council's Chief Solicitor regarding the decision making process to be taken by the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder when considering this application, in advance of the Portfolio Meeting.

9. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no staff implications for Hartlepool Borough Council, apart from the support outlined in 7.2; this support is within the remit of the team and is not dependent on grant approval.

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

- 10.1 There are no Section 17 considerations.

11. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The application from Red Dreams Limited meets the eligibility criteria and all relevant policies are in place. There are no determined equality and diversity issues highlighted by supporting this project.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to ratify the decision made on 5th February 2013 to allocate an Emergency Contributions Grant of £4,012.28 to Red Dreams.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Cabinet has previously agreed to allocate funds for Category 5 through a grant process (21st November 2011) and the criteria for Category 5 grants (19th March 2012).

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (i). Item 5.1 from Cabinet on 21st November 2011.
- (ii). Minutes from Cabinet on 21st November 2011.
- (iii). Item 6.1 from Cabinet on 6th February 2012.
- (iv). Minutes from Cabinet on 6th February 2012.
- (v). Item 5.1 from Cabinet on 20th February 2012.
- (vi). Minutes from Cabinet on 20th February 2012.
- (vi). Item 5.1 from Cabinet on 20th February 2012.
- (vii) Item 5.12 from Cabinet on 19th March 2012.
- (viii) Minutes from Cabinet on 19th March 2012.
- (ix) Mayors Portfolio Holder Minutes *Hartlepool Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy (Community Pool Grant Allocations 2012/13)* 21st May 2012.
- (x) Item 5.12 from Cabinet on 7th January 2013.
- (xi) Minutes from Cabinet on 7th January 2013.
- (xii) Item 2.4 from Regeneration & Neighbourhood Portfolio on 24th August 2012
- (xiii) Minutes from Regeneration & Neighbourhood Portfolio on 24th August 2012

15. CONTACT OFFICER

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**REGENERATION AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder

8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: QUARTERLY HOUSING REPORT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This report provides an update on progress and benchmarking across key areas of the Housing Service during Quarter 3 2012/13 and updates the last report presented to the Portfolio Holder on 7 December 2012.

4. EMPTY HOMES UPDATE

4.1 The Housing Services team along with partners Housing Hartlepool are progressing with the implementation of an Empty Homes Pilot scheme as part of the incentive approach to bringing empty homes back into use. This scheme operates a lease and repair model where properties are refurbished and then managed in the long term by Housing Hartlepool. Refurbishment works were completed on 19 properties as part of the first phase and of these 10 properties are already tenanted with tenants identified for the remaining properties. A further 24 properties have been inspected and specifications produced as part of phase 2 and of these owners have signed up with work commenced on 13 properties. The remaining 11 properties will shortly be receiving offer letters.

- 4.2 The Councils Empty Property Purchasing scheme is progressing well. To date 24 properties have been acquired with work completed on 7 of these properties. There are agreed sales with a further 10 owners and legal instructions to purchase have been issued. 115 valuations/inspections have been completed in total. The scheme is currently being delivered to programme and within budget. Progress reports on this scheme will be provided to Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis through the Housing Services Quarterly report and to Council on a four monthly basis in line with the Council decision.
- 4.3 A key action within the Empty Homes action plan was to bring 10% of empty properties back into use and to identify properties suitable for enforcement action. In order to demonstrate this ongoing work a table of the top 20 empty properties has been developed and this will monitor progress and assist in implementing the most appropriate form of enforcement action. The table includes properties which have been empty for the longest time and those in key strategic locations (identified within the empty homes strategy). Each individual case is assessed on its merits and appropriate informal action taken followed by enforcement action. All properties have been inspected, photographed and an empty property assessment form completed.
- 4.4 As properties are brought back into use they are removed from the list and additional properties added to create a rolling list. Of the original list 5 properties are being addressed through the pilot scheme, 2 have been purchased by the Council and 8 have been brought back into use through negotiation with the owner.

Table 1 – Current Top 20 Overview

Property Purchasing Scheme	1
Pilot Scheme	4
Enforcement Action Required	6
Dialogue/Negotiation Ongoing	9

- 4.5 Table 1 summarises the status of the current top 20 at the end of quarter 3. Compulsory Purchase Order enforcement action has recently been approved on 2 properties within the current top 20, enforced sale for unpaid Council tax is being pursued in 2 cases and 2 additional properties are currently being considered for potential enforcement action. Of the 9 properties where negotiation is ongoing 6 have only been added to the list in December 2012.
- 4.6 In total 54 properties were brought back into use within quarter 3. The cumulative figure for 2012/13 is now 135 properties brought back into use. This exceeds the annual target of 75. This figure records any intervention by the Council which has resulted in a property being brought back into use. This can range from informal discussions and awareness raising, with owners through to enforcement action and site visits. The work of the Housing Standards Officers has contributed significantly to this achievement. 33 Properties are currently within the S215 process with direct action commenced on 2 properties.

- 4.7 Regeneration of Baden Street is ongoing. In terms of the empty homes, during this quarter, the Council's Facilities Management section have completed work on 1 property and the tenants have now moved in. This is the third qualifying empty property brought back into use since the scheme was initiated. Work has begun on a second property and refurbishment work is due to commence on a further 5 properties. The Council has acquired 1 property on Baden Street through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme and the Council has agreed sale with 1 other property owner (recorded in the statistics above). The Council has also received approaches from a further 2 owners who are considering the option to sell. Work is in progress with the remaining owners who have opted to seek independent quotations for the work to their property. A number of owners have also recently changed managing agents with the intention of improving the management of their properties going forward. Intensive work has been ongoing throughout the quarter with the owners/managing agents of 6 properties; the refurbishment work to these properties is expected to commence in Q4. With the suite of ongoing initiatives, it is anticipated that the initial target of 11 properties refurbished will be achieved. Intensive work continues with the remaining owners.

5. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

- 5.1 The enforcement update encompasses a number of key areas, including housing conditions, housing related statutory nuisance and problematic empty properties.
- 5.2 Table 2 sets out the service requests that have been received by the enforcement team during the first two quarters of this year. Previous year's figures are shown in brackets for comparison purposes.

Table 2 – Enforcement Team Service Requests

Request Type	Number and % of Total Number by Quarter 2012/13							
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
Disrepair	(65) 52	19%	(56) 43	20%	(61) 75	42%	(60)	
Empty & Insecure Property	(30) 53	20%	(58) 45	21%	(48) 24	13%	(40)	
Empty property report	(0) 0	0%	(0) 0	0%	(2) 0	0%	(0)	
Empty property Nuisance	(31) 44	16%	(23) 11	5%	(16) 8	4%	(4)	
Unauthorised Encampment	(4) 1	0.5%	(5) 2	1%	(0) 0	0%	(0)	
Nuisance from Adjacent Property	(13) 6	2%	(3) 36	17%	(7) 27	15%	(60)	
Nuisance from Occupied Property	(86) 92	34%	(83) 66	30%	(42) 34	19%	(20)	
Filthy & Verminous	(3) 0	0%	(0) 0	0%	(5) 4	2%	(0)	
Defective Drainage	(23) 14	5%	(16) 10	5%	(6) 4	2%	(5)	
HMO Advice	(3) 3	1%	(4) 3	1%	(1) 3	2%	(1)	
Immigration Visit	(5) 2	1%	(2) 0	0%	(4) 0	0%	(7)	
Total Number of Requests	(263) 267		(250) 216		(192) 179		(197)	

- 5.3 The majority of service requests fall into three main areas:
- Disrepair
 - Empty Properties
 - Nuisance
- 5.4 Overall the number of service requests received by the team has reduced by 17% compared to the previous quarter and by 7% compared to the same quarter in 2011/12.
- 5.5 The number of disrepair cases has increased in the third quarter compared to the previous quarter and the previous year. This increase is not unexpected as the number of complaints about damp and cold housing tends to rise in the winter months. In this quarter, 2 Housing Act 2004 improvement notices were served and 5 Environmental Protection Act 1990 notices were served in relation to premises which were prejudicial to health. During this quarter, works were arranged on 1 property where the owner had failed to comply with an Environmental Protection Act notice.
- 5.6 Complaints regarding empty properties have also reduced when compared to the same quarter last year and the last quarter. It is likely that the reason for this is the proactive work undertaken in relation to the empty homes strategy, area surveys and section 215s has had a major impact. 6 notices were served to require the securing of empty dwellings and 6 notices were served requiring the abatement of nuisance associated with empty properties e.g. to remove rubbish from within the property boundaries.
- 5.7 The overall number of service requests relating to nuisances (both occupied and empty) reduced significantly from the previous quarter.
- 5.8 In addition to the reactive work carried out, the team undertakes proactive work in relation to identifying problematic empty and nuisance properties through area based targeting in a number of areas, including the Carr/Hopps Street Regeneration area, Oxford Road and Cornwall Street areas. Officers continue to undertake proactive inspections of the Selectively Licensed properties (as detailed in table 3).
- 5.9 From 2007, when mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was introduced, to 31 March 2012 there were 15 premises licensed as HMOs in Hartlepool. These licences remain in force for 5 years, unless there are circumstances that require a variation or revocation. 5 licences became due for renewal during quarter 3 and 3 renewal applications have been processed and proposed licences issued. The remaining 2 properties have been inspected and applications are being processed.

6. SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE

- 6.1 Housing Standards Officers have inspected a further 50 properties within the Selective Licensing areas this quarter, bringing the total for the year so far to

79, of this total 26 were found to have defects which have required a schedule of work to be issued to the licence holder.

6.3 106 properties were licensed in the first three quarters of this year bringing the total number issued to 690 although 11 of these have since been revoked for various reasons including;

- Change of ownership
- Change of management agent
- Property no longer licensable

Table 3 summarises the Selective Licensing activities undertaken.

Table 3 – Selective Licensing Activity

Licensed Properties	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 Q1-Q3
Total number of properties licensed	44	482	52	106
Licences revoked	0	0	6	11
Gas/Electrical Safety				
Reminder Letters sent for Gas or Electrical safety Certificates		395	673	472
Notice Served for non supply of satisfactory Gas or Electrical Safety Certificate		139	422	225
Final Warning of court proceedings	0	0	0	101
Certificates Supplied following Reminder or Notice sent		257	492	492
Additional Enforcement				
Referred for legal action to commence		N/A	112	113
Called in for office interview and informal caution			12	15
Telephone interview and informal caution			88	98
Conditions complied with following contact			99	88
Housing Standards Inspections				
Inspection of Licensed Property completed	0	86	220	79
Schedule of Works Sent with recommendation for action for Licensed property	0	10	140	26

7. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG) BENCHMARKING DATA

7.1 The Council continues to benchmark its service against other Local Authorities in the North East as part of the North East Adaptations Group.

- 7.2 The benchmarking is undertaken by monitoring the overall time taken from first contact (the date a person first approaches Social Services with a need for help and assistance) to certified date (date that the works are confirmed as completed).
- 7.3 During 2011/12 the Council's overall time taken averaged at 154 days. At the end of Quarter 1 2012/13 the Council completed 24 DFGs which took 139 days, compared to an average completion time of 159 days (average of 9 North East local authorities that provided data) from first contact to certified date. During Quarter 3 35 DFGs were completed which took 139 days. Limited benchmarking data is available for quarter 3 but it would appear that from this data the Council is continuing to perform well when monitored against the other North East local authorities.
- 7.4 At the end of Quarter 3 there were 80 applicants on the waiting list for a DFG.
- 7.5 During Quarter 3 the Council was notified about an extra £107,000 funding received from the Government. In addition £167,000 funding has been received in early January 2013 from the Primary Care Trust. This additional budget will be used to reduce the current waiting list.

8. ALLOCATIONS SUMMARY

- 8.1 Choice Based Lettings (CBL) activity and performance continues to be monitored on a quarterly basis and compared with our sub regional partners by the Sub Regional CBL Steering Group.
- 8.2 The number of applicants who are 'live' on the system and able to bid (shown in table 4) decreased during 2011-2012 and at the end of the year was 2180 in Hartlepool. At the end of Quarter 1 this number increased to 2340 and has increased again during Quarter 2 to 2399 applicants. However, during Quarter 3 the number has fallen to 2311 and this reflects a decrease in the waiting list across the sub region. During Quarter 1 the number of Housing Hartlepool applicants on the waiting list wanting a transfer (from one Housing Hartlepool property to another) increased from 25% to 29% as a result of the number of current Housing Hartlepool tenants who under-occupy their property and need to move so that they are not affected by the under occupation charge that will be introduced in April 2013. This figure remains 29% for Quarter 3 (2012-13).

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

	Hartlepool	Sub Regional Total
Quarter 4 (2011-12)	2180	16193
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	2340	16615
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	2399	16461
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	2311	15273

- 8.3 To ensure that applicants in the greatest need are given preference for an allocation of accommodation, levels of housing need are categorised into five bands. The numbers of applicants within each band demonstrates that since the end of Quarter 4 (2011-12) the number of applicants that fall within Band 4 – No or low level housing need – has reduced from approximately 75% of the whole waiting list to 68%. This means that there are an increased percentage of applicants whose level of housing need has put them into a 'priority' band (Table 5).

Table 5 – Total number of 'live' applicants (able to bid) within each Band

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total
Quarter 4 (2011-12)	145	425	60	1550	2180
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	190	512	54	1585	2340
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	200	497	56	1646	2399
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	173	507	46	1585	2311

- 8.4 Within Hartlepool, during Quarter 3, the number of decant applicants has decreased from 47 in Quarter 2 to 21. For the purposes of the CBL policy, a decant applicant is defined as one who is losing their home through a recognised regeneration scheme and they are awarded the greatest priority.
- 8.5 Some applicants within the three Priority Bands (1, 2 and 3) may also have cumulative needs (more than one housing need). This figure has increased significantly since 2011-12. Applicants with cumulative need due to a housing need in addition to under occupation have slightly decreased during Quarter 3 from 77 to 62 within Band 2 and from 37 to 30 within Band 1 since the first quarter.
- 8.6 Table 6 demonstrates that the majority of lettings continue to go to those on the waiting list rather than to Housing Hartlepool transfer applicants. However, the higher number of lets to transfers reflects the increased number of transfer applicants on the whole waiting list. One of the reasons for this increase is as a result of the number of current Housing Hartlepool tenants who under-occupy their property and need to move so that they are not affected by the under occupation charge that will be introduced in April 2013.

Table 6 – Lettings Information for Hartlepool

	Total no. lets	Direct Lets	Transfers
Quarter 4 (2011-12)	108	2	12 (11%)
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	151	0	22 (15%)
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	137	5	27 (20%)
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	146	3	29 (20%)

- 8.7 Within the sub region the number of lets within each Band as shown in table 7, shows that more than one-third of lettings have gone to applicants within Band 4 and this is an increase on previous quarters.

Table 7 – Percentage lets to each Band (within Hartlepool)

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Decants	Total no. lets
Quarter 4 (2011-12)	33%	25%	9%	33%	4%	108
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	34%	26%	6%	34%		151
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	35%	30%	3%	31%		137
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	30%	25%	9%	36%		146

- 8.8 The Sub Regional CBL Policy allows for cross boundary mobility as shown in table 8.

Table 8 – Cross Boundary Mobility

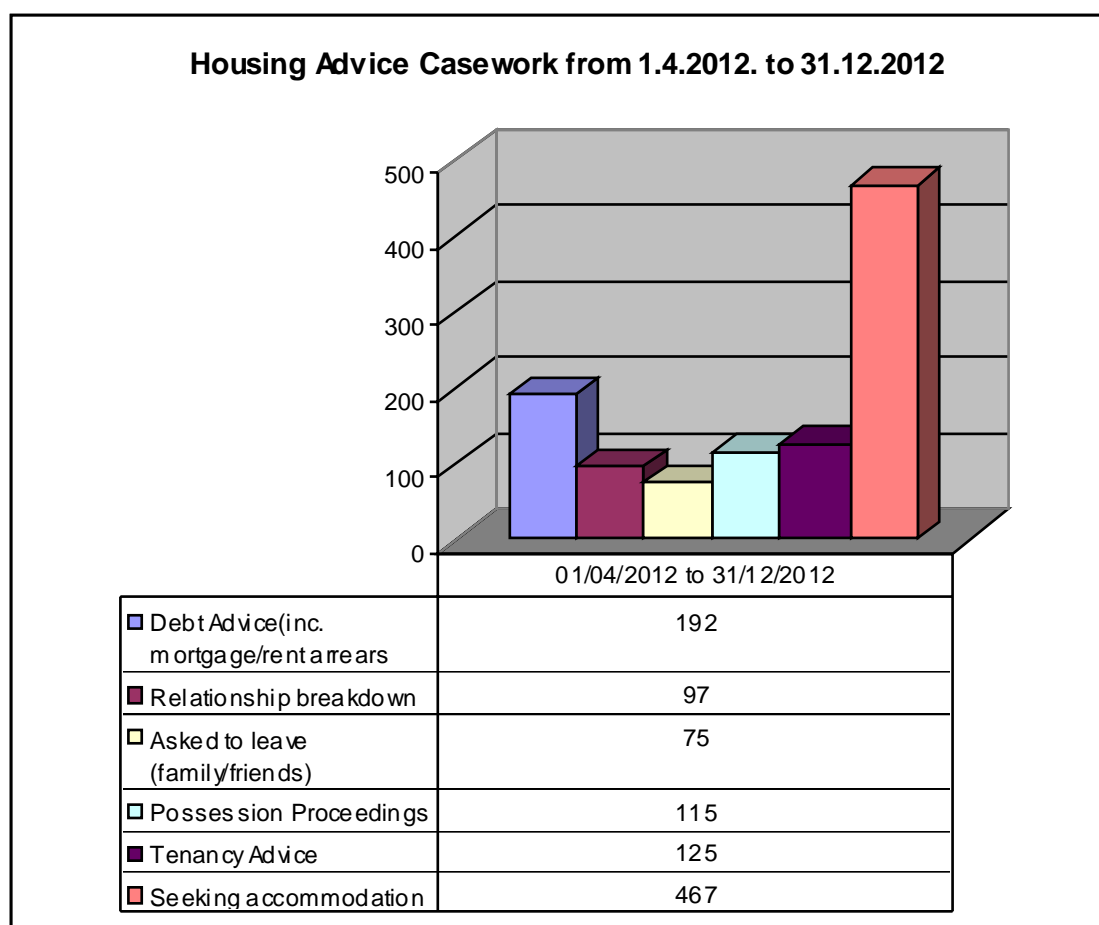
	Area applicant moved from:	Area applicant rehoused to:	Number
Quarter 1	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Stockton	Hartlepool	2
Quarter 2	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Redcar	Hartlepool	1
	Stockton	Hartlepool	3
Quarter 3	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	1
	Redcar	Hartlepool	1
	Stockton	Hartlepool	4

