

EXECUTIVE AGENDA

Monday 27th March 2017 at 1000 hours in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne

Item No.	PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS	Page No.(s)
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 an Extraordinary Executive meeting held on 20th February 2017. To approve the Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on 27th February 2017.	Previously Circulated Previously Circulated
5	Items recommended by Scrutiny Committees None.	
6	Policy and Budget Framework Items Derbyshire Revenues and Benefits Initiative – Housing Benefit and Local Taxation Support Verification Policy.	4 to 14
7	NON KEY DECISIONS (A) Arrears – Irrecoverable Items over £2500.	To Follow

8 KEY DECISIONS

- (A) Replacement and Upgrade of Kitchens 2017 – 2022. 15 to 17
- (B) Bolsover Safe and Warm Scheme Update. 18 to 23

9 PART 2 – EXEMPT ITEMS

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1, Schedule 12a (relevant exemption paragraph is cited next to the agenda item).

10 KEY DECISIONS

- (A) Joint Venture Update. To Follow

EXTRAORDINARY EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of an Extraordinary Executive of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, on Monday 20th February 2017, at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:- T. Connerton, M. Dooley, S. Fritchley, B.R. Murray-Carr, K. Reid and J. Ritchie.

Officers:- D. Swaine (Chief Executive Officer), B. Mason (Executive Director – Operations) (to Minute No. 0693), D. Clarke (Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues and Benefits) (to Minute No. 0693), S.E.A. Sternberg (Monitoring Officer) (to Minute No. 0693), P. Campbell (Assistant Director Housing and Community Safety) (to Minute No. 0693) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

Also sat in the public gallery where Councillors G. Buxton, T. Munro, B.R. Murray-Carr and D. McGregor.

Councillor A. M. Syrett in the Chair

0690. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

0691. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0692. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2017/18 to 2020/21

Executive considered a report of the Leader of the Council which proposed the budget in respect of 2017/18 as part of a consideration of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), covering the years 2017/18 to 2020/21.

The report presented the budgets and financial plans for the General Fund Revenue Account, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Programme. These budgets were fully funded within the year and therefore met the Council's legal obligation to agree a balanced budget.

In addition to the consideration of the MTFP, Council would also be requested to consider the proposed Treasury Management Strategy, which linked the financial plans into the Borrowing and Investment Strategy. This helped to ensure that the Council's financial plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

EXTRAORDINARY EXECUTIVE

Whilst the report was predominantly concerned with financial issues, it needed to be recognised that the Council's financial plans were part of a wider service planning framework incorporating both service plans, together with the range of related Council strategies and policies. This framework helped to ensure that the available resources were targeted at securing agreed Council priorities.

2016/17 Estimated Outturn Position - this was the current year budget revised to reflect changes, which had taken place or, which it was anticipated would take place during the remainder of the current financial year. It therefore provided a more accurate indication of the likely outturn position than the original budget.

2017/18 Original Budget - this was the proposed budget for the next financial year, commencing 1st April 2017, which Council would consider for approval at its meeting on 20th February 2017.

2018/19 to 2020/21 Financial Plan - in accordance with good practice, the Council agreed its annual budgets within the context of a MTFP which set out financial projections in respect of the next four financial years. This approach provided the Council with a longer planning horizon over which to develop service plans and to ensure that its underlying level of expenditure remained in line with its underlying level of resources. Effective multi-year planning was particularly important given that central Government plans were based upon significant year-on-year expenditure reductions for local government.

Robustness of the Estimates - the Council's S151 Officer (the Executive Director Operations) was satisfied that the methodology adopted to calculate the estimates was robust and provided Members with reliable information on which to base their decisions. Likewise, the S151 Officer was satisfied that the proposed level of reserves were adequate to cover the issues and potential risks which faced the Council.

The recommendations in the report had also previously been considered by Audit Committee on 16th January 2017 and Budget Scrutiny Committee on 27th January 2017.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor S. Fritchley

RECOMMENDED that (1) Council approve;

a) the view of the Chief Financial Officer that the estimates included in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21 are robust and that the level of financial reserves whilst at minimum levels are adequate, be accepted,

b) officers report back to Executive and to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis regarding the overall position in respect of the Council's budgets. These reports to include updates on progress in achieving the agreed range of savings and efficiencies necessary to secure a balanced budget for the 2017/18 financial year, together with progress on actions to ensure the longer term financial sustainability of the Council.

2) in addition to the above, the following specific recommendations be approved in respect of the main accounts of the Council;

EXTRAORDINARY EXECUTIVE

GENERAL FUND;

- a) a Council Tax increase of £4.97 in respect of a notional Band D property (3.08%) as part of a range of measures necessary to manage the continued reduction in the level of central government funding,
- b) the Medium Term Financial Plan in respect of the General Fund as set out in **Appendix 1** of the report be approved as the Estimated Outturn Budget in respect of 2016/17, as the Original Budget in respect of 2017/18, and the financial projection in respect of 2018/19 to 2020/21,
- c) officers continue to progress the implementation of measures designed to secure the forecast surplus in respect of 2016/17 together with the agreed savings targets in respect of 2017/18 with progress to be reported back to Executive, Budget Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee on a quarterly basis,
- d) any under spend in respect 2016/17 be transferred to the Transformation Reserve,
- e) in the light of the financial pressures facing the Council, the grant subsidy in respect of the Local Council Tax scheme be reduced on an annual basis with 2020/21 being the final year of payment,
- f) on the basis that income from Planning Fees is anticipated to exceed £400k the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Leader, be granted delegated powers to authorise such additional resources as are necessary to effectively manage the resultant increase in workload,
- g) a further report be presented to Executive to update the Council's Efficiency Plan in line with the revised financial projections as set out within the report and to provide further details concerning measures to secure the required level of savings over the period of the current MTFP.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT;

- a) rent levels be set in line with Government regulations reducing rent levels by an amount of 1% to apply from 1st April 2017,
- b) the increases in respect of other charges as outlined in **Appendix 2 Table 2** of the report be implemented with effect from 1st April 2017,
- c) the Medium Term Financial Plan in respect of the Housing Revenue Account as set out in **Appendix 2 Table 1** of the report be approved as the Estimated Outturn Budget in respect of 2016/17, as the Original Budget in respect of 2017/18, and the financial projection in respect of 2018/19 and 2020/21.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME;

