

Date: 29 August 2014

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Executive of Bolsover District Council to be held in the Chamber Suites at **The Arc, High Street, Clowne on Monday 8 September 2014 at 1000 hours.**

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on pages 2 to 3.


Yours faithfully



Chief Executive Officer
To: Chairman & Members of the Executive

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EXECUTIVE AGENDA

Monday 8 September 2014 at 1000 hours

Item No.		Page No.(s)
	PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS	
1	Apologies for absence	
2	Urgent Items of Business 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	Declarations of Interest Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct 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	Minutes To approve the minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on 11 August 2014	Previously circulated
5	Recommended Items From Other Standing Committees None.	
6	Scrutiny Review of Enforcement - Report and Recommendations Recommendations on page 5	4-28
7	Partnership Commissioning Update Recommendations on page 33	29-34
8	Annual Review of Local Government Ombudsman 2013/14 Recommendations on page 37	35-38

9	Comments, Compliments and Complaints Quarterly Report (Q1) 2014/15 <i>Recommendations on page 60</i>	39-61
10	Ambition Sheffield City Region Update <i>Recommendations on page 67</i>	62-69
11	Bolsover ERDF Economic Infrastructure Project – Progress Report <i>Recommendations on page 72</i>	70-73

PART 2 – EXEMPT ITEMS

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1, Schedule 12a.

Paragraph 3

12	Medium Term Financial Plan	To Follow
13	Re-roofing Contract*	To Follow

* Denotes Key Decision

There were no representations received in respect of either of the two exempt items.

Bolsover District Council

Executive

8 September 2014

Scrutiny Review of Enforcement - Report and Recommendations

Report of the Chair of the Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To consider the outcome of the scrutiny review of enforcement.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 The Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee has completed its review of Enforcement.
- 1.2 The aim of the review was to reduce the incidence of fly-tipping, dog fouling and littering by a set date, across the District.
- 1.3 The objectives of the review were:
 - To identify other local good practice
 - To establish existing good practice by the authority
 - To identify any best practice by other authorities and assess whether it can be implemented in the District.
- 1.4 Members carried out the review with key issues in mind. These included encouraging and acting on reports made by members of the public and the costs to the Council and the public purse of cleaning up after irresponsible dog owners.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee has made nine recommendations based on evidence gathered during the review. The comments of the relevant Portfolio Holder; Executive Directors – Growth and Operations; The Joint Assistant Director, Community Safety and Housing, Environmental Health Manager, the Housing Enforcement Officer and Principal Solicitor were sought prior to the final report being approved by the Scrutiny Management Board.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 None.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 None.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

None.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

None.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

None.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the Executive consider the Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee recommendations set out in the report following the review of enforcement.

6.2 That the Executive provide a response on the review recommendations within 6 weeks in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules in order that an action plan can be drawn up to monitor implementation.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	None.
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	COMMUNITY SAFETY – tackling anti-social behaviour and its causes. CS 04: Reduce the incidence of fly tipping, dog fouling and littering by 20% by March 2015 The Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny

	Committee have made recommendations to assist in reducing the incidence of fly tipping, dog fouling and littering across the District by ensuring that available enforcement powers, current resources and best practice are utilised.
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8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
A	Copy of Scrutiny Review Report
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None.	
Report Author	Contact Number
C Millington	

Report Reference –

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

SAFE & INCLUSIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Scrutiny Review of Enforcement

July 2014

Contents

Chair's Foreword

1. Introduction
2. Recommendations
3. Scope of review
4. Method of review
5. Evidence
6. Key findings and conclusions

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| Appendix 1 | Stakeholders engaged during the review |
| Appendix 2 | Enforcement data |
| Appendix 3 | Environmental Health: Summary of best practice in respect of environmental enforcement |
| Appendix 4 | Best practice examples of enforcement – Dog fouling |

Foreword of Councillor Mary Dooley

Chair of the Safe & Inclusive Scrutiny Committee

The Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee undertook to review Enforcement on dog fouling, fly tipping and littering following discussion of topics at the Annual Scrutiny Conference, where it was identified as a serious issue in our District. The Committee felt that as a matter of urgency, the authority should use whatever means were at its disposal to improve our performance on enforcement in these three areas to help make our District free from litter and fly tipping and safe from the potentially fatal disease of toxicariasis.

The Committee feels that its recommendations will make a difference when implemented by relevant officers. I would like to thank everyone who has made a contribution to this Review – Members and officers, especially the Acting Scrutiny Officer and the Governance Officer for their support.

Councillor Mary Dooley

Chair of the Safe & Inclusive Scrutiny Committee

1. Introduction

The Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee were concerned to improve the Council's performance on addressing dog fouling, littering and fly tipping.

Although most dog owners act responsibly and clean up after their dog, the fouling of streets and green spaces remains a key concern for residents in the District. Members of the Committee took the view that the public health risks from dog excrement should be emphasised more strongly:

Toxocariasis is a rare infection caused by roundworm parasites. It is spread from animals to humans via their infected faeces.

Roundworm parasites are most commonly found in cats, dogs and foxes and usually affect young children. This is because children are more likely to come into contact with contaminated soil when they play and put their hands in their mouths.

However, cases have been reported in people of all ages.

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Toxocariasis/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

The authority has an Eyes and Ears reporting system for employees and Members to report incidents and locations of fly tipping, littering or dog fouling which they have observed or received from members of the public. The Eyes and Ears Scheme is regularly publicised on the Council's intranet and monitoring, reporting and publicity is managed by the Patch Management Group.

Data on the number and types of reported incidents is reported to Scrutiny Committees on a regular basis and is available to Members and officers via the Council's performance management system, PERFORM. Cumulative data on fly tipping, dog fouling and littering can be found at Appendix 2, which also provides a detailed analysis of fly tipping incidents and enforcement action undertaken.

2. Recommendations

Having considered the issues and reached their conclusions, the Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee makes the following recommendations:

- 2.1 Continue to pursue enforcement strategies to deter dog fouling, littering and fly tipping
- 2.2 Produce a summary of costs to council of clearing and patrolling and the cost to individual council tax payers
- 2.3 Explore the use of cameras in hot spot areas
- 2.4 Achieve widespread publicity on public health risks and costs to the Council of cleaning up, costs which are ultimately borne by council tax payers
- 2.5 Signage to be placed on areas of risk, indicating use of camera surveillance and stressing health risks of dog excrement
- 2.6 Produce publicity material using image of child with dog excrement with explanatory text indicating 'Toxicaria: this is the risk to you and your children posed by the dog owner who doesn't pick up'
- 2.7 Promote the use of all street bins / household general waste bins to dispose of bagged dog waste. Publicise these through In Touch and social media and explore the possibility of including this on council tax bills
- 2.8 High profile campaign with Scrutiny Members and enforcement teams
- 2.9 This is a consistently failing target. There is an urgent need for an increase in staffing levels, preferably permanent with no increase to the current establishment. Staff deployment needs to be reviewed to ensure efficiency especially if there are unfilled posts.

3. Scope of review

The Review sought to identify enforcement powers and best practice which can be used to reduce the incidence of dog fouling and littering across the District.

The aim of the Review was:

- To reduce the incidence of fly tipping, dog fouling and littering by a set date, across the District.

Our objectives were:

- To identify other local good practice
- To establish existing good practice by the authority
- To identify any best practice by other authorities and assess whether it can be implemented in the District

Members carried out the review with key issues in mind. These included encouraging and acting on reports made by members of the public and the costs to the Council and the public purse of cleaning up after irresponsible dog owners.

The Committee comprised the following Members:

Cllr Mary Dooley (Chair)

Cllr Terry Connerton (Vice Chair)

Cllr Brian Hendry

Cllr Eric Hall

Cllr Sandra Peake

Cllr Tom Rodda

Cllr Ken Walker

Cllr John Phelan

Cllr Vivienne Mills

Support to the Committee was provided by the Scrutiny Officer and the Governance Officer.

4. Method of review

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

The Council's performance management data was used to identify areas for investigation. The Committee undertook a review of relevant literature including best practice in other authorities, which is summarised at Appendix 4. It also sought both oral and written evidence from Council officers.

The methods used were a review of relevant literature; analysis of performance management data; and face to face interviewing.

5. Evidence

Documentary evidence

- Performance Management information on targets CS 04 and EH 01
- Members Reporting System: BDC Rangers Report by Ward
- Members Reporting System: Number of Fixed Penalty Notices Issued by Ward
- Flyer for BDC Dog fouling enforcement campaign
- Press cuttings highlighting successful prosecutions by other local authorities
- Best practice examples from other local authorities
- Job Description - NEDDC Environmental Enforcement Officer
- Job Description - NEDDC Environmental Enforcement Technical Officer
- Job description – NEDDC Environmental Warden (Dogs)
- Job Description - BDC Community Ranger
- Structure chart for Environmental Health (Commercial, Industrial and Licensing)
- Samples of completed Dog Fouling Monitoring Logs, Day Patrol Logs and Night Patrol Logs
- Enforcement data (Appendix 2)
- Environmental Health: Summary of best practice in respect of environmental enforcement (Appendix 3)
- Best practice examples from other local authorities – Dog fouling (Appendix 4)

Review of literature

Best practice examples of enforcement from other local authorities were gathered by the Scrutiny Officer via desk based research. Many of the measures taken were already being used by Bolsover District Council; others were felt to be unsuitable for the Council to adopt. A summary of best practice examples with regard to tackling dog fouling can be found at Appendix 4.

It was established through scrutinising job descriptions that the appropriate enforcement powers are available to those in enforcement roles. Documentary evidence from officer logs and enforcement managers supported the view that all resources are fully deployed to address the problems of dog fouling, littering and fly tipping.

Interviews

The Environmental Health Manager (Industrial, Commercial & Licensing) provided an overview of the range of activities which raise awareness of issues and the enforcement actions undertaken. A summary of these best practice examples for dog fouling is provided at Appendix 4.

Environmental Health is a shared service with North East Derbyshire District Council covering a total combined area of 168.3 square miles (435.9 km²). The service currently has 5 Environmental Health Officer posts, all of which have powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices. These officers deal with stray dogs, dog fouling, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles, as well as undertaking litter patrols and educational and promotional activities, often out of office hours. All incidents of fly tipping, dog fouling and littering offences which are reported to Environmental Health are investigated by an officer.

Detailed data on the number and types of reported incidents and enforcement actions undertaken on fly tipping over several years is available to Members and officers via the Council's performance management system, PERFORM. This can be found at Appendix 2.

The Environmental Health Manager (Industrial, Commercial & Licensing) reiterated the need for Members to report incidences via the authority's Contact Centre so that enforcement action can be properly monitored. All cases are prosecuted where there is sufficient evidence but officers have to be in the right place at the right time to catch offenders 'in the act'.

The Committee was advised by the Principal Solicitor of a recent case of fly tipping in both Bolsover and North East Derbyshire districts by one offender who was successfully prosecuted as a result of witness statements by a Street Services Operative and two officers. The offender failed to attend court and a warrant had been issued for his arrest. Subsequently, the District Judge imposed a fine of £860 (2 offences at £430 each) plus £400 costs and a £43 victim surcharge, totalling £1303. This case was publicised via Council communications and received coverage in the local press. The Principal Solicitor noted that this case was successful because of the standard of evidence provided.

The Joint Assistant Director, Community Safety and Housing and the Housing Enforcement Manager provided detailed evidence of the wide variety of activities carried out by the CAN Rangers. The Rangers had two distinct roles. Daytime tasks were allocated by Firmstep (the Council's Customer Information System) and put through directly as tasks to the PDA devices held by the Rangers. This included working with the Police, Housing, Health and carrying out untidy garden inspections etc. A typical schedule of tasks undertaken was circulated. Night time activities were determined by the hot spot board or calls through Warden Control and Anti Social Behaviour or noise nuisance calls. The Rangers completed activity logs every night and a typical log was circulated to Members.

Dog fouling patrols are carried out throughout the week at various times and are usually targeted at times and localities identified through local intelligence reports. However, the presence of the CAN Rangers acts as a deterrent and those dog owners who might have behaved irresponsibly consequently change their behaviour on that occasion. So far this year, no Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued.

It is clear from the oral evidence taken that the evidential standards under criminal law are necessarily rigorous. While those employed in enforcement roles have the necessary powers and tools to meet these standards, the potential for enforcement action in response to reports from members of the public may be limited. This is particularly the case with regard to gathering evidence of dog fouling from residents, who are willing to report offences but are often reluctant to make a formal witness statement. The Council encourages reporting of dog fouling offences and gives clear advice to the public on how to do this in corporate communications such as In Touch and on its website. For example, the following is taken from the website:

Some people continue to be irresponsible and there are an increasing amount of dog owners who clear up after their dog and then leave the bag on a tree or a bush or even throw it on the ground. This is littering and we can issue a fixed penalty notice of £50.00 for this behaviour.

If you witness dog owners not picking up after their dog or disposing of their poop bags as described above, report them to us. Your call will be treated in confidence. If you decide to make a complaint about dog fouling, please ensure you supply as many details as possible in order for us to take the appropriate action:

- Name and address of the dog owner - if you know it!
- If the name/address is not known - a description of the person(s) and the dog(s)
- Did the offender drive a vehicle?
- A description and/or registration of the vehicle
- Location of the dog fouling or poop bag
- Time of the incident - Very important! We may be able to catch the person the next time as most dog walkers follow a similar daily routine

<http://www.bolsover.gov.uk/index.php/environment-waste/animal-welfare>

The Joint Assistant Director, Community Safety and Housing, advised that Patch Management Group is exploring the use of a smart phone application which members of the public, officers and elected Members might use to report the location and type of offence. This system would complement the existing Eyes and Ears reporting system for employees and Members.