- 8.9 The percentage of properties let on 1st offer is also monitored across the sub region. During Quarter 1 (2012-13) this percentage decreased from 73% in Quarter 4 (2011-12) to 44%. However it has increased again to 62% during Quarter 2 and 61% in Quarter 3. This will continue to be monitored through regular liaison meetings that take place with Housing Hartlepool.
- 8.10 The current CBL Policy (revised January 2012) has undergone review and consultation took place following a range of measures contained in the Localism Act 2011 and the subsequent Code of Guidance issued by Department of Communities and Local Government in June 2012. Cabinet has considered the review and a new policy will be adopted across the sub region from April 2013. This new policy will have some local variations for Hartlepool, namely not awarding additional preference to those in paid employment and retaining three reasonable offers of accommodation for applicants.

9. HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ACTIVITY

- 9.1 The Housing Advice and Homelessness service, based at the Housing Options Centre, carries out the Council's statutory duties in relation to homelessness and all aspects of housing advice. During the first three quarters of this year 3,732 customers have accessed the service by visiting the Housing Options Centre.
- 9.2 During the first three quarters of this year active casework has been carried out for 822 clients needing detailed advice and assistance to resolve their housing problem, this includes 206 households who with our assistance were prevented from becoming homeless.
- 9.3 During the first three quarters of this year we have accepted our statutory duty for 8 homeless households which has included 3 families facing mortgage repossession as all available options to save their homes had been exhausted. There has been a significant increase in mortgage advice casework and it is likely that this will continue to be a growing area of work as the impact of welfare reforms take effect.
- 9.4 Tenancy advice to both private landlords and their tenants has also seen an increase with requests for assistance ranging from landlords requiring advice on how to take repossession of their property due to default by the tenant, to tenants reporting mismanagement by landlords. There has also been a strong focus on undertaking pro-active work in order to raise standards of property management.
- 9.5 A series of factsheets has been produced by the Landlord/Tenant Officer, aimed at offering useful advice and guidance to landlords and tenants in the Private Rented Sector. In order to assist landlords to manage their properties effectively a range of 'model' template forms have also been developed. Production of these have been prioritised in order to tackle high profile, key issues in private rented housing, such as 'tenant referencing' and they have been circulated directly to all known landlords and managing agents operating across the town. Work will continue to develop a comprehensive range of these documents covering all aspects of tenancy management
- 9.6 Table 9 provides a breakdown of the enquiry types clients presented with during the year.

Table 9



10. HOUSING REPORTS ON FORWARD PLAN

- 10.1 RN 02/13 Hartlepool Housing Strategy End of Year (2012-2013) Report and Action Plan Refresh.** This is a key decision to approve the refresh of the Housing Strategy 2011–2015 Action Plan and the end of year report for 2012-2013. Cabinet will consider how the Housing Strategy and Action Plan have contributed towards the key housing priorities for Hartlepool for the period 2012-2013. Cabinet will further consider new actions that are proposed to be included from April 2013 which either build upon completed actions or have been developed to address new issues and priorities that have emerged.
- 10.2 RN 20/12 Selective Licensing.** This is a key decision to consider the findings of the evidence gathered from the consultation as prescribed by guidance together with a timetable of possible implementation of additional Selective Licensing areas in Hartlepool. The current designation of Selective Licensing was implemented in May 2009 covering 6 areas of the town and in September 2011 Cabinet agreed to delay their decision to extend the scheme into a further 9 areas for 12 months until a thorough evaluation of the evidence available from the existing scheme has been undertaken. This report will inform members of the outcome and evidence gathered from the consultation into introducing additional Selective Licensing areas in

Hartlepool which currently have selective licensing of private landlords operating in designated areas.

11. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

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

12. SECTION 17

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

13. RECOMMENDATIONS/ REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

- 14.1 There are no appendices attached to this report.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1 There are no background papers.

16. CONTACT OFFICER

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**REGENERATION AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO**
Report to Portfolio Holder
8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: TEES VALLEY DESIGN REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide information to the Portfolio Holder on the requirement for Councils to have local design review arrangement in place as per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 and seek agreement to signing a memorandum of understand relating to this requirement (**Appendix 1**).

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The North East Design Review Service (NE DRES) is the Design Review Service in the region affiliated to the Design Council Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) national network of Design Review Panels. Previously run by Ignite (part of One North East), the service was transferred to the care of The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) North East in May 2011 when One North East closed.

3.2 Funding for the service was continued by CABE through specific Design Review funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Northern Architecture was brought in as a partner in October 2011 to support the development and delivery of the Design Review and Enabling Service in the region. Both DCLG and Design Council CABE now require the regional panels to develop into a paid-for design review services and therefore from April 2012 NE DRES needs to implement a transactional business plan towards a sustainable, non-funded service.

3.3 The NE DRES believe that design review services should be developed and delivered in partnership with Local Authorities in the region. NE DRES wishes to work closely with Local Authorities as key clients and partners to

embed design review and enabling services as valued tools for enhancing and improving design quality in the built environment.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Paragraph 62 of the NPPF requires Councils to have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design in planning. The Tees Valley Planning Manager's meet regularly to discuss planning matters and discusses how to address this requirement. Whilst some council's have informal processes for design reviews it was thought in accordance with the duty to co-operate and as good practice to have a coordinated Tees Valley approach.
- 4.2 A representative from the NE DRES presented information to the Planning Managers on how they could help with establishing a review service, however this was focused on Local Planning Authorities subscribing and paying for the service. After subsequent discussions it was proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is entered into by the Tees Valley Authorities, without cost to secure the arrangements of design review, this approach has been agreed by NE DRES.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this memorandum of understanding.

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

- 6.1 There are no Section 17 implications.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the report and agrees to the Tees Valley approach to the design review arrangements.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The local authority has a duty under the National Planning Policy Framework to have local design review arrangements in place.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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Assistant Director (Planning & Regeneration)
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North East Design Review and Enabling Service

Memorandum of Understanding with North East Local Authorities

Statement of intent

This agreement recognises an emerging partnership founded on a shared belief in the value of design as essential to improving the quality of life. The partnership is based on: (i) shared belief of value and benefits of design review and the North East Design Review and Enabling Service's experience and practical knowledge of providing independent design review and enabling services in the region and (ii) the potential of the five Tees Valley Authorities comprising Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to play a strategic role in identifying and encouraging developers to engage in enabling and design review, and embedding design review in their planning and development processes; thereby improving the quality of design outcomes of significant schemes in the Tees Valley area.

NE DRES and the Tees Valley Authorities agree that this Memorandum is not legally binding between them and does not create any legal rights or obligations. It is a statement of their shared intention to work together in a spirit of cooperation.

Commitment from participating North East Local Authorities:

- To identify potential schemes for design review and pass contact details over to NE DRES for them to follow up;
- To encourage developers to engage with design review and enabling services provided by NE DRES;
- To identify other advocacy opportunities for NE DRES staff e.g. speaking at developers forums/service users panels;
- Promote NEDRES services via local authority websites / with pre-planning and planning correspondence;
- To work with NE DRES to encourage ~~embed~~ design review in planning and development processes and policies.

Commitment from NE DRES

- To approach developers of schemes identified by local authority officers to encourage them to engage in design review and enabling services;
- To consult relevant local authority officers on pre-briefing documentation on schemes coming forward for design review and enabling sessions;
- To provide copies of design review reports to relevant local authority officers;
- To work with local authority officers, when requested to embed design review in planning and development processes and policies.

The support of the Tees Valley Authorities will be publicised on the NE DRES website and in NE DRES marketing materials.

Signed on behalf of Darlington Borough Council

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of Middlesbrough Council

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of North East Design Review and Enabling Service

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Please feel free to give details below of any further contacts.

