

EXECUTIVE

**7TH SEPTEMBER 2009
AT 1000 HOURS**

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Minicom: 01246 242450 Fax: 01246 242423

Sherwood Lodge
Bolsover
Derbyshire
S44 6NF

Date: 27th August, 2009

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Executive of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday, 7th September, 2009 at 1000 hours.

Members are reminded that under Section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000 the Bolsover Code of Conduct was adopted by the Council on 16th May 2007. It is a Councillor's duty to familiarise him or herself with the rules of personal conduct by which Councillors must conduct themselves in public life. In addition, Members should review their personal circumstances on a regular basis with these rules in mind and bearing in mind the matters listed on the Agenda for discussion at this meeting.

Copies of the Bolsover Code of Conduct for Members will be available for inspection by any Member at the meeting.

Register of Members' Interest - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their interests under paragraph 14 or 15 of the Code of Conduct provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded of the provisions of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the responsibility of Members to make a declaration at this meeting if affected by the Section and not to vote on any matter before this meeting which would have an affect on the Council's budget.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 49.

Yours faithfully,



Chief Executive Officer

To: Chairman & Members of the Executive

Tel 01246 242424 Fax 01246 242423 Minicom 01246 242450 Text 07729 421737

Email enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk Web www.bolsover.gov.uk

Chief Executive Officer: Wes Lumley, B.Sc., F.C.C.A.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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DATE: 7th September 2009

NAME OF MEMBER- _____

Levels of Interest 1. Personal
 2. Personal and prejudicial

Nature of Interest _____

AGENDA ITEM	SUBJECT	LEVEL OF INTEREST
Signed		
Dated		

Note

Completion of this form is to aid the accurate recording of your interest in the minutes only. This form, duly signed, should be provide to the Clerk at the conclusion of the meeting.

Good practice to give nature of interest – without declaring any confidentiality.

It is still your responsibility to disclose any interests which you may have at the commencement of the meeting, and before the relevant item on the agenda is discussed.

A nil return is not required.

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Minutes of a meeting of the Executive of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday, 10th August 2009 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor A. Tomlinson – In the Chair (for Minute No's. 217 to 221)

Councillors J.E. Bennett, K. Bowman, B.R. Murray-Carr, A. Syrett and E. Watts.

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), S. Tomlinson (Director of Strategy), J. Brooks (Director of Resources), S.E.A. Sternberg (Solicitor to the Council), F. Bacon (Head of Revenue Services), K. Drury (Customer Service and Access Officer)(to Minute No. 225 only), D. Eccles (Head of Regeneration), N. Rodgers (Projects Officer (Policy and Research))(to Minute No. 232 only), P. Campbell (Head of Housing)(For Minute No. 222 only), B. Truswell (Head of Shared Procurement)(from Minute No. 233), and A. Bluff (Democratic Services Officer).

217. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A.J. Hodkin, D. Kelly and D. McGregor.

218. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

219. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made.

220. MINUTES – 13TH JULY 2009

Councillor Syrett referred to Minute Number 145 of the last meeting and asked if a response had been received from Old Bolsover Town Council. Councillor Tomlinson replied that he was not aware that a response had been received. The Chief Executive Officer said he would investigate and let Councillor Syrett know the outcome.

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Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by A.M. Syrett
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting held on 13th July 2009 be approved as a correct record.

Councillor Watts entered the meeting.

221. RECOMMENDED ITEM FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 14TH JULY 2009 – MINUTE NUMBER 159 – RISK MANAGEMENT

The Director of Strategy presented the report which provided details of up to date progress with regard to Risk Management.

The report had been presented to Scrutiny Committee on 14th July 2009 and would be presented to a future Council meeting.

Moved by Councillor J.E. Bennett, seconded by Councillor K. Bowman
RESOLVED that climate change risks that can be improved by nil cost or negligible action be progressed.

(Director of Strategy)

Reason for decision: To provide Executive with Risk Management arrangements.

Councillor E. Watts – In the Chair

222. RENT ARREARS – VERBAL UPDATE

The Head of Housing circulated information on area based targets in respect of housing rent arrears and also former tenants rent arrears.

The Head of Housing reported that there had not been any significant change in the level of rent arrears since the update presented at the last meeting. Sixty three notices had been served on tenants in rent arrears since the beginning of the financial year and thirty cases had been to court which had resulted in suspended possession orders. There had been six evictions this year where tenants had not complied with conditions set by the court for repaying their rent arrears.

Rent owed by former tenants was at a current level of £500k. The Head of Housing added that a draft policy to deal with former tenants rent arrears would be presented to the next meeting.

Moved by Councillor K. Bowman, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett
RESOLVED that the report be received.

Reason for decision: To keep Members updated on the present position of housing rent arrears.

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223. ANNUAL REVIEW FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN

The Customer Service and Access Officer presented the report which provided key points from the Annual Review of the Local Government Ombudsman for the year ending 31st March 2009.

The full Annual Review was attached to the report along with a covering letter, a statistical breakdown of complaints and an explanatory note.

Councillor Tomlinson congratulated the Customer Service and Access Officer on performance of dealing with customer complaints.

Moved by Councillor J.E. Bennett, seconded by Councillor A.M. Syrett
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for decision: To keep Members informed of Ombudsman complaints.

224. COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

The Customer Service and Access Officer presented the report which gave breakdown detail of the number of compliments, comments, complaints, freedom of information and personal data requests for the period 1st April 2009 to 30th June 2009.

Councillor Tomlinson queried if officers' salaries and expenses were exempt from release under freedom of information. The Director of Resources replied that certain aspects of some officers' salaries were included annually in the statement of accounts but in the future could be recorded in more detail and could also include officers' expenses and pension issues. He added that the Audit Commission had been looking at this quite closely.

Members asked questions and further discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson
RESOLVED that the report be received.

Reason for decision: To keep Members informed of volumes and trends regarding compliments, comments, complaints and freedom of information requests.

225. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE – QUARTER 1 IN 2009/10

The Director of Resources presented the report which gave detailed performance of the various budgets for the first quarter of the financial year April to June 2009.

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Five appendices were attached to the report which gave further detailed breakdown of the budgets.

Members asked questions and discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson

RESOLVED that 1) the first quarter performance on budgeted income and expenditure for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account be noted,

2) the first quarter review of the main areas covered by the Budget Risk Assessment be noted.

3) the report on the Treasury Management activities and Prudential Indicators be received.

(Director of Resources)

Reason for decision: **The Executive can evidence robust consideration of the details associated with the financial performance of the Council.**

226. ARREARS - IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS OVER £1000

The Head of Revenue Services presented the report to seek Members approval to write off outstanding debts, including costs, amounting to £36,339.83 in respect of persons unable to trace/bankrupt or companies in liquidation.

Members asked questions.

Moved by Councillor K. Bowman, seconded by Councillor E. Watts

RESOLVED that the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £36,339.83 be written off with the proviso that should any of the debts become collectable the amounts be re-debited.

(Head of Revenue Services)

Reason for decision: **In order that outstanding debts can be written off where they are uncollectable.**

227. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of

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Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

228. ARREARS – IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS OVER £1000 EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

The Head of Revenue Services presented the report to seek Members approval to write off outstanding debts, including costs, amounting to £18,421.58 in respect of accounts where the ratepayer has ceased to trade or where the debt was not cost effective to pursue.

Members asked questions.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett

RESOLVED that the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £18,421.58 be written off with the proviso that should any of the debts become collectable the amounts be re-debited.

(Head of Revenue Services)

Reason for decision: In order that outstanding debts can be written off where they are uncollectable.

229. ARREARS – IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

The Head of Revenue Services presented the report in respect of irrecoverable items relating to outstanding rent and other charges at Pleasley Vale Mills.

Innes England took over the management of the Mills in August 2005 and also took over responsibility for the billing and collection of rent and other charges. If debt was outstanding where there was no longer a tenancy/occupation, the responsibility for recovery of the debt was left with the Council.

Two schedules were attached to the report; the first identified amounts the Council were responsible for collecting and the second identified amounts Innes England were responsible for collecting. Attempts had been made over the years to recover the amounts owing but with limited success.

Members' approval was sought to write off of the irrecoverable items, including costs, amounting to £35,319.53 as itemised on the schedules.

Members asked questions.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson

RESOLVED that the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £35,319.53 be written off with the proviso that should any of the debts become

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collectable the amounts be re-debited.

(Head of Revenue Services)

Reason for decision: In order that outstanding debts can be written off where they are uncollectable.

230. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

The Head of Revenue Services presented the report in respect of an application from Snap Developments for discretionary rate relief.

In September 2008, the Council approved a scheme for determining Discretionary Rate Relief applications with delegated authority given to the Director of Resources who would determine awards. The proviso under the delegation scheme was that a group of four would consider each application in detail to advise the Director of Resources, but if they could not make a recommendation the Director could either make the decision or refer the matter to the Executive for consideration.

The Head of Revenue Services gave an explanation of why the panel were unable to advise what the award should be for each element for the application.

Members discussed the application.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the award of discretionary rate relief for SNAP Developments for 2009/10 be 80% and for the following two years.

(Head of Revenue Services)

Reason for decision: In order for the Council to determine an award for Discretionary Rate Relief under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

As this was the Head of Revenue Services last Executive meeting before he retired from the Authority on the 13th August 2009, Councillor Syrett stated that she wished to express her thanks to the Head of Revenue Services for all the help he had given her as the newest Member of the Executive.

Councillor Watts added that he would also like to thank the Head of Revenue Services on behalf of the Executive and wished him well for the future.

231. SHIREBROOK ENTERPRISE CENTRE EXEMPT PARAGRAPHS 4 AND 5

The Projects Officer (Policy and Research) presented the report in respect of the findings of a recently commissioned feasibility study into the development of an

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Enterprise Centre within the town of Shirebrook. The centre would make a significant positive contribution towards the local economy both in the short and long term.

Greenborough Management Limited had been appointed to evaluate the potential for an Enterprise Centre and to advise upon suitable locations. A number of locations were identified and assessed as part of the study and appraised against a lengthy list of criteria including: location; compliance with planning policy; accessibility; site infrastructure; as well a number of other factors.

Three sites on Brook Park remained the priority location for the Enterprise Centre. The town centre, although considered, was unable to occupy a Centre of the proposed size.

Members asked questions and discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that 1) the development of an Enterprise Centre in Shirebrook be supported,

2) an update report on the progress of the project be presented to a future meeting.

(The Projects Officer (Policy and Research)/Head of Regeneration)

Reason for decision: In order to fulfil the objectives of the Council's Regeneration Strategy.

232. BEST VALUE OF THE STAFF RESTAURANT EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

The Head of Regeneration presented the detailed report in respect of a review undertaken of the restaurant service in order to make financial efficiencies.

Four options were presented for consideration by Members.

Discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the restaurant service be closed by the end of the calendar year to achieve the substantial savings and efficiencies required and a minimum provision to be introduced in line with option four.

(Head of Regeneration)

Reason for decision: To achieve the necessary budgetary efficiencies, and in order to protect front line services.

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233. TENDER OPENING – SHIREBROOK GROUP REPAIRS EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

Six tenders for the above contract had been received before the deadline.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett
RESOLVED that 1) the Executive witness the opening of the tenders,

2) the tenders be passed to the Evaluation Team for final evaluation,

3) a report for Members' information providing details of the tenders and evaluation process be submitted.

(Head of Shared Procurement)

Reason for Decision: In order to secure the lowest tender and best value for money in accordance with Standing Orders Contracts.

The date for final evaluation of the tenders would be confirmed to Members by the Head of Shared Procurement.