Best practice

The Committee examined a range of best practice examples from other councils (see Appendix 4) and considered how these approaches might be used in the District. Evidence of the Council's own best practice is provided at Appendix 3.

6. Key findings

- Bolsover District Council takes a broad approach to tackling dog fouling, littering and fly tipping. Much of this work is driven and co-ordinated by the Environmental Enforcement, Cleansing and Education Group.
- In common with other local authorities, tackling dog fouling, littering and fly tipping remains a priority but also a challenge for Bolsover District Council due to the standards of evidence required to pursue enforcement action under criminal law and in addition, pressure on resources due to staffing issues.
- The indicative cost for cleaning up *each* dog fouling deposit is **£6.53**. compared to approximately £3.28 for emptying each dog bin The number of *reported* dog fouling incidents from 2010-2014 was 1101, costing the authority and its council taxpayers a total of £7189.53 to clean up. These costs could be widely publicised to encourage reporting by officers and members of the community.
- Reported incidents add to local intelligence mapping, enabling officers to pinpoint 'hot spot' areas and target persistent offenders.
- Deterring offenders by deploying tactics such as signage indicating that CCTV cameras are in operation could be used to support behaviour change while removing the burden of giving witness statements .

Appendix 1

Stakeholders

Portfolio Holder for Community Safety

Executive Director, Growth

Executive Director, Operations

Joint Assistant Director, Community Safety and Housing

Environmental Health Manager (Industrial, Commercial & Licensing)

Housing Enforcement Manager

Principal Solicitor

Appendix 2

Review of Enforcement: Reported incidents & enforcement action

Reported incidents, 2010 - 2014

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-13	2013-2014	Total
Fly tipping	746	640	526	861	2773
Dog fouling	285	284	264	268	1101
Littering	226	311	216	288	1041
Total	1257	1235	1006	1417	4915

Environmental Heath: Fly tipping reports and enforcement actions 2011-2014

		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Land use	Highway	469	365	588
	Footpath/bridleway	37	35	51
	Back alleyway	10	12	17
	Railway	0	0	0
	Council land	105	95	180
	Agricultural	0	1	1
	Private - residential	18	12	23
	Commercial / industrial	0	4	1
	Watercourse/bank	1	2	0
	Other	0	0	0
	Total	640	526	861
Waste type	Animal carcass	3	6	4
	Green	36	37	44
	Construction/demolition	64	41	66
	B/bags commercial	2	0	0

		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	Vehicle parts	11	8	9
	White goods	8	4	74
	Other electrical	40	15	33
	Tyres	45	47	50
	Asbestos	12	13	17
	Clinical	0	2	2
	B/bags household	59	55	107
	Chemical/fuel drums	11	9	19
	Other household	292	253	399
	Other commercial	57	36	37
	Other	0	0	0
	Total	640	526	861
	Size	Single b/bag	14	20
Other single item		138	105	184
Car boot or less		244	197	351
Small van		173	147	213
Large van		71	57	78
Tipper lorry		0	0	0
Multi/significant		0	0	0
Total		640	526	861
Actions	Investigations	678	515	559
	Duty of Care Insp.	483	246	210
	Notices	0	0	0
	Stop and Search	4	0	0
	Fixed penalties	10	2	2
	Prosecution	1	0	0
	Fly tip warns	54	83	98
	Actions Total	1230	846	869
	Incidents total	640	526	861
	Enforcement actions	1230	846	869

Source: Bolsover District Council performance management system (PERFORM)

Appendix 3

Report for Safe and Inclusive Scrutiny Committee

Environmental Health – Summary of best practice

in respect of environmental enforcement

All incidents of fly tipping, dog fouling and littering offences which are reported to Environmental Health are investigated by an officer.

1. Environmental, Enforcement Cleansing and Education Working Group attended by Environmental Health, Street Scene Manager, Housing Enforcement Manager, Can Rangers and Leisure Project Officer.
2. Educational and promotional initiatives: e.g Annual PDSA events, attendance at community events to promote responsible dog ownership, targeted cleansing and enforcement initiatives on intelligence received, high visibility dog fouling patrols,
3. Visits and talks to schools in relation to littering and dog fouling.
4. Responsible dog ownership advice.
5. Signage and spray pavement signs
6. Free micro chipping (chips provided free by the Dogs Trust)
7. Litter picking and rubbish removal by Offices where possible
8. Fly tipping stickers used on rubbish found so that the public know we have found it and are dealing with it.
9. Proactive covert surveillance (CCTV) in fly tipping and littering hotspots, which is reviewed weekly and results in significant numbers of fixed penalties.
10. Attend residents meetings and Parish Council meetings to identify concerns and develop action plans and approach to specific problems.
11. We have improved culture within the Council resulting in more reports of littering, fly tipping and dog fouling issues being reported for action from other officers and staff.
12. We carry out multi agency walkabouts with other organisations and agencies e.g. Environment agency, Police and Fire Authority
13. Work with landlords, Housing Associations and Council Housing to reduce littering and fly tipping from tenants
14. Leaflet dropping in target areas in relation to dog fouling
15. Provision of free dog bags to Residents.
16. Secured donations from Parish Councils for provision of dog bags
17. Dog fouling and littering reporting forms for Street Scene and others to report offences.
18. Partnership activities with Sanctuaries and Countryside Rangers to deal with dog and litter matters.
19. Stop and Search initiatives with the Police and Vosa

Outcomes

20. Fixed Penalty Notices issued for littering, dog fouling and fly tipping clean up

Numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices Served:

BDC	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Littering	108	122	73	78
Dog Fouling	15	14	6	1
Fly Tipping	8	9	2	1

<i>NEDDC</i>	<i>2010/11</i>	<i>2011/12</i>	<i>2012/13</i>	<i>2013/14</i>
<i>Littering</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Dog Fouling</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Fly Tipping</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>

21. Fly tipping prosecution (April 2014)
22. Increase in attendance by public at PDSA events
23. Notable decrease in targeted areas in relation to litter and fly tipping
24. Success published on website and press releases to highlight consequences of littering and fly tipping

A breakdown of service requests and complaints received during 2013/14 can be provided if required.

Environmental Health Manager (Commercial, Industrial and Licensing)

13/6/14

Appendix 4

Safe & Inclusive Scrutiny Committee

Best practice examples of enforcement – Dog fouling

Who	What	Approach	Key learning	Outcomes
<p>Tunbridge Wells Borough Council</p> <p>Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Group: <i>Reduce Dog Fouling</i>, December 2012</p> <p>http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/documents/s7825/Report_Template_11%2010%20201111%20amended.pdf</p>	<p>Dog fouling</p> <p>Littering</p>	<p>Three strand approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate - responsible dog ownership • Equip – have the right tools to do the job and promote their use • Enforce – intelligence led 	<p>Intelligence led recording system, not a reactive response</p> <p>-> profile of hot spot areas</p> <p>-> target resources in these areas</p> <p><u>Dog owners are part of solution</u> – majority are responsible owners.</p> <p>Involve community through 'community reporters'</p>	<p>Recommendations from Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of 'bag & flag' events • Intelligence gathering approach, not reactive • Promote message that 'any waste bin will do' • Develop toolkit for parish councils, community groups to deliver their own 'bag & flag' events • Enable Members to promote this approach at town / parish council meetings etc • Explore high profile enforcement campaign to deter people from dropping litter and / or

Who	What	Approach	Key learning	Outcomes
				not cleaning up after their dogs.
<p>Ribble Valley Borough Council</p> <p>Report to Health & Housing Committee, <i>Defining future dog fouling strategy based on best practice</i>, May, 2013</p>	<p>Dog fouling</p>	<p>Enforcement: Dog Control Orders</p> <p>Behaviour change – individuals</p> <p>Public health awareness</p>	<p>Review arose from longstanding problem of fouling on Council playing pitches and significant increase in complaints to Dog Warden service.</p> <p>Recognition that single intermittent incidents cannot be traced or resolved effectively; and reluctance of witnesses to report / provide witness statements against their neighbours</p> <p>Dog Control Orders -> use of enhanced powers to extend removal provisions; exclude dogs from designated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted high profile patrols • Installed & maintained 100+ dog waste bins • Promoted selected litter bins where bagged dog waste can be deposited • Use of enhanced Dog Control Orders - dog ban on Council playing fields • 3 educational awareness campaigns per year

Who	What	Approach	Key learning	Outcomes
			<p>areas; enforce control of dogs in public areas.</p> <p>Using findings from national research about behavioural traits of dog walkers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception by irresponsible dog owners that others 'get away with it' and that penalties will not be enforced allows them to justify their inaction • Dogs usually defecate within 10 minutes of leaving home • Deposits are usually made within 1 metre of footpaths • Only 10% of dogs in rural areas are kept on a lead all the time • Dog walking as key leisure activity for people living 	

Who	What	Approach	Key learning	Outcomes
			in & visiting rural areas	
<p>Angus Council</p> <p>February 2009</p> <p>http://www.angus.gov.uk/new/Releases-Archive/2009/2009-02-26a.htm</p>	<p>Dog fouling</p>	<p>‘Zero tolerance’ approach to dog fouling in the town of Arbroath.</p> <p>Enforcement patrols</p> <p>Publicity using council vehicles</p>	<p>Teams of enforcement officers working undercover over two week campaign observing, following and talking to dog walkers in the town between the hours of 7am and 10pm.</p> <p>To support this, three refuse collection vehicles used in Arbroath and the dog warden vans had side panels with the message 'Dog fouling. He can't clean it up', to highlight the issue.</p>	<p>Enforcement officers spoke with and/or issued waste bags to over 600 dog walkers.</p> <p>Finalist in <i>Keep Scotland Beautiful</i> - Best Local Environmental Quality Innovation award</p>
<p>Havant Borough Council</p> <p>May 2014</p> <p>http://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/local/havant-council-sprays-dog-mess-pink-to-shame-owners-1-</p>	<p>Dog fouling</p> <p>Littering</p>	<p>Enforcement campaign – Pick up or Pay up</p> <p>‘Paint poo pink’ project as part of overall campaign to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of extent of problem in local 	<p>Targeted to discourage street littering</p>	<p>82 FPNs issued in first week, majority for cigarette ends</p>

Who	What	Approach	Key learning	Outcomes
6053646		communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shame irresponsible dog owners into cleaning up. 		
South Ribble Borough Council September 2009	Dog fouling	Dog Control Orders issued for some enclosed children's play areas & public open spaces: http://www.southribble.gov.uk/sites/southribblecms.govplatform.firmstep.com/files/Dog%20control%20Orders%20%28amendments%29.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exclude dogs from designated areas; - Enforce control of dogs in public areas. Increased charge for Fixed Penalty Notices in 2013 http://agenda.southribble.gov.uk/akssribble/images/att4416.pdf		Dog Control areas extended to more children's play areas and open parks after public consultation in late 2013. 281 FPNs (value= £14,150) were issued in 2012-13 and 19 successful prosecutions taken for environmental offences. The Council was on track to exceed this performance in 2013/14.

Bolsover District Council

Executive

8th September 2014

Partnership Commissioning Update

Report of the Chief Executive's & Partnership Manager

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide Executive with an update on activities that have been commissioned following the award of £100,000 Council monies in January 2014.

1 Report Details

Partnership Commissioning

1.1 Members will recall the award of £100,000 Council monies to support the following initiatives identified by Bolsover Partnership following a review of the Sustainable Community Strategy in April 2013:

- Bolsover traineeship and apprenticeship programme;
- Volunteering in Bolsover district;
- Financial inclusion pilot project;
- Evaluating outcomes for the voluntary/community sector (VCS);
- Disability issues.

1.2 It was also identified that cash and in-kind match funding in the region of £250,000 would be secured to progress the initiatives identified above. All initiatives have now been commissioned and this report provides an update of activity.

Bolsover Traineeship and Apprenticeship Programme

1.3 In March 2014, BDC launched its Traineeship and Apprenticeship programme for 16-18 year olds. The programme involves a six month Traineeship whereby participants undertake two days per week work placement either with BDC or North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC), and two days per week on Maths, English and Employability skills. The programme is aimed at those who require additional support to prepare them for an apprenticeship. In April 2014, 10 Trainees commenced on programme; 8 remain to date.

- 1.4 After completion of the Traineeship, all participants will be given the opportunity to apply for one of five new apprenticeship positions, to be created internally and funded through residual Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF).
- 1.5 A part-time co-ordinator has been recruited to facilitate the programme, ensure participants are suitably matched to apprenticeship opportunities and provide the liaison between work placement employers. The cost of the post is £46,750 over four years, funded through the Council's allocation of funding.

Volunteering in Bolsover District

- 1.6 Following a competitive tendering process, a contract to increase volunteering activity within the district was awarded to Chesterfield Volunteer Centre, for activity to commence at the beginning of September 2014. A minimum of 2 days per week outreach support in the north and south of the district will be available for volunteers on a 1-2-1 basis which will include signposting/matching to volunteering opportunities. The project will also identify and promote new volunteering opportunities, and provide training and 1-2-1 support to groups/VCS organisations to increase the quality of volunteering placements within the district.
- 1.7 This contract has been awarded over an 18-month period and uses a combination of residual WNF (£5,000), BDC (£15,000) and in-kind contributions (£21,067). Additional funding will be sought to extend the lifetime of the project beyond 18-months.