- a) the Capital Programme as set out in **Appendix 3 Table 1** of the report be approved as the Estimated Outturn in respect of 2016/17, and as the Approved Programme in respect of 2017/18 to 2020/21,

EXTRAORDINARY EXECUTIVE

b) the Assistant Director - Property and Estates be granted delegated powers in consultation with the Portfolio Member and the Asset Management group to approve the utilisation of the £260,000 of AMP Refurbishment allocation, which such approvals to be reported back to Executive through the Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report,

c) the inclusion of an additional phase of the B@Homes programme of 22 new Council Homes at Pinxton and South Normanton at a total cost of £3.363m, be approved,

d) the Asset Management Group be requested to continue its work of identifying suitable assets for disposal or redevelopment in order to fund the Council's Capital Programme, reduce revenue costs and support the wider regeneration of the District.

REASON FOR DECISION: To meet the Council's legal obligation to achieve a balanced budget.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the report.

The Executive Director – Operations, the Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues and Benefits, the Monitoring Officer and the Assistant Director Housing and Community Safety left the meeting.

0693. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor J. Ritchie and seconded by Councillor K. Reid

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

0694. STRATEGIC ALLIANCE – SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW - PROPOSALS PARAGRAPHS 1, 3 AND 4

Executive considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services which sought approval to engage specialist external support to the Chief Executive Officer to undertake a full review of the current Strategic Alliance Management Team (SAMT). Full details were included in the report.

Moved by Councillor K. Reid and seconded by Councillor S. Fritchley

RESOLVED that Executive agrees the recommendations as outlined in the report.

EXTRAORDINARY EXECUTIVE

REASON FOR DECISION: These were outlined in paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the report.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: The options for Executive's consideration were detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report. There were no alternative options considered and rejected.

(Chief Executive Officer)

**0695. STRATEGIC ALLIANCE – SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW –
EARLY VOLUNTARY RELEASE REQUEST
PARAGRAPHS 1, 3 AND 4**

Executive considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services which sought approval for an early voluntary release request (redundancy only) for a Joint Assistant Director of the Senior Management team. Full details were included in the report.

Moved by Councillor A. M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor T. Connerton
RESOLVED that Executive agrees the recommendations as outlined in the report.

REASON FOR DECISION: These were outlined in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of the report.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: The options for Executive's consideration were detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report. There were no alternative options considered and rejected.

(Chief Executive Officer)

The meeting concluded at 1025 hours.

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, on Monday 27th February 2017 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:- Councillors T. Connerton, M.J. Dooley, S.W. Fritchley, B.R. Murray-Carr, K. Reid and J. Ritchie (from during Minute No. 0712).

Officers:- D. Swaine (Chief Executive Officer), B. Mason (Executive Director – Operations), D. Clarke (Assistant Director Finance, Revenues and Benefits), A. Wylie (Deputy Monitoring Officer), K. Apps (Joint Housing Strategy and Growth Manager), K. Drury (Information Engagement & Performance Manager) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting were Councillors S. Peake, H.J. Gilmour and C. Millington (Scrutiny Officer) and in the public gallery was Councillor T. Munro.

Councillor A.M. Syrett in the Chair

0708. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

0709. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

0710. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

0711. MINUTES – 30TH JANUARY 2017

Moved by Councillor K. Reid and seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the Minutes of an Executive meeting held on 30th January 2017 be approved as a correct record.

0712. ITEMS RECOMMENDED BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

HEALTHY, SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REVIEW; WHERE DOES PUBLIC HEALTH FIT WITHIN PLANNING POLICY

EXECUTIVE

Executive considered a report of the Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Scrutiny Committee which provided information on the findings of a Scrutiny review in relation to where public health fitted in with Planning policy.

The Scrutiny Committee commenced the review in June 2016, following concerns over the demands on local services brought by new development, and that the current Section 106 policy was not working to address public health issues.

Scrutiny Members had sought to understand the various demands and requests on Section 106 contributions and a number of documents, verbal evidence and presentations were considered throughout the review with twelve stakeholders engaged.

The two main concerns arising from the review reflected the comments and concerns raised by stakeholders around consultation on major applications and also on the number of hot food takeaways in areas with high levels of obesity. It was hoped that if accepted, the recommendations in the report would result in positive outcomes for the District's communities.

Members welcomed the report and noted that it had looked in depth, as well as raising awareness, of the issues of Section 106.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing noted that there had been many recent occasions where a Section 106 may have been applicable but outside agencies had not responded, specifically in relation to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and local practitioners (GP's). The Strategic Health Group had tried to broaden the remit of the CCGs but Planners also had issues with some major developers who felt that anything under £30k was not worth consideration and provided no response. It was hoped that the CCGs would encourage GPs to get more involved with regard to Section 106s.

The Chief Executive Officer noted that the review was a timely report. He advised the meeting that the Government's white paper noted that they would examine the options for reforming the system for delivery of developer contributions to ensure direct benefit for communities. The Government would be carrying out an independent review of community and infrastructure levy and section 106 obligations and make an announcement in the autumn budget statement. With regard to dialogue with the NHS, the Chief Executive Officer felt that further work needed to be carried out and stronger relationships built, especially directly with GPs.

Commenting further, the Chief Executive Officer noted that wider design considerations needed to be linked to Planning, for example, health and community safety when considering development after strategic sites had been agreed; clear guidance on how the Authority wanted to shape development such as the issue of too many takeaways, which then linked to the health agenda.

Members thanked the Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Scrutiny Committee for an informative report which had raised further discussion.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor M.J. Dooley

RESOLVED that 1) the recommendations as set out in the report of the Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Scrutiny Committee be noted and,

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2) a response to Scrutiny Committee regarding the recommendations be provided within 6 weeks.

(Executive)

REASON FOR DECISION: The recommendations arising from the review reflected the comments and concerns raised by stakeholders and it was hoped that these recommendations would result in positive outcomes for the Council's Communities.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: None.

Councillors S. Peake, H.J. Gilmour and the Scrutiny Officer left the meeting.