234. TENDER OPENING - CARR VALE GROUP REPAIRS EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

Six tenders for the above contract had been received before the deadline.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett
RESOLVED that 1) the Executive witness the opening of the tenders,

2) the tenders be passed to the Evaluation Team for final evaluation,

3) a report for Members' information providing details of the tenders and evaluation process be submitted.

(Head of Shared Procurement)

Reason for Decision: In order to secure the lowest tender and best value for money in accordance with Standing Orders Contracts.

The date for final evaluation of the tenders would be confirmed to Members by the Head of Shared Procurement.

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235. TENDER OPENING – DEMOLITION OF 1, 3, 5 AND 7 STATION ROAD, SHIREBROOK EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

Three tenders for the above contract had been received before the deadline.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett
RESOLVED that 1) the Executive witness the opening of the tenders,

2) the tenders be passed to the Evaluation Team for final evaluation,

3) a report for Members' information providing details of the tenders and evaluation process be submitted.

(Head of Shared Procurement)

Reason for Decision: In order to secure the lowest tender and best value for money in accordance with Standing Orders Contracts.

The date for final evaluation of the tenders would be confirmed to Members by the Head of Shared Procurement.

236. TENDER OPENING – PROVISION OF CLEANING SERVICES AT PLEASLEY VALE MILLS EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

Two tenders for the above contract had been received before the deadline.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett
RESOLVED that 1) the Executive witness the opening of the tenders,

2) the tenders be passed to the Evaluation Team for final evaluation,

3) a report for Members' information providing details of the tenders and evaluation process be submitted.

(Head of Shared Procurement)

Reason for Decision: In order to secure the lowest tender and best value for money in accordance with Standing Orders Contracts.

The date for final evaluation of the tenders would be confirmed to Members by the Head of Shared Procurement.

The meeting concluded at 1220 hours.

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Minutes of Previous Meetings			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R116L BDC: NEDDC:	
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency +Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
That the notes and records of decision of the following meetings be noted:			
Joint Board meeting held on 26th May, 2009			
Chief Executives' meeting held on 23rd June, 2009			
Reasons for Decision			
To note progress on joint working			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in	Yes		
Date Record issued: 23rd July, 2009 Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Shared Procurement Unit Budget 2009/10			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R116L BDC: NEDDC:	
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency +Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
That the 2009/10 budget for the S.P.U. be approved.			
Reasons for Decision			
To provide the necessary resource to progress the SPU work plans.			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in Yes			
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009			
Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Urban Design Unit			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable):		Delegation References: CBC: R116L	
CBC:		BDC:	
BDC:		NEDDC:	
NEDDC:			
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency *Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
1. That the post of Urban Design Officer be frozen until 1 st April, 2010.			
2. That a service level agreement be prepared and signed between Bolsover District Council and Chesterfield Borough Council covering the interim arrangement, and the Urban Design Unit arrangement.			
3. That details of the service level agreement for the Urban Design Unit be circulated to adjoining councils, including North East Derbyshire, inviting expressions of interest, and that discussions take place with any authorities expressing interest, and a further report be presented on the outcome.			
Reasons for Decision:			
Having access to urban design advice is an essential requirement for a good quality planning service. A three-authority urban design unit would meet the needs of Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield, and the prospect of providing this next year needs to be investigated; in the interim the temporary arrangement enables an urban design advice service to be retained.			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009			
Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Joint Scrutiny Report of Chesterfield Borough, North East Derbyshire District, Bolsover District and Derbyshire County Council on Alcohol and Young People			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable):		Delegation References: CBC: R116L	
CBC:		BDC:	
BDC:		NEDDC:	
NEDDC:			
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency +Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
<p>1. That the contents of the Joint Scrutiny report be endorsed.</p> <p>2. That the Joint Board, in conjunction with the County Council, adopt the implementation plan to lead and co-ordinate implementation of the recommendations.</p>			
Reasons for Decision:			
To influence the reduction of alcohol related crime and disorder and improve the health and well-being of all in our community including young people.			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009 Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Housing Market Area Strategy			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable):		Delegation References: CBC: R116L	
CBC:		BDC:	
BDC:		NEDDC:	
NEDDC:			
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency *Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
<p>1. That the progress being made at the Housing Market Area level in terms of strategic housing governance, capacity, delivery arrangements and links with Planning and Economic development be noted.</p> <p>2. That a further report on delivery vehicles, governance and capacity arrangements at the HMA level for strategic housing be made to a future meeting of the Joint Board.</p> <p>3. That the draft Sub-regional Housing Strategy be noted, and a presentation on the final document be made to a future meeting.</p>			
Reasons for Decision:			
To ensure members remain aware of and engaged with strategic housing related progress at the housing market area level.			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009			
Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: RIEP Projects			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable):		Delegation References: CBC: R116L	
CBC:		BDC:	
BDC:		NEDDC:	
NEDDC:			
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency +Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
That the progress on the RIEP funded joint working projects be noted.			
Reasons for Decision			
To ensure that the Board is able to monitor progress on the RIEP funded projects.			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009			
Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Procurement of Recyclable Wastes Collection Service			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R116L BDC: NEDDC:	
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan General urgency *Special urgency	N/A	Authorised by:
Record of Decision:			
<p>1. That an inter-authority project team be established to:-</p> <p>(a) Prepare a detailed business case to enable a final decision to be taken on the merits of proceeding with a joint procurement exercise for the provision of dry recyclable waste collection services for the three councils.</p> <p>(b) Look at the feasibility of developing a shared client resource.</p> <p>(c) Procure external support to advise the project team on (a) and (b) above and to prepare a detailed service specification for the procurement exercise.</p> <p>2. That the JWA Project Manager be requested to submit a Project Change Control application to support the diversion of £10,000 of RIEP funding to enable the work of the project team.</p> <p>3. That in the event of RIEP funding not being available, the three Councils be asked to consider sharing the costs on an 'invest to save' basis.</p>			
Reasons for Decision			
To achieve efficiencies in the delivery of the recyclables service.			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009			
Contact Officer: A Goss			

