

## Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 27th September, 2007.

**Present:** Cllr Ken Lupton (Chairman) Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Alex Cunningham, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy and Cllr Steve Nelson

**Officers:** G. Garlick (CEO), A. Baxter, J. Morrison (CESC), H. Dean (ACE), G. Cummings, I. Miles, P. Hutchinson (R); J. McCann, M. Robinson, S. Daniels, G. Clingan, S. Thomas, J. Glancey (DNS); M. Waggott, L. Lawty, S. Johnson and M. Henderson (LD)

**Also in attendance:** Councillors Andrew Larkin, Ross Patterson, David Harrington, Kevin Faulks, Maurice Frankland and Mrs Maureen Rigg.

**Apologies:** Councillor Mrs Mary Womphrey

### **CAB 52/07**      **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 5 'Consultation on Building Schools for the Future' as he was a governor at Stockton Borough First Federation and All Saints

Councillor Cook declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 5 'Consultation on Building Schools for the Future' as he was a governor at Blakeston School.

Councillor Nelson declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 5 'Consultation on Building Schools for the Future' as he was a governor at Norton School.

Councillor Frankland declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 5 'Consultation on Building Schopols for the Future' as he was a governor at Norton School.

Councillor Rigg declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 7 'Bus Lanes - Civil Enforcement' as she was a member of Egglecliffe Parish Council which was a consultee in this matter.

Councillor Mrs McCoy declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 9 'The Regeneration of Stockton Parks' as she had been involved in issues relating to the provision of CCTV at John Whitehead Park.

Councillor Nelson declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 15 'Regeneration Strategy for Stockton' as he served on the Tristar Homes Management Board and Tees Valley Unlimited Housing Board.

Councillor Cook declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 15 'Regeneration Strategy for Stockton' as he served on a number of Tees Valley Unlimited's Boards.

Councillor Lupton declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in 'Regeneration Strategy for Stockton' as he served on Tees Valley Airport Management Board.

Councillor Mrs Beaumont declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in 'Regeneration Strategy for Stockton' as she served on Tees Active Management

Board.

Councillor Nelson declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in item 16 'Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan' item as served on the Tristar Homes Management Board.

**CAB  
53/07**      **Britain in Bloom Award**

Prior to considering business detailed on the agenda the Chairman made reference to Stockton's recent success in the Britain in Bloom Competition, by winning the Best City category. The Chairman, on behalf of Members, congratulated and thanked all the staff who had worked toward achieving this significant national award.

**CAB  
54/07**      **Minutes of the meetings held on 2nd August 2007 and 30th August 2007**

The minutes of the meetings held on 2nd August and 30th August were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**CAB  
55/07**      **Local Authority Representatives on School Governing Bodies**

Members considered a report relating to Local Authority Representatives on School Governing Bodies. It was explained that as a result of the expiry of some Governors' Terms of Office and the Resignation of others, vacancies existed on some Governing Bodies. A list of the Governing Bodies and nominations was presented to Members.

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved as Minute 84 of the cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet was invited to consider the nominations to school Governing Bodies.

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made to the vacant Governorships, subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure:-

Bewley Infant School	- Mr W Bean	- Mr R
Sandbach		
Norton Primary School	- Mr R Buckley	
Permanent Governing Body of Roseberry Primary School	- Mr K Davies	
St John the Baptist CE Primary School	- Mrs L Ross	

**CAB  
56/07**      **Consultation on Building Schools for the Future**

Consideration was given to a report that informed Members of the next formal stage for Building Schools for the Future (BSF). The government had approved the Authority's BSF "Readiness to Deliver" document submitted, with Cabinet agreement, in October 2006. The next formal stage in the process would be the preparation of a "Strategy for Change" for submission in summer 2008. It

was explained that the Strategy would cover the entire borough, and officers had opened discussions with government to explore the possibility of treating the borough as a single BSF area rather than two separate waves.

Members were advised that the Strategy must set out how BSF investment, estimated at £150 million for the borough, would be used to transform educational opportunities. A combination of local factors (including falling pupil numbers) and national policy imperatives (particularly the need to increase diversity in the range of school types) would require a different pattern of school provision in the future.