Financial Inclusion Pilot Project

- 1.8 A small charity based in South Normanton called 'Release' has been successful in securing this contract to deliver a 12 month 'Budget Buddies' pilot project in (a) Clowne, and (b) South Normanton/Pinxton. The project will recruit and develop active buddies (approximately 4-5 in each area) that will work in a voluntary capacity to support people to manage their finances more effectively either through face-to-face, telephone or email contact. The buddies will signpost to other services that are available locally, and will be quality assured through the support of a co-ordinator.
- 1.9 This contract uses a combination of residual WNF (£6,350), BDC (£8,650) and in-kind contributions (£4,611). Depending on the outcome of the pilot project and availability of funding, it is envisaged that the programme will be rolled out across the district.

Evaluating Outcomes for the VCS

- 1.10 'Ideas to Impact' were appointed following a competitive tendering process to undertake an evaluation that would assess the impact of the work of Community Voluntary Partners (CVP). This work was successfully concluded and presented to Council in July 2014. This work will inform the Grants to Voluntary Organisations performance monitoring undertaken by the Partnership Team.

Disability Issues

- 1.11 Bolsover is the fourth highest district in the country for people with disabilities. To address some of the issues around levels of unemployment and disability, a contract has been awarded to Disability Dynamics who have previously been successful at delivering partnership activity in the district aimed at helping people with disabilities to gain employment. This new area of work will drive forward the cross-cutting theme 'Communication' within the Work and Skills Plan, with support from the Chief Executives and Partnership Team (CEPT), by developing and implementing a Communication Plan, maintaining the Help to Work directory and undertaking partnership working to increase employment opportunities for local unemployed people.
- 1.12 This contract has been awarded over a two year period and uses a combination of residual WNF (£5,000), BDC (£21,600) and Partnership Funding for Health Priorities (£18,360).
- 1.13 The table on the next page shows the total cost of each project and how much has been allocated from Council funding. It also shows that the £260,828 match funding (cash and in-kind) is anticipated to be levered in during the lifetime of the projects. This means that for every £1 invested, a further £2.60 is levered in to add value to the projects.

Activity	Target Communities	BDC Funding Allocated	Other Funding Identified (cash and in-kind)	Total	Contribution to Corporate Plan Aims
Apprenticeships (4 year project)	District wide	£46,950	Residual WNF £200,710	£247,660	CP: Promote the development of skills and learning SCS: Support activity that will create opportunities for individuals to gain employment
Volunteering (18 months delivery)	District wide	£15,000	Residual WNF £5,000 Chesterfield Volunteer Centre £11,623 1200 volunteer hours x £7.87 = £9,444	£41,067	CP: Promote the development of skills and learning SCS: Support activity that will create opportunities for individuals to gain employment
Financial Inclusion (12 month pilot)	Clowne and South Normanton	£8,650	Residual WNF £6,350 Release £2,250 300 volunteer hours x £7.87 = £2,361	£19,611	CP: Reduce poverty CP: Contribute to improving the health of the district SCS: Enhance access to transport, infrastructure, accommodation and finance for residents and businesses
CVP Evaluation of Outcomes (one-off piece of work)	District wide	£7,800		£7,800	CP: Provide services that are fair, equitable and open SCS: Build healthy communities
Disability (2 year project)	District wide	£21,600	Residual WNF £5,000 Partnership funding for health priorities £18,360	£44,690	CP: Contribute to improving the health of the district SCS: Build healthy communities
		£100,000	£260,828	£360,828	

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 That Executive notes the contents of this report.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 The Joint Chief Executive Officer, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council – Cabinet Member for Regeneration have been consulted.

3.2 The commissioning process has been overseen by Bolsover Partnership's Commissioning Group which consists of representatives from each of the thematic Action Groups, Community and Voluntary Sector, Older People's Forum and the Parish Council Liaison Group.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Alternative options for the delivery of initiatives have been considered through the competitive selection process.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

5.1.1 Project performance will be monitored quarterly using the CEPT's performance management systems which were used to manage previous funding programmes, such as WNF and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

5.2.1 Beneficiary data will only be stored by project leads, not the CEPT.

5.2.2 All commissioning has been overseen by the Shared Procurement Unit at the NHS.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

None.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the report be received.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	All
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	See links to Corporate Plan priorities detailed on page 4 of this report.

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Laura Khella	01246 242302

Report Reference –

Bolsover District Council

Executive

8th September 2014

Annual Review of Local Government Ombudsman 2013/14

**Report of the Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement/
Customer Standards and Complaints Officer**

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide information contained within the Review of Local Government Complaints 2013/14 from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

1 Report Details

This is the first time this information has been presented by the LGO in this format. The document contains an annual summary of statistics on the complaints made about the Authority for the year ending 31 March 2014.

The Review of Local Government Complaints 2013-14 has been appended for your information.

Key points from the review, specifically in relation to Bolsover District Council:

- The LGO received 20 enquiries and complaints during 2013/14, only 10% (2) of which were subject to detailed investigations.
- The LGO decided 2 complaints, 1 was found that there was no fault and 1 was appropriate to issue a report (S30(1)) because of maladministration/ service failure causing injustice.

General points from the review:

- Overall, complaints referred to the LGO and enquiries about benefits and tax increased by 26%.
- There was a 39% decrease in housing complaints, this is because all new complaints about Councils' role as social landlords became the responsibility of the Housing Ombudsman Service in April 2013.
- The LGO advised that 43% of people were not informed by their Council of their right to refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Benchmarking information - CIPFA Nearest Neighbour

When looking at close neighbouring authorities, the following is noted:

	Detailed investigations	Total complaints received
Ashfield District Council	7	25
Bassetlaw District Council	7	23
Bolsover District Council	2	20
Chesterfield District Council	3	17
Erewash District Council	5	12
Mansfield District Council	3	20
NE Derbyshire District Council	4	16

Whilst Bolsover District Council received 20 complaints against its services, it is pleasing that only 10% (2) were the subject of detailed investigations, the lowest amongst neighbouring authorities. 20 complaints might appear to be a high number, however, given the LGO's comments about people not being informed about how to refer their complaint to the LGO, this evidences that our customers are aware of how to escalate their complaint, should they wish to do so. Additionally, as only 2 complaints were the subject of a detailed investigation, this would appear to demonstrate that our corporate complaint system is resolving complaints before the intervention of the LGO.

Best Practice

The LGO support local scrutiny and the representative role of Elected Members who have a democratic mandate to scrutinise the way services are delivered and hold those services to account. The LGO believes that complaints are an important tool to support that process. The review includes issues that Elected Members may wish to consider when assessing if the Council is responding to and learning from complaints as follows:

Issues to consider	Bolsover Best Practice
Does the Council:	
➤ regularly report its experience and learning from complaints to Elected Members?	Yes, quarterly to Executive
➤ provide open access to complaints data for Elected Members and the public?	Yes, quarterly to Executive and via the Council's website
➤ actively seek feedback from service users on its complaints handling?	Yes, via satisfaction surveys, both externally and internally
➤ clearly display information about its complaints process online and in all service delivery settings?	Yes, via the Council's website and throughout Council buildings
➤ advise complainants of their right to access the ombudsman, and provide the correct contact information?	Yes, every Internal Review (stage three) complaint has the correct LGO or Housing Ombudsman information included
➤ ensure providers of services also respond to complaints raised and learn from them through commissioning and contracting?	Yes, trends/ repeat complaints are reviewed by the service provider with the Customer Standards and Complaints Officer to look at lessons learned and which changes in internal procedures or contracted services are appropriate

The Compliments, Comments and Complaints (CCC) Policy (and Procedure) have been in place since 2005 and are regularly reviewed to ensure that new legislation and best practice are taken into consideration. The new Joint CCC Policy has recently been reviewed and implementation will commence October 2014. As demonstrated above, Bolsover District Council is already operating at a high level in relation to the aspirations of the LGO.

Please note, although this report is regarding complaints directed to the LGO, the Council has received no complaints via the Housing Ombudsman for this period.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

The report is to keep Elected Members informed of volumes and trends regarding LGO complaints.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

The report is to keep Elected Members regularly informed of volumes and trends regarding LGO complaints. No consultation or equality impact assessment is required.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not applicable as the report is keep Elected Members informed rather than to aid decision making.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

Whilst there are no direct financial implications with regard to the report, the Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman. There are no Data Protection implications.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

Not applicable as the report is to keep Elected Members informed.

6 Recommendations

That Executive receive the report and the LGO Annual Review 2013/14.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	All wards
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Customer Focused Services Strategic Organisational Development

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
A:	Review of Local Government Complaints 2013-14
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement	Ext: 2343
Customer Standards and Complaints Officer	Ext: 2353



Review of Local Government Complaints 2013-14

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Local Government Ombudsman

**The Oaks, No 2
Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8JB**

**Phone: 0300 061 0614
Web: www.lgo.org.uk
Twitter: @LGOmbudsman**



“ At a time of even greater choice and diversity in local public service provision, public information is essential to support the decisions people make. ”

It is important that the LGO is an open and transparent organisation and provides assurance to the public about the work we do and how we spend public money. Local authority complaints make up the bulk of our work. Our unique role is to remedy personal injustice caused by maladministration or service failure by conducting independent and impartial investigations. The recommendations we make affect many more people because we often ask for changes to policy and practice which improve local complaint handling, public administration and service delivery. We regard this as an important part of our role to enhance local accountability to people who use services, many of whom rely on them for their day to day well-being.

At a time of even greater choice and diversity in local public service provision, public information is essential to support the decisions people make. Since April 2013 we have published the decision statements for all our cases on our website. For the first time, this report brings together in one place a summary of data we provide to each council in England in an annual review of complaints in their area. It supplements the LGO Annual Report and Accounts which gives more information about our performance, and follows the first annual review of social care complaints published in May this year.

Complaints processes should be responsive to the public. It is important that people know where to complain, how to complain and are satisfied with remedies proposed. Positioned at the apex

of the local complaints system, we want to continue to work with local authorities in support of excellent local complaint handling to put things right as soon as possible. We also want to ensure that the journey for complainants through local procedures to the LGO is as effective as possible. In an increasingly complex delivery environment where the council is more likely to commission than provide a service, we know that journey can be complicated and confusing. To prompt our thinking on this we have included some results from our customer satisfaction research carried out recently, which raises questions about where improvements can be made.

The report includes examples from some of our cases. They are only illustrative of the many matters we deal with, but they give a flavour of how we can help individuals who have experienced problems, and indicate the sort of changes and improvements we can bring about.

I hope this report will help officers and councillors, as well as all those who provide public services locally, to reflect on how they handle and learn from complaints. I hope it will also help all those who use local public services understand better how to raise concerns to good effect.

Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman



The data within this report refers to the complaints and enquiries we received, and the decisions we made, about English local authorities in the business year April 2013 – March 2014.

This is the first time we have combined our usual practice of writing to councils to report back the annual complaint statistics for their authority, with a report that looks at the state of local government complaints as a whole. This report will become an annual publication, intended to be a tool for those involved in complaint handling, policy making and local scrutiny to analyse trends in complaints about local public services.

We want to give open and transparent access to our data on complaints. We also want to help councils to view their statistics in the context of other local authorities. This is a common request we receive, so with this report we are publishing all of the data in one place. We know that councils have their own unique demographic make-up, so for those wanting to identify similar comparable authorities, we would refer them to the [CIPFA Nearest Neighbour model](#).

In the final section, we provide questions for local councillors to help them assess how their authority responds to, and learns from, complaints.



Complaint numbers & trends 2013-14

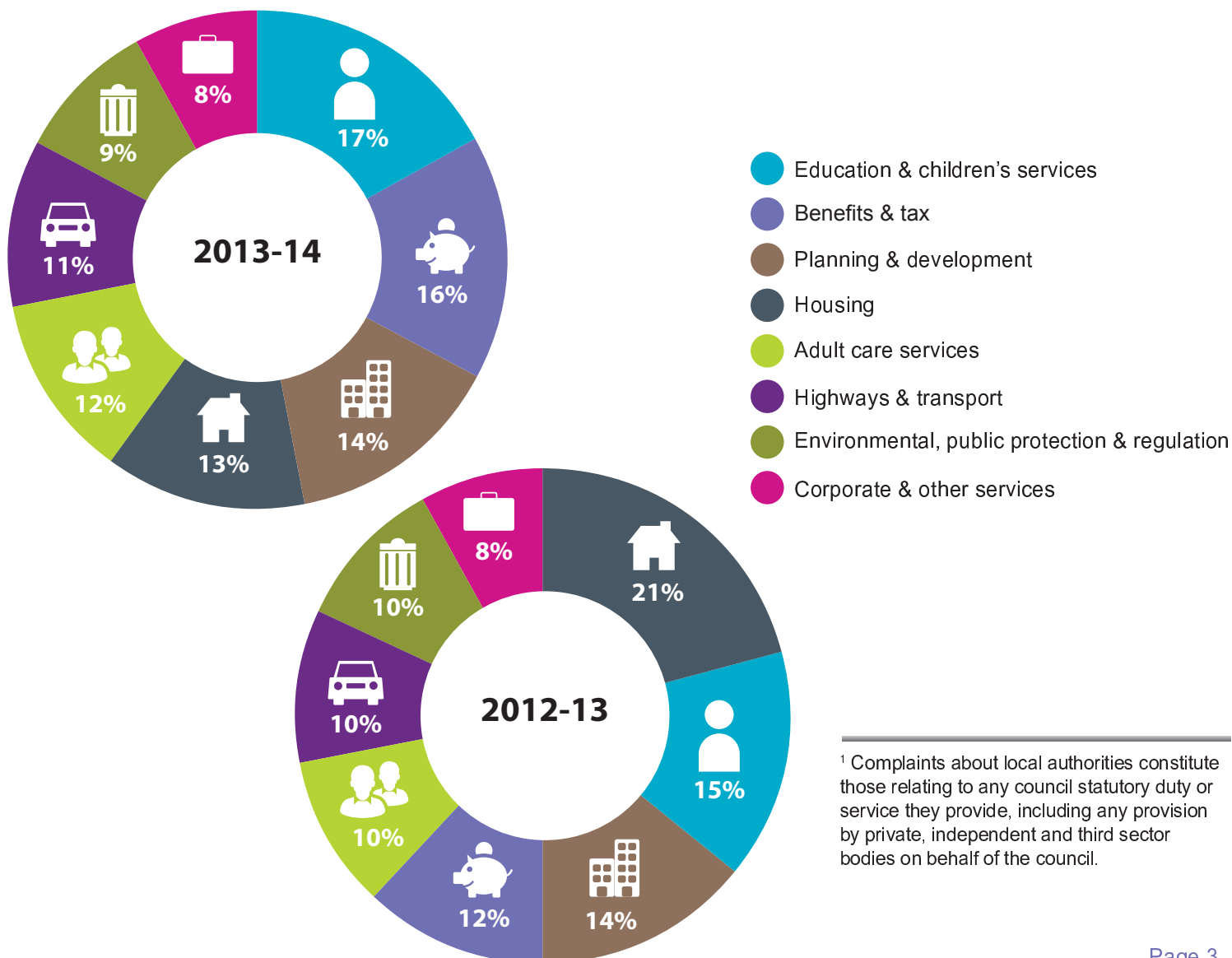
In 2013-14 the LGO registered a total of **20,306** new complaints and enquiries, an increase from 20,186 in the previous year.

