

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Monday 17 December 2018

at 4.00 pm

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

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors S Akers-Belcher, Belcher, Cassidy, James, Loynes, Marshall and T Richardson.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 (previously circulated)
- 3.2 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record of the meeting of the Emergency Planning Joint Committee held on 11 October 2018.

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

No items.

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 An Awareness Campaign on the Releasing of Balloons/Sky Lanterns on Council Owned Land - *Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services)*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items



7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30 September 2018 – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Director of Finance and Policy*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Monday 21 January 2019 at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



EMERGENCY PLANNING JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD 11th October 2018

The meeting commenced at 10.00am at the Emergency Planning Annex,
Stockton Police Station, Bishop Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1SY

Present:

Councillor: Lewis Young (Middlesbrough Borough Council) (In the Chair)

Officers: Stuart Marshall, Chief Emergency Planning Officer
Jon Hepworth, Group Accountant (Regeneration and
Neighbourhoods)
Jo Stubbs, Democratic Services Officer

8. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were submitted by Councillor Marjorie James (Hartlepool Borough Council) and Councillor Mike Smith (Stockton Borough Council)

9. Declarations of interest by Members

None

10. Meeting inquorate

As the meeting was inquorate it was agreed that it would be adjourned to a future date

Meeting adjourned at 10.15am.

The meeting reconvened at 10.00am on Wednesday 14th November 2018 at the Emergency Planning Annex, Stockton Police Station, Bishop Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1SY

Present:

Councillor: Lewis Young (Middlesbrough Borough Council) (In the Chair)

Councillors: Marjorie James (Hartlepool Borough Council)
Mike Smith (Stockton Borough Council)

Officers: Stuart Marshall, Chief Emergency Planning Officer
 Rachael Campbell, Principal Emergency Planning Officer
 Jon Hepworth, Group Accountant (Regeneration and
 Neighbourhoods)
 Jo Stubbs, Democratic Services Officer

11. Apologies for Absence

None

12. Declarations of interest by Members

None

13. Minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2018

The minutes were received

14. Function and Operation of Cleveland LRF (*Cleveland LRF Chair*)

Purpose of report

To provide background information on the structure and operation of Cleveland Local Resilience Forum.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

As the Chair of the Cleveland LRF was unavailable Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

Decision

That this item be deferred.

15. Financial Management Report for Period Ending 31st August 2018 (*Director of Finance and Policy and Chief Emergency Planning Officer*)

Purpose of report

To provide details of the revenue outturn forecast.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

A summary of the outturn position was provided as set out in the report. A favourable variance of £3,000 on the main Emergency Planning (EPU) budget was forecast while the Local Resilience Forum budget was expected to be fully spent.

Decision

That the latest forecast outturn be noted.

16. Activity and Incident Report (1st June – 31st August 2018) *(Chief Emergency Planning Officer)*

Purpose of report

To inform members of the activities, incidents reported and warning communications received and dealt with by the unit between 1st June and 31st August.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Between 1st June and 31st August –

- 23 warning communications had been received
- 4 incidents of note had taken place
- 4 training events had been held
- 4 training exercises had been held

Information was also given regarding community resilience activities and LRF activities.

A member queried what steps were being taken to ensure Brexit caused the minimum disruption particularly in terms of the import of goods. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer confirmed that discussions were taking place locally and nationally between the LRF members and Government Departments based on a range of possible scenarios including a no deal. Members were asked to feed any concerns raised by the community through to the Unit.

A member also referred to a national shortage of flu vaccine for the over 65s. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer advised he was meeting with representatives from NHS England and Local Authority Social Care the following day and would raise members' concerns at that time. Members queried why the decision had been made to change the vaccine on offer for the over 65s.

Decision

That the report be noted.

17. Emergency Planning Awareness Training for Elected Members *(Principal Emergency Planning Officer)*

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the approach to training for Elected Members in 2018/19.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

As part of the Unit's Action Plan awareness sessions are due to be delivered to Elected Members on an annual basis. In 2016 and 2017 briefings were offered on a combined basis to all 4 local authorities. The feedback from these sessions was very positive albeit fewer members attended in 2017 than had in 2016 and it had been suggested that it might be preferable to offer individual sessions to each of the 4 local authorities, hosted within their borough.

A Member suggested that this training could be tied in to new member inductions. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer noted this suggestion and advised that he would provide more information on future dates to members when it became available.

Decision

- I. That the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit continue to offer and deliver annual Emergency Planning Awareness sessions to Elected Members and continue to include this as an action in the CEPU Action Plan.
- II. That in future individual awareness sessions be offered to each local authority area at a convenient location to ensure accessibility.

18. Office for Nuclear Regulation Inspection *(Chief
Emergency Planning Officer)*

Purpose of report

To update members on the recent office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) inspection of Local Authority arrangements to plan and test the off-site emergency response plans produced under the Radiation Emergency Public Preparedness Information Regulations (REPPiR) 2001.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

In May 2018 the ONR had informed the Chief Executives of Local Authority's with a nuclear facility in their area about the planned inspections of off-site planning and response arrangements over the next 5 years. Hartlepool was the first local authority to be subject to the new inspection process which took place on 6th July 2018. Hartlepool's arrangements were graded as 'no formal action' with 3 areas being identified for improvement. Details of these concerns and the EPU response to them were appended to the report.

Decision

That members note the outcome of the ONR inspection and the work undertaken by CEPU officers.

