

# EXECUTIVE

**MONDAY  
28<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2012  
AT 1000 HOURS**

## COMMITTEE ROOM ONE

### ACCESS FOR ALL

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Sherwood Lodge  
Bolsover  
Derbyshire  
S44 6NF

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Executive of Bolsover District Council to be held in Committee Room One, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2012 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 pages 188 and 189.

Yours faithfully,



Chief Executive Officer  
To: Chairman & Members of the Executive

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



### **3.4 Executive Functions**

1. The making and revocation of appointments to outside bodies where the appointments relate to Executive functions.
2. Any function under the Derbyshire Act 1981 other than those relating to licensing, registration or regulatory matters.
3. Overall responsibility for the Best Value process.
4. The formulation or preparation of plans or strategies for consideration by Council where the plan or strategy is required to be approved by Council.
5. The amendment, variation, revocation of such plan or strategy required to give effect to a requirement of the Secretary of State or Minister of the Crown in relation to a plan submitted for his approval.
6. The making of applications for disposal of land (following authorisation by the Council) under section 135 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing & Urban Development Act 1993 (Programme for disposals) and sections 32 and 43 of the Housing Act 1985 for disposal of housing land other than under Right to Buy legislation.
7. The implementation of the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974 in respect of the Council as an employer and all its operations.
8. The delegation of such matters within its terms of reference as may be appropriate to the Chief Executive Officer or other appropriate officer.
9. The appointment, terms of reference and membership of sub-committees to deal with matters within the Executive's terms of reference.
10. The provision of such resources as may be necessary for the proper operation of the Council provided the resources are within the Budget and Policy Framework.
11. The level of grant aid and other assistance to Parish Councils and voluntary organisations of a cultural, sporting or other philanthropic nature.

12. The management of all the Council's properties and land including (for the avoidance of doubt) the purchase and disposal of freeholds and leaseholds, the letting of Council houses in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 and the granting of contractual licences.
13. The approval of the level of any fee, charge, rent or other payment due to the Council provided they are within the Budget and Policy Framework.
14. The implementation and monitoring of the Council's Treasury Management policies and practices.
15. Agreeing any agency arrangements with any local authorities or other bodies in so far as they relate to executive functions.
16. To monitor and enforce the effective implementation and reviews of the Council's **Single Equality Scheme** ~~Policy and Race Equality Scheme~~.
17. The management of the IT Strategy for the Council.
18. The opening and consideration and, if appropriate acceptance subject to scrutiny, of tenders for works in excess of £50,000.
19. The promotion of economic development and employment opportunities in the District.
20. Monitoring the finances of the Council.
21. The granting of discretionary relief for NNDR/Community Charge/Council Tax including the management of the Council Tax and Housing Benefit Schemes.
22. The collection of sundry and other debts, administration of mortgages and determination of any matter relating to the Council's insurance cover.
23. Monitoring level of homelessness and Council's responsibilities for this under the Housing Act 1996 - Part VII.
24. The maintenance of good relations with the Council's tenants.
25. The development of sports and recreational facilities and opportunities within the District and the development and promotion of tourism.
26. The co-ordination of and assistance to the arts provided throughout the District.

27. The fostering of community development and liaison with Parish Councils and voluntary bodies within the District.
28. The management of any Council markets including the level of rents for market stalls and any other level of charges relating to markets.
29. The development of international partnerships and friendships.
30. All other functions not specifically designated as Council functions and not required by law to be exercised by the Council.
31. Regular monitoring of Ombudsman and Corporate Complaints.
32. Regular monitoring of Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests for information.
33. Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices.
34. To respond to the views of the Council on petitions which have been debated at Council where the petition relates to an executive function or executive matters.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Executive Functions be agreed.**

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2012/2013  
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

Organisation and Representative(s)	Term of Office Expires On
<b>Age Concern Chesterfield &amp; District</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Alliance for Enterprise (LEGI)</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Industrial Communities Alliance</b> Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council  <b>EUROACOM</b> Leader of the Council  <b>National Worklessness Forum</b> Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH)</b> Cabinet Member for Housing Management	
<b>Association for Public Service Excellence</b>  <b>(a) National</b> Cabinet Member for Environment  <b>(b) Central Region</b> Cabinet Member for Environment	Annual Meeting of the Council  Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Bolsover Community Safety Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Community Safety	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Bolsover Countryside Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Environment	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Bolsover District Youth Advisory Panel</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council

<b>Bolsover District Community Sports Forum</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Bolsover Partnership Board</b> Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Bolsover Partnership – Health and Wellbeing Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Citizens Advice Bureau Board of Trustees</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Chesterfield Community Transport</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Chesterfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee</b> Cabinet Member for Housing Management Cabinet Member for Environment	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Community Voluntary Partners</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Coalfields Regeneration Trust – Community Land Trust Board</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Coalfields Task Force</b> Leader Deputy Leader (Substitute)	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DEP)</b> Leader Deputy Leader or Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Children’s Trust Board</b> Cabinet Member for Community Safety	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Coalition for Inclusive Living</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council

<b>Derbyshire Transformational Management Board</b> Leader of the Council Chief Executive Officer	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Sport</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Partnership Forum</b> Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council (substitute)	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Partnership Forum Board</b> Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Sustainable and Stronger Communities Board</b> Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre Bolsover Project</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Derbyshire Arts Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>District Councils Network (formerly East Midlands Councils)</b> Cabinet Member for Environment Leader of the Council (Substitute)	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>East Midlands Museum Service</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>East Midlands ERDF Local Management Committee</b> Leader of the Council (SCR Representative)	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Frederick Gent Community Sport &amp; Leisure Management Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council



<b>Groundwork Creswell</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Joint Working Board</b> (BDC/NEDDC/CBC) Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council Chief Executive Officer Representative from Scrutiny Management Board (Observer)  Representative from Scrutiny Management Board (Substitute Observer)	First meeting of the Executive following Annual Council  <b>NOMINATIONS REQUIRED FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD</b>
<b>Junction Arts</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>LEADER Programme</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Local Authorities Energy Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Environment	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Local Government Association – General Assembly</b> Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Local Government Association – Rural Commission</b> Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of the Council – Substitute	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Local Government Association – Urban Commission</b> Deputy Leader of the Council Leader of the Council – Substitute	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Local Government Information Unit</b> Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Markham Employment Growth Zone (MEGZ) Liaison Committee</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Meden Valley Making Places Ltd</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council

<b>North East &amp; Bolsover Learning Disability Partnership Board</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Older Persons Forum</b> Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Peak District and Derbyshire Destination Management Partnership</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board</b> Leader of the Council	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Shirebrook Business Services Board</b> Cabinet Member for Community Safety	Annual Meeting of the Council
<b>Supporting People Commissioning Body</b> Cabinet Member for Housing Management	Annual Meeting of the Council

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Representatives on Outside Bodies be appointed as outlined in the report.**

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	8.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Improvement Scrutiny Review - Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots		
Report by:	Councillor H. Gilmour, Chair of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee		
Other Officers Involved	Performance and Quality Officer		
Director	Director of Development Director of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor A. Tomlinson, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

Please specify how the proposals help to deliver the corporate aims.

Make the best use of our people and other assets

#### **TARGETS**

Does the subject matter contribute to any targets specified in the Corporate Plan?

SOD 01 - Reduce the Council's overall spend in accordance with the Savings Strategy by March 2013.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

Please describe how the proposals deliver value for money for the Council and its customer.

Continue to monitor, review and improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of all Council Services

## **THE REPORT**

Towards the end of the financial year in 2012, the Improvement Scrutiny Committee completed a Scrutiny Review of Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots. Elected Members were concerned that Grounds Maintenance and Cleansing budgets were being needlessly spent on land that could alternatively be disposed of.

With the Council still to find further savings in the next few years, it was considered timely to review this area with a view to identifying what savings have been made, what further savings could be found and whether the service or area of spend provides the Authority with value for money. The Council is taking this issue seriously and has dedicated a Portfolio Holder, Councillor Duncan McGregor to oversee budgets and savings.

## **ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Improvement Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial :	None
Legal :	None
Human Resources :	None

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Executive consider approval of the recommendations outlined in the report.

ATTACHMENT:	<b>Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots Scrutiny Review report</b>
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FILE REFERENCE:	<b>N/A</b>
SOURCE DOCUMENT:	<b>N/A</b>

# **BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots Scrutiny Review 2011/12**

**April 2012**

# **Foreword from Councillor Hilary Gilmour**

## **Chair of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee**

It is a pleasure to present this review on behalf of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee.

It details findings, conclusions and recommendations from the committee on it's review of Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage plots.

I would like to give our thanks to all those Officers who contributed to this report but especially Peter Campbell, Roger Owen, Adie Lowry, Danielle Troop and Julie Lewis for their data and information throughout the review.

Many thanks to Abby Brownsword, Democratic officer and special thanks to Robin Raily, Performance and Quality Officer, the Scrutiny support for Improvement Committee, for all his dedicated hard work and commitment to this review.

Finally, thank you to all the members of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee for their involvement and commitment in this review.

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## 1. Introduction

Elected Members have been concerned that the authority is expending resources keeping unused Council land, garages and garage plots clean and tidy when this land could be disposed of to developers or other bodies. The Scrutiny Review has questioned Key Officers on the prospects of disposal and also looked at alternatives to the sale of these assets.

## 2. Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

**Consider undertaking a project to identify Council-owned sites and garage plots that consume a disproportionate amount of the Grounds Maintenance and Cleansing budgets and look at measures to reduce problems.**

Identify hot spots; consider the particular areas that incur higher costs for cleansing and maintenance and look at re-configuring sites to reduce the incidence of fly tipping, dog fouling, etc. Options that could be considered include, for instance, looking at the issues around diverting paths away from garage sites (to reduce footfall and thus, litter, dog fouling, etc),

(References: 5:2, 5:3, 5:4, 5:5, 5:6, 5:7, 5:12, 6:6)

### Recommendation 2

**Consider producing an Improvement Plan to put in place arrangements for the management of Council-owned sites and garage plots with a view to disposal and/or development.**

As disposal of unused Council land and plots has stalled due to market conditions, alternative uses should be considered. Options could include, producing a list of Council-owned sites that are not suitable for disposal. Revisit the list of sites that are suitable for disposal; look at each site individually and consider what changes could be made to improve the prospects for disposal. Update the database that first appeared in the Executive report 'HRA Garage Sites' (01/12/2008) to reflect changes in land usage, any disposal, etc. Consider the implications of the Disposals and Acquisitions Strategy (6/3/2006).

(References: 5:1, 5:2, 5:3, 5:5, 5:6, 5:7, 5:9, 5:10, 6:1, 6:2, 6:7)

### Recommendation 3

#### **Allotments**

- I. **Examine the present rate charged for allotments and what services are delivered for that fee.**
- II. **Consider increasing the annual fee to cover the cost of administration and bring charging more into line with national trends and with the facilities provided.**

- III. **Consider the relative sizes of each plot and adjust the area so each plot is the same as the national average of 250/300 m<sup>2</sup>**
- IV. **Determine the exact number of allotments that are invoiced per year.**
- V. **Produce an allotments strategy, with a vision and clear objectives, detailing activities that will make best use of allotments in the future.**
- VI. **Approach Parish Councils to see if they would be interested in being part of a strategy for the disposal/development of their allotments.**
- VII. **Consider the creation of Allotments Management as an activity and approach Parish Councils as a potential income stream.**

Plotholders would be given adequate warning of any impending rise in costs and then charges could be introduced that reflect the facilities provided, for example, water or security. Also, costs would reflect the relative difference in area from one site to another. More detailed research with a family benchmark group could be undertaken to ascertain what would be a reasonable amount to charge. The District could formally contact Parish Councils to consult on their pricing, disposal and development policies.

(References: 5:5, 5:7, 5:8, 5:9, 6:3, 6:4, 6:8. See Appendixes 2, 4 & 5))

#### **Recommendation 4**

##### **Look into how Social Enterprises could develop unused Council plots of land**

This proposed activity is appropriate for the Aims and Objectives of this Review, that is, to promote and to make more efficient use of vacant Council land. The activity also contributes to the Corporate Plan Target, R 06 and fits well with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities.

Consider similar projects to the recently awarded summer works StreetScene (Shaw Trust) scheme. Or a coordinated environmental improvement scheme could be undertaken, for example, a 'clean-up' campaign of various pieces of land utilising the Probation Service's workforce. Also, look at the model provided by the Rhubarb Farm project and consider if there is a place for another Community Supported Agriculture project in the District. Consider a liaison with Groundworks Creswell to establish construction projects in the District to build Eco-bungalows (or similar) using NEETs-type labour.

(References: 5:1, 5:2, 5:3, 5:5, 5:6, 5:7, 5:10, 5:11, 6:5, 6:9)



### **3. Scope of Review**

To consider the use of Council-owned land within Bolsover District under the remit of Regeneration, by:

- 3.1. Reducing Council expenditure on the maintenance of unused land and building assets.
- 3.2. To consider options for making better use of these assets.
- 3.3. To make recommendations for the management or disposal of these assets.

#### **The Committee is comprised of the following Members,**

Cllr Hilary Gilmour (Chair)	Cllr Jim Smith (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Toni Bennett	Cllr Rose Bowler
Cllr Pauline Bowmer	Cllr Ray Brooks
Cllr Jim Clifton	Cllr Terry Cook
Cllr Ray Heffer	Cllr Rita Turner

Support to the Committee was provided by the Scrutiny Officer, the Performance and Quality Officer and a Democratic Services Officer.

### **4. Method of Review**

The Committee met on 2 occasions to consider the scope of the review, key issues they wanted to discuss and the people they wished to interview.

The Committee interviewed relevant officers and stakeholders in order to identify what procedures were in place and how the authority was meeting its obligations to maintain these sites.

Attached at **Appendix 1** is a list of stakeholders interviewed.

#### **Equalities and Diversity**

Within the process of the review the panel have taken into account the impact of equalities and have not identified any negative impact.

### **5. Evidence (with references)**

The following documents were considered as part of the review:

- 5.1. Briefing by the Head of Housing – HRA Asset Management and HRA Business Plan.
  - 5.1.1. The briefing by the Head of Housing outlined how the authority is responding to the changes in legislation that the coalition government is implementing. The explanation included detail on the financial arrangements that are required for the authority to take responsibility for a self funded HRA. There was some explanation of the impact that the Localism Act and Welfare Reform legislation is going to have

on the public and private rented sectors. Equally, there may be opportunities in the future for the authority to undertake building new houses in the District.

**5.2. Council Owned Garages and Garage Sites Policy (Dec 2006)**

5.2.1. A policy that aims to ensure that garage sites are managed in a way that maximises their value to the community. This policy covers the following areas:

5.2.1.1. Service standards for the management and maintenance of garage sites

5.2.1.2. Guidance to tenants who rent garages or garage plots

5.2.1.3. Guidance as to how to evaluate the options of investing in, improving sites or considering disposal or alternative use of sites.

**5.3. Report to Executive: HRA Garage Sites – (Dec 2008)**

5.3.1. The authority is currently spending money on maintaining garage sites with little or no return. This report recommends disposing of a number of sites resulting in a capital receipt to the authority and a saving on maintenance.

**5.4. Untidy Land and Buildings Policy (Jan 2008:reviewed Feb 2012)**

5.4.1. The aim of the Policy is to improve the amenity of residential neighbourhoods across the district in order to make them a cleaner, safer, greener place to live.

**5.5. Disposals and Acquisitions Strategy (Mar 2006)**

5.5.1. This Strategy was produced to provide a framework for the disposal and acquisition of land and property assets.

**5.6. Neighbourhood Management – Report from Communities Services Project Coordinator on the use of the Probation Service’s work team(s).**

5.6.1. As present, the Probation Service’s Community Service work team(s) are utilised by the Neighbourhood Management team to clean up paths, edges of back roads and communal areas. The Project Coordinator explained that these work teams are also available for one-off projects with the only proviso being, the teams will not undertake work that is within the remit of another body e.g. work that should be done by the authority’s Grounds Maintenance teams.

**5.7. Summary of questions: Grounds Maintenance related issues, Housing related issues and Regeneration related issues.**

5.7.1. A series of questions all originally raised by the Committee Members over the period of the Review but gathered together in one document. Officers from 3 different services attended the Committee meeting and provided responses to these specific questions. (see Appendix 3)

5.7.1.1. Head of Housing;

5.7.1.2. Street Services Manager

5.7.1.3. Senior Valuer

**5.8. APSE State of the Market Survey 2012 of Local Authority Allotment Services (see Appendix 4)**

5.8.1. An on-line survey carried out by the Association for Public Sector Excellence in Jan/Feb 2012.

5.8.2. 131 authorities took part, answering questions on:

5.8.2.1. 1. Number and management of allotments

- 5.8.2.2. 2. Cost of allotments
  - 5.8.2.3. 3. Size of allotments
  - 5.8.2.4. 4. Future increases in the number of allotments
  - 5.8.2.5. 5. Budget for allotments
  - 5.8.2.6. 6. Facilities at allotment sites
  - 5.8.2.7. 7. Security
  - 5.8.2.8. 8. Allotment strategy
- 5.9.** Breakdown of data and information for Bolsover DC Allotments (see Appendixes 2 & 5)
- 5.9.1. Tables setting out details of;
    - 5.9.1.1. Where Bolsover DC (as opposed to those run by Parishes) allotment sites are situated;
    - 5.9.1.2. The number of plots;
    - 5.9.1.3. The occupancy rate for each site
    - 5.9.1.4. The square area of the sites
- 5.10.** Briefing by the Deputy Leader: Groundworks Creswell Construction Training projects.
- 5.10.1. The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration briefed the Chair and Vice Chair of Improvement Scrutiny on the discussions that have been taking place with Groundworks Creswell (GC).
  - 5.10.2. Groundworks Creswell (GC) has been inspecting plots of land in Bassetlaw and North East Derbyshire with a view to new construction projects in those areas. GC has been looking for plots to build eco-friendly bungalows using a workforce recruited from the NEETs\* category or similar. The Deputy Leader explained that Bolsover would be interested in being involved in similar projects and had passed this along to GC.
- 5.11.** Summer Street Scene Works: a tender was recently submitted by a third sector organisation to carry out works. Shaw Trust, one of the organisations who have tendered for the works, is the UK's largest third sector provider of employment services for disabled and disadvantaged people.
- 5.12.** Corporate Plan Targets (PERFORM):
- 5.12.1. CS 04: Reduce the incidence of fly tipping, dog fouling and littering by 20% by March 2015.
  - 5.12.2. E 06: Increase the Standard of Cleanliness, so that 96% of streets each year meet the criteria of an acceptable standard, established by Keep Britain Tidy Group Local Environment Quality Standards (LEQS).
  - 5.12.3. R 06: Deliver £100,000 of New Homes Bonus per annum in the district as part of Local Investment Plan

## 6. Key Findings

### Strengths

#### 6.1. 'Laying the Foundations – a new Housing Strategy' (Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager)

The government has stated that housing has a key role to play in addressing the Coalition's priorities of economic growth and social mobility. In the run-up to the Autumn statement, the Chancellor softened poor growth figures with news of new housing incentives. Many elements of the new Housing Strategy released November 2011 and which provides the framework for the Chancellors Housing spend plans, were also contained in the Localism Act released the week before.

Key Governmental interventions include;

- Support for a Challenging Market
- (Moving) from Grant to Investment
- Focus on Assets
- Stepping up Supply
- Changing how Social Housing is Accessed

#### 6.2. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Plan (draft) Strategic Priorities (Head of Housing)**

6.2.1. To have in place well designed repair and maintenance systems which ensure the stock is well maintained and kept in a good state of repair.

6.2.2. To ensure the housing stock is brought up to and maintained at a locally determined Bolsover Standard, remaining attractive and meeting modern requirements and tenant expectations.

**6.2.3. To replace obsolete or uneconomic stock with new properties, which are better designed to meet future needs and create a better balanced portfolio.**

**6.2.4. To identify land, whether it be HRA, General Fund or non-council to build additional affordable homes to increase the number of Council owned properties available of the type and quality needed in locations where people want to live whilst ensuring a Balanced Housing Market**

6.2.5. To identify and consider potential opportunities for increasing the stock of properties available by acquiring homes, (e.g. RP disposals, new builds, reposessions & properties previously sold under RTB)

6.2.6. To ensure the ongoing availability of housing stock, which specifically caters for the particular housing needs of older vulnerable, special needs or minority households through the provision of appropriate attributes and facilities.

6.2.7. To have a long term strategy and programme in place to incrementally improve the thermal efficiency of the housing stock, at the same time helping to reduce levels of fuel poverty.

6.2.8. To use procurement processes to best effect to ensure value for money in the delivery of all repairs, maintenance and improvement works

6.2.9. To use the housing asset base to help deliver the wider corporate priorities of the Council

### **6.3. Allotment Services**

6.3.1. The authority has 71 allotment plots across the District, approximately 4.63 acres in area.

6.3.2. 81.7% are occupied (58) while 18.3% (13) are vacant.

6.3.3. The authority charges £2.50 p.a. per plot.

6.3.4. Property Services raise an invoice which is sent out periodically by Billing and Recovery and process the invoice on return.

6.3.5. Property Services estimates that administration (including Billing) of allotments costs about £500 p.a.

6.3.6. Of the 131 authorities that responded to the APSE State of the Market survey, 71.3% report that they charge at least £31.00 p.a.

### **6.4. Allotments: Temporary (see Appendix 5)**

6.4.1. The authority has 71 allotment plots across the District but they are temporary so are not protected from disposal and can be sold.

6.4.2. Further guidance on allotments is available from the The Allotments Regeneration Initiative.

### **6.5. Groundworks Creswell**

6.5.1. Groundworks Creswell (GC) are starting a series of constructions projects in the Bassetlaw and NEDDC areas.

6.5.2. GC are setting up training schemes for young people who fall into the NEETS category.

6.5.3. GC are building Eco-bungalows on small plots of land donated by the local authorities. (GC does not have the cash flow to buy land).

6.5.4. When each Eco-bungalow is complete the property is sold on to the open market and the capital receipt is given back to the local authority in return for the land donation.

## **Areas for Improvement**

### **6.6. Unused Council Land Garages and Garage Plots: Grounds Maintenance (Street Services Manager)**

6.6.1. Represents 1.25% of the overall Grounds Maintenance (GM) budget. - This includes approximately £10,000 p.a. on GM and approximately £15,000 p.a. for Cleansing functions like Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping and Litter. Street Services recharges the HRA approximately £600k p.a.

6.6.2. The majority of the Garage site GM budget is expended on just a few 'problem' sites.

6.6.3. If garage sites were put to an alternative use e.g. building houses, Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping and Litter problems would not necessarily end but just be moved on to other sites i.e. it would not result in savings.

6.6.4. A higher level of Garage Site Management would more likely result in savings.

6.6.5. Investment in garage sites would increase returns e.g. making garages larger (to accommodate bigger modern cars), making the sites more secure, etc.

## **6.7. Unused Council Land Garages and Garage Plots: Regeneration (Senior Valuer)**

6.7.1. No separate small plots of land have been sold since 2008

6.7.2. Not viable to dispose of individual plots

### **6.7.3. Barriers to disposal**

6.7.3.1. Poor location of many sites

6.7.3.2. Access difficulties.

6.7.3.3. Unofficial pedestrian and vehicular accesses that have been in use for many years.

6.7.3.4. Close proximity of other dwellings restricting development.

6.7.3.5. Current state of property market.

6.7.3.6. A lot of sites are very small for only one plot and may not be viable in the current market.

6.7.3.7. If land is not maintained it may become overgrown and attract fly tipping.

6.7.3.8. There is also the possibility of encroachments by adjoining owners onto the land.

6.7.3.9. No land is currently being marketed due to the current state of the residential market. The last two sites that sales were agreed (2007 & 2008), fell through due to the depressed state of the market. No sites have been disposed of since the garage site report of 2008.

6.7.3.10. Research carried out by Knight Frank shows residential land values in the East Midlands fell by 24% between 2008 and 2009.

6.7.3.11. Research in 2011 shows that land values were 40% down on the peak values of 2007 and values having recovered slightly during 2010 were down 3% at the end of 2011.

6.7.3.12. Any assets with a value under £10,000 are not shown on the asset register. There are a number of areas of POS that have recently been acquired under S106 agreements that are not currently shown.

6.7.3.13. 22 garage plots and 10 'other' sites across the District are considered suitable for disposal.

6.7.3.14. Suggestions for alternative uses include, garden extensions and private off road parking/garaging

## **6.8. Allotment Services**

6.8.1. Property Services estimates that the administration (including Billing) of allotments costs about £500 p.a.

6.8.2. Property Services have stated that there are 58 allotments occupied whereas Billing and Recovery have reported that they invoice only 46.

6.8.3. Billing and Recovery have stated that they are dependent on Property Services (Regeneration) to inform them who should be invoiced.

- 6.8.4. As there is such a low annual fee charged, if an allotment holder doesn't pay, there are no other measures taken for collection.
- 6.8.5. The annual fee for the rental of an allotment is £2.50 but the area of that plot in one ward might be 150m<sup>2</sup>; in another ward it might be as much as 890m<sup>2</sup> per plot.
- 6.8.6. The Allotments Service lacks a clear vision and objectives.
- 6.8.7. Parish Councils have a list of unused allotments; Parishes could be approached to see if they would be interested in signing up to Bolsover's marketing strategy for the disposal/development of land or if they would be interested in having their allotments managed on their behalf.

### **6.9. Groundworks Creswell**

- 6.9.1. The District has unused land with planning permission that may be suitable for Groundworks Creswell's Construction Training project.

## **7. Conclusions**

The Review of Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots by the Improvement Scrutiny Committee was initially decided upon by Conference in mid-2011. Elected Members were concerned that resources were being expended on the grounds maintenance of these areas when ideally these plots could be sold off.

Initial research revealed that the sums expended on Grounds Maintenance (GM) are negligible (Cleansing is a bigger issue) and these areas had been considered in 2008/09 and new Policies for dealing with the problems were introduced. The main issue at this point was the fact that Property Services had been unable to dispose of any sites since the property crash of 2008. As a result of this issue, the Review then shifted emphasis to look at alternative uses for unused sites.

This Review has been able to make recommendations for developing new or improving existing processes, for instance, the management of allotments or the maintenance and cleansing of unused Council land. But the main direction of the Review's recommendations is towards either alternative uses for sites or managing the sites better. Also, successful 'alternative use' examples for the District like Rhubarb Farm or Groundworks Creswell construction projects are highlighted.

This Review has concerned itself with considering options for the alternative use of sites or better managing the ones we have. The parallel Review 'Demand for Housing' being conducted by the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee has been considering how unused Council land can be used for building houses. It is appreciated that the recommendations from this Review complement those of the 'Demand for Housing' Review.

**Stakeholders**

Councillor Alan Tomlinson	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
Councillor Keith Bowman	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Duncan McGregor	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Efficiencies
Adie Lowery	Street Services Manager
Danielle Troop	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
David Hill	Head of Finance and Revenues
Diane Bonsor	Housing Needs Manager
Grant Galloway	Building and Contracts Manager
Ian Collis	Planning Policy Manager
John Ritchie	Head of Community and Street Services
Julie Lewis	Project Coordinator
Kevin Hopkinson	Director of Development
Matt Broughton	Project Officer (Business Growth)
Peter Campbell	Head of Housing
Roger Owen	Senior Valuer
Sam Bentley	Senior Environmental Health Officer



### All allotment sites breakdown

Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area (Acres)
71	58	13	81.7	18.3	4.63
4.63 acres = 18737m <sup>2</sup> (average 18737/71 = <b>264 m<sup>2</sup></b> )					

#### Individual Sites

##### Waterloo Street, Bramley Vale

Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
4	4	0	100	0	0.88 acres
0.88 acres = 3561m <sup>2</sup> (average 3561/4 = <b>890 m<sup>2</sup></b> )					

##### King Street, Clowne S43 4BS

Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
16	15	1	93.75	6.25	0.64 acres
0.64 acres = 2445m <sup>2</sup> (average 2445/16 = <b>151 m<sup>2</sup></b> )					

##### Portland Avenue, Creswell

#### **Breakdown**

Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
17	15	2	88.24	11.76	0.88 acres
0.88 acres = 3561m <sup>2</sup> (average 3561/17 = <b>209 m<sup>2</sup></b> )					

##### Whaley Common, Langwith

Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
6	6	0	100	0	0.16 acres
0.16 acres = 647m <sup>2</sup> (average 647/71 = <b>108 m<sup>2</sup></b> )					

##### Burlington Avenue, Langwith Junction (evens NG20 9AD odds NG20 9AB)

Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
13	11	2	84.62	15.38	0.87 acres
0.87 acres = 3521m <sup>2</sup> (average 3521/13 = <b>271 m<sup>2</sup></b> )					

Hillcrest, Shirebrook					
Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
4	4	0	100	0	0.22 acres
0.22 acres = 890m <sup>2</sup> (average 890/4 = <b>223</b> m <sup>2</sup> )					

Moorfield Lane, Whaley Thorns					
Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
2	2	0	100.00	0.00	0.19 acres
0.19 acres = 769m <sup>2</sup> (average 769/2 = <b>385</b> m <sup>2</sup> )					

Bakestonemoor, Whitwell					
Number of Plots	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant	Area
9	1	8	11.11	88.89	0.79 acres
0.79 acres = 3197m <sup>2</sup> (average 3197/9 = <b>355</b> m <sup>2</sup> )					

**Questions for Officers relating to;  
Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots Scrutiny Review**

**Aims and Objectives of the Review**

To consider the following issues for each area;

1. Savings identified/made in the last year?
2. Further savings that could be made?
3. Efficiencies in the particular areas?
4. Value for money of the areas?
5. Whether the authority can generate income from the areas?

**Issues to be resolved**

The initial drive behind this Review was Members concern about the cost of maintaining unused sites, garage and garage plots. Members thought that the disposal of this land and properties would realise savings and efficiencies.

**Grounds Maintenance-related issues**

- For the maintenance of the areas under review (Unused Council land and Garage areas), typically, what proportion of the overall budget does it represent i.e. how big is it a drain on the budget is it maintaining this land?
- What costs (approx) have been incurred keeping land clean and tidy since the policies below were agreed i.e. in the last 2-3 years?
  - Council Owned Garages & Garage Sites Policy (Jan 2009) and,
  - HRA Garage Sites report (Dec 2008) and,
  - Untidy Land & Buildings Policy (Jan 2008)?
- What costs are incurred by other services e.g. Anti Social Behaviour, Environmental Health, passed on to the HRA?

**Housing-related issues**

- How many Garages/Plots are there? Of all the garages; how many have been:
  - Rented?
  - Empty?
  - What's the rental income from Garages: Costs balanced against income?

**Regeneration-related issues**

- Is there an alternative i.e. what would happen if this land was not maintained?
- What are the main barriers to the disposal of land?

- What alternative uses could the sites be put to if disposal of the land does not succeed?
- Has any thought gone into the 'batching' of land i.e. disposing of small plots of land as one lot e.g. instead of one plot of 5 acres, 2-3 plots of 1-2 acres each?
- How many sites have been disposed of since the HRA Garage Sites report was agreed by Exec in Dec 2008?
- What is not on the Fixed Asset Register?

### **Allotments**

- Please provide a position statement on the management and disposal of Allotments.
  - What proportion of Allotments are operating and what proportion are unused?
  - Are there alternatives for those allotments that are unused? E.g.
    - Disposal
    - Turning into public open space
    - Reclaiming and promoting as new allotment space
    - Reclaiming and promoting as new schemes e.g. Rhubarb Farm, etc.

**Local Authority Allotment Services State of the Market 2012**

The Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) conducted an on-line survey on allotments during January and February 2012. In total, 131 responses were received from local authorities throughout the UK.

**Results from the survey**

**1. Number and management of allotments**

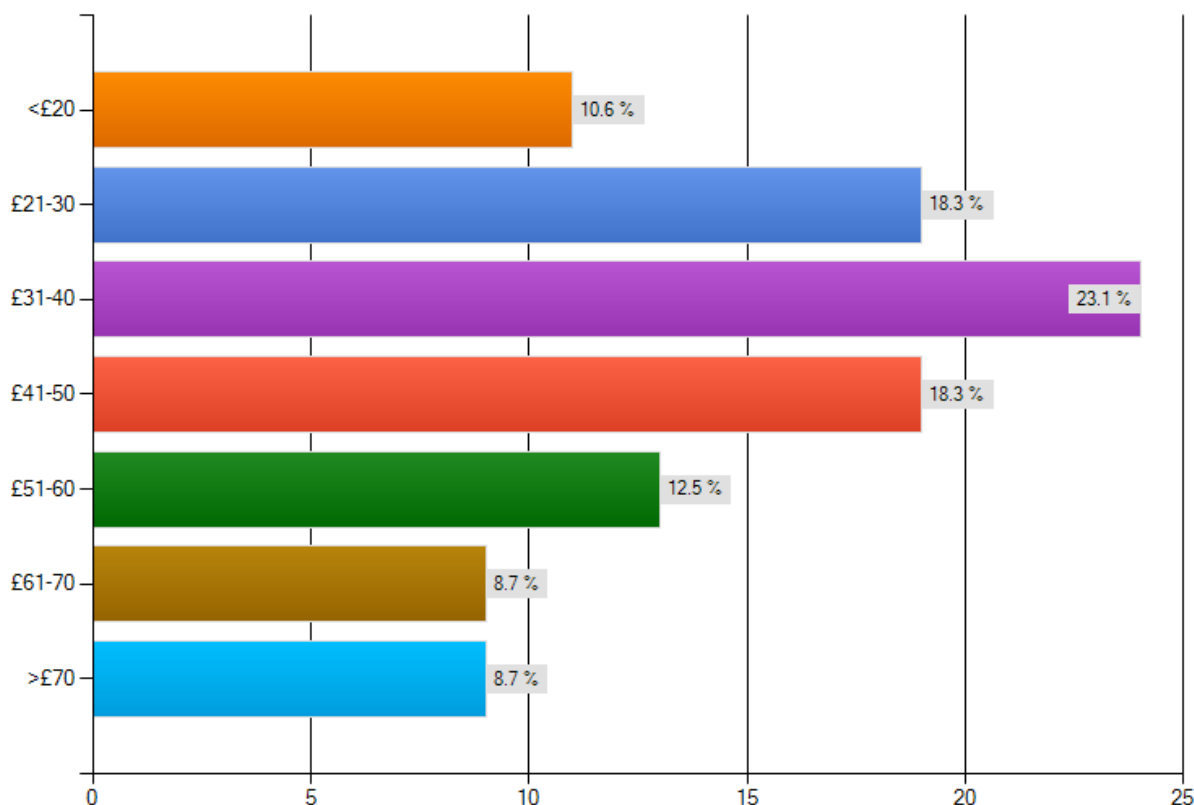
93% of respondents answered that they have council managed allotments within their authority. From the respondents that answered 'no' to this question; 75% stated that demand has been expressed for these.

In terms of management of the allotments, 79% stated that they have allotments which are managed by a council officer and 21% stated that these are managed through a site committee or association.