While the bulk of our work is about councils, our jurisdiction includes all registered social care providers. For complaints and enquiries solely about local authorities¹ we registered **18,436** new cases, which is a similar level to the previous year's total of 18,940.

However, the broadly static total number of complaints this year accommodated a **39% decrease in housing complaints** – meaning that, in real terms, complaints and enquiries about other council services increased. The expected reduction in housing complaints was because all new complaints about councils' role as social landlords became the responsibility of the Housing Ombudsman Service in April 2013.

Complaints about benefits and tax, and adult social care, were the two areas of work that saw the biggest percentage increase on last year. They were also the two areas in which we are more likely to find fault in a detailed investigation.

The graphics below show the breakdown of complaints and enquiries received in the different areas of our work over the last two years.



¹ Complaints about local authorities constitute those relating to any council statutory duty or service they provide, including any provision by private, independent and third sector bodies on behalf of the council.



Benefits & tax

Complaints and enquiries about **benefits and tax increased by 26%** on the previous year, and had our highest **uphold rate of 49%**.

We recognise that there have been changes to legislation affecting benefits and tax during the year but we have no evidence to indicate whether or not there is a link between these changes and the increase in complaints.

We help people get redress on a range of areas but one of the most common types of complaint we receive is around council tax. We also look at issues with housing benefit, council tax support and debt recovery, including the actions of bailiffs.

Some people who complain to us about benefits and tax rely on these council services for their everyday wellbeing, therefore failures to administer properly can have an acute impact on their lives. Some of these services comprise of 'crisis funds' designed to support those in particular need. A common fault we see from councils is a failure to consider whether the person complaining may be in a vulnerable situation.

Some of the other regular issues we find are:

- > not notifying people of their appeal rights
- > administrative errors around payments
- > not exercising discretion or taking a fixed view
- > a failure to follow policies.

The nature of complaints about benefits and tax means that a remedy will usually include a recommendation for a financial payment, which could include the waiving of debts or a refund. If we find a systemic problem we will suggest the council reviews its procedures to ensure others are not adversely affected.

Council tax discretion

Bernard bought an empty property and was renovating it. He originally received an exemption covering empty homes undergoing renovation, and did not pay council tax.

The Local Government Finance Act then allowed the council to impose a premium on owners of properties empty for more than two years. Bernard later became liable for 150 per cent council tax.

Bernard contacted the council to ask if it could reduce the amount he was paying because of his personal circumstances, but officers wrongly told him that that the council had no discretion to reduce it on an individual basis.

During our investigation the council told us that it does in fact have a scheme offering discretionary reductions, but said that Bernard would not qualify. The council decided in advance that it would automatically refuse an individual application where they do not fall into a set class of criteria, thereby fettering its own discretion.

The council has agreed to invite Bernard to make an application for a discretionary reduction in his council tax bill and consider it from the date at which he first asked the council for help.

We have asked the council to make a decision within two months and provide Bernard with the reasons for its decision in writing, so that he has the option to appeal to the Valuation Tribunal if his application is unsuccessful.

Complaint numbers & trends 2013-14



Social care

Complaints and enquiries about **adult social care increased by 16%** and we **upheld 48%** of complaints after detailed investigations. As the Social Care Ombudsman we provide a route for redress for all care complaints – both publicly and privately funded – and our recently published review of social care complaints for 2013² highlighted it as one of our fastest growing areas of our work.

The three areas most complained about last year were assessment and care planning; fees, grants and payments; and residential care.

Assessing and planning for care is one of the most fundamental local authority duties. Often we find fault within the assessment process when all the facts have not been taken into account, or a person's individual needs are not placed at the heart of the process, resulting in care packages that do not meet people's needs.

People not being given clear and comprehensive information is a common fault around the charging of care, as well as so called 'top-up fees' being sought when the person's care should be fully covered by public funding.

Complaints about residential care often come from family members because the person receiving care is unable to complain. A common issue is the failure to monitor properly and record the condition of people, and the care provided, which leaves family members uncertain that loved ones are properly cared for in their absence.

It is difficult to put a price on the cost of missed or inadequate care, but in remedying a situation we can recommend a financial payment.

This can be an amount to recognise how the injustice has affected the person, or when somebody has lost out financially we can recommend that costs are waived or refunded. Where poor planning and care assessments have taken place we will usually recommend a fresh assessment is carried out. We will always seek to ensure that the same mistakes do not happen again, and where appropriate we will recommend councils carry out reviews of policies and procedures, and undertake staff training.

Ignoring the evidence

Peter has autism, epilepsy and moderate learning disabilities. He lives at home with his mother. After his NHS funding was withdrawn the council assessed his needs but failed to comply with its legal duty to agree an aftercare plan.

Care professionals raised concerns that the care package offered would not meet Peter's needs but our investigation showed that the council failed to take into account all the relevant evidence. As a result Peter and his mother were left without the support they needed and Peter was unable to access respite. Their frustration was further increased when the council's response to the complaint contained inaccurate information.

We recommended that the council reassess and expedite the process of identifying Peter's needs so a care package could be agreed. We also recommended that they apologise for the way they carried out the original assessment and for how they responded to the complaint. We also recommended a financial remedy.

² Our [Review of Adult Social Care Complaints](#) covered the 2013 calendar year and published for the first time our statistics for social care complaints about private care providers as well as local authorities.

Complaint numbers & trends 2013-14



18,436 registered local authority complaints & enquiries



Housing
down 39%



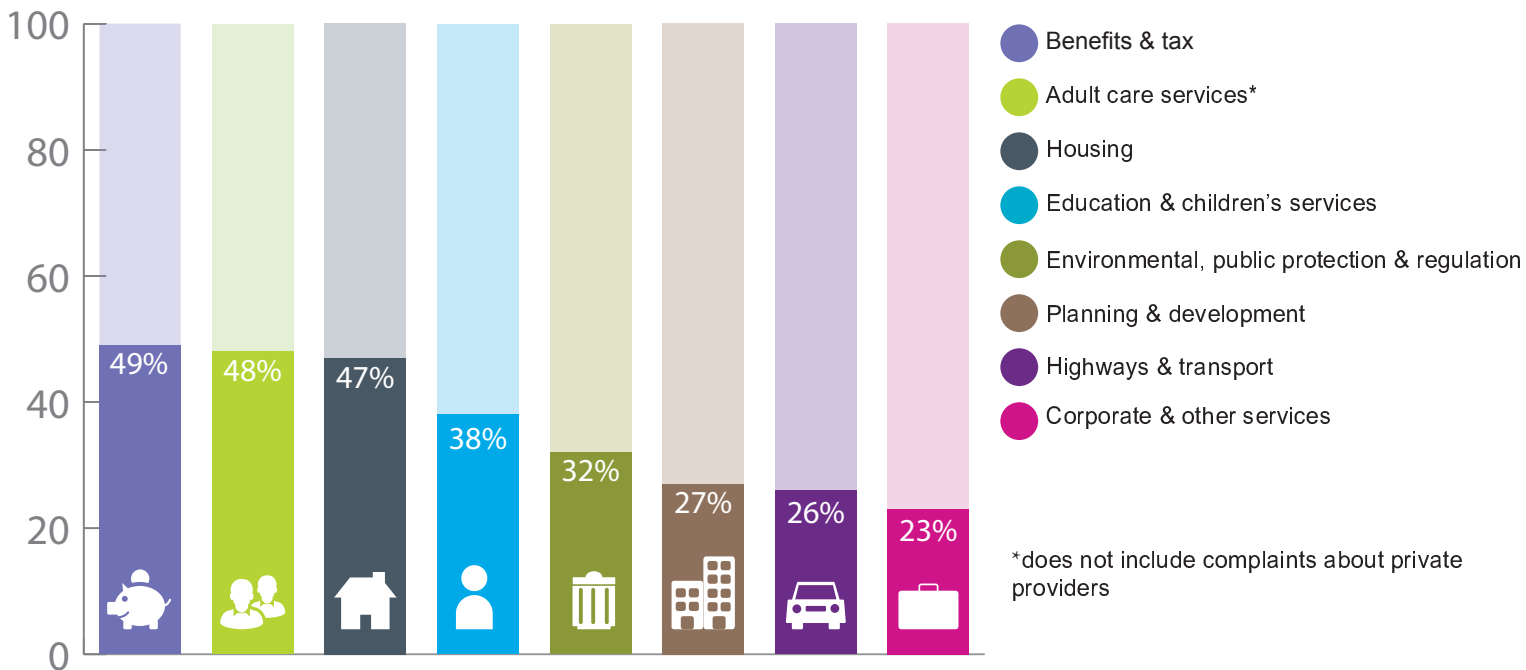
Adult care services
up 16%



Benefits & tax
up 26%

Complaints upheld

For the first time this year we have started to record complaint outcomes in a simpler way to show whether or not we have upheld a complaint. This year we **upheld 46%** of all complaints we investigated in detail. Below are the percentages by complaint type.



The complainant's journey



The people in the best position to hold service providers to account are those who use the service. Complainants tell us they want their complaints considered as quickly as possible by somebody who has the authority to put things right, and they want authorities to take responsibility when things have gone wrong. This demonstrates the need for councils to have an effective complaint handling service – one which is simple to access and provides a timely and consistent service.

Our role is to offer the assurance of an independent and consistent view when complaints cannot be resolved locally, and use our powers to ensure injustices are remedied. But referral to the ombudsman should be the last resort, once local routes to redress have been exhausted. We want to support councils to have the best possible front-line complaints service, which we do by sharing information and best practice.

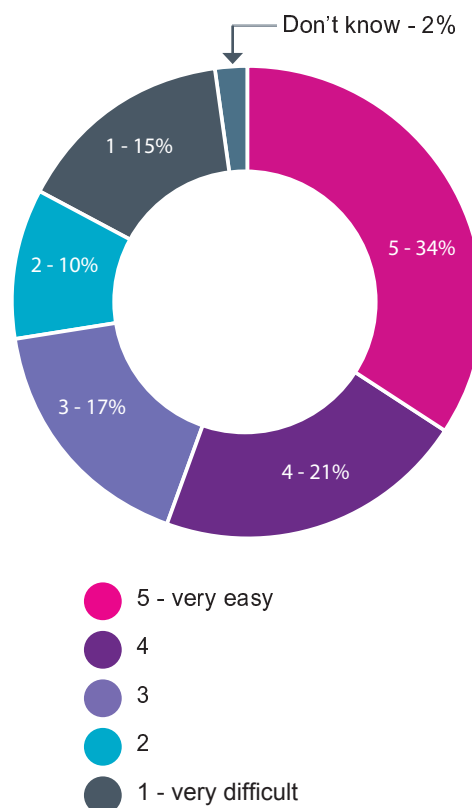
During the year we carried out independent customer satisfaction³ research about our service. The results also provided insight into the local authority complaints system as a whole, which may help councils better understand the customer experience of the system. They pose some questions about whether the local government complaints system is operating as effectively as it could be.

Accessibility

We know that the complaint system can feel more like a maze for people seeking to raise a complaint. Our research focused on the key access points when complainants navigate their way through local procedures to the Ombudsman. The figures below indicate where improvements could be made.

People were asked to say, on a scale of 1 to 5, how easy it was **to find information on how to make a complaint about their authority**. It is positive that over 50% of people rated it near the easy end of the scale. However, a quarter of people also rated it as difficult. The system should work as effectively as possible so that people can easily raise complaints locally and embark on a simple route to redress as soon as possible. Clear information about local procedures will also help to avoid people coming to the Ombudsman only to be referred back to the council.

How easy was it to find information on how to make a complaint about your authority?