0713. POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK ITEMS

VULNERABLE ADULTS RISK MANAGEMENT (VARM) POLICY

Executive considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, which sought approval of a Joint Vulnerable Adult Risk Management (VARM) Policy and guidance to implement the existing Derbyshire wide VARM policy framework.

In January 2014, Bolsover District Council, North East Derbyshire District Council and Rykneld Homes adopted the wider Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board's, Vulnerable Adult Risk Management policy, which provided a framework for professionals to facilitate effective multi-agency working with vulnerable adults who were deemed to have mental capacity and who were at risk of serious harm or death. Both BDC and NEDDC's Housing and Economic Development Strategies highlighted the commitment to help vulnerable people and it had been acknowledged that an internal VARM policy was required to ensure risks to vulnerable adults were minimised.

The draft Joint VARM policy had been developed in conjunction with the Joint Executive Director – Transformation, (the Safeguarding Lead officer) and was in line with the existing Derbyshire wide policy framework, which would be amended accordingly if it should change.

Each organisation had also identified VARM champions who would be the relevant point of contact, including Derbyshire Fire and Rescue, Derbyshire Constabulary, Environmental Health Officers, Housing, Probation, Alcohol and Drug Services.

For BDC the Champions were;

- The Housing Needs Manager
- The Housing Enforcement Manager

VARM cases would continue to be monitored internally using the existing format through PEFORM via the Housing Strategy Team on a quarterly basis and reported to Executive periodically.

Members welcomed the report and agreed that the Policy should be implemented at Bolsover District Council.

EXECUTIVE

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor J. Ritchie

RESOLVED that the joint Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) Policy be agreed and implemented at Bolsover District Council.

(Housing Strategy and Growth Manager)

REASON FOR DECISION: To approve the VARM Policy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: None.

0714. NON KEY DECISIONS

(A) NORTH DERBYSHIRE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2016-2020

Executive considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, which sought approval of the North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy 2016 - 2020.

In 2012, the Government introduced a Gold Standard Challenge with a focus on homeless prevention. To assist in achieving this standard and also due to the Council's current strategy having expired, officers had developed a North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy in partnership with NEDDC and Chesterfield Borough Council.

Following consultation with stakeholders, a number of priorities had been identified, which provided clear focus and direction to enable the Council to prevent homelessness as effectively and efficiently as possible in partnership with neighbouring authorities as well as other partner agencies such as advice and support providers.

Having an up to date Homelessness Strategy that was fit for purpose would put the Council in a strong position when applying for the Gold Standard for Housing Options services; it was also a legal requirement for the Council to have a Homelessness Strategy.

Members welcomed the report.

In response to a Member's query regarding any financial impact on the Authority for an increased strategy on homelessness, the Chief Executive Officer suggested that a further report be presented to Executive within six months, setting out the impact of the policy on the District particularly the corporate performance indicator C06 for the prevention of homelessness and also details of the costs of the preventative work and the financial benefits arising from reduced expenditure for the wider public sector, and details of the Council's procedures for dealing with evictions in order to ensure these were not contributing negatively to homelessness and were securing the best economic and social value.

Moved by Councillor J. Ritchie and seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr

RESOLVED that 1) the North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy 2016 - 2020 be approved.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr

RESOLVED that 2) a further report be presented to Executive in six months setting out:

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(i) the impact of the policy on the District particularly the corporate performance indicator C06 for the prevention of homelessness,

(ii) details of the costs of the preventative work and the financial benefits arising from reduced expenditure for the wider public sector and,

(iii) details of the Council's procedures for dealing with evictions in order to ensure these are not contributing negatively to homelessness and are securing the best economic and social value.

(Housing Strategy and Growth Manager)

REASON FOR DECISION: It is a legal requirement for the Council to have a Homelessness Strategy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: None.

(B) SHEFFIELD CITY REGION SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPACT

Executive considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing which sought approval for the Council to be a signatory of the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Social and Affordable Housing Compact.

In January 2016, the SCR Housing Forum met to discuss the key issues of meeting the challenge to deliver housing growth, Right to Buy extension to housing associations and a collective framework for allocations. It was agreed that a working group be established to develop a common set of principles that all major landlords across the SCR could sign up to.

The working group was launched in March 2016 and identified roles and responsibilities to ensure appropriate linkages to the SCR Housing Executive Board and Housing Directors Group. The working group had developed the Social and Affordable Housing Compact between April and August 2016 and the official launch date was in early December 2016.

The eight objectives of the SCR Social and Affordable Housing Compact were detailed in the report.

The SCR Social and Affordable Housing Compact would be signed by 8 Council's, 4 ALMOs and up to 29 Housing Associations; if the Council signed up to the Compact, BDC would be included in developing and shaping the SCR Compact as it evolved over time.

Members noted that the Authority was a non constituent member of the SCR.

The Chief Executive Officer advised the meeting that if the Council signed up to the Compact, it would be highlighted that this was to a statement of principles as a non constituent member.

Moved by Councillor J.R Ritchie and seconded by Councillor S. Fritchley

EXECUTIVE

RESOLVED that the Authority signs up to the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Social and Affordable Social Housing Compact Statement of Principles as a non constituent member.

(Housing Strategy and Growth Manager)

REASON FOR DECISION: Bolsover District Council would be included in developing and shaping the SCR Compact as it evolved over time.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: Not to sign the SCR Social and Affordable Housing Compact – rejected as this would result in Bolsover DC being excluded from future developments in the SCR Social and Affordable Housing Compact.

The Housing Strategy and Growth Manager left the meeting.

(C) CORPORATE PLAN TARGETS PERFORMANCE UPDATE – OCTOBER 2016 TO DECEMBER 2016 (QUARTER 3 – 2016/17)

Executive considered a report of the Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement which provided breakdown details of quarter 3 (October to December 2016) performance outturn for the Corporate Plan 2015 -2019 targets.

Out of the 60 targets 47 (78.3%) were on track, 9 (15%) had been achieved (3 this quarter and 6 previously), 2 (3.3%) had been flagged as an 'alert', i.e. they may not achieve their annual target, 1 (1.7%) was overdue and 1 (1.7%) had been withdrawn (previously). Full details of progress were given in the report.