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING

CBC: DEPUTY LEADER		Date of Decision:	
BDC: LEADER		21 st July, 2009	
NEDDC: NOT PRESENT.			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: No			
Title Reference: Sheffield City Region Forum			
Consultee Member: N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable):		Delegation References: CBC: R116L	
CBC:		BDC:	
BDC:		NEDDC:	
NEDDC:			
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision Status (CBC)	On Forward Plan	N/A	Authorised by:
	General urgency		
	+Special urgency		
Record of Decision:			
That the minutes of the meeting of the Sheffield City Region Chief Executives' meeting and issues arising be noted.			
Reasons for Decision			
To enable the Joint Board to consider its position on issues arising from the Sheffield City Region Forum			
Alternative options considered and rejected – N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 23 rd July, 2009			
Contact Officer: A Goss			

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	7.
Date:	7 th September 2009	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Former Tenants Arrears		
Report by:	Head of Housing		
Other Officers Involved	Head of Finance Head of HR and Payroll Housing Enforcement Manager		
Director	Chief Executive		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Housing Management		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – An increased collection rate for former tenants arrears would allow additional expenditure on other services.

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – This report considers a new methodology to recover debt, and using specialist contractors.

TARGETS

Not directly, however previous audit reports have been critical of the recovery rate of former tenants arrears. It is proposed to introduce additional target to be reported to Executive to monitor the progress if this report is accepted.

VALUE FOR MONEY

This report is based on the principle that an investment in a temporary post to collect former tenant's arrears will be more than offset by an increase in collection rates, and demonstrate VfM. This will be monitored on a regular basis.

THE REPORT

In 2006 Council agreed to restructure the Housing Department. The allowed an additional focus on, amongst other issues, rent arrears.

Prior to the restructure rent arrears were increasing. Since the new posts were introduced rent arrears have started to reduce. They have reduced by

over £350,000 in real terms between September 2006 and April 2009. However, if the previous trend had continued current rent arrears would have been an estimated £1.5 million. Current rent arrears stood at £630,882 at the start of the financial year.

This success is due not only to additional staff resources but by developing and following a systematic and robust escalation procedure. This approach is more clearly understood by officers, and is beginning to impact on the culture of non-payment with some groups of tenants.

During this time, however, former tenant's arrears (FTAs) have increased. This is partially due to more success in recovering arrears from current tenants (i.e. if a person leaves or is evicted the debt becomes a former tenant arrear), but is also due to the lack of a structured debt recovery procedure. The responsibility for former tenants' arrears transferred to the Housing Department from Revenue Services in September 2007 with the rent administration function.

On 6th July 2009 the total rent owed by Former Tenants stood at almost £500,000 This is unacceptably high.

The Audit Commission view of the Council's use of resources was critical about the amount of debt owed by tenants, and whilst this has been partially addressed with action taken against current tenants, there remains an issue with FTAs.

There is currently no specific policy for Former Tenants Arrears. There is a need to introduce such a policy. This will ensure that officers have a clear understanding of what action to take in each case, and to provide members with some reassurance that all action has been taken, when they are asked to write off debts.

The proposed policy is enclosed as an appendix.

The proposed policy is much more proactive and ensures that appropriate action is taken in each case. This offers better control of FTA's and keep them at a more appropriate level; this should be through additional payments and not merely writing off debt. The policy includes the use of external debt recovery agencies and, when appropriate, the use a 'tracing agent' to find former tenants, and will consider the use of enforcement through the small claims court. The policy recognises the need to use specialists at some stages of the process.

The policy allows debts to be passed to an external recovery agency. Several of these exist which offer the Council an option for recovery, where there is a charge made only for debt recovered (i.e. no charge where there is no recovery). This is not the use of bailiffs,

The policy, and this new way of working follows good practice guidance from the Chartered Institute of Housing. The advantage of using external

specialists is that this methodology used elsewhere has brought in debt that had been deemed irrecoverable. There is no risk to the Council by adopting this approach.

In the short term this system will need additional support. Council on 11th August 2009 agreed to recruit one additional Rent Administrator for a period of 2 years with specific responsibility for dealing with FTAs and liaison with the contractors employed.

It is proposed to report each quarter to Executive on update of FTAs. This will include information on the debt and the success of recovery from both the Council and the agency.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The approach to be taken by the Council in dealing with FTAs, the proposed policy and the reporting of outcomes.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial: This report recommends an 'invest to save' scheme where the recruitment of a member of staff will contribute towards the recovery of up to £500,000.

Legal: None directly.

Human Resources: This report considers the appointment of one additional post on a temporary basis.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1. That the Draft former tenant's arrears policy is adopted.**
- 2. That the Head of Housing, together with the Head of Shared Procurement identify and appoint a contractor to recover debt on a commission only basis.**

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

ATTACHMENTS: Yes
FILE REFERENCE: Draft FTA Policy
SOURCE DOCUMENT:

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Former Tenants Arrears
2009



This Policy addresses the following Corporate Aims (show those which are appropriate to the policy only):



COMMUNITY
SAFETY



CUSTOMER
FOCUSED SERVICES



STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



REGENERATION



SOCIAL INCLUSION

The District of Bolsover Equalities Statement

The District of Bolsover is committed to equalities as an employer and in all the services provided to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination in compliance with the Equality Strategy.

The Council also has due regard to eliminate racial discrimination and to proactively promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups when performing it's functions.

This document is available in large print and other formats from any of the Council Offices or by contacting the Chief Executives Directorate on 01246 242323. Please bear in mind we will need a few days to arrange this facility.

If you need help to read this document please do not hesitate to contact us.

Our Equality and Diversity Officer can be contacted via [Email](#) or by telephoning 01246 242407.

Minicom: 01246 242450

Fax: 01246 242423

Details of Document	
Title	Former Tenants Arrears
Document type – i.e. draft or final version	Draft v2
Location of Policy	L:\housing\policies
Author of Policy	Peter Campbell
Reviewed by Director of Ops.	
Risk Assessment completed	Not applicable
Community Safety implications Please indicate any implications in relation to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998	Not applicable
Equality Impact Assessment completed.	29/9/2008
Approved by	
Date Approved	
Policy Review Date	

Version numbers

Draft v1 – First draft

Draft v2 – Updated to include other housing debt.