**2. Cost of allotments**

The majority of respondents stated that the cost per annum to rent an allotment in 2011-12 was between £21 and £50. The full breakdown is as follows:

**Cost per annum to rent an allotment plot in 2011-12 (Note: if you have different costs according to size of land, please use the cost for a typical 250 square meter plot including water).**

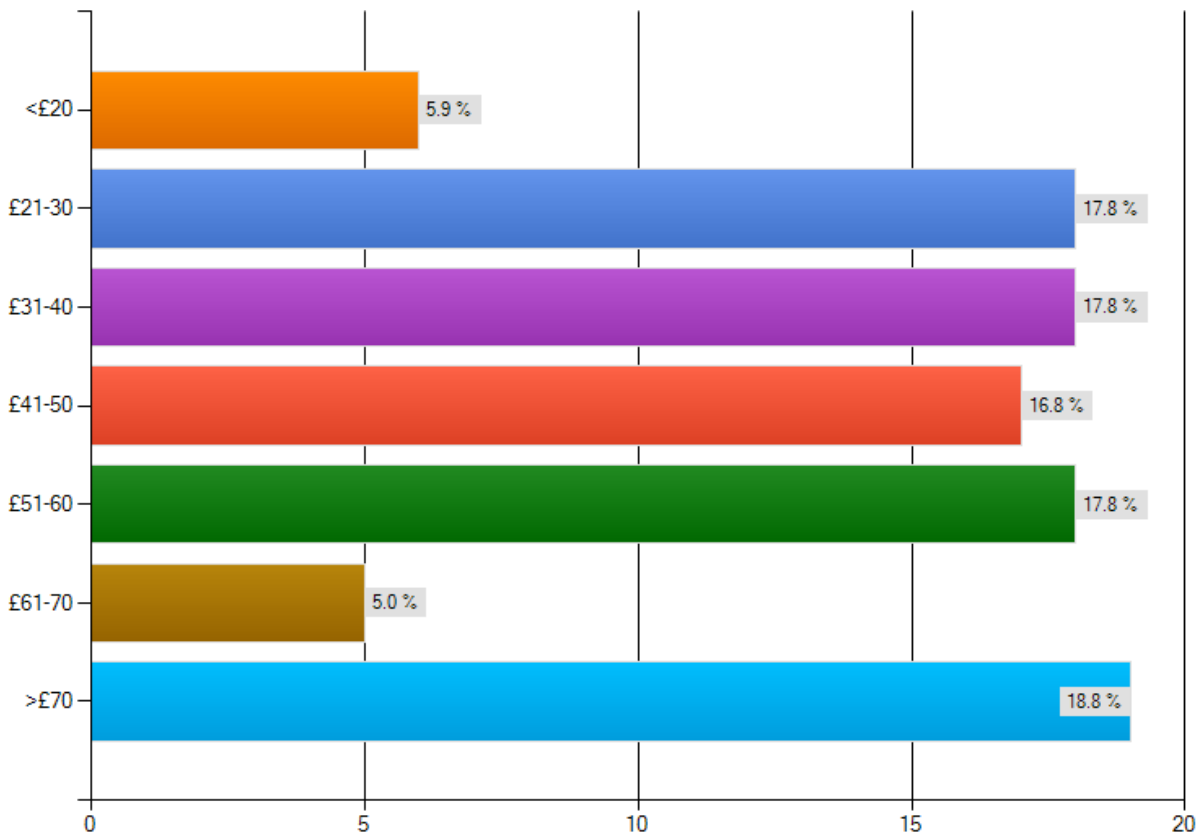


71.3% of respondents are reporting a cost of £31 or above. In comparison, the 2008 survey had reported even though the average cost to rent an allotment in 2008-09 was between £21 and £40, 60% of respondents expected the rent costs for 2009-10 to be above £31.

The 2012 survey asked about previous years increases in the rent of an allotment plot and 45% of respondents stated that there has been an increase in this (beyond an inflationary increase) during the past 2 years.

When respondents were asked about the expected cost per annum to rent an allotment next year (in 2012-13), 76.2% answered that they expected this to be £31 or above and 18.8% answered that this is above £70, representing an overall increase from the current cost paid. The full breakdown is as follows:

**Expected cost per annum to rent an allotment plot in 2012-13**



The majority (73%) of respondents claimed that the charge is directly related to the area of the allotment (e.g. square meters) and 18% stated that this is standard regardless of the size. There was also a split in the respondents who answered that concessionary prices are offered (65% yes, 35% no). From those who offer concessions, the breakdown is as follows:

- 97% offer discounts for pensioners, over 60's and/or retired people. The majority of these (70%) offer a 40-50% discount.
- 71% offer discounts to the unemployed or those on income support. The majority of these (59%) offer a 40-50% discount.
- 69% offer discounts to people with disabilities. The majority of these (53%) offer a 40-50% discount.
- 29% offer discounts to students. Of these, 26% offer a discount of 20-30% and 32% offer a discount of 40-50%.

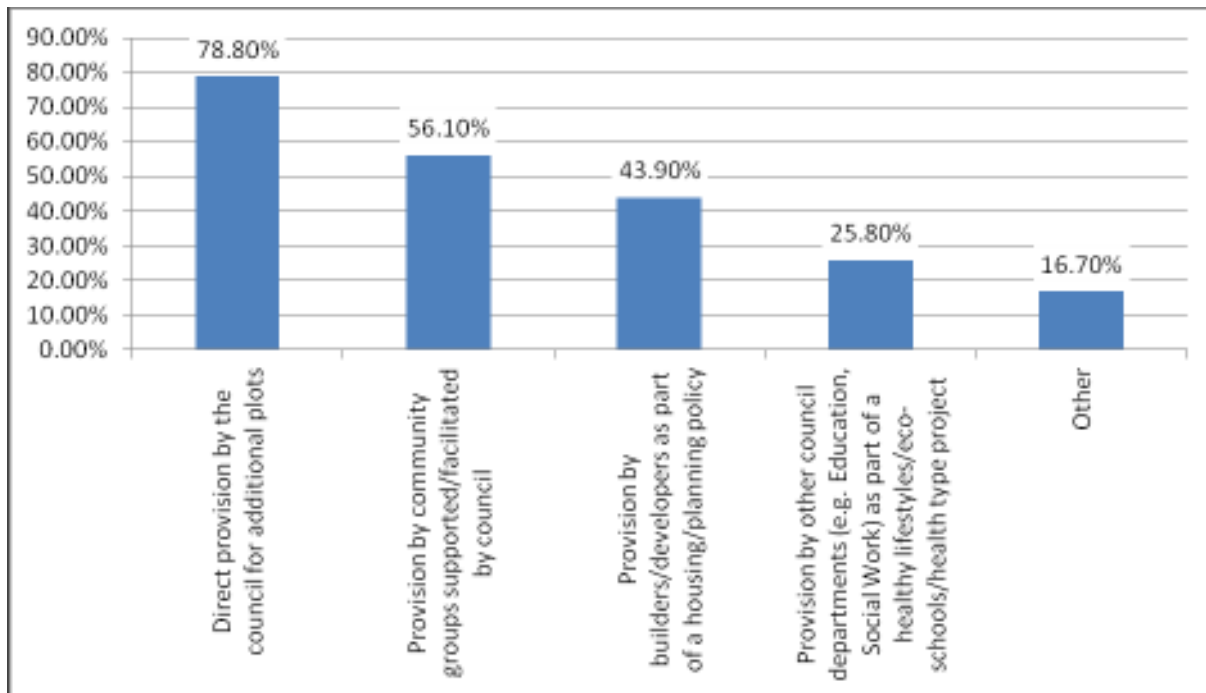
### 3. Size of allotments

In terms of the size of plots available, 37% stated that they have a standard size for a plot, and out of these, the most common size was 250-299 square meters. When asked for the total number of allotment sites in the local authority, the majority was 1-15 (55%), but this ranged to over 40 (11%). Again, there was a range of responses in terms of allotment plots, with 56% having 750 plots or less, but 5% having over 3,000 plots.

Waiting lists have proved the demand for allotments with 59% of respondents stating that they have 100-600 people on the waiting list for an allotment and 12% claiming over 1,000 people on their waiting list.

### 4. Future increases in the number of allotments

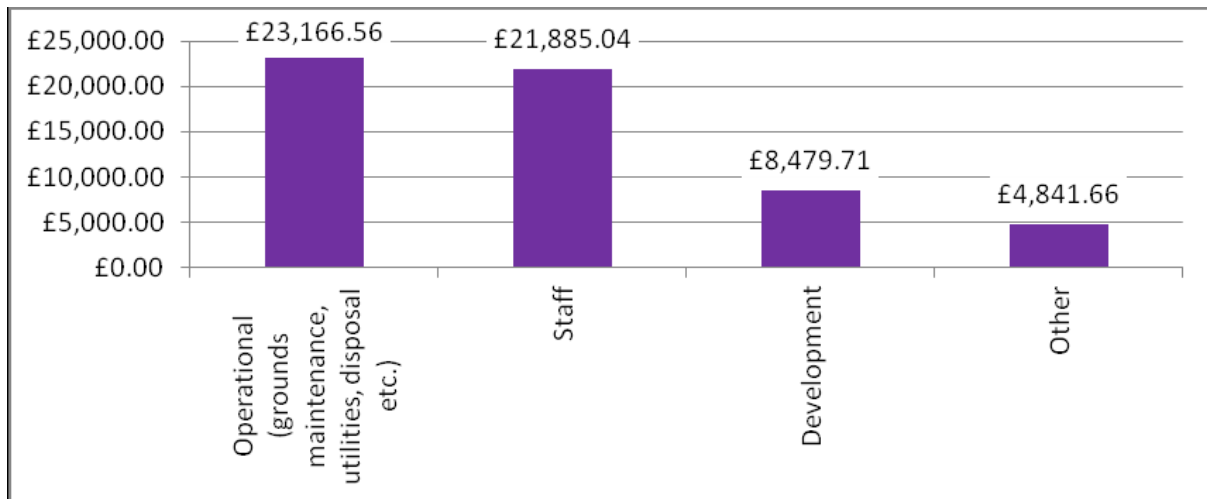
64% of respondents stated that their council plans to increase the number of allotments. From those respondents who stated that the number of allotments is planned to increase, the method of doing this is shown in the diagram below:



This shows an increase in the proportion provided by community groups supported/facilitated by the council from the survey conducted in 2008 (from 29% in 2008 to 56% in 2012). This may be as a result of 'Big Society' and Localism with a drive for greater involvement of community groups in council services. It may also be a reflection of the reducing budgets for local authority parks services and subsequent reductions in the capacity of managers to take on further responsibilities or assets.

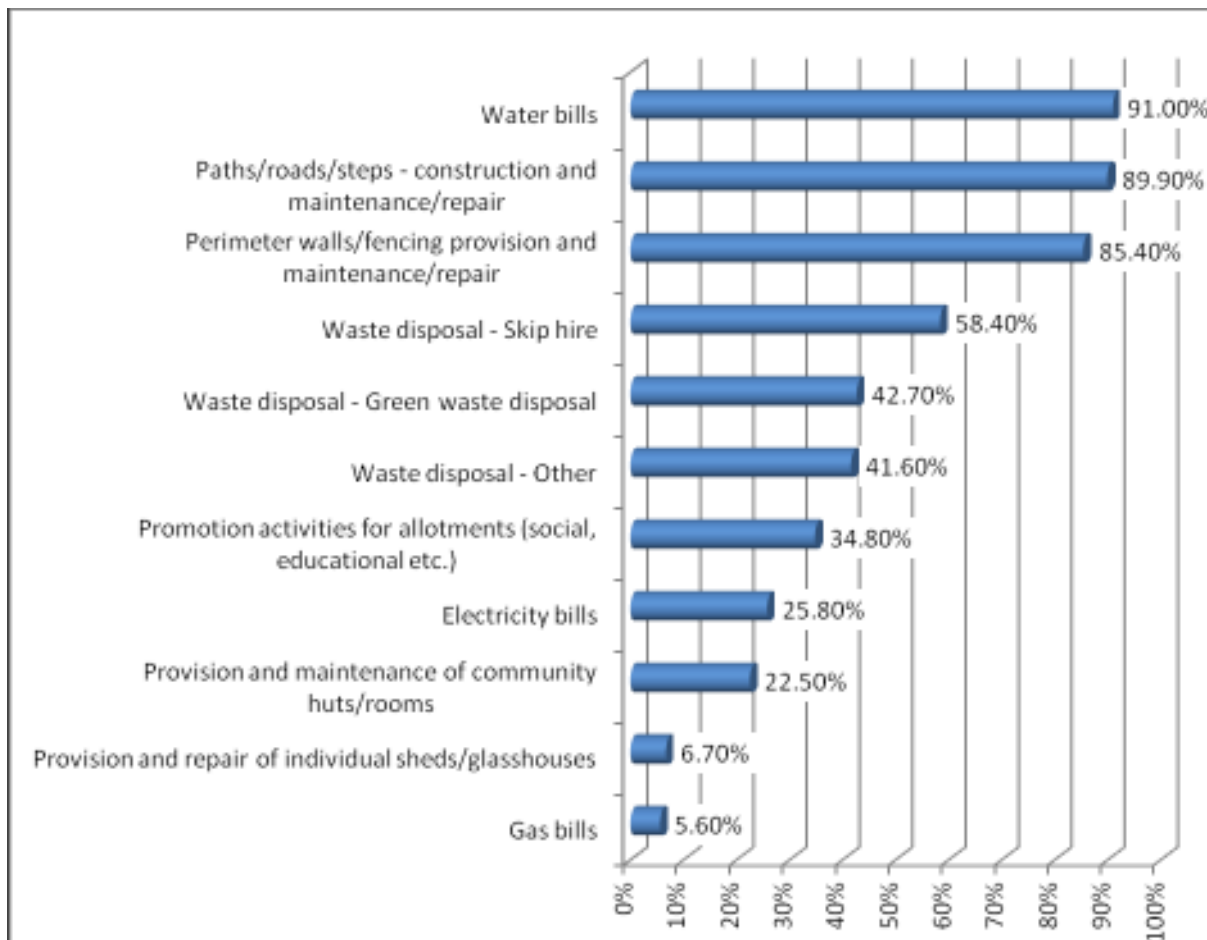
## 5. Budget for allotments

The average annual budgets for allotments were stated as follows:



The largest difference in the average budgets allocation above compared to the survey results in 2008 is in the area of development; a reduction from an average of £34,373 in 2008 to £8,479 in 2012. This may reflect a focus on maintenance as opposed to developments in allotments as a result of budget reductions in local authorities.

Respondents stated that their budgets include responsibility for the following:



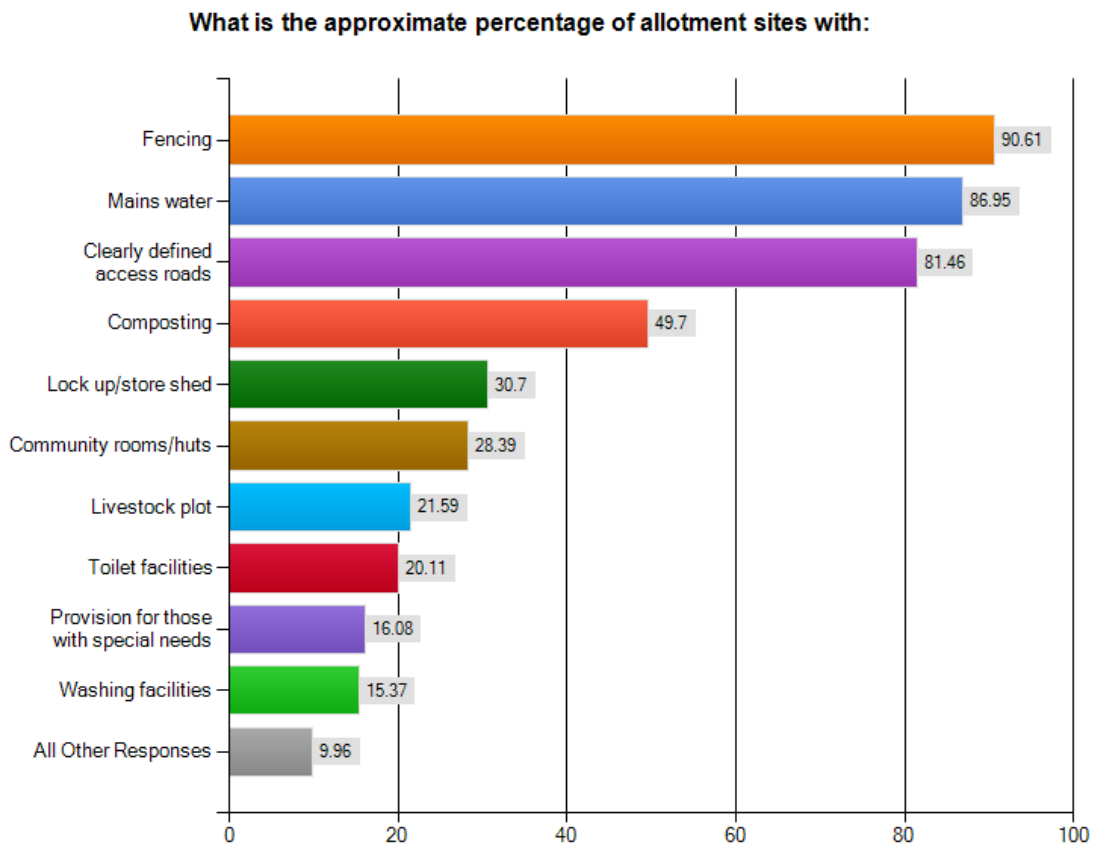


There has been a marked increase in the percentage of authorities whose budgets include water bills (from 83% in 2008 to 91% in 2012) and green waste disposal (from 33% in 2008 to 43% in 2012). There has been a reduction in the percentage of authorities whose budgets include provision and maintenance of community huts/rooms (from 31% in 2008 to 22.5% in 2012).

87% currently subsidise managing allotments (they do not recover full costs from managing these). Of the other respondents, 12% break even and only 1% make a surplus.

## 6. Facilities at allotment sites

Most allotment sites have the provision of water, fencing and clearly defined access roads. Some allotment sites have other services such as composting, livestock plots, community rooms, lock up/store sheds and toilet facilities. The full breakdown in terms of the average % of allotment sites with other facilities is as follows:



There has been an improvement in the average percentage of allotment sites with composting since 2008 with an increase from 44% in 2008 to 50% in 2012, as well as an increase in the percentage of allotment sites with community rooms/huts (from 23% in 2008 to 28% in 2012) and toilet facilities (from 17% in 2008 to 20% in 2012). The majority of respondents stated that grounds maintenance is carried out at allotment sites as an integral part of grounds maintenance operations/contracts (73%). 56% answered that this is carried out by the ploholders/site association and 21% said that this is carried out as part of rehabilitation programmes (*please note, respondents could choose more than one option on the survey for this answer*).

When asked how grounds maintenance is monitored, the majority stated that this is through inspections/site visits by an allotment officer, council officer or a site representative.

## **7. Security**

Plot holders themselves generally manage the security on allotment sites (67%), with 29% of respondents stating that they don't actively manage security. 7% stated community wardens manage security, 2% stated park rangers and 16% a 'plot watch' scheme or similar. This represents an increase in the percentage of 'plot watch' schemes since the survey was conducted in 2008 from 9% to 16% in 2012 and a reduction in the proportion where security is managed through community wardens and parks rangers. The majority of respondents have an allotment forum, friends group or something similar (67%).

## **8. Allotment strategy**

62% of respondents stated that they have an allotments strategy (which is an increase from 53% when the survey was conducted in 2008) and of the 38% that haven't currently got a strategy in place, 68% stated that the council is planning to develop one within the next 2 years.

54% stated that they are intending to increase the price of allotment plots within the next 2 years and a further 2% within the next 5 years. 34% are reviewing this. There has been a marked increase in the percentage of respondents who are reviewing their prices since the APSE email query was conducted in 2010; from 7% in 2010 to 34% in 2012. This may reflect the financial constraints facing local authority budgets and the need to review prices and charges to reduce dependence on subsidy by the local authority.

Of those who are intending to increase the price of allotment plots, 64% stated that even though they are increasing the price, the council would still have to subsidise the service; 35% stated that this would make the service cost neutral and only 2% stated that this would result in them making a surplus. When the responses to this question are correlated with the responses in section e) '*Budget for allotments*' above, the main change from the current situation is an increase in those councils trying to make the service cost neutral as opposed to an increase in the number of councils trying to achieve a surplus.

**Extract from DirectGov: Public Services all in one place**

**Types of allotment**

There are three types of allotment:

- 'Statutory' allotments - these cannot be sold or used for other purposes without the consent of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- Temporary allotments - these are not protected from disposal and can be sold
- Privately owned land - this can also be let for use as allotments but is not protected from disposal by your local council

**What will be provided to you**

A whole allotment is approximately 250 square metres. If you think this is too much, ask your provider if you can rent a half plot or share the plot with a friend.

Facilities will vary, but there are some basic things that you can normally expect:

- Safe and secure access for all users (main paths should be kept clear)
- An accessible water supply (the cost is often included in the rent)
- Adequate security measures against vandalism, like good fences and hedges

Some allotment sites may also provide:

- Toilets
- Huts that serve as a meeting place
- Sheds for plot holders (you may be charged extra for these)

**Your rights and responsibilities as a plotholder**

Your rights and responsibilities are set out in a tenancy agreement with the allotment provider.

As a plotholder, you will be expected to:

- Keep your allotment clean
- Maintain it in a good state of cultivation
- Keep minor paths clear
- Keep children and pets under control

Allotments are normally offered to plotholders on a renewable one-year lease. The agreement will usually set out how the tenancy can be terminated. The allotment provider has to give you 12 months' notice, expiring on or before 6 April or after 29 September in any year.

The allotment provider may also give one month's notice to quit if the rent remains unpaid or if you don't comply with the tenancy terms.

**What can I do with my plot?**

The main use of allotments is to grow fruit, flowers and vegetables. Depending on your agreement and any other regulations, you may also be able to:

- Keep hens and rabbits
- Keep bees

- Keep certain other livestock
- Build a hut, if one is not provided (it's recommended that you seek planning permission first)
- Build a pond (subject to certain safety restrictions)

### **What can't I do with my plot?**

There are limits to what you can do with your plot. For example you must not:

- Use it for a business or sub-let it (rent it out)
- Let the plot deteriorate
- Use sprinklers overnight or when you are not there
- Use barbed wire in a dangerous way

In addition, bonfires are either banned or subject to strict conditions.

### **What happens if the local council wants to dispose of the land?**

If your local council wants to sell a permanent allotment site, it must have the consent of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

The allotment provider must also fulfill certain conditions, including consulting with ploholders.

If the application is successful, the council has to provide an alternative site. If a statutory allotment provider ends a tenancy, the ploholder is entitled to compensation.

If your allotment is temporary or on privately owned land, then the Secretary of State's consent is not required. However, the allotment authority will usually still need to give you 12 months' notice.

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	9.
Date:	28th May 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Improvement Scrutiny Review - Use of Consultants		
Report by:	Councillor H. Gilmour, Chair of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee		
Other Officers Involved	Performance and Quality Officer		
Director	Director of Corporate Resources		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor D. McGregor, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Efficiencies.		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

Please specify how the proposals help to deliver the corporate aims.

Make the best use of our people and other assets

#### **TARGETS**

Does the subject matter contribute to any targets specified in the Corporate Plan?

SOD 01 - Reduce the Council's overall spend in accordance with the Savings Strategy by March 2013.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

Please describe how the proposals deliver value for money for the Council and its customer.

Continue to monitor, review and improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of all Council Services

## **THE REPORT**

Towards the end of the financial year in 2012, the Improvement Scrutiny Committee carried out a Scrutiny Review of the Use of Consultants by the Authority and has made 3 recommendations.

With the Council still to find further savings in the next few years, it was considered timely to review this area with a view to identifying what savings have been made, what further savings could be found and whether the service or area of spend provides the Authority with value for money. The Council is taking this issue seriously and has dedicated a Portfolio Holder, Councillor Duncan McGregor to oversee budgets and savings.

## **ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Improvement Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial :	None
Legal :	None
Human Resources :	None

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Executive consider approval of the recommendations outlined in the report.

ATTACHMENT:	<b>Use of Consultants Scrutiny Review report</b>
FILE REFERENCE:	<b>N/A</b>
SOURCE DOCUMENT:	<b>N/A</b>

# **BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Use of Consultants Scrutiny Review 2011/12**

**April 2012**

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## **Foreword from Councillor Hilary Gilmour Chair of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee**

On behalf of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee I am pleased to present a short, sharp review on the Use of Consultants. Its findings, conclusions and recommendations have been considered by the committee from documentation provided by the authority. Unfortunately, the original scope of the review does not reflect on the recommendations the committee agreed in this report as there was insufficient material to make recommendations other than those reached. However, the Improvement Scrutiny Committee will revisit the 'Use of Consultants' Review in the near future when more information is available.

I would like to extend our thanks to Abby Brownsword, Democratic Services Officer, and Robin Raily, Performance and Quality Officer, for his hard work and research.

Finally, thank you to members of Improvement Scrutiny Committee for their commitment and attendance at extra meetings to meet with the tight time schedules.



## 1. Introduction

Elected Members decided to review the Use of Consultants at the Scrutiny Conference in mid-2011. The Improvement Scrutiny Committee's remit was to look into the cost of the use of consultants, consider how efficiencies could be made, what alternatives were there and what other options could be employed.

When the scoping document was signed off in Feb 2012, it was decided, because of the relatively short time available, the Review would adopt a 'spotlight' approach to highlight and identify quick wins. An initial contact was made with the Head of Housing on the Use of Consultants in that service (knowing that Housing had used a variety of external businesses and individuals for advice, training and for implementing processes). This initial conversation highlighted the need to define what Consultants means in the Council context.

An enquiry was also made of Financial Services; put simply; what "..... monies have been spent on buying in external expertise" Financial Services explained that as a search criteria this was too broad but they responded by providing data and information for 4 Cost Codes. Analysis of the data and information provides the basis of the Review.

## 2. Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

**Establish a system to ensure that the engagement of Consultants is subject to the same controls as the recruitment of temporary or agency workers i.e. signed off by the Director of Corporate Resources and CEO.**

References: 5:3.

### Recommendation 2

**Ensure that steps are put in place to improve the recording of expenditure on Agency Staff, Software Purchases, Hired/Contract services and Professional / Consultancy Fees so that it's easier to analyse and monitor trends.**

References: 5:2, 5:3.

### Recommendation 3

**Revisit the 'Use of Consultants' Review when effective 'sort' mechanisms are in place that will allow an assessment of the costs of 'bought in' services; sorted by commissioning Officer and department**

References: 5:1

### **3. Scope of Review**

- 3.1. Use of Consultants
  - 3.1.1. Definition – what is a ‘Consultant’?
  - 3.1.2. What functions or services does a Consultant provide?
  - 3.1.3. Are there alternatives to using Consultants?
  - 3.1.4. Costs –
    - 3.1.4.1. External funding stream?
    - 3.1.4.2. Funding from reserves?
- 3.2. The Review’s general remit was to consider the following issues;
  - 3.2.1. Savings identified/made in the last year.
  - 3.2.2. Further savings that could be made
  - 3.2.3. Efficiencies in the particular area/service
  - 3.2.4. Value for money of the area/service
  - 3.2.5. Whether the authority can generate income from the area/service

#### **The Committee is comprised of the following Members,**

Cllr Hilary Gilmour (Chair)	Cllr Jim Smith (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Toni Bennett	Cllr Rose Bowler
Cllr Pauline Bowmer	Cllr Ray Brooks
Cllr Jim Clifton	Cllr Terry Cook
Cllr Ray Heffer	Cllr Rita Turner

Support to the Committee was provided by the Scrutiny Officer, the Performance and Quality Officer and a Democratic Services Officer.

### **4. Method of Review**

The Committee first considered the scope in autumn 2011 but signed the scoping document off in March 2012. As there was only 1 more monthly meeting available for the review, it was decided that the scoping document and evidence would be considered at the March meeting and the final report document signed off at the April meeting. In the end, it was decided to hold a special Committee meeting between the March and April meetings.

The Head of Housing was interviewed about their use of consultants and an enquiry was made of Financial Services for data on expenses incurred buying in external services. The report has been produced based on the material gathered from those conversations.

The Director of Corporate Resources was also consulted on the draft report

Attached at **Appendix 1** is a list of stakeholders interviewed.

#### **Equalities and Diversity**

Within the process of the review the panel have taken into account the impact of equalities and have not identified any negative impact.

## 5. Evidence (with references)

5.1. A Consultant may be defined as: an expert, a professional or a specialist. But in the context of the Council, examples of 'Consultants' could be defined as:

5.1.1. An Interim Manager – an individual employed on a temporary contract that's renewed on a regular basis. For instance, an Interim Manager will quite often be used to fill the gap between an Officer leaving and the recruitment of a replacement. Housing had an *interim* Repairs and Maintenance Manager in place for 2 years.

5.1.2. The Council has used specialists, for instance, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH Housing) – This not-for-profit organisation has been employed by the Council to produce major (Housing-related) policy documents where there is a statutory requirement or presumption to have these items in place, for example, the new HRA Business Plan.

5.1.3. Technical specialists – Housing used a company to install the new Mobile Working system; the company provided the software and the necessary training to run the system.

5.1.4. Structural Engineers – for instance, Housing has used Structural Engineers in the past to provide professional advice on building safety. Also advice has been sought from Asbestos and Legionella experts.

5.1.5. More widely; Training – the Council has often used organisations both commercial and not-for-profit, to deliver training on specialist subjects. For example, delivery of LGBT training, Sweeper Driver training, Fire Warden training, First Aid training, etc.

5.1.6. Investors in People Assessors – in order for the authority to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Investors in People regime, an on-site assessment - every 3 years - has to be paid for. This also applies to the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) award's (former CharterMark) annual assessment.

5.1.7. External Audit (Corporate) – there is a statutory requirement for the authority to engage external auditors.

5.2. An enquiry was made of Financial Services (Appendix 7) using the search parameter; 'any monies spent on buying in external expertise'. The following detail was provided.

### 5.2.1. **5008 - Professional / Consultancy Fees - annual budget of £616,650;**

5.2.1.1. For 2011/12 so far, the actual cost charged to the General Fund is: £306,568 against an annual budget of £616,650; and, actual cost charged to the HRA is £10,962: annual budget £15,980.

### 5.2.2. **1028 - Agency Staff - annual budget of £168,160**

5.2.2.1. For 2011/12 so far the actual cost charged to the General Fund is: £108,195 against an annual budget of £168,160; and Actual cost charged to the HRA is £4,359: annual budget of £4,500.

It should be noted that the Repairs and Maintenance manager was coded to the HRA, which is a separate, ring fenced account from the General Fund. It should also be noted that agency staff are often employed to cover vacant posts that can not be filled, and as such are not an additional cost to the Council.

### 5.2.3. **5001 - Hired / Contract services - annual budget £1.3 million.**

Some expertise is 'bought' in because either our own staff are not qualified enough or we do not have the facilities. An example of this is Vehicle Fleet where some repairs are done by external contractors rather than by our own mechanics. It was not possible to do an enquiry on 5001 to extract all "external expertise" costs as all kinds of contracts are coded here.

### 5.2.4. **4046 - Software Purchases**

Some consultancy work may be carried out as part of new capital projects, in which case, this would be charged to the capital code, along with all the other capital expenditure.

For instance, Financial Services purchased a new software model, but as part of the deal a consultant came in to review all of their services and part of the cost was off-set against the cost of purchasing the software. This kind of thing could occur on all kinds of purchases, which we would not be aware of, and would not be able to extract the costs from. There was a similar arrangement in place for Housing's Mobile Working scheme.

5.2.5. An examination of the details provided by Financial Services listing the services and expertise that is bought in by the authority (see Appendix 2) and then charged to 1 of 4 cost codes (1028, 4046, 5001 & 5008) highlights the range of individual items bought in. It also reveals that the same or similar activities are appearing in more than one list i.e. under more than one cost code. For example, 'Provision of an EHO' regularly appears in both 1028 and 5008.

## 5.3. **Typical items of expenditure by code** (see Appendix 4)

5.3.1. The ledger for Cost Code **1028 - Agency Staff** has over 350 separate entries for the year (2011/12) so far, showing an expenditure of nearly £112k. Items for this Cost Code seem to consistently relate to temporary (agency) staff.

5.3.2. The ledger for Cost Code **4046 - Software Purchases** has over 30 separate entries for the year (2011/12) so far, showing an expenditure of over £37k. Items allocated to this Cost Code include software that has been purchased but some staff costs (though ICT-related) have been placed here.

5.3.3. The ledger for Cost Code **5001 - Hired/Contract services** has over 2200 separate entries for the year (2011/12) so far, showing an expenditure of over £1m. Costs that have been allocated here include a large range of functions and services, for example, window cleaning on sheltered homes, membership subscriptions, hire of plant and machinery, specialist contractors fees, payments for room hire, training course costs, Historic Building Grants, buffet costs, legal fees, work carried out at Pleasley Business Park, sewer and drain clearing services, Land Registry costs, stock taking at Leisure Centres, trade refuse collections, Use of Multi Sport Ground, programme management support (LSP), public sector consultants, provision of specialist temporary staff, items bought with credit cards and many others. The vast majority of orders have been raised by Financial Services so it's not obvious which department has ordered the works, functions or services. Having such a large range of different items placed under this heading highlights a problem where items are placed here when they should have been placed under another Cost Code.

5.3.4. The ledger for Cost Code **5008 - Professional / Consultancy Fees** has over 100 separate entries for the year (2011/12) so far, showing an expenditure of more than £250k. Items for this Cost Code include 'bought in' consultancy but also some costs associated with engaging temporary EHOs.

5.3.5. Consultation with senior management revealed that there are forms and processes for the authorisation of the recruitment of agency workers and temporary staff, but no similar processes are in place for the engagement of Consultants.

See Appendix 4 for extracts from Cost Code data showing typical items for each of the 4 relevant Cost Codes. Also, Appendix 2 and 3 for samples of recruitment forms.

## 6. **Key Findings**

### 6.1. **Strengths**

6.1.1. Financial Services maintain Cost Codes for 4 areas where the budgets for Agency Staff, Hired / Contract services, Professional / Consultancy Fees and Software Purchases are monitored.

6.1.2. There are forms produced by Human Resources (HR) for the authorisation of the recruitment or engagement of temporary and agency staff.

### 6.2. **Areas for Improvement**

6.2.1. There are inconsistencies in the way costs are allocated between the 4 Cost Codes – 1028, 4046, 5001, 5008.

6.2.2. Staff costs appear under 3 separate Cost Codes – 1028, 4046, 5008.

6.2.3. Which department or Officer who has 'bought' in external services/supplies is not readily apparent from the downloaded spreadsheets provided by Financial Services. The spreadsheet provided by Financial Services has a 'sort field' for Section – but the column is nearly always filled in with the text 'Finance' rather than the department that has raised the order. Also, the manager's name who has raised the order or requested the service doesn't appear in the spreadsheet.

6.2.4. The Cost Code 5001 (Hired/Contract services) has a large range of different items that include the hire of plant and equipment (19/5/11) or the ordering of window cleaning contracts (13/4/11). But there are also items in the lists that do not obviously fall under the Hired/Contract services label, for instance (randomly chosen), *Historic Building Grant (25/10/11)*, *deliver apprenticeship framework NVQ2 Advice and Guidance (28/7/11)*, *provide Microsoft Office Word 2003 training (6/6/11)*, *purchase of SNAP software (24/1/12)*, *Clowne Linear Park - Bridge Assessment: Fee account for professional services*. Each of these items listed here could have appeared under a different Cost Code.

6.2.5. The recruitment of a Consultant requires a procedure that ensures that authorisation is obtained from the Director of Corporate Resources before the individual or company is engaged.

## 7. **Conclusions**

The Use of Consultants Review scoping document established early on that it was necessary to define what 'Consultant' means in this context. The Review produced a list of 7 possible interpretations for Bolsover DC. In general terms, all 7 are types of staff function or professions. But the 4 Cost Codes where external costs are recorded doesn't differentiate between these 7 staff definitions. The Costs Codes also have entries for materials, supplies, training, room hire and various other un-associated items.

The spreadsheet that was supplied by Financial Services contained 4 worksheets, one for each of the Cost Codes used for recording the placing of orders with external 'bought in' services. When viewed, it was apparent that there were similar or identical types of entry appearing under more than one Cost Code. The spreadsheet also revealed the great range of functions, staff costs, supplies and materials being recorded under these broad headings.

The Review concluded that it was important that each type of externally incurred cost should be recorded under one Cost Code only. Also, there should be sufficient 'fields' to allow the recording of departments, sections and Officers. This would allow the easy filtering of costs so individual departments, sections and Officers can be identified easily, held accountable and any financial information is readily available.

The scoping document's remit was to look closely at savings, efficiencies and value for money (VFM) but without a clear definition of 'Consultants', the present method of allocating costs to departments and individuals makes this remit hard to fulfil.

When the draft version of this report was given to the Director of Corporate Resources for their consideration, it highlighted that the engagement of Consultants is not governed by the same Quality Assured processes as that of temporary or agency staff.

