

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Thursday 20 March 2014

at 9.30 am

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

MEMBERS: REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Cranney, Dawkins, Fisher, Morris and Payne.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2014. (*previously published*)

4. KEY DECISIONS

- 4.1 Skills Support for the Workforce -Additional Funding – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*

5. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 5.1 First World War Commemoration – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
5.2 Fees and Charges Review 2014/15 – Borough Hall and Town Hall Theatre and Operation Review of the Borough Hall – *Assistant Director, Community Services*



6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 6.1 Hückelhoven Youth Exchange Project – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
- 6.2 ESF Additional Funding Opportunities – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
- 6.3 Quarterly Report – Adult Education – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
- 6.4 Quarterly Housing Report October-December 2013 – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
- 6.5 Quarterly Estates and Regeneration Report July – September 2013 – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION:

Date of next meeting – 10 April 2014 at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: SKILLS SUPPORT FOR THE WORKFORCE -
ADDITIONAL FUNDING

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Test (i) – Forward Plan Reference No RN 04/14.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval from the Committee to accept additional funding from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to deliver the Tees Valley European Social Fund bid for Skills Support for the Workforce – June 2013 to July 2015.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Skills Support for the Workforce project is designed to provide a range of training to assist employed individuals to:

- Enhance their skills in order to become more successful in the labour market
- Advance their career prospects
- Reduce the risk of long term unemployment and welfare dependency.

The project is designed to target SMEs in key sectors where skill weaknesses have been identified. The project is replicated in many areas nationwide on a sub regional basis.

3.2 In addition to the activities to deliver the training requirements an additional funding allocation was offered to produce a Local Response Fund (LRF) action plan to respond to emerging needs.

3.3 The offer of the contract for this project was approved at the Regeneration Service Committee on 20th June.

- 3.4 The SFA contacted the project staff in December to offer additional funding to support this project.
- 3.5 After discussions with the SFA an additional £800,000 was applied for. This amount was allocated to both delivery activities and non learning activities in both elements of the project.
- 3.6 Confirmation was received in January that this figure had been approved by the SFA and would be made available to Hartlepool Borough Council as the Lead Authority.
- 3.7 In order to receive this additional funding revised profiles of delivery were produced and submitted to the SFA. These were accepted by the SFA in January.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The additional funding will be split between the two elements of the project i.e. the Delivery project and the Local Response Fund. According to the SFA rules a maximum of 50% of any funding can be allocated to 'non learning activities'
- 4.2 Within the delivery project £250,000 will be allocated to deliver additional training outputs. This equates to an additional 298 starts. The original target was to engage 2162 employees. With the additional allocation the revised target is to engage 2460 employees.
- 4.3 A further £250,000 of additional funding has been allocated to provide 'non learning' activity. This refers to any activity which is not covered in the 'deliverables'. This was previously only available in the LRF element of the project. The funding includes 2 packages of support to employers. Firstly to provide financial support to enable them to release their staff for training and secondly to provide financial assistance for employers wishing to take on an Apprentice. These activities were not included in the original project so there is no original target. The number of employers to be supported by these 2 packages is expected to be 200 but this has yet to be agreed.
- 4.4 Part of this additional funding was allocated to provide support for the existing project staff. Currently there is no specific allocation for staff costs such as travel expenses / stationery / telephone and postage costs. These costs are currently being supported out of the deliverables management income or by the partners who are hosting the staff.
- 4.5 Within the LRF element an additional £150,000 is allocated to increased deliverables. This will provide for an additional 75 training starts. The original target was to engage 488 employees. With the additional funding the revised target is to engage 563 employees.
- 4.6 A further additional £150,000 was allocated for 'non learning activities'

This includes increased capacity to deliver financial support to employers to take on apprentices. Also it will allow increased capacity to provide workshops for employers on generic skills such as Human Resources or Management. The original target for engagement in these non learning activities was to engage 165 employers. The additional funding is expected to engage a further 100 employers. This figure has yet to be agreed

- 4.7 There has also been identified a need to provide support and development for CEOs and senior managers of SMEs engaged in growth. This will give the opportunity for senior managers of SMEs to be coached and mentored to enable them to apply for growth funding for their businesses and to aid with the management, planning and delivery of additional activities required as a result of extra funding received.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 This project is fully funded from the Skills Funding Agency so there are no financial implications for Hartlepool Borough Council or for the other Tees Valley authorities.

6. STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There is no additional staff requirements associated with the additional funding

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 8.1 There are no Section 17 implications.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the acceptance of the additional funding to support the Skills Support for the Workforce project.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The additional funding across both elements will allow the project to be successful at delivering increased objectives and outputs across the Tees Valley.

10.2 The increased outputs are expected to be:

- Additional 373 employees engaged in skills development
- Additional 70 employers supported in generic skills.
- Additional 118 incentives to employ apprentices.
- Additional 112 incentives to employers to release of staff

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Regeneration Services Committee Item 5.1, ESF Skills Support for the Workforce report as submitted as a key decision, 20th June 2013.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: FIRST WORLD WAR COMMEMORATION

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Regeneration Committee how Hartlepool will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the start of World War and the centenary of the Bombardment of the Hartlepoons on 16th December 2014. To advise the Committee as to other activities taking place in the Borough and to request support for a new Bombardment Memorial to be unveiled on 16th December 2014 (Images of existing and proposed memorial are attached as **Appendix 1 and 2**).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Hartlepool Borough Council has been awarded £394,775 from Arts Council England's Renaissance Strategic Support Fund to work with partners in Darlington Borough Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Stockton Borough Council and the Heugh Gun Battery Museum, to deliver a series of First World War commemorative activity across the Tees Valley up to March 2015. This is a cultural project that involves all areas of the sector including arts, events, libraries, archives and museums.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 **Tees Valley project:** Partnership work has begun across the Tees Valley which was shown through the good representation achieved at the project launch event on 30 July at the Heugh Battery. The launch event stimulated a significant amount of media interest with the project being promoted in full page spreads in all major north east newspapers, significant coverage on

BBC Tees Radio, BBC Look North News and ITV Tyne Tees News; shining a positive light on the Tees Valley, Hartlepool and the Heugh Gun Battery Museum.

- 4.2 As well as focusing on the main elements of the project, support has also been given to a variety of events. The project has been involved in three library WWI events in Hartlepool, Stockton and Middlesbrough, where many organisations came together to promote their own WWI projects. Each event was well attended by the public and several community groups expressed an interest in linking to the Tees Valley project.
- 4.3 The project is also represented at the regional WWI meetings, the WWI Commemorations Cadet Committee and the working group for the planning of a teacher's conference promoting WWI projects. The latter two projects are also regional.
- 4.4 Efforts are being made to establish a joint learning programme between the Museum of Hartlepool and the Heugh Battery Museum. This will offer a unique experience to schools, who would visit both sites in one day. The main focus would be the Bombardment but with an aim of showing this in the wider context of WWI.
- 4.5 Periplum Outdoor Arts Company were awarded the Outdoor Arts Contract.
 - Periplum will deliver an Outdoor Performance in all Five boroughs, the performance will be entitled 'Homecoming' and will be an interactive participatory performance which will use large structures, pyrotechnics, mobile structures and digital media. The performances will be bespoke using key stories from each borough, there will be a community project to involve young people within the performance.

Event dates:

- Location: Stockton
Date: Saturday 27 September 2014
Venue: Preston Hall Museum
- Location: Redcar & Cleveland
Date: Saturday 18 October 2014
Venue: Kirkleatham Hall Museum
- Location: Middlesbrough
Date: Saturday 1st November 2014
Venue: Albert Park
- Location: Darlington
Date: Friday 14 November 2014
Venue: Market Square
- Location: Hartlepool
Date: Tuesday 16 December 2014

Venue: Headland, Town Square

4.6 Outreach & Youth Engagement:

- Time Bandits were awarded the Outreach contract for year one. They are organising Outreach events in each of the five boroughs, where they will provide a variety of activities in non-traditional venues.

Outreach Event Dates:

- Location: Middlesbrough
Date: 01.02.14
Venue: Parkway Centre
- Location: Darlington
Date: 22.02.14
Venue: Crown Street Library & Central Hall in the Dolphin Centre.
- Location: Redcar & Cleveland
Date: TBC
Venue: TBC
- Location: Stockton
Date: 03.03.14
Venue: Thornaby Central Library
- Location: Hartlepool
Date: 08.03.13
Venue: Middleton Grange Shopping Centre & Grayfields Sports Pavilion

- 4.7 **Young Roots project:** Secured £35,400 of external funding from HLF which will offer part-time employment for 2 years to someone trained in working with young people. The project will promote unique ways of getting young people actively involved in learning about the First World War and working in creative industries, with a target of supporting 40 young people to achieve an Arts Award at bronze and silver level.

- 4.8 The Tees Valley project continues to work with young people and supports the Young Roots project with collections based activities. The WWI Project Officer also attended a WWI themed day hosted by Throston Youth Project. The purpose being to engage young people with the subject of WWI and with authentic WWI objects.

4.9 Marketing

- The Marketing contract was awarded to Jump, who have developed the brand 'Remembering Our War'. Jump have developed a toolkit and brand guidelines to allow the partners to brand their activities & events. There will be an online presence in the form of a dedicated website

which will consist of a home page, and a number of pages including a 'Venues' page which will have information about the partners venues, an 'Events' page which will feature information about the WW1 Outdoor Performances, Outreach Events and also any community events, an 'Exhibitions' page which will have information of the WW1 Exhibitions across the Tees Valley. There will be a 'Memory Wall' which will allow the public to upload their stories (this will not go public until it has been checked by a HBC staff member). Social media will be a big part of the marketing, Jump will set up a dedicated fb & twitter page. There will also be a QR tag (Bar code that enables mobile phones to access the website) in each venue which will direct people to the website; this will enable officers to track whether the visitor attends one or more venues across the Tees Valley. Jump have sub contracted PR Persuasion who will deliver the PR in conjunction with The Tees Valley PR teams to generate media interest and publicity for the project.

4.10 Research

- The Collections Audit budget of £6000 was utilised to fund the research of museum, library and archive material. Researchers in each of the five boroughs have supplied information about WWI collections and the stories and people relating to them. The research is largely being used to find themes and stories for the touring exhibition. It is also being used to support work on the loans boxes and outdoor performances and stories and objects will also feature on the project website.

4.11 Exhibition

- JANVS Design has been commissioned to produce the touring exhibition for £24,500. Work on this began in December 2013. It will be launched at Preston Park Museum in the last week of May and begin its tour at the Tees Transporter Bridge Visitor Centre in June, arriving at Central Library November-December 2014. It will be on display at a variety of venues across the Tees Valley until the end of the project. It is hoped that the exhibition will continue to be used throughout the commemoration period.
- The exhibition will take the form of three 3D units, which can stand alone or be combined to form one whole exhibition. Each structure in itself will form part of the interpretation, as the themes of the Bombardment, a munitions factory and Markse Aerodrome/airfields are built into the design.
- The stories for the exhibition have been finalised and two from each borough will feature. The focus of the stories will be the impact that the war had on the people and places of the Tees Valley. There will also be an individual panel produced for each borough. This will feature one of the stories from the exhibition in more detail and will stay on display in the relevant borough for the duration of the project.

- The style of interpretation for the exhibition will be simple and aim to give the audience a taster of the history of the First World War in the Tees Valley. It is hoped that the exhibition, along with additional information on the website will encourage and signpost people to visit our venues for more information.

4.12 Loans Boxes

- The decision was made by the loans box sub team to make the boxes in-house, ordering replicas and authentic objects (where possible) from a variety of suppliers.
- A total of 24 boxes are being created on two themes – the Home Front and A Soldier's Life. Each of the five boroughs will receive two sets – one for the museum service and one for the library service. A set will also be supplied to Teesside Archives and one to the Heugh Battery Museum.
- The boxes will be supplemented with copies of photographs and ephemera from the museum, library and archive collections to give the boxes a local element.
- A child's costume will be part of each box – either a soldier's uniform or a munitions worker uniform. Twelve of each are currently being created especially for the project by Newcastle based company, Sew...Alter, Make, Create.
- The boxes will also contain a teacher's pack containing information about the contents, contextual information and activities in which to use the contents.
- The boxes are due to be complete in June 2014 and will primarily be used by schools but could also be utilised by other groups.

4.13 Learning

- We are currently pursuing a partnership between the Museum of Hartlepool and the Heugh Battery Museum. The proposal is to offer schools a visit to both venues on the same day, where they will learn about both the social and military aspects of the Bombardment. They will also learn about the Bombardment in the wider context of the war.
- The project would pay for buses to transport schools between the venues at lunch time but they would be responsible for their travel to and from school. Extra staff support would also be required due to the Learning Officers at each site currently working part-time.

4.14 Collections

- WWI collections from the Museum of Hartlepool have been used at various outreach and public events. They have been used to engage young people with the subject of WWI and have also been used at public events to help promote the project to a wider audience.