Draft v3 – Updated to include section on joint tenants.

CONTENTS

- 1. The Introduction**
- 2. The Scope of the Policy.**
- 3. The Principles of the Policy.**
- 4. Policy Statement**
- 5. Responsibility for implementing the Policy (and implementation plans where necessary).**

Introduction

This policy is concerned with how the Bolsover District Council will deal with rent debts from former tenants of council housing. This aims to offer clear guidance to officers, and a clear explanation to customers of what steps will be taken in different circumstances, the processes that will be followed, and where discretion can be used, and by whom.

Scope of the Policy.

This policy applies to former tenants of Bolsover District Council with housing debt, and in some cases the executors of former tenants Estates, and the Receivers for former tenants who are bankrupt.

This policy applies to Housing debt owed by former tenants. This includes not only rent but other charges, for example charges for damage to properties.

Principles of the policy.

Bolsover District Council relies on the collection of rent in order to run a high quality housing service. Any rent not collected is a loss of income and may impact on service delivery for all tenants.

Bolsover District Council believes that all tenants should ensure that rent is paid during the period of their tenancy. If a tenant leaves a property with debt the Council will use appropriate methods of debt recovery.

The Council recognises that debt recovery in serious cases, is a specialised service and will look to use specialist companies in serious arrears cases where the tenant has refused to engage with the Council.

The Council also recognises that debt can be an emotive and sensitive issue, and will attempt to deal with applicants, or their representatives appropriately. There will, however, be occasions where the Council will need to take a tough stance to recover debt.

Policy Statement

There are a range of reasons why a debt may be left on a property (this includes both rent and other housing debt)

a. **Tenants Leave Property** – this includes people who leave the property of their own choice as well as people who have been evicted from Council Property.

1. The council will not attempt to recover rent arrears of less than £5 as it is uneconomical to do so.

2. Debt up to £100. The tenant will be sent Letter 1 at the end of the Tenancy (see Appendix) – if there is no contact payment letter 2 will be sent one month later. The account will be monitored for three months. If there is no progress the account will be written off.

Debt up to £999 *. The tenant will be sent Letter 1 and 2, as above. However after the three month period the details will be sent to an external agency who will attempt to recover the debt (on a no fee, commission only basis). If there is no contact within a further 6 months the debt will be written off.

3. Debt over £1000 *. Initial stages same as the lower level. However, if the recovery agent has had not success within 6 months the Council will authorise a 'trace' for the tenant. (There is a fee for this service), before being referred back to the recovery agent for a further 6 month period. If this is not successful a report will be presented to Executive requesting Write Off.

Note: In all cases that are referred to the collection agency they may chose to keep the case live for a longer period of time. If they are eventually successful the Council will reverse any previous write off.

* It is proposed that these thresholds are introduced from the date of introduction of this policy. However these are maximums and may be decreased with the agreement of the Head of Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Housing. This applies to actions only and not the write-off procedure referred to in section g.

- b. **The Tenant has deceased** – note if someone succeeds to the tenancy any debt is passed onto the successor. Otherwise:

1. If the debt is less than £5 the Council will not attempt to recover the debt.
2. If the debt is less than five weeks full rent the Council will accept the declaration on the termination form that there are insufficient funds and the debt will be written off.
3. If the debt is five weeks full rent or greater the Council will require written confirmation from the Executor that there is insufficient fund to pay the debt before considering write off. If this confirmation is not provided the Council will write to the executor to request this information and monitor the account for 6 months before writing off the debt.

Note: It is the executor of the estate who is responsible for the debt. No attempt will be made to recover money from the next of kin, (unless that person is also the Executor)
--

In cases where the Council are notified that a tenant has passed away, but there is no executor or family to end the tenancy, the Council will end the tenancy by serving Notice on the Office of the Public Trustee.

Note: In all cases where a tenant has deceased it is a condition of tenancy that the Council is given 4 full weeks notice by the executor or family member before ending the tenancy

c. The tenant has moved to residential care.

No recovery action will be taken for people with debt of less than £5.

For all cases over £5 an investigation will be carried out. There can be no blanket policy to deal with such situations, and each case will be considered on its merits by the Housing Enforcement Manager.

d. Bankruptcy

If a former tenant has been declared bankrupt, and the rent arrears or debt included as part of their bankruptcy these are irrecoverable and should be written off. In cases of over £100 the write off will be considered with appropriate proof from the former tenant or their receiver. The write off will only apply to the amount of debt included in the bankruptcy.

e. Exceptional cases.

In exceptional cases the Council may create a former tenant arrear, for example by rehousing a person with rent arrears or debt who is a victim of Domestic Violence. In such cases the Housing Enforcement Manager together with the Head of Housing will consider suitable options to recover the debt.

f. Joint Tenants

Where a tenancy was held jointly, then each tenant is jointly and severally liable for the whole of the debt.

The Council may agree, at its discretion, to accept an arrangement to collect the whole of the debt from one of the joint tenants, or, to accept an arrangement to apportion the debt repayments between the former tenants. The Council is not obliged to enter into such arrangements and, if it does so, it will not be prevented from pursuing each or all of the tenants for the whole of the debt in the event of default or at any other time. This will be made clear to joint tenants when any such arrangements are being considered

g. Dealing with Write Offs

Write offs of less than £100 will be submitted as a schedule to the Director of Resources.

Detailed information will be submitted for write offs up to £1000 to the Director of Resources.

Write Offs of over £1000 must be agreed by Executive.

In all cases write off may be reversed if the former tenant reappears, within the limitation period, and appropriate action will be started.

Notes:

When appropriate the Council will encourage former tenants to seek independent advice if they need specialist advice.