**Stakeholders**

Councillor Duncan McGregor	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Efficiencies
Bryan Mason	Director of Corporate Resources
Lisa Williams	Principal Accountant
Peter Campbell	Head of Housing

**BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
Memorandum

To:  
From: **HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL**  
Date:  
Re: **END OF TEMPORARY CONTRACT**

---

The temporary contract for the person named below is due for renewal as detailed:

**Name:**  
**Post:**  
**Contract End:**

In order for the necessary paperwork to be completed and payroll deadlines to be met would you please complete the form below and return to HUMAN RESOURCES immediately. **It is imperative that we give the appropriate notice under employment law to each individual if this contract is to be terminated.**

HUMAN RESOURCES

---

**To: HUMAN RESOURCES**

**From:**

**RE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please extend the above contract for \_\_\_\_\_ months/weeks. **Please note the CEO has delegated powers to authorise temporary contracts up to 12 months duration.**

**OR**

Please terminate the above contract on expiry.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
**HEAD OF SERVICE**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
**DIRECTOR**

---

**FINANCIAL APPRAISAL**

Sufficient monies are available to fund this post for the period stated

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
**DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES/HEAD OF FINANCE**

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

REVISED JANUARY 2006



## **REQUEST FOR AN AGENCY WORKER MAXIMUM 11 WEEKS DURATION**

This form must be completed and authorisation received prior to hiring agency workers. Prior to completion of this form, managers must check with Human Resources to ensure that there are no employees who could carry out the work required and are:

- on the redeployment register
- a casual worker
- a part time employee who is willing to work extra hours.

Managers must also consider whether it would be possible to recruit to the post on a temporary contract, or establish a pool of casual workers to carry out this work.

Agency workers must only be utilised once the above options have been exhausted, and with the necessary approvals as set out below.

**In exceptional cases, where urgent cover is required within the next 24 hours, due to unforeseen circumstances, the prior approval of your Director (or other member of Senior Management Team in their absence) is required. This form must then be completed to allow Human Resources to maintain an accurate record of the use of agency workers.**

**PLEASE OBTAIN DIRECTOR, DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES/HEAD OF FINANCE, AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER SIGNATURES BEFORE FORWARDING TO HUMAN RESOURCES.**

**ONCE ALL SIGNATURES HAVE BEEN OBTAINED HUMAN RESOURCES WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A JOB DESCRIPTION/PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR YOU TO PROVIDE TO THE AGENCY. FROM OCTOBER 2011 YOU WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED WITH A TERMS AND CONDITIONS SHEET TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGENCY WORKERS REGULATIONS.**

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF SERVICE PRIOR TO THE RECRUITMENT OF AN AGENCY WORKER**

<b>AGENCY TO BE USED</b>	
<b>TYPE OF AGENCY WORKER REQUIRED E.G. CLERICAL/LABOURER</b>	
<b>REASON FOR USE OF AGENCY WORKER E.G. SHORT TERM PROJECT REQUIRING SPECIALIST SKILLS</b>	
<b>PROPOSED DURATION OF NEED FOR AGENCY WORKER (MAXIMUM 11 WEEKS)</b>	
<b>PROPOSED START DATE</b>	
<b>PROPOSED END DATE</b>	

I confirm that an Agency Worker is required.

Before an Agency Worker commences an assignment I will ensure that I have fully complied with the Agency Workers Recruitment Guidance.

**HEAD OF SERVICE APPROVAL**

I wish to recruit an Agency Worker as outlined above, and confirm that a budget is available for this purpose from budget code \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

**HEAD OF SERVICE**

**FINANCIAL APPRAISAL**

Sufficient monies are available to fund an Agency Worker for the period stated

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES/  
HEAD OF FINANCE**

**DIRECTOR APPROVAL**

I authorise/agree to the recruitment of an Agency Worker

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**DIRECTOR**

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVAL FOR RECRUITMENT OF AN AGENCY WORKER**

As Head of Paid Service I authorise the recruitment of an Agency Worker for the period specified above

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

**Extracted rows from Ledger for Cost Code 1028 (Agency Staff)**

The 4 tables in Appendix 2 list typical items that are found under each of the 4 featured Cost Codes. Although each Ledger download has 16 different 'sort fields', the download has been edited just to show 4 columns. All of the tables has been anonymised. The full range of columns used in the Ledger is set out in a table in Appendix 3.

<b>Journal Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Narrative (Line)</b>
01/04/2011	(5,282.45)	Regeneration	Provision of EHO consultants for February and March 2011 - including mileage
12/04/2011	1,242.00	Finance	Provision of EHO consultants for February and March 2011 - including mileage
12/04/2011	3,904.00	Finance	Provision of EHO consultants for February and March 2011 - including mileage
15/04/2011	121.20	Finance	Provision of EHO consultants for February and March 2011 - including mileage
26/05/2011	579.50	Finance	Provision of Contaminated Land Officer April 2011 19hrs @£30.50 per hour
07/06/2011	884.50	Finance	Provision of a Contaminated Land Officer May 2011 29hrs @£30.50 per hour
14/06/2011	280.06	Finance	5/6/11, Agency StreetScene
14/06/2011	280.06	Finance	5/6/11, Agency StreetScene
14/06/2011	246.62	Finance	5/6/11, Agency StreetScene
14/06/2011	280.06	Finance	29/5/11, Agency StreetScene
12/10/2011	2,600.00	Finance	Provision of EHO for Food / Health and Safety September 2011 - 13 days (7hrs/day) @£200.00 per day = £2600.00
09/06/2011	351.12	Finance	Agency - GM & Cleansing, w/e 22.05.11
09/06/2011	280.06	Finance	Agency - GM & Cleansing, w/e 22.05.11
09/06/2011	351.12	Finance	Agency - GM & Cleansing, w/e 22.05.11
15/11/2011	735.93	Finance	Services of xxxxxxxxxxxx at an inclusive rate of £19.89 per hour. Max of 11 weeks
29/11/2011	735.93	Finance	Services of xxxxxxxxxxxx at an inclusive rate of £19.89 per hour. Max of 11 weeks
29/11/2011	735.93	Finance	Services of xxxxxxxxxxxx at an inclusive rate of £19.89 per hour. Max of 11 weeks

**Analysis: Table shows costs associated with hiring in staff from an external body**

**Extracted rows from Ledger for Cost Code 4046 (Software Purchases)**

<b>Journal Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Narrative (Line)</b>
18/04/2011	1,733.33	Finance	Pre-payment - Public-i - 6.5 months
26/04/2011	109.46	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/04/2011	15.32	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
06/05/2011	193.53	Finance	BARCLAYCARD 20/04/11 - CLEVERBRIDGE.NET
24/06/2011	387.67	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
24/06/2011	46.52	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/07/2011	371.52	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/07/2011	44.58	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/07/2011	290.76	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
23/08/2011	1,112.43	Finance	Windows for server licence (Standard 2008)
26/08/2011	34.89	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/09/2011	139.99	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/09/2011	16.80	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
26/01/2012	27.14	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
24/02/2012	298.83	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
24/02/2012	35.86	Finance	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
19/04/2011	1,358.00	Finance	Adobe Creative Suite CS5 for Windows, upgrade from CS3, boxed product.
01/08/2011	12,000.00	Finance	Quotation for software & services
11/10/2011	4,592.50	Finance	Quotation for software & services
10/11/2011	4,592.50	Finance	Quotation for software & services
30/01/2012	72.80	Finance	
01/04/2011	5,646.67	Finance	Pre-payment - Lalpac - 8 months
20/10/2011	(5,537.26)	Finance	Prepayment - Lalpac - 7.5 months
01/11/2011	8,859.62	Finance	Maintenance Fees and update packages for LALPAC System - Licensing

**Analysis: Shows the cost of purchasing software but a staff cost (anonymised - xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx) has been added**

**Extracted rows from Ledger for Cost Code 5001 (Hired / Contract services)**

Journal Date	Amount	Section	Narrative (Line)
26/07/2011	4,000.00	Finance	Provision of Hosted Disaster Recovery Service 1st Apr 2011 - 31st Mar 2012 (being £6128 less RIEP funding to 31st Mar 2011 £2128)
09/05/2011	1,529.00	Finance	2011/12 Contribution to Multi Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPA)
11/07/2011	11,653.00	Finance	Provision of 24/7 monitoring of CCTV systems at Sherwood Lodge Bolsover and the town centre schemes in Creswell, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton, for a period of 11 months effective from 01.05.2011 until 31.03.2012.
11/08/2011	77.12	Finance	Unmetered electricity supply for the town centre CCTV schemes in Bolsover, Creswell Shirebrook and South Normanton during 2011/12.
30/08/2011	577	Finance	To block off end of garage concrete blocks (7 sq metre and footings). To paint top of wall with anti climb paint and fit warning sign. As per your revised quotation dated 27.07.2011.
06/05/2011	14.81	Finance	BARCLAYCARD 20/04/11 - AMAZON
16/05/2011	1,800.00	Finance	Rent for the period 1st June - 30 November 2011 in respect of 41 Hyndley Road, Bolsover.
09/06/2011	19.5	Finance	service to fire extinguishers at Community house South Normanton
16/09/2011	46	Finance	South Normanton Community House Repair and refit lock to office door on 1st floor
03/05/2011	1,250.00	Finance	CAN Rangers to contribute to Capita Software Maintenance invoice for Housing Maintenance
09/05/2011	36	Finance	Criminal Records Bureau checks Taxi Licensing - 9 @ £26.00 Counter-signatory check - 1 @ £5.00 Employee recheck - 1 @ £36.00 Employee recheck - 1 @ £44.00
20/05/2011	626.05	Finance	Passenger seat assembly Our Ref: 85079 (can)
14/11/2011	23.5	Finance	Removal of confidential waste from Shirebrook Contact Centre

**Analysis: Table illustrating the huge range and types of costs that are placed under the 5001 Cost Code**

**Extracted rows from Ledger for Cost Code 5008 (Professional / Consultancy Fees)**

<b>Journal Date</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>	<b>Narrative (Line)</b>
20/04/2011	Finance	10,000.00	Independent Review of WNF
13/06/2011	Finance	4,015.37	Programme management support on behalf of Bolsover LSP and Bolsover District Council in relation to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund - May 2011
21/02/2012	Finance	4,189.55	Programme management support on behalf of Bolsover LSP and Bolsover DC in relation to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and other Work and Skills activity - January 2012
24/05/2011	Finance	1,929.13	Provision of EHOs April 2011 40hrs 15mins @£30.50per hour Pollution 23hrs @£30.50 per hour Commercial 8hrs 45mins @£30.50 per hour Provision of EHO for May 2011
07/06/2011	Finance	1,044.63	34hrs and 15mins @£30.50 per hour
25/10/2011	Finance	17,680.82	COOP BANK FOR 25/10/11 CHAPS STG U00359MXPUBLIC SECTOR CONS20111025U00359MX
25/10/2011	Finance	(1,666.67)	Split VAT on 2 payments made to Public Sector Consultants
30/08/2011	Finance	4,987.50	Assistance in preparation of Green Space Strategy as set out in the Council's invitation to quote dated 16th March
04/10/2011	Finance	400.00	Evaluation and Overview of the draft Sustainability Appraisal for the emerging HMA Residential Design SPD
15/11/2011	Finance	850.00	Additional advice on implications of non food retail development - Land north of Bolsover Town

**Analysis: Table illustrating costs associated with hiring temporary staff are being placed under both 1028 and 5008 Codes**



**Appendix 5****List of the 16 'Sort Fields' used in the Ledger (with typical information/data)**

<b>Column Title</b>	<b>Text provided from the order</b>	<b>Column Title</b>	<b>Text provided from the order</b>	<b>Column Title</b>	<b>Text provided from the order</b>
<b>Journal Date</b>	4/10/11	<b>Journal No</b>	X029525	<b>Ledger Code</b>	G006/5008
<b>Amount</b>	10,000.00	<b>VAT Amount</b>	2,000.00	<b>Transaction Code</b>	CRINV
<b>Cd.</b>	1	<b>Section</b>	Finance	<b>Pd.</b>	1
<b>Reference (Line)</b>	VS067838	<b>User Analysis (Line)</b>	2057793	<b>User Data (Line)</b>	
<b>Ref Number 2 (Line)</b>	CEO0001798	<b>Source Account</b>	26837	<b>Source Account Name</b>	Xxxxxxxxxxxx Ltd
<b>Narrative (Line)</b>	Programme management support on behalf of Bolsover LSP and Bolsover DC in relation to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund - April 2011	<b>CPID Code</b>			

**Analysis: Table showing the range of 16 Sort Fields/References used in the Ledger: Illustrating that the department/section and Officer that has 'bought' in the goods/service/ activity is not readily identifiable.**

**Cost Code Budgets 2011/12**

			<b>2011 / 2012 Budgets (as at 17/2/12)</b>					
<b>Cost Code</b>	<b>Ledger Title</b>	<b>Number of entries in the Ledger</b>	<b>General Fund Budget</b>	<b>2011/12 Spend</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>HRA Budget</b>	<b>HRA Spend</b>	<b>HRA Balance</b>
1028	Agency Staff	373	£168,160	£108,195	£59,965	£4,500	£4,359	£141
4046	Software Purchases	39	-	£37,499	-	-	-	-
5001	Hired / Contract services	2252	£1,300,000	£1,015,906	£284,094	-	-	-
5008	Professional / Consultancy Fees	136	£616,650	£306,568	£310,082	£15,980	£10,962	£5,018

**Text from the e-mail received from Financial Services 17/02/2012**

*"I'm afraid the search criteria of "any monies spent on buying in external expertise" is too wide an area and too difficult for us easily provide you details of.*

**Professional / Consultancy Fees** get coded to detail code **5008**.

*For 2011/12 so far the actual cost charged to the General Fund is £306,568 against an annual budget of £616,650; and the actual cost charged to the HRA is £10,962 against an annual budget of £15,980.*

*Interim management, such as the Repairs & Maintenance Manager, are coded to **Agency Staff** on detail **code 1028**.*

*For 2011/12 so far the actual cost charged to the General Fund is £108,195 against an annual budget of £168,160; and the actual cost charged to the HRA is £4,359 against an annual budget of £4,500.*

*It should be noted that the R&M manager is coded to the HRA, which is a separate, ring fenced account from the General Fund.*

*It should also be noted that agency staff are often employed to cover vacant posts that can not be filled, and as such are not an additional cost to the Council.*

*Some expertise is bought in because either our own staff are not qualified enough or we do not have the facilities. An example of this is Vehicle Fleet where some repairs are done by external contractors rather than our own mechanics. This expenditure would be coded to **5001 - Hired / Contract services**.*

*I could not do an enquiry on 5001 to extract all "external expertise" costs as all kinds of contracts are coded here, The annual Hired / Contract Services budget is £1.3 million.*

*Some consultancy work may be carried out as part of new capital projects, in which case this would be charged to the capital code, along with all the other capital expenditure.*

*In Finance we purchased a new software model, but as part of the deal a consultant came in to review all of our services and part of the cost was off-set against the cost of purchasing the software. This was coded to **4046 - Software Purchases**. This kind of thing could occur on all kinds of purchases, which we would not be aware of, and would not be able to extract the costs of.*

*You would have to speak to individual departments to ask what outside expertise they had employed."*

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	10.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Review - Demand for Housing in Bolsover		
Report by:	Councillor K. Reid, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee		
Other Officers Involved	Performance and Quality Officer		
Director	Director of Development Director of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. Bowman, Portfolio Holder for Housing Management		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

Please specify how the proposals help to deliver the corporate aims.

Regeneration - Improve the standard of housing across the district

Social Inclusion - Ensure that housing across the district meets the needs of all residents

#### **TARGETS**

Does the subject matter contribute to any targets specified in the Corporate Plan?

*R 06 - Deliver £100,000 of New Homes Bonus per annum in the district as part of Local Investment Plan through the delivery of new affordable housing, empty properties brought back into use and mortgage assistance schemes.*

*SI 05 - Maximise the supply of affordable housing in the district and deliver an average of 20 units per annum by March 2015.*

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

Please describe how the proposals deliver value for money for the Council and its customer.

Demonstrate value for money through a culture of innovation

## **THE REPORT**

In 2011/12, the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee has produced a report entitled, Demand for Housing. The Review was to consider the demand and availability of housing within Bolsover District under the remit of Regeneration.

When the Committee viewed the waiting list for Council properties, the demand for housing across the District and the number of new developments with empty properties available, the Committee considered it timely to review what housing was currently available and what was required within Bolsover District.

The Report has made 8 recommendations.

## **ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Improvement Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial :	None
Legal :	None
Human Resources :	None

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Executive consider approval of the recommendations outlined in the report.

ATTACHMENT:	<b>Demand for Housing Scrutiny Review report</b>
FILE REFERENCE:	<b>N/A</b>
SOURCE DOCUMENT:	<b>N/A</b>

**BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Demand for Housing in Bolsover  
District  
2011/12 Scrutiny Review**

**April 2012**

## **Foreword from Councillor Karl Reid, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee**

Bolsover District Council can become a leader and a source of inspiration to home seekers in the region. By adopting a holistic approach to housing provision, the authority can implement a strategy that unifies the common elements of the local public and private housing sector. Bolsover can improve the prospects of all residents by lowering the age profile and raising the wealth profile of the District, welcoming new residents to the District, reducing homelessness and ensuring that residents reside in the most appropriate properties.

The collapse in the Housing Market, the subsequent rise in demand for rented accommodation and new legislation from the coalition government means that the Council must be more influential in the local private housing sector. This review will hopefully provide the impetus for the Council to look closely at local Housing provision, explore the links between the local Housing market and economic development, and adopt new approaches in response to this changing environment. Also, the new Welfare Reform legislation will have a significant impact on service delivery.

I would like to give our thanks to all those Officers who contributed to this report but especially Kevin Hopkinson, Peter Campbell and Danielle Troop.

Also, many thanks to Alison Bluff, Democratic Services Officer and special thanks to Robin Raily, Performance and Quality Officer and Claire Millington, Scrutiny Officer, for their support to the Sustainable Communities Committee and for their dedicated hard work and commitment to this review. But, finally, I would like to thank Members of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee for all their efforts and contributions.

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## **1. Introduction**

When the Committee viewed the waiting list for Council properties, the demand for housing across the District and the number of new developments with empty properties available, the Committee considered it timely to review what housing was currently available and what was required within Bolsover District.

Shortly after agreeing the subject for review, the draft Corporate Plan Priorities and Targets for 2011 – 2015 were agreed. There are 13 Corporate Plan Targets, directly or indirectly related to the goals and ambitions for this Review. These new priorities include the delivery of £100,000 of New Homes Bonus per annum in the District as part of the Local Investment Plan through the delivery of new affordable housing (new build units, empty properties brought back into use and the Mortgage Support grant schemes) highlighting the importance placed on this issue across the whole authority.

Also, the Review coincides with the introduction of new legislation (Localism Act, Welfare Reform Bill 2011) and a new Government Housing Strategy. These new papers will have a significant impact on the provision of private and public Housing, locally and nationally.

The provision of Housing in the District requires a new approach that repositions the authority as not only a provider of Council Housing but as a partner in the private sector and in other areas of the public sector, for example, with other Residential Social Landlords (RSLs). The Council has the opportunity to forge partnerships with developers, builders and other similar bodies using the authority's stock of building land as the driver. It's essential that the authority achieves a good understanding of the local Housing market to be able to ensure that Housing is built that the community really needs and bring about positive outcomes.

## **2. Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

**Produce a new strategy and vision for local housing that redefines the authority's role as a Housing provider and sets out a future for Bolsover as a major partner in the commercial house building, social and private rented sector.**

It is recognised that to raise the wealth profile of the District, the authority needs to bring new people into the District, people who appreciate Bolsover's rural setting but who will commute with ease to any of the region's conurbations. A major draw for these people will be new good quality housing. National and local developers recognise that there is a market for this type of Housing and Bolsover is in a position to take advantage of this situation by supplying the land. The Council will be better servicing its community by raising the wealth profile, encouraging local job creation, providing more good quality housing and removing the burden of maintaining unused plots of land \*. A new strategy also needs to define what other providers are in the region, for example, Housing Associations, understand their needs and set out the communication channels necessary to establish and maintain working relationships with them. The strategy will also have to establish a process for examining why particular properties remain empty for a long time and suggest solutions for tackling the problems. There is a possibility that the flexibility of the new Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding arrangements will generate sufficient 'headroom' (surplus) for finance to be available for the authority to build it's own housing, adding to Council stock.



(References: Items 5:4, 5:5, 5:6, 5:16, 5:18, 5:21, 6:7, 6:9, 6:11, 6:16, 6:17, 6:22 \*)

### **Recommendation 2**

**Ensure that the Review Action Plan emphasises the importance of the Regeneration Corporate Aim for the District so that the need to attract “new” households to the District is recognised across the authority \***

The district has a large, low quality private rented sector, a low value open market sector across a range of settlements and the retention of an open housing waiting list for reasons of historic low demand in some social rented stock. The Housing Market of the District has performed the function of attracting low skill households into the district. The District needs to “balance” its housing market so that higher capacity households are attracted to live, work and spend here thereby assisting to deliver economic development aspirations.

(References: Items 5:4, 5:13, 5:14, 5:20, 5:42, 6:7, 6:9, 6:10 \*, 6:11, 6:20)

### **Recommendation 3**

**Produce a strategy and action plan for the reduction of the number of Empty Properties across all sectors.**

The Government is providing funding or a 'bonus' for new homes by match funding the additional council tax raised for new homes and empty properties brought back into use, with an additional amount for affordable homes, for the next six years. It is also in the Council's interests to reduce the number of private and public sector Empty Properties; each Empty Property is subtracted from the total of New Homes thus reducing the Bonus available to the authority. Every property in the District that is removed from the Empty Property list will increase the Council's income in one way or another.

(References: Items 5:1, 5:6, 5:9, 5:10, 5:13, 5:18, 5:20, 6:4, 6:5, 6:6, 6:11, 6:14, 6:17, 6:18. See Appendixes 8 & 9)

### **Recommendation 4**

**Consider re-orientating the Housing Needs and Housing Options Teams.**

The introduction of the Localism and Welfare Reform Acts puts a responsibility on local authorities to make a much greater use of the private sector market. Also, it is now even more important that the home seeker is matched to the right size of property as their Housing Benefit will be linked to a minimum number of rooms. Also, for the Council to respond effectively to the demands of the new legislation, consideration should be given to unifying all the different necessary approaches to Housing provision in one team. This would mean that, the Home Improvement Agency and Energy Efficiency Services, shared ownership, Firstbuy, Newbuy, Local Authority Mortgage Support, social and private rented properties could all be marketed by the one team. Government legislation is forcing local authorities to make greater use of the private sector rental market and is also providing greater incentives for new build and to reduce the number of Empty Properties, particularly in the private sector. A greater dialogue with other organisations that have similar goals e.g. Social Services, CAB, Benefits departments, Landlords Forums would be an advantage to highlight incentives and areas of common interest. The Revenues and Benefits department would also be represented.

The Housing Options Team should provide the marketing function to enable Housing Strategy Officers to deliver a balanced housing market. They could also represent the

authority on any local regional bodies set up to deal with Housing issues; for example, North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area, Sheffield City Region Housing Growth Group, etc. They could also be responsible for providing a regular 'snapshot' of the number and condition of empty homes in the District through links to Environmental Health Enforcement Officers and Council Tax collection. A principal role for the team would be providing the marketing function to address the requirements of the Corporate Plan Target, R 06 \*. By adopting a more holistic approach to Housing provision, the authority will be able to ensure that it is providing a more complete service to all the community.

(References: Items 5:2, 5:3, 5:4, 5:5, 5:6, 5:7, 5:9, 5:11, 5:12, 5:14, 5:15, 5:16, 6:3\*, 6:11, 6:15, 6:16, 6:20, 6:21)

## **Recommendation 5**

### **Carry out a regular survey and assessment of Housing demand and need; establish a reliable data gathering and cleansing process.**

It is important that the Council has a good understanding of all of the District's Housing stock both private and public sectors. Managers need to know key pieces of information about the District's stock to aid decision making. For instance, managers need to know how many houses are empty, how many bedrooms does each house have, what type of house is it, the state of repair, the owner and the demand for this type of property. The survey also needs to recognise that demand varies from one Parish, Ward or area to another.

New legislation is also going to change provision and demand. For instance, the District's Housing stock is heavily focussed on 3-bed, Band A properties which contributes to void numbers in the private rented and owner-occupied sector. This contributes to a weak housing market and limits the ability of smaller households and more affluent households to access the Housing market (see below: Welfare Reform); it also limits the ability of employers to source labour from the local population for Research and Development activity that's required in the Enterprise Zone.

Erroneous or outdated housing-needs data for affordable housing also affects the number of units negotiated on Section 106 sites. This, potentially, can lead to artificially high requests for affordable housing and dissuades developers from delivering new build developments in the area.

As a result of Welfare Reform, there will be a risk of an increase in shared Housing. Also, there will be a need to increase the delivery of smaller new build units or the sub-division of existing larger properties because of the single room rate requirement of the Welfare Reform Act. There is also a potential need for the larger 'aspirational' property.

(References: Items 5:5, 5:6, 5:9, 5:11, 5:12, 5:13, 5:40, 6:1, 6:7, 6:11, 6:16, 6:17, 6:20, 6:21)

## **Recommendation 6**

### **Consider altering the Housing Application Form so more relevant data about tenants can be gathered.**

The presentation by Dales Housing illustrated how they use data gathered from the Housing Application Form to address Housing need. Their approach has become particularly relevant as the new Welfare legislation will require Housing organisations to make decisions about needs based on income, the age of applicants and the types of housing available to them. It could also identify where households are ineligible to access social rented units owing to their income and offer alternative housing models such as shared ownership. A number of

new legislative factors affecting Housing Benefit claimants are going to have a significant impact.

This Recommendation was written based on evidence that was submitted last autumn. Since the evidence was originally submitted last year, Housing Services has published a new application form as part of the adoption of Choice Based Letting (CBL). The new form satisfies the requirements of this Review apart from one question relating to income that hasn't been included on the application form.

Whilst it is accepted that Elected Members have considered and rejected the option to have more questions about prospective Tenant's incomes on the application form (in a previous year), the Scrutiny Committee still wishes this issue to be considered by the Executive Committee (see item 6:11)

(References: Items 5:5, 5:6, 5:11, 5:12, 5:13, 5:14, 5:15, 6:11, 6:20)

### **Recommendation 7**

#### **Produce a Plan to drive improvement in the prioritisation and turnover of Void Council properties.**

Members felt that the Corporate Plan Target (CFS 06) to reduce the number of days that a Void remains out of the rental market was not sufficiently challenging. Members feel that it's important that properties are occupied and earning rental income as quickly as possible.

The CFS 6 Corporate Plan Target figure could be reduced by adopting a system of prioritisation for each property as it comes available. If the Housing Service can ensure that the property is clean and safe, most repairs and maintenance can be done after tenancy.

The principal objective for a void property is to get it earning rent as soon as possible.

(References: Items 5:22, 6:3, 6:4, 6:10, 6:11, 6:17)

### **Recommendation 8**

#### **Produce a communications strategy that gives advice and guidance to Tenants on the new Housing Benefits legislation**

The advice and guidance would be associated with making sure the right budgetary arrangements are in place for every tenant to ensure that they continue paying their rent when the new Universal Credit regulations are introduced. (Housing Benefit will be paid directly to tenants leaving the onus on the authority to recover rent from them as individuals.) Good communication between Housing Services and tenants needs to be established. If a tenant is having difficulty paying their rent, its needs to be recognised early on to avoid the risk of adding to the authority's Rent Arrears total. Also, good communications need to be established to ensure that all the relevant Officers and external bodies can exchange data and information and deliver an effective service.

(References: Items 5:2, 5:3, 5:6, 5:7, 5:8, 5:11, 5:14, 5:15, 5:16, 5:17, 5:18, 5:40, 6:11, 6:20)

### **3. Scope of Review**

To consider the demand and availability of housing within Bolsover District under the remit of regeneration.

- 3.1. How can the authority move forward in the current climate to meet the demands for suitable housing
- 3.2. How Council stock and land is managed
- 3.3. What is the Council's responsibility
- 3.4. Relationships with partners

#### **The Committee was comprised of the following Members,**

Cllr Karl Reid (Chair)

Cllr Clare Munks      Cllr Deborah Watson      Cllr George Webster

Cllr Graham Parkin      Cllr Jennifer Wilson      Cllr Malcolm Crane

Cllr Stephen Fritchley      Cllr Sue Wallis (Vice Chair)      Cllr Tommy Rodda

Support to the Committee was provided by the Scrutiny Officer, the Performance and Quality Officer and a Democratic Services Officer.

### **4. Method of Review**

4.1. The Committee met on 5 occasions to consider the scope of the review, key issues they wanted to discuss, consider the evidence submitted and the people they wished to interview.

4.2. The Committee interviewed relevant officers and stakeholders in order to identify what procedures were in place and how the authority was working with its partners to provide housing to meet demand.

4.3. The committee had presentations by Officers from Bolsover DC, Chesterfield BC and Derbyshire Dales DC.

4.4. An Elected Member and an Officer attended a Workshop ('Accessing the private rented sector in the light of welfare reform') run by North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA.

4.5. Attached at **Appendix 1** is a list of stakeholders interviewed.

4.6. Equalities and Diversity - Within the process of the review the panel have taken into account the impact of equalities and have not identified any negative impact.

## **5. Evidence** (with references)

The following is a list of key pieces of written and verbal evidence presented to Elected Members during the course of the Review (see Review Document list, Appendix 2)

- 5.1. Members were asked to consider the impact of moving all or part New Homes Bonus from general savings and putting it into reducing the Empty Properties list (This leaves the problem that any monies removed from the General Savings budget would have to be replaced by other savings).
- 5.2. Best Practice Presentation: Derbyshire Dales have developed a joint board comprised of Revenues and Housing Options officers that sits fortnightly and allocates Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) monies to those in need.
- 5.3. Best Practice Presentation: Chesterfield BC Revenues Team take referrals from the Housing Options team and are looking to receive Homelessness Grant from Housing
- 5.4. Members were asked to consider how the 3 departments with Housing responsibilities work together - Housing Needs, Housing Strategy and Environmental Health (private sector housing).
- 5.5. Members were asked to consider the merits of the Derbyshire Dales model. The authority could usefully assist those seeking to access home-ownership products if the front-line Housing Needs Team were re-orientated as a Housing Options team. Also, Housing Options could produce a profile study of Types of Housing available compared with predictions of Housing Need-based age profiles, unemployment, etc.

(\* See Appendix 7)

- 5.6. A new Housing Options Team could undertake the active management of Empty Properties (in both private and public sectors); including:
  - 5.6.1. Monitoring of the numbers of empty properties using Council Tax data:
  - 5.6.2. Producing a condition survey of all empty properties in the District.
  - 5.6.3. Producing a profile study of Types of Housing available compared with predictions of Housing Need-based age profiles, unemployment, etc.
  - 5.6.4. Producing a profile of income levels of households on the Statutory Housing Register: Undertaking activities to encourage property owners to rent their property – e.g. contacting owners explaining options and drawbacks (Section 215\*), sending a series of 3 letters (when this was undertaken in Rotherham, Empty Properties came down by 20%), etc.
  - 5.6.5. Undertake briefings of Officers in other organisations that have similar goals e.g. Social Services, CAB, Benefits departments, etc. (as per Derbyshire Dales practice); create a common forum.
- 5.7. Set up a dialogue with Landlords Forums to highlight incentives and areas of common interest.
- 5.8. Look into a protocol to cover the work of Benefits and Housing Officers relating to addressing the needs of home seekers - contacts & options
- 5.9. Undertake the development and implementation of a procedure/protocol for a cost neutral reduction of the Empty Properties list
- 5.10. Members were asked to consider the merits of levelling 100% Council Tax on Empty Homes (up from 50%) - The Head of Finance stated that this action would realise very little money, but it should be noted that the 50% discount is primarily a disincentive for landlords to rent out empty properties. The present arrangements in place are that the

County (DCC) takes 20% of any income. But High Peak Council has negotiated an arrangement where the smaller local Council receives a higher proportion of the Council Tax. The additional finance is returned to the area in the form of greater Disabled Facility Grants (DFGs). The basis of the High Peak negotiation is that, empty properties are less burdensome on Council services i.e. no tenants using County and District services; this rationale can be used to justify a reduction in the 20% taken away from the area by the County. Also, all measures to encourage Empty Property owners to rent out properties should be taken

- 5.11. The Welfare Reform Bill will mean that it is necessary to make an assessment of tenants' incomes to aid the enabling and allocation of suitable homes for those in genuine housing need. The Bill "*... restricts Housing Benefit entitlement for social housing tenants whose accommodation is larger than they need*" This will affect the number of households deemed to be in housing need and possibly reduce the numbers of affordable units negotiated through Section 106 \*.
- 5.12. Elected Members saw examples of the way the Housing List can be managed, matching home seekers income to the appropriate size of property. Using an Application Form on-line, the authority (Derbyshire Dales) has the software to be able to compile data, statistics and reports from the forms on Housing Needs. This allowed better analysis of the Housing waiting list.
- 5.13. Elected Members saw examples of the way that data can be compiled to aid decision making in the enabling and allocation of properties and the listing of types of property available (private sector rented, shared ownership etc..) If tenants or prospective tenants' income and/or assets exceed a pre-set figure, this may affect the property type options that are open to them and should limit the numbers of new affordable units negotiated on open market sites. Thus, the district becomes more attractive to developers; the district meets new build targets and receives more New Homes Bonus.
- 5.14. Members heard how the proportion of affordable units required must be closely linked to the authority's Allocation Policy i.e. making the type of housing available match the type of housing needed.
- 5.15. Derbyshire Dales have introduced an Equity Bar as part of measures to gather information about tenants/prospective tenants' income. This ensures that the properties that are available are restricted to the most needy or the highest priority. Newark and Sherwood also (through their application form) ask if the applicant owns another property; they also ask for references.
- 5.16. Best Practice: Derbyshire Dales detailed how Benefits and Housing Officers work together to highlight problem cases so they can be targeted with an aim to reduce the impact of Welfare Reforms i.e. maximising the claimant's income rather than resorting to Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).
- 5.17. Derbyshire Dales detailed how they work with local landlords: Streamline processes, joint working, Landlord Forums, joining services – welfare benefits, CAB, Credit Unions, joint working with Housing Benefits and Housing Options Officer.
- 5.18. The Localism Act reforms the way that social housing is regulated. The Act provides social tenants with stronger tools to hold their landlords to account. Landlords will be expected to support tenant panels - or similar bodies - in order to give tenants the opportunity to carefully examine the services being offered.
- 5.19. The Localism Act allows local authority's to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector. In order to do this, the Allocations Policy must be amended

- 5.20. The authority has indicators and targets for improving the turnover of void Council properties and there is a specific Corporate Plan Target to reduce the average number of days that a property is out of use.
- 5.21. 'Empty Homes' – BDC Environmental Health.
  - 5.21.1. The Senior Environmental Health Officer (Residential) gave a briefing on the sections activities and it's recent successes
- 5.22. Empty Properties, New Homes Bonus and the General Power of Competence – (2/9/11 Committee)
- 5.23. HRA Self Financing: Head of Housing briefing on the authority's new HRA arrangements.
- 5.24. 'Help with Housing'
  - 5.24.1. An Ault Hucknall Parish Council News article on how to approach the District Council to get advice on Shared Ownership schemes.
- 5.25. Housing Application Form (Report to 4/11/11 Committee – Head of Housing)
  - 5.25.1. A copy of BDC's new Housing Application Form
  - 5.25.2. A copy of NEDDC's Housing Application Form
- 5.26. 'Housing Shortages: what Councils can do' – Housing Commission Report
- 5.27. Inside Housing article – 'Against the tide' by Lord Best
  - 5.27.1. An article from the (on-line) magazine Inside Housing by Lord Best, Chair of the CLG/LGA Housing Commission.
- 5.28. Local Lend a Hand Scheme – BBC News Article
- 5.29. Mortgage Rescue Schemes – information from Bolsover District Council Website.
- 5.30. New Build Household Survey report (Report to 4/11/11 Committee)
- 5.31. New Homes Bonus Article – Housing – Department for Communities and Local Government
- 5.32. Private Sector Housing Strategy – Future Working between Housing and Revenue Services
- 5.33. Report from workshop – Accessing the Private Rented Sector in the light of Welfare Reform.
- 5.34. Shared Ownership Housing in Bolsover District (Report from Housing Strategy & Enabling Manager, 25/11/11)
- 5.35. The National Policy Context – Homelessness Act 2002 (2/9/11 Committee).
- 5.36. 'Why we need more housing' – Bolsover District Council (June/July 2011 'In-touch' article)
- 5.37. Housing Commission – Housing Shortages: what Councils can do (Final report). LGA/CLG-commissioned document.
- 5.38. Workshop from North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA 'Accessing the private rented sector in the light of welfare reform.
- 5.39. Affordable Housing and Allocations;
  - 5.39.1. Bolsover has a statutory duty to maintain a Housing Waiting List.