4.15 Additional Projects/Events

- Discussions are under way with the Councils and museum/heritage organisations in Scarborough and Whitby on joined up approaches.
- Major commemorative exhibition “Voices of the Bombardment” opens at the Museum of Hartlepool on September 20th 2014, and runs into 2015.
- The exhibition supporting programme includes History Wardrobe presenting First World War fashions on 25th September, a lecture programme in association with libraries, a major living history event at the Museum on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th October, and family activities during half term.
- HLF funding for community projects in Hartlepool is starting to be approved. The Headland History Group successfully secured £10,000 for a community publication of images of the Bombardment “now and then” in December. This includes partnership working with the museum and libraries on raising research and digitalisation skills. Meanwhile, the £60K “Heroism and Heartbreak” First World War maritime heritage project from the Nautical Archaeological Society and Hartlepool Culture and Information was unable to be funded due pressures on the NE’s funding allocation, but has been asked by HLF to be resubmitted at the first opportunity.
- Media interest, especially in The Bombardment, has significantly increased ;
- The first episode of the BBC’s “Britain’s Great War” written and presented by Jeremy Paxman was broadcast on BBC1 at 9:00pm on Monday 27th January. This includes a segment on the Bombardment filmed last March in Hartlepool, facilitated by the Museum and Community groups, and included our iconic “Bombardment Clock” and a poignant interview with Violet Muirs, “the last living eyewitness”, who died recently aged 106 .
- Filming featuring our conservation of James Clark’s iconic oil painting “The Bombardment” for an episode of BBC North East and Cumbria’s “Inside Out” with Chris Jackson took place in December and January. Broadcast is proposed for February.
- Two major contributions to BBC Radio 4’s programming have been recorded, including for Michael Portillo’s “Great War of Words”.
- Fact checking for BBC producers working on Kate Adie’s The Story of Women in World War One.
- Our contribution to a major article for BBC OnLine’s magazine strand on the Bombardment is due to be active shortly.
- Discussions have taken place with ITV on a number of regional and national programmes, and there is interest from BBC’s The One Show.
- Physical print copies of major artworks and ephemera relating to the First World War are being prepared.
- Input into Cleveland Local History Society’s Dayschool at Teesside University, Middlesbrough, on Saturday March 8th 2014. Their theme is “War and Remembrance”.

- Assisting in the delivery of the Hartlepool Headland Heritage Festival for a weekend in July. Details to be confirmed, theme around the start of the First World War and local volunteering. Involvement from the Museum Service, the 18th DLI (Durham Pals) living history society, and Beamish.
- We have been approached by the Hartlepool Mail to undertake a First World War Poetry Competition beginning in September 2014 with the winning entries being showcased at the Civic Event at the Borough Hall on the 16th December 2014.

4.16 16th December 2014

- Please see below proposed programme of events on the Headland on the date of the 100th Anniversary of the Bombardment of the Hartlepoons.

Tees Valley First World War Commemoration Project

Tuesday 16th December 2014

Schedule

Time	Activity	Location	Lead Organisation
08:00 – 09:00	Formal Service	Heugh Gun Battery	Heugh Gun Battery
09:00 – 10:00	Refreshments	Heugh Gun Battery or Borough Hall	Hartlepool Borough Council
10:00 – 11:00	Ex-Servicemen's Parade	Headland	Tug Wilson
11:00 – 13:00	Memorial unveiling and possible VIP visit	Heugh Gun Battery	Hartlepool Borough Council
13:00 – 16:30	Civic Event inc: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afternoon tea & Refreshments • Possible link to Scarborough Commemorations • Seeds of Change performance • Music from School/College group • Civic Speeches 	Borough Hall	Hartlepool Borough Council
16:30 – 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLI Bugle band 	Borough Hall	Hartlepool Borough Council
17:00 – 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homecoming (outdoor performance) 	Borough Hall	Hartlepool Borough Council

4.17 Bombardment Memorial

4.16 It is proposed that a memorial to those killed in Bombardment of the Hartlepoons is created on the Headland to be opened on 16th December 2014.

- The memorial to be erected in a plinth-style with decorative reliefs that would adorn the faces of the plinth would be based on the James Clarke painting 'the Bombardment of the Hartlepoons'.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The successful application to the Arts Council was for £394,775 (£111,122 in 2013/14 and £283,653 in 2014/15). There are no additional financial implications for Hartlepool Borough Council.

5.2 The estimated cost of the Bombardment Memorial is between £50-60,000.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that Committee: -

- i) notes the proposals and progress of the project.
- ii) Underwrites the cost of the Bombardment Memorial so that work can commence with an expectation that the cost can be covered by commercial sponsorship and through existing resources.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 This project will enable Hartlepool to be at the centre of the World War I commemorations in 2014. It will give the young people of Hartlepool a sense of the affect that the First World War had on their home town in one of the most momentous periods of 20th century history.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Project timeline.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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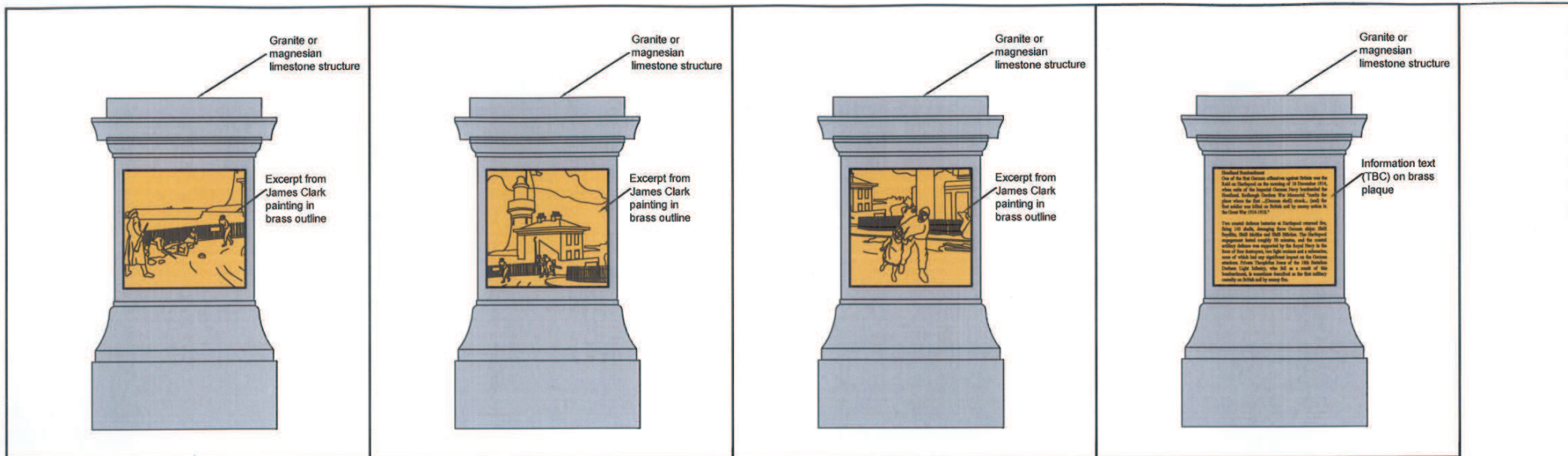
Tel: (01429) 523491

E-mail: david.worthington@hartlepool.gov.uk

Existing Memorials





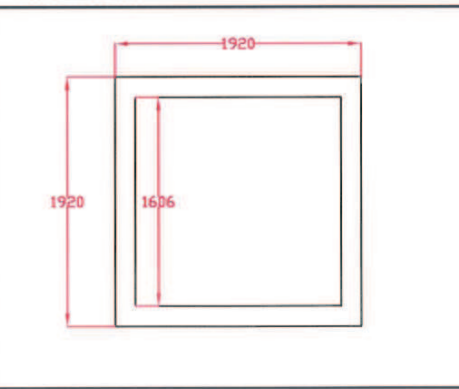
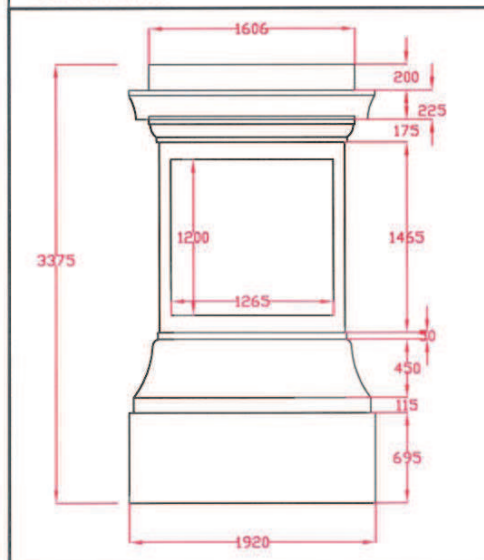


Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 1
Scale 1:20 at A1

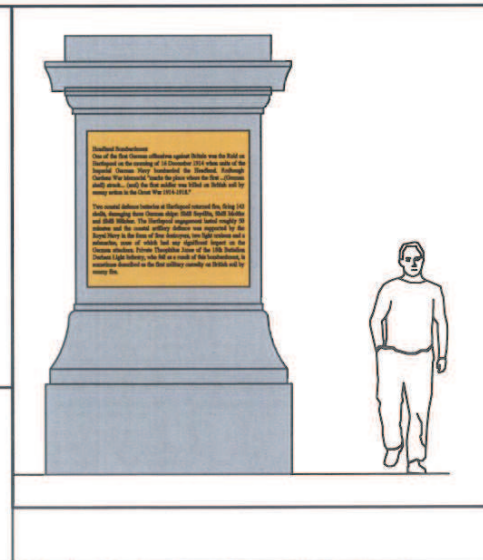
Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 2
Scale 1:20 at A1

Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 3
Scale 1:20 at A1

Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 4
Scale 1:20 at A1



Headland Bombardment Memorial - Plan
Scale 1:20 at A1



Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 4
Scale 1:20 at A1

Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation
Scale 1:20 at A1



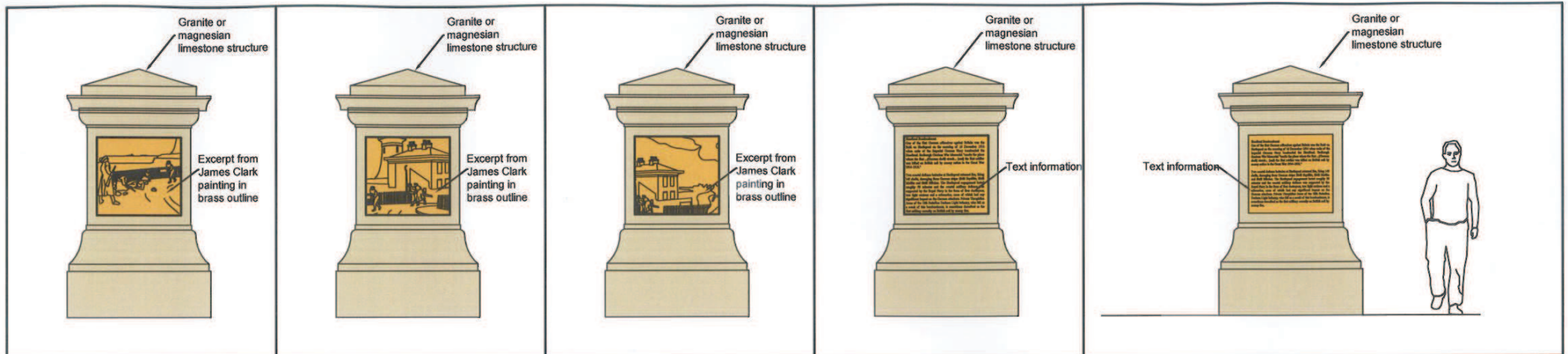
Headland Bombardment Memorial - Site Aerial
Scale NTS



Headland Bombardment Memorial - Site (services shown) Scale 1:750 at A1

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL	
REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS DEPARTMENT	
DIRECTOR: Sharon Ogden	
RESOURCES DIVISION	
Graham Frankland Head of Regeneration Bryan Hanson House Hartlepool TS24 7ET TEL: 01459 226522	
Client: Culture & Information	
Project: Headland Bombardment Memorial	
Title: Headland Bombardment Memorial Option 1	
Drawn: DW	Scale: 1:20 at A1
Drawing No: HBM L001	Date: 14/02/2014
DWG. LAST UPDATED: 19 Dec 13	

PRELIMINARY



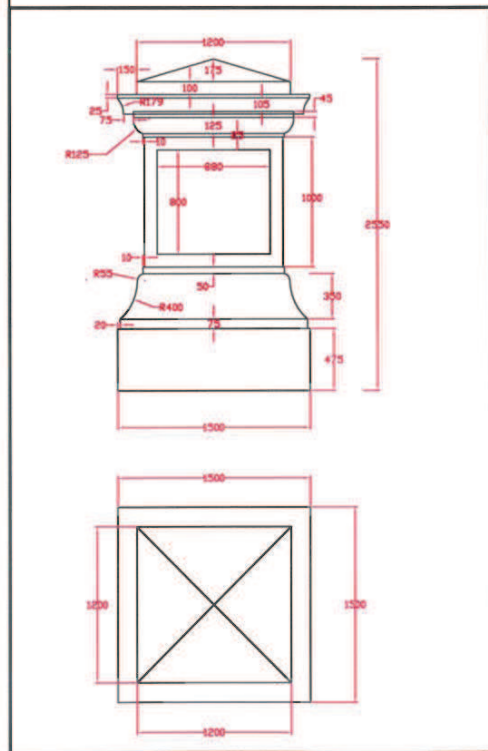
Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 1
Scale 1:20 at A1

Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 2
Scale 1:20 at A1

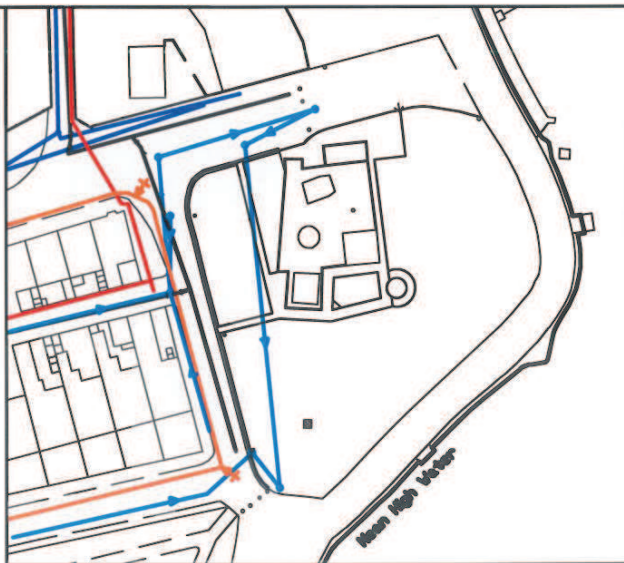
Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 3
Scale 1:20 at A1

Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation 4
Scale 1:20 at A1

Headland Bombardment Memorial - Relative Size
Scale 1:20 at A1



Headland Bombardment Memorial - Elevation & Plan
Scale 1:20 at A1



Headland Bombardment Memorial - Site (services shown)
Scale 1:500 at A1



Headland Bombardment Memorial - Site Aerial
Scale 1:500 at A1

Rev		Amendment		Date
HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL				
REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR: Denise Ogden RESOURCE DIVISION Graham Franklin Head of Resources Bryan Mason House Hanson Square Hartlepool TS24 7BT Tel: 01423 206522 Fax: 01423 206889				
Client				
Culture & Information				
Project				
Headland Bombardment Memorial				
Title				
Headland Bombardment Memorial Option 2				
Drawn	Scale	Date		
SW	1:20 at A1	07 Feb 14		
Drawing No.		HBM L002		
DWG. LAST UPDATED		DATE 14/02/2014 TIME 16:03		

PRELIMINARY

THE CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHECKING ALL DIMENSIONS AND DETAILS ON SITE PRIOR TO ERECTION, MANUFACTURE AND INSTALLATION. WHERE PRODUCTS ARE SPECIFIED BY PROPRIETARY NAME AND THE PHRASE 'OR EQUAL APPROVED' IS NOT INCLUDED, IT IS DEEMED TO BE INCLUDED.