It was noted that BSF funding could not be used to maintain the status quo. Meetings with secondary headteachers and other stakeholders had produced a range of possible options for changes to school organisation. It was emphasised that these were options, not firm proposals, and it was now time to consult more widely on them. It was not suggested that these were the only possible options: new options may emerge during the process. It was noted that no changes to schools could be made as a result of the initial consultation. If formal proposals for change became necessary, Cabinet would be asked to authorise full statutory consultation in due course. Members were provided with a copy of the Future Learning Options booklet and a copy of the consultation strategy for the booklet. Cabinet requested that the proposed date for the distribution of the booklets, to all households, be forwarded to all Members.

Members were advised that the scale and complexity of BSF required input from appropriate external financial, legal, technical and specialist advisors. These could be selected from framework agreements set up by the government's BSF delivery agency following a formal tendering process. The cost of these medium-term contracts would exceed the limit of officer delegation in the Council's procurement strategy (£50,000). Members were therefore asked to delegate appropriate powers to Chief Officers to enter contracts without further reference to Cabinet.

RESOLVED that:-

1. consultation should take place with school governors and staff, parents, carers and pupils, on possible school organisation options for Building Schools for the Future across Stockton-on-Tees.
2. authority to enter contracts with financial, legal, technical and specialist advisors, where the cost of those contracts exceeds the £50,000 limit provided under the Council's procurement strategy, be delegated to the Corporate Director for Children, Education and Social Care, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

**CAB  
57/07**

**Altogether Better  
A Five year strategy for improving the outcomes for children and young people with multiple and complex needs in Stockton on Tees**

Members considered a report that detailed a series of recommendations underpinning a 5 year strategy for improving outcomes for children and young people with complex and multiple needs, following a wide ranging review of services.

The borough of Stockton on Tees was responsible for providing high quality services to 46,000 children and young people. Within that group were 1,800 who had particular needs, either physical, educational or emotional. Approximately 200 children and young people were looked after in public care and 200 were placed on the Child Protection Register.

It was noted that the needs of many of the 46,000 children and young people in Stockton were being met effectively. In order to guarantee an excellent service for all children and young people, it was considered timely to consider a review of provision of services for those with complex needs.

The Government's second Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was due to report in the autumn of 2007. It would set out national spending plans and priorities for the years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11. This CSR report would be informed by a series of policy reviews, one of which was a review of children and young people, building on the Government's strategy to improve their outcomes. A significant strand of this work was the disabled children's review.

Members were advised that the culmination of the national disabled children's review was the report 'Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families (May 2007) which set out a range of actions and proposals to create a local and national focus on promoting the life chances of disabled children and their families. It was expected that the CSR would announce the funding to make the proposals a reality.

It was explained that a significant programme of work and policy reform had been put in place nationally to improve outcomes for disabled children and their families. This had been detailed in the first section of the Complex Needs Review, a copy of which was presented to Members.

It was recognised that locally there were a range of individually effective services in Stockton but that: coordination was sometimes haphazard; structures did not always support effective integration; there were some gaps in services and at times elements of duplication which impacted on cost effectiveness. It was noted that it mirrored the national picture for such services.

Members were advised that the review team set out to audit services for children with multiple and complex needs and their families and make recommendations that would improve outcomes in the following three priority areas:

- Access and empowerment
- Responsive services and timely support
- Improving quality and capacity

The review initiated a phased process to ensure provision of services for children and young people with multiple and complex needs in Stockton-on-Tees were made 'altogether better' with a long term goal of transforming their life chances. It was envisaged the process would have 4 phases. The work undertaken comprised phase 1, the Federation and re-configuration of the special schools and phase 2, the review of broader services for children with multiple and complex needs and corresponding

recommendations. Phases 3 and 4, comprised the action planning and staged implementation of the recommendations.

RESOLVED that:-

Planning, Commissioning, Co-Ordinating and Delivering Services.