- 5.39.2. From this list, allocations are made to social housing as dictated by the Allocations Policy.
  - 5.39.3. The Housing Waiting List is the primary evidence source for affordable housing need.
  - 5.39.4. In 2011 the Housing Waiting List was cleansed in readiness for Choice Based Lettings (CBL) 2012. Prior to this date, the uncleansed list informed the Allocations Policy. Also in readiness for CBL, the Allocations Policy was rewritten in 2010/11
  - 5.39.5. The cleansing process saw numbers on the list reduce from over 5000 households to fewer than 2000 households. Prior to 2011, the list had not been cleansed for a number of years so households were registered who would have been adequately housed a number of years ago.
  - 5.39.6. It is likely that an excess of affordable housing has been negotiated over the last 4 years. The authority's Allocation Policy allows owner occupiers in Bands C and D and does not specify maximum income levels required in any band. It is likely in negotiating an excess of affordable housing means asking landowners to take a reduced capital receipt for the purposes of housing those who already have homes or adequate incomes to access open market housing. The Allocations Policy needs rewriting to exclude owner occupiers (or introduce an equity bar), to specify maximum incomes, to allow discharge of duty into the private rented sector
  - 5.39.7. The Bolsover Housing Market will be assisted if fewer affordable units are requested and the current imbalance of Band A vis a vis other band units can be diminished
  - 5.39.8. Of the 1800 households now on the Housing Waiting List, its possible there are owner occupiers; equally, the income levels of those on the list is not known.
  - 5.39.9. The authority does not undertake an eligibility check to see what size unit the household can bid for. This means that the household can tick a number of unit sizes and settlements resulting in duplication in housing needs data. For the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) 2011, NEDDC had 0 households in the unknown unit size category, Bolsover had over 887 in that category.
- 5.40. Bolsover has a large low quality private rented sector mainly made up of 3 bed ex-coliery units. The authority's empty property issues stem from this housing stock. R 06: Deliver £100,000 of New Homes Bonus per annum in the District as part of the Local Investment Plan through the delivery of new affordable housing; empty properties brought back into use and the Mortgage Support grant schemes.
- 5.41. SI 05: Maximise the supply of affordable housing in the district and deliver an average of 20 units per annum by March 2015.
- 5.42. Corporate Vision: 'To enhance and improve the wealth profile, well-being and quality of life for the communities of the district of Bolsover'.



## 6 Key Findings

### Strengths

Various initiatives have been undertaken in recent years to address the changing Housing needs of the District.

6.1 The introduction of Choice Based Letting (CBL): CBL is a new way of allocating properties. *“Each week, the available properties are advertised giving applicants the opportunity to ‘bid’ for the properties they are interested in. This enables applicants to be directly involved in the allocation of properties and allow applicants to make choices about areas and types of property. By increasing choice it is hoped to develop more settled and sustainable communities. “*

6.2 An Officer was recruited to specifically address the outstanding current and former Tenants rent arrears.

6.3 The Council has Corporate Plan Targets (PERFORM) for:

- **CFS 05** - Complete implementation of Choice Based Letting (CBL) process by Dec 2011.
- **CFS 06** – Reduce average relet times of Council properties from 25 days to 22 days by March 2015.
- **CFS 10** – Process all new Housing and Council Tax benefit claims within 20 days.
- **E 07** - Complete and adopt residential development guide as Supplementary Planning Guidance by December 2012.
- **E 09** – Bring 40 private sector empty properties back into use by March 2015.
- **R 06** – Deliver £100,000 of New Homes Bonus per annum in the district as part of Local Investment Plan
- **R 09** - Work with tenants to develop a new modern standard for council housing and develop a programme to deliver this by April 2012.
- **SI 02** – Prevent homelessness for more than 50% of people who are facing homelessness each year.
- **SI 04** – Produce a Tenancy Strategy in line with new statutory requirements by December 2013 (or by the statutory timescale).
- **SI 05** - Maximise the supply of affordable housing in the district and deliver an average of 20 units per annum by March 2015.
- **SI 06** – Produce and adopt a Homelessness Strategy by March 2012.
- **SOD 02** - Reduce the percentage of rent arrears by 20% by 2015.
- **SOD 03** - Reduce the level of Former Tenants Arrears by 25% by 2015.

6.4 Reducing Empty Properties across the District will boost New Homes Bonus.

6.5 Planning Services (Policy) are intending to commission an updated study of affordable housing need in the District. The brief should cover issues such as:

6.5.1 The experience of front line allocations officers

6.5.2 The size of the Housing Waiting List, numbers in reasonable preference categories and its' usefulness as an evidence base

6.5.3 The Allocations Policy

- 6.5.4 Entry level incomes for Bolsover plus benefits available (Housing Benefit, Discretionary Housing Payments)
- 6.5.5 Bidding rounds through CBL but minus owner occupiers and minus those above entry level incomes
- 6.5.6 The size and affordability of the private rented sector
- 6.5.7 The number of private sector voids and the ability of Bolsover Officers to bring those back into use
- 6.5.8 Write to all households on the Housing Register to determine what size property they need. This would help the updated study.
- 6.6 The Localism Act will allow local authorities to meet their homelessness duty by providing good quality private rented homes.
- 6.7 The Localism Act will give local authorities greater freedom to set their own policies about who should qualify to go on the waiting list for social housing in their area.
- 6.8 The Head of Housing gave a presentation on the new arrangements for a Self Financing HRA.
  - 6.8.1 Rent increase: a direct consequence of the government's formula for calculating rents for Council properties. The authority has to charge its tenants rents based on a imposed calculation.
    - 6.8.1.1 9.1% increase = 5.5% inflation + 0.5% + £2.00 p.w.
    - 6.8.1.2 Increase equates to a rise from £62.95 to £72.50 p.w
  - 6.8.2 The government are offering just one day (26/3/12) when discounted loans are available from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)
- 6.9 DRAFT PRIORITIES – HRA Asset Management Plan (AMP)
  - 6.9.1 To have in place well designed repair and maintenance systems which ensure the stock is well maintained and kept in a good state of repair.
  - 6.9.2 To ensure the housing stock is brought up to and maintained at a locally determined Bolsover Standard, remaining attractive and meeting modern requirements and tenant expectations.
  - 6.9.3 To replace obsolete or uneconomic stock with new properties, which are better designed to meet future needs and create a better balanced portfolio.
  - 6.9.4 To identify land, whether it be HRA, General Fund or non-council to build additional affordable homes to increase the number of Council owned properties available of the type and quality needed in locations where people want to live whilst ensuring a Balanced Housing Market
  - 6.9.5 To identify and consider potential opportunities for increasing the stock of properties available by acquiring homes, (e.g. RP disposals, new builds, repossessions & properties previously sold under RTB)
  - 6.9.6 To ensure the ongoing availability of housing stock, which specifically caters for the particular housing needs of older vulnerable, special needs or minority households through the provision of appropriate attributes and facilities.
  - 6.9.7 To have a long term strategy and programme in place to incrementally improve the thermal efficiency of the housing stock, at the same time helping to reduce levels of fuel poverty.
  - 6.9.8 To use procurement processes to best effect to ensure value for money in the delivery of all repairs, maintenance and improvement works
  - 6.9.9 To use the housing asset base to help deliver the wider corporate priorities of the Council

- 6.10 Corporate Aim: *Regeneration: Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities*
- 6.10.1 Develop vibrant town centres
  - 6.10.2 Develop flourishing rural communities
  - 6.10.3 Secure a decent standard of housing across the district
- 6.11 Recommendation 6 was originally written based on evidence that was submitted last autumn. The recommendation suggested renewing the authority's Housing application form so further questions could be asked of prospective tenants. Since the evidence was originally submitted last year, Housing Services has published a new application form as part of the adoption of Choice Based Letting (CBL). The new form satisfies the requirements of this Review apart from one question relating to income that hasn't been included on the application form.
- The decision not to include a question about a tenant's income was based on the fact that Members have, in the past, rejected the suggestion that tenants should be asked about their income: Members did not want to include neither an income nor an equity bar on applicants looking for housing. This view was reflected within the Allocations policy, and consequently applicants are not asked for details on either income levels or savings. Moreover members considered this a divisive question as it could result in areas of the District populated only by with tenants with low incomes, potentially leading to ghettos of low income families.
- It has since become apparent that the 'banding' system within CBL will ensure that the most deserving applicants receive the necessary 'points' and the most appropriate housing. Owner Occupiers under 60 are placed in band D, and those over 60 in Band C but are awarded fewer points than tenants (all other factors being equal). This means that owner occupiers are unlikely to be offered popular properties, but may be successful in bidding for less popular properties (i.e. where there are less bids). For clarity even with applicants aged over 60 a tenant would get priority over an owner occupier if all other factors are equal. .

### **Areas for Improvement**

- 6.12 Increasing the New Homes Bonus is a Corporate Plan Target (*R 06 - Deliver £100,000 of New Homes Bonus per annum in the district as part of Local Investment Plan through the delivery of new affordable housing, empty properties brought back into use and mortgage assistance schemes.*) The Committee agreed that reducing the number of Empty Properties would deliver improvements for the Council and for the community as a whole.
- 6.13 The Corporate Plan Target CFS 06 (*Reduce average relet times of Council properties from 25 days to 22 days by March 2015.*) may not be challenging enough for a projected 4-year activity. Reducing the length of time that a property remains unoccupied will increase income.
- 6.14 Reducing Empty Properties will boost New Homes Bonus
- 6.15 The introduction of new legislation – Localism and Welfare Reform Acts
- 6.16 The authority has to negotiate with developers what percentage of new build is required to be affordable housing. (Too large a % and the developer won't be interested).
- 6.17 Members were also asked to look and consider a number of other options in addressing the Empty Property list.
- 6.17.1 Promote Shared Ownership to existing BDC residents:

- 6.17.2 Consider producing a 'Masterplan' for Housing Investment. (This will be forthcoming through the Local Investment Plan for the Sheffield City Region but will be informed by the HRA Asset Management and Business Plans).
- 6.17.3 Consider supporting the strategy of strengthening the Bolsover housing market by seeking to bring first time buyers into the District through Firstbuy, Mortgage Support schemes and high quality new build.
- 6.17.4 Explore the issues around 'Invest to Save', batches of properties with consideration given to partnerships e.g. between developers and the authority.
- 6.17.5 Consider a Local Authority Mortgage (LEM) scheme to retain all business rate growth (uplift) to enable reinvestment; also, LEM to consider a Tax Incremental Finance Scheme to allow borrowing against future business rate uplift.
- 6.17.6 Enabling new affordable housing without sufficient regard to accurate housing needs data can produce genuine problems. (The example of Pear Tree estate was cited by a Member of the Committee).
- 6.17.7 Giving non-repayable grant to private sector landlords can be self defeating. In making Landlords repay grant, there is an incentive to manage properties and safeguard investment.
- 6.17.8 Access/facilitate Empty Property Loans via the Sheffield City Region Empty Homes working group.
- 6.17.9 Consider putting the Housing Needs Survey on to the Planning Portal to assist developers.
- 6.18 Members were asked to consider the impact of moving all or part New Homes Bonus from general savings and putting it into reducing the Empty Properties list (This leaves the problem that any monies removed from the General Savings budget would have to be replaced by other savings).
- 6.19 Produce analysis of previous Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) usage including a projection of the DHP budget to meet demand. Consider producing a clear policy of how DHP is used.
- 6.20 New Housing and Housing-related legislation means the authority needs a broader response to Housing Needs to encompass all the options available e.g. giving advice on social rented, affordable rented, private sector rented homes, shared ownership and other home ownership products – based on household incomes. Also, the Localism Act gives local authorities greater freedom to set their own policies about who should qualify to go on the waiting list for social housing in their area.
- 6.21 A Private Sector Housing Team need to focus on enforcement to ensure that private sector void stock of over 900 units comes down and helps to diminish housing need.
- 6.22 See the draft Review of Unused Council Land – Improvement Scrutiny Committee.

## 7 **Conclusions**

The Review of Demand for Housing carried out by the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee was chosen by conference in mid-2011 because of Elected Members desire to focus on levels of Housing provision and what recommendations could be made for improvement. It was also recognised that there were a large number of empty properties particularly in the private sector and this is an issue that requires addressing. The Review has coincided with the introduction of new legislation and guidance from Government in the form of the Localism and Welfare Reform Acts together with a new national Housing Strategy. But one of the most important factors is the cuts in subsidy that the authority is suffering. This has

highlighted the need to focus on the impact the cuts are going to have and how the shortfalls are going to be addressed.

The Review has identified a series of activities associated with the delivery of Housing Services to the community. There are recommendations to suggest improvements in processes, for instance, activities associated with the administration of void properties or providing advice and guidance for home seekers. The Report also recognises the importance of introducing new citizens to the District to aid economic development in the region. But Members have acknowledged that the Review's most important recommendation is for the authority to produce a new strategy and vision that redefines the authority's role as a Housing provider.

**Stakeholders**

Councillor Alan Tomlinson	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
Councillor Keith Bowman	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Kevin Hopkinson	Director of Development
Stuart Tomlinson	Director of Neighbourhoods
David Hill	Head of Finance and Revenues
Peter Campbell	Head of Housing
Danielle Troop	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
Ian Collis	Planning Policy Manager
Diane Bonsor	Housing Needs Manager
Sam Bentley	Senior Environmental Health Officer

**Review Document List**

- Affordable Homes for Winsick – North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) June 2011 'The News' article
- Ault Hucknall Parish Council news letter – Summer 2011
- Bolsover District Housing Target – Discussion Paper
- Bring Empty Properties back into use – Sheffield City Region Loans Approach (2/9/11 Committee)
- Cabinet Report, Derbyshire County Council – Derbyshire Second Homes: Council Tax (2/9/11 Committee) Choice Based Letting (CBL) – report by Housing Needs Manager
- Chart of Average House Price and Number of Dwellings (2011)
- Chesterfield BC report – use of New Homes Bonus for Affordable Housing.
- Choice Based Lettings Information Leaflet (BDC)
- Core Strategy/Local Development Framework (LDF) – 5-year Housing Supply assessment (extract from Report to Planning Committee; 28/10/11)
- E-mail from Danielle Troop to Claire Millington Sustainable Communities Scrutiny (6/10/11 12.28)
- Extract from 'Intouch': Why we need more Housing' (27<sup>th</sup> June 2011)
- Extract from Inside Housing: 'Against the tide' (June/July 2011)
- Fordham Research - Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Northern Sub-regional Housing Group (Sept 2007)
- Housing Commission report: Housing Shortages: what Councils can do (Nov 2010)
- Housing Application Forms – Bolsover DC, Chesterfield BC, Rykneld Homes
- New Build Housing Survey – September 2010
- Planning Committee Report – 5-year Housing Supply (26/10/2011)
- Presentation to BDC by Rob Cogings, Derbyshire Dales DC

- PowerPoint Presentation to the Improvement Scrutiny Committee by the Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager – Laying the Foundations – A new Housing Strategy for England 2011-14.
- PowerPoint Presentation by Head of Housing: Self Financing HRA.
- Report to Committee on Shared Ownership products (Source: North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Local Investment Plan)
- Table of New Homes delivered in Bolsover District – March – Oct 2011
- Welfare Reform Workshop – Overview

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Summary of Section 106**

**Section 106 (S106)** of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority (LPA) to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission. The obligation is termed a Section 106 Agreement.

These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are increasingly used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing.

The scope of such agreements is laid out in the government's Circular 05/2005. Matters agreed as part of a S106 must be:

- Relevant to planning
- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms
- Directly related to the proposed development
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development
- Reasonable in all other respects.

A council's approach to securing benefits through the S106 process should be grounded in evidence-based policy.

### **Appendix 4**

#### **Summary of Section 215**

**Section 215 (S215)** of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) provides a local planning authority (LPA) with the power, in certain circumstances, to take steps requiring land to be cleaned up when its condition adversely affects the amenity of the area. If it appears that the amenity of part of their area is being adversely affected by the condition of neighbouring land and buildings, they may serve a notice on the owner requiring that the situation be remedied.

### **Appendix 5**

#### **Summary of Welfare Reform Bill**

##### **Welfare Reform Bill 2010-11**

The Bill provides for the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from 2013. The Bill follows the November 2010 White Paper, 'Universal Credit: welfare that works', which set out

the Coalition Government's proposals for reforming welfare to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and tackle administrative complexity. Besides introducing Universal Credit and related measures, the Bill makes other significant changes to the benefits system.

#### Key areas

- Introduces Personal Independence Payments to replace the current Disability Living Allowance
- Restricts Housing Benefit entitlement for social housing tenants whose accommodation is larger than they need
- Up-rates Local Housing Allowance rates by the Consumer Price Index
- Amends the forthcoming statutory child maintenance scheme
- Limits the payment of contributory Employment and Support Allowance to a 12-month period
- Caps the total amount of benefit that can be claimed.

## **Appendix 6**

### **Summary of the Localism Act**

The main measures of the Localism Act are under four headings:

- New freedoms and flexibilities for local government,
- New rights and powers for communities and individuals,
- Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective,
- Reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally.

#### □ **New Freedoms and Flexibilities**

##### **General power of competence**

- The Localism Act includes a 'general power of competence'. It gives local authorities the legal capacity to do anything that an individual can do that is not specifically prohibited; they will not, for example, be able to impose new taxes, as an individual has no power to tax.
- The new, general power gives councils more freedom to work together with others in new ways to drive down costs.
- The Act does, however, give the Secretary of State the power to remove unnecessary restrictions and limitations where there is a good case to do so, subject to safeguards designed to protect vital services.

##### **Abolition of the Standards Board**

Through the Localism Act, the Government has abolished the Standards Board regime. Instead, local authorities will draw up their own codes, and it will become a criminal offence for councillors to deliberately withhold or misrepresent a financial interest.

##### **Clarifying the rules on predetermination**

In parallel with the abolition of the Standards Board, the Government has used the Localism Act to clarify the rules on 'predetermination'. The Localism Act makes it clear that it is proper for councillors to play an active part in local discussions, and that they should not be liable to legal challenge as a result.

##### **Greater local control over business rates**

The Localism Act gives councils more freedom to offer business rate discounts - to help attract firms, investment and jobs. Whilst councils would need to meet the cost of any



discount from local resources, they may decide that the immediate cost of the discount is outweighed by the long term benefit of attracting growth and jobs to their area.

### **Directly elected mayors**

Using powers in the Act, the Government intends to trigger a referendum in the largest cities outside London, inviting local people to decide whether they want to have an elected mayor. Referendums are being planned for May 2012.

### **Other freedoms for councils**

The Localism Act will remove several rules,

- Councils will have greater freedom over how they set up their area committees (or other methods for consultation),
- Councils will have greater flexibility about how they carry out the scrutiny role.
- Councils, where they wish, may move away from an executive form of governance (i.e. a leader or a mayor) to a committee system.
- The Act also removes previous constraints around the timing of when councils can change their governance models.

## **□ New rights and powers for communities**

### **Community right to challenge**

The Localism Act gives voluntary and community groups, parish councils and local authority employees the right to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service. The local authority must consider and respond to this challenge; and where it accepts it, run a procurement exercise for the service in which the challenging organisation can bid.

### **Community right to bid (assets of community value)**

The Localism Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of assets of community value which have been nominated by the local community. When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Act then gives community groups the time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market.

### **Right to approve or veto excessive council tax rises**

The Localism Act gives local communities the power to decide Council Tax rates. The Secretary of State will determine a limit for council tax increases which has to be approved by the House of Commons. If an authority proposes to raise taxes above this limit they will have to hold a referendum to get approval for this from local voters who will be asked to approve or to veto the rise.

### **Transparency over senior council officials' pay**

Under the terms of the Localism Act, councillors will need to vote on and publish a statement of their policies on pay. This will include the salaries of senior officials working in local authorities, but also the lowest paid employees.

### **Getting rid of fines and charges for rubbish collection**

The Climate Change Act 2008 gave councils the ability to charge families for overfilling their bin and to introduce extra tariffs for taking away household waste. In the Localism Act, we have removed this ability.

- **Reform to make the planning system clearer, more democratic and more effective**

### **Abolition of regional strategies**

The Secretary of State wrote to local authorities in 2010 to tell them that the Government intended to abolish regional strategies. The Localism Act will enable us to do this.

### **Duty to cooperate**

The duty requires local authorities and other public bodies to work together on planning issues.

### **Neighbourhood planning**

The Act introduces a new right for communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan. Local communities will be able to use neighbourhood planning to grant full or outline planning permission in areas where they most want to see new homes and businesses, provided a neighbourhood development plan or order is in line with national planning policy, local communities will be able to vote on it in a referendum. If the plan is approved by a majority of those who vote, then the local authority will bring it into force. Local planning authorities will be required to provide technical advice and support as neighbourhoods draw up their proposals. The Government is funding sources of help and advice for communities

### **Community right to build**

As part of neighbourhood planning, the Act gives groups of local people the power to deliver the development that their local community want. A community organisation, formed by members of the local community, will be able to bring forward development proposals which, providing they meet minimum criteria and can demonstrate local support through a referendum, will be able to go ahead without requiring a separate traditional planning application. The Government will also fund sources of help and advice for communities.

### **Requirement to consult communities before submitting certain planning applications**

To further strengthen the role of local communities in planning, the Act introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments.

### **Strengthening enforcement rules**

The Localism Act will strengthen planning authorities' powers to tackle abuses of the planning system, such as deliberately concealing new developments.

### **Reforming the community infrastructure levy**

The Localism Act will change the levy to make it more flexible. It allows some of the money raised to be spent on things other than infrastructure. It will give local authorities greater freedom in setting the rate that developers should pay. And crucially, the Act gives the Government the power to require that some of the money raised from the levy go directly to the neighbourhoods where development takes place.

### **Reform the way local plans are made**

Local planning authorities play a crucial role in local life, setting a vision, in consultation with local people, about what their area should look like in the future. The plans allow local authorities to draw up and set out where new buildings, shops, businesses and infrastructure need to go, and what they should look like.

The Localism Act will limit the discretion of planning inspectors to insert their own wording into local plans.

### **Nationally significant infrastructure projects**

The Localism Act abolishes the Infrastructure Planning Commission and restores its responsibility for taking decisions to Government ministers.

#### **Reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally**

### **Social housing allocations reform**

The Act gives local authorities greater freedom to set their own policies about who should qualify to go on the waiting list for social housing in their area.

### **Social housing tenure reform**

Provisions in the Localism Act allow for more flexible arrangements for people entering social housing in the future. Social landlords will now be able to grant tenancies for a fixed length of time. The minimum length of tenancy will be two years, in exceptional circumstances, with five years or more being the norm. There is no upper limit on the length of tenancy.

### **Reform of homelessness legislation**

Councils have a duty to house people who are eligible, in priority need and unintentionally homeless; and this duty will remain in place. Central Government will also continue to fund support and advice to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Localism Act lets local authorities meet their homelessness duty by providing good quality private rented homes.

### **Reform of council housing finance**

Now, instead of having to send the money raised by rent to central government and wait to see each year what share they get allocated back, councils will be able to keep the rent and use it locally to maintain their social homes.

### **National home swap scheme**

The Localism Act paves the way for a national home swap scheme. This will enable people who would like to swap their social home to access details of all other tenants who may be a suitable match.

### **Reform of social housing regulation**

The Act reforms the way that social housing is regulated. The Act provides social tenants with stronger tools to hold their landlords to account. Landlords will be expected to support tenant panels - or similar bodies - in order to give tenants the opportunity to carefully examine the services being offered. The Act also abolishes the Tenant Services Authority and transfers its remaining functions to the Homes and Communities Agency.

The Act also changes the way that complaints about social landlords are handled. Currently, there are two separate ombudsmen (the Local Government Ombudsman and the Independent Housing Ombudsman) handling social tenants' complaints about their landlord. In the future, a single watchdog (the Independent Housing Ombudsman) specialising in complaints about social housing will ensure greater consistency across the sector.

### **Abolition of Home Information Packs**

The Localism Act has repealed once and for all the original laws that called for Home Information Packs.

**Products included in the 2010/11 additional affordable housing statistics**

**Social Rent:** Rent Mixed Funded (MFRENT), Rent Mixed Funded challenge fund (CFRENT), Temporary Social Housing (TSH), General needs remodelled units, Recycled Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), Disposals Proceeds Fund (DPF), Private Finance Initiative (PFI), and local authorities new build, and Section 106 nil grant social rented homes (from HCA/HSSA).

**Intermediate Rent:** Intermediate Rent (INTRENT), Intermediate Rent Key Worker (KWINRENT), Intermediate Rent Challenge Fund scheme (CFIRENT).

**Low Cost Home Ownership** includes:

- **New Build HomeBuy:** New Build HomeBuy (HBYNB), New Build HomeBuy Key Worker (KWHBYNB), Shared Ownership challenge fund (CFSALE), Shared Ownership Mixed Funded (MFSALE), Shared Ownership, Mixed Funded Key Worker (KWMFSALE).
- **Open Market HomeBuy:** HomeBuy Open Market Purchase (HBYOM), Rent to HomeBuy, Home Ownership for people with long term disabilities (HOLD), HomeBuy Direct (HBYDIR).
- **Social HomeBuy** (SHB).
- **Other:** Right to Acquire (RTA), Cash Incentive Scheme (CIS; from HSSA Section J), Voluntary Purchase Grant (VPG), Recycled Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), First Time Buyers Initiative (FTBi), London Wide Initiative (LWI). Mortgage Rescue Scheme, Armed Forces Home Ownership Scheme, S106 nil grant low cost home ownership homes (from HCA/HSSA).
- **DCLG announcement 12/3/2012:** Newbuy scheme, Right-to-buy (RTB) % discounts.

**NEW HOMES BONUS PAYMENTS 2012-13**

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Year 1 allocations (£): inc empty homes, inc AH premium</b>	<b>Year 2 allocations (£): inc empty homes, inc AH premium</b>	<b>First monthly payment - March 2012</b>	<b>Other monthly payments - April 2012 to March 2013</b>	<b>Total payment in year 2012-13 (Year 1 plus Year 2)</b>
<b>Bolsover</b>	<b>£117,312</b>	<b>£193,346</b>	<b>£25,179</b>	<b>£23,790</b>	<b>£310,659</b>

Source: Department of Communities and Local Government:

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the New Homes Bonus:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingsupply/newhomesbonus/newhomesbonusquestions/>

New Homes Bonus Calculator

[Return to homepage](#)

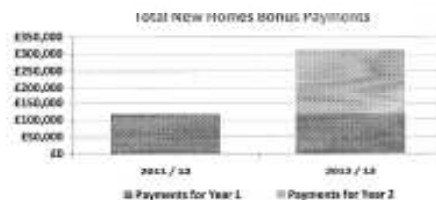
[Comments](#)

**Bolsover**

Current houses stock (Net 11)	34,385
Net change in stock (Net 11) <sup>1</sup>	196
Affordable housing supply (NA71) <sup>2</sup>	00
Stock of empty houses (Net 11)	34,581
Affordability ratio (2030) <sup>3</sup>	4.97

		Year of Payment →						
		2011 / 12	2012 / 13	2013 / 14	2014 / 15	2015 / 16	2016 / 17	2017 / 18
Year of Delivery ↓	Cumulative Payments							
	Payments for Year 1	£117,312	£117,312	£117,312	£117,312	£117,312	£117,312	£117,312
	Payments for Year 2		£193,346	£193,346	£193,346	£193,346	£193,346	£193,346
	2012/13: Total Payments		£310,659					

Total Payments (2012/13)	
Year 1	£117,312
Year 2	£193,346
<b>Total Payment:</b>	<b>£310,659</b>



**Assumptions:**

1. Net additional dwellings are calculated by subtracting effective stock (total stock less long-term empty houses) as recorded on the CTS in each year from the previous year. <http://www.bolsover.gov.uk/gub/2012/05/2012-13-housing-figures>
2. Data taken from the Council Tax base forms <http://www.commissioners.gov.uk/property/valuation/valuation-2012-13>
3. Combined data from affordable housing <http://www.commissioners.gov.uk/property/valuation/valuation-2012-13> and affordable housing <http://www.commissioners.gov.uk/property/valuation/valuation-2012-13>
4. Affordability is measured by the ratio of mean quarterly house price to mean quarterly earnings. <http://www.commissioners.gov.uk/property/valuation/valuation-2012-13>

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	11.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Category	
Subject:	Homelessness Strategy	Status	Open
Report by:	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager		
Other Officers involved:	Head of Housing Housing Needs Manager Private Sector Housing Manager Revenues and Benefits Manager Head of Planning		
Director	Director of Development		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor A. Tomlinson, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration		

## **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

### **SOCIAL INCLUSION**

SI 02 - Prevent homelessness for more than 50% of people who are facing homelessness each year.

SI 06 - Produce and adopt a Homelessness Strategy by March 2012.

### **TARGETS**

The Production of a Homelessness Strategy is a specific Corporate Target

### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

Reducing homelessness acceptances can represent a cost saving to the authority

## **THE REPORT**

### **1.0 Executive Summary**

A draft version of the Bolsover District Council Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2012-14 is appended at Appendix A. The document complies with the requirements of the 2002 Homelessness Act and refers to the Localism Bill, the Welfare Reform agenda and government initiatives to limit rough sleeping.

It is noted that additional statistical information has recently been made available by DCLG and where appropriate some graphs and tables will be updated to reflect this new data.

### **2.0 Background**

2.1 Bolsover District Council retains responsibility for strategic and statutory housing functions. "Homelessness" is a statutory housing duty and the Homelessness Act 2002 required that Local Housing Authorities like Bolsover should:

- ❖ Review homelessness services
- ❖ Develop and publish a strategy to address homelessness issues

2.2 In 2006 the Department of Local Government and Communities (DCLG) required that Homelessness Reviews and Strategies should be updated on a five yearly cycle with all authorities updating their Homelessness Strategies for June 2008. The exception to this rule was "excellent" authorities and Bolsover took advantage of this exception to allow for embedment of homelessness prevention techniques.

## **ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

A number of consultation events have been held with statutory partners 2008 – 2011. One Strategic Objective coming through was that of "Joint Working". This objective refers to the range of adult social care support packages made available for vulnerable households, by Derbyshire County Council, and which are implemented at the sub-regional level. "Joint Working" has been subsumed as a cross-cutting theme throughout the document and it is felt that by 2014, there may be merit in delivering a Joint Homelessness Strategy to cover Bolsover, Chesterfield and NEDDC. Hence the short lifespan of this document.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial** : Not directly from this report. The Strategy refers to the requirement to carry out a Private House Condition Survey but this will be subject to a separate report . Joint procurement of the study with NEDDC and Chesterfield Borough Council will deliver cost efficiencies.



**Legal** : Holding a Housing Waiting List and delivering a Statutory Allocations Policy is a legal requirement at the lower tier level.

**Human Resources**: Not directly.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. Executive approve the attached strategy and action plan**
- 2. Executive note the need to carry out a Private House Condition Survey which will be reported to a future meeting.**

ATTACHMENT:                   **Appendix A**  
FILE REFERENCE:  
SOURCE DOCUMENT:

# BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Homelessness Strategy

2012 - 2014

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



## **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

<b>Details of Document</b>	<b>Comments / Confirmation</b>
Title	Homelessness Strategy
Document type – i.e. draft or final version	Final Draft
Location of Strategy	Development Directorate
Lead Author of Strategy	Housing Enabling Manager
Member route for Approval & Cabinet Member concerned	Executive Cllr Alan Tomlinson
Date Risk Assessment completed	
Date Equality Impact Assessment approved	February 2012
Consultation Undertaken (Internal or External) if required	Sub Regional Homelessness Forum x 2 (External), Housing Officers Liaison Group x 6 months (Internal)
Partnership Involvement (if applicable)	Sub Regional Homelessness Forum
Strategy Approved by	
Date Approved	
Strategy Review Date	
Date forwarded to CSPD (to include on Intranet and Internet if applicable to the public)	

# CONTENTS

## ***FOREWORD***

This Homelessness Strategy sets out the vision for our homelessness service over the next two years. It identifies the challenges and opportunities that our Local Authority faces in relation to homelessness and describes the responses that have been developed in partnership with Communities and Local Government (CLG), public and private housing and support providers, the voluntary sector and of course, the clients. Consultation with our partners and stakeholders has told us what our Strategic Objectives should be. They encompass HOUSING OPTIONS, PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING, ROUGH SLEEPING and PARTNERSHIP WORKING.

The short lifespan of this strategy reflects two things:

1. The expectation of a new National Homelessness Strategy in 2012
2. The opportunity to align a refreshed Homelessness Strategy with Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire District Council's in 2014

Seeking to deliver a future joint strategy reflects the difficult economic climate that we face and acknowledges the benefits of a co-ordinated and streamlined approach. For now, the issues of anticipated job cuts and Mortgage Repossession, Welfare Reform and the "unringfencing" of County Council Supporting People budgets are highlighted and the risks to vulnerable client groups identified. Cuts to the National Affordable Housing Programme are similarly highlighted with alternative proposals to deliver affordable housing explored. Finally, the Bolsover-specific issue of a large, often poor quality private rented sector focussed mainly on 3 bed pre-1919 units is analysed with recommendations on reasonable preference, enforcement action, shared housing and demolition, proposed.

Homelessness and the threat of homelessness can present one of the most worrying and traumatic events faced by any household. Our vision links directly to individual Community Plans, to the joint Housing Market Area Strategy and illustrates our holistic approach to improving the quality of life for Bolsover District residents in housing need. We commend this strategy to you.

**Cllr Alan Tomlinson**

**Cllr Keith Bowman**

# ***POLICY CONTEXT***

## **1.1 The national policy context**

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to:

- provide free advice and information about homelessness and preventing homelessness to everyone in their district
- assist eligible individuals and families who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and in priority need

1.1.1 With the 2002 Homelessness Act, the Government made homelessness prevention a priority through providing increased funding to tackle homelessness, setting challenging targets for prevention and placing requirements on the local councils to produce Homelessness Strategies. These strategies were to be informed by a review of performance, current service provision and estimated future need. The Act stated that the focus of these strategies was to be on prevention measures, as well as emphasising the importance of offering advice to all people in housing need.

1.1.2 The government later identified a number of targets in relation to homelessness. These included:

- to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010 by 50% (against December 2004 figures)
- to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless 16/17 year olds by 2010
- to end rough sleeping by 2012/13

1.1.3 National strategies and guidance that have helped shaped this Homelessness Strategy include:

- “Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives” (2005): Homelessness Prevention, reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, from 2010 B&B no longer suitable for 16/17 year olds
- Sustainable Communities: “Homes For All” (2005): Choice Based Lettings schemes in all local authorities in England by 2010
- Tackling Homelessness” (2006): recognises the role of RSLs in preventing homelessness through partnership working, sustainable communities, allocation and management policies and better use of existing stock
- “No One Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping” (Nov 2008): aimed to end rough sleeping in UK for more than one night by 2012
- “Laying the Foundations” A National Housing Strategy for England 2011.
- The Localism Act introducing the option of flexible tenancies and affordable rents

These strategies had some success and homelessness and rough sleeping has fallen nationally over the five years to 2010.

1.1.4 With the new Coalition Government, however, priorities are shifting. Welfare reform is a major plank of the new Government’s agenda, with plans to devolve decision making to the local level and reducing overall welfare spending in particular the Housing Benefit bill by:

- a. Increasing non-dependents deductions
- b. Introduction of property sizes limits in Social rented sector
- c. Maximum benefits cap
- d. Universal Credit

- a. **limiting Housing Benefit entitlements** for working age people in social housing sector to reflect family size
- b. **moving towards a Universal Credit** - likely to end Housing Benefit payments direct to landlords, introduce non-dependant deductions and introduce an overall cap that may impact upon vulnerable people

As a result, there is an unprecedented amount of change underway that is likely to impact on homelessness over the coming years, both in terms of the resources available to tackle it and demands placed on services. At the time of writing, it is unclear exactly how these changes will impact, either individually or in the round but there does seem to be a consensus that services will come under pressure in the medium term while the hoped-for behavioural changes materialise.