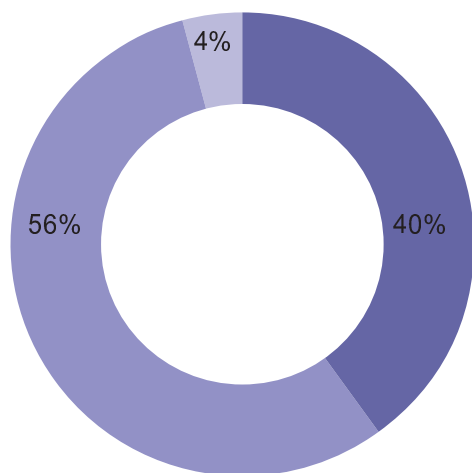
³ Our research involved an independent research company carrying out more than 800 telephone interviews with people who had ongoing cases with us. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the customer satisfaction of our service, independent of the complaint outcome. Those surveyed were a random selection from our whole caseload, so will include a small percentage of people who had a non-local authority related complaint, for example regarding a private care home. The research in full will be available on our website.

The complainant's journey



56% of people did not recall being made aware of their local authority's complaint handling procedures. All councils have published complaints procedures, but this would indicate that the majority of people who complain do not feel engaged with them. Councils may want to reflect on whether there are better ways to ensure complainants understand what they can expect from their local complaints service.

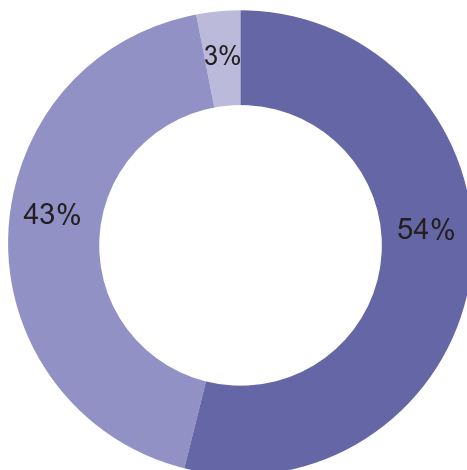
Were you made aware of the local authority's complaint handling procedures?



- Yes
- No
- Don't know

43% of people were not advised that they could refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. It is not a statutory requirement for councils to signpost to the ombudsman. These results indicate that many councils do follow this good practice, but despite this, not enough people are being advised of their right to access redress.

Were you advised that you could refer your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman?



- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Councils increasingly deliver their services through a mix of public, private and third-sector parties, and personal choice is increasingly part of the mix for consumers. Whilst councils have a good track record historically of signposting people to the ombudsman, the companies who work for them may be less familiar with the LGO, and not as effective in providing an accessible complaints service. In this multi-agency environment, councils may want to ask whether their contracted companies are responding to complaints effectively, and whether they ensure that accountability is retained through the commissioning and contracting process.

Timeliness

The research also indicates that some complaints are taking a long time to be resolved locally before people come to us for an independent view.

The research showed that 62% of people had been **trying to resolve their problem locally** for at least six months, including more than a third (36%) who had been trying for over a year. **The average time that somebody tried to resolve their complaint before approaching us was nine months.**

We recognise that some complaints can be complex and require detailed investigation locally, and we know there are some statutory processes, such as for children's social care, which require a longer timescale, but we advise that most complaints should take no longer than 12 weeks to be resolved. This is a reasonable time for a council to consider a complaint and come to a final response. It is also good practice to have published complaint procedures that include time targets for specific stages, which are well publicised. In the rare cases that warrant further time, this should be communicated to the complainant as soon as it is known.

Sometimes people complain to us before they've given the council the full opportunity to resolve the matter. When this happens, we refer people back to the council and advise how we can help if, after exhausting the local process, they remain dissatisfied. If a complaint comes back to us following this scenario we class it as a re-submitted complaint.

This year we made decisions on 1,387 cases that were re-submitted to us. We found some form of fault in 292 of these, which is **more than a fifth** (21%) of the total amount of re-submitted cases. In these instances, it could indicate a missed opportunity for local authorities to resolve the complaint before they were referred to us.

Better services for people: sharing the lessons from complaints



The thousands of complaints and enquiries we deal with each year place us in a unique position to draw on these experiences to shape wider service improvements.

In April 2013 we started to publish all of our decision statements, unless where to do so would have compromised the anonymity of the person complaining. This brings greater transparency to our decision making, whilst providing an important resource to inform local scrutiny and service improvement.

For some complaints we highlight a wider public interest by releasing a detailed investigation report. We published 58 of these this year.

We also published new [Guidance on Remedies](#). Produced primarily for our own staff, we also made this publicly available so complaint handlers can understand our approach to remedies, and use it as a resource when suggesting suitable remedies locally.

Making complaints count

As well as helping individuals achieve redress, our investigations can have a wider outcome for the public. Sometimes we uncover systemic fault, and a single investigation can recommend remedies that right the wrongs for many people in similar situations to the person complaining.

Justice for hundreds of foster carers

More than 340 foster carers were given the right support that they had been denied, following a single investigation.

Fiona was asked by the council, and agreed to care for her nephew after his parents became unable to care for him. Left struggling to cope, she complained to us that she was not receiving the correct amount of financial support from the council.

Upon investigation, it was discovered that a council-wide approach meant that more than 340 other 'family and friends' carers were also missing out on payments to which they were entitled. A whole group of people who provide such a critical support system for children who can no longer live with their parents were being mistreated.

The council not only agreed to increase Fiona's payments, and backdate that which she had missed out, but it also agreed to pay all those carers receiving special guardianship allowance the correct rate, and to pay all its foster carers at least the Government's national minimum fostering allowance rate.

The case led to us producing an in-depth report calling for equality for carers who look after the children of family and close friends. It encouraged other authorities to look again at their own processes and procedures to ensure that other carers across the country were not being disadvantaged in the same way.

Better services for people: sharing the lessons from complaints



Elderly tenants reimbursed

Trudie lives in council-managed sheltered accommodation for people over the age of 60 and was worried that she was paying too much for her water. Her bill was nearly double the local water authority's Assessed Household Charge of £175.

The council said it had charged her for water use in accordance with its policy. But, during our investigation, the council identified that it had been charging all the residents far more than it had paid the water company, which was not in accordance with the Water Resale Order.

In total, the council had overcharged tenants by more than £38,000 over the space of five years.

The council has since written to Trudie to apologise and tell her and nearly 60 elderly neighbours that they are owed money and that they will be reimbursed that which they had been overcharged. It also agreed to carry out a review of how it charges tenants for water across the authority.

Driving service improvement

Many people say to us that a major motivation for complaining is for somebody to take responsibility for what has happened and to ensure that mistakes that have afflicted them do not happen to others. We will often ask for an apology and our investigations always seek to inform and drive service improvement, with councils agreeing to carry out reviews, policy changes or training to ensure faults are not repeated.

Care charging policy revoked

Jenny agreed to have home care after a stay in hospital and for the first six weeks this was free.

A review of Jenny's care was carried out and her social worker recommended that she needed a long-term care package. The county council then applied a weekly charge before completing its financial assessment.

Guidance from the Department of Health says that councils should not apply charges retrospectively, and should not charge before a financial assessment is carried out and the customer informed.

Our investigation found that the council's provisional charging policy, which had been in effect for 18 months, did not comply with statutory guidance.

We recommended that the council reconsider the policy, waive Jenny's provisional charge and make a payment of £200 to her son for the time and trouble in having to bring the complaint to us.

With other older people potentially affected by the policy, we recommended, and the council agreed, to identify who they were and make arrangements to repay any charges due to them.

Better services for people: sharing the lessons from complaints



Putting things right

In deciding upon remedial action or a payment to acknowledge an injustice, we will take into account the unique circumstances of each case. We can suggest remedies that are a creative way of replacing something that was missed as a result of the fault – for example a contribution towards a child's education fund – or takes into account other people that were affected.

Village gets respite from noise

An investigation helped a village community get respite from years of excessive noise, and the community centre receive support.

A group of residents complained about the noise from a nearby racetrack, and said that their local council had not been enforcing the historic restrictions that were part of its planning approval.

The villagers had been affected for a number of years and said that the council was slow to act in enforcing the issues. It left them feeling like they were trapped in their homes, unable to spend time in their gardens.

As part of the remedy, the council instructed a barrister to provide legal advice on the contents of a new notice to be served on the new track operators.

The LGO also recommended that the council consider outstanding queries about the impact alterations to the track had made on noise levels. One couple received £2,500 and the council paid £5,000 to a second couple as a contribution towards legal fees they had incurred.

The council also made a £1,000 donation to the village schoolroom committee for the benefit of other residents who were also involved in the complaint.

Supporting local complaints procedures

Sharing the learning from complaints is an important part of encouraging good local complaints handling and service improvement. Using our experience of complaint handling, we offer advice and training to councils to help them deal with complaints more effectively.

This year we provided 45 training courses to more than 750 council staff involved in complaint handling. The feedback from attendees after the courses showed that:

- > 45% more people know how to use complaints to drive service level improvements
- > 89% more people feel confident about dealing with complaints

Local scrutiny & accountability: a key role for councillors



During 2013 the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) published a report, following a survey of over 400 local government senior officers and elected members, into how we could use our complaints data to enhance local accountability. It found that more than 75% of respondents wanted us to provide more access to detailed information about local government complaints.

We are fully committed to support local scrutiny and the representative role of councillors. They have a democratic mandate to scrutinise the way services are delivered and hold those services to account, and we believe they can use complaints as an important tool to support that process.

We started publishing all of our decision statements online on new complaints after 1 April 2013 – becoming the first UK public sector ombudsman to do so.

This year we have also sent to every council leader a copy of the annual letter we present to council chief executives. These letters provide our complaint statistics about their authority and feed back any particular issues of concern.

Questions for elected members and scrutiny committees

Members may wish to consider the following questions to assess whether their council is responding to and learning from complaints.

Does your council:

- > regularly report its experience and learning from complaints to elected members?
- > provide open access to complaints data for councillors and the public?
- > actively seek feedback from service users on its complaints handling?
- > clearly display information about its complaints process online and in all service delivery settings?
- > advise complainants of their right to access the ombudsman, and provide the correct contact information?
- > ensure providers of services also respond to complaints raised and learn from them through commissioning and contracting?

About the ombudsman



Since 1974 the Local Government Ombudsman has independently and impartially investigated complaints about councils and other bodies within our jurisdiction. Our services are free of charge. If we find something wrong, we can ask the council to take action to put it right. What we ask the council to do will depend on the particular complaint, how serious the fault was and how the complainant was affected. We have no legal power to force councils to follow our recommendations, but they almost always do. Some of the things we might ask a council to do are:

- > apologise for the fault and the injustice caused
- > take action to put things right as soon as possible
- > pay a financial remedy to acknowledge the impact of the injustice caused, such as distress
- > improve procedures so similar problems do not happen again

Bolsover District Council

Executive

8th September 2014

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Quarterly Report (Q1) 2014/15

**Report of the Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement/
Customer Standards and Complaints Officer**

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide information on the monitoring and effective management of complaints and customer requests which is central to excellent customer service and the Council can use to improve services.
- To provide information on the number of compliments, comments and complaints for the period 1st April to 30th June 2014.

1 Report Details

Compliments

Table A shows the number of written compliments received for the period. In total 24 written compliments were received. A good cross section of compliments received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 7 for the Housing Department and 6 for Streetscene Services

Comments

Table B shows the number of written comments received for the period. 9 were responded to within standard (20 working days). There were no trends for this quarter.

Table C shows the above information by department.

Service Requests

This information is not available at this time as the new customer information system does not have a reporting function. ICT are currently looking at developing a reporting tool to capture this data.

Complaints

Stage one

Table E shows the number of stage one complaints for the period. The customer service standard for responding to Stage one complaints is 3 working days.

Table F shows the above information by department.

Stage two

Table G shows the number of stage two or written complaints received for the period by date order. 27 complaints were received during this period. All were responded to within our customer service standard of 20 working days. Whilst 9 complaints were for the Housing Department, there were no trends and none of the complaints were upheld.

Table H shows the above information by department.

Stage three

Table I 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 3 stage three complaints were received, all of which were responded to within standard.

Ombudsman

Table J shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2014/15 as of 30th June 2014. During this quarter, two decisions were received, in one of which the Ombudsman discontinued her investigation and recorded the decision as 'Not upheld: no Maladministration' and another of which was closed after their initial enquiries. We received two further complaints, which were responded to within the LGO's statutory timescale of 20 working days and are currently awaiting those decisions.

Performance

The target of 100% has been achieved for responding to stage two complaints within 20 working days for 2014/15.