1. Stockton Children's Trust Board (CTB) and partners accept and work to the agreed definition of 'multiple and complex needs' presented by this review.
2. a clear and explicit commissioning strategy be developed, to include, for example, direct payments, transitions, early intervention, holidays and short breaks, and person centred planning.
3. a strategic lead for commissioning services for children and young people with multiple and complex needs be identified, to work directly to the Complex Needs Service.
4. multi-agency protocols and agreements be developed across services and agencies, to set out how partners will work together to support children, young people and their families from birth through to transition to adulthood.
5. a single point of contact/central team/base be established to co-ordinate the delivery of complex needs services for children and young people. The central team should include close and explicit partnership with the developing Federation of Special schools in Stockton.
6. the extent to which commissioning responsibility for complex needs remains with the CTB/Council, and the extent to which it goes out, to schools or the Federation, for example, be clarified and agreed.
7. an active database to enable a clear understanding of the population and its needs be established and maintained. The data base must be accessible, able to be interrogated, and co-ordinated, through dedicated MIS time.
8. the protocols surrounding Health Care and Social Care tasks, with a view to achieving better efficiencies and promoting inclusion (clinical governance) be reviewed and refreshed.
9. current eligibility criteria be reviewed and a range of appropriate services for the increasing population of high functioning ASD children and young people within the borough be established.
10. protocols be reviewed and clarity be established with partners in relation to the provision of services for looked after children and young people with complex needs.
11. policy/funding priorities be reviewed in order to establish permanence of funding to support and develop good practice that has previously depended upon grants (for example the highly successful Early Support Key Worker programme).

Communication

12. an information/communication strategy be developed and explicit linkages to the CTB Service Directory, to improve the management of information across and between Services and provide information to families at the point of need be ensured.

13. confidentiality/data sharing protocols across agencies be reviewed and refreshed, and a common process be agreed.

14. protocols and procedures to enable the views of children and young people with multiple and complex needs be developed, to be explicitly embedded within the developing PIC network and service design.

#### Residential / Respite Care

15. the recommendations of the 'Short Break' Unit for Children with disabilities' report be actioned and a new respite/holiday/day care unit to replace current Piper Knowle and Hartburn Lodge provision be commissioned.

16. options for 52 week residential provision as a CESC/Health partnership alongside the Federation and King Edwin school be developed.

#### Workforce Development

17. A robust skills audit, alongside the developing Children's Workforce Development Strategy and ISA development be undertaken, to match workforce development needs to current and future context and population.

18. The key worker system operating within Early Support be supported and embedded, and be extended across the age range and into transition.

19. CPD and training policies be reviewed to ensure SEN and disability training pervades Children's Services staff initial training and continuing professional development.

20. the lead professional role be developed, and the roles and responsibilities of lead professionals as against key workers be distinguished between.

21. a common competency based appraisal system which is applicable across the range of statutory systems currently in operation be developed and agreed across agencies.

#### Council Issues

22. the developing transport strategy pays explicit attention to children and young people with multiple and complex needs.

23. the developing Parenting Strategy pays explicit attention to the needs of families supporting a child or young person with multiple and complex needs.

24. complex Needs Service work with Adult Services to develop and implement effective procedures around person centred planning, to support families and young people on transition from Children's to Adult's Services.

## Referral Systems / Eligibility Criteria

25. CAF be used as the single referral method by all agencies, through to a single multi-agency complex needs panel, sited within the Complex Needs Team.

26. until such time as CAF is operational, all existing referral criteria be cross referenced to the agreed definition of 'complex needs' referred to in the review.

### **CAB 58/07**      **Bus Lanes - Civil Enforcement**

Cabinet considered a report relating to the enforcement of bus lanes as a civil contravention and the introduction of clamping and towing away powers.

Members noted that the Bus Lane Contravention (Penalty Charges, Adjudication and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2005 made provision for the enforcement of bus lane contravention by local authorities. In particular, they provided for penalty charges to be set by local authorities. It was suggested that the Council adopt powers under these regulations.

It was explained that this was one of a number of moving traffic contraventions that could be enforced as a civil matter. Others could include prohibited turns by, or directions of, moving vehicles and yellow box contraventions. It was suggested that future applications for powers to enforce other moving traffic offences be delegated to the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Transport.

Members were provided with details of existing bus lane restrictions and noted that public perceived Police enforcement of the restrictions to be inadequate. Better enforcement would improve compliance and create a number of benefits.

- Improve punctuality of bus services, allowing easier and more consistent journey times.
- Encourage patronage of public transport by reducing duration of travel, particularly during peak traffic periods.
- To improve the environment by encouraging commuters to choose more sustainable forms of travel and thereby reduce CO2 emissions.
- To enhance highway safety by separating alighting bus passengers from other traffic.

In addition, section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 imposed a duty on the Council, as a local traffic authority, to manage its road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable having regard to its other obligations, policies and objectives to secure the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network.