In relation to target G11: 'Through a programme of targeted refurbishment bring 15 empty private sector properties back into use per annum'. No properties brought back into use to date during 2016/17, it was noted that a new Empty Properties Officer was now in post and supporting this area of work

Members thanked the Information, Engagement & Performance Manager for the update.

Moved by Councillor J. Ritchie and seconded by Councillor M.J. Dooley

RESOLVED that progress against the Corporate Plan 2015-2019 targets be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep Members informed of progress against the Corporate Plan Targets noting achievements and any areas of concern.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: Not applicable, as providing an overview of performance against agreed targets.

The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager left the meeting.

EXECUTIVE

(D) INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Executive considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services which provided information on changes to the Investors in People (IiP) Standard and also sought approval to withdraw from the IiP process.

The Council had committed to achieving the Investors in People standard for a number of years through corporate objectives and work plans with a three yearly external assessment process. In July 2015, Bolsover District Council was assessed against the Investors in People Standard and accredited with the Silver level of the Extended Framework.

In September 2015, Investors in people launched a new Standard - the Sixth Generation of the Investors in People Standard.

The new framework was structured around nine indicators, which were organised under three headings; Leading, Supporting and Improving and also introduced a four stage performance model; (developed, established, advanced, high performing), which underpinned the nine indicators of the IiP framework.

The introduction of the new IiP Standard would involve a significant amount of work for the Council in terms of understanding the requirements of the new Standard; service areas producing, implementing and evidencing the requirements; Human Resources and Organisational Development in supporting service areas with the work and collating evidence, as well as time to develop a close working relationship with a new assessor.

If the Council continued with IiP, the budget allocation would need to be increased to meet the cost of assessment against the new standard, whereas not continuing with IiP would make a saving of £5,500 which had been allocated in the 2018/19 budget.

BDC's current accreditation would continue until the end of the three year period which was toward the end of 2018.

Members agreed that given the increased costs, resource commitment required and the general trend within the region and beyond, the Authority should discontinue with IiP assessment/accreditation.

Moved by Councillor M.J. Dooley and seconded by Councillor K. Reid

RESOLVED that 1) the changes to the Investors in People Sixth Generation Standard be noted,

2) given the increased costs, resource commitment required and the general trend within the region and beyond, the Authority discontinues with IiP assessment/accreditation.

(Assistant Director - HR & Payroll)

REASON FOR DECISION: Due to the significant changes to the IiP Standard requiring resource commitment and an increase in cost to the Authority.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: None.

EXECUTIVE

(E) HIGH SPEED 2 PHASE 2b; CREWE TO MANCHESTER, WEST MIDLANDS TO LEEDS

Executive considered a report of the Chief Executive Officer which provided details of the Government's High Speed 2 Phase 2b route refinement consultation and also the property consultation. The report also set out proposals for a response to the consultation. A summary of residents' letters received by the Council which raised their concerns was attached as an appendix to the report.

In November 2016, the Government published its preferred route for Phase 2b of HS2. Whilst the proposed route refinement varied the previous route of HS2 through the District, with seven substantial changes, there remained a significant impact on property, businesses and local communities, including the potential loss of income to the Authority in business rates and council tax and impact on the visual amenity.

Of the seven route refinements outlined, the one most relevant to the Council's area was the Derbyshire to West Yorkshire (M18/Eastern Route).

Additionally, the consultation document set out how the proposed route could serve Sheffield City Centre and Chesterfield with a spur line. This would link into the existing rail network south of Chesterfield by joining the existing line near Clay Cross. It was proposed that this spur line would cross the M1 from east to west just after Junction 28 of the M1 and would then travel through Blackwell and Newton meeting the existing line near Stonebroom where it would then travel on into Chesterfield. A copy of the map setting out the spur route and the main route and the proposals for the line to the Staveley Depot could be viewed via a link provided in the report for Members' information.

Since the announcement of the proposed changes, ongoing dialogue had taken place with HS2, with the Leader of the Council writing directly to Sir David Higgins to express concern about the impact on the District.

In addition to this, the Chief Executive Officer and the Leader had met with the HS2 Consultation Team and Sir David Higgins, to talk through the impact and how best the Council could influence Government's proposals and what opportunities were available to mitigate the significant impact on communities and businesses.

The Chief Executive Officer noted that there were many factors to be considered and in consultation with the Leader of the Council, he would be responding to the consultation on behalf of the Authority. Any Member comments to add to the consultation should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer to assist with the response and the finalisation of the response with the Leader.

The deadline regarding the route refinement consultation and the property consultation was 9th March 2016.

A lengthy discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor M.J. Dooley

RESOLVED that 1) the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Leader, finalises the Council's response to the HS2 consultation in order that it be submitted by 9th March 2017,

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2) any Member comments to add to the consultation be referred to the Chief Executive Officer to assist with the response and the finalisation of the response with the Leader,

(Chief Executive Officer)

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Council to respond to the HS2 consultation by the deadline of 9th March 2017.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED: For the District Council not to respond to the consultation was rejected as this would limit its ability to influence the proposals and ensure that Government were aware of the impact and opportunities HS2 presented for the Council's local communities and businesses.

The meeting concluded at 1115 hours.

Bolsover District Council

Executive

27 March 2017

**Derbyshire Revenues and Benefits Initiative – Housing Benefit and Local Taxation
Support Verification Policy**

Report of Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues & Benefits

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

To approve the Housing Benefit and Local Taxation Support Verification Policy as part of implementing the ongoing Derbyshire wide benefits processing initiative.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 On 25th April 2016, the Council took the decision to become part of a consortium of Derbyshire authorities working together to improve the Revenues and Benefits Service with the objective of:
- Increasing income collection on Council Tax and NNDR;
 - Securing improvements in the flexibility and accessibility of the service for local residents through enabling internet access;
 - Securing service efficiencies through facilitating the use of self service;
 - Using data matching to reduce the potential for fraud and error;
 - Securing service efficiencies by adopting a risk based approach to handling and managing housing benefit and council tax support claims;
 - Participating in a Derbyshire wide group that may bring further opportunities for service improvement or efficiencies.
- 1.2 To enable some of the above objectives to be met, it was essential to have an intuitive online housing benefit and local council tax support claim form which has the ability to work on any mobile device. This form has now been developed, tested and we are planning to implement from 1 April 2017.
- 1.3 In order to enable the use of this form, the Council are required to adopt a risk based verification policy in relation to processing housing benefit and council tax support claims.
- 1.4 In the early 1990's the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) introduced a "verification framework policy" for administering Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims. This was a voluntary policy that strongly recommended that local Councils should obtain a substantial amount of documentary evidence, carry out numerous pre-payment checks and/or visits before making any payment on a new claim or processing a change in circumstances. It had to be applied to all new claims and

changes, was costly, and there was little scope for local discretion. Although it was abandoned in 2006 by the DWP, most Councils, including Bolsover, have continued to use at least some of the verification guidelines set out in the framework.