Table A: COMPLIMENTS SUMMARY 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Compliment	Departments Involved
03/04/14	Bolsover	Thanks to Benefits Officer for helping with benefit claim and explaining everything	Revenues & Benefits
03/04/14	Bolsover	Thanks to CAN Rangers for help with Freedom Community Project	Community Services
04/04/14	Clowne	Thanks for cleaning graffiti from bus shelter	Streetscene Services
04/04/14	Bolsover	Thank you for professional handling of FOI request	(Customer Service & Improvement)
07/04/14	Clowne	Prompt and detailed response from Planning in respect of a development	Planning
07/04/14	Glapwell	Lovely job done by gardeners on assisted garden maintenance scheme	Streetscene Services
11/04/14	Shirebrook	Thanks for service from Customer Advisor and Plumber in relation to tap repair	Customer Service (& Improvement) Housing
11/04/14	Bolsover	Thank you for professional handling of FOI request	(Customer Service & Improvement)
14/04/14	New Houghton	Praise for the road sweeper who did a great job	Streetscene Services
14/04/14	Clowne	Super tots taster sessions, the children loved them, thank you to all staff involved	Leisure
08/05/14	Newton	The three operatives who came to fit combi-boiler and electrics are a credit to the Council	Housing
28/05/14	Creswell	Impressed with how clean and tidy the area is	Streetscene Services
28/05/14	Clowne	Thanks to Ground Maintenance Operative cutting the verges in Clowne, very helpful and cheerful	Streetscene Services
30/05/14	Langwith	Thanks to Streetscene Services, especially the Waste Services Officer, regarding a problem with bin collections	Streetscene Services
04/06/14	Blackwell	Thanks to Repairs Operative who changed her locks	Housing
04/06/14	Creswell	Housing Warden is a credit to the Council, resident was made very welcome and put at ease	Housing
10/06/14	Bolsover	Thanks to all Housing staff involved - love the flat, thanks you for help	Housing

Table A: COMPLIMENTS SUMMARY 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Compliment	Departments Involved
10/06/14	Clowne	Thanks to Repairs Operative who repaired the shower, polite and very efficient	Housing
13/06/14	France	Thank you for help with overseas vote	Legal, Governance & Elections
13/06/14	Shirebrook	Thanks for help with direct payments	Revenues & Benefits
26/06/14	Clowne	Thanks for all the help given by Governance team	Legal, Governance & Elections
23/06/14	Bolsover	Thanks to Central Control who dealt with emergency call regarding anti-social behaviour	Housing
30/06/14	Shirebrook	Thanks to Creswell Leisure Staff for helping school out during sickness absence	Leisure
30/06/14	Shirebrook	Thanks to Customer Advisor for all help with benefits and DHP	Customer Service (& Improvement)

Table B: Compliments Summary by Department 2014/15

Department/Section	01/04/14 – 30/06/14	01/07/14 – 30/09/14	01/10/14– 31/12/14	02/01/15 – 31/03/15	Total
	No. of Compliments	No. of Compliments	No. of Compliments	No. of Compliments	No. of Compliments
CEO/ CEPT					
Customer Service & Improvement	4				
Community Services	1				
Legal Governance & Elections	2				
Environmental Health					
Finance					
Housing	7				
Legal					
Leisure	2				
Planning	1				
Economic Growth					
Revenues & Benefits	2				
Streetscene Services	6				
Totals	24				

Table C: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Comment	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Summary of Response
02/04/14	South Normanton	Several issues to do with Council Tax, Housing and potholes	Revenues Housing (DCC)	28/4/14	16	Council Tax frozen (BDC precept), rents rising in line with Government policy and potholes reported to DCC
11/04/14	Clowne	Caddy is the wrong size for the recycling bin	Streetscene Services	30/4/14	11	Explanation of how caddy fits in bin (to rear)
30/04/14	Newton	Cost of a bin for a new build	Streetscene Services	8/5/14	5	The charge was set by the policy
06/05/14	Shirebrook	Further comments regarding Shirebrook Council Tax precept	Finance	15/5/14	7	Council Tax frozen (BDC precept), Shirebrook Town Council precept increased
12/05/14	Bolsover	Checking if work is being carried out to comply with Planning Regulations	Planning	10/6/14	20	Work is usually carried out toward the end of the development - Planning to check conditions
27/05/14	Whitwell	Sent in schedule of payments - freeman on the land	Legal & Governance Housing	12/6/14	12	Council does not accept 'freeman on the land' status
11/06/14	Pinxton	Still not happy with garage site	Housing Streetscene Services	8/7/14	19	Re-iterated advice previously given
27/06/14	Shuttlewood	Does not like the new arrangements to put food waste in the green recycling bin	Streetscene Services	28/7/14	20	Taking part in the scheme is discretionary. Information on where to get the recycling bags given

Table C: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Comment	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Summary of Response
23/06/14	Bolsover	Various objections re: Sherwood Lodge	Legal & Governance Customer Service & Improvement	21/7/14	20	Reiterated previous responses

Table D: Comments Summary by Department 2014/15

Department/Section	01/04/14 – 30/06/14			01/07/14 – 30/09/14			01/10/14 – 31/12/14			04/01/15 – 31/03/15			Total		
	No. of Comments	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Comments	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Comments	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Comments	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Comments	No. Responded to in time	No. responded to out of time
CEO/ CEPT															
Customer Service & Improvement	1	1													
Community Services															
Legal, Governance and Elections	2	2													
Environmental Health															
Estates & Property															
Finance	1	1													
Housing	3	3													
Leisure															
Planning	1	1													
Economic Growth															
Revenues & Benefits	1	1													
Streetscene Services	4	4													
Total	13	13													

Table E: Summary of Stage One Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of complaint	Department	Resolved Yes/No	No of work days	Remedy
01.4.14	Shirebrook	Tree cut down but roots not removed	Grounds Maintenance	Yes	1	Advice given
03.4.14	Shirebrook	Missed Burgundy Bin - contaminated and green bin only half emptied	Refuse	Yes	1	Advice given
03.4.14	Whaley Thorns	Missed Collection. Customer unhappy regarding presenting bin at the front of property	Refuse	Yes	1	Refuse team contacted customer
03.4.14	Whaley Thorns	Missed Collection. Customer unhappy regarding presenting bin at the front of property	Refuse	Yes	3	Refuse team contacted customer
04.4.14	South Normanton	Job out of time	Housing Repairs	Yes		Contacted customer
04.4.14	South Normanton	Time taken to respond to original request AND timescales being unavailable once outcome has been sorted	Housing Repairs	Yes	3	Tenant contacted, work is being carried out by contractor
09.4.14	Newton	Job still outstanding due to access problems and missed appointments	Housing Repairs	Yes	1	Customer contacted and message left
17.4.14	Shirebrook	Direct Debit council tax - money taken at wrong time	Revenues	Yes	3	New bill issued to customer

Table E: Summary of Stage One Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

23.4.14	Creswell	Tenant unhappy with regards to length of time being taken for a new kitchen to be fitted.	Housing Repairs	Yes	3	Tenant contacted
2.5.14	Barlborough	Missed Green Bin no fault of customer requesting a return to empty	Refuse	Yes	0	
02.5.14	Bolsover	Missed assisted bin not happy no side waste on Tuesday collection	Refuse	Yes	0	Advice given to customer
7.5.14	South Normanton	Burgundy bin missed	Refuse	Yes	0	
7.5.14	Shirebrook	Green bin not emptied	Refuse	Yes	1	Customer advised crew to return
8.5.14	Benefits	Waiting 2 months for benefits claim to be assessed	Benefits	Yes	6	Claim re-assessed
12.5.14	Bolsover	Not happy with advice regarding rent	Housing	Yes	6	Contact made to customer
14.5.14	Clowne	Green bin only half emptied	Refuse	Yes	1	
14.5.14	Clowne	Food caddy thrown over fence onto garden when delivered	Refuse	Yes	0	Contact made to customer
13.5.14	Blackwell	Regarding contractor's employees attitude	Refuse	Yes	1	
12.5.14	Bolsover	Regarding the way the caddies were delivered	Refuse	Yes	0	Advice given to customer
19.5.14	Stanfree	Central Control advice on out of hours repairs	Housing	Yes	1	Advice given to customer

Table E: Summary of Stage One Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

21.5.14	Creswell	Bolsover vehicle blocking her drive	Housing	Yes	3	Raised as a complaint on Housing system
22.5.14	Upper Langwith	Had 2 collections missed - burgundy bin	Refuse	Yes		Contact made with customer
27.5.14	Creswell	Reported flytipping 3 times	Grounds Maintenance	Yes	3	Private land – request passed to Environmental Health
27.5.14	South Normanton	Disabled customer put wrong items in burgundy bin would like someone to advise him	Refuse	Yes	1	Bin arranged to be emptied before next collection date
30.5.14	Creswell	Council operatives parking in designated parking bays for houses	Housing	Yes	0	Raised as a complaint
30.5.14	Shirebrook	Getting maggots now using food caddies	Refuse	Yes	3	Advice given
30.5.14	Langwith Junction	Getting maggots now using food caddies	Refuse	Yes		Advice given
30.5.14	Shirebrook	Getting maggots now using food caddies	Refuse	Yes	3	Advice given
4.6.14	Shuttlewood	Council operatives sprayed their flowers when spraying weed killer	Grounds Maintenance	Yes	1	Council operatives addressed and flower beds rectified
5.6.14	Bolsover	Grass cutting is a poor standard	Grounds Maintenance	Yes	1	Contact made to customer
5.6.14	Tibshelf	Maggots now using food caddies	Refuse	Yes	0	Advice given

Table E: Summary of Stage One Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

9.6.14	Bolsover	Caddy tipped out onto grass by bin crew	Refuse	Yes	1	Crew addressed
10.6.14	South Normanton	Assisted bin keeps being missed	Refuse	Yes	0	Bulky crew deployed to empty bin
10.6.14	Barlborough	Burgundy bin missed continually	Refuse	Yes	1	Additional collection arranged to empty bin
10.6.14	Bolsover	Been waiting a month for new bin lid	Refuse	Yes	0	Advice given
10.6.14	No address given	Grass overgrown	Grounds Maintenance	Yes	0	Advised within NEDCC area
11.6.14	Hardstoft	Burgundy bin continually missed	Refuse	Yes	3	Visited by contractor
11.6.14	Whitwell	Refuse bin thrown onto drive	Refuse	Yes	1	Contact made and situation addressed
12.6.14	Whitwell	Bins not collected and no one returned to empty them as advised	Refuse	Yes	0	Advice given
13.6.14	South Normanton	Green and burgundy bins missed twice	Refuse	Yes		Advice given regarding bin presentation
13.6.14	Stanfree	Waiting for sound monitor	Environmental Health	Yes	5	New case opened
13.6.14	Creswell	Still awaiting new kitchen to be fitted 2 years on from original report	Housing	Yes	1	Advice given
13.6.14	Shirebrook	Grass cutting left a mess	Grounds Maintenance	Yes	0	Visit made and re-cut arranged

Table E: Summary of Stage One Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14						
23.6.14	Barlborough	Burgundy bin missed	Refuse	Yes	1	Additional collection arranged
24.6.14	Tibshelf	Bins not emptied due to parked cars ongoing	Refuse	Yes	0	Additional collection arranged
24.6.13	Bramley Vale	Not happy with operative's language and attitude	Refuse	Yes	1	Crew addressed
26.6.14	Bolsover	Damp problem - still unresolved.	Housing Repairs	Yes	3	Advice given

Table F: Stage One Complaints Summary by Department 2014/15

Department/Section	01/04/14 – 30/06/14			01/07/14 – 30/09/14			01/10/14 – 31/12/14			04/01/15– 31/03/15			Total		
	No. of Stage One Complaints	No. responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Stage One Complaints	No. responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Stage One Complaints	No. responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Stage One Complaints	No. responded to in time	No. responded to out of time	No. of Stage One Complaints	No. responded to in time	No. responded to out of time
CEO/ CEPT															
Customer Service & Improvement															
Community Services															
Legal, Governance and Elections															
Environmental Health	1		1												
Finance															
Housing	10	8	2												
Leisure															
Planning															
Regeneration															
Revenues & Benefits	2	1	1												
Streetscene Services (Refuse)	28	28													
Streetscene Services (GM)	6	6													
Total	47	43	4												

Table G: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Remedy
02/04/14	Clowne	House needs repointing	Housing	17/04/14	11	Works already ordered
03/04/14	Newton	Lack of services with relation to service charges	Housing Streetscene Services Revenues & Benefits	06/05/14	20	Charges in line with other authorities and reflect actual cost of service
02/04/14	Creswell	Has been told they do not have the 'Right to Buy'	Housing	06/05/14	20	Right to Buy has been granted after further information confirmed
09/04/14	Whitwell	Details of one of the customer's dependants not included on benefit claim	Revenues & Benefits	30/04/14	13	Apology for genuine error - but claimants are asked to check details
15/04/14	Pinxton	Flooding is still an issue on the rear garden	Housing Legal, Governance & Elections Estates & Property	14/05/14	18	Investigations are still ongoing as to the cause of the flooding, which is thought to originate from privately owned land
16/04/14	Shuttlewood	The housing allocated to him is unsuitable and alleges a breach of his data as his neighbours are aware of his past	Housing	16/05/14	20	No breach of data protection and tenancy conditions explained to all tenants
29/04/14	Clowne	Anti-social behaviour from neighbours	Community Services	16/05/14	13	Fouling on private land - appropriate action to be taken when evidence has been monitored

Table G: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Remedy
02/05/14	Creswell	Administration of DHP	Revenues & Benefits	16/05/14	9	Explanation regarding the internal review of DHP process (in accordance with the policy)
13/05/14	Barlborough	Weed spraying in Barlborough has damaged vegetation	Streetscene Services	20/05/14	5	Spraying done correctly – apology for delay in response to initial e-mail
08/05/14	South Normanton	Not enough service desks open at the Hub	Customer Service & Improvement	02/06/14	16	Apology for delay however new staff were being trained
13/05/14	Shirebrook	Repairs to soffits and fascias not completed yet	Housing	19/05/14	4	Not reported these repairs before - an inspection has been raised
12/05/14	Shirebrook	Benefits not sorted yet	Revenues & Benefits	05/06/14	18	Explanation of delays due to customer not providing information - apology for slight delay
21/05/14	South Normanton	Not happy with food caddies	Streetscene Services	03/06/14	8	Explanation of rationale behind scheme
08/05/14	Tibshelf	Other leaseholders have planted trees and put up fencing in open plan area	Housing	06/06/14	20	Housing Needs Manager to check the conditions of sale
02/06/14	Barlborough	Bin Operatives leaving a mess and needs a replacement green bin	Streetscene Services	17/06/14	11	Trade waste charged for, used bin supplied as a goodwill gesture
04/06/14	Glapwell	BDC Operatives using Back Lane as a 'rat run'	Streetscene Services Housing Environmental Health Leisure	16/06/14	8	Garage returned vehicle after repairs - been instructed not to do so in future