Another of these behaviours linked to Welfare Reform for the Coalition Government is the belief that is that recipients of Housing Benefit (Council tenants) and Local Housing Allowance (Other tenants) should be expected to take financial responsibility for paying their rent. This means that with the exception of certain cases, rent support payments will be paid to the claimant rather than the landlord.

1.1.5 **Public spending cuts** - in October 2010, the Chancellor set out savings of £81bn to be made from public spending over the next 5 years. Funding for local authorities is being reduced by 26% over the next four years with the majority of cutback in the first two years. Whilst Homelessness Grant, which supports local authorities in homelessness prevention, was increased in 2011/12, this increase is marginal when compared to cuts made to welfare monies. Discretionary Housing Payments were also increased 2010/11 in recognition of increasing demand for private sector rented housing.

1.1.7 **Changes to housing allocations** – the new Allocations Code of Guidance is out to consultation January to March 2012. It allows local authorities to have flexibility in reducing their waiting list to allow only “reasonable preference categories” to apply. Because Bolsover District Council has chosen to continue with an “open” waiting list, statistics pertaining to persons without reasonable preference categories will not be used as part of the evidence base to generate new supply.

1.1.8 **Reducing capital funding for new affordable housing** - The 2011 Localism Act seeks to reduce grant dependency and encourage Housing Associations and other RP’s to borrow more heavily by introducing “affordable rents” at 80% of open market rents – thereby increasing the income stream available to Housing Associations in order to pay off interest charges on development loans. New proposals in the 2011 “Housing Strategy for England” also seek private sector investment in new affordable housing to replace government grant cuts. However, external investors have minimum rates of return that they need to achieve for their investment. It is not clear whether investment in **new** affordable housing in low value areas costing circa £100,000 to build, can achieve those levels of return. Conversely, investment in

cheap private sector rented accommodation in Bolsover District is assessed as easily delivering the gross yields required by investors

- 1.1.9 Increasing the Discounts available through Right to Buy** – The 2011 Housing Strategy for England proposes increasing the discounts available on Right to Buy properties purchased from Local Authorities. The government have also announced their intention that every sold home will be replaced by a new social rented home, but at time of writing, it is unclear how this will be delivered.
- 1.1.10 New forms of tenure** – The introduction of Strategic Tenancy Strategies in the Localism Act means that social housing providers may consider tenancies for life for new social housing tenants being replaced by fixed term (10, 5, or in exception circumstances 2 year) “flexible tenancies”, renewable depending on household circumstances. Impacts may include increased turnover in social housing, reduced demand for new social housing tenancies (not least because rents on new build and possibly relets will increase to 80% of market rents) and challenges to community sustainability. On the other hand, the narrower gap between social and market rents may, as the Government hopes, start to change perceptions about the acceptability of “decent” private sector as a long term housing solution.
- 1.1.11 Housing Revenue Account Reform** – The Coalition Government has introduced a new self financing system for stock holding authorities. This may allow more direct development by Local Authorities. The Council is embarking on an assessment of the opportunities presented by these changes.
- 1.1.12 Supporting People funding** - the Derbyshire Supporting People Programme delivers housing-related support to vulnerable people (including homeless people) across the county and thus plays an important role in tackling homelessness. Loss of ringfence to Supporting People Funding in addition to cuts are anticipated to this revenue stream with many significant supported housing contracts are to be re-tendered in the homelessness strategy lifetime.

The uncertainty surrounding these changes on the provision of, and demand for, homelessness services mean that the authorities will need to monitor the situation carefully to ensure that the strategy remains abreast of potential impacts.

## **1.2 Sub- Regional Context**

Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire District Councils have a successful history of delivering joint projects that support homeless and potentially homeless households. By working together, the partnership is able to maximise funding and deliver joint projects that would otherwise be unviable at the local authority level. The partnership has also been highly successful in securing additional funding to support its homelessness prevention work.

In 2007, the three north Derbyshire authorities were joined by Bassetlaw District Council situated in Nottinghamshire. Together, the four authorities became the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area (HMA) and delivered a number of key research projects, including housing needs studies for Young People, Older Persons, Persons with Complex Needs and BME Groups – adopted by Bolsover District Council in 2009 (weblink).

In October 2009, the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA published their first joint housing strategy. This strategy proposes interventions to ensure that the Housing



Market contributes towards Economic Development and meets Housing Need. Indeed, Strategic Objective 3: “Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Groups” states that the authorities will:

*“.....work in partnership to ensure that the four authorities are able to meet the needs of vulnerable groups across the sub-region in a manner that reduces duplication and maximises effectiveness”*

To deliver this objective, the joint housing strategy action plan includes a number of actions that will deliver improved services to homelessness people and those threatened with homelessness. These actions will be delivered in partnership and will include:

- Work around the homelessness changes programme
- Work with private landlords to develop the private rented sector
- Empty property work
- Review the approach to 16/17 year olds protocols and pathways approach
- Responding to Welfare Reforms

“PARTNERSHIP WORKING” came through as a strategic objective through the consultation process. It is proposed to subsume partnership working as a cross cutting objective throughout the body of this strategy.

### **1.3 Local Context**

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Bolsover represents the aspirations of the authority by seeking to deliver the “Wellbeing” power for the benefit of local residents. The Local Development Framework for Bolsover District Council is the spatial representation of both the Community Strategy and the 2009 Sub-Regional Housing Strategy and is due before HMS Planning Inspectorate 2012 with a view to achieving confirmation of “soundness” for its Core Strategy.

The Homelessness Strategy is a statutory requirement and should be viewed in the context of these higher tier strategies but alongside the Allocations Policy, Strategic Tenancy Strategy and County Council Adult Social Care Strategies.

## **2. *HOMELESSNESS DATA AND TRENDS***

### **2.1 Housing Needs**

In winter 2010/11, the housing register for Bolsover District was reviewed in readiness for the introduction of Choice Based lettings. This action saw housing need drop from over 5000 households to just under 2000 households registered with 30% households having ‘reasonable preference’. Reasonable preference is laid out in the Council’s Allocations Policy and may cover the type of housing that you live in (such as unsanitary, unfit/non-decent or overcrowded conditions) or give preference to ex-armed forces households for example. Unlike “priority needs” classifications, reasonable

preference is a statutory requirement only in some cases – others are optional and can be used instead to reflect local circumstances.

In section 4, the proportionally poor quality of the private rented sector in Bolsover is analysed and the requirement to include private sector tenants living in properties with category 1 hazards, in reasonable preference categories, is highlighted.

#### Sub Regional Waiting List Data

	<b>Bolsover</b>	<b>Chesterfield</b>	<b>North East Derbyshire</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Bolsover Feb 2012 update</b>
1- Bed	40	1990	1740	3770	1319
2 – bed	198	781	561	1540	430
3 – bed	51	290	219	560	144
4+ bed	4	41	7	52	5
Not known	887	215	0	1102	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>3317</b>	<b>2527</b>	<b>7024</b>	<b>1898</b>
Reasonable preference	346	425	469	1240	1158
% Reasonable preference	30%	13%	19%	18%	61%

**Table One** Source: April 2011 HSSA return

The April 2011 Housing Waiting List figure for Bolsover District was low in April 2011 on account of the Housing Waiting List having been cleansed in readiness for Choice Based Lettings. By February 2012, numbers on the Housing Waiting List had increased to 1898 in Bolsover District. 61% of those 1898 households were situated in reasonable preference categories against a Housing Market Area (HMA) average of 18%. Since reasonable preference criteria are locally determined, this disparity *may* relate to high numbers of people in poor quality private rented accommodation and needs to be investigated.

## **2.2 Housing Supply**

Financial year 2010/11 saw 20% (45 of 203 completions) of all new housing developed in the district coming forward as new affordable housing stock. A further 80 units are anticipated over the next three year period with this new supply going some way towards improving housing quality for those in need of affordable rented accommodation in the district. Disability access and move-on units are routinely requested as part of s106 negotiations on private sector development sites, however, consultation with Housing Association partners has confirmed that Welfare Reform notwithstanding, the appetite for purchase of 1 bed units on new development sites is extremely limited. It seems clear therefore that housing for single persons, will have to be developed in partnership with the private rented sector or by the council itself.

The Statutory Housing Register is the prime evidence base used to indicate the size and supply of new affordable housing required. All three Derbyshire authorities

demonstrate a marked shortfall in smaller properties with Bolsover demonstrating particularly low levels of household demand for 3 and 4 bed properties. This trend is assumed to be an outcome of high 3 bed, pre-1919 private sector rented supply in the district as demonstrated later in the strategy.

## **2.3 Move-On**

<b>Derbyshire Districts</b>	<b>EREWASH</b>	<b>AMBER VALLEY</b>	<b>CHESTERFIELD BOLSOVER &amp; NE DERBS</b>	<b>HIGH PEAK &amp; DERBS DALES</b>	<b>SOUTH DERBS</b>
<b>Snap-shot March 2010 - % waiting for move-on</b>	41%	51%	82%	62%	73%
<b>2010/11 Move-on target</b>	61 Units	119 units	129 units	33 units	97 units

Despite good performance in general needs and older persons affordable housing delivery, Bolsover in partnership with Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire District Council registered the highest requirement for move-on accommodation in the County in 2010 at 82%. The provision of supported housing bed spaces for vulnerable persons remains a challenge. Those leaving move-on are placed in Band C allowing the widest possible choice for rehousing as it has the largest proportion of properties being advertised. Furthermore, applicants are awarded sufficient points to elevate them to the top, or near the top of the band.

The Council is now involved in a county wide project looking at move on accommodation. As part of the project the council has signed up to the Derbyshire Move-On Protocol and contributes to the County Move-On Co-ordinator post through use of Homelessness Prevention grant. Move-On performance in 2011/12 is expected to improve.

## **2.4 Non Priority Homeless**

If households presenting as homeless are not deemed to be in priority need in accordance with the 2002 Homelessness Act, the Council does not have a duty to provide temporary accommodation or to rehouse such households under homelessness legislation (other than to offer temporary accommodation if needed for the duration of the investigation)

In 2010 the Communities and Local Government Critical Friend Assessment noted that this client group do not have homelessness applications routinely taken when they approach BDC and as a result BDC may be underreporting the number of people presenting as homeless. A non-priority decision (may) still give a household reasonable preference through the Council's allocations scheme, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing a permanent offer of accommodation. This change was implemented in 2011.

The following assistance for non-priority households is as follows:

- Rent deposit guarantee scheme to access the private rented sector
- Mortgage Rescue
- Bed and Breakfast Accommodation
- Firstbuy Mortgage Support
- The Council's Housing Waiting List
- Accommodated with family or friends.

## 2.5 Priority Need Homeless

The 2002 Homelessness Act defined priority need groups as follows:

- Homeless in an emergency
- Have dependant children
- Be pregnant
- Be a 16-17 year old owed a duty under section 20 of the Children's Act 1989
- Be a care leaver aged 18-21
- Be vulnerable due to:
  - Old age, or
  - Medical Problems, or
  - Domestic Violence

The graph below (Fig 1) shows an increase in homelessness acceptances 2009/10 for priority needs groups in Bolsover District

## 2.6 Numbers Accepted as being Homeless and in Priority Need

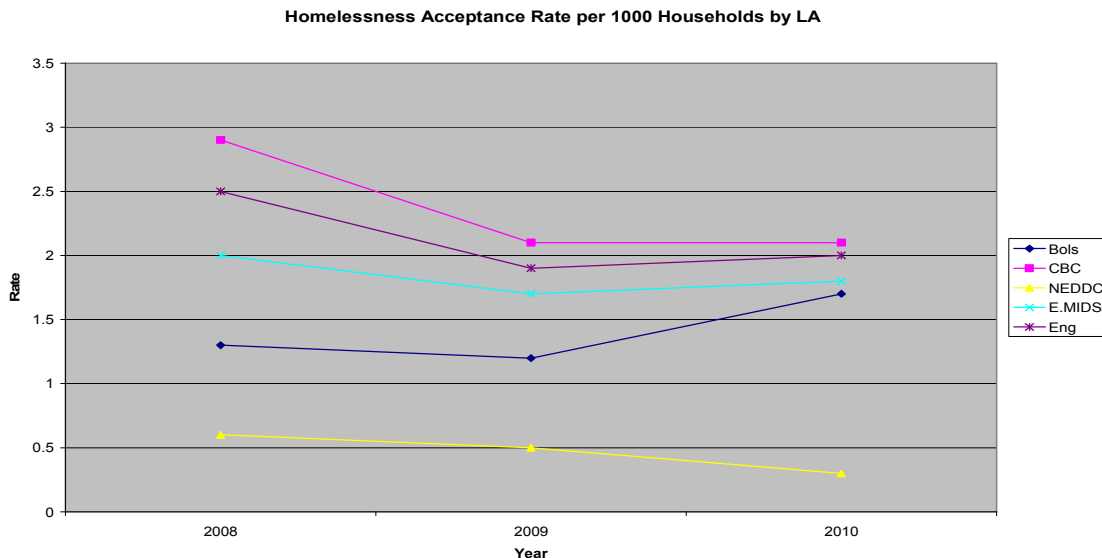


Fig 1 SOURCE P1E DATA (Returns made by Councils to DCLG)

## 2.7 Analysis of Reasons for Homelessness Acceptance

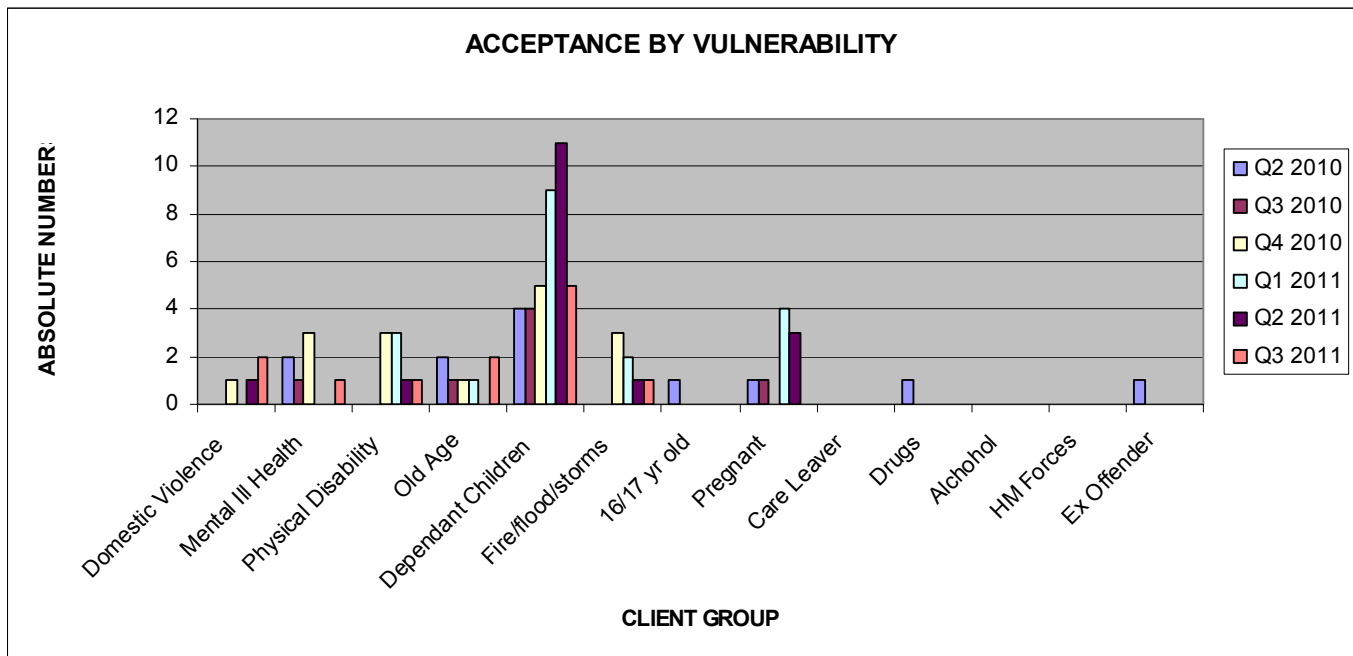
For the Homeless Service is to continue to provide appropriate prevention initiatives, it needs to be guided by the reality of why vulnerable people become homeless.

The most frequently occurring reason for homelessness acceptance is “family no longer willing to accommodate” and “termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy” (see overleaf). This analysis indicates that in terms of prevention “Mediation”, “Housing Benefit Assistance” and “Home Visits” may be effective remedies since most private sector landlords will seek to minimise rent loss due to empty properties. Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy can often relate to a Landlord seeking to increase rents, or find tenants willing to pay rent regularly and care for the property.

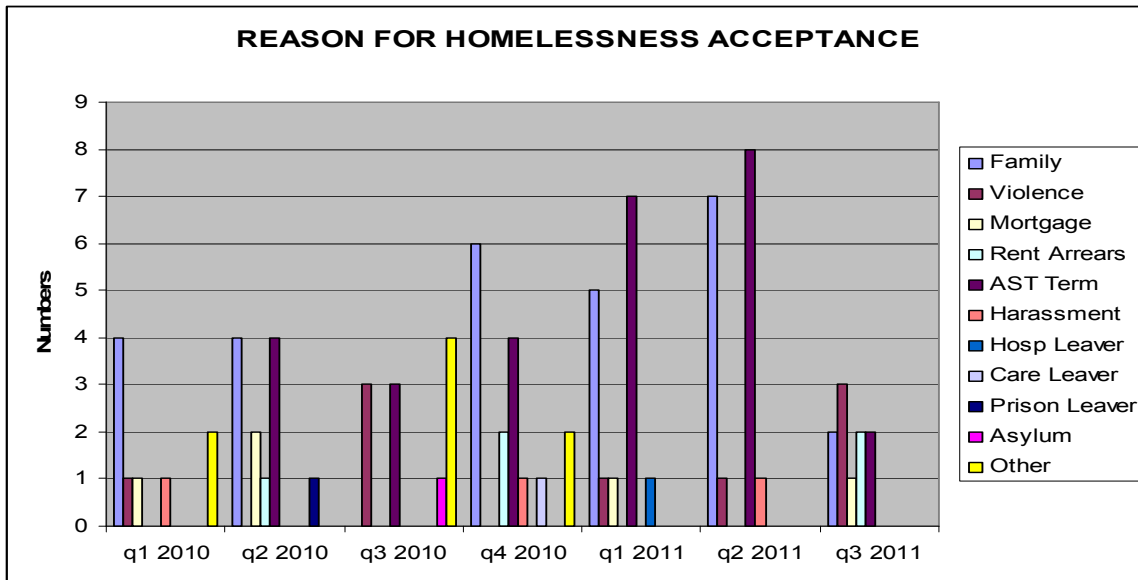
In absolute terms, the most frequently occurring vulnerable groups accessing the homelessness in Bolsover 2010-2011 is as follows:

- Those with dependant children
- Those pregnant with no other children
- Those with a physical disability
- Those affected by floods/fire/storms

Support and advice tailored for individual vulnerable groups is highlighted in the following section.



Source P1E DATA (Returns made by Councils to DCLG)



## 4. LOCAL PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the above data, based on consultation with partners and service users and linked to national strategy, the strategic objectives for the Bolsover District Homelessness Strategy are as follows:

### SO1 HOUSING OPTIONS

In many circumstances, homelessness can be prevented through good housing advice. Housing Advice is delivered via frontline services at four points in the district – Bolsover District Council Offices and Clowne, Shirebrook and South Normanton contact centres. Consistency of housing advice is ensured through use of a standard housing advice sheet and through detailed procedures guiding delivery of individual preventative schemes.

- Additional housing advice is delivered through Bolsover District partners CAB, Chesterfield Law Centre (providing advocacy) and the National Housing Advisory Service with the Bolsover District Financial Inclusion Partnership funding parallel advisory services through Working Neighbourhoods Funding. Service Level Agreements are issued at a Corporate Level and action now needs to be taken to ensure that prevention statistics can be collated from partners in terms of Homelessness and delivery on Local Performance Indicator 213.
- The preventative schemes employed by the Authority as part of the Housing Advice Role, frequently in partnership with neighbouring authorities, are as per Fig 4 axis:
  - **Mediation** – dedicated “brokering” between client at risk of leaving family home (excluding DV victims) leading to homelessness prevention
  - **Mortgage Arrears Assistance** – use of government funding to prevent homelessness resulting from repossession
  - **Other** – at the Housing Options Team discretion leading to homelessness prevention

- **Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme** – assistance enabling households to access the private rented sector leading to homelessness prevention
- **Nomination to Social Housing** – Choice Based Letting will see this change to a bidding system for most social housing in the district
- **Debt Advice** – signposting to CAB or the Credit Union leading to homelessness prevention
- **Sanctuary Scheme** – provision of a range of measures including secure locks, alarms, new doors etc to the establishment of “safe room” in the family home for DV victims meaning that victim does not need to flee/present as homeless.
- **Housed with Friends/Relatives** – linked to mediation above, but more likely to refer to prevention of homelessness for young persons
- **Home Visits** – to understand current housing situation and risk of homelessness
- **Managed Move** – this can be support to undertake an exchange, or for the applicant to be transferred via the allocations policy.
- **Nomination to Supported Housing** – for vulnerable persons requiring supported living leading to homelessness prevention
- **Housing Benefit Assistance** – advice from Revenues and Benefits Team potentially encompassing Discretionary Housing Payments, leading to homelessness prevention
- **Crisis Intervention** – early warning system from Tenancy Management Officers leading to homelessness prevention
- **Advocacy** – signposting to Chesterfield Law Centre resulting in homelessness prevention
- **Prevention Fund** – use of Homelessness Prevention monies at Housing Options Team discretion resulting in homelessness prevention

The use of each prevention scheme is examined below.

Homeless Prevention - By Period & Method

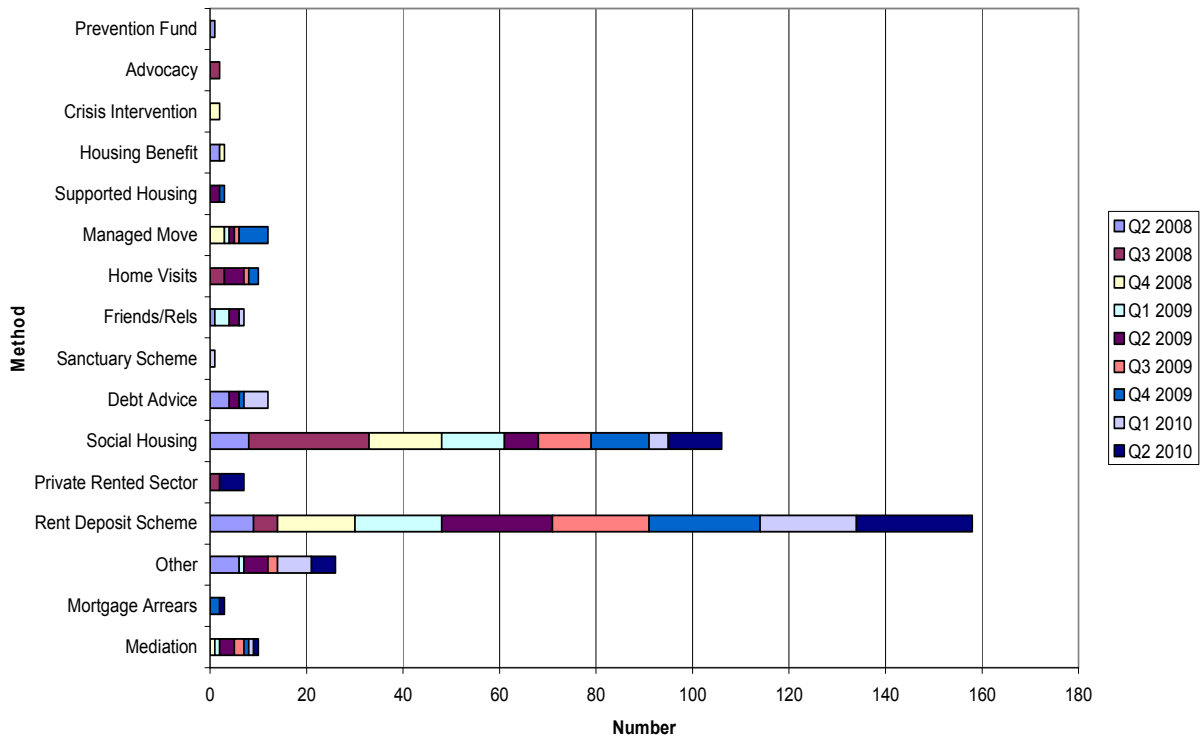


Fig 4 Source HSSA DATA

- Nominations

Fig 4 shows the method that has been used most throughout the period in all quarters when considering all interventions is that of Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme with nominations to social housing stock coming second. The authority has tightened up on nomination agreements to existing RSL stock and seen new affordable units come into management 2008 – 11. If all Registered Providers submit their housing stock to Choice Based lettings, further increase in access to affordable housing for households on the Statutory Housing Register should occur. The following issues “A” and “B” below will affect the number of preventions occurring through nominations in the future:

- **A** Flexible Tenancies

Bolsover District Council does not intend to deliver this tenure type within its own stock. Through the development of our Strategic Tenancy Strategy and in consultation with our Housing Association partners, we will endeavour to ensure that as and when flexible tenancies come to an end, the Housing Association undertakes a sustainability appraisal to ensure that the subject household will not face homelessness as a result of tenancy termination. It is proposed that the household will be able to either:

- proceed to a new tenancy where no alternative accommodation is available



- secure offer of equity share purchase in the subject property
- **B Affordable Rents**

Also introduced via the Localism Bill, affordable rents are set at 80% of open market rents. For a low value area such as Bolsover where private sector rented housing is frequently used to house those presenting in housing need, 80% of open market rents is unlikely to be unaffordable, and should the council adopt such a policy the affordable rent would be set at the 'target' rent if this is higher than 80% of market rents.
- Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme

Fig 4 shows that the scheme remains a fundamental part of homelessness prevention in the district. Joint provision with CBC, NEDDC and a partner will ensure the scheme delivers quality service and best use of the limited Homeless Prevention Grants. Quality of housing and the shortfall of smaller housing (one and two beds), discussed in SO2 below, is an issue requiring assistance from the Private Sector enforcement team.
- The Private Rented Sector

Fig 4 above shows very low prevention of homelessness through use of the private rented sector without the use of the rent deposit guarantee scheme.
- Sanctuary Scheme

Fig 4 above also shows virtual non-use of the Sanctuary Scheme as a homelessness prevention method. However, the Council Employs a highly effective dedicated Domestic Violence Officer within the cross-tenure Community Safety Team. Each year the Domestic Violence Officer receives in excess of 185 referrals requiring assistance. The most common process for supporting victims and preventing homelessness is to:

  1. Get the victim to safety via refuge or friends and family
  2. Apply for injunction/court order against the perpetrator
  3. Return the victim to the family home

In this way, the Domestic Violence Officer ensures that only a small proportion of those experiencing violence in the home, actually go on to make a homelessness application. The Council now needs to ensure that all of those preventions are recorded for CLG monitoring purposes. The likelihood is that in this instance, homelessness preventions occurring through Domestic Violence support, which is part-funded by the PCT, could outnumber preventions occurring through the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme.
- Housing Benefit Intervention

Fig 4 shows a very small amount of homelessness prevention arising from Housing Benefit and Revenues intervention. However, as per Domestic Violence Support above, it is known that the true prevention figure is much higher. Welfare Reform and subsequent increases in the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) fund from Central Government means that pressure for homelessness prevention to occur via this route is likely to increase. New ways of working between Housing Benefits and

the Housing Options team are being developed for 2012 to ensure that so that all preventions undertaken by the Benefits Team are recorded.

- Supported Housing

Fig 4 shows access to Supported Housing rose slightly in 2008 owing to the development of Supporting People schemes locally. Supported housing schemes commissioned by Derbyshire County Council in on behalf of Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Council's have had the knock on effect of increasing housing advice in the district with the following supported housing providers providing accommodation and advice services:

- **Advance Housing Association** – nine units of accommodation for people with enduring mental health problems.
- **North Derbyshire Women's Aid** – two purpose built refuge schemes for women affected by domestic abuse providing 14 bed spaces plus three dispersed refuge units with floating support.
- **Action Housing** – five units of supported accommodation for people with complex needs
- **South Yorkshire Housing Association** – seventeen flats of supported accommodation for 16-25 year olds in the Chesterfield area plus a further five units of supported accommodation in Bolsover and NEDDC.
- **Stonham Housing** – supported lodgings providing accommodation for 16-25yr olds in Chesterfield

Although there have been no cuts 2011/12; Housing Related Support Services funded by Derbyshire County Council Accommodation and Support Team (previously Supporting People) who are part of Adult Care are being systematically retendered for 2012/13.

- Accommodated with Friends or Family

Fig 4 shows some homelessness prevention via accommodation with friends and family/mediation demonstrating traditional prevention techniques used for younger client groups. However, it is likely that this solution is underreported in the statistics above. Many cases are avoided by informal telephone conversations or visits. The work within schools has been particularly successful in debunking many of the myths around homelessness and the options available to young people, but there are numerous cases where young people may seek accommodation following minor family issues these remain unrecorded.

The strategic response to working with children's services was developed in 2011. Landmark legal judgements have changed the way in which young people at risk of homelessness are dealt with giving children's services a much stronger role. In addition, Home Visits are now undertaken as a matter of course in all cases where homelessness is caused by parental eviction.

- Debt Advice

In terms of assisting households who are experiencing difficulties meeting mortgage or rental payments the Council fund a CAB debt advisor to promote advice and assistance. Fig 4 shows a large increase in homelessness prevention occurring

through debt advice in 2010. In 2011, a new Service Level Agreement has been established.

- Mortgage Support

In 2010 DCLG had confirmed that the Authority would receive notification from lenders when they are seeking repossession action against a household within the District boundary. In 2011, the Housing Options Service commenced writing to all affected households to offer advice and assistance and monitor the success of the approach for the purpose of government returns. Now that additional monies have been made available for 2012, it is a possibility that DCLG will want specific reports on repossession activity prevented through the new funding.

- Crisis Intervention

In terms of identifying households facing eviction due to rent arrears, an early warning system between Tenancy Management and housing options officers was developed in 2010 for Council House stock. This process will be rolled out 2012 to all social housing stock through the RSL Forum. In light of Welfare Reform and the risk that homelessness resulting from rent arrears could become a growing problem, an increase in Crisis Intervention is anticipated.

Cost benefit analysis comparing value for money of each preventative scheme now needs to occur. On the qualitative side, exit interviews identifying the experience of households in receipt of homelessness prevention activity would also help to inform service development. Additional homelessness prevention tools available to Housing Options Officers are outlined below:

- Discharge Protocols

In terms of vulnerable persons leaving supported housing or hospital, protocols with the Health Authority and Adult Social Care have previously been established, however, these are currently being jointly reviewed.

- Information Leaflets

In 2011 leaflets advertising the Housing Options service and individual homelessness prevention initiatives have been developed and the full range of leaflets is available at appropriate locations.

## **SO2 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING**

- Number of households

The number of households in North Eastern Derbyshire in 2008 was estimated at 119,000 and is projected to rise to 137,000 by 2026. The number of households in Bolsover District is 34,455. The age profile of households is expected to shift as the baby boomer generation reaches retirement age and the proportion of people aged 65+ is expected to rise from 18.5% in 2008 to 25.2% of the population by 2026 affecting unit size of housing required.

- House Prices

Average house prices in North Eastern Derbyshire are significantly lower than the national average. In 2010, the Land Registry data gave average prices of £163,909

in North East Derbyshire, £142,674 in Chesterfield and £116,251 in Bolsover. Despite the relatively low house prices owner occupation is out of reach for many households owing to low household incomes. Demand is often focussed therefore on the private and social rented sectors with shared-ownership historically considered an “unaffordable” option in the district.

- Demand for Affordable Housing

Looking at the future demand for housing, the 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identified a significant shortfall in the supply of affordable homes in North Eastern Derbyshire. This shortfall was estimated annually at 1,151 properties (607 Bolsover, 133 Chesterfield and 311 North East Derbyshire). These statistics would indicate that the discharge of duty cannot be met through social housing alone – however in Bolsover’s case, the sharp drop in households on the statutory waiting list following preparations for the introduction of Choice Based Lettings, may mean that the 2013 SHMA will show lower affordable housing need.

- Discharge of Homelessness Duty into the Private Rented Sector

In order to deal with the ***national*** social housing shortfall, the Government have introduced legislation via the Localism Act to enable local authorities to fully discharge their duty to secure accommodation by arranging an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector, without requiring the applicant’s agreement. However, an assessment of suitability will include an assessment of the condition and cost of the accommodation.

Where applicants become homeless again within two years, through no fault of their own, the authority will still have a responsibility to the household regardless of the priority need at that time. Systems will need to be established to ensure such cases are recorded.

- Local Housing Allowance

The table below illustrates that if renting in the private sector and dependant on Local Housing Allowance (LHA), top up of £20 per month is required on Bolsover District.

	<b>Average monthly private rent (2 bed)</b>	<b>Local Housing Allowance rate (50<sup>th</sup> percentile Aug 11)</b>
Bolsover	£445	£425
Chesterfield	£445	£425
North East Derbyshire	£427	£425

A summary.

The proposed changes to Local Housing Allowance that will potentially impact on homelessness and homelessness prevention is shown in Table 1 overleaf.

**Table 1: Changes to Local Housing Allowance and implications**

<p><b>reducing the Local Housing Allowance (LHA)</b> from 50% of the Broad Market Rental Market Area (BRMA) to 30% from October 2011. This will impact on many households renting in the private sector, reducing their LHA payments.</p>
<p>uprating and increasing the <b>non-dependent rate</b> from April 2011 is likely to place pressure on households with adult children still living at home who cannot contribute towards household expenses. The increase in the non-dependant rate will take place over a number of years and is likely to result in ongoing pressure on households with adult children at home in private and social sectors.</p>
<p><b>capping the Local Housing Allowance</b> is likely to make applicants for private sector letting less attractive to landlords</p>
<p><b>capping the total benefits</b> to a household at no more than the national average wage is likely to impact larger families and people with multiple needs</p>
<p><b>limiting payments for people under 35</b> to the shared room rate (up from 25), making it harder to place young single people in private rented accommodation</p>
<p><b>uprating LHA in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI)</b> instead of Retail Price Index (RPI) could impact on the number of private sector homes available for rent</p>

- Private Rented Housing Market

In 2010, the four authorities of Bolsover, Bassetlaw, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire commissioned a study of the private rented housing market in the Housing Market Area (HMA). The findings for Bolsover are summarised in the report as follows:

*“Bolsover exhibits a localised market where living close to family and friends is important to tenants indicating a lack of mobility and a need for family support structures, although it is noteworthy that the area has the highest proportion of tenants whose previous address was out of area. The sector caters for more single people and single parents than the other areas. Tenants typically access a property through word of mouth and the majority indicate no problems in finding a property to rent. The vast majority of survey respondents (83%) rent terraced housing traditionally associated with industrial and post industrial areas. There are high levels of worklessness amongst tenants with only 19% in full time employment, which is considerably lower than the other three areas. Tenants exhibited a slightly lower satisfaction rating with their landlord than average. Average rent levels are the lowest in the HMA. The sector in Bolsover is typical of many deprived areas, where the sector plays a complementary role to the social sector and tenants exhibit a similar profile.”*

- Empty Properties

In 2010/11 financial year, the number of empty properties vacant for over 6 months in the district rose from 936 to 1014 units – although it is known that some of this rise is the result of empty Council House stock awaiting demolition. Requirements for greater mortgage deposit means that many units will be “stuck” on the sale market with buyers unable to access sufficient loan monies. However, the narrowness of the Bolsover housing market centred on Council Tax Band A 3 bed-semis and terraces, the low numbers of households seeking 3 and 4 bed property on the Housing Waiting List and the knowledge that private sector tenants come into the district from outside the area, indicates that a proportion of empty properties may comprise residual stock.

In September 2010, CLG released an Expression of Interest opportunity for £100million monies to bring empty properties back into use as affordable housing. Bolsover District has sought to access these monies in partnership with Sheffield City Region authorities. The requirement will be to source empty properties appropriate for sub-division into smaller units/shared housing or properties that are smaller in the first instance.