In 2011, the DWP allowed Councils to apply a different type of approach to reducing fraud and error, based on Risk Based Verification (RBV) principles. This concentrates on the risk profile of each claimant. Resources can then be targeted at the higher risk groups where the majority of error is likely to occur. It is an approach used by many public services as well as businesses in the commercial world aimed at preventing errors and mistakes from entering into the system at the outset.

- 1.5 The Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Verification Policy in Appendix 1 will allow the Council to implement a risk based verification approach to assessing its housing benefit and council tax support claims.
- 1.6 The introduction of this policy should deliver service improvements and efficiencies within the team and for residents applying for housing benefit and council tax support. The system will feature secure data protection controls and will be able to be accessed by residents at home, via a mobile device or at the Council offices, enabling residents to process their claims online. This provides a significant improvement in access and convenience for local residents, and facilitates a more timely processing of claims. For the Council, there are significant efficiencies which include the fact that the information provided in the electronic format goes directly into the back office system therefore significantly reducing paper communication and retyping of data.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 This report and the approval of the policy will enable all Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support claims to be assessed using risk based verification from 1st April 2017. Having this in place from 1st April 2017 will give a clear separation between financial years, therefore making the audit process smoother and more transparent.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 These have been considered within the policy.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The alternative option would be that the Council decides against implementing the recommendations outlined within this report. This would significantly reduce the opportunity to improve the service to our residents and disadvantage the Council in participating in the Derbyshire wide project.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

Legal and data protection implications have been fully considered during the production of this policy in consultation with the Data Protection Officer.

5.3 Human Resources Implication

None arising directly from this report.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Executive approves the Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Verification Policy.

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	N/A
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Providing our customers with excellent services. Transforming our organisation.

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Verification Policy
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
Dawn Clarke – Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues & Benefits	01246 242214

Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Verification Policy

March 2017



We speak your language

Polish

Mówimy Twoim językiem

Slovak

Rozprávame Vaším jazykom

Chinese

我们会说你的语言

If you require this publication in
large print or another format
please call us on **01246 242424**

**CONTROL SHEET FOR
HOUSING BENEFIT AND LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT VERIFICATION POLICY**

Policy Details	Comments / Confirmation (To be updated as the document progresses)
Policy title	Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Verification Policy
Current status – i.e. first draft, version 2 or final version	Final Version
Policy author (post title only)	Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues & Benefits
Location of policy (whilst in development) – i.e. L-drive, shared drive	
Relevant Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr K Reid, Portfolio Holder with Responsibility for
Equality Impact Assessment approval date	n/a
Partnership involvement (if applicable)	
Final policy approval route i.e. Executive/ Council	Executive
Date policy approved	27th March 2017
Date policy due for review (maximum three years)	March 2020
Date policy forwarded to Improvement (to include on Intranet and Internet if applicable to the public)	

1. Introduction

In the early 1990's the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) introduced a "verification framework policy" for administering Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims. This was a voluntary policy that strongly recommended that local Councils should obtain a substantial amount of documentary evidence, carry out numerous pre-payment checks and/or visits before making any payment on a new claim or processing a change in circumstances. It had to be applied to all new claims and changes, was costly, and there was little scope for local discretion. Although it was abandoned in 2006 by the DWP, most Councils, including Bolsover, have continued to use at least some of the verification guidelines set out in the framework.

In 2011, the DWP allowed Councils to apply a different type of scheme to try to reduce fraud and error, based on Risk Based Verification (RBV) principles. This concentrates on the risk profile of each claimant. Resources can then be targeted at the higher risk groups where most of the fraud and error is likely to be. It is an approach used by many public services as well as businesses in the commercial world, from finance to the police and immigration authorities.

This policy is approved by the Section 151 Officer as it will form the guidance for internal and external audit of benefit claims. Recent guidance has stated that any RBV policy adopted should indicate the start date and that claims should be clearly marked as having gone through the process, to enable auditors to differentiate sampling when conducting audits.

2. Scope

RBV principles will apply to new claims and change of circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims from March 2017. This approach is being adopted to reduce the burden on customers to provide excessive evidence, reduce the time spent by customer service advisors photocopying and authorising original documents and to reduce the cost of administering claims, for example postage costs of letters to claimants requesting documentary proof. It will also allow more resources to be targeted at high risk claims.

3. Principles

The policy will link to the Council's Corporate Plan aims by;

- Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service
- Transforming our Organisation

The policy will also link to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of;

- Process all new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims within an average of 21 days.
- Process changes to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support within an average of 9 days.
- Through successful delivery of projects within the Transformation programme, achieve total savings/income of £600,000 by March 2019.
- Increase on-line self service transactions dealt with by the Contact Centre by 20% per year.

4. Statement

Background

Bolsover District Council must adhere to Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support legislation. The regulations within the legislation do not specify what information and evidence they should obtain from a customer. However, it does require an authority to have information which allows an accurate assessment of a claimant's entitlement, both when a claim is first made and when the claim is reviewed.

Housing Benefit Regulation 86 states;

“a person who makes a claim, or a person to whom housing benefit has been awarded, shall furnish such certificates, documents, information and evidence in connection with the claim or the award, or any question arising out of the claim or the award, as may reasonably be required by the relevant authority in order to determine that person's entitlement to, or continuing entitlement to housing benefit and shall do so within one month of being required to do so or such longer period as the relevant authority may consider reasonable.”