The meeting concluded at 10.40am

H MARTIN

INTERIM CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 19th November 2018

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

17th December 2018



Report of: Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON THE RELEASING OF
BALLOONS/SKY LANTERNS ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision (test (ii)) – Forward Plan Reference No. RN 011/18.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 This report informs Members of the Committee about the results of the consultation with the public on the impact of balloon and sky lantern releases. The reason for reporting this issue in December rather than November was due to the fact that consultation did not conclude till mid-October and officers then had to formulate a report for Members to then make an informed decision.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It has been shown that balloon releases have a detrimental effect on the environment, particularly marine wildlife. The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) continues to campaign to raise awareness of the negative impact of balloon releases while it is encouraging local authorities to look at the banning of these releases on Council owned and managed land, as well as in their authority area.
- 3.2 Marine animals, including dolphins, porpoises, whales, turtles and seabirds have been killed by balloons or parts of balloons, as they break up/disintegrate. If swallowed, the animal's stomach can get blocked and this leads to the animal starving. Other studies show that marine animals also get tangled up in balloon ribbons and string, restricting movement and the ability to feed. All of the above animals can be found in the waters off our north east coast and around the UK.

- 3.3 Mass balloon releases also cause a beach litter problem as well as unsightly visual issues when they get caught up in trees and hedges. The MCS has carried out surveys which have shown that there has been a tripling of balloon release litter, found on beaches in the UK, over the last 10 years.
- 3.4 Sky Lanterns can be mistaken for distress flares over water, raising false alarms to the Coastguard and RLNI. This wastes their valuable time and resources, and in bad weather puts the boat crews at risk, when they attempt to answer these false alarms.
- 3.5 At present, 77 Local Authorities in the UK have signed up to support the ban on balloon releases, with 4 in the north east of England, adopting a non- release policy on all balloon and sky lantern releases on council owned and managed land.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee considers the results of the public consultation and awareness campaign on the proposal to impose a voluntary non release policy on all releases of balloons and sky lanterns on Council owned and managed land.
- 4.2 A draft policy has been produced in response to the feedback received during the consultation (**see Appendix 1**).
- 4.3 Should a policy be agreed, there will be a need to encourage the public to change their present position and understanding on the release of balloons and sky lanterns, through education, offering alternatives to releasing balloons, as well as garnering their support and assistance in combating the pollution and environmental harm created by these releases.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The public consultation and awareness campaign was carried out between July and the first two weeks of October this year (a period of 14 weeks) and gave the public and interested parties, including relevant charitable organisations, the chance to comment. The consultation was located on the Council's website with links to an online questionnaire. An article in Hartbeat and information on social media informed the public of the consultation and how to participate. The Council also spent a day in the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre explaining the reasoning behind the proposals.
- 5.2 An agreed set of 5 questions and background information allowed the public the opportunity to respond and offer alternative and sustainable activities instead of the existing balloon and sky lanterns releases (**see Appendix 2**).
- 5.3 The results show an overwhelming response in favour of the council adopting a non release policy of balloons and sky lanterns on council owned and managed land (**see Appendix 3**). 94.5% of respondents stated that they supported the Council adopting a

non release policy of Balloons and sky lanterns, whilst 4% disagreed with this proposal. 1% was in the 'don't know' group.

- 5.4 One of the questions asked for the respondent to nominate alternatives they would like to see adopted, to replace the release of balloons etc. A wide range of alternatives were proposed, as well as support for a number of suggestions provided by the council such as bubble releases, memorial benches, candlelight vigils, and flower releases into the sea. 90% of respondents agreed with the Council's alternative suggestion to plant memorial trees, shrubs and wildflowers and 77% supported our alternative to enhance open spaces and wildlife sensitive areas throughout the Borough. **(See Appendix 4).**
- 5.5 The last question asked if the respondent would be willing to assist in an awareness campaign and future events/campaigns. A large number of the respondents provided their contact details. Careful consideration will be given as to how to work with these willing volunteers in the coming years as it is recognised that the Council will have to continue to inform and advise the public of the issues round balloon and sky lantern releases.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Should the Council not carry out the recommendations as set out in this report there is a possibility that it would receive negative publicity for failing to adopt a policy on the non release of balloons and sky lanterns given the strong support indicated in the public consultation.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 It is considered that there would be a need to continue an awareness campaign, on an annual basis, so as to keep the importance of the message in the public eye. This would require officer time and possibly materials in promoting the campaign.
- 7.2 This and other incidental costs can be accommodated within the existing Heritage, Coast and Country budget.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 It has been suggested that the act of releasing a balloon into the air constitutes a form of littering which is an offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005).

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications relating to this report.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 It is considered that there are no negative implications relating to the adoption of a policy for the non release of balloons and sky lanterns on Council owned and managed land.

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

- 11.1 There are no negative implications relating to continuing a public awareness campaign on non release of balloon and sky lanterns or the adoption of a policy on the non release of Balloons and sky lanterns on Council owned or managed land.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There will be a continued demand on officer time to engage the public and raise awareness of the restrictions on the release of balloons etc. It is considered that this can be managed through existing work programmes.

13. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 It is considered that the approval and adoption of a non release policy for balloons and sky lanterns would need to be advertised on council owned and managed land.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 It is recommended that Neighbourhood Services Committee,
- a) Note the response to the public consultation on the proposal to adopt a policy for the non release of balloons and sky lanterns from Council owned and managed land.
 - b) Agree to adopt a policy for the non release of balloons and sky lanterns from Council owned and managed land.
 - c) Support the creation of a Memorial Wood at Summerhill.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 To continue to allow the release of balloons and sky lanterns on Council land could have a negative effect with regards to the public perception of the Council and how it approaches protection of the natural environment in Hartlepool.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 Neighbourhood Services Committee, 13th June, 2018.

17. CONTACT OFFICER

Tony Hanson
Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523400
E-mail: tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Chris Scaife
Countryside Access Officer (Heritage, Coast and Countryside Section)
Level 1
Civic Centre
Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523524
E-mail: chris.scaife@hartlepool.gov.uk

DRAFT POLICY PROHIBITING BALLOON, LANTERN AND SIMILAR RELEASES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The release of balloons, lanterns and other items into the environment can make an impressive sight.
- 1.2 There is now strong evidence relating to the serious harm that releases of balloons and lanterns into our environment can cause to marine life, livestock, people and property, and the hazard they create from interference with legitimate Coastguard and Civil Aviation Authority activity.