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 REPRODUCED FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONARY OFFICE © CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED LICENCE NO. LA0001.
 ALL TIMBER AND WOOD-BASED PRODUCTS SHOULD BE PURCHASED FROM INDEPENDENTLY VERIFIABLE, LEGAL AND SUSTAINABLE SOURCES.

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director, Community Services

Subject: FEES & CHARGES REVIEW 2014/15 – BOROUGH
HALL & TOWN HALL THEATRE AND OPERATION
REVIEW OF THE BOROUGH HALL

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is twofold; to seek approval for the Town Hall Theatre and the Borough Hall annual charges for the use of facilities from April 1st 2014. In addition, to appraise the current operation of the Borough Hall and Buildings and to consider future changes to be assessed after consultation with current users, community groups, members and the wider community.
- 2.2 The report gives some contextual detail to inform Committee of developments at the Borough Hall and Buildings over the years, some usage detail and the current issues pertaining to the operation of the facility.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Borough Hall and Buildings were originally built in 1866 as an indoor market and civic building for the former Borough of Hartlepool. Whilst this use changed over the years, the Borough Hall itself became a major indoor venue in the early part of the 20th Century; some may remember the former use as an indoor skating rink and popular dance hall.

Following the amalgamation of the Hartlepoons, the Borough Buildings were eventually replaced by the current Civic Centre and the site continued as a functions venue, a housing office and storage facility.

- 3.2 As a listed building, this was of concern but investment into the building commenced in the 1980's and 1990's with the creation of the Constables' Bar, internal redecoration and office accommodation for the Parish Council. The awarding of European funding allowed for the refurbishment of the buildings to restore it to its former glory including expanded community facilities and accommodation of the Headland Library. This was carried out in two phases through the availability of ERDF and Single Regeneration Funding.
- 3.3 Ongoing consultation with the Headland community and the loss of some indoor sports provision at the Friarage Centre led to an ambition to add new sports provision onto the rear of the building. A successful funding application to Sport England for a capital grant to make up the shortfall in funding led to the provision of a new Sports Hall and Fitness provision integrated onto the rear of the site in 2006. This in effect, created and completed a community "hub" for the Headland offering a range of services and facilities.

The site now consists of the following:-

- Large auditorium with stage, dressing rooms and balcony with a maximum capacity of 1200
 - Bar and lounge area
 - A suite of Community rooms – Croft, Sandwellgate, Heugh, Pilot.
 - Middlegate Marriage room.
 - Headland Branch library facilities
 - Headland Parish Council offices
 - a 4 court sports hall
 - Fitness facility
- 3.4 Since the closure of the Redcar Bowl in 2013, the auditorium is now the largest events venue in the sub region.

4. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE SITE TO DATE

- 4.1 The whole site was operated by Community Services between Sports and Recreation and Culture and Information. The site is now fully integrated – notwithstanding the need to work with others when the need arises.
- 4.2 This led to an opportunity to generate staffing efficiencies by integrating the responsibility for the Borough Hall and Buildings with the Headland Sports Centre, with the Senior Assistant Manager becoming the license holder. This has worked very well and has resulted in a much improved operation over the past 6 months on the basis of 'one site, one manager'.
- 4.3 Following the Corporate restructure, Community Services responsibilities have been transferred to other departments – the Sports and Recreation service is now a part of the Public Health Department.

- 4.4 The Borough Hall and Buildings have to date been operated as a risk averse “hire venue” in a similar way to the community centre facilities rather than a “promoting venue”. Whilst there is a good regular repeat business and this in itself generates new expressions of interest, it is also reliant on clients making approaches to utilise the venue.
- 4.5 There are limitations in exactly what can be promoted at the site owing to the physical inadequacy of the dressing room facilities; in other words, a super venue but with restricted back stage facilities. However this simply means that whilst the Borough Hall has limitations in its variety of use there is still a considerable market to be explored for major ‘large auditorium’ events. This can be achieved by targeting promoter agency hire for concerts with additional income via bar sales and higher end hire fees.
- 4.6 The site caters for a range of bookings from the Girl Guides and Boys Brigade weekly meetings, charity fundraising events, dance competitions, weddings and televised events e.g. BBC Question Time to an expansion of sports and physical activity programmes into the auditorium. Some bookings are regular, historical annual events such as the Round Table Beer Festival or the Horticultural Show but the fact remains that they vary enormously in size, scope, complexity and cost. To give some indication of this variety, a current schedule is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.7 Over the years, many of the rooms in the Borough Buildings have been used as long term hire dedicated office facilities for a range of users such as Phillips Petroleum Ltd, Adult Education and the Building Schools for the Future Project Team. The site also provided office archive storage for the Council. Whilst this has been excellent business for the site in the past, as time has elapsed, the reliance on these former income streams has now caused a substantial income pressure as these users have withdrawn from the site. The only remaining long term use is of the Middlegate Room which is used as a wedding room – this use will not be impacted by the current changes to Registrars.
- 4.8 Whilst the combined Headland site has now become much more vibrant and better used with small scale hires, particularly now that the Sports Centre and its expanded activities are so popular throughout the week, this has been balanced by a constant need to reduce expenditure as a requirement of the regular pressures exerted upon the Council’s budget, so for instance the Sports hall is currently closed at weekends due to this being the quieter trading period. Whilst this is reversible subject to demand, it does demonstrate that we are having to carefully manage the wider service to be as efficient as possible. It should also be explained that we do not have staff scheduled to be in work on site when there are no activities or bookings, the staffing is very flexibly managed. This should be considered when enquiries for bookings are made and cost estimates for bookings include certain staff costs. If this were not so, this would compound our budget pressure and the casual staff that are brought in to work functions require those costs to be recoverable from the proceeds of the event.

5 CURRENT PRICES AND THEIR APPLICATION

- 5.1 The current charges for the Borough Hall, Borough Buildings and the Town Hall Theatre along with the proposed fees and charges for 2014/15 are attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 5.2 These have been frozen and not increased for the past two years and already have concessions built within them. They give a framework upon which event charging can be built dependent upon what the client's needs may be. They do allow for one member of staff within the charge although with some of the low community rates, this cost is actually not recovered unless there are multiple bookings at the community rate. This is no different to the principles of community subsidy that operate in the Community Centres.
- 5.3 We also acknowledge that there appears to be an imbalance in the charges applied for the use of the rooms other than the main auditorium owing to the differences in their maximum user capacities. It is therefore intended to address this moving forward within the new fee structure. In addition, we have reassessed the cost of Security and Ushers and have proposed reductions in the cost of Ushers where this applies. The difference has occurred as a result of percentage inflationary increases without detailed review of the actual cost. This change will mainly benefit major events which attract large audiences.
- 5.4 It should also be pointed out that there may be public confusion regarding the cost of use of the Borough Hall, where for example a potential hirer viewing a hire fee charge sheet then calculates their own estimate, often way above the actual hire costs. This often results in a) a complaint which is unfounded or b) a departure for another venue when the Borough Hall has never been approached to quote or clarify charges.
- 5.5 In addition, both the Borough Hall and the Town Hall Theatre are often approached by organisers of charitable functions seeking a waiver of the hall hire. As a high percentage of our programmed activity is for charitable events or community based events then this cannot be acceded to as it would mean the venue would be subsidising the proposed event beyond what the Borough Council already does.
- 5.6 The proposed amendments and freezing of prices is intended to stimulate usage and increase hires which in turn will assist in generating more income from ancillary spends from bar sales. Actual officer experience and supporting anecdotal evidence suggests that we know we are actively losing hires because of perceptions of cost rather than the reality.

6 REVISED OPERATION AND PROPOSED CHARGING ARRANGEMENTS TO INCLUDE THE TOWN HALL THEATRE

- 6.1 Over the last 6 months, our systems have now changed and all major bookings and arrangements are dealt with by the Senior Assistant Manager in order to provide continuity and one point of contact.
- 6.2 Until all details are known pertaining to the clients booking, no charges are quoted. This is extremely important if someone is enquiring about a function but obviously once these details are known, a written quotation is provided as well as a booking form that the client is expected to complete and return as confirmation of the booking and acceptance of the charges.
- 6.3 The revised and proposed charges are attached at **Appendix 2**. These are only intended as an approved framework but it is essential that Officers have the flexibility to use these in order to negotiate charges with clients, based upon the nature and complexity of the booking.
- 6.4 The main changes detailed in **Appendix 2** and proposed for 2014/15 are as follows, are again effectively frozen (for a third year) and are now based on room size:
- Significant reductions of between 50% and 75% in the cost of small rooms for community use at the concessionary rate and concessionary use of the Borough Hall auditorium. This should stimulate additional community use.
 - Price freeze for the third year running of standard hire rates for the Borough Hall auditorium, Croft Room and Constables Bar when used as a meeting room (otherwise free in conjunction with auditorium standard hire rates).
 - Usher / Hall staff hourly fees reduced - between 10% and 25% according to the time of week (weekend working costs are higher)
 - 0% increase for Performing Rights Charges (PRS) and Phonographic Performance Licence (PPL) fees. As outlined in section 6.5, it is recommended that community hires i.e. non ticketed activity have these fees absorbed and are not charged.
 - New corkage fee introduced of £1.00 on soft drinks per litre when the bar facility is not required – i.e. teetotal hires and small scale hires supplying own drink.
- 6.5 With the exception of the commercial / ticketed bookings, we propose amending the application of PRS and PPL charges which are currently passed onto hirers. Whilst these costs cannot be ignored and will have to be paid to the appropriate agencies, in accord with what happens within the other Sport and Recreation facilities, we propose to no longer pass these onto bookings at the Borough Hall. It currently causes confusion and complaint.

- 6.6 It has been suggested that if a booking is a large function at which the bar is required, that the hall charges should be dispensed with owing to the ability to generate income on the bar. This would actually bring difficulties as there would be no guarantee of the income return over the bar and is something that would not be recommended. Similarly, in the absence of any catering offer, the venue would not have another source of income potential to off-set the loss of any hall income. The current fees and charges are competitive within the market place and across comparator venues where these exist.
- 6.7 Finally, there are occasions when the bar is not required or when expected numbers to an event are low and experience demonstrates that particular audiences do not partake in the bar offer, thus to date, corkage charges have been levied for the provision of alcohol. We have however seen an increase in requests for the provision of a non-alcoholic bar thus we are proposing to expand the corkage charges to cover this eventuality also.
- 6.8 Staffing costs over and above the member of staff included in the hire rate (unless otherwise stated) are chargeable. This is to cover the additional cost of bringing in casual staff and/or security etc for major events.
- 6.9 It is obviously very difficult to design a charging framework that covers every possible eventuality as the use of the facilities varies so much, thus Officers must be allowed the freedom and flexibility to use their best judgment in these cases. With these particular circumstances, we would suggest that any such cases are always referred to a Senior Officer to approve.

7 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are significant historical financial pressures with the budget for this particular venue. This has been highlighted within the bi-monthly Strategic Financial Management Reports.
- 7.2 The projected overspend will be funded from under spends elsewhere within the Council as part of the overall outturn strategy. This strategy is unsustainable in future years therefore it is intended that a review of the operations of the Borough Hall, focusing in particular on income generation and cost analysis, will be undertaken over the next few months with the results reported back to this Committee.

8 OPTIONS MOVING FORWARD

- 8.1 New initiatives are currently being introduced into the programme. Some have a financial risk attached but these need to be tested to demonstrate the potential for greater daily activity at the venue and the expected income potential. The recent 'Begin 2 Dance' initiative is a case in point. This is focused on the Borough Hall as a natural extension to the Headland Sports Hall and is currently supported by Public Health Funding – the hall gains from hire income, the participants gain from an initial very low entry fee and the professional company Nouveau Fitness providing the coaching have

their costs covered. Success will be measured by take up and the long term potential for these new markets to be self sustaining by higher participation fees in the future.

8.2 It is fully accepted that the management of the Borough Hall in particular has been risk averse to self programming on a major scale – unlike the Town Hall Theatre, this venue relies on niche activity and sustainability has proven to be a problem in the past. However with the right product this is being reviewed and additional activity with greater promotion to the concert and agent market is being tested. We already have some bookings of this nature in the next three months with more in mind. Some considerable backing is required from Committee however to encourage such a change of tack and allow us to test the market in this way. Private hire will undoubtedly however continue to be a backbone of the Borough Hall programme.

8.3 The Borough Hall and Buildings have had considerable investment in previous decades and many areas of the venue continue to be in good condition – however the time is fast approaching where consideration of capital and maintenance funding is required to improve particular aspects to ensure we can move forward with confidence, namely:

- Improvement to the dressing rooms – whilst acknowledging they cannot be expanded - is a priority,
- the refit of the kitchen servery to enable medium scale self serving of food and refreshments – this is not anticipated to be a full production kitchen as the venue is unlikely to warrant such investment and alternative methods of provision can be sourced.
- The technical specification for the Hall requires stage lighting and equipment replacement and sound system upgrading.
- Regular Hall decoration is overdue and would assist in maintaining an attractive venue.
- The Maintenance schedule for the building would also highlight more technical improvements which are required.