Furthermore; Section 1 of the Social Security (Administration) Act 1992 dictates a National Insurance number must either be stated or enough information provided to trace or allocate one. This legislation applies to both customers and their partners.

(1A) No person whose entitlement to any benefit depends on his making a claim shall be entitled to the benefit unless subsection (1B) below is satisfied in relation both to the person making the claim and to any other person in respect of whom he is claiming benefit.

(1B) this subsection is satisfied in relation to a person if–

(a) The claim is accompanied by–

(i) a statement of the person's national insurance number and information or evidence establishing that that number has been allocated to the person; or

(ii) information or evidence enabling the national insurance number that has been allocated to the person to be ascertained; or

(b) the person makes an application for a national insurance number to be allocated to him which is accompanied by information or evidence enabling such a number to be so allocated.

Given those requirements are at the core of the process of administering claims these shall be adhered to at all times and be considered process within the Quality Assurance checks completed on Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support claims assessed.

Risk Based Verification

Bolsover District Council have implemented an ICT solution for Risk Based Verification following a fundamental service review process which highlighted a significantly high percentage of time was being used in verifying and requesting documentation. Risk Based Verification is a method of applying different levels of

checks to Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support claims according to the risk associated with those claims. This allows officers to target activity toward checking those cases deemed to be at highest risk of involving fraud and/or error. The purpose of Risk Based Verification is to increase the levels of fraud and error detected by focusing resource appropriately.

The process of Risk Based Verification can be used for assessing New Housing Benefit and/or Local Council Tax Support Claims and also incorporates associated changes in circumstances.

For the purposes of applying verification on a risk basis, each claim is ranked into one of three categories i.e. Low, Medium and High Risk. The table at *Appendix 1* shows the requirement to be upheld dependent on the risk grouping. A national Insurance number and identity confirmation must be made in all cases irrelevant of the risk grouping; this is to comply with the aforementioned legislation.

Low Risk

The only checks to be made on cases classed as low risk are proof of identity and a National Insurance number. The Council will utilise the data available from the Department for Works and Pensions.

Medium Risk

Cases in this category should be treated as based on the original Verification Framework policy but the documentation can be photocopies in this instance.

High Risk

For high risk cases original documentation is recommended and there must be an additional check above that of medium risk. This can be by using a Credit Reference Check (CRA) to determine if there are any discrepancies between the information provided by the customer on a claim form and the information available via CRA checks, or by other methods e.g. visits, interviews etc.

Recording and Monitoring

In line with Department of Work and Pensions estimates, around 55% of cases could be Low Risk, 25% Medium and 20% High.

All risk scores are recorded by the software used to process claims and they must be recorded on the assessment officers record posted to a customer's account. Bolsover District Council also performs a minimum of 2% blind sampling which means cases from lower categories are upgraded to test the software assumptions and this information can be fed back into the propensity models, provided by the supplier, to support the parameters of the Risk Based Verification portal. Cases cannot be downgraded by an assessment officer; they can be increased though with approval from a Team Leader. Cases which are upgraded will be done so with supporting explanation.

Bolsover District Council will monitor the risk scoring splits on a monthly basis by using ICT tools available. The reports will show the categories of risk by percentage

and the level of fraud across the authority in comparison to a baseline position. Information will be derived from cells 222 and 231 within the Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE), which is provided to the DWP, in order to be able to produce statistical data.

Bolsover District Council also undertakes to carry out targeted interventions each year. This will help monitor the effect of Fraud and Error detection rates compared to the baseline rate. It is expected that the levels of Fraud and Error will be small in Low Risk cases, increased in Medium Risk cases and highest in High Risk cases.

This Policy has been produced in line with Department of Work and Pensions guidance on the use of Risk Based Verification circular S11/11.

Equalities Impact

Risk Based Verification will apply to all new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. A mathematical model is used to determine the risk score for any claim. This model does not take into account any of the protected characteristics specified by the Equality Act 2010; the authority nevertheless has a statutory duty to have due regard to equality in all its functions.

The course of action to be taken in respect of the risk score is governed by this policy. As such there should not be any equalities impact.

Where it is intended to carry out visits, these will be undertaken by a trained visiting officer. These officers are used to carrying out visits to the vulnerable, elderly and disabled, as these groups of claimants are often unable to access council services in any other way.

Legal Implications

The risk based verification policy complies with the recommendations from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) outlined in Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Circular HB/CTB S11/2011. It should be noted that this policy will be the basis on which the Council is audited. For this reason, the policy must be approved by the Council's Section 151 Officer and elected members.

Any errors or fraud overpayments identified following the review of claims, will be dealt with under the Housing Benefit Regulations or the current Council Tax Support Scheme, as they are now..

5. Responsibility for Implementation

This policy will form an integral part of the processes and procedures that operate within the Revenues and Benefits Section and will be the responsibility of the Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues & Benefits.

Appendix 1

Type of Evidence	Sub-category of evidence	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk	
Identity and S19 (NINO)	Identity	Originals or Photocopies	Originals or Photocopies	Originals required	
	S19 NINO	Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
Residency/Rent	Private Tenants		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
	Social Landlords		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
	Public Sector				
	Registered		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
Household Composition	Partner ID/S19/Income/Capital	Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
	Dependants under 18		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
	Non-dependants - remunerative work			Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required
	Non-dependants – passported benefit				
	Non-dependant - student		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
	Non-dependant - not in remunerative work/other			Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required
Income	State Benefits				
	Earnings/SMP/SSP		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
	Self employed earnings		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
Child Care Costs			Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	
Student Status	Income also required	Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals or Photocopies	Originals required	
Capital	Below lower capital limit		Originals or Photocopies accepted if over £5500 for Working Age or over £9500 for Elderly - not required if under these amounts	Originals if over £5500 for Working Age or over £9500 for Elderly - not required if under these amounts	
	Above lower capital limit		Originals or Photocopies	Originals required	
	Property		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required	

Bolsover District Council

Executive

27th March 2017

REPLACEMENT AND UPGRADE OF KITCHENS 2017 – 2022 (All Areas)

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- Appointment of Contractor to undertake replacement of kitchens and associated works to the councils housing stock (tenanted & void properties)
- Approval of recommendation to appoint following full Tender Evaluation

1 Report Details

1.1 A tender exercise has been undertaken to identify and appoint a suitable contractor to carry out the replacement of replacement kitchens to Council owned domestic properties as required by Housing Services. Properties within the councils housing stock as identified may on occasions require structural alterations in order to comply with modern Homes Standards. Examples of such alterations include the taking out of existing pantry walls or the removal of other load bearing and/or non-load bearing internal walls / chimney breasts as required.