2 Policy

- 2.1 The Council forbids intentional and uncontrolled releases of items, including balloons and lanterns, into the air and other intentional and uncontrolled release of any items which have the potential to cause hazard or harm, e.g. “rubber ducks” into water without a plan for their collection.
- 2.2 This policy covers all Council owned and managed property*, Council employees and Council endorsed or supported events. (*Crown Land, which lies between the ‘mean low’ and ‘mean high’ water marks of ordinary spring tides).
- 2.3 The Council will continue to raise awareness of the economic and environmental consequences of such activities and will look to promote suitable and sustainable alternatives.
- 2.4 This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose for all.

3 Enforcement

- 3.1 New agreements for licences and leases will, where possible, prohibit balloon and lantern releases. Dependent on the terms of the agreement breaches of the requirement will lead to termination of the agreement on notice, or other appropriate action, taking into account the full circumstances of the matter.

4 Alternatives

- 4.1 Balloon, lantern and similar releases are popular means of fundraising, commemoration and celebration. There are a number of viable alternatives that do not present the same negative outcomes. These include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Planting in remembrance – planting a tree, shrub or a wild flower area or

APPENDIX 1

garden benefits the environment as well as providing a memorial which can be visited for many years to come.

- b) Flower water release – release of flowers or petals encapsulates a similar sense of farewell without the negative consequences.
- c) Bubble releases, either privately or at commemorative events.
- d) The siting of memorial benches to commemorate individuals, groups or important events.
- e) Candle light vigils, either privately or at public/commemorative events.
- f) Habitat improvements in places with or without public access – this allows the enrichment of the environment and improves the wellbeing of the public.

4.2 More alternatives are provided by [Balloons Blow](#) and the [Marine Conservation Society](#)

5 Definitions

- 5.1 “Balloon” refers to an inflatable bag made from a synthetic or natural material, filled with gas or hot air for lift.
- 5.2 “Chinese” or “sky” lanterns are made of thin paper or other material, held by a wire or bamboo frame and lifted by heat from a naked flame.
- 5.3 The above include degradable and biodegradable forms which have been proven can still cause hazard or harm.

BALLOONS AND SKY LANTERN NON-RELEASE QUESTIONNAIRE

Non-Release of Balloons and Sky Lanterns

The Council is currently considering the impact that mass balloons/sky lantern releases has on the environment and wildlife. We would like to find out your views on this subject and how the Council could help to improve the situation by considering a non-release policy on Council owned and managed land.

The consultation will be open all summer with next steps being developed in the autumn.

If you have any questions with regards to this consultation please contact Chris Scaife, Countryside Access Officer on 01429 523524 or chris.scaife@hartlepool.gov.uk

Thank you!

1. Are you aware of the harm that the releasing of balloons and sky lanterns has on the environment

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

It has been shown that balloon and sky lantern releases have a negative effect on the environment and in particular marine wildlife. Marine animals including dolphins, porpoises, whales, turtles and seabirds have been killed by balloons or parts of balloons as they break up and disintegrate. If swallowed, the animal's stomach can get blocked and this leads to the animal starving. It has also been shown that marine animals can get tangled up in balloon ribbon and string restricting their movement and the ability to feed. All the animals mentioned can be found in the waters off our north east coast.

Mass balloon releases also causes a beach and countryside litter problem when they get caught up in trees and hedges. Studies show that there has been a tripling of balloon released litter found on beaches across the UK in the last 10 years.

Sky lanterns can be mistaken for distress flares over water, raising false alarms to the Coastguards and RLNI. This wastes valuable time and can put crews at risk in bad weather.

At present 79 Local Authorities in the UK have signed up to support the ban on balloon releases on their land. Hartlepool is looking to become the 4th Local Authority in the North East to consider supporting the Marine Conservation Society by raising public awareness on the subject and considering a non-release policy on all balloon and sky lantern releases on all council owned and managed land

2. Hartlepool Borough Council is thinking about entering into a voluntary non-release of balloons and sky lanterns policy on all of the land it owns and manages, including the foreshore. Would you support such a decision?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

3. If the Council enters into a non-release policy it would like offer a number of alternative activities such as tree planting, memorial bonfires and enhancing open spaces. Which of these options would you like to see? Please tick all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tree, shrub and wildflower planting | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancing of public access open spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remembrance/memorial bonfires at specific sites | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancing of sensitive sites that are not accessible to the public due to wildlife sensitivity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other suggestions or alternatives to the releasing of balloons and sky lanterns (please specify) | |