Table G: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Remedy
04/06/14	Bolsover	Unhappy with removal of toilets in Bolsover and thinks it's unlawful	Estates & Property Customer Service & Improvement Legal, Governance & Elections	17/06/14	9	BDC has no statutory duty to provide public toilets
12/06/14	South Normanton	Does not agree that she is liable for Council Tax on a property she owns	Revenues & Benefits	08/07/14	18	Council tax is payable as previously advised
19/06/14	Bolsover	Delay in paying benefit after tribunal found in her favour	Revenues & Benefits	04/07/14	11	Benefits Section awaiting Tribunal 'statement of reasons'
20/06/14	Bolsover	Does not agree with Planning permission given	Planning Legal, Governance & Elections	01/07/14	20	The withdrawal of the Local Plan Strategy does not significantly alter the balance of judgement and the decision is sound as NPPF policies have primacy in the balance of consideration.
17/06/14	Shirebrook	Antisocial behaviour and litter in Shirebrook	Community Services	08/07/14	15	Councillor exploring the possibility of PROW closure with DCC
10/06/14	Clowne	Son's housing issues - damp property want to move	Housing Environmental Health	08/07/14	20	Damp is caused by condensation/tenant's lifestyle
16/06/14	Shirebrook	Wants to complain that a direct debit was set up without his permission	Revenues & Benefits	14/07/14	20	Tenant was still occupying property after advising he had moved out

Table G: Summary of Stage Two Complaints 1/4/14 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Remedy
25/06/14	Whitwell	Regarding lack of response to trade bin for Whitwell Cricket Club	Streetscene Services	22/07/14	19	Trade bin missed due to new team on round - now resolved
30/06/14	Barlborough	Was not advised of when hedges would be trimmed	Streetscene Services Customer Service & Improvement	22/07/14	16	Apology for incorrect/ incomplete advice given
23/06/14	Chesterfield	Not happy with being kept on the EPR	HR and Payroll	09/07/14	12	Advised kept on EPR because of ongoing verbal abuse
23/06/14	Newton	Maintains Officers are blocking his access to service	Revenues & Benefits Customer Service & Improvement	15/07/14	16	Reminded to be respectful and courteous to officers and to stop using inappropriate language

Table H - Complaints (Stage 2) Summary by Department 2014/15

Department/Section	01/04/14– 30/06/14			01/07/14– 30/09/14			01/10/14- 31/12/14			04/01/15– 31/03/15			Total 2014/15		
	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
CEO/ CEPT															
Customer Service & Improvement	4	4													
Community Services	2	2													
Environmental Health	2	2													
Economic Growth															
Estates & Property	2	2													
Finance															
Housing	9	9													
HR & Payroll	1	1													
Legal, Governance & Elections	3	3													
Leisure	1	1													
Planning	1	1													
Revenues & Benefits	8	8													
Streetscene Services	7	7													
Total	40	40													

Table I: Summary of Stage Three Complaints 1/414 – 30/6/14

Date Received	Area	Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response Sent	No of work days	Remedy
02/04/14	Pleasley	Not happy with the installation of the speed bump at Pleasley Mill	Estates & Property	29/04/14	18	Speed hump is having a positive effect on slowing traffic down - will not be removed or replaced
22/05/14	Creswell	Not happy with the administration of the DHP or handling of the complaint at stage 2	Revenues & Benefits	13/06/14	15	DHP was administered in line with the DHP Policy, advice given in response to stage two complaint correct
17/06/14	Pinxton	Still having problems with flooding in the garden	Housing Estates & Property Legal & Governance Planning	14/07/14	19	Drainage to be installed in garden

Table J: Summary of Ombudsman Complaints 2014/15

Date Received	Area	LGO's Summary of Complaint	Departments Involved	Date Response sent	No. of Calendar Days	Date Decision Letter Received	Ombudsman's Decision
21/2/14	Stanfree	Allowed to speak at a Planning Committee meeting but not happy about the way it was conducted	Planning Governance	21/03/14	20	08/04/14	Discontinue investigation – there was no fault in the Council's actions.
06/05/14	Shirebrook	Benefit claim taking a long time	Revenues & Benefits	02/06/14	18		Awaiting decision
24/6/14	Creswell	CAB representative says they have not received a final response from the Benefits Section	Benefits	22/07/14	20		Awaiting decision
27/6/14	Bolsover	Dust from nearby farm is causing a nuisance	Environmental Health			27/06/14	Closed after initial enquiries - no further action, because there is insufficient evidence of fault on the Council's part.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

The report is to keep Elected Members informed of volumes and trends regarding compliments, comments, complaints.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

The report is to keep Elected Members regularly informed of volumes and trends regarding compliments, comments and complaints. No consultation or equality impact assessment is required.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not applicable as the report is keep Elected Members informed rather than to aid decision making.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

Whilst there are no direct financial implications with regard to the report, the Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

In the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman and, in the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines. There are no Data Protection implications.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

Not applicable as the report is to keep Elected Members informed.

6 Recommendations

That Executive note the overall performance on compliments/comments and complaints.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	All wards
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Customer Focused Services Strategic Organisational Development

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Table A:	Compliments summary 1/4/14 – 30/6/14
Table B:	Compliments summary by department 2014/15
Table C:	Comments summary 1/4/14 – 30/6/14
Table D:	Comments summary by department 2014/15
Table E:	Stage one complaints summary 1/4/14 – 30/6/14
Table F:	Stage one complaints summary by department 2014/15
Table G:	Stage two complaints summary 1/4/14 – 30/6/14
Table H:	Stage two complaints summary by department 2014/15
Table I:	Stage three complaints summary 1/4/14 – 30/6/14
Table J:	Ombudsman complaints summary for 2014/15
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement Customer Standards and Complaints Officer	Ext: 2343 Ext: 2353

Bolsover District Council

Executive

8th September 2014

Ambition Sheffield City Region Update

Report of the Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide Executive with an update on progress of the Ambition Sheffield City Region (SCR) Programme.
- To recommend that Executive agree to the formation of an Ambition Partnership.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 Ambition SCR is a 2 year pilot employment support programme for 18 – 24 year old Job Seekers Allowance claimants who are 6 month + unemployed. Individuals who can be identified as having been persistently or long term NEET and who can be predicted to becoming long term unemployed can also be referred onto the programme. All referrals will be via the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 1.2 This pilot programme will be funded via monies obtained through the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership from the Youth Contract Underspend.
- 1.3 The programme will be delivered via intensive 1-1 support, individually tailored employability and skills training, work placement, in work support and support with progression.
- 1.4 There is funding allocated in the budget to support with travel during the training and work placements to ensure that this is not a barrier to finding employment.
- 1.5 A back to work bonus – total of £500 - will also be provided for each young person who remains in work for 26 weeks as an additional motivator to stay in work. This back to work bonus will be paid over three instalments.
- 1.6 Details of the funding available and expected outputs that we have previously been allocated can be seen in Appendix I. However, due to the number of JSA claimants being reduced for all authorities except Chesterfield which has seen an increase, since December 2013, the numbers of expected beneficiaries and the funding have now been changed to:

Impact on monies & outputs New average starts/ month

Bassetlaw	Reduced by £26,937	3
Bolsover	Reduced by £4,848	2
Chesterfield	Increased by £6,194	4
Derbyshire Dales	Reduced by £13,096	1
North East Derbyshire	Reduced by £2,493	2

- 1.7 A report was presented on 19 March 2014 to provide Executive with background information on Ambition SCR. It was agreed that BDC work collaboratively with North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) and utilise the expertise of both councils.
- 1.8 In May 2014, a delegated decision by the Chief Executive Officer was approved for NEDDC to become the accountable body for the sub-regional delivery of the Ambition SCR and recruit additional staffing to deliver the programme. An Ambition SCR Contract Specification has been developed and this is currently with the legal services team at Bolsover which is acting for both NEDDC and BDC.
- 1.9 Discussions have now taken place with Bassetlaw District Council and Chesterfield Borough Council and both have agreed to have the service delivered in their local authority areas via the collaborative working between North East Derbyshire District Council and Bolsover District Council. An inter-authority agreement is currently being developed to ensure that any risk is shared. Derbyshire Dales District Council have also requested to join the partnership and this has been agreed by NEDDC through a delegated decision.
- 1.10 Sheffield City Council has now negotiated with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) that JSA claimants can be referred from the DWP to Ambition SCR when they are 3 months+ unemployed. This will be advantageous for the Derbyshire area as there is a current DWP programme which supports the same age group 6 months+ unemployed which could have potentially reduced the number of young people being referred.
- 1.11 Due to the large geographical area to be covered, a full time Team Leader will be recruited and four full time equivalent Key Workers to provide the intensive support to clients. The Team Leader will be responsible for the employer engagement role to find work placements and jobs as appropriate for the young people. There will be ongoing monitoring of the programme to ensure that the staffing levels are as required to deliver the programme.
- 1.12 It has been recognised that there will be young people with debts to include credit card debt, loans and student therefore it has been decided to employ a Financial and Debt Adviser within the Ambition Team. The Financial and Debt Adviser will develop and facilitate workshops/training sessions as required for the young people in addition to providing financial support on a one to one basis.

- 1.13 There is also a need for mental health support for young people across the geographical area. The team will therefore include a Health Support Advisor who will develop and facilitate workshops/training sessions as required for the young people. Discussions are also taking place with the Clinical Commissioning Groups to see how they can provide added value to the project given that it meets many of their priority themes.
- 1.14 All the posts have been evaluated through NEDDC's job evaluation process and contracts will be issued for one year initially, following formal review of the programme.
- 1.15 The delivery model that is going to be used for this geographical area can be seen in Appendix II.
- 1.16 Advertising of the posts took place in August using local authority channels of communications and networks, and wider advertising in the Derbyshire Times, Mansfield Chad and Worksop Guardian. Secondments may also be an option to support skills development of existing employees. The Team Leader will be appointed first and then be involved in the recruitment process for the rest of the team. It is expected that the Team Leader, the Health Support Advisor, the Financial and Debt Adviser and 2 FTE Key Workers will be in place to start delivery in November/December 2014. A further 2 FTE Key Worker will be appointed in February 2015 to ensure that there is sufficient staffing in place at the end of the project time to support young people who have registered with the project towards the end of the two years.
- 1.17 The Ambition Team will initially be based at Coney Green however it expected that around 80% of their time will be out in the community supporting clients in facilities to be sourced. Staff will then move to Mill Lane when required in the accommodation/move project plan.
- 1.18 A communications protocol is being developed to ensure that any promotional materials, publicity and press releases are co-ordinated by NEDDC, but which involve partners.
- 1.19 An Ambition Partnership Group will be formed with member and officer representation from the five local authority areas which will meet bi-annually. The purpose of this group will be to provide feedback and advice on project progress. Regular meetings will take place with individual authorities to provide an update and ensure that any local issues are dealt with quickly.
- 1.20 Employers across this geographic area will be engaged with to provide young people with an invaluable work placement opportunity. This will be for 3 days per week for a period of 8 weeks which could be extended if required to further support the young person for 12 weeks. Each work placement will be in a safe working environment and the young person's experience will be structured around their Individual Development Plan. The young person will have weekly contact with their Key Worker and have formal monthly reviews against their Individual Development Plan to ensure that progress is being made. The employer will also be supported by the Team Leader for the duration of the work placement and if there is feedback about the young person then this will provided to the Key Worker. It will be critical that the right work placement can be provided for the young person to support them

with their long term career aspirations and the Team Leader through liaison with the Key Worker will ensure that the most suitable employer is selected.

- 1.21 A further report will be produced in summer 2015 to provide Executive with a progress report when the programme has been running for six months.
- 1.22 An opportunity has arisen to bid for funding under the DCLG's current Help for Single Homeless bidding round. The bid criteria encourages an integrated approach to homeless prevention through working with partner agencies such as health, job centre plus and debt advice agencies to ensure that those at risk of homelessness are able to access support to gain health, independence and stability to enable them to sustain a home of their own.

Under this bidding round, local authorities from Derbyshire and Derby City have submitted a bid for £340,000 over 18 months. The Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager has negotiated proposals for a dedicated project totalling £150,000 in the north of the County to work in partnership with the Ambition Project and Talent Match to ensure the housing needs of young people are met. The project will employ a Project Coordinator and two Housing Support workers.

These workers will cover North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bolsover and Derbyshire Dales and will coordinate a pathways approach to housing for young people. Housing units will be identified for young people, including shared accommodation and links into the existing Private Rented Access Scheme.

The remaining Derbyshire wide bid also includes a worker to be based within Calow Royal Hospital to manage admissions and discharge protocols for people with complex needs; a Benefit Sanctions Worker and a No Second Night Out Worker based in Chesterfield to work with rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping in the north of the County.

The partnership working with Ambition will be used as a pilot project to provide evidence of need for a future Derbyshire wide project linking housing with employment, skills and health. Best practice will also be cascaded across Derbyshire and Derby City. The closing date for this bid was 8th August with successful bids expected to be announced mid September for project start dates November 2014.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 That Executive notes the content of the report
- 2.2 That Executive agrees to the formation of an Ambition Partnership Group and nominates an Executive member to represent Bolsover District Council.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 The Sheffield City Region Skills and Labour Market Workstream Group have worked together to draw down funding from Central Government and have developed this project.