Please return two signed copies of this form to:

NE DRES

c/o RIBA North East

School of the Built & Natural Environment

Northumbria University,

Ellison Building, Ellison Place

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE1 8ST

Appendix 1 - Contact details for each local authority

The best contact/s for NE DRES to correspond with on identifying potential schemes for design review are:

Darlington Borough Council

Contact 1

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Contact 2

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Hartlepool Borough Council

Contact 1

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Contact 2

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Middlesbrough Council

Contact 1

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Contact 2

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Contact 1

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Contact 2

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Contact 1

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

Contact 2

Name/s:
Position/s:
Email:
Telephone:

**REGENERATION AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO**
Report to Portfolio Holder
8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods)

Subject: STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING CHARGES

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to set out a proposed range of charges to be introduced for the function of street naming and numbering. It is recommended that these charges to be introduced from 1 April 2013

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Street Naming and numbering is a function carried out by the Council in relation to all new developments and those circumstances where householders seek to re-name/number their property. Where a new development is built, the Council liaises with Royal Mail to agree a naming/numbering convention. Once agreed, the Council advises emergency services, utility companies and a number of other bodies. It would appear that in neighbouring councils this is a fee paying service.

3.2 For charging purposes, it is proposed to introduce the following categories of development:

- Larger scale developments involving new streets;
- Smaller single/infill development;
- Re-naming and numbering existing properties

3.3 The following gives an indication of the charges levied by other authorities

3.3.1 Hambleton District Council

- Developments which include a new road name cost £185 for 10 properties or less, plus £25 for each additional property
- Developments which do not include a new road name cost £70 per property
- Re-naming a property costs £30 per property

3.3.2 Durham County Council

- One dwelling/unit on an existing road - £40.00
- Two to ten dwellings/units on an existing road - £75.00 per plot.
- More than ten dwellings/units on an existing road - £75.00 per plot for the first ten dwellings then £5.00 for each additional dwelling.
- One to ten dwellings/unit on a new road(s) - 105.00 per plot
- More than 10 dwellings/units on a new road(s) - £100.00 per plot for the first ten dwellings then 5.00 for each additional dwelling

3.3.3 Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

- Large developments £150 per new road and £10 per plot
- Small development which do not include a new road name: £70 per property
- Re-naming a property £30

3.3.4 Stockton on Tees Borough Council

- As per Redcar and Cleveland

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The level of income which would have been generated in the financial year 2011/2012 ranges from £3,690 using the Durham County Council model to £3,840 using the Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council model

4.2 Following a comparative exercise with the other authorities, it is proposed to introduce the following level of charges

- Large developments £150 per new road name and £10 per plot
- Small developments which do not include a new road name: £70 per property
- Re-naming/re-numbering a property £30

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Based on these figures approximately £3,840 would have been raised in the 2011/2012 financial year

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 7.1 There are no Section 17 Implications

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Council to start charging for the function of Street Naming and Numbering from 1st April 2013

- 8.2 The costs will be as identified in 4.2 above

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To bring the Council in line with the charges that the other Tees Valley Councils are charging.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 There are no background papers.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
8th March 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering)

Subject: Town Centre Traffic Signals Improvements

1. TYPE OF DECISION/ APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for traffic signal alterations, to reduce delays and improve traffic management around the town centre.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A review has taken place into key junctions in the town centre area, to determine where further improvements could be made.

3.2 Previously, a lot of the delays which occurred along the A689 corridor appeared to stem from insufficient northbound flow through the A689/ Church Square junction. This was addressed in 2011 with the prohibition of the right turn from Marina Way into Clarence Road, which had the effect of increasing northbound traffic flows each signals cycle.

3.3 This has brought about a considerable improvement at the A689 junctions with both Church Square and Victoria Road, and as a result a further phase of improvements can now be considered.

4. PROPOSALS

York Road/ Park Road Junction – **Appendix 1**

4.1 At present, traffic travelling west on Park Road towards this junction can only use the left hand lane, while the right hand lane is prohibited to buses only, although buses have not used this route for some years. At times,

this can lead to excessive queuing, with vehicles blocking the junction with the Shopping Centre Car Parks/ One Life Centre, while there is a lane sat empty.

- 4.2 It is proposed to re-allocate these lanes, so that the left hand lane is for vehicles turning left into York Road, and the right hand lane is for traffic travelling straight on.
- 4.3 This will give a much better distribution of traffic, and lead to shorter queues on the Park Road approach to the junction.
- 4.4 Vehicles travelling east on Park Road towards the junction are currently prohibited from turning left into York Road.
- 4.5 It is planned to remove this restriction in order to give another option for vehicles travelling around the town centre, and it will also reduce traffic on Osborne Road and St. Pauls Road, which are mainly residential.
- 4.6 The right turn ban in place for vehicles turning from York Road west into Park Road will remain in force, as there is only a short right turn lane and vehicles queuing to carry out this manoeuvre would block straight ahead traffic.

York Road/ Victoria Road Junction – Appendix 2

- 4.7 As at the Park Road junction, traffic travelling west can only use the left hand lane, with the right hand lane designated for buses only, although some buses do carry out this manoeuvre. There are also bus stops on the approach to the junction, however, for the majority of the time a lane is again sat empty.
- 4.8 It is proposed to re-allocate these lanes in a similar manner to the Park Road junction, with the left hand lane used for vehicles turning left into York Road, and the right hand lane for traffic travelling straight on, plus right turning buses. To prevent delays by buses turning right into York Road, additional traffic signals detector loops will be cut into the carriageway to ensure access.
- 4.9 At the moment, vehicles travelling east on Victoria Road towards the junction are prevented from turning right into York Road. Again, it is proposed to remove this restriction in order to give another option for vehicles travelling around the town centre, and associated benefits for nearby residential streets.
- 4.10 As with the Park Road junction, the right turn restriction in place for vehicles turning from York Road east into Victoria Road will remain in force, due to the short right turn lane and the fact that vehicles queuing to

carry out this manoeuvre would block straight ahead traffic. This turn is restricted to buses only, and is a well used manoeuvre by them.

A689/ Huckelhoven Way Junction

- 4.11 Currently, the junction operates with northbound and southbound flows on separate phases, with dedicated right turn manoeuvres following on. Traffic modelling has been carried out which demonstrates that changing the operation of the signals to run the northbound and southbound directions at the same time, will provide significant junction capacity benefits and help reduce delays.
- 4.12 The figures shown at 4.13 demonstrate the capacity improvements. **Practical reserve capacity (PRC)** is a term describing how well the junction is running compared with the amount of traffic passing through the junction. Negative percentages indicate that the junction is over saturated and positive percentages indicate that there is spare capacity.

Degree of Saturation (DOS) is a term describing how much traffic demand a junction is receiving compared to its total capacity. DOS of 100% mean that demand and capacity are equal and no further traffic is able to progress through the junction. Values of 90% are typically used to indicate traffic congestion and the formation of significant queues.

- 4.13 (i) Figures if no pedestrian phase is called:-

	<u>Exg</u> <u>PRC (%)</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>PRC (%)</u>	<u>DOS (%)</u> <u>(exg)</u>	<u>(Proposed)</u>
AM PEAK	-2.2	-0.9	92.0	90.9
OFF PEAK	-4.2	+26.1	93.7	71.3
PM PEAK	-5.9	+34.9	95.3	66.7

- (i) Figures if pedestrian phase is called every signals cycle:-

	<u>Exg</u> <u>PRC (%)</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>PRC (%)</u>	<u>DOS (%)</u> <u>(exg)</u>	<u>(Proposed)</u>
AM PEAK	-22.6	-12.1	110.3	100.9
OFF PEAK	-25.6	+9.8	113.3	82.0
PM PEAK	-29.2	+14.1	116.3	78.9

- 4.14 If approved, all of the changes would take place in the summer, particularly after the ongoing York Road improvements have been completed. The right turn manoeuvre from Park Road into York Road has specifically been maintained as buses only for this reason, as it is the main diversion route for buses during the works.
- 4.15 The traffic regulation orders will be introduced on an experimental basis to allow for monitoring of the changes, in order to ensure they are successful. The improvements will be well publicised, and a series of advanced and temporary signs will be erected to raise motorists awareness.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of the changes would be met from existing traffic and transport budgets.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 7.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the traffic signal improvements for the town centre be approved.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To give improved traffic flows and reduce delays around the town centre area.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