Cabinet was informed that enforcement by the Council would be via the use of camera evidence capture. Penalty charges could be set at £40, £50 or £60.

Should the Council take up civil bus lane enforcement powers, then the National Parking Adjudication Service (NPAS) would deal with appeals against penalty charges. The Council would be required to join the Bus Lane Adjudication

Service Joint Committee, that had appointed NPAS to provide adjudication, and appoint a representative and substitute.

Cabinet noted that when the Council decided to take up Decriminalised Parking Enforcement powers it did not at that time seek to include powers to clamp or tow away. It was now considered appropriate that the Council sought consent to remove or to immobilise vehicles and to advertise a scale of charges.

It was explained that removal by towing away or lifting of a vehicle in contravention of a traffic regulation order could not be undertaken lightly. In most cases it would not be proportional to the misdemeanour. In addition to the penalty charge notice the motorist would face fees for removal and storage of the vehicle. However, a vehicle contravening a bus lane order or an order in a high traffic volume street could have more serious implications than at other, less sensitive locations.

Members were provided with financial and legal implications associated with adoption and enforcement of the powers.

Members agreed the adoption of the regulations and requested that an article be placed in Stockton News explaining the new Council powers and providing guidance to motorists.

RESOLVED that:-

1. it be agreed that officers, in addition to actions by the police, take on enforcement of bus lanes as a civil contravention.
2. the charge for the penalty amount for keepers of vehicles recorded as contravening the regulations be set at £60
3. the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into an agreement with the Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee.
4. the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport be appointed as the Council's representative to serve on the Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee, with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Social Inclusion acting as substitute.
5. powers be obtained for contraventions of traffic orders to be dealt with by clamping or by removal of the vehicle when appropriate.
6. the Head of Technical Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport, be authorised to seek powers to enforce other moving traffic offences, if deemed appropriate, in the future.

**CAB  
59/07**

### **Play Area Strategy 2007 - 2010**

Cabinet considered a proposed Play Area Strategy 2007 – 2010. The Strategy was a companion document to Stockton's Play Strategy 2007 – 2012 which was approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 2nd August 2007.

It was explained that the Strategy focused on one key aspect of play provision:



sites with fixed play equipment which were accessible free of charge at all reasonable times. It referred to 38 such sites across the Borough. These were mainly under the ownership and management of Stockton Borough Council, but others bodies such as parish councils also owned and manage facilities. The Strategy did not refer to play equipment within school grounds or other locations not accessible to the wider public.

Following an audit of the Borough's play areas in 1998 it was recommended that the Council adopted a hierarchy of play area sites as a basis for targeting resources effectively. This hierarchy was recognised in this strategy and comprised:

- Destination sites – well-equipped play areas within parks, which served a large catchment area and offered a good range of supporting facilities such as toilets and refreshments.
- Neighbourhood sites – again, well-equipped areas within parks, but with fewer supporting facilities.
- Doorstep Sites – smaller, stand-alone play areas which had a limited range of equipment and served a local catchment area.

Over recent years the Council had removed facilities at a number of Doorstep Sites where these had become out-dated, under-used, damaged or superseded by new provision in the same neighbourhood. This new Strategy re-stated the broad principle that the Council would focus resources for play areas primarily into the development of Destination and Neighbourhood Sites, while ensuring all equipped play areas were subject to an agreed inspection programme and were maintained to a high standard.

This approach was in line with proposals set out in a parallel report to Cabinet on the Regeneration of Stockton's Parks , to be considered later in this meeting. This report made recommendations for how the £500,000 capital fund allocation for parks should be utilised, with some of those funds being made available to support the development of play facilities at Destination Sites.

It was noted that under the Play Strategy Action Plan, a separate funding bid had been submitted to the Big Lottery Fund Children's' Play Programme for the development of Play Facilities at Romano Park, Ingleby Barwick, as part of a larger package of projects across the Borough.

It was explained that the Council had developed nine strategic objectives which it would seek to achieve through implementation of the Strategy. These were set out in Section 6 of the Strategy.

Cabinet was informed that Stockton's Open Space Audit process provided an opportunity to further develop the evidence base to shape the future development of the strategy and informed implementation. The Council's existing Open Space Audit provided an assessment of open space provision across the Borough, including play areas. However, no work had yet been undertaken to assess local need for different types of open space. This 'needs assessment' would be completed by May 2008 and would form an essential step in the process of setting local standards for the provision of play areas and other types of open space.