In November 2011, the new National Housing Strategy for England identified a further £50million funding to deliver Empty Property interventions that could involve demolition of stock. This opportunity saw an Expression of Interest submitted March 2012.

- Ease of Access to the Private Rented Market

In terms of ease of access to private rented housing, Bolsover respondents most frequently suggested that finding their current home had been “very easy”.

%	Chesterfield	NEDDC	Bolsover	Bassetlaw
Very Easy	30	45	79	23
Fairly Easy	37	46	19	65
Neither Easy nor Difficult	14	7	0	7
Fairly Difficult	5	2	0	4
Very Difficult	0	0	0	2
Don't know	4	0	2	0

Source: Ecotech Study into the HMA Private Rented Market 2009

However, in the same study, the proportion of private sector renters on a waiting list for council or housing association property was highest in Bolsover perhaps suggesting dissatisfaction with the quality provided by private sector renting. Alternatively, local attitudes concerning the expectation of lower rent levels may be a cause.

- Private Sector Stock Condition

The private sector stock condition survey for Bolsover District Council was conducted in 2003 by Fordhams Research. The report classified 22.7% of private rental dwellings surveyed as unfit compared to a cross tenure average of 8.1%. The SAP rating for the private rental sector was 38 compared to an overall rating of 44. At 22.7% the level of unfitness was around four times higher than that found in the owner occupied sector and 16 times higher than in the RSL sector – statistics that may explain why many private sector renters in Bolsover District are querying whether they are “adequately housed” by lodging themselves on the statutory Housing Waiting list. The survey found that unfitness was strongly associated with age with 17% of pre 1919 dwellings estimated to be unfit. It is noticeable that the private rented stock contained a higher proportion of pre-1919 dwellings with 68.2% in this age category compared to 33.2% of all dwellings in the district – no doubt influenced by the low market values and high yields that such properties deliver. Yields that will increase if houses are sub-divided into shared housing units to cater for single households affected by welfare reform and the lack of smaller units available in the district.
- Private Sector Landlord Accreditation

The Council is a contributor to both East Midlands and Sheffield City Region landlord accreditation schemes. In the longer term it is hoped to mimic the approach of neighbouring authorities where accredited private sector landlord properties are advertised alongside social rented stock via Choice Based lettings.
- Green Deal

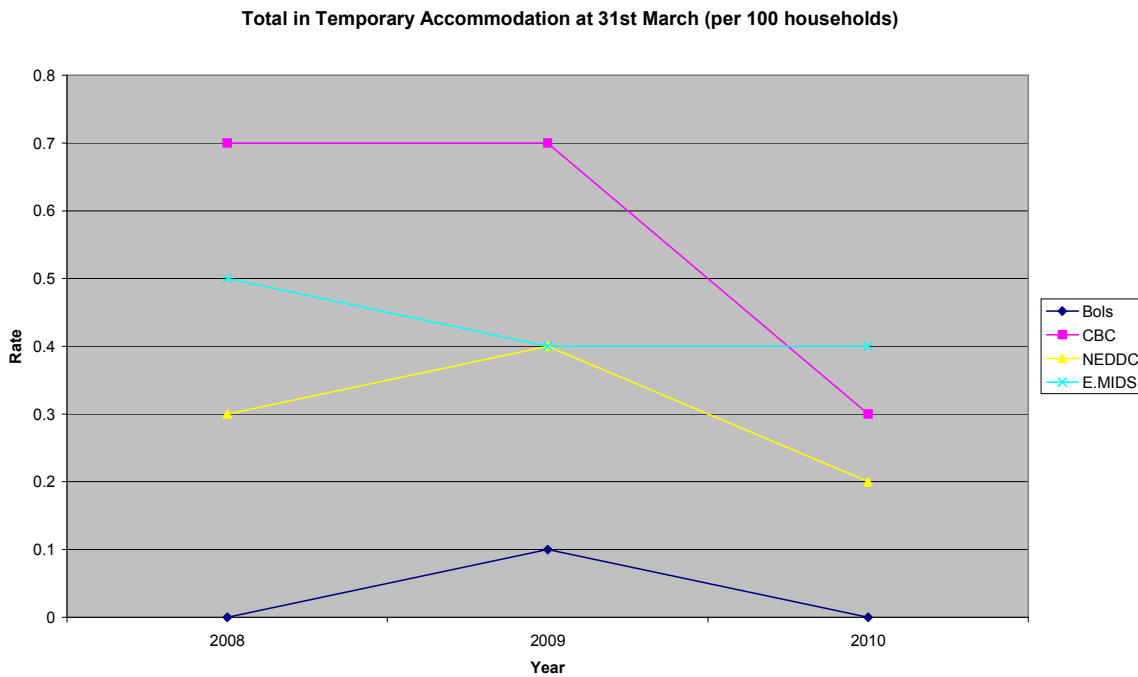
The above initiative represents the biggest cross-tenure intervention in housing quality in a generation and will be of great importance in improving the thermal efficiency of private sector rented stock in the district. Detailed guidance will be issued summer 2012 with the basic thrust of the scheme being that energy saving initiatives will be paid for through the “topping-up” of reduced energy bills.
- The most recent evidence (2003) however is that whilst Bolsover District may be seen to have a “good” supply of private sector rented accommodation (as both the Ecotech study, temporary accommodation and rent deposit guarantee figures suggest), the quality of that housing may be poor in many instances. If the authority is to use the private rented sector to discharge the homelessness duty as allowed by the Localism Act, comprehensive assessment by Environmental Health officers will be required. New Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Private Sector House Condition surveys are also key.
- It is probable that the comparatively cheap housing offer in Bolsover district will continue to attract low skill, low pay households from outside the Local Authority boundaries as per Ecotech primary research findings. Once resident in the district, these households will acquire “local connection” and be eligible to access the homelessness service should their tenancy fail.

### SO3 ROUGH SLEEPERS

- “No One Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping” (Nov 2008)  
As described in the background section, the above strategy aimed to end rough sleeping in UK for more than one night by 2012. This government agenda has been launched in Derbyshire through the mapping of services in the County for Rough Sleepers including a phone number for anyone to call in and notify the area of anyone rough sleeping.

- Temporary Accommodation

Outwardly, rough sleeping has never been a prominent issue for Bolsover District. The temporary accommodation figures reaching zero confirms the commitment of Bolsover to avoid the use of inappropriate temporary accommodation especially families in B&B accommodation. Temporary accommodation is only used for families in short term emergencies.



However Rough Sleeping presented itself as a strategic objective during the consultation process for this strategy. This is due to a number of sub-regional factors including :

- the proximity of Chesterfield as Sub Regional Service Centre
- the relatively high numbers of rough sleepers recorded in the Chesterfield Local Authority Area (which were – higher than Derby City in 2008)
- the potential for Bolsover residents to gravitate to the larger urban centre
- the ongoing importance of rough sleeping at a national level

the bleak economic outlook 2011 – 2017



- Homelessness Watch

Each autumn the authority participates in the County-wide “Homelessness Watch” survey. At the time of writing, the 2011 data is not available however 2008 - 10 data is overleaf showing only 4% of rough sleepers within Bolsover District but an average of 30% rough sleepers in Chesterfield. Local connection data within the 2010 Homelessness Watch report shows 7% of 2010 rough sleepers stating local connection with Bolsover District despite location of actual bedding down.

District/ Borough	2008		2009		2010	
	Number	% of Rough Sleepers in this Area	Number	% of Rough Sleepers in this Area	Number	% of Rough Sleepers in this Area
Amber Valley			3	6	6	8
Bolsover	3	4			3	4
Chesterfield	25	36	15	32	16	23
Derby City	16	23	24	51	23	32
Derbyshire Dales	2	3	0	0	3	4
Erewash	6	9	0	0	12	17
High Peak	9	13	4	9	3	4
North East Derbyshire	3	4			3	4
South Derbyshire	2	3	1	2		
Out of Derbyshire	3	4			2	3
Total	69	100	47	100	71	100

Source: 2010 Derbyshire Homelessness Watch

- Support Needs

In terms of vulnerability, 59 rough sleepers across the County reported multiple support needs.

Number of Support Needs	No. County-wide
ONE	22
TWO	21
THREE	12
FOUR	4
TOTAL	59

Source: 2010 Derbyshire Homelessness Watch

- Referral Protocols

With the possible exception of the ex-offender category, it would be difficult to state whether support needs identified in the highest ranking categories overleaf are cause or effect of rough sleeping. Clearly, in addition to appropriate accommodation for these client groups, of key importance are referral protocols with:

- Probation
- County Council Adult Mental Health
- NHS Trust Drug and Alcohol Teams (DAT)

Support Needs of Rough Sleepers	Number County-wide	% of Rough Sleeper Presentations where support need identified	% of all Presentations where support need identified	County Differential
Alcohol Problems	27	46	18	28% more
Ex-Offender	21	36	17	19% more
Mental Health	21	36	18	18% more
Drug Problems	18	31	16	15% more
Domestic Violence	7	12	10	2% more
Learning Difficulties	5	8	6	2% more
Physically Disabled	4	7	4	3% more
Other	9	15	11	4% more
No Data Supplied	4	7	4	
Total	116			

Source:  
2010  
Derbyshire  
Homelessness  
Watch

### Reasons for Rough Sleeping

The table overleaf confirms that the reasons why Rough Sleepers are homeless majorly centre around parents/partners/relatives no longer willing to accommodate. In 2008, Bolsover Council provided land at 50% of open market value to East Midlands Housing Association to deliver 3 units of supported move-on accommodation for Young Persons. The units are sub-let to South Yorkshire Housing Association, current recipients of Derbyshire County Council supported housing grant for that client group.

Reason Why Rough Sleepers are Homeless	No. Presenting Homeless for this Reason in Derbyshire	%of 71 Rough Sleeper Presentations Falling into this Category
Parents no longer willing to accommodate	18	25
Non-Violent Breakdown of Relationship with Partner	14	20
Other Relatives/Friends no longer willing to accommodate	12	17
Violent Breakdown of Relationship with Partner	5	7
Leaving Prison/Custody	8	11
Required to leave NASS accommodation	1	1
Other forms of violence	7	10
Other harassment	4	6
Racially motivated harassment	1	1
Racially motivated violence	1	1
LA rent Arrears	4	6
Private Sector Rent Arrears	3	4
Housing Association Rent Arrears	1	1
Assured Short-hold Termination	1	1
Loss of Tied accommodation	1	1
Other reasons for loss of tenancy	5	7
Drug use meaning client unable to access accommodation	8	11
Other	6	8
No Data Supplied	2	3
Total	102	N/A

Source:  
2010  
Derbyshire  
Homelessne  
ss Watch

- Direct Access Supported Accommodation

In fact, the move-on units have been delivered prior to the main homelessness cluster unit, currently awaiting slippage grant from the Homes and Communities “Homelessness Change” programme. Worked up jointly between Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire District Councils, the cluster unit will provide direct access accommodation for individuals aged 16-35 with local connection to Bolsover, Chesterfield or North East Derbyshire. A site has already been identified for provision at nil value, by Chesterfield Borough Council.

In 2010, Communities and Local Government Critical Friend Assessment stated that at present, this type of accommodation is non-existent in Bolsover District and recommended a number of Local Authorities where good practice examples could be sought.

- Youth Rough Sleeping

The Council also works closely with Derbyshire County Council's Multi Agency Teams (MATs). Amongst other support, the MATs provide mediation between families to enable young people to stay at home. Each MAT has members from the County Council in addition to partner agencies that work in the area. Through this, a wide range of support services can come together to support children, young people and families in Derbyshire and mitigate against the risk of youth homelessness.

## **5. KEY CHALLENGES**

The Key Challenges can be summarised as follows:

- Stretched capacity in the Private Sector Renewal Team meaning Category 1 hazards cannot be assessed in private rented stock
- Potential for stretched capacity in Anti-Social Behaviour Teams resulting from inappropriate shared housing/management in the private sector following introduction of the Single Room Rate/Welfare Reform
- Difficulty in delivering one and 2 bed rented units for households on the Housing Register
- Inability to rationalise private sector stock through achievement of CLG monies and demolition of 3 bed ex-coliery housing
- Exacerbation of the trend whereby low quality housing offer continues to attract low skill or unemployed households from out with the district and who then acquire "local connection" through residency status
- Formula Grant cuts make procurement of Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Private House Condition Surveys unaffordable
- County Council cuts to supported housing projects owing to lack of ring fence and retendering leading to repeat homelessness
- High demand for rent deposit guarantee scheme limiting the ability to recycle homelessness grant monies
- Continuation of the economic downturn leading to increased repossession activity and a lack of mortgage finance

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

An action plan covering each of the three strategic objectives is appended to this strategy. Actions within will be subsumed into individual service plans and monitored via the "Perform" system run corporately within the Council. The Strategy and Action Plan will also be scrutinised quarterly by the Homelessness Forum hosted by Chesterfield Borough Council.

### Improvement Plan

<b>SO1 EFFECTIVE HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE</b>						
<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Value for Money assessment of homelessness prevention initiatives	Housing Needs Manager	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013 completion	Focus homelessness prevention grant on most cost effective interventions for 2014	Officer time Homelessness Prevention monies		
Consultation with homelessness prevention users as a matter of course	Housing Needs Manager	From September 2012	Allow service development to occur in conjunction with service users	Officer time		
Record advice and assistance delivered/signposted to all those presenting as homeless	Housing Needs Manager	From September 2012	Better illustration of preventative work undertaken both by LA and partners. Satisfaction of SLA criteria	Officer time IT		
Establish a comprehensive set of procedures for homelessness prevention initiatives	Housing Needs Manager	Completed by April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013	Consistency of service across the district	Officer time		
Through benchmarking, keep homelessness prevention rate in line with neighbouring authorities through homelessness prevention delivery.	Housing Needs Manager	From 2013	Reduced cost to the authority in processing of accepted homeless households	Officer time Homelessness Prevention monies		

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Make supported accommodation more readily available by moving tenants on into permanent accommodation once ready for independent living	Housing Needs Manager	From 2013	Better availability of move-on accommodation	Allocations Policy Derbyshire Move On action plan		
Promote role of Revenues Team in providing advice regarding impact of welfare reform changes on affected households	Revenues Manager	From 2013	Households provided with advice and support regarding their housing options	Publicity provided, in - house and external articles. Signposting protocol between Housing Options and Revenues		
Extend the Hospital Discharge protocol	Housing Needs Manager		All vulnerable client groups leaving hospital are supported to access accommodation on their release	Derbyshire Move-on Co-ordinator		

<b>SO2 BETTER USE</b>	<b>OF THE</b>	<b>PRIVATE</b>	<b>RENTED</b>	<b>SECTOR</b>		
<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Consider the procurement of a Private House Condition Survey	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager	Decision during 2012/3 financial year, Completed by 2015	Understanding of scale of interventions required by the private rented sector	Budget allocation required 2013. Partnering opportunity with neighbouring authorities		
Enforcement against landlords letting sub-standard accommodation. -	Private Sector Housing Manager	Assessed at March 31 <sup>st</sup>	Vulnerable households are not housed in units demonstrating category 1 hazards	Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team capacity		
All properties housing households accessing the rent deposit guarantee scheme to have been assessed for Cat 1 hazards by the Private Sector Renewal Team	Private Sector Housing Manager	April 2012 Onwards	No households accessing the scheme to be at risk of poor health outcomes as a result of their housing	Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team capacity		
Increase membership of the Credit union by households accessing the rent deposit guarantee scheme	Housing Needs Manager	April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013	Ability of households to afford rent deposits on subsequent "lets"	Housing Options Team capacity		
Develop referral process to guide the allocation of Discretionary Housing Payments	Revenues Manager	Sept 1 <sup>st</sup> 2012	Provision of DHP prevents 10 households from becoming homeless annually	Revenues Manager Capacity		

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Apply for CLG empty Property monies	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager	2012	Ability to sub-divide empty 3 beds into smaller units	Empty property list		
Deliver new units of move-on accommodation in the private rented sector	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager	2013	Reduction in bedblocking	Private Sector Landlords Forum		
Commence in-depth partnership work with Private Sector Landlord Forum to deliver appropriate shared housing for single households	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager	2012	4 units of shared accommodation made available to single under 35's annually	Private Sector Landlords Forum		
Assess whether units used are HMO's or Shared Housing	Private Sector Housing Manager	Ongoing	Rise in enforcements against private sector landlords	Enforcement Officer capacity		



<b>SO3 PREVENTION</b>	<b>OF</b>	<b>ROUGH</b>	<b>SLEEPING</b>			
<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Work with partners to implement the “no second night out” agenda	Housing Needs Manager	2015	Zero rough sleeping for two nights	Night watch (annually)		
Refresh Housing Needs Studies for complex needs, young people and older people	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager	March 2013	Provide a robust case for HCA Homelessness Change bid	SCR Transition Fund		
Continue to work in schools to deliver homeless awareness project to years 10 and 11	Housing Needs Manager	March 2013	Young people made aware of realities of leaving home. Reduction in rough sleeping and youth homelessness	Homelessness prevention grant		

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	12.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive 3. Part of the Budget and Policy Framework		
Subject:	Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme.		
Report by:	Head of Housing		
Other Officers Involved	Asset Management Officer Members of Housing Stock Group		
Director	Director Of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. Bowman, Portfolio Holder for Housing Management		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities by maintaining properties at their current condition and improving the housing stock.

SOCIAL INCLUSION – Promoting fairness and equality by ensuring that housing across the District meets the needs of all residents.

#### **TARGETS**

Working with tenants to develop a new modern standard for council housing and develop a programme to deliver this by April 2012.

Carry out 200 adaptations to council houses each year to allow people to live in their current home.

Maximise the supply of affordable housing in the district and deliver an average of 20 units per annum by March 2015.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

External contractors are selected through a competitive process.

#### **THE REPORT**

This report seeks member approval of the initial capital programme for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It should be noted that this report is in

accordance with the financial position as agreed by Council at its meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

The reform of Housing Finance has, in general terms, been favourable to the Council and offers an opportunity for the Council to develop a more ambitious Capital Programme over the next few years.

In coming years the Asset Management Strategy, when approved, will drive the capital investment. This will include a balance of expenditure, some to maintain properties at their current condition, and some additional expenditure to improve stock, or to increase numbers.

However, until the Asset Management Strategy is fully approved, there is a need to set an interim Capital Programme which is an incremental programme building on the principles of previous years.

Proposed Budgets for 2012/3.

Code	Element	Value	Comment
C092	Welfare Adaptations *	£400,000	
C094	Group Dwelling Safety Work	£150,000	Woburn House est. £123k (Legionella)
Co97	Inspectors Salary	£42,950	
C098	External Wall Installation	£750,000	100 properties – maximises grant income
C099	Windows	£5,000	
C100	Electrical Upgrades	£250,000	10 year cycle, plus communal areas
C107	Cavity Wall & Loft Insulation	£10,000	Mop up – as identified
C112	New Bolsover Heritage	£200,000	Will be match funded if bid successful
C113	Doors	£200,000	270 Bungalows to complete, plus c. 200 others
C114	Heating Upgrade	£350,000	Bramley Vale Electric & Langwith Gas
C115	Environmental Works	£50,000	Survey Officers / Members
C116	Relet Repairs *	£150,000	Also revenue
C117	DHS Standards	£600,000	
C118	Kitchen Alterations	£200,000	
	Fees	£200,000	
	Unallocated	£144,507	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3,702,457</b>	
Income	RCCO	£650,000	
	MRA	£3,052,456	
		<b>£3,702,456</b>	
	Tarran Replacement	£1,100,808	c/f from previous year

\* The amount shown represents the total value of the budget. This includes work carried out by BDC staff as well as contractors

The above items represent a commitment to longer term projects that are continued from previous years. The exceptions to this are:

- a. The Door budget is to complete the installation of new doors to all bungalow accommodation plus door replacements where existing doors are beyond economic repair.
- b. New Bolsover Heritage. We have been working with English Heritage to develop a scheme for New Bolsover, and if successful this will be match funded.
- c. External Wall Insulation – this is to fit external installation to properties without cavity walls. Additional Grant funding is currently on offer of c.£500 per property for work completed by December 2012.
- d. DHS Standard – includes a range of small projects including boiler replacement at Alder House, Alder House converting bedsits into flats, Soffit and Fascia Replacements etc.
- e. Unallocated – this funding is used for unanticipated issues. If unspent it will be redistributed where needed.

An amount of money was identified last year for the purchase of Tarran replacements at Langwith. This will roll forward into this year. There is no additional budget at this stage to purchase Tarran replacements at New Houghton however it is intended to include this within the HRA Asset Management Plan arising from the proposed Asset Management Strategy.

As in previous years, the budget and progress will be monitored through the Housing Stock Group which is a working group of Members and Officers.

### **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

Whether to accept the proposed interim HRA Capital Programme.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: As covered in the report  
 Legal: Not directly  
 Human Resources: Not directly.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**The interim detailed HRA Capital Programme is approved for 2012/13.**

### **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

To allow capital works to be carried out on HRA properties.

ATTACHMENTS: N  
 FILE REFERENCE:  
 SOURCE DOCUMENT:

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	14.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Working Neighbourhoods Fund Monitoring Report – Quarter 4 and 2011/12 End of Year Update		
Report by:	Partnership Consultant Programme Manager		
Other Officers Involved	Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager		
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor A. Tomlinson – Portfolio Holder, Regeneration Councillor E. Watts, Leader of the Council		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities. The use of Working Neighbourhoods Fund will affect the wider determinants of Worklessness by commissioning activity that takes account of the effects upon the wellbeing of residents in local communities in respect of their health, wealth and secure employment; all of which contributes to building sustainable communities in the district."

#### **TARGETS**

National Indicator (NI) 153 measured progress on reducing concentrations of worklessness within local authority areas, particularly those in receipt of the WNF. Specifically, the indicator measured the out-of-work benefits claimant rate in the worst performing neighbourhoods – these were defined as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) with a benefit claimant rate of 25% or more as at February 2007 (4 quarter rolling average).

A local target was negotiated within the Derbyshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) to reduce the average claimant rate in the worst performing neighbourhoods from 28.7% to 25.7% by March 2011. To take account of the impact of the economic downturn this target was later revised to an average claimant rate in the NI153 areas that was 1.1 percentage points lower than that of the East Midlands.

Following the change of Government in 2010, NI153 figures ceased to be published centrally and the target is no longer active within the LAA. However, the Chief Executives and Partnership Team continues to calculate and publish the same 'out of work benefit claimant' data for the purpose of consistently monitoring the impact of the WNF programme.

### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

The principles of Value for Money – economy, efficiency and effectiveness will be applied in all interventions considered.

## **THE REPORT**

### **Background**

1. Executive Members will recall the Authority's award of Working Neighbourhoods Fund in 2008 (Minute No. 886 refers). The Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) was introduced as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement and was paid as one element of the Area Based Grant. It provides resources to local authorities to tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise in their most deprived areas.

The WNF allocation to Bolsover District Council is £7,066,100.

2. As part of the Council's approach to tackling worklessness, a Commissioning Framework was established to allocate the funding in two ways:-
  - i) the Local Authority's focus upon the people who are **already receiving benefits** and are unemployed and try to encourage them back into work and off benefits, and
  - ii) tasking the Local Strategic Partnership for Bolsover with identifying measures to address and **prevent the need to be in receipt of benefits** or become unemployed
3. All WNF has now been received by the Council as it was paid over the 2008-11 period. As the WNF is non-ringfenced it has been carried into 2011/12 to enable interventions to continue and impact in the district. Residual WNF has also been allocated to selected projects during 2012/13 to maximise delivery impact in the absence of further area based grant.

## **2011/12 Quarter 4 Report**

4. The attached report titled 'Quarter 4 and 2011/12 End of Year Update' has been produced following the submission of quarterly monitoring returns by projects that have been funded to date through the Council's Working Neighbourhoods Fund. The attached report provides:

- Financial summaries for the period 2011-12
- An overview of activity currently taking place in relation to Working Neighbourhoods Fund planning, commissioning, and future activity in relation to securing additional funding
- Unemployment statistics including an analysis of the National Indicator (NI) 153, Job Seekers Allowance claimant counts, the number of 16-18 year olds Not in Employment, Employment or Training)
- Information in relation to progress of individual projects in Quarter 4 and outturn for 2011/12
- Case studies of individuals assisted through WNF interventions to demonstrate impact

### **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

The contents of the report.

### **IMPLICATONS**

Financial: Detailed in the report.

Legal: None

Human Resources: None

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the report be received.**

### **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

To ensure that WNF is targeted to best effect.

ATTACHMENTS: Y

FILE REFERENCE:

SOURCE DOCUMENT:

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	15.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	3. Part of the Budget and Policy Framework		
Subject:	Compliments, Comments, Complaints and Freedom of Information Requests		
Report by:	Customer Service and Access Officer		
Other Officers Involved	Support Officer		
Director	Director of Corporate Resources		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor E. Watts, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and Policy and Performance		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

The effective management of complaints and customer requests is central to excellent customer service. It also provides a good source of information which the Council can use to improve services.

#### **TARGETS**

Local performance indicators for handling written complaints and Ombudsman complaints.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

A centralised complaints and freedom of information requests service maximises the use of staffing resources as well as the provision of management information.

### **THE REPORT**

To provide information on the number of compliments, comments, complaints, freedom of information and personal data requests for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31st March 2012 together with a summary for 2011/12.

#### **Compliments**

Table A shows the number of written compliments received for the period. In total 32 written compliments were received (up from the previous quarter when we received 27). A good cross section of compliments received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 10 for the Community and Street Services Department for the collection of refuse, flytipping and grounds maintenance duties, 7 for the Leisure Department and 6 for the Housing Department.



## Comments

Table B shows the number of written comments received for the period. All 22 received were responded to within standard (20 working days). 3 comments were received concerning the closure of Contact Centres on Saturday mornings and a further 3 comments regarding the length of time waiting for Contact Centres to answer the telephone.

Table C shows the above information by department.

## Complaints

### Stage one

Stage one complaints refer to expressions of dissatisfaction made verbally by customers. The table below provides a breakdown of stage one complaints handled by the Contact Centres by service area and volume for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>01/04/11– 30/06/11</b>	<b>01/07/11– 30/09/11</b>	<b>01/10/11– 31/12/11</b>	<b>01/01/12 – 31/03/12</b>	<b>Total</b>
Complaints regarding housing repairs e.g. out of time, quality	Information not currently available – to be reported on from 01/04/12				
Missed clinical waste collection	16 (5)	19 (11)	36 (13)	23 (10)	94 (39)
Missed domestic or green bin collection	166 (155)	192 (175)	601 (573)	318 (279)	1277 (1182)
Missed blue box/ burgundy bin collection	205 (201)	518 (492)	568 (530)	252 (238)	1543 (1461)
<b>Total</b>	<b>387 (361)</b>	<b>729 (678)</b>	<b>1205 (1116)</b>	<b>593 (527)</b>	<b>2914 (2682)</b>

The figures in brackets show the number of stage one complaints not resolved by the Contact Centre and passed through to the Community & Street Services department for investigation/action. For the same period Contact Centres handled 8,283 requests for service in total.

### Stage two

Table D shows the number of stage two or written complaints received for the period by date order. 41 complaints were received during this period, up from last quarter in which we received 25 complaints. All were responded to within our customer service standard of 20 working days. 4 complaints concern out of time repairs.

Table E shows the above information by department.

### Stage three

Table F shows the number of stage three complaints received for the period by date order. These are complainants who have already made a stage two complaint and still feel dissatisfied. During this period 5 stage three complaints were received, all were responded to within standard.

## Ombudsman

Table G shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2011/12 as of 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012. During this quarter, three formal investigations were received and one decision in which the Ombudsman decided not to initiate investigations. We have four complaints awaiting a decision from the Ombudsman for 2011/12.

## Freedom of Information (FOI)

Table H shows the number of requests for 'freedom of information' for the period by date order. Of the 111 requests received (up from 86 last quarter), 109 were responded to within the government standard of 20 working days and two have had the timescale extended (as permitted under the legislation). Additionally we received 18 further requests which we forwarded to other organisations.

Table I shows the above information by department.

## Personal Data requests (DP)

There were 7 requests made within this quarter, all of which have been dealt within standard (40 calendar days).

## Performance

The target of 100% has been achieved for responding to stage two complaints within 20 working days for 2011/12.

## Summary for 2011/12

The following tables provide a summary of performance for compliments, comments, complaints and freedom of information requests for 2011/12.

### Volume and Performance

Volume by type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2011/12 Total	2010/11 Total	2009/10 Total
Compliments	45	49	27	32	153	173	129
Comments	29	17	25	22	93	78	64
Stage 2 Complaints	32	26	25	41	124	79	115
Stage 3 Complaints	5	9	4	5	23	25	22
FOI	102	107	86	111	406	408	312
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>642</b>
Stage 1 Complaints	387	729	1205	593	2914	1059	1644
<b>% Comments responded to within standard</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Average response in days	17	13	17	14	15	12	12
<b>% Stage 2 responded to within standard</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>98%</b>
Average response in days	15	15	15	16	15	14	15
<b>% Stage 3 responded to within standard</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>92%</b>
Average response in days	18	16	16	19	17	16	15
<b>% FOI Requests responded to within standard</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>
Average response in days	12	15	16	14	14	11	9

When comparing 2011/12 to the previous year of 2010/11, the following is noted:

- Received more stage two complaints, an increase of 45 (57%).
- Received similar volumes of stage three complaints.
- Received more written comments, an increase of 15 (19%).
- Received fewer written compliments (-11%).
- Received more stage one complaints, an increase of 1855 (175%).
- Responses to customer requests within standard - written comments and FOI requests (remained at 100%), stage two complaints (100%, up 1%) and stage three complaints (100%, up 13%).
- Received similar volume of FOI requests.

## Customer Feedback

The following changes have been made as a result of customer feedback obtained through written comments and complaints:

- Reference number to be given to all written complaints and noted in correspondence with the complainant
- Customer Advisors to check Planning computer at the beginning of each day to ensure it is working correctly
- Benefit Section's procedures reviewed to reduce any unnecessary delays in processing appeals
- Members allowances to be published by 31st July in future

## **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

None

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: - None

Legal: - None

HR & Payroll: - None

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the report be received**

## **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

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

ATTACHMENTS:                   **Y**

Table A: Compliments summary for the period 01/01/12 – 31/03/12

Table B: Comments summary for the period 01/01/12 – 31/03/12

Table C: Comments summary by department 2011/12

Table D: Stage two complaints summary for the period 01/01/12 – 31/03/12

Table E: Stage two complaints summary by department 2011/12

Table F: Stage three complaints summary for the period 01/01/12 – 31/03/12

Table G: Ombudsman complaints summary for 2011/12

Table H: Freedom of information summary for the period 01/01/12 – 31/03/12

Table I: Freedom of information summary by department 2011/12

FILE REFERENCE: - N/A

SOURCE DOCUMENT: - N/A

**Table A: COMPLIMENTS SUMMARY 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Compliment</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>
03/01/12	Nottingham	Very happy with neutering advice on our website, customer hoping to persuade other councils to follow suit	Environmental Health
05/01/12	Bolsover	Thanks to department for all their help and information given (Food Safety Service)	Environmental Health
09/01/12	Facebook	Happy with our Facebook page, very informative	Customer Service & Performance
09/01/12	Facebook	Praise for Facebook page	Customer Service & Performance
10/01/12	Langwith Junction	Thanks to grounds maintenance for cutting back hedge	Community & Street Services
12/01/12	Whitwell	Thanks to Customer Advisor for help with request for urgent repair to taps	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)
13/01/12	Barlborough	Refuse service is brilliant	Community & Street Services
13/01/12	Clowne	Thanks to speedy response for removal of fly tipping	Community & Street Services
13/01/12	Bolsover	Many thanks for responding so quickly to litter problem	Community & Street Services
17/01/12	Creswell	Dog fouling removed, very good job done	Community & Street Services
27/01/12	Clowne	Very pleasant and helpful staff at Leisure Centre reception for birthday party	Leisure
31/01/12	Creswell	Thanks to Benefits staff for all help and support with housing and council tax benefits	Finance & Revenues
13/02/12	Sheffield	Very impressed with service received with regard to Land Charges	Legal & Democratic
17/02/12	New Houghton	Housing repairs service outstanding	Housing
17/02/12	Bolsover	Thanks to Wes, Mandy and Pam for their presentations to Voluntary Sector Forum	CEO Chief Executive's & Partnership Team
17/02/12	Sheffield	Thanks for help given to resident regarding Careline service	Housing
20/02/12	Creswell	Operative attended very quickly to emergency repair, very pleasant	Housing
20/02/12	Clowne	Thanks to Yorkshire Windows for a clean and tidy job	Housing
23/02/12	South Normanton	Thanks to maintenance team for cleaning up mess in area	Community & Street

**Table A: COMPLIMENTS SUMMARY 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Compliment</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>
			Services
24/02/12	Clowne	Thanks for very quick response to complaint on dog fouling, cleaned up very well	Community & Street Services
29/02/12	Glapwell	Staff at Creswell Leisure Centre are friendly, helpful and welcoming, facilities good, clean and well kept	Leisure
07/03/12	Langwith	Big thank you for fantastic morning at SEN (Special Educational Needs) Sports Hall Athletics competition	Leisure
07/03/12	Scarcliffe	Refuse team always polite and professional	Community & Street Services
08/03/12	Shirebrook	Extremely pleased with level of service from responsive repairs operative	Housing
09/03/12	Clowne	All classes for Aqua Fit/ Aqua Jog are very good	Leisure
09/03/12	Clowne	Instructors for Aqua Fit/ Aqua Jog are very good, motivational and make exercising more interesting	Leisure
12/03/12	Stanfree	Thanks for quick response by CAN Rangers to clean up graffiti	Community & Street Services
16/03/12	Unknown	Grateful for time and effort in supplying information in relation to Land Charges	Legal & Democratic
19/03/12	Creswell	Very pleased with operatives who carried out repair	Housing
21/03/12	Whitwell	Aqua Fit session is super	Leisure
23/03/12	Clowne	Wants to thank Grounds Maintenance team for cutting back trees	Community & Street Services
28/03/12	Clowne	Highly satisfied with staff at Creswell Leisure Centre, clean and well maintained	Leisure

**Table B: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Comment</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Summary of Response</b>
06/01/12	Clowne	Why CCTV cameras in Clowne have not been working for last 2 months	Community & Street Services	01/02/2012	18	Confirmed no cameras in Clowne working since contract with Chesterfield Borough Council was terminated in February 2011, saving on resources put into other cameras across district. Clowne to get new cameras shortly
11/01/12	Clowne	Has previously asked for bins to be collected from behind wall	Community & Street Services	07/02/2012	19	Advised to present a full bin in windy conditions. Customer does not meet assisted bin collection criteria
12/01/12	Unknown	Unhappy with how long kept waiting when calling Contact Centre service	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	17/01/2012	3	Telephony report does not show any calls on hold excessively. Customer advised to contact so further details can be taken
16/01/12	South Normanton	Closure of Contact Centres on Saturday	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	03/02/2012	13	Apology for closures and explanation as to why decision taken i.e. budget pressures, service standards
30/01/12	Tibshelf	Unhappy that Contact Centres are closed on Saturday, suggestion that they close one day in week instead	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	14/02/2012	11	Apology for inconvenience of closure on Saturday's. Gave all various methods of contact and payment
06/02/12	South Normanton	Further comments on response letter received in relation to closure of Contact Centres on Saturdays	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	15/02/2012	7	Confirmed nothing further to add to previous e-mail, decision made by elected members
15/02/12	Shirebrook	Unhappy with length of time taken to answer phone at Contact Centre	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	29/02/2012	7	Apology for any inconvenience caused waiting to be answered. Assurance that ways are being