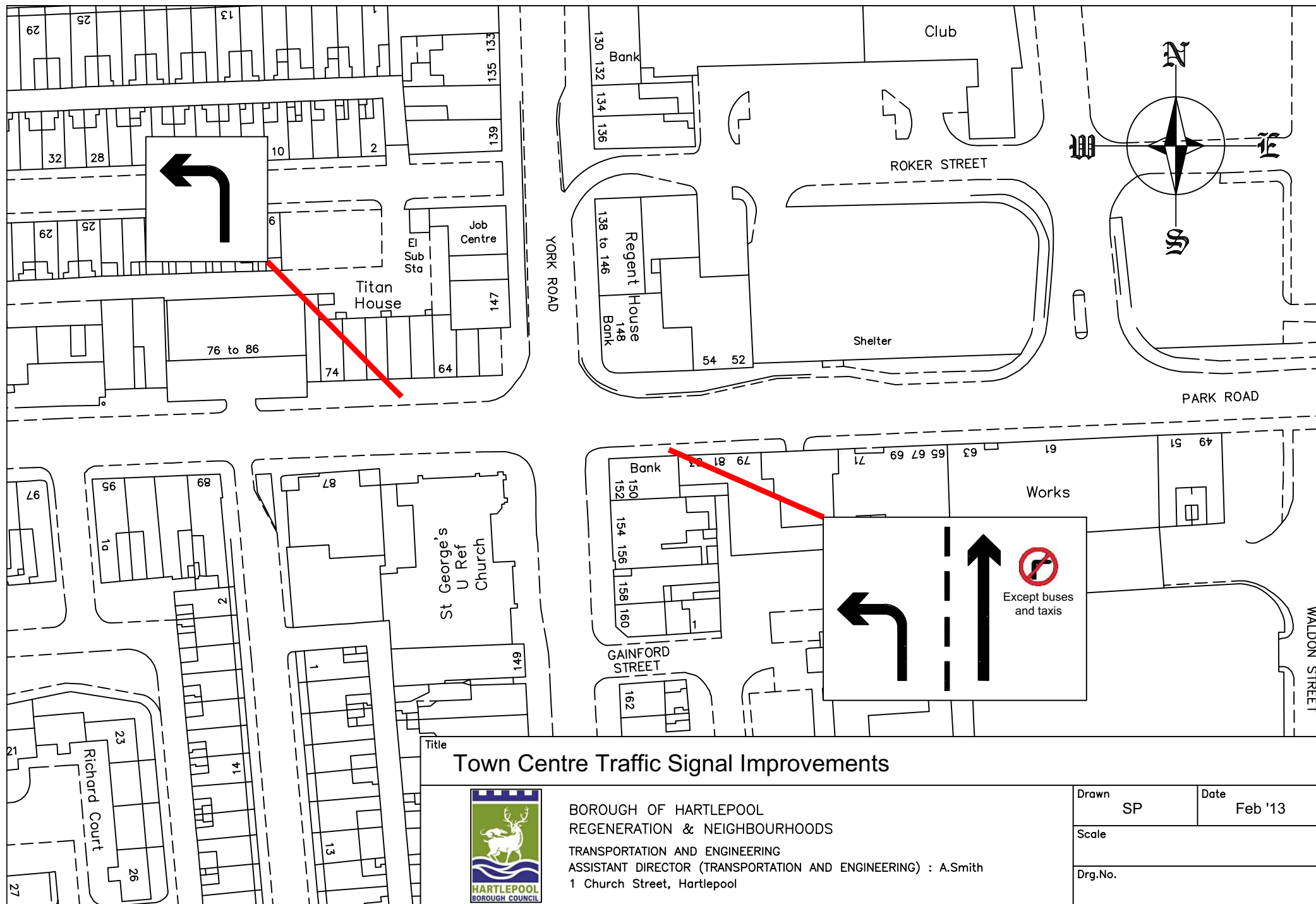
- 10.1 There are no background papers.

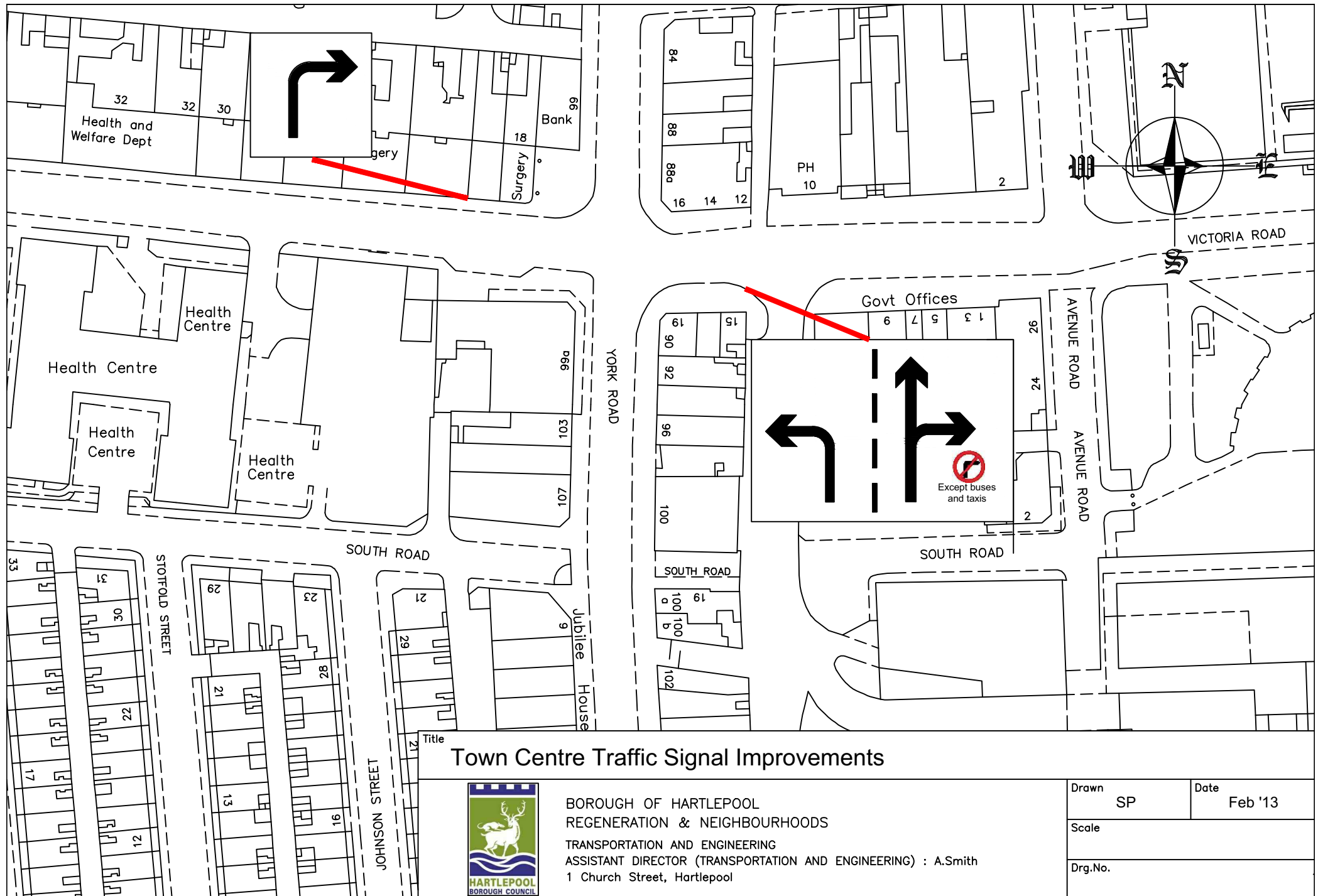
11. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO REPORT

8th March 2013



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL CCTV
STRATEGY AND PROTOCOLS 2012-2015
ACTION PLAN UPDATE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Portfolio Holder on the development of the Community Safety CCTV Service and outcomes of the CCTV Action Plan (**Appendix 1**) contained in the refreshed CCTV Strategy and Protocols 2012 - 2015.
- 2.2 To consider pursuing a joint CCTV maintenance tender as one of several measures aimed at ensuring the future sustainability of the CCTV system.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Community Safety CCTV Service consists of 132 public space CCTV cameras which are managed by Hartlepool Community Safety Team and which are connected to the Community Monitoring Centre and monitored by Housing Hartlepool under a Service Level Agreement.
- 3.2 On 29th June 2012 a report was considered by the Portfolio Holder regarding the results of an internal review of the Community Safety CCTV Service. This report recommended that the Council's CCTV Strategy and Action Plan was refreshed and updated due to changes in staffing, the Codes of Practice and legislation affecting the regulation of CCTV, and the need to provide an effective and efficient CCTV system that would be sustainable into the future. On 28th September 2012 a report was subsequently considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee regarding the refreshed Hartlepool Borough Council Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Strategy, Action Plan and Protocols 2012 – 2015, and the strategy, action plan and

protocols were subsequently approved by Cabinet on 4th October 2012.

- 3.3 The CCTV Action Plan accompanying the Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy and Protocols (2012 – 2015) underpins its implementation. The action plan details how the Council will achieve and monitor the objectives set out in the CCTV Strategy in accordance with the following four objectives:
- Objective 1 - to support delivery of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Safety Plan and its objectives by assisting in the prevention and detection of crime and anti-social behaviour and in promoting reassurance and confidence in Hartlepool.
 - Objective 2 - to ensure that Council CCTV systems are operated in accordance with regulatory requirements in a transparent and cost efficient manner, taking account of appropriate technological developments.
 - Objective 3 - to assist in the protection of Hartlepool Borough Council clients, staff and assets.
 - Objective 4 - to assist Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police and other Statutory and Enforcement Agencies in carrying out their regulatory, investigatory and enforcement duties in Hartlepool.

4. CCTV ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS UPDATE

- 4.1 Objective 1 of the CCTV Action Plan sets out to – “Support delivery of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Safety Plan and its objectives by assisting in the prevention and detection of crime and anti-social behaviour and in promoting reassurance and confidence in Hartlepool”.