Responsibility for implementation:

Head of Housing

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	8.
Date:	7 th September 2009	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Customer Satisfaction Policy		
Report by:	Customer Service and Access Officer		
Other Officers Involved	SMT Customer Excellence Group		
Director	CEO		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Customer Services		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services

SOCIAL INCLUSION – Promoting fairness, equality and lifelong learning.

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

Having a formalised policy for measuring external customer satisfaction with council services will provide a framework for services to follow and enable consistent information to be obtained from customers on how satisfied or not they are with the way we provide services.

TARGETS

The production and implementation of the policy achieves one of the milestones contained within the Customer Service and Access Strategy 2009-11.

VALUE FOR MONEY

Implementation of the policy will enable the Council to make greater use of customer information to drive and measure performance. It will also help prioritise where improvements should be made.

THE REPORT

The Customer Satisfaction Policy is attached at pages 35 to 44.

The purpose of this policy is to formalise the Council's approach to customer satisfaction by setting out a framework on how often we should undertake measurement exercises, what measurement scales we should use and

clarifying responsibilities for the measurement activity. It is intended for the Customer Service and Performance Department to offer support to those departments seeking it by producing surveys, undertaking analysis and producing a report. This support will be offered to departments by way of a yearly programme whereby departments seeking assistance can book a slot. Support to be offered at a level which Customer Service and Performance Department can accommodate within existing resources. Supporting guidance has also been written to provide practical assistance to departments.

Implementation of the policy will enable the Council to make greater use of customer information to drive and measure performance, and shape its services.

The Council is also seeking Customer Service Excellence accreditation. This is the Government's national standard for excellence in customer service. Formally known as Charter Mark, the new standard places greater emphasis on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and having a robust system for measuring customer satisfaction. The adoption and implementation of this policy will help us formalise our approach to understanding the experiences that customers have when they receive services from us and how satisfied they are with those services. This is essential for achieving Customer Service Excellence.

The policy (and supporting guidance) has been developed following significant research into best practice and the running of three internal pilot projects during 2008 (Contact Centres, Sports Development and Creswell Leisure Centre).

Regarding consultation, the policy has been taken to the Customer Excellence Group for consideration. Senior Management Team and Heads of Service have been given an opportunity to comment also.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The production and implementation of a Customer Satisfaction Policy is a milestone within the Customer Service and Access Strategy 2009-2011. Achievement of the strategy's milestones is a key corporate plan target.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial: None specifically for the policy itself – the costs of undertaking customer satisfaction measurement activities to be borne by departments and will largely consist of printing and postage costs.

Legal: None

Human Resources: None specifically for the policy itself – CSPD will offer a programme of support to departments within their current resources.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Customer Satisfaction Policy be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

To have an approved policy on Customer Satisfaction and to implement the framework contained within.

ATTACHMENTS: **Y**
(1) Customer Satisfaction Policy

FILE REFERENCE: N/A
SOURCE DOCUMENT: N/A

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL
Customer Satisfaction Policy

This Policy addresses the following Corporate Aims:



The District of Bolsover Equalities Statement

The District of Bolsover is committed to equalities as an employer and in all the services provided to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination in compliance with the Equality Strategy.

The Council also has due regard to eliminate racial discrimination and to proactively promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups when performing its functions.

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Our Equality Improvement Officer can be contacted via [Email](#) or by telephoning 01246 242407.

Minicom: 01246 242450

Fax: 01246 242423

CONTROL SHEET

Details of Document	Comments / Confirmation
Title	Customer Satisfaction Policy
Document type – i.e. draft or final version	Final
Location of Policy	Internet and Intranet
Author of Policy	Customer Service & Access Officer
Member route for Approval & Cabinet Member concerned	Executive Councillor McGregor
Reviewed by Director of Strategy	Yes
Date Risk Assessment completed	25 th June 2009
Date Equality Impact Assessment approved	Undertaken 20 th May 2009
Partnership Involvement (if applicable)	
Date added to the Forward Plan	
Policy Approved by	
Date Approved	
Policy Review Date	September 2010 (and thereafter every 3 years)
Date forwarded to CSPD (to include on Intranet and	

Internet if applicable to the public)	
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5	Responsibility for implementing the Policy	9
6	Supporting Guidance	9

1. Introduction

The significance of customer satisfaction has been recognised for some time at Bolsover and reflected in the Corporate Plan 2007 – 2011 as a target to ‘achieve overall satisfaction with council services to top 25% of local authorities by March 2010’ under the corporate aim of ‘providing excellent customer focused services’.

This approach has been strengthened by the addition of a number of local indicators for customer satisfaction for some customer facing departments.

Increasingly organisations like the Improvement Development Agency (IDeA), Audit Commission and Local Government Association (LGA) are stating that there is a significant opportunity for local government to improve its performance through more effective use of customer intelligence¹. It is unlikely that the council of the future will be regarded as performing well unless it is using customer information to drive and measure performance and shape its services.

The most useful set of customer information is:

- Customer satisfaction – measured for each service and by key customer segment

- Complaints, comments and compliments

- Mystery shopping results

- Service usage – customer numbers in total and by segment if available

- Customer views – obtaining, considering and using to improve services.

“People’s expectations of public services are rising and the financial climate is changing, putting pressure on authorities to deliver highly tailored services, without massive investment from central government, or excessive council tax increases”². It is therefore more important than ever to know whether we are meeting the expectations of our customers and residents and to demonstrate that we are delivering high quality services by the most cost-effective method. The use of customer intelligence helps us to achieve this.

The Council is also seeking Customer Service Excellence accreditation by March 2010. This is the Government’s national standard for excellence in

¹ IDeA (2006) Driving Improvement – a new performance framework for localities & IDeA (2006) Review of Customer Satisfaction Schemes

² The Local Government White Paper (October 2006) – Strong and Prosperous Communities

customer service. Formally known as Charter Mark, the new standard places greater emphasis on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and measuring customer satisfaction.