In addition the Council had made a commitment to “develop a new strategic vision for parks and greenspaces”, as set out in the Council Plan 2007-2010: this would provide the context for any future strategy revision.

Subject to the approval of the Children’s Trust Board and the Stockton Play Partnership it proposed that by 2009/10 the ‘Play Area’ and ‘Play’ Strategies should be brought together into a single document. Linked to this the Council would also produce a comprehensive ‘Play Area Action Plan’, informed by the on-going Open Space Audit

As with the Play Strategy there had been no specific public consultation carried out in relation to this specific document. Rather it had been informed by the Council’s on-going consultation processes which had effectively engaged with children and young people and adults over recent years. This included a Viewpoint Questionnaire on Play Areas completed in November 2006.

Members noted that the final version of this document would be made available to the public, and the Council would consult locally on the implementation of any specific proposals set out in the ‘Priorities for Development’ Appendix to the Strategy, following the guidance set out in the corporate Consultation Strategy.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the Play Area Strategy 2007-2010 be approved.
2. the specific proposals outlined in Appendix 1 of the Strategy be approved, to be delivered as and when funding is made available: from existing budgets, via external partners or contributions, or subject to subsequent bids for additional Council resources.
3. subject to the approval of the Children’s Trust Board and the Stockton Play Partnership, Cabinet supports the integration of the ‘Play Area Strategy’ and ‘Play Strategy’ into a single document by 2009/10. Linked to this Strategy, the Council would produce a comprehensive ‘Play Area Action Plan’, informed by the revised Play Strategy and the Council’s Open Space Audit.
4. a progress report on this current Play Area Strategy is presented to Cabinet in Autumn 2008.
5. it is noted that the report on the Regeneration of Stockton’s Parks, also presented at this meeting, recommends that existing capital funds be allocated to the development of some key ‘Destination Sites’ identified within the Strategy.

**CAB  
60/07**

### **The Regeneration of Stockton's Parks**

Members considered a report relating to the regeneration of parks within the Borough

Members agreed that well-managed, accessible and diverse parks made a significant contribution towards quality of life, helping to make the Borough an attractive place to live, work and visit.

It was explained that the development of parks and greenspaces contributed to a wide agenda, relating to all five core themes within Stockton's Community Strategy.

Cabinet noted that in 2007 Stockton Borough Council was awarded four Green Flags for Ropner Park, Billingham Beck Country Park, Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park and Wynyard Woodland Park. Continuous improvement and development of Stockton's parks would help to achieve the Council's target of five Green Flags by 2009.

The successful implementation of the Council's 'Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Strategy 2001-2005' had seen the regeneration of the three Thornaby Parks, the £3.5 million restoration of Ropner Park and significant improvements to Tilery Park, Primrose Hill Park and the Great North Park. Newham Grange Park had recently had a new £200,000 play area installed.

Members were reminded that in February 2007 Cabinet approved the commitment of £500,000 expenditure to finance the on-going development and regeneration of Stockton's parks as part of the Council's Medium Term Capital Plan. The proposed projects were:-

- creation of a new park in Ingleby Barwick (Romano Park);
- continued redevelopment of Newham Grange Park;
- redevelopment of John Whitehead Park in Billingham;
- a new approach to play provision at Wynyard Woodland Park.

Further details of the proposed projects were provided to Members, together with information on the financial and legal implications.

The current funding (including external match funding) would be used to deliver discrete projects, providing significant benefits in their own right. However, each project also formed a component of a broader master plan or development plan for each site, delivery of which would be phased over a period of years.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the commitment of £500,000 for park regeneration projects as detailed in this report be approved.
2. it be agreed that any secured external funding should be used to support delivery of the schemes, and additional external funding sought where possible.

**CAB**  
**61/07**      **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of a meeting of an Area Partnership Board.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the minutes of the following Area Partnership Board be received/approved, as appropriate:-

**CAB  
62/07**     **ICT Strategy**

Cabinet considered the ICT Strategy and the need for funds required to “pump prime” it.