The following progress has been made in relation to each of the following actions relating to this objective:

4.1.1 Ensuring the appropriate commissioning of cameras

Against the backdrop of new Codes of Practice and legislation affecting the governance and management of the public space CCTV system, this key action aims to ensure that cameras are only commissioned in compliance with the following provisions:

- The Information Commissioners Code of Practice for CCTV under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

- The Surveillance Camera Commissioners forthcoming Surveillance Camera Code of Practice under the terms of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- British Standard 7958:2009 – Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Management and Operation – Code of Practice.

The Information Commissioners Code of Practice for CCTV cautions that the fact that a CCTV camera is possible, affordable or has public support should not be the primary motivating factor for its installation or for its continued presence. As such the use of public space CCTV cameras should:

- Balance the protection of the public with the rights and legitimate expectations of the individual.
- Be appropriate, proportionate and in the public interest.
- Be necessary to meet a continuing pressing social need. This is defined as ongoing Crime Prevention and Public Safety issues or for National Security issues.

In compliance with the Codes of Practice, the refreshed Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy sets out that crime prevention and public safety, along with national security will be the only criteria to be considered when deciding whether to commission or decommission a public space camera. Using these criteria four requests to commission new Community Safety CCTV cameras in the Borough are currently being considered at the following locations:

- Car park to rear of St Patricks Shops
- Junction of Brierton Lane and Ardrossan Road
- Junction of Old Cemetery Road and Leas Grove
- Junction of Comwall Street and Rossall Street

An annual location justification review in relation to the current CCTV system is currently underway. Requests in relation to the above cameras will be considered following completion of this work, and in accordance with the above CCTV Codes of Practice and Protocols.

4.1.2 Improving Public and Partner understanding of CCTV contribution to Community Safety

To achieve full operational efficiency the CCTV Strategy recognised that the CCTV system and its capabilities needed to be fully understood by the public and partners. As such CCTV information webpage's have been created on the Hartlepool Borough Council website which set out the various CCTV camera systems used by the Council along with details of the Community Safety CCTV budget, camera performance and policies.

Tours of the Community Monitoring Centre will take place during 2013 to brief partners on the benefits of using the Community Safety CCTV Service. (Hartlepool Council Enforcement Teams, Cleveland Police, and Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service), and the CCTV Service Level Agreement between the Council and Housing. Hartlepool has been rewritten to include a requirement for the Community Monitoring Centre to issue a quarterly press release regarding Community Safety CCTV performance and achievements. At the April 2013 meeting of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Public Confidence and Cohesion Task Group the first quarterly update regarding Community Safety CCTV performance and achievements will be received for further dissemination to the public and partners.

4.1.3 More effective use is made of CCTV cameras:

Reviewing Community Safety CCTV camera 'at rest' positions, and tasking priorities is considered essential to achieving more effective use of CCTV cameras.¹ Consequently the existing Authority Public Protection (APP) database has been set up to record all Community Safety CCTV camera 'at rest' positions for use by CCTV operators and these have been checked to ensure that they continue to remain appropriate.

This database has also been set up to enable the recording and monitoring of all CCTV Tasking Requests by authorised partners. This is where a monitoring operation is carried out on request by CCTV operators of a specific location using its associated CCTV cameras.

4.1.4 Partnership wide understanding of the potential contribution of CCTV to Safer Hartlepool Partnership strategic objectives and to operational work:

Key to improving partner understanding of the contribution of CCTV to Safer Hartlepool objectives and operational work is an understanding amongst partners of where cameras are located. All Council CCTV camera locations have therefore been mapped using a Geographical Information System (GIS) program, and a map produced showing the camera locations.

This map will be updated on a regular basis to take account of any changes following annual CCTV Location Reviews and will be

¹ 'At Rest' positions are used where CCTV cameras are not in direct use by CCTV Operators. A CCTV camera is left pointed at a location in the cameras field of view which is the main potential problem / hotspot area for that camera location. For example; the at rest position for a camera located at a shopping parade would typically for it to be pointed at the shopping parade.

published on the CCTV information webpage's of the Council's website.

From April 2013 a weekly report detailing CCTV incidents will also be sent to authorised partners for their information and considered action. i.e. Targeted Outreach Project, Cleveland Police, Trading Standards, Hartlepool Anti-social Behaviour Unit and Housing Hartlepool Tenancy Relations and Enforcement Team.

4.1.5 Appreciation of the contribution of CCTV to the work of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership across the partnership:

Since the CCTV Strategy was developed and approved in October 2012 by Cabinet strong links have been made between the CCTV Service and partners, including their strategies and policies where relevant.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Assessment 2012 has referenced the role of the Community Safety CCTV Service and the work of the annual CCTV Location Review; and Community Safety CCTV camera operation and performance is now included on the agendas of the Neighbourhood Management Joint Action Groups, and the Night Time Economy Operational Group.

As outlined above during 2013, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Public Confidence and Engagement Task Group will also receive quarterly updates regarding Community Safety CCTV performance and achievements to publicise to partners and to the public.

Further links that will be made in the future are the inclusion of the Councils CCTV Service in Ward Profiles during 2013 and the forthcoming refresh of the annual Safer Hartlepool Partnerships Community Safety Plan.

4.2 Objective 2 of the CCTV Strategy sets out to “ensure that Council CCTV systems are operated in accordance with regulatory requirements in a transparent and cost efficient manner, taking account of appropriate technological developments”.

The following actions identify progress to date under this objective:

4.2.1 Robust evidence of effective CCTV system:

Baseline figures for the Community Safety CCTV service and the introduction of key performance indicators to enable effective monitoring of the system have been developed and introduced. CCTV performance indicator results have been compiled for the previous 5 years to establish a baseline and are published on a

quarterly basis on the CCTV information pages of the Council's website.

Nine performance indicators have been established and these were incorporated into the refreshed CCTV Strategy and Protocol 2012-2015 approved by Cabinet in October 2012. The CCTV Service Level Agreement between the Council and Housing Hartlepool has also been rewritten to include the use, monitoring, and monthly reporting on the new CCTV performance indicators.

Between 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2012 Community Safety CCTV cameras were responsible for:

- Identifying 1160 incidents of anti-social behaviour / public safety events,
- Assisting Cleveland Police in monitoring, documenting and dealing with 187 arrests,
- Directly identifying incidents and informing Cleveland Police which resulted in a further 90 arrests.
- Referring 230 incidents to Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Hartlepool Shop Watch, Hartlepool Pub Watch, Hartlepool Borough Council, Housing Hartlepool and HM Coast Guard for further action.

As identified under paragraph 3.1.1 the Council has commenced an annual CCTV Location Review to examine if any of the Community Safety CCTV cameras in Hartlepool are no longer necessary at locations where levels of crime and anti-social behaviour have been significantly reduced due to the work of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership since the installation of the camera. The outcome of this review will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet.

4.2.3 All partners understand the use to which mobile CCTV cameras may be put and how to request their deployment:

Following approval of the CCTV Strategy in October 2012 a mobile, non-covert CCTV Protocol has been agreed with the Neighbourhood Management Joint Action Groups, and the Night Time Economy Operational Group who have responsibility for making decisions on where the mobile cameras will be deployed. This is now published on the CCTV information webpage's of the Council website.

4.2.4 Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool Partnership Agreement in place to enable further development of CCTV systems:

A quarterly Partnership Agreement Steering Group was established during 2012 to oversee the drafting and implementation of the Partnership Agreement during 2013. A draft Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool Partnership Agreement has now

been produced and is awaiting legal sign off. This includes operation and monitoring of the Community Safety CCTV, Council Out of Hours Emergency Number, and Council Building Alarm Monitoring services. The findings from the internal review of the Community Safety CCTV Service during 2011-12 have been incorporated into the CCTV Service Level Agreement.

4.2.5 Ensure Community Safety CCTV Service is compliant with Codes of Practice for CCTV and associated legislation:

One of the biggest changes in relation to the implementation, management and operation of CCTV systems during 2012-13 was the planned introduction of a new CCTV Code of Practice and associated legislation which requires an annual CCTV Location Review.

The Community Safety Team is in the process of carrying out the first annual Community Safety CCTV Location Review in line with locally agreed standards and protocols that reflect the national CCTV Code of Practice 2008 which must:

- Balance the protection of the public with the rights and legitimate expectations of the individual.
- Be appropriate, proportionate and in the public interest.
- Be necessary to meet a continuing pressing social need. This is defined as ongoing Crime Prevention and Public Safety issues or for National Security issues.

As identified above the outcome of this review will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.

4.2.6 CCTV systems to give value for money in accordance with regulations:

As reported to Cabinet on 4th October 2012, work has been undertaken by the Community Safety Team over the last year in pursuit of cost savings through wirelessly connecting public space CCTV cameras to the Community Monitoring Centre rather than using very expensive secure broadband connections.

In this respect a wireless CCTV feasibility study has been undertaken involving a wireless survey carried out at CCTV camera locations to determine if the location could be connected to the Community Monitoring Centre using wireless CCTV technology. This has been followed up by a successful Wireless CCTV Pilot Project involving the establishment of a wireless node on the roof of Brierton Sport Centre, and connecting three nearby CCTV cameras to it which have been converted to secure wireless transmission with footage transmitted to

the Community Monitoring Centre using the Council's Information Technology Infrastructure.