4. Would you be willing to help the Council promote the benefits of a non-release balloon and sky lantern policy

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

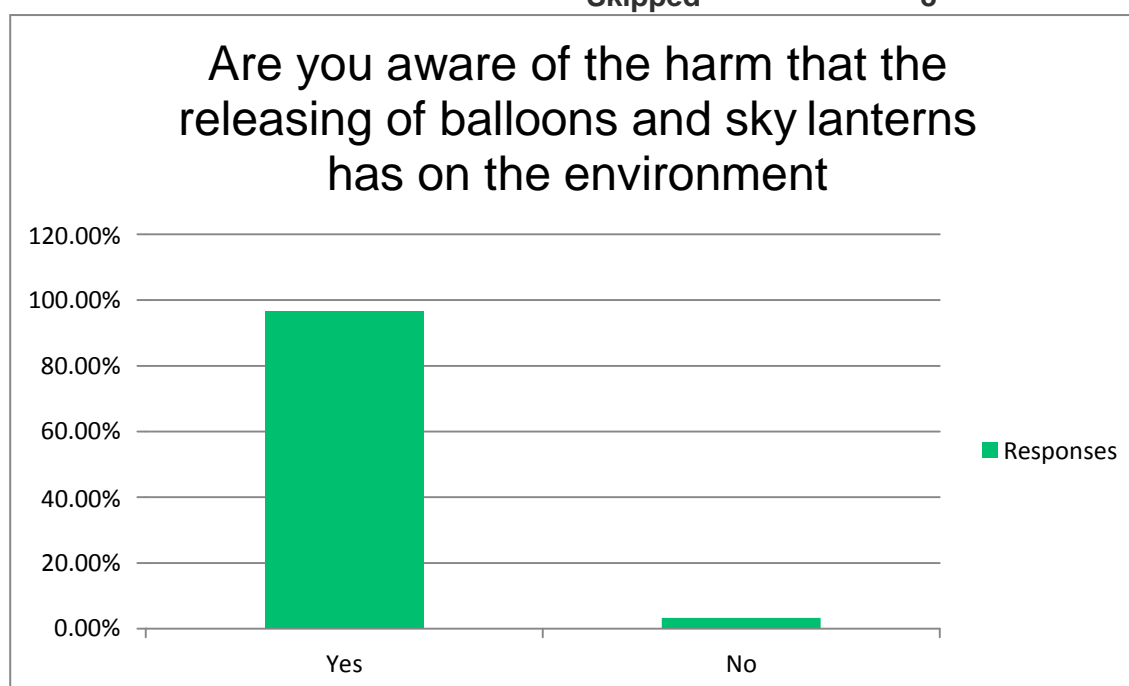
5. If yes, please leave your name and contact details below:

Non-Release of Balloons and Sky Lanterns Results

Question 1

Are you aware of the harm that the releasing of balloons and sky lanterns has on the environment

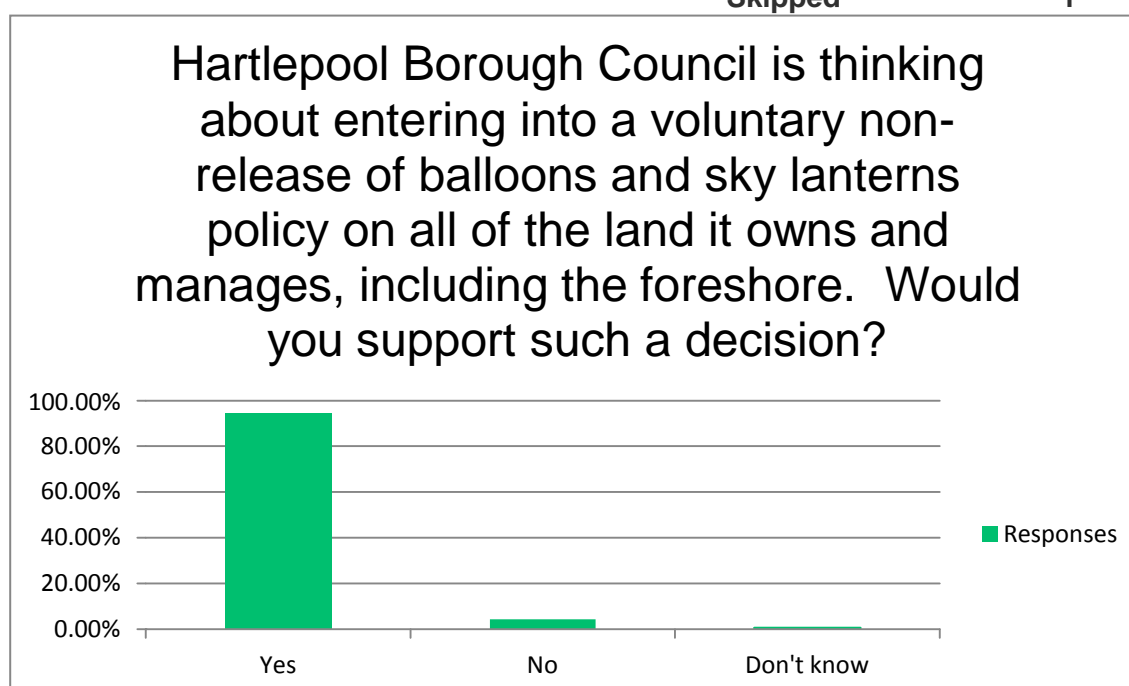
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	96.65%	836
No	3.35%	29
Answered		865
Skipped		8



Question 2

Hartlepool Borough Council is thinking about entering into a voluntary non-release of balloons and sky lanterns policy on all of the land it owns and manages, including the foreshore. Would you support such a decision?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	94.50%	824
No	4.36%	38
Don't know	1.15%	10
Answered		872
Skipped		1



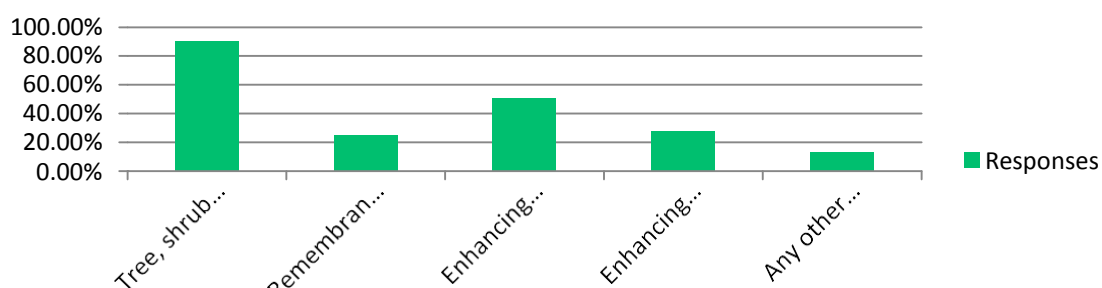
Question 3

If the Council enters into a non-release policy it would like offer a number of alternative activities such as tree planting, memorial bonfires and enhancing open spaces. Which of these options would you like to see? Please tick all that apply.