Cabinet was informed that the Council had delivered its ICT services without having an overall strategy in place. Although this had been successful and achieved national e-government targets, the implementation of major systems, the certification to the international standards and very good performance in national benchmarking, it had meant that investments had been made on a tactical basis as opposed to being part of an overall strategic approach. Therefore, in the main, ICT investments had been made on a departmental projects basis as services promoted their own agendas. Although successful in implementation, this approach had delivered a large programme of predominantly service based ICT systems.

The development of technology was now so integral to the organisation it was time to ensure that a more robust strategic approach to ICT was utilised to drive through and deliver the changes required to meet the challenging agendas which faced the Council. Hence the need for an ICT Strategy.

The strategy would raise the profile and awareness of the importance of ICT investments and the governance which surrounded these, including benefits realisation. The strategy would also provide a robust and reliable technology architecture underpinning the Council which also acted as an enabler and catalyst for service delivery both within the Council and across its partners.

It was explained that the development of an ICT Strategy, external input was used to provide market intelligence and input on best practice in both public and private sectors. Facilitated sessions were held with the key stakeholders of CMT and all Service Group Management Teams. Individual meetings were also held with the Corporate Directors and Chief Executive. These sessions were aimed at gaining a wider understanding of service requirements and existing practice, and provided a challenge to views and processes. Ultimately a vision was extracted and developed, identifying actions for both ICT and the wider governance framework in which it operated. Through facilitation and information sharing with all Service Groups, the ICT Strategy had been developed from the requirements of the Service Improvement Plans, Business Unit Plans and the Council Plan which these ultimately supported. The strategy was endorsed by the Extended Management Team (CMT and Heads of Service)

The Strategy was provided to Members for consideration. In summary, it stated an overall aim of achieving improved strategic ICT investment and maximising the benefits in the following areas:

- § Secure remote and mobile working technologies at network and client levels
- § Sound and scalable technical ICT; designed to deliver integration
- § Robust information management and workflow across the Council and with our partners

Maximising the benefits from strategic ICT investments was both by the service areas themselves, in their drive to deliver service based improvements, and by the Council as a whole as it delivered complex partnering and change agendas. To deliver on these aims the strategy identified key themes for further development:

§ ICT Service Restructure – As part of the Stockton Darlington Partnership

§ ICT Governance - Adopting a set of strategic principles which would form the basis of the Council's ICT governance framework

§ ICT Investment – Funding strategic infrastructure and systems

§ Business Change Programme – Maximising the use of and exploiting the Council's new infrastructure and systems

Members noted that the ICT Strategy identified a number of initial capital and on-going revenue costs in relation to investments in technologies totalling £11.85m over a ten year period. However, the two areas of Client Technologies and Home Working were anticipated to be cash neutral as they displace existing costs within services. These represented £9.8m of the overall total.

The two remaining areas requiring investment were therefore; Workflow and Mobility Technologies. The business cases when developed for each would examine the detail of these investments, associated service improvements and savings. Currently the costs associated with these two areas had been estimated at £750K capital.

RESOLVED that

1. the ICT Strategy be approved.
2. Members consider the funding requirements of the ICT Strategy when approving the medium term financial plan and during the budget setting process.

**CAB  
63/07**

## **CORPORATE ASSESSMENT 2007 – SELF ASSESSMENT**

Cabinet considered a report relating to the 'corporate assessment' the Council would be subject to in December 2007 as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

Members noted that as part of the preparation for the Corporate Assessment, the Audit Commission required the Council to complete a self assessment document for submission to the inspection team. The self assessment would form the principal reference point for the corporate assessment. The information and evidence that it provided would be used to help inform judgements made by the assessment team and decisions regarding the scope and focus of its team's on-site field work.

It was explained that the self assessment must include what the Council considered its scores were for each theme, be analytical and evidence based.

The Council had to demonstrate:

- That it was self aware of its current position in terms of local context and capacity to deliver improved outcomes for local people.

- A clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities it faced and a realistic evaluation of strengths and weaknesses

The Self Assessment would be based on a set of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) which provided a framework to assess the Council against five key themes, under three headline questions:

- What was the Council, together with its partners trying to achieve?

Theme 1 – Ambition for the community

Theme 2 – Prioritisation

- What was the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it was trying to achieve?

Theme 3 – Capacity

Theme 4 – Performance Management

- What had been achieved?