Given the success of the pilot the Community Safety Team is now underway progressing the replacement of the current broadband system with a wireless based radio system.

4.2.7 Ability to demonstrate that CCTV systems are operated in a transparent manner in accordance with regulatory guidance and Codes of Practice for CCTV:

The CCTV Strategy identifies the needs to implement regular reviews of the Community Safety CCTV systems internal audit processes, record keeping, operational guides and responsible officers. As such the CCTV Service Level Agreement between the Council and Housing Hartlepool has been rewritten to include detailed guidance on the internal audit processes and record keeping required by the Council. This includes a quarterly review of these documents by the Council.

Policies, procedures and camera locations have also been published on the Hartlepool Borough Council website where CCTV information webpage's have been created setting out the various CCTV camera systems used by the Council, their locations, the Council CCTV Strategy and Protocol 2012-2015, and details of the Community Safety CCTV budget and camera performance.

4.3 Objective 3 of the CCTV Strategy sets out to ensure that the CCTV system "Assist in the protection of Hartlepool Borough Council clients, staff and assets" and aims to do so in the following ways:

The following actions identify progress to date against this objective:

4.3.1 Reduce reactive maintenance of CCTV systems:

The Council's Electrical Engineering Team has developed and implemented a 3 year planned maintenance plan, along with a yearly inspection, cleaning, and planned maintenance programme for Community Safety CCTV cameras. These maintenance programmes should reduce the amount of costly unplanned (reactive) maintenance and repairs for Community Safety CCTV cameras into the future.

4.3.2 Investment in CCTV for community benefit:

Following a review of the appropriateness of Community Safety CCTV system insurance coverage it was identified that current insurance coverage needs to be increased. The Electrical Engineering Team has therefore compiled a CCTV equipment asset

list which has been provided to the Council's Insurance Section and as a result the insurance coverage of the Community Safety CCTV system is due to be increased.

4.3.3 Community Safety Prioritised:

Linked to the operational monitoring of CCTV a Community Safety CCTV Service business continuity / disaster recovery plan is under development. Housing Hartlepool have a disaster recovery plan for the building which houses the Community Monitoring Centre and discussions are underway with the Community Safety Team, Housing Hartlepool and the Council's Emergency Planning Officer to develop a business continuity plan specifically for CCTV monitoring during 2013.

4.3.4 CCTV systems capable of sustainable delivery:

In addition to the development and implementation of the 3 year planned maintenance programme outlined above, the possibility of a joint tender for CCTV maintenance between Hartlepool Borough Council, Longhill and Sandgate Business Association, Stockton Borough Council and Middlesbrough Borough Council is being explored with the potential for a further reduction in costs of CCTV maintenance for the Council and improving the quality and responsiveness of CCTV maintenance and repairs.

Progress on the wireless CCTV system will also assist to reduce costs by enabling all of the remaining CCTV cameras connected by broadband to the Community Monitoring Centre to be connected by much lower cost wireless connections. Money saved by cancelling broadband connections as part of the wireless project will be available to reinvest back into the CCTV maintenance budget thus ensuring the sustainability of the CCTV maintenance budget into the future while also allowing for the repayment of the prudential borrowing required to carry out the wireless project work.

4.4 Objective 4 of the CCTV Strategy sets out to "Assist Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police and other Statutory and Enforcement Agencies in carrying out their regulatory, investigatory and enforcement duties in Hartlepool". The following actions are aimed at contributing to this objective:

The following actions identify progress to date under this objective:

4.4.1 Ensure that a system is in place for compiling information on the operation of Community Safety CCTV systems:

To assist agencies, including the Council, and Cleveland Police, to carry out their regulatory investigatory and enforcement duties during

2012 the Local Authority Public Protection (APP) database was set up to record all CCTV Incidents, Tasking and Viewing Requests, Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests, and to monitor CCTV Performance Indicators.

4.4.2 Ensure that the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system located in the Community Monitoring Centre is operated in accordance with regulatory requirements and Codes of Practice:

At the beginning of February 2012 Hartlepool Borough Council began work with Cleveland Police to develop an ANPR Protocol.

4.4.3 Ensure that a procedure is in place for use of Community Safety CCTV Talking Cameras:

A Talking CCTV camera is a camera which has a speaker attached to it allowing a CCTV operator to speak to members of the public being filmed by the camera. A Talking CCTV Camera Protocol has been developed and incorporated into the Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy and Protocol 2012 -2015. This protocol sets out for CCTV Operators the criteria for use of a Talking CCTV camera in an emergency situation.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The implementation of the wireless CCTV project, combined with the planned joint CCTV maintenance contract with Longhill and Sandgate Business Association, Stockton Borough Council and Middlesbrough Borough Council will ensure the long term sustainability of the CCTV maintenance budget, and through this the effective maintenance and operation of the Community Safety CCTV system.

6. PROCUREMENT

- 6.1 All work to be undertaken will be commissioned in line with council procurement policy.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Should the Council fail to implement the actions outlined in the refreshed CCTV Strategy and Protocols Action Plan the Council would not be following national best practice regarding the use of CCTV. Due to this there is a risk that the Council could be found in breach of:

- The Information Commissioners Code of Practice for CCTV,

- The Surveillance Camera Commissioners forthcoming Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.
- British Standard 7958:2009 – CCTV - Management and Operation – Code of Practice.

7.2 Failure to follow these CCTV Codes of Practice could also risk the Council being found in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998 – non compliance of which can lead to a fine of up to £500,000. Any breaches of the Act could therefore result in potentially significant costs being incurred by the Council as well as potential damage to the Council's reputation due to non-compliance with the Act.

7.3 In addition the Council is required under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 to follow the Surveillance Camera Commissioners forthcoming Surveillance Camera Code of Practice. Non-compliance of which is admissible in evidence in criminal and civil proceedings, and a court of tribunal may take into account a failure by the Council to have regard to the code in determining a question in any proceedings.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Information Commissioner's Office is currently responsible for regulating the use of non covert CCTV cameras operated by the Council under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 8.2 The Information Commissioner has published a Code of Practice for CCTV which the Council has a duty to follow to ensure all CCTV cameras are managed in line with national best practice and that their use is compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 8.3 Under the Protection of Freedom Act 2012 this responsibility will be supplemented by the new Surveillance Camera Commissioner and the additional forthcoming Surveillance Camera Code of Practice which the Council also has a duty to follow.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 An Impact Needs Requirement Assessment (INRA) will be conducted for the Community Safety CCTV Service to identify any adverse, or differential impact, or unmet needs of these changes.

10. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no staffing considerations.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The Council's Electrical Engineering Team has developed and implemented a yearly inspection, cleaning and planned maintenance programme for Community Safety CCTV cameras.
- 11.2 The Council's Electrical Engineering Team has developed and implemented a 3 year planned maintenance programme for Community Safety CCTV cameras.
- 11.3 These maintenance programmes should reduce the amount of costly unplanned (reactive) maintenance and repairs for Community Safety CCTV cameras.
- 11.4 The Electrical Engineering Team has compiled a CCTV equipment asset list which has been provided to the Council's Insurance Section. As a result of this the insurance coverage of the Community Safety CCTV system is due to be increased.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications.

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

- 13.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires Local Authorities to consider the impact of everything they do in relation to crime and disorder in all of their activities. This duty is what is referred to as 'Section 17'.
- 13.2 The Council began introducing council-owned and monitored CCTV cameras in the late 1990s. CCTV enables remote surveillance of areas where it is installed, whether as general monitoring or as part of a wider operation by the Council, Police or other organisations like HM Customs and Excise. Storage and retrieval of CCTV images also allows analysis of evidence after an event has occurred.

14. CONCLUSION

- 14.1 Good progress to date has been made against the CCTV Action Plan under the refreshed Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy and Protocol 2012 – 2015.

14.2 By significantly reducing costs, the expansion of the CCTV Wireless Project will contribute to the future sustainability of the Councils CCTV system.

14.3 A joint CCTV maintenance contract with Stockton Borough Council and others could result in further efficiencies in the future for Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Safety CCTV Service.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note the content of the report and approve the following recommendation:

- (a) That a joint CCTV maintenance tender is pursued with Longhill and Sandgate Business Association, Stockton Borough Council and Middlesbrough Borough Council.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Information Commissioner's Code of Practice for CCTV 2008.
- Surveillance Camera Code of Practice 2013. Surveillance Camera Commissioner.
- British Standard 7958:2009 – Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Management and Operation – Code of Practice.
- Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy and Protocol's 2012-2015.
- Final Report – Hartlepool Borough Council's Community CCTV Provision 2008. Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum. Hartlepool Borough Council.

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

17.1 Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Action Plan.

18. CONTACT OFFICER

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5. ACTION PLAN

Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Action Plan 2012 – 2015

This action plan accompanies the Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV Strategy 2012 – 2015 and underpins its implementation. This plan details how the Council will achieve and monitor the objectives set out in the strategy.