It is important to state that the venue is good and the current appearance is acceptable – simply tired and needing these required upgrades as part of a planned programme. There is no funding allocated at the current time but these identified elements require to be considered in the proposed consultation phase.

8.4 As an essential part of the future strategy for improvement we need to improve upon the current customer evaluation, consult with users, potential users and identified non users and commercial agents etc to ensure we have a wide ranging input into the development of the future strategy. The local community and the Headland Parish Council will have a role to play too. It is proposed that a timetable of consultation and evaluation is developed and a report back to Committee scheduled to assist in the decision making within by the early summer.

- 8.5 Meanwhile this report to Committee will provide opportunity for Members to comment with individual views, opinions and aspirations which will be taken on board to help formulate future direction. It is hoped that the content of the report to date will assist Members in achieving a better understanding of the challenges of meeting income targets and developing a better product. The improvements and initiatives achieved to date assist in giving encouragement for the immediate future.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the revised fees and charges for the Borough Hall and Buildings and the Town Hall Theatre as attached at **Appendix 2**, with effect from April 1st 2014.
- (ii) To receive the operational review proposals contained within the report.
- (iii) To approve the proposal to undertake consultation with a report back to Regeneration Committee to consider a long term Strategy for the Borough Hall and Buildings site by early summer 2014.

10 CONTACT OFFICER

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Range Of Events and Bookings That Take Place In The Borough Hall and Connected Rooms		
Venue	Length Of Booking	Comments – Set Up Etc.
Borough Hall		
Business Event – Celebrating Success	One weekday	Set up and De-rig required before and after event
Beer Festival	Over a long weekend, usually includes a Friday	Hall closed for at least 5 days, so beer can settle, reduced heating limiting other user bookings.
Wedding Reception	One day over a weekend	Set up and De-rig required before and after event – time dependant upon size of wedding and requirements
Asian Wedding	Usually over weekend	No bar required so only hall hire taken in income, normally reduced set up and de-rig requirements – growing market.
Horticultural Show / Event	One or two day over a weekend	Set up and De-rig required before and after event
Concert – eg Jar Family / The Cooks	One weekday	Set up and De-rig required before and after event, can be significant leading to hall being unavailable for a day before and after event
Hartlepool Mail Voice Choir	Two days, weekday or weekend	Set up and De-rig required before and after event, rehearsals one day concert the next day
Dance Competitions	One day over a weekend	Set up and De-rig required before and after even
Boxing Event	One day, varies over 7 days	Set up and De-rig required before and after event, can be significant leading to hall being unavailable for a day before and after event. This can require overnight working to secure next day events set up.
Body Building Show	One day, varies over 7 days	Set up and De-rig required before and after event, can be significant leading to hall being unavailable for a day before and after event
BBC Question Time	One weekday	Set up and De-rig required before and after event
Fitness Classes	Available 7 days per week, usually booked for a one hour period	Little set up or de-rig times as this is normally included within the hours booking eg;- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zumba • Metafit • Circuit Training
Anti Social Behaviour Unit	Week long booking	Week long booking where all primary schools attend and attend various workshops – All areas booked

In House Events	One day booking	Set up and De-rig required before and after event eg;- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halloween Event • Bon Jordie Event
Paranomal Event	One evening booking 9.00pm – 3.00am	No set up or de-rig for event, but whole building made available for tour
Tea Dance Event / Bookings	Half day booking	Set up and De-rig required before and after event,
Large Funerals	Whole day booking	Set up, break down, Service & wake function
Headland Carnival	Whole day booking	Various – whole day as support in kind for Headland Annual carnival.
Middlegate / Wedding Room		
Weddings	Available 7 days per week, usually booked for a two hour period	Room permanently set up ready for weddings
Croft Room, Constables Room, Snadwellgate Room, Heugh and Pilot Room - General		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings various 	Days and times vary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls Brigade • History Society • Parish Council Monthly meetings • Public consultation meetings • Training meetings • Small ad hoc conferences

		Direct Input	Calculate d Cell	Calculate d Cell			
	ITEM	Charge to customer 2013/2014 £ @ 20% vat - ROUNDED AND DECIDED BY MANAGER	2014/15 charge net of VAT	% change to customer from April 2014			
SPORT & RECREATION							
Borough Hall							
<u>Croft, Constables Bar, Heugh,Pilot & Sandwell Rooms, Middlegate</u>							
Concessionary Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri	£20.00	5.00	-75.0%			
Concessionary Rate (per hour)	Weekends and bank holidays	£25.00	10.00	-60.0%			
Croft & Constables Bar							
Standard Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri (8am-6pm)	£20.00	20.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri (6pm - midnight)	£25.00	25.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Weekends & Bank Holidays (8am-midnight)	£30.00	30.00	0.0%			
Middlegate & Sandwell Rooms							
Standard Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri (8am-6pm)	£20.00	10.00	-50.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri (6pm - midnight)	£25.00	12.50	-50.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Weekends & Bank Holidays (8am-midnight)	£30.00	15.00	-50.0%			
Heugh & Pilot Rooms			-				
Standard Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri (8am-6pm)	£20.00	5.00	-75.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri (6pm - midnight)	£25.00	6.25	-75.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Weekends & Bank Holidays (8am-midnight)	£30.00	10.00	-66.7%			
Borough Hall Auditorium							
Concessionary Rate (per hour)	Mon - Fri	£30.00	10.00	-66.7%			
Concessionary Rate (per hour)	Weekends and bank holidays	£30.00	30.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Time band A Mon - Fri 8am - 6pm	£50.00	50.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Time band B 6pm - midnight	£80.00	80.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Time band C - Weekends & Bank Holidays	£100.00	100.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Technical Assistance Charges per hour Monday to Friday	£25.00	25.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Technical Assistance Charges per hour Saturday & Sunday	£35.00	35.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Technical Assistance Charges per hour Bank Holiday	£40.00	40.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Piano Tuning	£60.00	60.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Usher Charges per hour Monday to Friday	£15.00	11.25	-25.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Usher Charges per hour Saturday & Sunday	£20.00	17.00	-15.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Usher Charges per hour Bank Holidays	£25.00	22.50	-10.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Security per hour Monday to Friday	£20.00	20.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Security per hour Weekends & Bank Holidays	£25.00	25.00	0.0%			
Corkage	Corkage - per 70cl bottle	£3.00	3.00	0.0%			
Corkage	Corkage - per glass	£0.50	0.50	0.0%			
Corkage	Corkage - soft drinks per litre		1.00	0.0%			
Performing Rights Charges	Theatrical Performances	£32.00	32.00	0.0%			
Borough Hall (excluding VAT)	Popular and Classical Music Concerts (fee for 100 people)	£32.00	32.00	0.0%			
Borough Hall (excluding VAT)	Conferences, Exhibs and Fashion Shows	£42.00	42.00	0.0%			
Borough Hall (excluding VAT)	Ballet, Musicals, Variety Shows	£42.00	42.00	0.0%			
Borough Hall (excluding VAT)	Dance Displays and Dance Comps	£62.50	62.50	0.0%			
Borough Hall (excluding VAT)	Dance Training/Aerobics/Community Dances	£8.50	8.50	0.0%			
Phonographic Performances	Disco/Dances Catering Functions	£32.00	32.00	0.0%			
CULTURE & INFORMATION							
Town Hall Theatre							
<u>Lauder Suite/Dressing Rooms</u>							
Standard Rate (per hour) (minimum 4 hrs letting)	Time band A Mon - Fri 6am - 4pm	£20.00	20.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour) (minimum 4 hrs letting)	Time band B 4pm - midnight and weekends	£25.00	25.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour) (minimum 4 hrs letting)	Time band C - Bank Holidays	£30.00	30.00	0.0%			
Theatre Auditorium							
Standard Rate (per hour) (minimum 4 hrs letting)	Time band A Mon - Fri 6am - 4pm	£50.00	50.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour) (minimum 4 hrs letting)	Time band B 4pm - midnight and weekends	£80.00	80.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour) (minimum 4 hrs letting)	Time band C - Bank Holidays	£100.00	100.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Technical Assistance Charges per hour Monday to Friday	£25.00	25.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Technical Assistance Charges per hour Saturday & Sunday	£35.00	35.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Technical Assistance Charges per hour Bank Holiday	£40.00	40.00	0.0%			
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Standard Rate (per hour)	Security per hour Monday to Friday	£20.00	20.00	0.0%			
Standard Rate (per hour)	Security per hour weekends & Bank Holidays	£25.00	25.00	0.0%			
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Corkage	Corkage - per glass	£0.50	0.50	0.0%			
Corkage	Corkage - soft drinks per litre		1.00	0.0%			
Performing Rights Charges	Theatrical Performances	£32.00	32.00	0.0%			
Town Hall (excluding VAT)	Popular and Classical Music Concerts (fee for 100 people)	£32.00	32.00	0.0%			
Town Hall (excluding VAT)	Conferences, Exhibs and Fashion Shows	£42.00	42.00	0.0%			
Town Hall (excluding VAT)	Ballet, Musicals, Variety Shows	£42.00	42.00	0.0%			
Town Hall (excluding VAT)	Dance Displays and Dance Comps	£62.50	62.50	0.0%			
Town Hall (excluding VAT)	Dance Training/Aerobics/Community Dances	£8.50	8.50	0.0%			
Phonographic Performances	Disco/Dances Catering Functions	£32.00	32.00	0.0%			

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: HÜCKELHOVEN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROJECT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the potential for the Council to develop a youth exchange in partnership with Hückelhoven in Germany using funding from the European Commission's Erasmus + Programme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Preparing young people for the world of work is the key principle of *Hartlepool Youth Investment Project*. To make this happen, the Council has brought together key stakeholders such as schools, colleges and critically employers to help young people access varied internships, mentoring programmes and work-related learning.
- 3.2 Integral to the success of this project will be to help young people access new learning opportunities which will raise their aspirations, increase their skill base, improve their confidence and make them job ready. This is even more vital at a time when youth unemployment remains a global problem and 24.4% of under-25s across Europe are currently unemployed.
- 3.3 Hückelhoven in Germany is Hartlepool's twin town and in December 2013, following a visit the Leader of the Council asked Officers to explore what external funding was available to enable the two towns to work more closely together to develop activities particularly those involving children and young people.

4. PROPOSED PROJECT

- 4.1 It is proposed that a youth exchange project is developed between Hartlepool and Hückelhoven. The project will be targeted to those young people from the most disadvantaged areas to provide them with new opportunities which will increase their personal, social and employability skills.
- 4.2 This proposed project would be for 60 young people (30 from Hartlepool and 30 from Hückelhoven) who are in Years 9 to 12. The young people will be selected from a range of partners including schools, colleges and youth centres. Each exchange will last for five days (excluding travel) with the activities and itinerary being designed by the young people from each country but as a minimum will include: -
- Visits to key businesses;
 - Sports competitions, and;
 - Links to Animex International Festival of Animation & Computer Games.

5. FUNDING

- 5.1 This project will be funded through the European Commission's Erasmus + Programme 2014 – 2020 which offers education, training, youth and sport opportunities across Europe. The programme seeks to address the following challenges:

'Fighting rising levels of unemployment - particularly among young people - has become one of the most urgent-tasks for European governments. Too many young people leave school prematurely and run a high risk of being unemployed. The same risk threatens the high number of adult workers with low skills. Strong and well-performing education, training and youth systems can help deal with these challenges by providing citizens with the skills required by the labour market and a competitive economy'.

- 5.2 Under Key Action 1 of the programme funding is offered for the Mobility of Young People and Youth Workers with the aim of developing exchange programmes with partner countries across the European Union. The funding is on a per participant basis with the breakdown below: -
- Travel Costs – €170
 - Individual Support – €4 per day
 - Organisational Support – €33 per day in Germany
– €40 per day in United Kingdom
- 5.3 Alongside this, exceptional costs are funded which will include additional support for young people who have fewer opportunities or special

educational needs, passport and visa costs and accommodation and travel for Advanced Planning Visits.

5.4 The deadline for applications for projects which will be starting between 1st September 2014 and 28th February 2015 is 12 noon on Wednesday 30th April 2014.

5.5 Only one EU partner is required for transnational exchange projects.

6. TIMESCALES

6.1 The project will commence in September 2014 with the exchanges taking place between January and March 2015. A full project timetable is shown in **Appendix 1**.

7. NEXT STEPS

7.1 If members are in agreement, there are a number of key tasks that are required to progress with this project: -

- 30 April 2014 – submit application to ERASMUS;
- September 2014 – promote exchange to young people in Hückelhoven and Hartlepool through schools, colleges and youth centres with 60 young people selected for the exchange visits;
- October 2014 – Advance Planning Visit to Hückelhoven and Hartlepool to undertake Health & Safety checks including Risk Assessments and Education Visit Form;
- October 2014 to January 2015 – Group activities developed to include communication, teambuilding, history and culture to increase language skills of young people and leaders;
- February 2015 – Hückelhoven young people to visit Hartlepool for 5 days to coincide with the Teesside University Animex Festival of Animation and Computer Games;
- March 2015 – Hartlepool young people to visit Hückelhoven for 5 days to undertake a range of cultural, sporting and entrepreneurial activities.

8. STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 There will be no funding through the Erasmus + Programme for staffing so it will be the responsibility of Hartlepool Borough Council to manage the project in partnership with the schools, colleges and youth centres using existing staff.

9. IMPACT ON CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 This potential project will positively contribute to tackling the longer term causes and consequences of child and family poverty by preventing young people from becoming long term NEET by providing individuals with skills and experience that will enable them to reach their aspirational goals and become economically active.

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

- 10.1 This potential project will positively contribute to Section 17 by providing employment routeways for young people. It will also provide routeways for individuals who may have been identified as high risk of offending.

11. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 This potential project will provide opportunities for young people, particularly amongst vulnerable groups such as the seven priority groups shown below: -
- Looked after children and care leavers;
 - Young offenders (including those leaving the secure estate);
 - Teenage parents;
 - Young carers;
 - Young people with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SLDD);
 - Young people with mental health issues, and;
 - Young people with drug and alcohol misuse issues.

12. CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER COUNCIL PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 12.1 This potential project will benefit other Council employment initiatives, such as the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project and Think Families, Think Communities. Also, the project will positively contribute to the following indicators: -
- Improving the Overall Employment Rate;
 - Improving the Overall Youth Employment Rate;
 - Reducing the Youth Unemployment Rate, and;
 - Reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report and if the bid is successful a further report will be submitted.

14. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 The main reasons for the recommendations are that: -

- This potential project offers an exciting opportunity for young people and will improve their personal, social and employability skills, and;
- It will improve our partnership with Hückelhoven and could lead to the development of further joint activities.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

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Project Timetable

Task	Deadline
Seek endorsement from Hartlepool 11-19 Partnership	March 2014
Teesside University to contact Dusseldorf Chamber of Commerce through Enterprise Europe Network	March 2014
Seek endorsement from Hückelhoven's key partners who are involved in the programme	March 2014
Submit application form	By 30 th April 2014
Confirmation that application was successful (EU to confirm within 4 months of the deadline) and sign the grant offer letter	August 2014
Promote exchange to young people through schools, colleges and youth centres	September 2014
60 young people to be chosen for the exchange visits	September 2014
Advance Planning Visit to Hückelhoven and Hartlepool – Preparatory visit up to two days (excluding travel) to: - - Undertake Health & Safety checks including Risk Assessments and Education Visit Form; - Discuss practicalities of developing the programme between Hartlepool and Hückelhoven colleagues, and; - Young people and leaders to develop in-depth itineraries for the visit	October 2014
Develop group activities including communication, teambuilding, history and culture as well as increasing the language skills of young people and leaders	October 2014 to January 2015
Hückelhoven young people to visit Hartlepool to coincide with the Teesside University Animex Festival of Animation and Computer Games	February 2015 (5 Days)
Hartlepool young people to visit Hückelhoven to undertake a range of cultural, sporting and entrepreneurial activities	March 2015 (5 Days)

**REGENERATION SERVICES
COMMITTEE
20th March 2014**



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: ESF ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Report for information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the recent opportunity to seek additional funding from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) European Social Fund (ESF) for the delivery of 2 additional projects.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On the 10th February 2014 the SFA published invitations to tender to eligible providers for additional ESF funded projects. These tenders were for projects to be delivered across the whole of the North East region.
- 3.2 The first project will utilise ESF funding allocated by the SFA to provide English and Maths qualifications to employees in Small and Medium Enterprises (SME).
- 3.3 The funds available for this project are £4.6 million to be utilised over the North East region. The funding will be used to provide support for 3,500 individuals. In addition there is funding available within the project to support 1,000 employers to enable them to release the staff to attend the English and Maths provision.
- 3.4 It is envisaged that the delivery of the English and Maths will be mainly by the Adult Education services of the 12 local authorities in the North East as well as other sub contracted providers.

- 3.5 The second project is a flexible fund for the unemployed with a contract value of £670k across the North East.
- 3.6 This funding will make the development of tailor made programmes for the unemployed and requires the implementation of a plan of action which outlines how providers will work together.
- 3.7 The deadlines for the submission of the bids is very tight and the deadline is the 24th February 2104. The projects are due to begin in June 2014 and will continue until July 2015.
- 3.8 There have been discussions with a number of the North East Adult Education services who expressed an interest in being a partner within the project.
- 3.9 Both projects must deliver across the whole North East region and HBC will submit a bid on behalf of the Local Authorities.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This project is fully funded from the SFA so there are no financial implications or risk for the Lead Authority. Payments to subcontractors are only awarded upon successful delivery outcomes.

5 STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 If the bids are successful and the funding is allocated there will be a need to recruit additional staff to manage both projects and support the English and Maths tutors. The level of staffing will be determined when the result of the tender is known.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no Equality and Diversity considerations

7 SECTION17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Crime and Disorder considerations

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report.

- 8.2 A further report will be submitted to Regeneration Services Committee once a decision has been made by the SFA on the submitted application.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9 The main reasons for the recommendations are that:
- The additional funding for the English and Maths project will complement the existing Skills Support for the Workforce project and provide employees with additional opportunities
 - The additional flexible fund for the unemployed will complement key strategies such as the Economic Regeneration Strategy.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 The tender specifications are available

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: QUARTERLY REPORT – ADULT EDUCATION

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to update members about the work of the Adult Education service.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This report provides an update on the activities of the Adult Education service from the beginning of the academic year 2013-2104.

3.2 The Adult Education service is fully funded through allocations which are received from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Education funding Agency (EFA) as well as income from fees.

3.3 Table 1 shows the figures for the engagement of learners to date for the current academic year in some key groups.

Category	Number of Enrolments
16 -18	61
19 -25	238
25+	1139
BME	10%
Disability	24%
Total	1438

4 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The report contains no proposals and is for information only

5. ADULT SKILLS

- 5.1 The Adult Skills Budget (ASB) is a mainstream allocation provided by the SFA for the delivery of a range of skills provision. In order to be eligible all the provision has to be approved and listed on the Qualification and Credit framework (QCF). This type of provision includes NVQs, English and Maths, Apprenticeships, and other listed qualifications. It also includes the delivery of short qualifications in e.g. Interview Skills to support unemployed adults. Since August this also includes the provision of traineeships for those aged 19-23.
- 5.2 Table 2 shows the number of enrolments in some key types of skills provision for the current academic year.

Aspect	Number of Enrolments
English and Maths	161
NVQ's	240
Other Qualifications	216
Provision for the unemployed	81
Traineeships	1
Apprenticeships	2

- 5.3 The service is also working in partnership with Job Centre plus (JC+) to support unemployed adults. Referrals are received from JC+ to deliver bespoke training to individuals under the Pace and Purpose project. The service also provides bespoke Skills for Life courses for those who have been mandated to achieve a maths or English qualification.

6. COMMUNITY LEARNING

- 6.1 The Community learning allocation is designed to deliver a wide range of non accredited provision in response to the Government paper New Challenges, New Chances, which was published in 2012
- 6.2 The Community learning programme is designed to reach those adults who are farthest removed from learning or the labour market. The programmes concentrate on working in partnership with a range of agencies to engage with the most disadvantaged. This could be in a range of ways and a range of provision.
- 6.3 A key project for the service is the provision of support to those adults who wish to participate in volunteering. As well as providing access to a qualification in community volunteering the service supports any individual who wishes to volunteer. To date 43 have been supported

into a volunteering placement, of these 9 have progressed onto employment and 24 have gone on to training programmes.

- 6.4 A second key aspect is the delivery of Family Learning type activities. These include working with schools, children's centres and other organisations to deliver a range of activities. These include e.g. Saturdays at Summerhill, Keeping up with the Kids, Safe and Sound and other programmes designed to get families learning together or to give parents skills to support their children
- 6.5 Table 3 shows the enrolment in some of the key aspects of the community learning provision in the current academic year

Aspect	Number of Enrolments
Family Learning	275
Volunteering	100
Personal Development	153
Employability	12

7. PROVISION FUNDED BY THE EDUCATION FUNDED AGENCY (EFA)

- 7.1 The service receives an allocation from the EFA for the delivery of a range of programmes to 16-18 year olds.
- 7.2 In August the Government launched the new Traineeship Programme. As a provider which has received an inspection grade 2 the service is eligible to deliver this programme. To date the service has recruited 4 trainees who started their programme in January.
- 7.3 The service also has a contract to deliver Apprenticeships to this age group. At present one apprentice is on programme.
- 7.4 The service also works with the Careers Service and the Council's 14-19 team to deliver study programmes to young people. At present the service is supporting 5 young people on a full time study programme. In addition 6 young people are supported through sub contracted provision.
- 7.5 Working in partnership with the 14-19 team the service is supporting 19 young people with special needs who are following a study programme at Catcote School.

8. TEES VALLEY WORKFORCE SKILLS

- 8.1 The Tees Valley Workforce Skills project is a European Social Fund (ESF) funded project delivered in partnership with the other Tees Valley local authorities.

- 8.2 The project started in July 2013 and will cease in July 2015. It is funded to engage employers in workforce development and to deliver training to employees across Tees Valley.
- 8.3 The project has to date employed 7 additional full time staff with 4 of these being based within the Regeneration teams of the Tees Valley local authorities.
- 8.4 Delivery of the project training started late but it is now back on target. The profiled target for starts by the end of January is 158. To date the project has engaged with 129 employers and has delivered training to 166 employees.

9. ENTERPRISE PROVISION

- 9.1 The service maintains an Enterprise Programme which provides activities to employers at full cost. These activities include the provision of courses such as First Aid, Food Hygiene and Management. These courses are not fundable through the SFA or other funding streams so are delivered by the service at full cost.
- 9.2 During the current academic year 143 learners have participated in this type of provision. It is estimated that this provision has attracted £5,321 so far of income. This income is taken into account when planning the annual budget.

10 SUPPORT

- 10.1 In order to ensure that all the provision is fully accessible to all a range of support measures are put in place. These measures include providing where appropriate the provision of crèche, transport and 1-1 in class support to those individuals who may need extra support to allow them to participate in learning.
- 10.2 Table 4 shows the type of support which has been delivered to date

Type of Support	Number of Learners
1:1 Support	47
Childcare	24
Equipment	12
Transport	1
In class support	38
Total	122

11. INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

- 11.1 The service provides a range of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services from the main centre and 2 outreach venues.
- 11.2 The IAG services provide support to anyone who requires information about learning and work. The IAG team consists of trained advisers who will support people to choose the most appropriate learning activity. They are also on hand to support unemployed individuals with job search, CV writing and other skills to support them into work. The service receives many referrals from JC+ who send individuals to the centre to obtain a good CV. The team also provide extra support to any unemployed learners to assist them to acquire employment. To date 90 have accessed the IAG service. Of these 41 have achieved further learning and 4 have gained employment.

12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The service is fully funded by the SFA and EFA so there are no funding implications for the Council. The allocations which are received are subject to the successful delivery of learning outcomes.

13 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 The service regularly carries out analysis of its provision to ensure that it is providing equality of opportunity and is fully accessible by all.

14 SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 There are no Crime and Disorder considerations

15 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report.

16. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 To ensure that members are informed of the current activities across the Adult Education service.

17 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 There are no background papers.

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: QUARTERLY HOUSING REPORT OCTOBER-
DECEMBER 2013

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

The report is for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Regeneration Services Committee about progress across key areas of the Housing Service relating to empty homes, enforcement activity, Selective Licensing, Disabled Facilities Grants, housing allocations, the impacts of Welfare Reform, housing advice & homelessness prevention and Warm up North during the third quarter of 2013/14.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report provides an update on progress and benchmarking across key areas of the Housing Service during Quarter 3, 2013/14 and updates the last report presented to the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder on 5 December 2013.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The report contains no proposals and is for information only.

5. EMPTY HOMES UPDATE

- 5.1 A total 14 properties were brought back into use within Quarter 3 of 2013/14 bringing the cumulative figure for 2013/14 to 62. The target of bringing 60 long term empty properties back into use within 2013/14 has therefore been exceeded. Given the level of engagement with owners and the number of properties being brought back into use through incentive schemes it is

anticipated that the annual target of 60 will be significantly exceeded by the end of the financial year.

Table 1 - Empty Homes Enforcement Activity

Enforcement Activity	Number of Active Cases	Number of Resolved Cases	Comments
Enforced Sale	2	1	Enforced Sale for unpaid Council tax – one resolved as owner has joined incentive scheme.
Compulsory Purchase Proceedings (CPO)	2	1	One CPO served and GVD ¹ currently being implemented. One was pending a decision and another property is undergoing refurbishment as part of lease incentive scheme.
S215 Action (Formal)	15	16	These cases have been resolved through negotiation. Outstanding cases progressing through the informal route.
S215 Action (Informal)	22	4	This route has been progressed before formal action is taken.
Direct Action through S215	1	2	One owner agreed sale with Council and one direct action has been completed. Another direct action is pending. All S215 cases are reported to Planning Committee.
Positive Action (Top 20) – rolling top 20 enforcement list of longest empty and most problematic	18	8 ²	Negotiation with owners commenced on 18 properties and some owners have now joined the lease scheme.

5.2 Compulsory Purchase Proceedings almost reached conclusion on the first property identified through the top 20 enforcement list. The second General Vesting Declaration (GVD) notice was served in December and the Council will take possession of the property in the next quarter.

5.3 Two enforced sales also neared conclusion in Quarter 3, both of which were also on the top 20 enforcement list and have large Council Tax debts. The charging orders have been issued and the next stage is to enforce the sale. However, there is a risk that the owners could pay the debt at this stage and prevent the enforced sale taking place. It is proposed that these properties will also be acquired and refurbished through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme but are likely to be offered to the market first to get best value for the properties in accordance with best practice guidance. These enforcement activities demonstrate the Council's pro-active approach to empty property enforcement and are in-line with the adopted empty homes strategy.

¹ GVD – General Vesting Declaration (provides power to take ownership of property following compulsory purchase)

² Resolved through informal negotiation. Enforcement is escalated where negotiations fail.

Table 2 - Empty Homes Incentive Scheme Overview

Incentive Scheme	Number of Properties	Number completed and re-occupied	Comments
Empty Property Purchasing Scheme	80	20	Of the 80 properties included in scheme 10 are in agreed sale awaiting final legal completion.
Every Home Matters (lease scheme in partnership with Housing Hartlepool)	43	28	Work is currently underway on 14 properties.
Baden Street Improvement Scheme	22 (eligible in original scheme)	13	22 out of eligible 22 property owners are engaged. The number of re-occupied properties includes landlords who have had assistance from the Council in terms of re-letting.