Theme 5 – Achievement; broken down into five sub themes:

- o Sustainable communities and transport

- o Safer and stronger Communities

- o Healthier communities

- o Older people

- o Children and young people (the Council was not required to include this area in the self assessment as the Joint Area Review of Children's Services was happening at the same time and would provide evidence for this theme of the corporate assessment)

In addition to the Key Lines of Enquiry themes, the self assessment included a context and summary section, which detailed the following:

- Locality information and operating context (economic and business opportunities and challenges relevant to the shared priorities; information about major initiatives, projects or pilots that the council or its partners were doing; information about the key features of the community – demography, deprivation, diversity etc – and how this impacted on the council)

- Contextual information about the council (decision making structures; key partnerships, arrangements or frameworks for joint working or delivery; arrangements for undertaking research, consultation and engagement; financial resources)

Members noted that work on drafting the self assessment against the Key Lines of Enquiry had included consultation, engagement and feedback from many sources including members, officers and partners. To support the self

assessment the Audit Commission also required key documentation and supporting evidence to be submitted. The self assessment was supported by evidence which had been subject to a rigorous quality assurance process to ensure all evidence supported both the key lines of enquiry and the self assessment.

A copy of the self assessment was provided to members for consideration

Cabinet noted that there was a requirement for the self assessment to be scored. Each theme could be scored with a maximum of 4 points. These 5 scores would then be combined using a set of rules to produce an overall Corporate Assessment Score. The rules were as follows;

- 2 or more themes with a score of 4 and none less than a score of 3 will score 4
- 3 or more with a score of 3 or more and none with less than a score of 2 will score 3
- 3 or more with a score of 2 or more will score 2
- Any other combination will score 1

Detailed below were the Council's proposed scores for each theme:

- Ambition for the community - 4
- Prioritisation - 4
- Capacity - 3
- Performance management - 4
- Achievement -4

If achieved then this would produce a Corporate Assessment score of 4. The Corporate Assessment score would then be combined with other service block scores to provide the authority with an overall CPA rating.

Members noted that the Self Assessment and supporting evidence had to be submitted to the Audit Commission by the 15th October 2007. Following on from this, there was an analysis week which would include a tour of the Borough and a round table meeting where the inspection focus would be discussed in further detail. Details of these dates and those leading up to the publication of the final report were provided:-

- Self Assessment Submission 15/10/07
- Analysis week w/c 12/11/07
- On site inspection 2 weeks commencing 3/12/07
- Draft report to Council 30/01/08
- Comments back to team leader 13/02/08
- Pre publication report to council 14/03/08
- Latest date to request a review 11/04/08
- Publication 22/04/08

RESOLVED that

1. the draft self assessment and scores for each theme be agreed.
2. the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be delegate authority to make any further changes to the self assessment, prior to

its submission to the Audit Commission in October.

**CAB 64/07 PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q1, 2007/8  
Quarter Ended April – June 2007**

Members considered a report that outlined the Council's performance for the period Quarter 1 – April – June 2007, providing details of performance against targets and improvement trends. The report included the linkages between finance, performance and corresponding risks and performance against the Corporate Basket of key performance indicators, Gershon Efficiency Savings, complaints and commendations, research and consultation, sharing of good practice, undertaken during Quarter 1.

Members noted that with regard to the Corporate Basket, results showed good progress with 88% of the reported targets being achieved and 71% showing an improvement trend from the same period last year.

With regard to Gershon efficiency savings it was explained that the Council position after Quarter 1 was projected to be in excess of the 2.5% annual requirement.

Cabinet were informed that complaints over Quarter 1 had reduced from the same time last year.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**CAB 65/07 Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations**

Cabinet was informed that it was a requirement of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 for the Council to undertake and complete a review of all polling districts, polling places and polling stations in the Borough by 31 December 2007.

Stockton had recently undertaken this review and this report presented Cabinet with proposed changes coming from it.

Members noted details of the review process and consultation. Consultees included all Members, Parish Clerks, Disability access groups, Viewpoint Focus groups and BME representatives. Advice was also sought from In addition a compulsory submission was received from the Returning Officer which was required to focus on

- Access for all electors
- Facilities for the required staff, tables booths and notices

Cabinet was provided with a copy of the Returning Officer's Submission as well as details of all the responses received from the consultees.

It was explained that all of the detailed representations had been taken into account and had informed the proposals contained within the report at Appendix 4.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the report be noted and the changes



proposed in the Appendix 4 of the report be approved.