**Table B: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Comment</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Summary of Response</b>
						looked at to improve on this. Current system does not have function to advise customers how long waiting times are but this is being considered for the future
17/02/12	Shirebrook	Moved out of Tarran bungalow and heard people have had relocation grants and their properties decorated and carpeted	Housing	12/03/2012	16	Confirmed letter sent out by the Housing department on 31/01/12; enclosed copy
17/02/12	Shirebrook	Burgundy bins left in middle of drive again when emptied	Community & Street Services	08/03/2012	14	Apology for any inconvenience caused. Investigated with contractor and crew have been instructed on leaving bins in correct position
21/02/12	Bolsover	Cannot find information about swimming at Creswell for over 60's	Leisure	15/03/2012	17	Apology for difficulites in finding information on website, gave website link and prices
29/02/12	Shuttlewood	Notice of increased charges for community alarms received twice on same day in two separate envelopes	Housing	21/03/2012	15	Thanked for bringing this matter to attention and Housing assured resident that arrangements were being made to rectify the matter
01/03/12	Scarcliffe	Hold planning meetings in a bigger venue	Planning Democratic Services	26/03/2012	17	Council is currently considering the options. No new Committee date has as yet been set however will advise of the arrangements for this once this has been set
01/03/12	Scarcliffe	Let public know of future plans for either refurbishment or new facilities of the toilets in Bolsover	Regeneration	21/03/2012	14	Explanation that the Council provided two toilet facilities but owing to running costs and poor condition of Cavendish Walk toilets, a decision was made to close them



**Table B: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Comment</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Summary of Response</b>
02/03/12	Barlborough	Unhappy with length of time held on phone and the music being played	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	28/03/2012	18	Thanked customer for comments unfortunately the music cannot be changed at the moment, comments will be considered for any future changes. Apology for the time on hold
05/03/12	New Houghton	Believe that the Council are failing to provide dignity in care to users of the Clinical Waste scheme	Community & Street Services Customer Service & Performance	12/03/2012	5	Apology for upset caused, confirmed the stock of clinical waste bags are below standard and the supplier to send replacements. Interim arrangements in place
07/03/12	Clowne	Live in private property, cannot afford rent after cut to housing benefit. Would like a council bungalow, applied before and told two year wait	Finance & Revenues Housing	03/04/2012	19	Notification letter sent from Benefits in February advising of change to Local Housing Allowance Scheme and how this would affect customer's claim, Benefits Officer rang on 12th March to make sure it was clear
12/03/12	Barlborough	Why were certain minutes from council meetings not on website	Democratic Services	11/04/2012	20	Apology for minutes not being on website, explained procedure for minutes to be published after they have been approved at following meeting. Given link to website as they are now on
12/03/12	South Normanton	Why has ground rent for car park increased so much each year	Housing	11/04/2012	20	Rent now charged reflects the cost of providing the service

**Table B: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Comment</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Summary of Response</b>
13/03/12	Shirebrook	Took out fixed price for life leisure membership which is no longer applicable for Kissingate	Leisure	04/04/2012	16	Confirmation that membership is at Creswell Leisure Centre and concession is no longer available
20/03/12	South Normanton	Property is not looked after properly by tenant	Housing	16/04/2012	18	Comments noted by the Housing department
27/03/12	Unknown	Why were toilets at Cavendish Walk closed	Regeneration	25/04/2012	19	Explanation that the Council provided two toilet facilities but owing to running costs and poor condition of Cavendish Walk toilets, a decision was made to close them
28/03/12	Clowne	Creswell Leisure Centre male changing rooms fan was disconnected as per request of users, but would like it on a switch to enable them to switch on and off	Leisure	25/04/2012	18	Staff have been informed to switch fan on and off according to conditions, no switch because children may use inappropriately

**Table C: Comments Summary by Department 2011/12**

<b>Department/Section</b>	<b>01/04/11 – 30/06/11</b>			<b>01/07/11 – 30/09/11</b>			<b>01/10/11– 31/12/11</b>			<b>04/01/12 – 31/03/12</b>			<b>Total</b>		
	<b>No. of Comments</b>	<b>No. Responded to in time</b>	<b>No. responded to out of time</b>	<b>No. of Comments</b>	<b>No. Responded to in time</b>	<b>No. responded to out of time</b>	<b>No. of Comments</b>	<b>No. Responded to in time</b>	<b>No. responded to out of time</b>	<b>No. of Comments</b>	<b>No. Responded to in time</b>	<b>No. responded to out of time</b>	<b>No. of Comments</b>	<b>No. Responded to in time</b>	<b>No. responded to out of time</b>
<b>Contact Centre</b>							<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Customer Service &amp; Performance Department</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>								<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Community &amp; Street Services</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	
<b>Housing</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>					<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>										<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Leisure</b>				<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	
<b>Planning</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>					<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Environmental Health</b>				<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>					<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	
<b>Regeneration</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	
<b>Finance &amp; Revenues</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>					<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>		<b>111</b>	<b>111</b>	

**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
03/01/12	Bolsover	Unhappy with level of service regarding a door repair that has still not been completed after 16 months	Housing	30/01/12	19	Apologies for work not being completed on time due to contractor's workload. Door now been replaced
03/01/12	Sheffield	Unhappy with lack of contact in relation to a privately owned property	Finance & Revenues	30/01/12	19	Confirmed that Revenues had e-mailed on 04.01.12 but could find no record of complainant's previous e-mail. Changes have now been actioned
05/01/12	Unknown	Bin not been collected several times last year and received an unprofessional comment from a refuse operative	Street Services	01/02/12	20	Asked for customer's address in acknowledgement and response so can investigate further. Gave assurance that refuse team had been reminded of customer service standards
09/01/12	Barlborough	Unhappy with service received regarding council tax benefit calculations and amount of time taken for response	Finance & Revenues Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	03/02/12	19	Apology for length of time however now resolved with customer. Apology that letter was sent to Revenues Section and not progressed as a formal complaint
09/01/12	Clowne	Still unhappy about the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) form	Environmental Health	06/02/12	20	Advised that we can only help with DFG form if we have had referral from occupational therapist which we have not had
10/01/12	Shirebrook	Unhappy with exposed cables left after work carried out	Housing	07/02/12	20	Power company undertook work to cables serving the intercom system

**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

Date Received	Area	Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Remedy
						and remedial works were done a few days later leaving cables temporarily exposed. Contact details given for power supplier if wishing to make a complaint
17/01/12	Glapwell	Unhappy at being asked to provide proof again of income for benefit application	Finance & Revenues	13/02/12	19	Apology for length of time taken to resolve and for asking for duplicate information however further information needed for application. Claim assessed and does not qualify
19/01/12	Barlborough	Concerns over current housing application	Housing	10/02/12	16	Case sent to independent medical advisors who recommended not to award any additional points, may appeal but need to pay costs which will be refunded if appeal upheld
23/01/12	South Normanton	Unhappy with baliff's actions, wants case to be looked at again	Finance & Revenues	17/02/12	19	Confirmed response already sent by bailiff on 30/01/12. Council accepted proposal of £30 payment per month
25/01/12	Clowne	Various problems regarding claim for housing and council tax benefit	Finance & Revenues	16/02/12	16	Apology for not sending a copy of a letter out, delay due to complexity of application. Recovery action to continue for council tax arrears
26/01/12	Clowne	Unhappy that correspondence from Democratic Services not in 18 font and cannot get signature in box on form	Democratic Services	16/02/12	15	Apology for form going out in standard font size. Sent out enlarged waiver application form and explanation of how to vote in

**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
						future without signature
26/01/12	Bolsover	Been waiting for repairs for last two years	Housing	14/02/12	13	Confirmation that letter from Housing (31/01/12) was sent, work completed to customer's satisfaction
03/02/12	Bolsover	Unhappy with heating system, had engineers out to check it but still having to use two electric heaters. Seeking compensation	Housing	01/03/12	19	Not appropriate to pay compensation as heating already subsidised and the problem was rectified as soon as it was reported
06/02/12	Shirebrook	Unhappy with the way requests for cavity wall insulation have been dealt with	Housing	24/02/12	14	Representative from Consultancy Services Section visited and confirmed cavity wall insulation in place and solid walls given internal insulation. Closed ventilation fan to be installed
10/02/12	Bolsover	Unhappy with non collection of black bins and information given	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres) Community & Street Services	29/02/12	13	Evidence from tracker on lorry shows bin not presented on time. Customer Advisor tried to contact customer but was unable to. Apology for any inconvenience
13/02/12	Creswell	Unhappy that bin was not emptied fully and does not want to leave extra bags out because of rats	Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres) Community & Street Services	28/02/12	11	Due to inclement weather refuse froze in bin and was not fully emptied. Apology for inconvenience

**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
10/02/12	Clowne	Still unhappy about the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) form	Customer Service & Performance Environmental Health	08/03/12	19	Confirmation that decision not to progress with DFG due to absence of referral from Derbyshire County Council so no right of appeal to this Council
14/02/12	Bolsover	Window repair not done within stated timescale and still outstanding	Housing	02/03/12	13	Apology for length of time taken to repair window. Contractor left cards on three occasions but no response from customer. New appointment made
15/02/12	Creswell	Leaving bin in front of drive and not returning to collection point	Community & Street Services	08/03/12	16	Apology for inconvenience caused. Both crews have instructions to monitor to stop this happening again
15/02/12	Doe Lea	Repeated reporting of damp walls in bedroom, no inspection on 19/01/12 as promised	Housing	06/03/12	14	No record found of request for damp problems prior to 13/12/11 when roof tiles replaced and water ingress stopped. Further inspection arranged
22/02/12	Barlborough	Threat of bankruptcy due to council tax arrears – unhappy with Council's approach	Finance & Revenues	20/03/12	19	Not proceeding with bankruptcy as concerns regarding non payment are being addressed
27/02/12	Pleasley	Ongoing concerns with noise from generator at car boot and starting up too early	Planning Environmental Health	16/03/12	14	Given assurance that case is being pursued and that Planning will continue to take action to regularise breaches
28/02/12	Bolsover	Been waiting for repairs to gutters since September 2010	Housing	22/03/12	17	Work carried out when tenant not present but not solved problem. Replacement guttering carried out

**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
29/02/12	Stanfree	Renovating house and has asked for 100% council tax discount but advised it was 50%	Finance & Revenues	23/03/12	17	Explanation that cannot give further discount as already had maximum empty property discount allowed, i.e. one year
29/02/12	Langwith	Unhappy that operatives walked into residents home after briefly knocking and not waiting for door to be opened	Housing	08/03/12	6	Apology for any upset caused in this matter. Reminder issued to everyone undertaking repairs on behalf of Council of our practice for gaining access
29/02/12	Creswell	Unhappy with the way housing application being processed	Housing	23/02/12	17	Not currently on waiting list, asked to contact Housing as soon as possible to discuss situation
05/03/12	Belper	On behalf of son and daughter-in-law who have been waiting for a new front door for two years and want rehousing	Housing	28/03/12	17	Replacement door on 2012/13 programme. Housing status given, i.e. points. Advised son and daughter-in-law to contact Housing to discuss any specific requirements
07/03/12	Hilcote	Problem with damp and mould been in touch before and has been over a year waiting	Housing	26/03/12	13	Damp caused by condensation, lifestyle, drying clothes on radiators etc. Given resident advice on how to alleviate the problem
07/03/12	Glapwell	Unhappy with article in Intouch about dog fouling incident	Customer Service & Performance Environmental Health Legal	29/03/12	16	Apology given and corrected article to be published in next Intouch



**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
08/03/12	Blackwell	Unhappy with increase in service charge on bedsit	Housing	28/03/12	14	Given breakdown of rent charges, special services, heating and support charges
12/03/12	Barlborough	Unhappy with litter on roundabout on M1 not being cleared	Street Services	11/04/12	20	Apology for lack of usual high standard. Arranged for a deep cleanse of area within the next week and increased inspections
15/03/12	Shirebrook	No written notification received following internal investigation	Housing	13/04/12	19	Apology that verbal notification was not followed up in writing (Stage 2 response used for the purpose)
21/03/12	Whitwell	Liability order issued against complainant for arrears for council tax and rent despite efforts to resolve with the Benefits Section	Finance & Revenues, Customer Service & Performance (Contact Centres)	12/04/12	14	No bank statement received, however apology as claim could have been processed without this and this should have been explained to customer. Claim now being re-assessed and a letter of notification will be sent
22/03/12	Hilcote	Waiting for repair to internal lift and claims wet room has been wrongly installed	Environmental Health	16/04/12	15	Works undertaken under a Disabled Facilities Grant and completed in June 2008. DCC not aware of lift problem and will investigate. Wet room problem has already been referred to DCC by complainant's occupational therapist
22/03/12	Langwith	Refuse lorries churning up grass on industrial estate	Street Services	13/04/12	14	Arranged for sweeper to clean roads and complainant was happy with this

**Table D: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
22/03/12	Clowne	Unhappy at not receiving a response about a transfer to another property from the Housing Department	Housing	18/04/12	17	Apology for not replying to previous correspondence. Explanation that current property been adapted for residents needs and the property applied for does not have all these features
22/03/12	Clowne	Believes application has been wrongly suspended	Housing	18/04/12	12	Explanation of letters sent and apology for any confusion
28/03/12	Shirebrook	Complaints regarding the area surrounding footpath B11/9/1, e.g. overgrown, fires	Street Services	19/04/12	13	Explanation of responsibility for footpath (DCC) and CAN Rangers to patrol/monitor antisocial behaviour
29/03/12	Bolsover	Failure to process clients Housing and Council Tax Benefit appeal in a timely manner, failure to respond to letters and follow complaints procedures	Finance & Revenues	18/04/12	13	Apology for the time taken. Benefit procedures reviewed to reduce unnecessary delays in future
29/03/12	Eastwood	Unhappy with information provided through a subject access request in relation to CAN Rangers job history	Customer Service & Performance	19/04/12	13	Explanation that no further information is held and assurance that a thorough check has been undertaken
30/03/12	Clowne	Unhappy with information given by a Benefits Officer in relation to Local Housing Allowance and Discretionary Housing Payment	Finance & Revenues	18/04/12	11	Explanation of the process to date and information required from the customer before a decision can be made about whether to use a higher rate of Local Housing Allowance

**Table E - Complaints (Stage 2) Summary by Department 2011/12**

Department/Section	01/04/11 – 30/06/11			01/07/11 – 30/09/11			01/10/11- 31/12/11			04/01/12 – 31/03/12			Total 2011/12		
	No. of Complaints	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Complaints	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Complaints	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Complaints	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Complaints	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time
Contact Centres	6	6		1	1		6	6		3	3		16	16	
Customer Service and Performance	7	7		2	2		2	2		5	5		16	16	
Community & Street Services	3	3		6	6		11	11		7	7		27	27	
Housing	8	8		12	12		5	5		17	17		42	42	
HR & Payroll				1	1		1	1					2	2	
ICT				1	1								1	1	
Legal & Democratic Services	6	6		2	2		2	2		2	2		12	12	
Leisure				2	2								2	2	
Planning	3	3		3	3					1	1		7	7	
Environmental Health	3	3		2	2					5	5		10	10	
Regeneration	1	1					4	4					5	5	
Finance & Revenues	10	10		2	2		3	3		10	10		25	25	
BCN							1	1					1	1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>166</b>	

**Table F: Summary of Stage Three Complaints 01/01/12 – 31/03/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
27/02/2012	Bolsover	Wants to act as their ex-tenant's representative in order to seek further benefit entitlement	Finance & Revenues	23/03/12	18	Reiterated information given in Stage Two response is still correct. As no longer the landlord the Council does not recognise the authorisation of the landlord for the tenant in question
07/03/2012	Bolsover	Claims heating was not rectified straight away and wants compensation as received it last year	Housing	04/04/12	20	A heating allowance was paid last time which is not applicable this time. Acknowledged that there is an issue during particularly cold spells. Council looking at longer term solutions this year
13/03/2012	Bolsover	Seeking compensation for having day off work when repairs operative did not keep to appointment	Housing	12/04/12	20	Apology for inconvenience, however compensation not appropriate as no financial loss suffered
23/03/2012	Stanfree	Unhappy as wants 100% council tax discount for empty property	Finance & Revenues	20/04/12	18	The Council does not have any discretion to award further discount as these are prescribed in central government regulations
27/03/2012	Barlborough	Still unhappy with the way client's Council Tax arrears are being recovered	Finance & Revenues	26/04/12	20	Re-iterated advice given in Stage Two and advised that a Debt Recovery policy to be written

**Table G: Summary of Ombudsman Complaints 2011/12**

Date Received	Area	LGO's Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response sent	No. of Calendar Days	Date Decision Letter Received	Ombudsman's Decision
25/3/12 (Issued 20/6/12 by LGO, not received at the time. Picked up when checking provisional statistics from LGO)	Clowne	Council failed to deal with complaints about the activities of two football clubs who play on its land. As a result property has suffered repeated damage on days when games are being played	Leisure	No information sought from the Council		25/3/12	<b>To discontinue investigation as there is no evidence of maladministration</b> in the Council's decision to reposition the pitch. The problems are acknowledged and unfortunate but, to some extent, the complainant must accept responsibility for his own injustice because the proposed location of the pitch was public knowledge at the time they bought their house
20/06/11	Shirebrook	Council's regeneration work carried out in 2007/08 was substandard resulting in continuing need for remedial work to correct faults	Regeneration	No information sought from the Council		20/06/11	<b>Outside jurisdiction</b> as the complainant signed off the works at the time and did not raise any dissatisfaction at the time
15/07/11	Creswell	Council responsible for the subsidence of complainant's drive and slippage of his land	Planning	Not formally investigated Documents		15/07/11	<b>Outside jurisdiction</b> as complainant did not raise the issue with the

**Table G: Summary of Ombudsman Complaints 2011/12**

Date Received	Area	LGO's Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response sent	No. of Calendar Days	Date Decision Letter Received	Ombudsman's Decision
				requested			Ombudsman within 12 months of knowing about it
11/08/11	Barlborough	Council's response to the breaches in planning control has been insufficiently robust to protect the amenity of local residents	Planning	Not formally investigated, documents sent		11/08/11	<b>To discontinue investigation</b> as it is the developer's behaviour which has caused distress, not any maladministration by the Council ( <b>note - the LGO has cited good practice in respect of the Council</b> )
05/09/11	Barlborough	Complaint that Bolsover District Council wrongly advised complainant's employer, a parish council, over matters concerning employment	Legal	No information sought from the Council		05/09/11	<b>Not in jurisdiction and no discretion</b> – the complaint is against the parish council who do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman
06/09/11	Hodthorpe	An article in Intouch breached the code of practice on local authority publicity and that the article had an adverse and unfair impact on public opinion	Customer Service & Performance Legal	Investigated informally		06/09/11	<b>Not to initiate an investigation</b> – no personal injustice caused to the complainant

**Table G: Summary of Ombudsman Complaints 2011/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>LGO's Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response sent</b>	<b>No. of Calendar Days</b>	<b>Date Decision Letter Received</b>	<b>Ombudsman's Decision</b>
14/10/11	Pinxton	That the Council failed to pass Housing Benefit appeal to the Tribunal despite being asked to	Finance & Revenues	25/10/11	7	14/11/11	<b>Ombudsman to discontinue investigation</b> as the Council has lodged the appeal with the Tribunals Service and that process needs to run its course
22/12/11	Clowne	Council refusing to rehouse complainant because he has rent arrears at a former tenancy. Complainant disputes arrears	Housing	20/1/12	22		
17/01/12	Whitwell	Complaint against Council's failure either to adapt former flat or move complainant somewhere more appropriate within a reasonable timescale	Housing	15/2/12	29		
05/03/12	Clowne	Claimed outcome of complaint to Councils Standards Committee was inconsistent with the outcome of complaint to Council about the same matter regarding article in Intouch	Legal	Investigated informally		05/03/12	<b>Not to initiate an investigation</b> as does not consider complainant has experienced significant personal injustice arising from the publication of the article

**Table G: Summary of Ombudsman Complaints 2011/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>LGO's Summary of Complaint</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response sent</b>	<b>No. of Calendar Days</b>	<b>Date Decision Letter Received</b>	<b>Ombudsman's Decision</b>
09/03/12	Clowne	Complaint relates to a Disability Facilities Grant	Environmental Health	20/03/12	11		
13/03/12	Shirebrook	Council has failed to take action to prevent flooding on complainant's street and that both district and County Council are not taking responsibility	Regeneration	23/03/12	10		



**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
03/01/12	EIR/294/1112	Questions in relation to Land Search for named property	BCN Planning Environmental Health	31/01/12	19	No information held
04/01/12	F/295/1112	Details on celebrity appearances at council run talks, events, conferences, dinners over last five years back to January 1st 2007	Customer Service & Performance	27/01/12	17	Partially - some information provided, some not held
05/01/12	F/296/1112	Questions in relation to temporary event licence applications over last 5 years	Leisure Legal	30/01/12	10	No information held
05/01/12	F/297/1112	List of business rates for current overpayment/ credit shown for financial year if credit balance since 1st April 2000 to date	Finance & Revenues	30/01/12	17	Yes
06/01/12	F/298/1112	Questions on Framework Agreement Contracts and Suppliers	Procurement	03/02/12	20	Partially - some information provided, some not held
09/01/12	EIR/299/1112	Questions in relation to Land Search for named property	BCN Planning Environmental Health	31/01/12	16	Partially - some information provided, some not held
09/01/12	F/300/1112	All public health funerals held in last 4 weeks	Environmental Health	12/01/12	3	Exempt - Section 21 information available by other means, given web link
10/01/12	F/301/1112	From August 2011 until present day how many public health funerals held	Environmental Health	07/02/12	20	Exempt - Section 21 information available by other means, given web link
11/01/12	F/302/1112	Information in relation to business rates and attempted refund of accounts	Finance & Revenues	02/02/12	16	Yes

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
11/01/12	F/303/1112	Headcount of staff in post at the beginning of relevant year who have left organisation by end of that year for each of last 5 years	HR & Payroll	19/01/12	6	Request withdrawn, new request sent in
11/01/12	F/304/1112	For past 3 years information relating to dog fouling	Environmental Health	02/02/12	16	Partially - some information provided, some not held
12/01/12	F/305/1112	Information on a property in South Normanton	Finance & Revenues	06/02/12	17	Partially - some provided some exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
13/01/12	F/306/1112	Information relating to current staffing levels as at 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2012	HR & Payroll	02/02/12	14	Yes
13/01/12	F/307/1112	Information on Local Housing Allowance payments to private landlords	Finance & Revenues	07/02/12	17	Partially - some information held, some Section 12 - exceeds appropriate limit
13/01/12	F/308/1112	Names of ratepayers for list of business premises at McArthur Glen Retail Park	Finance & Revenues	02/02/12	14	Yes
13/01/12	F/309/1112	Up to date list of subcontractors, suppliers and consultants involved in the Enterprise Centre in Shirebrook	Regeneration	02/02/12	14	Yes
16/01/12	F/310/1112	Information relating to land use class (meat processing)	Planning	07/02/12	16	Partially - some information held
17/01/12	F/311/1112	Information relating to pension strain charges in respect of early retirement and retirement on health grounds	HR & Payroll Finance & Revenues	09/02/12	17	Partially - some information held
18/01/12	F/312/1112	Information in relation to our buildings/ property portfolio	Customer Service & Performance	08/02/12	15	Yes

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
18/01/12	F/313/1112	Council headcount per year split by pay band for monetary equivalents of NJC pay scales	HR & Payroll	07/02/12	14	Yes
18/01/12	F/314/1112	Number of times Council have hired private investigators and the cost/reason.	Finance & Revenues	07/02/12	14	No information held
19/01/12	F/315/1112	Cost and number of calls made from staff to speaking clock and directory enquiries	Customer Service & Performance	25/01/12	3	No - Refusal (Section 12) - exceeds appropriate limit
20/01/12	F/316/1112	Information relating to Private Hire Operators	Legal	08/02/12	13	Partially - some information provided, some not held
20/01/12	F/317/1112	Information relating to social housing fraud	Housing	17/02/12	20	Partially - some information provided, some not held
23/01/12	F318/1112	Information relating to authority gross and net budget for 2006 to 2011	Finance & Revenues	07/02/12	11	Yes
23/01/12	F/319/1112	Full list of properties both local authority and housing association sold since 2000	Housing	17/02/12	19	Partially, some information provided, some exceeds appropriate limit (Section 12)
23/01/12	F/320/1112	Details on homeless people for Jan 2009 to Dec 2010 and Jan 2010 to Dec 2011	Finance & Revenues Housing	17/02/12	19	Partially, some information provided, some exceeds appropriate limit (Section 12)
24/01/12	F/321/1112	List of all Licensed Private Hire Operators under our borough	Legal	13/02/12	14	Partially - some provided some exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
24/01/12	F/322/1112	How many requests were made to council run public access buildings in 2009, 2010	Housing Customer Service	09/02/12	12	Partially - some information provided, some not held

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

Date Received	Ref Number	Summary of FOI	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Information released
		and 2011 to bring a team of ghost investigators into the building	& Performance			
25/01/12	F/323/1112	Questions relating to price of named services	Community & Street Services Leisure Housing Environmental Health	22/02/12	20	Partially - some provided some exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website and web links given)
24/01/12	F/324/1112	Statutory legal measurement requirements for making doorways in homes wheelchair accessible for council tenants/housing association tenants	Environmental Health BCN	16/02/12	17	Exempt - Section 21 information available by other means
26/01/12	F/325/1112	Commercial premises which are currently vacant and where rateable value of the property exceeds £25,000	Finance & Revenues	15/02/12	14	Yes
26/01/12	F/326/1112	Questions relating to Planning Applications for 2010 to 2011	Planning	13/02/12	12	Partially - some information provided, some exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
27/01/12	F/327/1112	During each of the last three financial years how much was spent on legal fees to remove travellers from illegal sites	Environmental Health	17/02/12	15	Partially - some information provided, some not held
27/01/12	F/328/1112	Questions in relation to authority's use of the provisions under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act during 2011	Legal Finance & Revenues	13/02/12	11	Partially - some information provided, some not held
31/01/12	EIR/329/1112	Questions in relation to Land Search for named property	BCN	17/02/12	13	No information held

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
02/02/12	F/330/1112	Contact details for named posts	Customer Service & Performance	07/02/12	3	No information held
02/02/12	F/331/1112	Contact details for named posts	Customer Service & Performance	15/02/12	9	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
02/02/12	F/332/1112	Contact details for named posts	Customer Service & Performance	15/02/12	9	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
02/02/12	F/333/1112	Contact details for named posts	Customer Service & Performance	15/02/12	9	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
02/02/12	F/334/1112	Information regarding household waste collection and contractual information	Community & Street Services	21/02/12	13	Yes
06/02/12	F/335/1112	Information on Council's energy use	Finance & Revenues Regeneration	05/03/12	20	Partially - some information provided, some not held
06/02/12	F/336/1112	Has authority employed interim managers within last 3 years	HR & Payroll	17/02/12	9	Yes
09/02/12	F/337/1112	Information on pay policies	HR & Payroll Finance & Revenues	05/03/12	17	Partially - some information provided, some not held
08/02/12	F/338/1112	List of all public health funerals since 9th January 2012	Environmental Health	13/02/12	3	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
09/02/12	F/339/1112	Questions relating to Queens Diamond Jubilee and Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant	CEO Democratic Services	15/02/12	4	No information held

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
10/02/12	F/340/1112	Details of power of entry under any relevant acts from 2008 to 2011	Environmental Health Finance & Revenues Planning Housing Legal	28/02/12	12	No - Refusal (Section 12) - exceeds appropriate limit
14/02/12	F/341/1112	Information regarding Housing Benefit claim numbers and amounts	Finance & Revenues	07/03/12	16	Yes
14/02/12	F/342/1112	Information regarding council mobile phone contracts	Procurement	09/03/12	18	Yes (and given NEDDC contact details for shared ICT)
16/02/12	F/343/1112	How many employees in permanent posts were paid through companies rather than through PAYE	HR & Payroll	13/03/12	18	No information held
16/02/12	F/344/1112	Public Health funerals since November 2011 with no known next of kin	Environmental Health	21/02/12	3	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
16/02/12	F/345/1112	Breakdown of Disability Facility Grants and Discretionary Grants awarded in last 5 years	Environmental Health Housing	13/03/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
17/02/12	F/346/1112	Questions in relation to use of enforcement services	Finance & Revenues	14/03/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
16/02/12	F/347/1112	Details of empty properties paying a current rateable value above £50,000	Finance & Revenues	13/03/12	18	Yes
17/02/12	F/348/1112	Details relating to swimming participation in the area	Leisure	13/03/12	17	Partially - some information provided, some not held

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
20/02/12	F/349/1112	Information on AcChief Executive's & Partnership Teamable Behaviour Contracts	Community & Street Services	15/03/12	18	Yes
20/02/12	F/350/1112	Primates licenses issued under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976	Environmental Health	15/03/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
20/02/12	F/351/1112	Full list of properties both local authority and housing association sold since 2000 under the Right to Buy Schemes	Housing	27/02/12	5	Yes
20/02/12	F/352/1112	Information on maintenance contracts for council owned housing	Housing	15/03/12	18	No information held
21/02/12	F/353/1112	List of all empty commercial properties within the area	Finance & Revenues	16/03/12	18	Yes
21/02/12	F/354/1112	Costs of Civic Car purchase	CEO	20/03/12	20	Partially - some information provided, some not held
22/02/12	F/355/1112	Information on the history of named property, what it was used for	Planning	19/03/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
22/02/12	F/356/1112	Price paid for land on which Shirebrook Enterprise Centre is being built	Regeneration	19/03/12	18	Yes
22/02/12	F/357/1112	Details on any contracts held with Serco Group	Procurement Finance & Revenues	19/03/12	18	No information held
22/02/12	F/358/1112	Number of local government pension scheme members at end of financial years 6/7, 7/8, 8/9, 9/10 and 10/11	HR & Payroll	19/03/12	18	No information held, given Derbyshire County Council details
23/02/12	F/359/1112	Noise abatement/noise enforcement against pianos in last 5 years	Environmental Health	21/03/12	19	No - Refusal (Section 12) - exceeds appropriate limit
23/02/12	F/360/1112	Business premises which have appropriate food and/or alcohol licenses to operate	Legal Environmental	21/03/12	19	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

Date Received	Ref Number	Summary of FOI	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Information released
			Health			(website)
23/02/12	F/361/1112	Information around responsive maintenance procurement for social housing stock	Housing Procurement	21/03/12	19	Partially - some information held, some exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
22/02/12	F/362/1112	Marketing budget for 2012	Customer Service & Performance Leisure Community & Street Services Regeneration Housing	19/03/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
24/02/12	F/363/1112	Information regarding Senior Information Risk Owners or Officers	Customer Service & Performance	21/03/12	18	Yes
24/02/12	F/364/1112	Redundancy, resignations, staff and disciplinary actions	HR & Payroll	21/03/12	18	Yes
24/02/12	F/365/1112	Number of open space sites and the area in square metres of open space	Planning	21/03/12	18	No - Refusal (Section 12) - exceeds appropriate limit
28/02/12	F/366/1112	Information required of plans and council tax paid on named property	Planning Finance & Revenues Environmental Health	26/03/12	19	Yes
28/02/12	F/367/1112	Information on planning approval on land between Ball Hill, Corn Close and the M1 Motorway	Planning	27/03/12	20	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)



**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
28/02/12	F/368/1112	Details of who provides our Childcare Voucher service	HR & Payroll	26/03/12	19	Yes
28/02/12	F/369/1112	Details of investments in Icelandic financial institutions prior to collapse in 2008	Finance & Revenues	26/03/12	19	Yes
29/02/12	F/370/1112	How many automatic wash/dry toilets are provided via Disabled Facility Grants in 2010/11 and 2011/12	Housing, Environmental Health	26/03/12	18	Yes
01/03/12	F/371/1112	Coaching in our organisation	HR & Payroll	26/03/12	17	No information held
01/03/12	F/372/1112	Questions on planning applications	Planning	26/03/12	17	Yes
02/03/12	F373/1112	List of all properties with rateable value in excess of £2,600 currently vacant	Finance & Revenues	28/03/12	18	Yes
05/03/12	F/374/1112	Information on parking spaces	Customer Service & Performance	06/03/12	1	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
05/03/12	F/375/1112	Members allowances, council tax and pension contributions	HR & Payroll Finance & Revenues	29/03/12	18	Partially - some exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
06/03/12	F/376/1112	Questions regarding third sector services and projects	Chief Executive's & Partnership Team	30/03/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
05/03/12	EIR/377/1112	Questions in relation to Land Search for named property	BCN Environmental Health	29/03/12	18	No information held
06/03/12	F/378/1112	How many planning applications have been granted since 1st January 2007 which resulted in development of land on green belt	Planning	03/04/12	20	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
05/03/12	F/379/1112	Properties which are currently vacant with rateable values in excess £250,000	Finance & Revenues	29/03/12	18	Yes
06/03/12	F/380/1112	How many gypsies and travellers have been evicted from authorised sites in each of last 3 years	Environmental Health	30/03/12	18	No information held
07/03/12	F/381/1112	Information on provision of lone worker devices and Telecare equipment	Housing Community & Street Services	04/04/12	20	Partially - some information provided, some not held
08/03/12	F/382/1112	Information on health and safety at workplace in relation to slipping	Environmental Health	04/04/12	19	Partially - some information provided, some not held
09/03/12	F/383/1112	Information on Pet Shop Licensing	Environmental Health	04/04/12	18	Yes
12/03/12	F/384/1112	List of addresses in area that have been granted a premises under the Licensing Act 2003 to authorise the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises	Licensing	03/04/12	16	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
13/03/12	F/385/1112	Average salary of staff and average number of sick days per headcount	HR & Payroll	05/04/12	17	Partially - some information provided, some not held
15/03/12	F/386/1112	Has council bought any tickets for the Olympic events	Customer Service & Performance	19/03/12	2	No information held
16/03/12	F/387/1112	Number of Councillors and vacancies	HR & Payroll Democratic Services	05/04/12	14	Partially - some information provided, some not held
16/03/12	F/388/1112	Questions in relation to use of enforcement services within local authority area	Environmental Health	11/04/12	18	Partially - some information provided, some not held
16/03/12	F/389/1112	List of all Non Domestic rate accounts that are currently in receipt of mandatory relief	Finance & Revenues	12/04/12	19	Yes

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
19/03/12	F/390/1112	Details of all premises with Zoo Licences	Environmental Health	13/04/12	19	No information held
19/03/12	F/391/1112	Contact for allotment societies	Regeneration	13/04/12	19	Yes
19/03/12	F/392/1112	Request for information on services for young people	Chief Executive's & Partnership Team Customer Service & Performance Leisure	13/04/12	19	Partially - some information provided, some not held
19/03/12	F/393/1112	Confirmation on any plans to amend fees in relation to local searches	Legal	13/04/12	19	No information held
19/03/12	F/394/1112	Information in relation to NNDR accounts in credit	Finance & Revenues	13/04/12	19	Yes
20/03/12	F/395/1112	Amount of money council is spending on a property in South Normanton	Housing			Extension applied (Section 10)
21/03/12	F/396/1112	Interim staff at a cost of £400 per day or more	Finance & Revenues	17/04/12	16	No information held
21/03/12	F/397/1112	Information on New Homes Bonus funding	Housing Planning Finance & Revenues Customer Service & Performance	16/04/12	16	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means (website)
22/03/12	F/398/1112	Information on areas identified as flood risk areas	Planning	13/04/12	16	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means, given link to website
26/03/12	F/399/1112	List of all public health funerals in last 4 weeks	Environmental Health	19/04/12	16	Exempt - Section 21 available by other means, given link to website

**Table H - Summary of FOI Requests 01/01/12 – 31/3/12**

<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Ref Number</b>	<b>Summary of FOI</b>	<b>Departments Involved</b>	<b>Date Response Sent</b>	<b>No of work days</b>	<b>Information released</b>
27/03/12	F/400/1112	Information relating to empty houses within the authority	Housing Regeneration Finance & Revenues	19/04/12	14	Partially - some information provided, some not held
28/03/12	F/401/1112	Details of CCTV systems as they relate to taxis and private hire vehicles	Licensing	20/04/12	15	Partially - some information provided, some not held
28/03/12	F/402/1112	Copies of food standard and hygiene reports carried out for hospitals in area since January 1st 2011	Environmental Health	20/04/12	15	Yes
29/03/12	F/403/1112	Tender documents for the delivery of a bespoke businesss start up programme for people with disabilities	Procurement			Extension applied (Section 10)
29/03/12	EIR/404/1112	Questions in relation to Land Search for named property	BCN Environmental Health	25/04/12	14	No information held

**Table I: Freedom of Information Requests by Department 2011/12**

Department/Section	1/4/11- 30/6/11			1/07/11 – 30/9/11			1/10/11 – 31/12/11			4/1/12 – 31/3/12			Total		
	No. of Requests	No. Responded to in time	No. out of time	No. of Requests	No. Responded to in time	No. out of time	No. of Requests	No. Responded to in time	No. out of time	No. of Requests	No. Responded to in time	No. Out of time	No. of Requests	No. Responded to in time	No. out of time
CEO	1	1					1	1		2	2		4	4	
Chief Executive's & Partnership Team										2	2		2	2	
Customer Service & Performance	13	13		8	8		11	11		17	17		46	46	
Community & Street Services	8	8		7	7		8	8		5	5		28	28	
Legal & Democratic	11	11		9	9		11	11		9	9		40	40	
Finance & Revenues	33	33		32	32		21	21		30	30		116	116	
Housing	7	7		2	2		6	6		16	16		31	31	
HR & Payroll	19	19		8	8		15	15		14	14		56	56	
ICT	1	1					2	2					3	3	
Leisure	2	2		4	4		3	3		4	4		13	13	
Planning				10	10		7	7		13	13		30	30	
Environmental Health	14	14		27	27		14	14		28	28		83	83	
Procurement				4	4		1	1		5	5		10	10	
Regeneration	16	16		11	11		6	6		7	7		40	40	
BCN							7	7		6	6		13	13	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>125</b>		<b>122</b>	<b>122</b>		<b>113</b>	<b>113</b>		<b>155</b>	<b>155</b>		<b>515</b>	<b>515</b>	

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	16.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Repairs to Pleasley Vale Pond		
Report by:	Director of Health & Wellbeing		
Other Officers Involved	Assistant Director of Leisure		
Director	Director of Health and Wellbeing		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor A. Syrett, Portfolio Holder for Social Inclusion		

### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

COMMUNITY SAFETY – Ensuring that communities are safe and secure by providing facilities and services to target those at risk of ASB.