- 5.4 The Council continued to acquire properties throughout Quarter 3 of 2013/14 with 80% of properties either purchased by the Council or in the 'agreed sale' position awaiting legal completion. The refurbished properties are let at 80% of market rent and are proving popular to local residents. A update report on this scheme is provided to full Council on a 4 monthly basis.

6. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

- 6.1 The enforcement update encompasses a number of key areas, including housing conditions, housing related statutory nuisance and problematic empty properties.
- 6.2 Table 3 sets out the service requests that have been received by the service during the course of the year. Previous year's figures are shown in brackets for comparison purposes.
- 6.3 The majority of these service requests fall into three main areas:
- Disrepair
 - Empty Properties
 - Nuisance
- 6.4 Overall the number of service requests received by officers has decreased by 25% compared to the previous quarter but has remained at the same level when compared to the same quarter in 2012/13.
- 6.5 The number of disrepair cases increased significantly in this quarter from 55 to 86 and represented almost half of all service requests dealt with by the team.
- 6.6 In total, hazards were removed from 24 privately rented properties during Quarter 3, including five following the serving of legal notices. In this quarter, three Housing Act 2004 Improvement Notices were served and three Environmental Protection Act 1990 Notices were served to abate housing conditions that were considered to be prejudicial to health.

Table 3 – Enforcement Team Service Requests

Request Type	Number and % of Total Number by Quarter 2012/13							
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
Disrepair	53 (52)	26%	55 (43)	23%	86 (75)	48%	(132)	
Empty & Insecure Property	42 (53)	21%	38 (45)	16%	25 (24)	14%	(19)	
Empty property Nuisance	12 (44)	6%	13 (11)	5%	4 (8)	2%	(10)	
Unauthorised Encampment	5 (1)	2%	4 (2)	2%	1 (0)	>1%	(2)	
Nuisance from Adjacent Property	30 (6)	15%	37 (36)	15%	17 (27)	10%	(21)	
Nuisance from Occupied Property	43 (92)	21%	75 (66)	31%	41 (34)	23%	(35)	
Filthy & Verminous	3 (0)	1%	2 (0)	1%	0 (4)	0	(1)	
Defective Drainage	10 (14)	5%	10 (10)	4%	0 (4)	0	(3)	
HMO Advice	2 (3)	1%	4 (3)	2%	2 (3)	1%	(1)	
Immigration Visit	3 (2)	1%	1 (0)	1%	2 (0)	1%	(2)	
Total Number of Requests	203 (267)		239 (216)		178 (179)		(226)	

- 6.7 The number of complaints regarding insecure empty properties in this quarter was lower than the previous quarter but comparable to the same quarter last year. Overall, the number of complaints about insecure properties is expected to fall as the Council acquires them in pursuance of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme and through Housing Market Renewal. Five notices were served in Quarter 3 to require the securing of empty dwellings and 2 notices were served requiring the abatement of nuisance associated with empty properties to remove rubbish from within the property boundaries.
- 6.8 The overall number of service requests relating to nuisances (both occupied and empty properties) reduced by 50% from 125 in Quarter 2 to 62 in Quarter 3 but was comparable to the same period in 2012/13. The peak in Quarter 2 was largely attributed to the rise in nuisance complaints in relation to overgrown/untidy gardens which tend to be seasonal in nature.
- 6.9 In addition to the reactive work carried out, officers have undertaken proactive work in relation to identifying problematic empty and nuisance properties and those with the potential to be dealt with using Section 215 powers, through area based targeting in a number of areas, including the Carr/Hopps Street Regeneration area, Belle Vue, Burbank Street, Oxford Road and Cornwall Street areas. Officers have also undertaken a significant number of proactive inspections of Selectively Licensed properties in these areas.
- 6.10 Mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was introduced in 2007. This requires HMOs, three or more storeys in size with five or more occupants to be licensed. These licences remain in force for 5 years, unless there are circumstances that require a variation or revocation. One House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) was issued with a mandatory HMO licence during

the third quarter of 2013/14, bringing the total number of licences currently in force to 14. Two further proposed licences remain outstanding at the end of this quarter as one application for a HMO licence was not considered 'duly made' and there were concerns about the management of the second.

7. SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE

7.1 Table 4 summaries the Selective Licensing activities undertaken since the scheme commenced in May 2009.

Table 4 - Selective Licensing Activity

Licensed Properties	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (Q1)	2013/ 14 (Q2)	2013/ 14 (Q3)
Total number of properties licensed	44	489	52	148	10	21	26
Licences revoked	0	0	6	54	14	8	20
Gas/Electrical Safety							
Reminder Letters sent for Gas or Electrical safety Certificates		395	673	660	176	185	171
Notice Served for non supply of satisfactory Gas or Electrical Safety Certificate		139	422	331	54	91	116
Final Warning of court proceedings	0	0	0	119	5	23	74
Certificates Supplied following Reminder or Notice sent		257	492	649	122	120	155
Housing Standards Inspections							
Inspection of Licensed Property completed	0	86	220	100	5	15	74
Schedule of Works Sent with recommendation for action for Licensed property	0	10	140	38	3	2	19

7.2 During the third quarter of 2013/14, 26 properties were licensed bringing the total number issued since the beginning of the designation to 790. Of these, 688 remain in force as 102 have been revoked by mutual agreement for various reasons including:

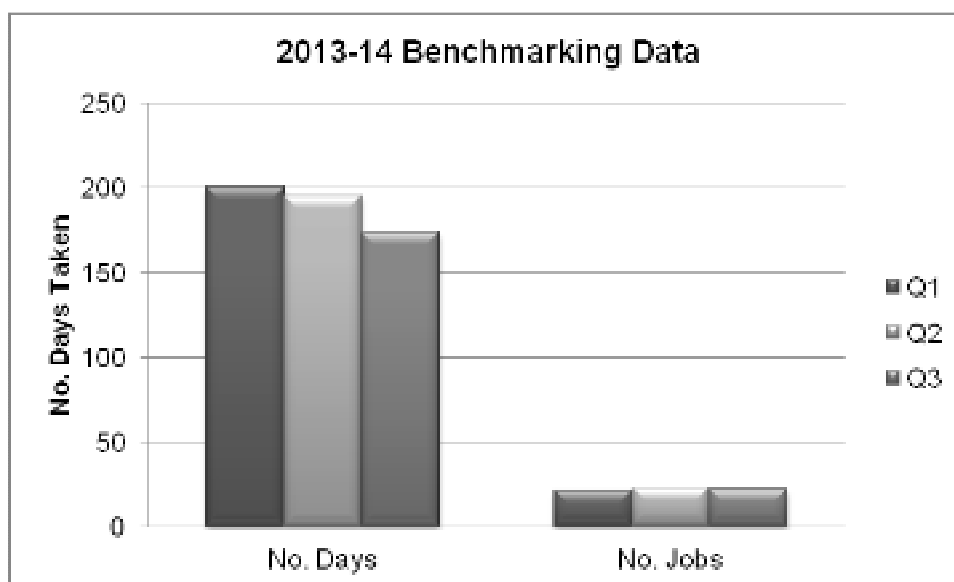
- Change of ownership
- Change of management agent
- Property no longer licensable

- 7.3 During this Quarter there was only one remaining case of non-compliance with the requirement to be licensed and enforcement action is being progressed with Legal Services.
- 7.4 With regards to the introduction of a future Selective Licensing designation, progress has been made in preparing a business case (the preferred option agreed for exploration by the Working Group) which is focussed on the licensing of priority wards.

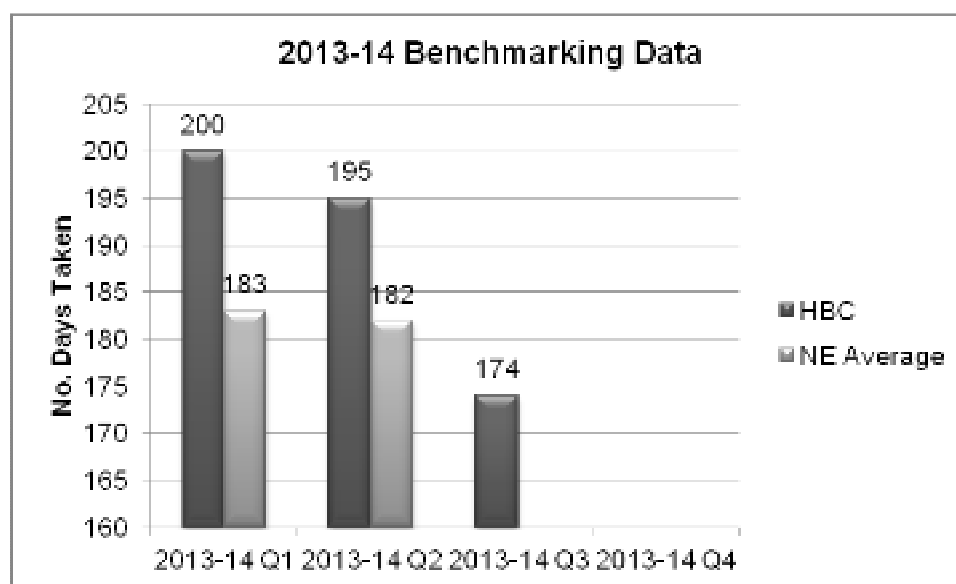
8. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG) BENCHMARKING DATA

- 8.1 During Quarter 3 of 2013/14, 22 DFGs were completed in Hartlepool and the overall time taken reduced from 195 days in Quarter 2 to 174 days. Figure 1 illustrates the time taken to complete DFG works in Hartlepool.

Figure 1 - Time Taken to Complete DFG Works in Hartlepool – 2013/14



- 8.2 Benchmarking data was available from the other members of the North East Adaptations Group for the first half of 2013/14. Figure 2 illustrates Hartlepool's benchmarking data against the average time taken with the 8 local authorities which provided data.

Figure 2 – Time Taken to Complete DFG Works

- 8.3 At the end of Quarter 3, the number of applicants on the waiting list for a DFG had decreased slightly from 143 to 132 at an estimated cost of £534,310. The DFG budget for 2013-2014 received from the Government is £437,717. For 2014-2015 the funding is expected to be £418,000.
- 8.4 In Quarter 1, Committee was advised that in addition to the current waiting list there had also been a noticeable decrease in the number of adapted properties being advertised via the Choice Based Lettings system which could have an impact on the DFG budget. As a consequence an approach was made to the Clinical Commissioning Group to request additional funding, however in December 2013 the Council was advised that this bid had been rejected.

9. ALLOCATIONS SUMMARY

- 9.1 Choice Based Lettings (CBL) activity and performance is monitored on a quarterly basis and compared with our sub regional partners by the Sub Regional CBL Steering Group.
- 9.2 The number of applicants who are 'live' on the system and able to bid has increased in Hartlepool during 2013-14. 30% of the waiting list is made up from Housing Hartlepool applicants wanting a transfer.

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

2013-14	Hartlepool	Sub Regional Total
Quarter 1	2385	15609
Quarter 2	2552	15635
Quarter 3	2516	15350

- 9.3 To ensure that applicants in the greatest need are given preference for an allocation of accommodation, levels of housing need are categorised into bands. It can be seen that the increase in the waiting list is amongst applicants categorised with Band 4 priority – no or low level housing need. An analysis of all new applications made during 2013 shows that of the new applications received 83% were for 1 and 2 bedroom properties. Just 9% of new applications made were for 3 bedroom houses and 7% for 4 or 5 bedroom houses.

Table 6 – Total number of ‘live’ applicants (able to bid) within each Band

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total
Quarter 1 (2013-14)	206	548	58	1573	2385
Quarter 2 (2013-14)	235	540	65	1712	2552
Quarter 3 (2013-14)	225	543	62	1686	2516

- 9.4 At the end of Quarter 3 the number of decant³ applicants in Hartlepool was 4.
- 9.5 Some applicants within the three Priority Bands (1, 2 and 3) may also have cumulative needs. This figure has stayed consistent since the last quarter with 28 applicants within Band 1 and 70 within Band 2.
- 9.6 The number of bids made on advertised properties during Quarter 3 has reduced again in Hartlepool and across the sub region. The number of properties advertised have been monitored to determine any emerging trends in bidding behaviour and also to monitor properties that are advertised on several cycles before being accepted by a successful applicant. Trends have been compared with 2012 and bids in some areas have fallen by as much as 60%. These areas include King Oswy Upper, Middleton Road and West View Upper.

Table 7– Bids per Band (within Hartlepool)

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total no. bids
Quarter 4 (2012-13)	959	2130	235	3580	6904
Quarter 1 (2013-14)	641	1675	162	2799	5277
Quarter 2 (2013-14)	746	1645	151	2632	5174
Quarter 3 (2013-14)	552	1589	84	2336	4561

³ a decant applicant is defined as one who is losing their home through a recognised regeneration scheme and they are awarded the greatest priority

- 9.7 Across the sub region 25,938 bids were placed in total as shown in table 8. This is a decrease again from previous quarters and since Quarter 1 the number of bids placed across the sub region has reduced by 36%.

Table 8 – Bidding activity by type of property (within the Sub Region)

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Other property type (e.g. studio flat)
Quarter 4 (2012-13)	19130	15917	9468	399	89	515
Quarter 1 (2013-14)	15889	14035	9101	527	83	684
Quarter 2 (2013-14)	12495	12217	7109	517	61	262
Quarter 3 (2013-14)	6251	6258	3558	191	4	121

- 9.8 Table 9 demonstrates that the majority of lettings continue to go to those on the waiting list rather than to Housing Hartlepool transfer applicants. However, during Quarter 3 the number of lets to transfers has decreased since the previous quarter which reflects the current situation where Registered Providers are minimising transfers as a response to welfare reform and its affect on demand for certain property types and locations.

Table 9 – Lettings Information for Hartlepool

	Total no. lets	Direct Lets	Transfers
Quarter 1 (2013-14)	162	0	40 (25%)
Quarter 2 (2013-14)	159	0	33 (21%)
Quarter 3 (2013-14)	138	0	27 (20%)

- 9.9 The number of lets within each Band as shown in table 10 illustrates that just under half of lettings have gone to applicants within Band 4.