Answer Choices

1. Tree, shrub and wildflower planting
2. Remembrance/memorial bonfires at specific sites
3. Enhancing of public access open spaces
4. Enhancing of sensitive sites that are not accessible to the public due to wildlife sensitivity
5. Any other suggestions or alternatives to the releasing of balloons and sky lanterns (please specify)

If the Council enters into a non-release policy it would like offer a number of alternative activities such as tree planting, memorial bonfires and enhancing open spaces. Which of these options would you like to see? Please tick all that apply.



Answer choices

Responses

1	89.97%	780
2	24.80%	215
3	50.17%	435
4	27.10%	235
5	13.03%	113

Answered

867

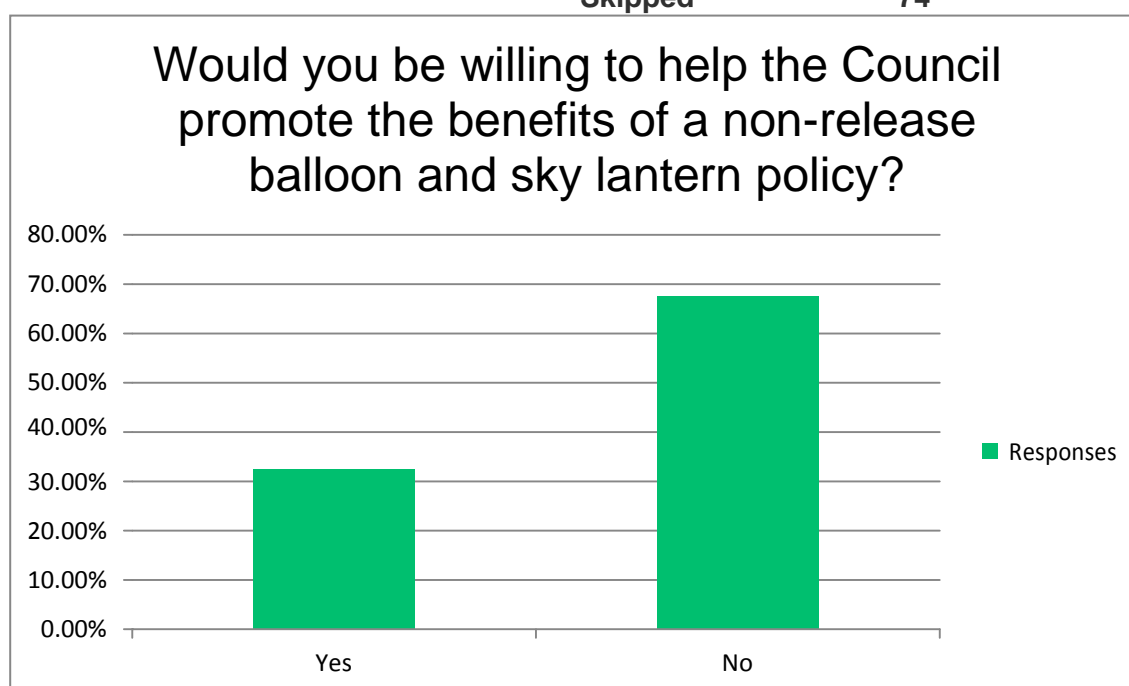
Skipped

6

Question 4

Would you be willing to help the Council promote the benefits of a non-release balloon and sky lantern policy

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	32.42%	259
No	67.58%	540
Answered		799
Skipped		74



PUBLIC ALTERNATIVES TO THE RELEASING OF BALLOONS AND SKY LANTERNS

In order of precedence and support

1	Bubble releases	13%
	Memorial Benches	13%
3	Memorial planting of trees, shrubs and wildflowers	7.5%
4	Candlelight Vigils	6.5%
5	Habitat Improvements	5.5%
6	Litterpicks	4.5%
	Flower releases into the Sea	4.5%
	Beacon lighting	4.5%
9	Memorial plaques	3.5%
	Paint pebbles with name and release into sea	3.5%
	Ribbons/spinners	3.5%
	Memorial wall	3.5%

After these suggestions the other alternatives provided were not as well supported but included the following and totalled the remaining 23.5% of replies:

- Positive events
- World Wildlife Fund animal adoption
- Public education
- Release white doves
- Beach activities
- Kite flying

Whilst there are clearly some well supported suggestions it is anticipated that people will find ways to show their respect, grief and support when commemorating events and people. The above list is not exhaustive but indicates that the majority of the public are fully supportive of changing to positive alternatives to the release of balloons and sky lanterns.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

17th December 2018



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and
Director of Finance and Policy

Subject: STRATEGIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT
- AS AT 30th SEPTEMBER 2018

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For Information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the 2018/19 forecast General Fund Outturn, the 2018/19 Capital Programme Monitoring and to provide details for the specific budget areas that the Committee is responsible for.

3. BACKGROUND AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

- 3.1 Members will be aware from previous reports submitted to Finance and Policy Committee that there were significant over spends on the General Fund budgets in 2016/17 (£302,000) and 2017/18 (£1.509m) and this reflected continuing service pressures, particularly in relation to Looked after Children. These pressures commenced in 2016/17 and had been recognised within the 2017/18 MTFS and one off resources allocated to support the recurring budget. However, despite these one off resources and some under spends on corporate budgets, there were net over spends in the last two years which had to be funded from the Unearmarked General Fund Reserve, as summarised below:

	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000
Gross Departmental over spend	1,035	1,902
Corporate under spend	(715)	(393)
Net over spend before one off items and use of reserves	320	1,509
Uncommitted 2015/16 Actual Outturn and release of funding allocated for potential protection costs	(194)	0
Planned Use of Reserves	0	(1,400)
Net over spend funded from Unearmarked General Fund Reserve	126	109

- 3.2 Using the Unearmarked General Fund Reserve to meet future budget over spends is not sustainable as this amount is held to manage unforeseen commitments and risks.

4. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS 2018/19

- 4.1 The availability and reporting of accurate and up to date financial information is increasingly important as future budget cuts are implemented and one-off resources are used up.
- 4.2 The Finance and Policy Committee will continue to receive regular reports which will provide a comprehensive analysis of departmental and corporate forecast outturns, including an explanation of the significant budget variances. This will enable the Committee to approve a strategy for addressing the financial issues and challenges facing the Council.
- 4.3 To enable a wider number of Members to understand the financial position of the Council and their service specific areas each Policy Committee will receive a separate report providing:
- a brief summary of the overall financial position of the Council as reported to the Finance and Policy Committee
 - the specific budget areas for their Committee
 - the total departmental budget where this is split across more than one Committee. This information will ensure Members can see the whole position for the departmental budget.

5. SUMMARY OF OVERALL COUNCIL FINANCIAL POSITION

- 5.1 An assessment of the forecast 2018/19 outturn has been completed and was reported to Finance and Policy Committee on 26th November 2018. This report identified an anticipated over spend of £920,000, consisting of the following elements:

Forecast 2018/19 Outturn against approved budget

	Previous Forecast Outturn over/(under) spend £'000	Current Forecast Outturn over / (under) spend £'000
Departmental service based expenditure	1,000	1,120
Corporate expenditure	(200)	(200)
Forecast Net Over Spend	800	920

- 5.2 The 2018/19 outturn has been prepared to reflect expenditure incurred to date and forecast to be incurred in the rest of the financial year. As Members will be aware from previous years significant elements of the Council's budget are demand led and affected by expenditure over the winter months, including care

costs in relation to older people and winter maintenance. The outturn forecasts will be closely monitored and regular updates will be reported to Finance and Policy Committee.

5.3 Strategy for Managing the 2018/19 Forecast Overspend

- 5.4 As indicated in the previous section the Council is facing a third successive year end over spend which largely reflects continuing and increasing pressures in relation to Looked after Children. The Council also faces a budget deficit for 2019/20 of nearly £6m and the prospect of further budget deficits in 2020/21 to 2021/22. These issues are a significant financial challenge for the Council and will require robust action and difficult decisions to address.
- 5.5 The MTFS update report considered by Finance and Policy Committee on 3 September 2018 identified recurring budget reductions from a combination of measures (reduction in income contingency risk, holiday pay costs, external audit fees and funding changes) which will reduce the 2019/20 budget deficit. These items total £371,000 and are also available to reduce the forecast 2018/19 over spend as follows:

Forecast Over spend still to be addressed

	Previous Forecast Outturn over/(under) spend £'000	Current Forecast Outturn over / (under) spend £'000
Forecast Net Over Spend	800	920
Corporate Expenditure	(371)	(371)
Forecast Over Spend still to be addressed	429	549

- 5.6 Officers will continue to pursue further actions to reduce this figure by achieving in-year reductions (i.e. over achieving the salary vacancy target and reducing discretionary revenue spending), or using funding flexibilities (i.e. using funding flexibilities and capitalising revenue expenditure).
- 5.7 There remains a risk that further in year budget savings may not be achievable. In this situation the net forecast over spend will need to be funded by reviewing the Council's earmarked reserves and details will be reported to a future Finance and Policy Committee meeting. Therefore, whilst the over spend for 2018/19 can be managed, the Council will need to develop a robust strategy to bring recurring costs into line with recurring income and to remove the reliance on using reserves – which can only be used once.

6. 2018/19 FORECAST OUTTURN – NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood Services Committee has responsibility for services managed by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods. Budgets are managed at a Departmental level and therefore a summary of the Departmental position is provided below. The table sets out the overall budget position for the Department broken down by Committee, together with a brief comment on the reasons for the forecast outturn.

Budgets Managed by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Budget £000	Description of Expenditure	Previous Projected Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) Forecast £000	Current Projected Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) Forecast £000	Comments
2,666	Finance & Policy Committee	0	0	
14,780	Neighbourhood Services Committee	10	130	The higher projected net adverse variance is predominantly a result of changes in demand in relation to Passenger Transport. Refer to paragraph 6.2 below.
1,364	Regeneration Services Committee	90	90	This adverse variance relates to a shortfall in income at the Town Hall Theatre and the Borough Hall
18,810	Total Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	100	220	

- 6.2 The increase in departmental overspend reflects a higher projected adverse variance in Neighbourhood Services by a further £120,000. The main reason for this is a forecast adverse variance of £115,000 for Passenger Transport which can be partly mitigated by releasing £35,000 from the Passenger Transport reserve. This reflects increased costs as a result of changes in demand arising from the new academic year starting in September and are mainly owing to an increase in pupil numbers accessing 'Special Educational Needs' transport including transport outside of the borough.
- 6.3 Details of the specific budget areas this Committee is responsible for are provided in **Appendix A**.

7. CAPITAL MONITORING 2018/19

- 7.1 Capital Expenditure to the 30th September 2018 is summarised in the table below and further details are provided in **Appendix B**.

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE IN CURRENT YEAR				
	A	B	C	D	E	F
	2018/19 Budget £'000	2018/19 Actual to 30/09/18 £'000	2018/19 Remaining Expenditure £'000	2018/19 Re-phased Expenditure £'000	(B+C+D) 2018/19 Total Expenditure £'000	(E-A) 2018/19 Variance from Budget Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000
Neighbourhood Services Committee	12,264	2,558	7,033	3,673	13,264	1,000

7.2 The main items to bring to the attention of the Committee are detailed below.

7.3 Coast Protection - Headland Town Wall and Block Sand scheme

It was previously reported that this scheme has suffered delays as a result of an objection raised in August 2016 as part of the planning process and license to carry out works. This resulted in work to a particular section of the sea wall being rephased until March 2018. Other ongoing work had continued, albeit with restricted access and additional plant hire leading to increased costs. The delay also meant that the work was exposed to the exceptional weather conditions in March 2018, as well as some of the worst storm surges in recent years which caused numerous damages to the wall requiring repair.