ENVIRONMENT – Promoting and enhancing a clean and sustainable environment by repairing and enhancing the mill pond at Pleasley Vale.

REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities by providing accessible leisure facilities.

### **TARGETS**

To reinstate the Mill Pond to allow the Outdoor Centre to market and sell the water based activities associated with the site.

### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

By obtaining best value under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972

## **THE REPORT**

### **Introduction**

The current outdoor centre has now been operating adventurous activities for 9 years, most of which have been for children from the local communities and often targeted and specialist intervention programmes which are highly respected.

The initial operation was delivered largely from the 'Boat House' which was refurbished in 2001. Building on that success, funding was sought to expand

the offer by bringing into use the formerly derelict building known as the 'Greaseworks' which increased the capacity, facilities and space to expand the provision – the cost of this project was approximately £250k.

More recently the Authority has managed to secure external funding of a new jetty and disabled access on the site to the value of approximately £93.5k.

The centre caters for almost any size of group and offers a range of adventure & team building activities including:  
Canoeing, Kayaking, Orienteering, Raft building, Abseiling, Climbing, Caving, Archery, Bush craft, Bellboating, Problem solving, Mountain biking, Team building, Forest schools/skills.

The centre can offer off the shelf traditional adventurous activities, but mainly prides itself on bespoke programmes designed around the customer needs. Such areas include:

Diversionary programmes, Corporate programmes, Health initiatives, Team building programmes, Youth initiatives, Events, Inclusion initiatives.

The facility at Pleasley Vale has been instrumental in the Council achieving its corporate aims and objectives in recent years.

## **Background**

Work to replace the jetty on the mill pond at Pleasley Vale has recently been completed. This was funded through an Aiming High for Disabled Children Capital Grant for £93,500 from Derbyshire County Council. Executive approved this project on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 the report also highlighted that mill pond levels were an issue and that further funding was required to resolve the leakage of water from the mill pond and that a further report would be brought back to Executive - contained here in.

The resultant facility will form part of the Pleasley Vale Outdoor Activity Centre, which includes a 28.5m jetty with disabled access ramp. Disabled access to the jetty and adjacent boathouse has been provided through the installation of a 1.8m wide footbridge from the car park and across the River Meden.

As previously reported, the water level in the mill pond has been exceptionally low since the summer of 2011. However, this has allowed construction of the jetty to proceed without the need to drain the pond.

The level of water in the pond continues to fluctuate, but the general trend is a steady loss of water, which has been exacerbated by recent dry weather. The water level is now at a point where it has not been possible to run water based activities on the pond since August 2011 and there is also an ever increasing threat to the wildlife and ecology of the site, which Bolsover District Council, as owners of the site, has a responsibility to protect.

Without an early resolution of the underlying issues, the benefits of the recent £93,500 investment in the outdoor activity centre will not be realised. Without sufficient water in the pond, it will not be possible to install the floating pontoon sections which are designed to allow safe access for all users (particularly disabled users) of the pond.

Whilst the pond is unavailable for use the potential for the outdoor activity centre to generate income will be significantly reduced as 70% of the centre's users have some element of water based activity as part of their programme of activities. Although it is estimated that water based activity could account for up to £46,000 per annum, there is also a potential impact upon non-water based activities as these are often booked alongside water based activities as part of a package which could result in a loss of up to £70,000 per annum.

### **Assessment of works necessary to prevent leakage**

The existence of a leak in the pond was originally identified in 2010 and was confirmed in a report by John Short in February 2011, which found that water was flowing into a crack in the outlet pipe, presumably through the embankment material around the headwall.

As it became apparent that the pond would need to be drained to effect repairs, the pond was registered as a fishery in 2011 so that fish could be removed from the pond as and when necessary.

Later in 2011, and in order to ascertain the likely cause of the reduced water level, ECUS Environmental Consultants were engaged to undertake a survey of the pond to identify any areas where water was leaking from the pond and to provide recommendations and an estimate of the cost of necessary repairs to the pond.

A report (*'Pleasley Vale Pond – Water Supply / Loss Investigation and Remediation'*) was produced by ECUS in December 2011. The primary content of the report is the engineering requirement to prevent leakage and improve inflow. The engineering element is supported by an assessment of the potential for ecological and landscape impacts to occur as a result of the necessary engineering works, together with appropriate mitigation requirements.

Kingfisher Consulting was commissioned by ECUS to carry out a visual inspection of the reservoir and to prepare a feasibility report on possible ways in which the leakage through the dam may be curtailed.

The recommendations of the engineer were as follows:

- *The off-take channel underneath the brickwork building adjacent to the overflow (The Boathouse) is sealed with jointed solid blockwork.*
- *The outlet pipe is repaired either by excavating and replacement of the damaged section, or by in-situ lining with plastic pipe.*



- *Areas of undercutting of the crest wall are sealed with puddle clay.*
- *Joints in the masonry crest wall are raked out and filled with lime mortar, especially around the headwall to the outlet pipe.*
- *The efficacy of the above measures is checked on completion, and if the leakage is not adequately curtailed, consider low pressure grouting from the crest around the outlet pipe location. This could be cement-bentonite grout or other designed mix, taking due account of the embankment material. It is important to note that the specification and method of application of this grouting is undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced chartered engineer.*

Based on these recommendations, quotes were sought from suitably experienced companies to undertake the works. To date, two quotes have been received, from RB Allfree (£11,722) and Gould (£14,500), not including the cost of low pressure grouting.

However, as there is still approximately 2.1m (7') of water in front of the sluice gate, it has not been possible to undertake a detailed investigation below the water line, which would be necessary to accurately assess the extent and cost of repair works.

### **Current Position**

During the recent jetty works, an attempt was made to open the sluice gate to reduce the water level to facilitate the casting of the footings for the jetty. However, it was found that the sluice gate had become detached from the lifting mechanism and was no longer operational. Subsequently, the water level was reduced over a period of three days by using a small pump.

Following discussions with the Environment Agency, the majority of the fish in the pond were removed by John Wall Fisheries for resale to other fisheries. Due to the weight of fish removed, this was carried out at no cost to the council.

Once works to repair the pond have been carried out it will be possible to repopulate the pond with fish transferred from mill pond 2, which is currently overstocked.

Following a recent report to SAMT, it was suggested that an accurate assessment of cost needed to be presented before a decision regarding funding the necessary works could be made. As outlined above, whilst there is still water in the pond, it is not possible for this to be provided.

A number of suggestions have been made as to the best way forward, particularly in order to de-water the pond to accurately identify and cost the works necessary to repair the pond. It is accepted that opening the sluice gate would be the easiest way to achieve this. However, as this will need to be repaired, additional costs would be incurred for either a camera survey (£700+) or divers (£2,000 to £3,000) to survey and hopefully lift the sluice

gate. As a result, the only viable and cost effective option would be to hire a pump to empty the pond.

Quotes have been sought for this, which would suggest that the cost of hiring a pump would be approximately £750, including the cost of fuel. Using a pump with a sufficiently large capacity, it would be possible to empty the pond within 2-3 days. It would also be possible to recover any remaining fish at the same by controlling the rate of emptying.

Refilling the pond could be assisted by extracting water from the River Meden, subject to securing an abstraction licence from the Environment Agency. An allowance for additional pump hire will need to be included. Otherwise, allowing the pond to refill naturally is likely to take several weeks despite the existence of a number of natural springs which feed the pond.

Quotes for repair of the sluice gate were sought by Bolsover District Council's Engineers. However, as the exact size of penstock required can't be determined until the pond is emptied, a range of prices were requested.

For the purpose of this report a comparison of the 1000mm penstocks (which should be the maximum size needed) is presented. Both companies agreed this was the best guess at this stage from the size of existing spindle, blind probing of the existing penstock underwater and discussions on site with the manager of Pleasley Vale Outdoor Activity Centre regarding the outlet diameter. The first quote is for traditional cast iron as existing and the second is for the more modern and corrosion resistant HDPE which is at least as strong as cast iron.

Quotes are as follows:

Ham Baker - 1000mm cast iron penstock, inc. installation: **£ 4,326**

Aquatic Control Engineering - 1000mm HDPE / stainless steel penstock, inc. installation: **£ 6,211**

### **Summary of costs**

- Pump hire (drain / re-fill) £1,500\*
- Repairs identified in ECUS report £11,722 to £14,500
- Sluice gate repairs £4,326 to £6,211

**Total** **£17,548 to £22,211**

- Low pressure grouting (estimate) £5,000 to £10,000

**Total (inc low pressure grouting)** **£22,548 to £32,211**

*\* includes £470 for fuel on a sale or return basis*

## **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- The facility at Pleasley Vale has been instrumental in the Council achieving its corporate aims and objectives in recent years.
- Water based leisure activities at the pond have not been taking place at the site now for some months due to the water level.
- Not only does this impact upon the elements of delivery described above, but this also reduces the income potential of the site.
- The loss of the water based element at Pleasley Vale would not only affect the direct income from the water based activities bookings but would also affect the dryside activity income which is often booked alongside the water based activity as a package.
- The loss of the income described above will severely reduce our capacity to remain a self financing activity/service.
- The Authority has managed to secure external funding for a new jetty and disabled access on the site to the value of approximately £93k – without the repairs this will become unusable.
- The level is now at a point where there is an ever increasing threat to the wildlife and ecology of the site which BDC has a responsibility for as owners of the mill complex.
- Failure to repair the pond at this stage could result in further deterioration and greater expense further down the line.
- BDC Leisure Services will as much as reasonably practicable use repairs and maintenance budgets to help meet the cost of this project.

In terms of risk, the failure to repair the pond and put it back into use as part of the activity centre will effectively close the operation/ facility

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial:** The recommendations set out within this report for work to address leakage within the pond at Pleasley Vale will cost an amount up to £32,000 on the basis of the details provided within this report. It is recommended that the amounts involved are funded by way of a charge against the Transition Grant provided to Bolsover District Council in respect of 2012/13. There is a potential impact upon the income generated by all activities run from the facility as these are often booked alongside water based activities as part of a package – this could result in a loss of up to £70,000 per annum. The £93,500 in Aiming High grant for the jetty could be clawed back if the Mill Pond is not reinstated.

**Legal:** Ensuring compliance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972

**Human Resources:** None

## **RECOMMENDATION**

In light of the urgent need to address the water loss issues on the mill pond at Pleasley Vale, the following recommendation is made:

**That a sum of up to £32,000 is agreed to cover the costs of the works outlined within this report, with those costs to be met from the Transition Grant available to the Council in respect of the 2012/13 financial year.**

## **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

In order to allow the reinstatement of the Pond at Pleasley Vale Outdoor Activity Centre.

ATTACHMENTS:  
FILE REFERENCE:  
SOURCE DOCUMENT:

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	17.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	3. Part of the Budget and Policy Framework		
Subject:	Arrears – Irrecoverable Items over £1000		
Report by:	Billing and Recovery Manager		
Other Officers Involved			
Director	Director of Corporate Resources		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor E. Watts, Leader of the Council		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

To maintain sound Financial Management and continue to seek efficiency savings. As part of sound financial management it is necessary to recognise and deal with money owed where no further effective steps can be taken for recovery. This supports the provision of efficient Council services as it enables a focus to be maintained on those accounts which are collectable.

#### **TARGETS**

Does not apply to this report.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

Ensuring that the limited resources are concentrated on recovery of debt that is collectable. Under current Council guidance, it has been considered not cost-effective to spend more money on outside agencies to take further action.

#### **THE REPORT**

#### **IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS**

Executive is requested to approve the write off of the under-mentioned irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £28,322.21 as itemised on the attached schedules.

<b>Bankruptcy/ Liquidation</b>		
No of Accounts	Type of Account	
1	Council Tax	£1,526.62
2	Business Rates	£18,780.42
	<b>Total</b>	£20,307.04

<b>No Trace</b>		
No of Accounts	Type of Account	
5	Council Tax	£6,167.82
1	Business Rates	£1,847.35
	<b>Total</b>	£8,015.17

Where debtors leave the properties without forwarding addresses extensive efforts are made to trace them. In addition to departmental checks, statutory undertakers and other agencies are contacted, enquiries are made of neighbours and family or employers where known. Where it is known that a person has moved to another area contact is made with the relevant local authority to alert them and request reciprocal information.

### **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

Writing off the outstanding debts in respect of persons who are bankrupt or companies in liquidation or unable to trace.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: The costs will be met from a provision for doubtful debts which has been agreed as part of the Council's budget.

Legal: None

Human Resources: None

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That approval is given to write off the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £28,322.21 with the proviso that should any of the debts become collectable the amounts be re-debited.**

**REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
CONSTITUTION**

In order that outstanding debts can be written off.

ATTACHMENTS:            Y

SOURCE DOCUMENT:    Official Receiver/ Internal records.

**COUNCIL TAX: AMOUNTS FOR WRITE OFF - BANKRUPT**

<u>Account Reference</u>	<u>Lead Liable Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>	<u>Liabile From</u>	<u>Liabile To</u>	<u>Bill Balance</u>
1 90118795X	HAVENHAND,MS SARAH ELIZABETH	7 DUKE STREET CRESWELL S80 4AS	£1,526.62	01/04/2009	01/04/2010	£908.22
				01/04/2010	01/04/2011	£305.59
				01/04/2011	20/10/2011	£312.81
			<b><u>£1,526.62</u></b>			



**BUSINESS RATES: AMOUNTS FOR WRITE OFF: BANKRUPT/ LIQUIDATION**

	<u>Account Reference</u>	<u>Lead Liabile Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>	<u>Liabile From</u>	<u>Liabile To</u>	<u>Bill Balance</u>
1	800130884	HAWKS INNS NORTH LTD	NAGS HEAD NORTH ROAD CLOWNE	£ 3,883.42	01/04/2011	07/02/2012	£ 3,883.42
2	800166038	ENTERPRISE SERVICE LTD	3 MAISIES WAY SOUTH NORMANTON	£ 14,897.00	18/03/2011 21/03/2011 01/04/2011	21/03/2011 01/04/2011 18/10/2011	£ 200.76 £ 736.13 £13,960.11
				<u>£ 18,780.42</u>			

**COUNCIL TAX: AMOUNTS FOR WRITE OFF - NO TRACE**

	<u>Account Reference</u>	<u>Lead Liabile Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>	<u>Liabile From</u>	<u>Liabile To</u>	<u>Bill Balance</u>
1	900489009	BREWSTER,MS CHARMAINE	2 CHESTNUT COURT PINXTON NG16 6HJ	£ 128.67	20/05/2002	14/09/2002	£ 128.67
2	900524693	BREWSTER,MS CHARMAINE	82 THE WOODLANDS LANGWITH NG20 9BY	£ 2,138.39	01/04/2009 01/04/2010 19/07/2010 01/04/2011	01/04/2010 19/07/2010 01/04/2011 05/06/2011	£ 749.63 £ 361.71 £ 792.87 £ 234.18
3	900593447	DARWENT,MR MICHAEL W	101 SELWYN STREET HILLSTOWN S44 6LS	£ 1,643.93	01/04/2006 01/04/2007 01/04/2008	01/04/2007 01/04/2008 19/06/2008	£ 590.15 £ 795.26 £ 258.52
4	901407267	ADAMCZYK,MR ROMAN	71A MAIN STREET SHIREBROOK NG20 8AN	£ 1,208.98	01/03/2010 01/04/2010 01/04/2011	01/04/2010 01/04/2011 16/08/2011	£ 130.20 £1,060.72 £ 18.06
5	901419621	PETRYKOW,MR JARENEUSZ	3 RECREATION DRIVE SHIREBROOK NG20 8RG	£ 1,047.85	06/09/2010 01/04/2011	13/02/2011 02/12/2011	£ 509.97 £ 537.88
				<u>£ 6,167.82</u>			

**BUSINESS RATES: AMOUNTS FOR WRITE OFF: NO TRACE**

<u>Account Reference</u>	<u>Lead Liabile Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>	<u>Liabile From</u>	<u>Liabile To</u>	<u>Bill Balance</u>
1 80015986X	MR JIM DOUBLE	THE SUMMIT CARTER LANE SHIREBROOK	£1,847.35	18/10/2010 01/04/2011	01/04/2011 06/06/2011	£1,402.28 £ 445.07
			<u>£1,847.35</u>			



## EXECUTIVE AGENDA

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 1000 hours  
Committee Room One

Item No.		Page No.(s)
	<b>PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS</b>	
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.	
4.	To approve the Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2012.	Previously circulated
5.	The record of decision notices from the meeting of the Joint Board held on 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2012 have now been circulated to all Members. Members may raise any questions on these decision notices.	Previously circulated
6.	To agree the Executive Functions. <b>Recommendation on Page 5</b>	3 to 5
7.	To appoint Representatives on Outside Bodies. <b>Recommendation on Page 10</b>	6 to 10
8.	Improvement Scrutiny Review - Unused Council Land, Garages and Garage Plots. <b>Recommendation on Page 12</b>	11 to 36
9.	Improvement Scrutiny Review - Use of Consultants. <b>Recommendation on Page 38</b>	37 to 59
10.	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Review - Demand for Housing in Bolsover. <b>Recommendation on Page 61</b>	60 to 86

11.	Homelessness Strategy. <b>Recommendation on Page 89</b>	87 to 121
12.	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme <b>Recommendation on Page 124</b>	122 to 124
13.*	Housing Asset Management Strategy.	To follow
14.	Working Neighbourhoods Fund Monitoring Report – Quarter 4 and 2011/12 End of Year Update <b>Recommendation on Page 127</b>	125 to 127
	<b>Quarterly Report to be circulated separately week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012.</b>	
15.	Compliments, Comments, Complaints and Freedom of Information Requests. <b>Recommendation on Page 132</b>	128 to 165
16.	Repairs to Pleasley Vale Pond <b>Recommendation on Page 172</b>	166 to 172
	<b>An Appendix to the report is to follow.</b>	
17.	Arrears Irrecoverable Items over £1,000 (Open). <b>Recommendation on Page 174</b>	173 to 179
	<b>PART 2 – EXEMPT ITEMS</b> <i>The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1, Schedule 12a.</i>	
	<u>Exempt - Paragraph 2</u>	
18.	Arrears Irrecoverable Items over £1,000 (Exempt). <b>Recommendation on Page 181</b>	180 to 184
	<u>Exempt – Paragraph 3</u>	
19.	Lease of Land at Stanhope Street, Bramley Vale. <b>Recommendation on Page 186</b>	185 to 187
20.	Commercial Property Lease Approval.	To follow
21.*	Tender Evaluation Outcome - External Insulation Contract 2012.	To follow
22.*	Tender Evaluation Outcome - CCTV Monitoring, System Upgrade and Maintenance Contract.	To follow

**\*Denotes Key Decision on Forward Plan**

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	13.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	1. Key decision included in Forward Plan		
Subject:	Housing Asset Management Strategy		
Report by:	Head of Housing		
Other Officers Involved	Housing Stock Group		
Director	Director of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. Bowman, Portfolio Holder for Housing Management		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

COMMUNITY SAFETY – By ensuring Council properties are secure.

CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – By offering a range of improvements that match the needs for customers, and by involving customers in the development of the strategy.

ENVIRONMENT – By ensuring properties have efficient heating and adequate insulation.

REGENERATION – The Asset Management Strategy allows significant investment into the District.

.

#### **TARGETS**

Work with tenants to develop a new modern standard for council housing and develop a programme to deliver this by April 2012

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

The Strategy proposes that the Council should “use procurement processes to best effect to ensure value for money in the delivery of all repairs, maintenance and improvement works”

## **THE REPORT**

In previous years the Capital Programme has been targeted to deliver decent homes and the way that funding was allocated made it difficult to set out long term plans.

However, with the extra flexibility that is offered with self financing there is an opportunity to be more ambitious with the capital programme.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) has been developed in conjunction with ConsultCIH who have spoken to a number of key stakeholders including members, customers and officers, and have taken account of national, regional and local issues whilst developing the strategy. The draft HAMS is attached as Appendix 1 for approval.

The Strategy aims to set out the HRA plans for the period of the Business Plan and has been developed alongside the financial plan previously agreed with members.

Although the new financing regime does allow the capital programme to be more ambitious than in previous years, the main expenditure will remain on investment within the existing housing stock and improving standards in current Council properties.

Whilst Decent Homes standards are largely focussed on the fabric of the property, the newly developed Bolsover Standard also takes into account wider neighbourhood issues.

Looking more widely, the HAMS may allow some expenditure on projects that were not possible under the previous funding regime. This may include new build or other acquisitions.

The HAMS aims to set out the main priorities for HRA capital work over the coming period.

- i. To have in place well designed repair and maintenance systems which ensure the stock is well maintained and kept in a good state of repair
- ii. To ensure the housing stock is brought up to and maintained at a locally determined Bolsover Standard, remaining attractive and meeting modern requirements and tenant expectations.
- iii. To replace obsolete or uneconomic stock with new properties, which are better designed to meet future needs and create a better balanced portfolio.



- iv. To identify land, whether it is Housing Revenue Account (HRA), General Fund or non-council to build additional homes to increase the number of Council owned properties available of the type and quality needed in locations where people want to live.
- v. To identify and consider potential opportunities for increasing the stock of properties available by acquiring homes, particularly if property types and location match housing need and management arrangements. (eg. RP disposals, new builds, repossession and properties previously sold under RTB)
- vi. To ensure the ongoing availability of housing stock, which specifically caters for the particular housing needs of older, vulnerable, special needs or minority households through the provision of appropriate attributes and facilities.
- vii. To have a long term strategy and programme in place to incrementally improve the thermal efficiency of the housing stock, at the same time helping to reduce levels of fuel poverty.
- viii. To use procurement processes to best effect to ensure value for money in the delivery of all repairs, maintenance and improvement works
- ix. To use the housing asset base to help deliver the wider corporate priorities of the Council

As now, it is envisaged that members will approve the annual capital programme as part of the budgetary framework; however, the annual plan will be derived from the priorities within the HAMS.

Progress will continue to be monitored by the Housing Stock Group, and this group will be expanded to include the HRA accountant and the Housing Strategy Officer when appointed.

Members should note that the enclosed strategy is a draft document, and some sections will need updating once some current work is completed.

### **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

The recommendation to adopt the HRA Asset Management Strategy

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: Not directly – however more detailed capital plans will arise from this strategy.

Legal: Not directly

Human Resources: Not directly

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **That the HRA Asset Management Strategy is adopted;**
2. **That delegated authority is given to the Head of Housing in consultation, with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing Management Portfolio Holder to make minor changes to the Strategy arising from current work.**
3. **That the HRA Asset Management Strategy is reviewed, at least once a year, by the Executive**

## **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

To agree the Housing Asset Management Strategy.

ATTACHMENTS:            Y

FILE REFERENCE:

SOURCE DOCUMENT:

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	13.
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Status	Open
Category	1. Key decision included in Forward Plan		
Subject:	Housing Asset Management Strategy		
Report by:	Head of Housing		
Other Officers Involved	Housing Stock Group		
Director	Director of Neighbourhoods		
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- 2. That delegated authority is given to the Head of Housing in consultation, with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing Management Portfolio Holder to make minor changes to the Strategy arising from current work.**
- 3. That the HRA Asset Management Strategy is reviewed, at least once a year, by the Executive**

## **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

To agree the Housing Asset Management Strategy.

ATTACHMENTS: Y

FILE REFERENCE:

SOURCE DOCUMENT:

## EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive of Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room One, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at 1000 hours.

### PRESENT:-

Councillor A.F. Tomlinson – In the Chair

Members:-

Councillors K. Bowman, D. McGregor, B.R. Murray-Carr and A. M. Syrett.

Officers:-

S. Tomlinson (Director of Neighbourhoods), P. Hackett (Director of Health and Well Being), B. Mason (Director of Corporate Resources), S.E.A. Sternberg (Solicitor to the Council), P. Campbell (Head of Housing) (to minute no. 1110), N. Etches (Projects Officer, Policy and Research) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

Observer:-

A. Derby (Work Experience) (to minute no 1107).

### 1102. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors D. Kelly and E. Watts and W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer).

### 1103. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

### 1104. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute No.	Councillor	Level of Interest
1106.	K. Bowman	Personal

## EXECUTIVE

### 1105. MINUTES – 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2012

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr  
**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012 be agreed as a true record.

### 1106. HOUSING DEPARTMENT QUARTERLY REPORT

The Head of Housing presented the report to update Members on Housing Department services.

Work had been undertaken with other Derbyshire authorities in respect of the tender for the Supporting People contract for mobile warden services. This was expected to be issued shortly and initial feedback had so far been positive.

Members discussed future arrangements for the Supporting People contract for Alarm Monitoring at considerable length. Questions were raised in respect of the business case, including the financial implications of the purchase of new monitoring equipment and potential changes in staffing levels. The Head of Housing advised Members that should the contract be awarded to the Bolsover consortium, all related costs would be assumed by Supporting People and staffing levels would be reviewed in line with the terms of the Supporting People contract.

The Head of Housing drew Members' attention to the report detailing year end figures for former and current tenant rent arrears, recovery and legal actions carried out, repairs and customer satisfaction. Members acknowledged the reduction in rent arrears and interventions by Housing and requested clarity on the amount of the reduction that was as a result of write offs. It was also requested that the Head of Housing provide the arrears report broken down by areas. It was confirmed that repairs had been carried out within targets.

There had been deterioration in the level of service from the current providers of tracing and recovery services. It was proposed that Procurement be requested to look at other options for presentation to Executive at a future date.

Members raised concerns with regard to public awareness of the Choice Based Lettings system and the accessibility of the service for those people without internet access. The Head of Housing advised Members that lettings information was provided in a variety of ways including via Contact Centres and Parish Councils and that an automatic bidding service was available on request. Members would be provided with a list of Parish Councils in receipt of the Choice Based Lettings information.



## EXECUTIVE

Moved by Councillor K. Bowman, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr  
**RESOLVED** that Members note the performance of the Housing Service

**REASON FOR DECISION:**        **To update Members on the progress of key services.**

(Head of Housing)

### **1107.            THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr  
**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 item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

### **1108.            FORMER TENANT ARREARS – WRITE OFFS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2**

The Head of Housing presented the report to seek Members' approval to write off irrecoverable debts. Members' attention was drawn to the schedule included in the agenda.

Brief discussion took place on the use of Council properties by third party organisations.

Moved by Councillor K. Bowman, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor  
**RESOLVED** that (1) Members agree to write off former tenant arrears as detailed in the schedule to the report.

(2) in accordance with policy, these debts may be written back on if further evidence becomes available, without the need for a further report.

**REASON FOR DECISION:**        **To write off debts that are deemed irrecoverable.**

(Head of Housing/ Director of Corporate Resources)

## EXECUTIVE

### 1109. SOLAR PV RENT A ROOF SCHEME – WIDER CONSIDERATIONS AND TENDER EVALUATION EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 3

The Director of Neighbourhoods presented the report to advise Members of the outcome of a tendering exercise. Tenders had been invited under an OJEU framework arrangement for a project to provide solar photovoltaic panels to Council housing properties on a rent-a-roof basis. Only one tender was received before the specified deadline.

The bid was evaluated on a cost and quality basis and was determined to be of limited benefit to the Authority. It was therefore recommended not to accept the tender and to seek Members' views on the next steps to be taken.

The Director of Neighbourhoods advised Members that it was understood that a nearby local authority had opted to self finance. However this option would significantly reduce the amount of residual funds available in the "borrowing headroom" of the Housing Revenue Account. It was added that Council had previously taken a decision not to proceed with a scheme involving self financing the Council's commercial premises and group dwellings.

Members discussed the issue at considerable length. It was suggested that information was required in respect of the number of properties that had an appropriate south facing orientation and were in a suitable structural condition. The Director of Neighbourhoods advised that there were currently no staff dedicated to this type of project, the Climate Change Group had been suspended and it would impact upon available staff and financial resources as roof surveys would be required. Senior Alliance Management Team was requested to provide a report for consideration by Executive suggesting options to take the project forward. .

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr  
**RESOLVED** that (1) the tender from Evo Energy not be accepted;

(2) Senior Alliance Management Team be requested to provide a report for consideration by Executive suggesting options to take the project forward.

(Director of Neighbourhoods)

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To allow further consideration of potential options.

The Head of Housing left the meeting.

## EXECUTIVE

**1110. TENDER EVALUATION OUTCOME – MARKETING AND  
BRANDING CONSULTANCY SERVICES, SHIREBROOK  
ENTERPRISE CENTRE  
EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 3**

The Projects Officer, Policy and Research, presented the report to advise Members of the outcome of a tender evaluation exercise for marketing and branding services for the Shirebrook Enterprise Centre.

Nine responses were received before the deadline and were evaluated on a cost and quality basis. Of these, three companies were invited to interview.

Following evaluation of the bids, it was recommended that the contract be awarded to Abstrakt Creative on the basis of best value.

Moved by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor  
**RESOLVED** that the contract be awarded to Abstrakt Creative on the basis of a specific contract running from appointment (expected 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012) to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 with no option to extend.

**REASON FOR DECISION:**            **In order to secure the tender which gives  
the best value for money**

(Projects Officer, Policy and Research)

The meeting concluded at 1135 hours.

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - JOINT WORKING**

CBC: LEADER		Date of Decision: 15 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012	
BDC: LEADER			
NEDDC: LEADER			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: N/A			
Title Reference: Minutes of Previous Meetings			
Consultee Member(s) N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R080L 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:			
a) That the notes and Records of Decision of the Joint Board meeting held on 13 <sup>th</sup> March, 2012 be noted.			
b) That the draft minutes of the Chief Executive's meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> April, 2012 be noted.			
Reasons for Decision			
To note progress on joint working			
Alternative options considered and rejected (if any) N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 16 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Contact Officer: Jackie Brobyn			

CBC: LEADER		Date of Decision: 15 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012	
BDC: LEADER			
NEDDC: LEADER			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: N/A			
Title Reference: Solar PV Panels			
Consultee Member(s) N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R080L 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 Joint Board note the current position.			
Reasons for Decision  To ensure that Members are aware of developments.			
Alternative options considered and rejected (if any) N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 16 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Contact Officer: Jackie Brobyn			

CBC: LEADER		Date of Decision: 15th May, 2012	
BDC: LEADER			
NEDDC: LEADER			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: N/A			
Title Reference: Supporting People Contracts			
Consultee Member(s) N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R080L 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 Joint Board note the current position.			
Reasons for Decision  To ensure that Members are kept informed.			
Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 16 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Contact Officer: Jackie Brobyn			

CBC: LEADER		Date of Decision: 15 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012	
BDC: LEADER			
NEDDC: LEADER			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: N/A			
Title Reference: Shared Procurement Unit – Annual Update			
Consultee Member(s) N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R080L 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:			
1. That the Joint Board note the progress made by the Shared Procurement Unit in the year 2011/12.			
2. That the Joint Board approve the budget proposals for 2012/13.			
Reason for Decision			
To provide members with comfort that the SPU are operating well and within projected budget forecasts.			
Alternative options considered and rejected (if any) N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in Yes			
Date Record issued: 16 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Contact Officer: Jackie Brobyn			

CBC: LEADER		Date of Decision: 15 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012	
BDC: LEADER			
NEDDC: LEADER			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: N/A			
Title Reference: Internal Audit Consortium – Annual Report 2011/12.			
Consultee Member(s) N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R080L 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:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the annual report of the Internal Audit Consortium be noted.</li> <li>That the Internal Audit Consortium retains £20,000 of the accumulated surplus as a working balance and that the remainder be distributed to the partner authorities as detailed in paragraph 4.3 and 4.4.</li> <li>That a report on the progress of the 2012/13 Business Plan and the Draft Business Plan for 2013/14 be submitted to the Joint Board in January 2013.</li> </ol>			
Reason for Decision			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable the Joint Board to consider the annual report of the Internal Audit Consortium.</li> <li>To return the accumulated balance held that is over and above the working balance requirements.</li> <li>To enable the Joint Board to monitor performance against the Business Plan and consider the 2012/13 Business Plan.</li> </ol>			
Alternative options considered and rejected (if any) N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 16 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Contact Officer: Jackie Brobyn			



CBC: LEADER		Date of Decision: 15 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012	
BDC: LEADER			
NEDDC: LEADER			
CBC Non-executive Leader's Support Members present: N/A			
Title Reference: BCN Consultancy (Building Control) - Update			
Consultee Member(s) N/A			
Key Decision References (if applicable): CBC: BDC: NEDDC:		Delegation References: CBC: R080L BDC: NEDDC:	
Report and background papers	Yes	Public <input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt <input checked="" 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 Joint Board agrees the actions set out in paragraph 5.7 of the report to recover the BCN budget deficit in 2012/13 and 2013/14.			
Reason for Decision  To effectively manage the budget of BCN in accordance with legislation and the legal agreement for the joint working consortium.			
Alternative options considered and rejected (if any) N/A			
Declarations of interests: None			
Decision subject to call-in		Yes	
Date Record issued: 16 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Contact Officer: Jackie Brobyn			

## **Notes to Record of Decision (Joint Working):**

### **CBC - CALL-IN REQUESTS**

*The implementation of certain decisions is suspended until the call-in period has expired without a call-in being validly invoked. Any Member of the Council shall be entitled to call for a decision to be suspended by giving notice to the Head of Governance, as Monitoring Officer either by telephone, fax, email or in writing **not later than 5.00 pm on the day following the date of the Joint Board meeting**. Any decisions so suspended shall not be capable of implementation for a period of **five calendar days** from the date of the Joint Board meeting. During the call-in period a request may be made in respect of any decision so suspended by not less than one quarter of the total membership of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee. To do this you will need to notify the Monitoring Officer in writing, by fax or by email by 5.00 pm on the date being five days following the day of the Joint Board meeting.*

### **BDC - CALL-IN REQUESTS**

*The implementation of certain decisions is suspended until the call-in period has expired without a call-in being validly invoked. The call-in period is **nine working days** from the date of this decision. During the call-in period **at least three** members may request certain decisions to be called in. You may do this in any of the following ways - In writing - a written notice may be signed by one or more Members, or By telephone - in order to safeguard the integrity of the system, Members may only call in by telephone on their own behalf, • E mail - this may be done using a Members terminal within the Council Offices or where a member has the facility via the internet, • By fax - as with written notifications, the faxed message may contain the signature of more than one Member, • In person. Democratic Services Officers who are authorised to accept notifications from Members.*

### **NEDDC - CALL-IN REQUESTS**

*The implementation of certain decisions is suspended until the call-in period has expired without a call-in being validly invoked. The call-in period is **five working days** after the publication of this decision. During the call-in period the **Chair and Vice Chair together with three other members of any Overview and Scrutiny committee** may object to a decision and call it in.*