Table 10 – Percentage lets to each Band (within Hartlepool)

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total no. lets
Quarter 1 (2013-14)	23%	15%	9%	52%	162
Quarter 2 (2013-14)	23%	19%	7%	51%	159
Quarter 3 (2013-14)	25%	19%	8%	48%	138

- 9.10 The numbers of offers that are refused are also monitored. During Quarter 3 the number of refusals of Housing Hartlepool properties reduced from 73 in the previous quarter to 39, of those 6 stated 'dislikes area' (15%) and 4 'no longer wants area' (10%). No refusals were because the property was too large and just 2 were because the property was too small.

- 9.11 The Sub Regional CBL Policy allows for cross boundary mobility as shown in table 11.

Table 11 – Cross Boundary Mobility

	Area applicant moved from :	Area applicant re-housed to:	Number
Quarter 3	Hartlepool	Stockton	1
	Hartlepool	Darlington	1
	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	1

- 9.12 The percentage of properties let on 1st offer is also monitored across the sub region and has decreased from 87% last quarter to 74% in Hartlepool during Quarter 3.

10. IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM

- 10.1 The impacts of welfare reform on demand for social housing and on tenancy sustainability and homelessness continues to be monitored in partnership with registered providers.
- 10.2 Bidding activity continues to show that family houses are in low demand in certain areas of the town as reported in Quarters 1, 2 and 3 and above in paragraph 9.6.
- 10.3 Bidding activity also shows that the average numbers of bids made on all property types have reduced since the same period in 2012. The number of bids made on 2 bedroom properties has halved (from an average of 24 to 12) and on 4 and 5 bedroom properties has reduced by 75% (from an average of 15 to just 4).
- 10.3 All registered providers have reported an increase in rent arrears due to Welfare Reform and the figures reported last quarter will be updated at the end of Quarter 4.
- 10.4 Terminations from the social rented sector to the private rented sector continue to increase across registered providers. Housing Hartlepool has reported that 27% of all their terminations relate to moves to the private rented sector, which represents a doubling from the start of the year. Other registered providers operating in Hartlepool have reported similar increases.
- 10.5 As reported in section 9.2 above at the end of Quarter 3 there were 2516 applicants on the housing register. This represents an increase of 184 applicants since the start of the year. However, the majority of new applicants have been assessed as Band 4 priority – no or low housing need.
- 10.6 Terminations have also increased in Hartlepool during 2013. Within Housing Hartlepool stock there has been a 3.8% increase in voids and terminations have increased to 513 compared to 487 during 2012.

- 10.7 There has been a marked increase in terminations from people living in 3 bedroom houses, up 28% from the same period in 2012. This is a consequence of the under occupation charge and transferring exiting tenants to smaller properties.
- 10.8 Terminations due to transferring tenants have also increased by 24% due to the reasons cited above in 10.7. Tenants have also transferred to the new build properties.
- 10.9 Housing Hartlepool have also experienced a 63% increase in their tenants moving to other registered providers' stock and this has again been mainly to avoid the under occupation charge.
- 10.10 Through the Low Demand Working Group and other external meetings both locally and sub regionally, the Council is working with all registered provider partners to both understand and tackle the challenges since the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act. In Quarter 3, various initiatives have been introduced such as relaxed eligibility criteria, promotion and access to white goods through the furniture scheme. Other initiatives are also being developed for future introduction such as advertising on other property websites and improving the standard of properties.

11. HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ACTIVITY

- 11.1 The Housing Advice and Homelessness service carries out the Council's statutory duties in relation to homelessness and all aspects of housing advice. During Quarter 3, 1,108 customers accessed the service by visiting the Housing Options Centre.
- 11.2 During this quarter, active casework has been carried out with 252 clients to resolve their housing issue and homelessness has been prevented for 88 households who would have been homeless without officers' assistance. Only four households had to be accepted as statutorily homeless and subsequently provided with suitable alternative accommodation.
- 11.3 Table 12 provides a breakdown of the enquiry types clients have presented with during the quarter.

Table 12 – Housing Advice Casework 2013/14

Enquiry Type	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
Debt Advice*	35	73	54
Relationship Breakdown	25	52	36
Asked to leave	30	61	42
Possession Proceedings*	28	54	79
Tenancy Advice	19	30	29
Seeking Accommodation	114	141	123
Total Enquiry Types	299	411	363
Total clients	251	315	252

* includes mortgage and rent arrears

12. WARM UP NORTH

- 12.1 The Council entered into a partnership with British Gas and eight other Local Authorities in the region to deliver a scheme to improve the energy efficiency of homes in the North East towards the end of Quarter 2 and the 'Warm up North' (WuN) scheme was officially launched in September 2013. The scheme is divided into two key parts – the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the Green Deal (GD)
- 12.2 The initial emphasis following the launch of the scheme was around the ECO delivery, which focussed on the provision of free boilers, cavity and loft insulation to homes of eligible households who were in receipt of one or more qualifying benefits. Towards the end of Quarter 3, once the Green Deal product had been developed, surveys were programmed in for non-ECO qualifiers by British Gas.
- 12.3 Since the launch of the scheme to the end of December, 29 households benefitted from the installation of a new energy efficient boilers in their homes.

13. HOUSING REPORTS ON FORWARD PLAN

- 13.1 RN 31/13 – Housing Services New Opportunities Structure.
Committee will consider detailed financial proposals for the future opportunities for the Housing Services team. This will include reviewing the management of the housing waiting list, management of Council-owned housing stock and the development of a Social Lettings Agency.
- 13.2 RN 03/14 – Selective Licensing.
Committee will be asked to consider a comprehensive business case, which will include evidence to support (a) proposal(s) for the introduction of a new Selective Licensing designation in the town. The report will also seek approval to begin the consultation process, for a minimum of 10 weeks, with all stakeholders who are likely to be affected by the proposed selective licensing designation, in line with prescribed Government guidance.
- 13.3 RN 05/14 – Charges for Housing Services
Committee will be asked to approve the introduction of new charges and amendment of existing charges for activities undertaken by Housing Services. The charges will include those for taking enforcement action under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 (such as serving an improvement notice), arranging works in default of legal notices served (where the recipient fails to comply within a specified timescale) and for undertaking non-statutory inspections for immigration purposes.

14. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

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

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

- 15.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires local authorities to consider crime and disorder reduction in the exercise of all their duties, activities and decision-making. This means that all policies, strategies and service delivery need to consider the likely impact on crime and disorder. This legal responsibility affects all employees of the Council as well as those agencies that are contracted by, or that legally contract to work in partnership with the Council in the provision of services.
- 15.2 Hartlepool Borough Council recognises that Community Safety affects all our lives, people, communities and organisations. People need to feel safe and this means developing stronger, confident and more cohesive communities. Community Safety includes reducing crime and disorder and tackling anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, promoting fire safety, road safety and public protection. The key areas of Housing Services have been developed with the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour in mind.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

17. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 17.1 To ensure that committee members are informed about key activities across the Housing Service.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 There are no background papers to the report.

19. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th March 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: QUARTERLY ESTATES & REGENERATION REPORT
JULY – SEPTEMBER 2013

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 The report is for information

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To update the Regeneration Services Committee about the range of work undertaken within the section and progress across key areas of the Estates & Regeneration service and recent achievements in the July to September quarter (Appendix A). **Appendix A contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The aim of the Estates & Regeneration section is to facilitate regeneration through property interventions and maximise the efficiency/use and financial return from the Councils property assets.

3.2 The section is responsible for the management of the Councils portfolio comprising 175 operational properties (including schools) which are used for direct service delivery together with 1167 non-operational/investment properties/areas of open space. Non Operational assets are used for a range of uses including income generation, economic development and recreation. In total the combined asset value of the operational and education portfolio is £171M

3.3 The section is managed by Dale Clarke who has 6 staff three of which concentrate on property management/rationalisation, land & property disposals and acquisitions, rating, asset valuations and maintaining detailed property records. Two officers focus on facilitating regeneration through the preparation of development briefs, developing master plans, preparing funding bids and facilitating development agreements and site assembly

including addressing the issues of derelict buildings within the town. Regeneration Officers also work with the Local Enterprise Partnership on the Local Growth Fund and the emerging ERDF Programme in addition to managing a number of grant schemes and developing and delivering a number of town centre projects. The final member of the team currently concentrates on enabling the capital programme for investment works to be carried out on the education estate including liaising with the Department for Education in relation to the development of the new school buildings within the town. However the role is widening to incorporate proactive asset management cross the educational and corporate portfolio.

3.4 The key areas of work undertaken by the section relate to:

- a) Development & Regeneration – The Council own a number of strategic sites which have the capacity to influence visionary development to drive forward the next phase of regeneration in both the town centre and the marina.
- b) Operational Property – Ensuring the mix, quality, efficiency and location of the Council's operational properties is correct, is fundamental both to the delivery of high quality services but also to minimise cost and attract and retain quality highly motivated staff.
- c) Non-operational/Investment Properties – Hartlepool own a varied and substantial non-operational estate that currently generates significant income which is reflected in the General Fund Budget - £812,000 pa. (2012/13 including the shopping centre income) Pro-active management is essential to maximise the income and review opportunities to restructure the estate to generate greater financial and social returns.
- d) Capital Receipts – In order to fund approved capital expenditure commitment the achievement of capital receipts of £6.5m are essential for the period 2012 – 16.
- e) Community Asset Transfer – The Community Asset Transfer Policy will assist the Council to identify suitable Community Groups with the capacity to continue to provide public services from Council properties where cuts in main stream budgets do not enable direct service provision.
- f) Capital investment & Maintenance - Continued investment and prioritisation of spend is essential to maintain a quality fit for purpose portfolio.

4. **DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION**

- 4.1 The Council as a major landowner has the ability to influence and bring forward a number of regeneration schemes that will have a significant influence on the future of the town; however a pro- active approach is essential both to assemble sites but also to benefit from major investment

proposals in terms of capturing increasing values through the strategic acquisition of land & property likely to benefit from the regeneration.

- 4.2 The section have recently undertaken significant work preparing Hartlepool's vision document and launch and development work for the preparation of a Regeneration Masterplan covering key sites including Jacksons Landing and the Marina, Church Street and Lynn Street Depot. Work to date has included the preparation of the brief which outlines the scope and nature of the work and managing the procurement exercise to seek a professional team to work alongside Officers. The Council has key land holdings in all these strategic locations which need to be exploited both in terms of enabling place changing developments but also maximising the financial returns to the Council to enable ongoing investment and regeneration. The team are developing options to relocate the depot to release the site for development whilst achieving efficient replacement facilities.
- 4.3 The preparation of ambitious creative and deliverable masterplans needs to be backed by a commitment from the Council to assemble sites using its Compulsory Purchase Powers where appropriate and there is a robust business case. The section have the specialist skills required to undertake Compulsory Purchase and have recently successfully completed through the use of CPO powers the acquisition of 200 houses in the Perth/Hurworth St area to enable demolition, clearance and redevelopment as part of the Housing Market Renewal programme (HMR).
- 4.4 Staff have also been successful in acquiring an additional 85 residential properties through negotiation during the past 18 months to facilitate the Empty Homes programme and are on target to achieve 100 during 2014. Similarly the Carr Hopps Street HMR requires the acquisition of 188 properties to enable demolition and redevelopment. To date 140 have been acquired by negotiation and discussions are ongoing with remaining property owners to finalise acquisitions during 2014.
- 4.5 In locations such as Hartlepool where financial margins are more limited developers require sites that are ready for development, where all the legal issues and ownership matters have been resolved. They also need evidence that demand exists and confidence that they are buying in to a town that has ambitions and a direction of travel in terms of growth and prosperity. To create momentum the Council needs to continue to be extremely active in terms of its property interventions and acquisitions to remove blight and create developable sites.
- 4.6 To date a range of pro-active property deals have been undertaken including the Joint Venture partnership for the Seaton Regeneration scheme as well as the purchase of strategic sites including Jacksons Landing and 'back to back' deals such as the 'Easy Skips Site'. The section has been opportunistic identifying properties where marriage value exists through the combination of land holdings such as Briarfields Ambulance Station and Focus DIY on Lynn St, all of which are positive examples.

- 4.7 Regeneration Officers secured funding for the Council to purchase and demolish the former Crown House Building which was having a significant detrimental impact on the surrounding area, as part of a pro-active acquisitions strategy. Flexibility through partnership to achieve positive regeneration outcomes has resulted in the recent disposal of this Council controlled Crown House site on Surtees street for the development of new student accommodation comprising 64 units for Cleveland College of Art & Design. The section worked with Vela, the Homes & Communities Agency and the college to develop a scheme and agree a £2.2m funding package including a loan from the Council to undertake the development. The new facilities will hopefully help to attract degree students from across the country to Hartlepool to study and create long term wealth generation and support the development of the Innovation and Skills Quarter and the regeneration of Church Street.
- 4.8 Similarly the section acquired at auction Morison Hall on the Headland a long term derelict building which blighted the local area and have agreed a transfer to NDC Trust to develop a scheme/funding to convert the building in to 7 flats for social housing using apprentice labour to undertake the work.
- 4.9 The section also have a proactive approach to facilitating regeneration schemes on land outside of its control and recently acted on a consultancy basis with the Trustees of the Friarage on the Headland to bring forward part of the Friarage land for residential development using the proceeds to refurbish the Friarage Manor House. This innovative approach using in house skills will result in an historic listed building which has blighted the Headland being conserved and brought back in to residential use together with a well-designed social housing scheme, adding value to the Heritage of the town, providing well needed housing and resolving a long established problem for the Trustees. A Planning Application for the Friarage development is currently being considered.