Objective 1:

To support delivery of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Safety Plan and it's objectives by assisting in the prevention and detection of crime and anti-social behaviour and in promoting reassurance and confidence in Hartlepool.

Desired Outcome	Action	Lead Officer / Group	Timescale	Progress Indicators	Update
Cameras are commissioned in most appropriate areas	Review outstanding camera commissioning requests	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator All Hartlepool Borough Council Operational Managers	March 2013	Review carried out	4 requests have been received and will be considered following completion of the CCTV Location Review. Written responses to be sent to requesting parties.
Public and Partner understanding of CCTV contribution to Community Safety	Develop publicity strategy for HBC CCTV	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	March 2013	Strategy in place, and implemented	CCTV webpage's created on HBC website with CCTV information and performance indicators published. Tours of Community Monitoring Centre to take place during 2013. CCTV SLA draft includes requirement for Housing Hartlepool to issue quarterly press releases regarding CCTV performance/achievements.

					From April 2013 Public Confidence and Cohesion Task Group will receive quarterly updates on CCTV performance and achievements to disseminate to public and partners.
Most effective use is made of CCTV cameras	Review community safety CCTV camera at rest positions and tasking priorities	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	March 2013	Increase in incidents recorded leading to increase in arrests carried out either fully or partially attributable to CCTV	<p>Details of CCTV at rest positions compiled and reviewed.</p> <p>CCTV Tasking Request database established to monitor requests and outcomes.</p> <p>CCTV Tasking Request Procedure to be publicised with Partners through tours of Monitoring Centre.</p>
Partnership wide understanding of the potential contribution of CCTV to strategic objectives and to operational work	Establish GPS co-ordinates for all HBC CCTV camera systems, develop GIS map and provide to approved partners	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	March 2013	Increase in requests for tasking of cameras by partners	<p>GPS co-ordinates established for all CCTV Cameras and map of CCTV camera locations created.</p> <p>GIS map to be issued to partners once outcome of camera commissioning/decommissioning known subject to results of CCTV review.</p> <p>Weekly CCTV Incidents report to be sent to authorised partners from April 2013 for information and action.</p>

Appreciation of the contribution of CCTV to the work of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership across the partnership	Develop linkages between HBC community safety CCTV service and partners including their strategies and policies where relevant	All Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Managers	March 2013	CCTV referred to in all Safer Hartlepool Partnership strategies	<p>Strategic Assessment has referenced the role of CCTV Service and Location Review.</p> <p>CCTV performance included on agendas of JAGs/NTE Group.</p> <p>CCTV will be referenced in next annual update of Ward/Neighbourhood Profiles and in 2014 update of Community Safety Plan.</p>
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Objective 2:

Ensure that Council CCTV systems are operated in accordance with regulatory requirements in a transparent and cost efficient manner, taking account of appropriate technological developments

Desired Outcome	Action	Lead Officer / Group	Timescale	Progress Indicators	Update
Robust evidence of effective CCTV system	Establish base line figures for community safety CCTV performance indicators and monitor	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	March 2013	Baseline in place	<p>CCTV performance indicators developed.</p> <p>CCTV performance indicators compiled for previous 5 year period to establish baseline and published on website.</p> <p>Refreshed CCTV Strategy and Protocols includes new CCTV performance indicators.</p> <p>CCTV SLA draft includes requirement for Housing Hartlepool to use, monitor and report each month on new CCTV performance indicators.</p>
All partners understand the use to which mobile cameras may be put and how to request their deployment	Develop non-covert, mobile CCTV camera use protocol	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	October 2012	Protocol agreed by Joint Action Groups/NTE Group	<p>Mobile, non covert CCTV Protocol written and partners briefed.</p> <p>Mobile CCTV Protocol has been signed off by North and Coastal and South and Central Joint Action Groups and Night Time Economy Group.</p> <p>Protocol published on council website.</p>

Clear guidelines for operating the community safety CCTV Service	Develop Service Level Agreement for CCTV, out of hours emergency number and council building alarm monitoring	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager	March 2013	SLA in place	Draft Service Level Agreements produced – to be implemented once Partnership Agreement signed off. Findings from internal CCTV review have been incorporated into CCTV SLA.
Partnership Agreement in place to enable further development of CCTV systems	Develop Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool Partnership Agreement	HBC Legal Services Housing Hartlepool Legal Services	March 2013	Partnership Agreement in place	Draft Partnership Agreement produced and awaiting legal sign off. Quarterly Partnership Agreement Steering Group established to over see drafting and implementation of Partnership Agreement during 2013.
Ensure Hartlepool Borough Council CCTV systems are compliant with the CCTV Codes of Practice	Implement review s of HBC CCTV camera systems to ensure compliance with CCTV Codes of Practice	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager All Hartlepool Borough Council Operational Managers	March 2013	Reviews to take place	Internal review of Community Safety CCTV service completed. Annual CCTV Location Review in progress. Future Cabinet Report to be produced outlining the results.
CCTV systems to give value money in accordance with regulations	Pursue CCTV cost savings through wirelessly connecting to the Community Monitoring Centre all remaining community safety public space CCTV cameras	Electrical Engineering Team Leader Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager	March 2013	Wireless connections in place	Wireless CCTV Feasibility Study completed: - Wireless potential survey carried out for all relevant CCTV cameras. - Wireless pilot successful. 3 cameras converted to wireless transmission and connected to 1 wireless node at Brierton Sports Centre pilot test site. - Wireless Project rollout to be complete by June 2013.

	The decommissioning of any CCTV cameras found to not be compliant with CCTV Codes of Practice	All Hartlepool Borough Council Operational Managers		Cameras Decommissioned	Annual CCTV Location Review in progress with Cabinet Report to be produced outlining the results.
Ability to demonstrate that CCTV systems are operated in a transparent manner in accordance with regulatory guidance and Codes of Practice	Implement regular review of HBC CCTV systems internal audit processes, record keeping, operational guides and responsible officers	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager All Hartlepool Borough Council Operational Managers	March 2013	Community Safety reviews carried out	Refreshed CCTV Strategy includes details of internal audit processes. Draft CCTV SLA includes requirement for Housing Hartlepool to keep audit records and for a quarterly review of documents by the Council.
	Publicise policies / procedures and camera locations on the Hartlepool Borough Council website				CCTV webpage's created on HBC website with CCTV information, budget, Strategy and Protocols and performance indicators published.

Objective 3 :

To assist in the protection of Hartlepool Borough Council clients, staff and assets

Desired Outcome	Action	Lead Officer / Group	Timescale	Progress Indicators	Update
Planned reducing reactive maintenance	Develop a yearly inspection programme for all HBC CCTV systems equipment	Electrical Engineering Team Leader All Hartlepool Borough Council Operational Managers	March 2014	Annual programme of repairs completed	Yearly inspection and maintenance program established and implemented. 3 yearly maintenance and equipment replacement program established and implemented.
Investment in CCTV is protected for community benefit	Review appropriateness of community safety CCTV system insurance coverage	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Electrical Engineering Team Leader	December 2012	Review of insurance coverage complete	CCTV insurance coverage reviewed and found to have insufficient coverage. CCTV Asset List compiled by Electrical Engineering Team and provided to HBC Insurance Section. As a result insurance coverage is due to be increased.
Community Safety prioritised	Develop Community Safety CCTV system business continuity / disaster recovery plan	Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Emergency Planning Officer	March 2014	Business continuity / disaster recovery plan in place	Housing Hartlepool have a disaster recovery plan for building housing Community Monitoring Centre. Specific Community Monitoring Centre Disaster Recovery Plan being developed.

CCTV systems capable of sustainable delivery	Review sustainability and appropriateness of CCTV Budget and CCTV Maintenance Budget	Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator Electrical Engineering Team Leader	November 2012	Budget review and investment plan complete	3 yearly maintenance and equipment replacement program established and implemented. Savings in CCTV revenue budget from implementation of Wireless CCTV Project will be used to bring CCTV maintenance budget up to a sustainable level.
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Objective 4 :

To assist Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police and other Statutory and Enforcement Agencies in carrying out their regulatory, investigatory and enforcement duties in Hartlepool

Desired Outcome	Action	Lead Officer/Group	Timescale	Progress indicators	Update
System in place for compiling information on the operation of community safety CCTV systems	Develop Authority Public Protection database for CCTV incident recording, performance monitoring, tasking and viewing requests, and CCTV Subject Requests and Freedom of Information requests	Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	December 2012	Database in place and regularly updated	Authority Public Protection Database established and implemented for all CCTV tasks and monitoring.
Automatic Number Plate Recognition system to operate in accordance with regulatory requirements and Codes of Practice	Develop automatic number plate recognition (A.N.P.R) protocol, taking into account new code of practice	Cleveland Police Licensing Sergeant	March 2014	ANPR Protocol in place	Cleveland Police and Hartlepool Council developing protocol from February 2013.
Procedure in place to enable use of talking cameras in emergency situations	Develop Talking CCTV camera use protocol	Housing Hartlepool CCTV Manager Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator	March 2013	Talking CCTV camera Protocol in place	Talking CCTV camera protocol included in refreshed CCTV Strategy and Protocols.