7.4 Additional costs have now been quantified of £1m. To manage the complexities and risks of delivering this project revenue contributions of £0.244m had been set aside. In addition, headroom within the revenue budget for potential additional prudential borrowing had not been committed. Therefore, the remaining £0.756m can be funded using prudential borrowing. The repayment costs can be funded from the existing revenue budget which now fully commits the loan repayment element of the budget.

7.5 The rephased amount reflects the expected profile of expenditure to be incurred and resources will be rephased accordingly. The main items included within this are:

- Neighbourhood Investment Fund barrier works at Tesco roundabout and roundabouts at key gateways, detailed scheme designs are being considered - £0.600m
- Deferred vehicle purchases to maximise revenue savings - £1.929m

7.6 There is a longer lead in time for capital schemes and therefore it is not unusual for expenditure to be low at this stage of the year

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 As detailed in Section 3, a 2018/19 General Fund revenue budget over spend of £920,000 is forecast. This mainly reflects continuing Looked after Children pressures. Officers have identified measures that will reduce the forecast deficit to £549,000 and will continue to try to achieve further in-year reductions.

8.3 However, there is a risk that further in year budget savings may not be achievable. Therefore it is anticipated that it will be necessary to identify one off

funding from reviewing the Council's earmarked reserves and details will be reported to a future Finance and Policy meeting. This strategy will avoid a call on the Unearmarked General Fund Reserve, which needs to be maintained to manage future financial risks.

- 8.4 The financial pressures facing the Council are not unique and national press reports over the last few weeks have highlighted significant financial issues in many councils, including Northamptonshire County Council, East Sussex County Council and Birmingham. This clearly indicates the financial pressures facing the sector and individual councils will need to develop local strategies to address their specific financial challenges.
- 8.5 To some extent the Council is in a better position in the short term than many other areas as it has implemented difficult decisions over the last few years to cut expenditure, increase recurring income by increasing Council Tax, achieving housing growth and by carefully managing reserves.
- 8.6 However, as detailed in the 2019/20 to 2020/21 MTFS report considered by Finance and Policy Committee on 3rd September 2018, the financial outlook for the next three years is extremely challenging. The Council faces a 2019/20 budget deficit of £6m and further deficits in 2020/21 and 2021/22. This means further extremely difficult decisions will be required over the next three years to set balanced budgets.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that Members note the report.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that the Neighbourhood Services Committee has up to date information on the forecast 2018/19 General Fund Revenue budget outturn and Capital Programme.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

'Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20' report to Finance and Policy Committee 03.09.18.

'Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30th September 2018' report to Finance and Policy Committee 26.11.18.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

Denise Ogden
Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
denise.ogden@hartlepool.gov.uk
01429 523300

Chris Little
Director of Finance and Policy
Chris.little@hartlepool.gov.uk
01429 523002

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/19 as at 30th SEPTEMBER 2018

Approved 2018/2019 Budget	Description of Service Area	Forecast Outturn as at 30th September 2018 Adverse/ (Favourable)	Director's Explanation of Forecast Variance
£'000		£'000	
20	Archaeology	0	There is a forecast short fall in income of £5k owing to a proposed lottery bid being unsuccessful. The team will continue to work to secure additional funding but the forecast shortfall can be met by the Archaeology Reserve.
(325)	Building Design Service	150	The adverse variance relates to a shortfall in fee income from Capital and external work. A review of this area is underway to evaluate the fee earning capacity in future years.
(874)	Car Parking	80	The adverse variance relates to a shortfall in income.
(32)	Coast Countryside & Heritage	0	
(46)	Construction & Construction Support	0	
863	Consumer Services	30	Adverse variance is a forecast shortfall in licensing income.
(35)	Environmental Standards	10	Adverse variance relates to income shortfall on Markets.
(3)	Environmental Protection	0	
367	Engineering & Design	(100)	Underspend relates to the timing of prudential borrowing charges in relation to the Headland Capital Scheme as some charges will not be incurred until 2019/20.
24	General Allotments	0	
2,719	Environmental Services	0	
(338)	Highways Trading	0	
2,647	Highways & Transportation	(30)	The favourable variance relates to a forecast over achievement of income.
1,360	Passenger Transport	80	A favourable variance had previously been reported in relation to Home to School Transport which is a demand led service. However the position has worsened since the start of the new Academic Year. This is owing to an increase in pupils requiring SEN support particularly in relation to out of town transport. The increased costs have been partly offset by fully utilising the Passenger Transport Reserve of £35k.
130	Road Safety	0	
994	Street Lighting	(40)	The favourable variance represents energy and maintenance efficiencies in relation to the LED scheme.
2,410	Sustainable Transport	(90)	The favourable variance is based on the negotiated position with Bus Operators which has resulted in the current contract being below the base budget provision.
(34)	Vehicle Fleet	(100)	The favourable variance relates to temporary savings on vehicle borrowing costs as vehicles are kept for longer and the purchase of new vehicles has been delayed where appropriate.
4,933	Waste Management	140	Waste Management continues to be a volatile area. The latest trends for recycling income have been used which are lower than 2017/18. The projections for the waste disposal are based on predicted tonnages from the beginning of the year (which includes growth of the town). The position has worsened by £20k since Quarter 1 but Departmental reserves have been identified to mitigate the increase and have been reflected in the figure reported. Actual tonnages and income levels will continue to be monitored closely.
14,780	Total	130	

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE
PLANNED USE OF RESERVES

The above figures include the 2018/2019 approved budget along with the planned use of Departmental Reserves created in previous years.
The details below provide a breakdown of these reserves