5. **CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

- 5.1 The Council is facing significant financial challenges and has significant capital expenditure commitments. In order to fund the capital commitments it is important that opportunities to identify surplus assets through property review and service rationalisation are undertaken. Adding value through obtaining planning permission for alternate uses is fundamental together with mechanisms to capture value through direct development or overage.
- 5.2 During 12/13 the section has been responsible for the marketing and sale of 12 sites generating £1.8M including the former Foggy Furze site and Tanfield Road nursery. The sales have involved a significant amount of work to both facilitate the removal and relocation of operational services and liaison with the planners and developers to agree appropriate development schemes and financial mechanisms to maximise current and future income. Currently there are a number of key sites that the section have identified for sale and work is ongoing either to sell or resolve planning or legal issues prior to sites being brought forward. Sites include Henry Smiths on King Oswy Drive, Briarfields, Brierton and the Education Development Centre

Seaton Lane which remain as key capital receipt opportunities. As part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2013 -16 a capital receipts target of £6.5M has been agreed and the detail of the proposed sales and timetable was reported and agreed by Finance & Policy Committee on 18th October 2013.

- 5.3 As part of the development of the new Local Plan all Council owned sites have been considered as part of the Strategic Housing Land Allocation Assessment (SHLAA) and 243 acres have been identified by the section as having potential. If these sites are allocated for residential development then these will be brought forward for disposal during the plan period.
- 5.4 Depending on the extent of the sites eventually included within the Local Plan allocations this will potentially generate significant additional land value receipts to the Council and provide a key source of income and development opportunity.
- 5.5 Additionally, as key landowner opportunities to maximise the return from access ransom strips offers the potential for income and these will arise on a periodic basis as developments proceed.
- 5.6 Service reviews as part of the financial planning process consider alternate methods of service delivery to include the rationalisation of operational property assets. The opportunity to rationalise buildings and release latent development potential are all important sources of additional capital receipts and ongoing service reviews will assist the asset planning and receipts programme. Re investment of capital however is essential to ensure that the retained portfolio is fit for purpose to meet the current and future changes in technology and customer demands.
- 5.7 The educational portfolio has until recently been managed separately to the corporate estate but has now been incorporated within the Estates and Regeneration section. Opportunities to identify surplus land and property are being undertaken with a view to generating receipts. Although the legislation in relation to the use of monies released from educational assets has to be ring-fenced, if this enables additional investment in education properties and sports facilities this could be a beneficial outcome.
- 5.8 Capital receipts are generated from a wide range of disposals which range from garden extensions & garage plots to large residential development sites. In addition the section processed over 1000 land ownership queries during 2013 and requests for easements /wayleaves for utility companies wanting permission to lay pipes and cables within council owned land. All these transactions require inspections, valuations and negotiations to ensure that the Council receives appropriate compensation.

6. NON OPERATIONAL PROPERTY

- 6.1 The Council's investment portfolio is made up of a wide range of assets generating rent from a range of sources including Newburn Bridge industrial units, Hartlepool Enterprise Centre, agricultural tenancies, grazing licences,

ground rents for Hartlepool Football Club and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. The current annual income from rentals is £812K 2012/13. Day to day the management of the portfolio is intensive to ensure that tenants are complying with covenants for repairs and maintenance, arranging repairs, ensuring rents are paid and marketing and agreeing terms for letting vacant units and instructing and liaising with the Councils legal department.

- 6.2 Significant additional income streams have been agreed including the leasing of Bryan Hanson House and a site for a wind turbine on Brenda Road. These will add substantially to the rental income stream and in addition there are a number of outstanding rent reviews and vacant industrial units that are being actively pursued with an aim to increase the rental income to £1M in 2014/15.
- 6.3 A recent review has been undertaken which has identified that 98% of investment property is let and 95% of rentals are being collected.
- 6.4 Proactive management is essential to maintain and add value. Newburn Bridge Industrial Estate consists of 21 light industrial units and was managed until 2013 by Economic Development. The estate was 48% vacant with significant issues of disrepair and rent arrears. As a result of active management, tenants with significant rent arrears have been removed, repairing covenants have been enforced, a number of the units have been subdivided and now 98% of the units are now let generating an additional income of £33,400 part of which is being re-invested to improve the overall condition of the estate.
- 6.5 As demand continues to grow a business case is being developed to construct more units which will generate a revenue stream to the Council and create more space for the development of new businesses and wealth generation in the town.
- 6.6 Although active management is important it is also fundamental to challenge the reason why the Council continue to hold such a wide range of property assets and identify the benefits that it provides in terms of Economic, Social and Wellbeing outputs. Traditionally Council's continue to hold property without challenging the reason why. Expenditure in terms of financial and staffing resource is being incurred and this needs to be considered against focused objectives and outcomes. If land and property is being held purely to generate financial returns then consideration needs to be given as to whether these are being maximised and whether there are better opportunities to dispose of underperforming assets and reinvest the capital in higher yielding investments. A key part of the ongoing work within the team is to develop a plan for each individual property and its contribution to the key aims and objectives of the Council and develop individual action plans. The work will be resource intensive but taking account of the opportunity and financial costs/opportunities this work is essential.
- 6.7 Having identified properties that should be retained then these need to be maintained and managed to achieve the maximum benefits that relate to the reason why they are being held. A programme of condition surveys and investment requirements needs to be addressed to ensure the assets

remain fit for purpose. This work will form a key focus for 2014 within the section,

7. MANAGING OPERATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTAINING FRONT LINE SERVICES

- 7.1 As the Council continues to review its services consideration of the delivery options and the opportunity to critically analyse current and future delivery models is creating the drive necessary to instil creativity and challenge as to whether the current property base is fit for purpose and if not what would be more appropriate. Consideration of the options to harness technology and work more flexibly including sharing resources with other partner organisations has been achieved to an extent but this offers even greater opportunity. As a consequence of the rationalisation of the portfolio significant savings of £500K pa in running costs have been achieved to date and reflected in the base budget. In addition, £2.476M gross capital receipts have been achieved to date and a substantial number of properties have been rationalised and sold/leased including:

Administrative Accommodation

- 7.2 Significant rationalisation of office accommodation has been achieved through the Business Transformation process which commenced in 2009 where the strategy has focussed back office function to Civic Centre/ Church St, Anuran Bevan with a multifunctional public contact centre on the ground floor of the Civic. As a consequence a number of properties have been disposed of including:
- Municipal Buildings
 - Leadbitter Buildings
 - Brooklyn
 - 85 Station Lane
 - 65 & 73 Jutland Road
- 7.3 In addition terms have been agreed for the lease of Bryan Hanson House to an external user and both the leases on 173 York Road and Park Towers will be terminated to achieve further savings and ensure maximum use of the core office accommodation.

Community Buildings & Libraries.

- 7.4 The closure of Foggy Furze Library provided the opportunity to review the overall site for residential development and the reduction in funding for Community Centres has resulted in successful Community Asset Transfers of Jutland Road and Mires Avenue to Community Groups.

Brierton

- 7.5 Brierton provided an opportunity to co-locate a number of users on to one site to maximise the use, add value from shared facilities and release additional assets for disposal. Work is well underway to relocate the EDC &

PRU together with investment in an all-weather pitch to improve sporting provision and release land both on the site and the current EDC & PRU sites for residential development to fund the overall improvements. A sale of the land to a residential developer has already been agreed.

- 7.6 Although there are many other examples of property rationalisation and this will be an ongoing process as services work with the asset managers to achieve savings it is important to focus on ensuring service delivery objectives are achieved as a result of any changes but investment in technology and flexible ways of working are key.
- 7.7 Rationalisation of the administrative accommodation has been extremely successful but the completion of the latest moves to close Bryan Hanson House, 173 York Road and Park Tower will absorb the majority of vacant space within the existing buildings.
- 7.8 A part of the strategy commencing with Business Transformation it was identified that the surrender of leased properties was a priority and this has been ongoing. All back office services are now largely centralised but as service models change it may be that a number of existing leases are retained or new accommodation is required to deliver services where the existing portfolio or other public sector partner organisations are unable to accommodate the requirement and a full business plan outlining the costs/benefits have been evaluated.
- 7.9 It is important that the Council aim to occupy the minimum amount of property but it must be flexible, fit for purpose and efficient and ongoing investment will need to be allocated to ensure that it is maintained and adds value to service delivery.
- 7.10 Flexible and home working arrangements through improved IT need to be prioritised in order to reduce still further the back office accommodation.

8. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

- 8.1 The Localism Bill 2011 has created a greater emphasis on delivery of services through the voluntary sector and the Community Right to Bid.
- 8.2 The Council have acknowledged the potential for Communities to become empowered through the occupation of buildings through the adoption of the Community Asset Transfer Policy.
- 8.3 Mires Avenue Community Centre has been transferred under the Asset transfer arrangements and the lease is being finalised for Jutland Road Community Centre however potential exists for further transfers in appropriate circumstances.
- 8.4 The Community Asset Transfer policy has been developed to ensure that only community organisations with the financial/business and governance capabilities are encouraged to pursue asset transfer. The Council has a responsibility to assist groups to build capacity in these areas to ensure long

term successful service delivery but also to ensure that buildings are adequately maintained and safe.

- 8.5 Balance needs to be achieved between ensuring adequate capacity in the town for community facilities against the ability to release land and buildings for disposal/redevelopment.

9. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE/RUNNING COSTS

- 9.1 Currently the cost of operating the corporate portfolio in terms of utilities and maintenance and repair is £3M pa (excluding schools) It is therefore important to actively manage the performance and utilisation of properties to minimise cost and maximise return. Investment in the property stock must be driven as a result of a comprehensive assessment of condition, suitability and sufficiency together with the current and future demands for service delivery.
- 9.2 The development of the corporate asset management role is essential to drive the performance and further rationalisation of the portfolio and the section will develop this as resources allow however currently there is limited recent condition information (with the exception of the Education Estate) and no formal assessment and plan for each property. This combined with restricted maintenance budgets has resulted in a largely reactive approach to maintenance which is masking the underlying issue of significant backlog.
- 9.3 The identification of a short/medium plan through the collation of current data will enable an assessment of the overall backlog of maintenance and investment requirements from which decisions can be addressed about which properties should be prioritised and which are managed out of the portfolio.
- 9.4 In addition to the revenue running costs a budget of £600K was allocated in 2012/13 to undertake capital works.
- 9.5 The Education estate has received far greater resourcing in terms of asset management and better quality condition information is available. The capital programme for 14/15 is £1.8m and the programme of investment is currently being developed. In previous years concentration of investment has been solely related to condition related items, however this year and forthcoming years in consultation with the Director of Children's Services the investment will be based on condition, suitability and sufficiency. Priority will still be given to address key building defect issues but increased investment in new internal facilities to deliver improved curricular outputs will form part of the prioritisation criteria.
- 9.6 In order to reduce overall running costs within the section a substantial amount of work has been undertaken to review and challenge the rateable value of all the properties owned by the Council. Appeals have been undertaken in conjunction with a consultant rating surveyor on a success

related basis but overall to date overpayments of £1.6M has been recovered by the Council.

10. STATUTORY VALUATIONS

- 10.1 The section are also responsible for undertaking asset valuations across the portfolio for inclusion within the Council's Annual Accounts. These are a statutory requirement and subject to review by District Audit. All valuations have to be undertaken on a 5 year rolling programme requiring 270 detailed valuations to be undertaken by qualified in house Chartered Surveyors each year.

11. VALUE FOR MONEY

- 11.1 To ensure value for money it is essential that resources and priority is addressed to undertaking active asset management. Significant staffing resource cuts have resulted the loss of the dedicated Asset Management team and as a consequence prioritisation has been addressed primarily to the delivery of capital receipts targets, key regeneration projects and non-operational property management.
- 11.2 An amalgamation of the Education Buildings Capital Investment Officer in to the Estates and Regeneration Team has been important to promote the Corporate management of the education and general property portfolios but additional capacity may be required to drive pro active asset management and any development company ambitions.
- 11.3 The Council's Capital Funding Group (CCFT) chaired by the Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhood meets regularly to review strategic and investment issues and the continued co-ordination of the Asset Manager and Consultancy Manager is essential to ensure resources are focussed to achieve quality data and performance information against which to base strategic decision making through CCFT.

12. PROPOSALS

- 12.1 It is proposed that Members note the wide range and scale of the work undertaken by the section and this report provides an overview of the current and ongoing workload. This report forms a baseline from which future data relating to each key work area will be provided. A property action plan (appendix 1) has also been agreed by Finance & Policy Committee as part of the Property Strategy in January and this forms the basis of key priorities for the section

13. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 The value of the Council's property portfolio is substantial and this represents both a significant asset and liability. Active management is required in order to maximise returns and minimise expenditure.
- 13.2 Operating costs are significant and ongoing rationalisation needs to be undertaken to minimise occupation whilst investing in key buildings to improve efficiency and maximise use.
- 13.3 Opportunities to increase revenue and capital income streams from active management and creative property/development transactions are key to supplementing the capital programme and generating income for investment in the portfolio to ensure the Council occupy modern and efficient buildings to enhance service delivery.

14. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 Failure to acknowledge the cost/benefit of the property assets of the Council may lead to significant unnecessary expenditure in running costs and missed opportunities to maximise the returns both financially and economically from property rationalisation and development opportunities.

15. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 15.1 None.

16. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 16.1 There are no equality or diversity considerations as part of the report proposals.

17. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 17.1 There are no current staffing considerations as part of the report proposals.

18. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 18.1 The attention of the Committee is drawn to the Asset Management element of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The decision by Cabinet in January 2009 requires a commercial, proactive approach to be taken on Asset Management issues.

19. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME & DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 19.1 The implications of The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have been considered and there are no matters affecting these proposals.

20. CONCLUSIONS

- 20.1 Property is a key resource for the Council requiring active management to maximise the benefits and minimise the costs.

21. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 21.1 Members are recommended:
- 1) Note the contents of the report including the range, depth and recent achievements across all the key areas of the Estates and Regeneration Service.
 - 2) Decide which, if any, other key areas need to be included in future reports for information purposes.
 - 3) Note the achievements in the quarter July – September 2014

22. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 22.1 To ensure that Members are informed about key activities across the Estates & Regeneration Service.

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 23.1 There are no background papers to the body of this report.

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