- 3.2 Sheffield City Council are the accountable body for the region and they have had discussions with the Department of Work and Pensions on behalf of this Group.
- 3.3 A presentation of the project was given to Cabinet in February 2014 and a report was taken to Executive in March 2014.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Alternative options for the local delivery of Ambition SCR were discussed in the Executive report in March 2014 and it was decided that a direct delivery mechanism would be used.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 Funding is provided by SCR LEP for the 2 year programme. Performance will be reviewed formally every six months throughout the life of the programme. The tolerance level of performance is 50% of job starts. If this target is not being met then the local authority will have 3 months to improve performance. If under-performance continues then the funding could be re-distributed to other local authority areas, the contract size could be reduced or the contract could be removed completely. The programme will be managed in house on a monthly basis and any issues will be identified quickly. Partnership meetings will take place on a regular basis to discuss any localised issues and the way forward. Project management documentation will be completed to ensure that progress can be monitored and issues and lessons learned can be logged as appropriate. There is a risk that the number of referrals from the DWP does not materialise. Promotion of Ambition will take place with individual Job Centres to ensure their advisers are fully aware of the programme and if there are issues, these will be raised up to Sheffield City Council. There is a risk that work placements are not secured for the young person. Again promotion of Ambition will take place by the Team Leader. Partners will also promote Ambition with their businesses when the opportunity rises and at networks and forums that take place in their geographic area. The Team Leader will meet with individual businesses before a young person is placed with them to ensure that the business and the young person is a suitable match, as this is a critical element of the programme. Other regional networks such as Skills Made Easy will also be utilised.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 Data will be stored onto a SCR database. This data will be collected, stored and maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Meetings are to take place with the Data Protection Officer to ensure that data is collected, stored and retained as appropriate. SCR has also negotiated data sharing agreements with the DWP.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 NEDDC will employ the staff, but a BDC officer will be involved in the interview panel for the Team Leader on 15th September 2014.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Executive notes the content of the report.
- 2.2 That Executive agrees to the formation of an Ambition Partnership Group and nominates an Executive member to represent Bolsover District Council.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	All
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote the development of skills and learning• Reduce poverty• Contribute to improving the health of the district

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Key Performance Indicators and outputs
2	Flowchart showing local delivery model of Ambition SCR
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Laura Khella	01246 242302

Key Performance Indicators and Outputs

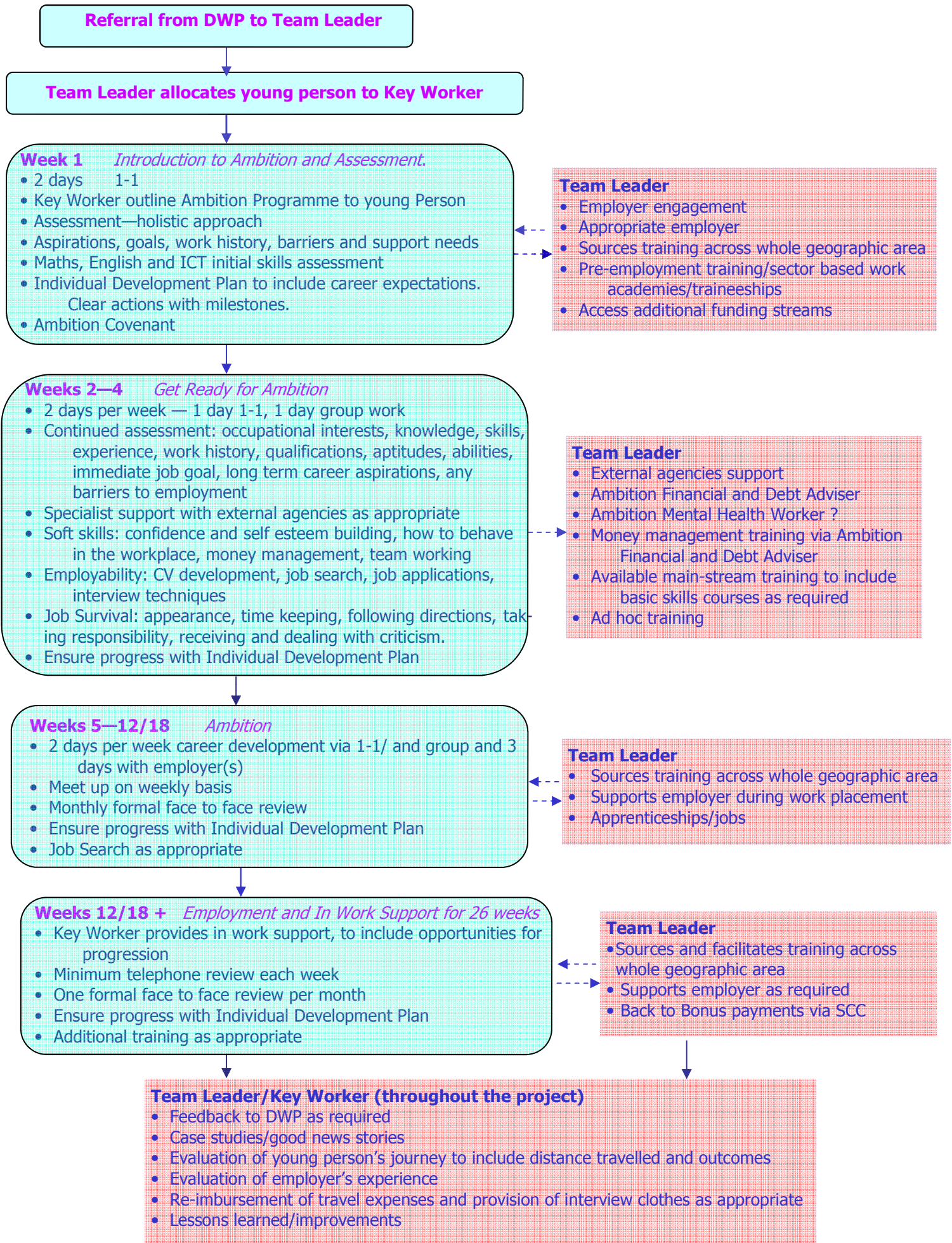
Appendix I

ALL	JSA Claimants Aged 18-24 as of Dec 2013	% of LEP 18-24 JSA's	LA Contract value	Back to Work Bonus (retained by SCC)	Number Assessed	Number Beneficiaries	Minimum Number Jobs (4 weeks)	Minimum Number of progressions (26 weeks)	Minimum Number of sustained in the workplace (26 weeks)
						67% of column A	40% of column B	55% of column C	80% of column C
Barnsley	1,545	13.4%	£ 567,755.01	£ 67,203.13	324	218	87	48	70
Bassetlaw	600	5.2%	£ 220,487.38	£ 26,098.30	126	85	34	19	27
Bolsover	385	3.3%	£ 141,479.40	£ 16,746.41	81	54	22	12	17
Chesterfield	640	5.6%	£ 235,186.54	£ 27,838.19	134	90	36	20	29
Derbyshire Dales	110	1.0%	£ 40,422.69	£ 4,784.69	23	16	6	3	5
Doncaster	2,205	19.2%	£ 810,291.14	£ 95,911.27	463	311	124	68	99
North East Derbyshire	360	3.1%	£ 132,292.43	£ 15,658.98	76	51	20	11	16
Rotherham	1,920	16.7%	£ 705,559.63	£ 83,514.57	403	271	108	60	87
Sheffield	3,730	32.4%	£ 1,370,696.57	£ 162,244.45	783	526	210	116	168
City Region Total	11,495	100.0%	£ 4,224,170.80	£ 500,000.00	2414	1620	648	356	518

Number of young people:

- A. Referred by JCP and assessed by a Key Worker
- B. Started on the programme – minimum number assessed by a Key Worker and started the programme
Numbers undertaking 12 and 18 week programmes split out in the tables below
- C. Starting a job (a minimum of 16 hours per week for 4 weeks – last date for job start is 31 April 2016)
- D. Progressing within the workplace; training/qualification, increased hours, increased salary, second job (to increase hours), career progression, achieving next step on career ladder (within 26 weeks of starting the job)
- E. Remaining within work after the programme (a minimum of 16 hours per week for 26 weeks)

Delivery of the SCR Ambition Programme within Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire



Bolsover District Council

Executive

8 September 2014

Bolsover ERDF Economic Infrastructure Project – Progress Report

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

To inform Executive of the progress of the Bolsover ERDF project, including the procurement of marketing and promotional material, a contract for capital works to the town centre, delivering a successful Bolsover Food and Drink Festival, the financial constraints associated with ERDF funding and of the implications of the viral attack and subsequent closure of the Business Bolsover website.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 In December 2012 Bolsover District Council (BDC) submitted an application for European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) towards improving the public realm and infrastructure for Bolsover Town. In January 2014 a funding offer was confirmed. The project will run from January 2014 – March 2015.
- 1.2 The initial Executive report on the project highlighted that there was an element of risk to the projects financial support due to the need to deliver within tight timescales to meet ERDF funding requirements.
- 1.3 The project has successfully thus far delivered:
Marketing and Promotions: A new brand for the town – Discover Bolsover – There's Life Beyond The Castle Walls, a discoverbolsover.com website, social media presence on Facebook and twitter, town centre banners, signed off interpretation for key access points, Town Jewel campaign, PR coverage both national and local, liaison with town businesses and introduction of a new town newspaper.
- 1.4 1.4 Events: 3 events are to be delivered: Bolsover Food and Drink Fair (26-27 July 2014), Bolsover Christmas Festival (29 November 2014) and Bolsover Antiques Fair (24 May 2015). The food and drink fair was a great success with over 6,000 people visiting the town over the weekend. Aldo Zilli the celebrity chef was an excellent ambassador for the town and promoted Bolsover through his social media, radio broadcasts and national newspapers columns. Of the 60 stall holders attending the event 3 have taken a regular market stall in Bolsover. A date for next year's event is to be set shortly.
- 1.5 Public realm: the final design has been signed off having consulted with District members, Old Bolsover Town Council, Bolsover Access Group, Derbyshire County

Council Highways/ Conservation and businesses on Castle Street and the cenotaph area that are directly affected by the scheme. Materials have been ordered and we are working towards getting the section 278 agreement signed off at DCC in order for works on the ground to commence. North Midland Construction will start the public realm improvements in September and start the works around the cenotaph area to ensure the area is complete ready for Remembrance Sunday. The rest of improvements on Castle Street will then be phased with businesses being liaised with throughout the process. The works will be complete by the end of November 2014.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The report provides an update on the Bolsover town centre project and advises the Executive committee of actions to mitigate the risks associated with the ERDF funding.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 As part of the public realm design consultation all businesses on Castle Street and around the cenotaph are have been consulted with as well as all District and Bolsover Parish members. The equalities officer has consulted with Access Bolsover and no comments have been received.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

N/A

5 Implications

- 5.1 Bolsover DC has contracted with Ruby Slippers (marketing and promotions, Events) and North Midland Construction. Should the Marketing and Promotions, events and infrastructure budgets not achieve profiled spend, this would mean that the money could be clawed back by ERDF and Bolsover District Council would be left to bear the cost of the value of the contracts. North Midland Construction and Ruby Slippers have reassured the District Council they will achieve their spend as profiled. Officers are continuing to work actively with the contractors to seek to ensure that financial profiles are met. The District Council is required to procure the rest of the revenue spend to ensure the profiled spend is met.
- 5.2 Part of the budget allocation for the project was to update the Business Bolsover website, however other options which are available to the council may now provide a more appropriate way forward.
- 5.3 Given the approval of the Growth Strategy and the acquisition of Firmstep it would be appropriate to reallocate the website upgrade spend to other activities. This would achieve two outcomes; it would remove an additional pressure to deliver in an already constrained circumstances and it would potentially facilitate improved communication with the business sector.

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1 So far the following has been delivered in the 2 claim periods between January - March and April – June 2014:

£58,324 staff time (BDC and OBTC)
£51,393 Marketing and promotion
£3,000 Website (OBTC)
£16,350 Events
£1,027 CDM coordinator and Lighting Column Survey

- 5.2 In line with the ERDF agreed financial profile, by the end of quarter 2 the project was 10% behind on spend. The intention of the Council was to then request a re-profiling of expenditure for the duration of the project which is custom and practice within grant funded projects.

- 5.3 However, because of ERDF concerns about underspends on other larger projects and the fact that the ERDF project is closing in December 2014 BDC have been issued with a letter, as appended, explaining that no additional project slippage or financial re-profiling will be allowed. Officers are actively working to mitigate the risk that should projects not spend to profile that ERDF funding will be lost.

- 5.4 To meet financial profile this means that in quarter 3 (July – September 2014) the project needs to have delivered and defrayed the following:

£21,901 staff time (OBTC and BDC)
£13,607 Marketing and Promotion (Contracted with Ruby Slippers – on target)
£23,150 Events (Contracted with Ruby Slippers – on target)
£24,973 Other revenue (we have received confirmation that we can carry over this amount to spend in quarter 4)
£250,000 Capital Infrastructure (Contracted with North Midland Construction – on target)
£9,114 Signage (Contracted with Ruby Slippers – On Target)

£6,500 Websites (OBTC website contracted, remaining on improving Business Bolsover)

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The Council has entered into a contract with ERDF and is obliged to meet the terms and conditions of that contract.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

BDC has also committed £96,964 in staff time over the project delivery period November 2013 – March 2015.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That Executive note the report and the progress to date.

6.2 That the council review the use of an external business support website as part of the transformation and growth agenda.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	Yes
District Wards Affected	Bolsover NW Ward
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	<p>ENVIRONMENT – Promoting and enhancing a clear and sustainable environment.</p> <p>REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities.</p> <p>The public realm and infrastructure improvements will create a sustainable, welcoming town centre whilst supporting the growth of the local economy.</p>

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
	Letter from DCLG dated 5 August 2014
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Therasa Garrod Projects Officer (Tourism)	01246 242324