**CAB      Regeneration Strategy for Stockton 2007 - 2012**

**66/07**

Members considered a report that set out a Regeneration Strategy for the Borough. The strategy took the 'place' theme as its key emphasis, and set out a programme of physical development across the Borough, which would drive economic and social regeneration. It was one of a number of daughter strategies to the Sustainable Community Strategy, and in particular needed to be consistent with the emerging Local Development Framework.

It was explained that the Regeneration Strategy collated the vision of the many regeneration projects which had already been endorsed by Cabinet, and those which would continue to be in the future, from a longer term strategic direction that demonstrated Stockton's strategic fit both nationally and regionally. It would dovetail into and compliment the Local Development Framework (LDF) and more specifically, the Regeneration Development Plan Document (DPD) when adopted.

Members noted that there was no statutory requirement to publish a Regeneration Strategy. However, with such scale and ambition to the Council's regeneration vision it was an opportunity to bring everything together and demonstrate both locally, sub regionally and nationally, that Stockton-on-Tees was a Borough of exciting and transformational change.

The draft Regeneration Strategy was provided to Members. It set out the achievements made by the Borough and its partners in regeneration over the last 10 – 15 years. It then set out the significant opportunities that existed in terms of redeveloping and transforming the Borough and identified Key Ambitions for doing this.

The Borough was building on its major assets, through physical regeneration focussed on the River corridor, the Town Centres and the redevelopment of the older housing areas. Significantly, many of the major regeneration proposals were located in the most deprived wards, creating local opportunities for residents.

The Regeneration Strategy provided a detailed overview of all of the individual projects which would contribute to the successful delivery of the Council's Key Ambitions.

It was explained that the Regeneration Strategy was a delivery-focused document. All of the individual projects within it had their own project plans, which would be used to monitor progress on a quarterly basis, as part of the Council's performance management framework. The success of the Regeneration Strategy would be measured against a number of key measures and reported to Cabinet and Renaissance annually. Details of the measures were provided to Members.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the Regeneration Strategy for Stockton 2007– 2012.

**CAB      Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan.**

**67/07**

Members considered a report that sought approval of the Council's updated Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan.

It was explained that the planning and management of capital resources and assets was becoming more prevalent and developing a higher priority both locally and nationally, not least to attract investment to regenerate the Borough and develop economic capacity. A strong approach was essential to ensure that resources were directed to the most appropriate areas, external investment was maximised and assets were utilised to the maximum capacity.

The Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan was a strategic planning documents, which outlined the Council's approach to capital investment and asset management. The Capital Strategy detailed how the physical investments and priorities outlined in the Community Strategy and Council Plan would be delivered.

The document encapsulated the various regeneration schemes, housing initiatives, Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and a range of other secure developments within the Borough, all of which linked with the vision outlined in the Council Plan. It covered partnership working and external investment as well as the planned allocation of Council resources and the mechanisms within the Council for prioritising and monitoring capital spend.

It also outlined the approach to management and upkeep of the assets owned by the Council, the current maintenance backlog and the mechanisms for resolving this.

The documents linked directly with a range of other plans and strategies prepared by the Council i.e.

- Council Plan
- Regeneration Strategy
- BSF Strategy
- Local Transport Plan

In preparing the documents, a review of performance measures for asset management, had been undertaken and the proposed measures were included in the revised plan. The monitoring of performance against those indicators would be incorporated into the Council's Performance Management Framework.

Members were provided with a copy of the Strategy and Plan for consideration.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Capital Strategy and Asset Management plan be approved.

**CAB  
68/07**

#### **Exclusion of Public**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**CAB  
69/07**

## **Billingham Town Centre**

Members considered a report that provided a formal progress update on the developments associated with the sale of the Council's freehold interest in Billingham Town Centre and sought approval to complete a public consultation on the public realm / landscaping details of the proposed town centre regeneration scheme. The report also requested approval for the use of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Powers to assist the town centre owners to acquire any 3rd party interest required for a regeneration scheme.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the sale of the Council's freehold interest in Billingham Town Centre be noted.
2. a Council led, further phase of public consultation on the public realm / landscaping details of the scheme, in conjunction with the Billingham Partnership and Halladale, be approved
3. if required, the Council use its Compulsory Purchase Powers to assist Halladale in the acquisition of any 3rd party interests required for the scheme.