1.2 Housing had identified from the recent housing stock survey that a replacement kitchen scheme needed to be put in place to replace and upgrade kitchens within domestic properties as identified in the survey.

A contract was to be put together on a 1 + 2 + 2 (5 Years) a Budget of £800k per year is allocated. Any extension to the contract will be based on satisfactory contractor performance and will be documented by the Assistant Director Property and Estates under the delegated decision scheme.

1.3 An open tender was advertised on Source Derbyshire. Bidders were invited to submit prices against a detailed schedule of rates. These prices would then be used for subsequent years of the contract period.

The 11 returned bids were opened on Friday 3rd March 2017 by Procurement Services.

1.4 The tender sums are based on a detailed schedule of rates which correspond to a number of general installation works expected to be undertaken at properties throughout the duration of the contract.

The evaluation sessions of the submitted prices and supporting information was undertaken by officers of Housing Services, Shared Procurement and Property Services on Tuesday 7th March 2017.

In accordance with the published assessment criteria the tenders were evaluated on the following basis;

- PRICE 60%
- QUALITY 40%

PRICE

The lowest price returned was awarded the full 60% score and was set as the benchmark against all other price submissions as per the standard procedure of Procurement Services. Subsequent prices were then deducted percentage points in relation to how much they exceeded the lowest price.

QUALITY

Quality Evaluation Category	Weighting
Returned References / Evidence of Competence	20%
Relevant Experience of Project Completion	20%
Contract Management	20%
Tenant Liaison	20%
Resources (incl. sub-contracting)	20%

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The combined price and quality scores of the contractors has been calculated and of the 11 contractors that submitted a bid the lowest overall contractor based on the price and evaluation score was Matthews and Tannert Limited (Kirkby-in-Ashfield).

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 Not Directly

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 No alternative options to be recommended at this time.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

The Programme of Kitchen Works has been approved as part of the Council's Capital Programme therefore financial provision is in place to fund this work.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

Contract to be arranged by Legal Services as per details within section 6.1 of this report.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

N/A

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Having reviewed and evaluated each bid the evaluation group recommends that Matthews and Tannert Limited are appointed as the contractor to undertake the Council's replacement of kitchens and associated works requirements arising for the period from 1st May 2017 until 31st March 2022 on a 1 + 2 + 2 JCT contract basis (Total 5 Years).

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	All Areas of Bolsover District
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Growth Strategy

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
Richard Mooney	01246 242352

Bolsover District Council

Executive

27th March 2017

Bolsover Safe and Warm Scheme Update

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To update Executive on the Safe and Warm scheme,
- To update Executive concerning ongoing discussions with a potential supplier to monitor and manage the data provided by the heat meters which will be installed as part of the Safe and Warm scheme.

1 Report Details

1.1 Update

- 1.1.1 As Executive will be aware the Safe and Warm scheme is to upgrade heating systems and other facilities at Sheltered housing schemes where there is a communal heating system.
- 1.1.2 The aim is to update all communal heating system within a period of three years. Replacing heating systems will potentially be disruptive for the residents and the work will need to be carefully planned in order to manage any potential disruption. In addition to the requirement to upgrade heating systems the Council's Sheltered Accommodation has also suffered from difficulties in letting properties. One of the key factors underlying the level of voids is that the older schemes include 'bedsit' properties which no longer meet tenant expectations. Where appropriate the opportunity will be taken to incorporate other building works necessary to modernise the sheltered housing schemes so that they better meet tenant requirements. While this will clearly involve additional work at the sheltered schemes concerned by undertaking the heating renewal and the upgrading work at the same time the impact on tenant will be minimised.
- 1.1.3 Appendix 1 to this report details the Sheltered Housing Schemes, which fall into three main categories. Phase 1 now includes Victoria House, Woburn House and Hides Green which have the greatest risk of boiler failure. They are therefore the schemes which need to be undertaken at the start of the Programme. Tendering for this work is now complete and Officers are in the final stages of agreeing a programme of work to provide new heating systems together with other upgrades where appropriate. Other upgrades include – where required - level access

showers, improved fire safety arrangements, etc. This work will be undertaken by companies procured from an existing framework agreement. Phase 1 work will commence in April 2017, with completion scheduled for October 2017.

- 1.1.4 Phase 2 of the Programme which concerns the schemes at Parkfields, Valley View, Jubilee Court and Ashbourne Court are those schemes where the major programmes of work are required. Accordingly an architect has been appointed to undertake some detailed design work on Phase 2. It is planned that once this work has been completed that the Council will go out to tender in the Autumn of 2017, with work commencing on site early in 2018. Given the level of work required it is important that the Council takes appropriate steps to mitigate the level of disruption for our tenants, many of whom are vulnerable. Minimising the level of disruption is likely to be made easier as a result of the fact that all these schemes have got vacant properties.
- 1.1.5 In addition to the Phase 1 and 2 works there are another 8 schemes covered by the Safe and Warm arrangements. These properties are the least complex ones where the main work required is heating upgrades. Work at these properties will therefore be planned around the timescales for the more complex, or higher priority schemes which are included in Phase 1 and Phase 2.

1.2 Heat Meters

- 1.2.1 Executive will be aware that the objective of the Safe and Warm Programme is to provide heating that is controllable (both temperature and timing) by the tenant, with tenants to be charged for their own fuel usage rather than on the basis of apportioned cost. It should, however, be noted that the fuel charge in respect of the communal areas (corridors, scheme lounge, etc) will continue to be charged as a service charge.
- 1.2.2 Each individual home will be fitted with a heat meter, allowing tenants to adjust temperature, hours of operation and providing details of energy usage. In order to operate the arrangements effectively the Council will need to send bills to the tenants and to monitor the usage to ensure that tenants are using the system appropriately and – in particular – are maintaining a reasonable temperature within their home.
- 1.2.3 While it is intended that once the scheme is completed the Council will provide this service, in the initial three years of operation it is considered more appropriate that we utilise the support and services of an established and experienced contractor / managing agent. While there are a number of monitoring services that are available the vast majority of these are commercial organisations with unproven levels of customer support in particular in working with vulnerable people, and who would be seeking contractual arrangements with a long tie in for the Council. On the basis of the work that has been undertaken Officers have only been able to identify one organisation which fully meets our requirements which is Nottingham City Council through their energy company Enviroenergy. In particular they have experience of providing this service to vulnerable tenants in sheltered housing schemes for social landlords (including the ability to send alerts when there is low usage which may be a concern).