The purpose of this policy is to formalise the Council's approach to customer satisfaction. This will enable the Council to make greater use of customer information to drive and measure performance. It will also provide a good source of evidence for Customer Service Excellence.

2. Scope

For the purpose of this policy the term customer refers to external recipients of council services both mandatory and discretionary. It also relates to business organisations as well as individuals.

This policy applies to every department that provides services to external customers. Internal customer satisfaction is excluded from this policy. Separate arrangements and guidance are already in place for collecting and measuring internal satisfaction.

This policy also applies to those departments choosing to use the services of an external organisation to undertake their satisfaction exercise and measurement.

This policy refers to customer satisfaction surveys and measurement only.

Guidance supporting this policy will provide more practical information to assist departments.

2. Principles of the Policy

The following principles apply:

Each (external) customer facing department to undertake a customer satisfaction exercise in accordance with this policy and proportionate to their service areas in terms of customer volumes and importance.

Each (external) customer facing department to have relevant and meaningful local performance indicators and targets for customer satisfaction.

Departments may decide to undertake other satisfaction exercises over and above the requirements of this policy.

The adoption of a recognised satisfaction scale will enable the Council to produce a score by each exercise undertaken, which will enable departmental comparisons and some external benchmarking.

It is essential that the information obtained through customer satisfaction exercises be used to improve services. This will be done through action/improvement plans.

The collection of equalities monitoring data as part of the satisfaction exercise to be considered as to the relevance and benefit it would add to the information obtained. Where collected the standard equalities monitoring form will be used. Additional equalities and/or customer information may be sought with the agreement of the Customer Service and Access Officer.

To provide opportunities for customers to provide additional comments and to be contacted by the relevant department where appropriate and/or beneficial.

The results of satisfaction exercises to be publicised.

To manage any personal data collected in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and appropriate departmental codes of practice.

4. Policy Statement

Satisfaction is determined by the quality of the customer's experience. It is therefore essential that only customers who have used a service are asked to rate their experience of it and in so doing provide a measure of satisfaction.

Quality is determined by a customer's **expectation** of a service and their **perception** of it once delivered. When a customer's expectation of a service is exceeded by their perception of the service the result is that they are usually satisfied/very satisfied with the service. Conversely if their perception of a service is less than their expectation of it then they are usually dissatisfied/very dissatisfied with the service. For example, it is reasonable for a customer ringing the Council to have their call answered within a reasonable time and for the person answering the call to be courteous and provide their name. If the call is not answered or takes a long time, if the person answering is off hand and gives no name then the customer is highly likely to be dissatisfied with the service.

Departments will need to consider which services this policy applies to and how best and how often the satisfaction exercise should be undertaken. For some services a 'by event' approach may be best, for example, issuing a survey form after an application has been assessed, for example, planning, benefit, grant. For services that are frequently used by customers, for example, Contact Centre service, refuse collection, then it is probably better to survey a sample of the customer database. (The supporting guidance will provide more information on sampling).The Citizen Panel may be a useful way to measure satisfaction with some universal services. It could also provide an audience of service users and non users to take part in in-depth discussions or surveys.

For key front line services it is recommended that satisfaction is either measured continually by event or annually, if sampling. There may be some exceptions to this, for example, a front line service may decide to undertake a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey every two years. However, the department would need to demonstrate that whilst formal measurement may only take place every two years that the service has other mechanisms in place to capture customer feedback on a regular basis, for example, customer comment cards, telephone interviews, on-line survey forms, focus groups.

For less frequently used services it is recommended that satisfaction is measured every two to three years. Once again it is important that departments have effective arrangements in place for capturing customer feedback.

Satisfaction measurement is an activity that asks customers to rate their satisfaction with the key aspects of the service in question (the customer journey) and from that produce an overall measure of satisfaction. This is to be done under this policy by either using a numerical rating scale (1 to 10) and producing a customer satisfaction index or by using a 5 point rating scale and adding together the very satisfied or satisfied scores to produce an overall score.

Careful thought needs to be given to the customer journey and typically will include access to the service, friendliness and professionalism of staff, understandable documents, clear service standards, being kept informed and delivering on promises. It is essential that we ask customers to rate their satisfaction with requirements that are important to them. Ideally this list of requirements should be informed by customers through focus groups or interview, however it is accepted that this may not be feasible in terms of resources for many services. However, this information can be captured through the satisfaction exercise by asking the customer to add any requirements which they felt were missing.

Two types of measurement will be allowed under this policy to enable departments to select the one most appropriate to their needs and to also provide some consistency of approach throughout the Council. The latter will enable departments to track their satisfaction scores over time and will also facilitate some internal and external benchmarking.

The first measure is known as a verbal scale – it is a five point scale as noted below:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Question					

This scale is long established and used in the Place Survey³, which will enable some services to compare their satisfaction score with the Government's Biennial Survey.

The second scale is a 10 point numerical rating scale where 1 represents extremely dissatisfied or extremely unimportant and 10 represents extremely satisfied or extremely important. This type of measurement is also very established and is used to calculate a Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI). This is done by asking customers to first rate the importance of a set of requirements and then asking the customer to rate their satisfaction with the same set of requirements.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Requirement										

The methodology used to calculate a 'customer satisfaction index' or CSI is based on measuring an index of measures to reach a satisfaction score rather than asking one overall satisfaction question. As such it is considered to be a more accurate measure of satisfaction and also provides 'priorities for improvement' or the gaps between 'satisfaction' and 'importance' where we should be concentrating our efforts to improve the service.

Producing a customer satisfaction index will enable us to track progress year on year (or whenever the exercise is repeated) and enable the service to be benchmarked against the new UK Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) collated by the Institute of Customer Service. This is the national measure of customer satisfaction with UK organisations, covering sectors such as transport, retail –food, utilities, government departments and agencies, and, local government.

Other measurement scales may be used with the agreement of the Customer Service and Access Officer. This will usually be for capturing customer feedback, for example short transactional surveys, which will support and complement the formal customer satisfaction measurement exercise.