Approved 2018/2019 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Usage 2018/2019 £'000	Variance Over/ (Under) £'000	Director's Explanation of Forecast Variance
0	Archaeology Reserve	5	5	Reserve to be released to offset projected income shortfall.
0	Trading Account Reserve	20	20	Reserve released to offset increase in waste management variance.
0	Passenger Transport Reserve	35	35	Reserve to be released to offset adverse variance on Passenger Transport.
32	Trading Stds Initiatives (Public Health Reserve)	32	0	
17	Env Protection Initiatives (Public Health Reserve)	17	0	
50	Allotments (Public Health Reserve)	50	0	
99	Total	159	60	

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30th SEPTEMBER 2018

NEIGHBOURHOODS SERVICES COMMITTEE

Project Code	Scheme Title	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE IN CURRENT YEAR					Type of Financing	2018/19 COMMENTS
		A	B	C	D	E	F		
		2018/19 Budget £'000	2018/19 Actual as at 30/9/18 £'000	2018/19 Expenditure Remaining £'000	Expenditure Rephased into 2019/20 £'000	(B+C+D) 2018/19 Total Expenditure £'000	(E-A) 2018/19 Variance from Budget £'000		
7272	Wheelie Bin Purchases	106	45	61	0	106	0	UDPB	
7466	DSO Vehicle Purchases	3,305	466	910	1,929	3,305	0	UDPB	Vehicle replacements have been deferred where possible to maximise savings, resulting in a reduction in the current year's procurement programme and rephasing of expenditure until the next financial year.
CR	Crematorium Chapel refurbishment	404	1	19	384	404	0	RCCO	Scheme to be revised and business plan will be prepared.
Allot	Allotments Improvements	216	0	216	0	216	0	UDPB	Detailed works to be agreed.
LTP	Local Transport Plan (LTP) Schemes	2,629	880	1,354	395	2,629	0	GRANT	Re-phased budgets are for A689 Wynyrd that has slipped to 2019/20 and Greatham Creek Bridge works in collaboration with Stockton Borough Council that is not likely to commence until 2019/20.
PLAY	Parks & Playgrounds	150	58	92	0	150	0	GRANT	
7243	Seaton Carew Car Parking Pay & Display	4	4	0	0	4	0	UDPB	Scheme complete.
7900	EA - Hartlepool Marina - North Pier Study	30	0	0	30	30	0	GRANT	
7902	EA - Hartlepool Drainage Schemes	8	2	6	0	8	0	GRANT	
8958	Elwick By-Pass Growing Places	389	40	149	200	389	0	UDPB	A separate report on the Western Growth Corridor will be presented to Members detailing progress in relation to this scheme.
8965	TVCA Brenda Road Cycleways TV4	205	139	66	0	205	0	GRANT	Expected completion 2018/19
8986	TV55 Cycleways	5	3	1	1	5	0	GRANT	Expected completion 2019/20
8591	Coast Protection - Headland Town Wall & Block Sands	882	882	1,000	0	1,882	1,000	MIX	Refer to paragraph 7.3 of Strategic Financial Management report.
8444	Coast Protection - Town Wall Strengthening	46	3	0	43	46	0	GRANT	Scheme complete, however ongoing legal issue in process. When resolved request to Environment Agency to transfer balance to another Environmental Agency scheme of a similar nature.
8578	Coast Protection - South Management Unit Study	28	1	0	27	28	0	GRANT	Ongoing study leading to an options appraisal that will be taken to committee, with anticipated completion in 2019/20.
NIP3	NIP 8997 - Neighbourhood Investment Fund unallocated	278	0	278	0	278	0	UDPB	The remaining balance on the Neighbourhood Investment Fund to be allocated to schemes following future approval by the members.
7246	NIP - Rossmere Park	400	10	390	0	400	0	GRANT	Expected completion 2019/20.
8977	NIP - King Oswy Drive	289	2	287	0	289	0	UDPB	Expect work to commence at the end of 2018 .
7222	NIP - Seaton Park (Coronation Drive)	68	1	67	0	68	0	UDPB	
NIP1	NIP 8288 Stranton Cemetery Barrier	45	0	45	0	45	0	UDPB	
NIP2	NIP 8994 - BIS Paving	105	1	104	0	105	0	UDPB	
NIP4	NIP 8995 - Barrier Works TESCO Roundabout	400	0	0	400	400	0	UDPB	Potential start 2019/20 could be later, depending on investigations & results from safety audits
8292	NIP 8292 - Headland	112	19	93	0	112	0	UDPB	
NIP5	NIP 8996 - Roundabouts at Key Gateways	200	0	0	200	200	0	UDPB	Alternatives to the original scheme design are being considered to enhance & provide low maintenance roundabouts for 2019/20.
7181	Waste Disposal Contract Extension	1,872	0	1,872	0	1,872	0	UDPB	As set out in the MTFS this represent an upfront payment in relation to the waste disposal contract to secure more favourable gate fee rates . This cost is being met from borrowing.
8980	TVCA Bishop Cuthbert Cycleway Access	45	0	10	35	45	0	GRANT	Design to be carried out for TVCA Due Diligence and £35k will be re-phased to 2019/20.
8981	TVCA - Brenda Road A689 Footpath	13	1	8	4	13	0	GRANT	Design to be carried out for TVCA Due Diligence and £4k will be re-phased 2019/20.
8982	TVCA A689 Brenda Road Cycleway	30	0	5	25	30	0	GRANT	Design to be carried out for TVCA Due Diligence and £25k will be re-phased to 2019/20.
Neighbourhoods Committee Total		12,264	2,558	7,033	3,673	13,264	1,000		

Key
RCCO Revenue Contribution towards Capital
MIX Combination of Funding Types
UCPB Unsupported Corporate Prudential Borrowing
SCE Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)

GRANT Grant Funded
CAP REC Capital Receipt
UDPB Unsupported Departmental Prudential Borrowing
CORP Corporate Resources