- 1.2.4 In the light of the market research which has been undertaken Officers are proposing to enter into commercial negotiations with Enviroenergy regarding the detailed terms and conditions which would apply in respect of a contract with Bolsover District Council. On the basis of information currently available a three year contract would cost a maximum of £40,000 over the period of the contract (assuming that all properties with communal heating are fitted with a meter).

On the basis that these preliminary negotiations demonstrate that the scheme provides best value for the Council then it is recommended that delegated powers be granted to the Head of Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to agree contractual terms and to award the contract for a three year period to Enviroenergy. Members should note that a three year contract will cover the period during which all Sheltered Housing will be remodelled and upgraded to heat meters, which would be an appropriate point in time for the Council to assume responsibility. As part of these outline negotiations, Officers will evaluate whether the proposed terms and conditions from Enviroenergy can be demonstrated to secure value for money for the service.

In recommending that the Council does not obtain competitive tenders in this instance Officers would be relying on the provisions within the Council's Constitution which accept that a competitive process is not appropriate in those instances and where is no or insufficient marketplace to allow an effective competitive process. Officers are therefore seeking an exemption from the Council's Procurement Rules on this basis. This is under 4.8.4 (i)(e) of the Procurement Rules. It should be noted that Enviroenergy is a company wholly owned by Nottingham City Council.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The Safe and Warm Scheme is one of the highest priority scheme within the Housing Department Capital Program and the options outlined within this report will ensure that it progresses within a timely fashion.
- 2.2 An essential part of the upgrades of the heat meters is that the Council makes arrangements for effective monitoring of the service. As Enviroenergy are a local authority concern, are based locally and have the skills and experience required, it is proposed that the Council appoint them as our nominated monitoring service for this scheme.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 While the upgrade of the heating systems themselves continues to be subject to consultation with the Council's tenants, the issues considered within this report are technical ones about how to organise the delivery of the preferred scheme .
- 3.2 The main driver for replacing the current heating system is that they are approaching the end of their usable life and no longer meet tenant expectations. Accordingly an EIA was not considered essential on these matters, although Executive will note that cost effective heating in these schemes will both reduce costs and improve levels of comfort for our tenants. This is of particular relevance in the Sheltered schemes which are targeted at older people and people with

health and disability issues for whom effective heating arrangements are particularly important.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 To select heat meter providers / monitoring services through competitive tender. This approach is not the favoured option as preliminary market assessment has indicated that there are a limited number of suppliers the majority of whom are focussed on the commercial, rather than the sheltered housing market. Market intelligence and initial contact with Enviroenergy has indicated that they have the expertise in dealing with elderly social housing tenants who are the key clients for this scheme and that they would be prepared to offer a three year contract with the option for the Council to bring the scheme in house at the end of this period.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

Capital Provision of £3m has previously been approved as part of the Council's Capital Programme which will fund the upgrade to the sheltered housing schemes as outlined within this report. This investment is necessary both to ensure that sheltered housing continues to meet the 'Decent Homes' criteria and that it remains attractive to tenants and potential tenants thus protecting income levels to the HRA. The revenue costs of operating the heat meters will be charged to residents as part of the costs of operating the communal heating schemes. Given that the upgraded systems will be more economical the overall level of charges to residents will be reduced, however, the costs to some tenants may increase as a result of changes in the charging arrangements to one based upon actual energy usage, or occupying one bedroom flats rather than bedsits.

With respect to risk the key issue that has been identified is that of ensuring that tenants have safe and effective heating arrangements. Communal heating is viewed as the best way of achieving this outcome as the heating systems are based on multiple boilers with sufficient capacity to operate in a situation where one boiler fails. Given that tenants living in the schemes are often vulnerable the work will be planned so as to minimise disruption.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

These are covered in the report.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Executive note the progress on the Safe and Warm Scheme
- 6.2 That Executive grant delegated powers to the Head of Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to agree appropriate terms that provide value for money

and to enter into a contractual arrangement for a period of up to 3 years using the exemption from tendering contained in the Procurement Rules at 4.8.4 (i)(e).

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	
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	To reduce Energy Use in Sheltered Housing schemes to 10% by 2019.

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
Peter Campbell / Bryan Mason	Xt 3038 / 2431

Report Reference –

APPENDIX 1

	Heating	Remodelling	Notes
Alder House	Partial	Yes	
Ashbourne Court *	Yes	Yes	Phase 2 Scheme
Hides Green / Hill Top	Yes		Phase 1 Scheme
Jubilee Court	Yes	Yes	Phase 2 Scheme
Orchard Close	Yes		
Mill Lane	Yes		Excluded from Safe and Warm with individual gas heating already installed
Park View	Yes		
Parkfields *	Yes	Yes	Phase 2 Scheme
Pattison Street	Yes		
Queens Court	Yes		
Recreation Close	Yes		
Sandhills Road	Yes		
The Paddock	Yes		
Valley View *	Yes	Needed	Phase 2 Scheme
Victoria House	Priority	Upgrades	Phase 1 Scheme
Woburn House	Priority	Longer term.	Phase 1 Scheme

Notes:

1. In determining the priority of the schemes the key concern is addressing those schemes with operational difficulties on their existing heating system as a matter of priority. Once these priority concerns have been addressed then Officers are looking to put out the work for tender in the most appropriate package. This should ensure better terms but equally important it will allow the contractors to work on a similar range of schemes thus minimising the inconvenience to tenants.
2. Commencement and completion dates are at this stage indicative and especially in respect of the later phases may evolve as specifications of work are clarified and contracts are put out to tender.