The following methods can be used to measure satisfaction:

Self completion methods, for example, postal surveys, web surveys, surveys on stand alone electronic devices.

Interview methods by telephone, face to face.

The supporting guidance provides more information on survey methods.

All departments will need to complete a satisfaction proposal form for approval by the Customer Service and Performance Department prior to undertaking the survey. Corporate satisfaction exercises will be approved by the Customer Excellence Group.

³ A statutory consultation which replaces the 'Best Value General Satisfaction Triennial Survey'. The data from this survey informs many of the new national indicators.

The Customer Service and Performance Department is able to provide assistance and support in the form of survey design, analysis and reporting. This will be offered to departments in the form of a yearly programme of support whereby departments seeking assistance can book a slot.

5. Responsibility for Implementing the Policy

A good working knowledge of the policy and guidance will ensure that satisfaction exercises are carried out consistently throughout the Council.

The responsibilities and key actions for the Customer Service and Performance Department are:

- To provide advice and guidance on satisfaction matters to departments.
- To consider and approve routine satisfaction proposals.
- To provide a yearly programme of support whereby departments can book a slot for assistance with survey design, analysis and reporting.
- To liaise with Democratic Services over any scanning arrangements in connection with the yearly programme.

The responsibilities and key actions for Departments are:

- To undertake satisfaction activity in accordance with the policy and supporting guidance.
- To forward all satisfaction proposals to the Customer Service and Access Officer.
- To produce an action plan for improvement following the satisfaction exercise.
- To publicise the results of the satisfaction exercise to the target audience.

The responsibility and key actions for the Customer Excellence Group is:

- To consider and approve significant/corporate satisfaction proposals.
- To receive regular reports on satisfaction exercises undertaken and their results.
- To learn from best practice.

6. Supporting Guidance

The supporting guidance to this policy can be found on ERIC at

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	9.
Date:	7 th September 2009	Status	Open
Category	Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Changes to the Idox Uniform system		
Report by:	Director of Resources		
Other Officers Involved	Senior IT Projects Officer		
Director	Director of Resources		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Portfolio holder for Efficiency		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation. Ensuring that all IT support and maintenance contracts deliver value for money and that any risk is minimised.

TARGETS

This does not contribute to any targets specified in any approved plans.

VALUE FOR MONEY

By ensuring that the most cost effective contracts are in place.

THE REPORT

Payment of Idox Support and Maintenance

In 1996 the Council signed an Orbit framework agreement with Norsk Data, the provider of our Uniform solution. Rather than purchase the software, the Council entered into a leasing arrangement and this has continued until now. Norsk Data was taken over by CAPS and CAPS has subsequently been taken over by Idox. The Uniform solution is used by Planning, Environmental Health, IT, Land Charges and Building Control. The current annual payment for 2009/10 will be £33,425.

Normally the Council purchases software and then pays an annual maintenance charge for ongoing support.

Idox have proposed that we pay a one off cost to purchase the software and then pay annual maintenance, this will eventually reduce the annual payments. Their proposal is that the Council pays a one off cost to purchase the software of £39,000. The annual licensing will then be £11,773 a year less than the current annual payment, resulting in a payback in just over three years. It is proposed to fund this from the ICT and Office Equipment reserve. The annual saving on support and maintenance of £11,773 will be returned annually to the reserve.

The Land Charges system

The current version of Land Charges software will not be supported after the end of September 2009. Idox have had their latest version, TLC, on the market for some time and approximately 150 of their clients have either implemented or are in the process of implementing the upgrade. We are one of only two Councils who have not committed to the upgrade.

As stated before the Uniform system from Idox is also used by Planning, Environmental Health and Building Control. Upgrades to the system are tested against all the different modules to ensure that an upgrade, for example, for Planning does not create problems for Environmental Health. Idox have told us that from September these upgrades will not be tested against the version of Land Charges we have.

There will be implications for the staffing resource in both Land Charges and IT due to the large amount of work that will be needed during the change over and the timing of the implementation will have to be carefully managed.

There had been a temporary two year post to assist with the development of the Idox system which was funded from the CPA development fund, the holder of this post left in April, six months early, there is subsequently a saving of £12,110.

The cost of the upgrade is £16,650 and it is proposed to fund this partially from the ICT and Office Equipment reserve and partially from the saving for the Idox post.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The purchase of the idox software as proposed in the report and the purchase of the Uniform upgrade for Land Charges and the IT and Land Charges resources needed to implement.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial:	£43,540 from the reserve with £11,773 being returned annually £12,110 from the CPA Development fund allocated to Idox development
Legal:	None

Human Resources: Resources are required in IT and Land Charges to implement the Land Charges upgrade. There is no free resource in either section at present and so this needs resolving if members approve the purchase of TLC.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the purchases be approved subject to resolving the resourcing issues.

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

In order to allocate funds from the ICT reserve to secure a long term saving and to secure a supported Land Charges system.

ATTACHMENTS: No
FILE REFERENCE: None
SOURCE DOCUMENT: Held in ICT

AGENDA

Monday 7th September 2009 at 1000 hours

Item No.		Page No.(s)
	PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS	
1.	To receive apologies for absence, if any.	
2.	To note any urgent items of business which the Chairman has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
3.	Members should declare the existence and nature of any personal and prejudicial interests in respect of: a) any business on the agenda b) any urgent additional items to be considered c) any matters arising out of those items and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	3
4.	To approve the minutes of a meeting held on 10 th August 2009.	4 to 12
5.	Key Decision Notices from the Joint Board held on 21 st July 2009.	13 to 20
6.	Rent Arrears – Verbal Update.	Verbal Report
7.	Former Tenants Rent Arrears.	21 to 31
8.	Customer Satisfaction Policy.	32 to 44
9.	Changes to the Idox Uniform System.	45 to 47
	PART 2 – EXEMPT ITEMS <i>The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1, Schedule 12a</i>	
10.	Tender Opening - Bolsover Intermediate Labour Market Programme.	48