

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 8th July, 2010.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey

Officers: J. Danks, G. Cummings, L. King, J. Spittle, V. Rutland, A. Kelly (R); P. Dobson, J. McCann, M. Chicken, R. Poundford, S. Daniels, P. Diggins, C. Starughan (DNS); J. Humphreys, S. Willson (CESC), D. Bond, M. Henderson (LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr Maureen Rigg

Apologies: Cllr Ken Lupton

CAB 30/10

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Review of Tees Valley Unlimited as he was a member of the Visit Tees Valley Board.

All Cabinet Members present declared a personnel non prejudicial interest in the item 'Member's Allowance scheme 2011/12' as they were entitled to receive allowances under the scheme.

Councillor Mrs Rigg declared a personnel non prejudicial interest in the item 'Member's Allowance scheme 2011/12' as she was entitled to receive allowances under the scheme.

CAB 31/10

LA nominations

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved at Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet were requested to approve the nominations to school Governing Bodies as detailed within the report.

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

Eggescliffe – Mrs K Ward (School Nomination)

Eggescliffe CE Primary – Mrs J Johnson (LD)

Mandale Mill Primary – Mrs P Oldfield (School Nomination)

CAB 32/10

Economic Climate Update Report

Cabinet considered a monthly update report providing members with an overview of the current economic climate, outlining the effects that this was having on Stockton Borough, and the mitigations already in place and those being developed.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work being

undertaken supported.

**CAB
33/10** **Review of Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU)**

Cabinet considered a report setting out progress made to date on the review of Tees Valley Unlimited and sought endorsement of the work undertaken and proposed next steps.

It was explained that the main proposals of the review, which were endorsed by the TVU Leadership Board on 10th June 2010 were:

- TVU to continue as a Public Private Partnership with additional Board members from One North East and the Homes and Community Agency.
- that a new Investment Board be established to develop and manage the integrated Investment Plan.
- Task and Finish Groups would replace the existing sub boards.
- A New Managing Director, equivalent to a LA Corporate Director, reporting to the Board and Chair, to be appointed to drive forward the organisation.
- The establishment of a detailed transition process, with the involvement of partners, to establish the new organisation. Members were provided with a copy of the transition plan.

Members were provided with details of the recommended way forward and principles that would guide the delivery of the proposals. Members also noted the types of functions and core activities TVU would provide.

It was explained that TVU would be a higher level, light touch organisation, with specific focussed objectives on economic growth. TVU would be likely to have fewer, but more highly skilled staff, and would operate on the basis of not carrying generic in-house capacity other than where more effective and efficient to do so. TVU would have clear and agreed governance and accountability to its core funding partners.

Members noted that implementation of the review proposals was likely to produce savings for the organisation, as a whole, of 15% over three years. However, the exact level of savings might be greater depending upon the final level and numbers of staff, which would be determined as the detailed transition work moved forward.

RESOLVED that:-

1. progress be noted.
2. that the revised TVU organisation and appointment of a new Managing Director be supported
3. the proposed next steps and the delivery of the detailed transition plan be

noted.

**CAB
34/10** **Clarences Farm**

Cabinet was invited to consider proposals for the ownership and management of the Clarences Community Farm to be taken over by Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd in partnership with Billingham Partnership and the Billingham Environmental Link Programme (BELP) so as to use the facility as a community resource to lever in funding and investment with long term proposals to turn the site into training facility to deliver work based and vocational training.

It was noted that the facility had for many years been a major feature of the Clarences occupying a good location within easy access for residents with the potential to play a greater roll in providing training to the local and wider community. In recent years, it had however been subject to scrutiny due to foot and mouth and the threat of Ecoli had resulted in the temporary closure of the farm until a decision as to the future viability had been agreed. Visitor figures were low in comparison to other attractions within the borough and the farm was considered to be in need of significant capital investment, with internal and external facilities being old, worn and damaged as a result of vandalism.

Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd and BELP had agreed common business objectives for the development of the Clarences Farm and proposed a partnership arrangement for the future management of the facility, linking this with other community facilities in the area, such as the Clarences Allotments site. The proposals focussed upon the long term development of a Centre of Excellence, delivering work based and on site vocational training relative to the existing environmental, land based and recycling industries and emerging eco and energy enterprises. The farm and surrounding areas would be secured by Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd using staff funded through the Future Jobs Fund and through the appointment of a Project Manager. The first stages of the plans would be to utilise the farm facility to address some of the most pressing community issues in line with the BELP programme.

Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd had also developed a relationship with Saltholme Nature Reserve, Prior Pursglove College and Askham Bryan Agricultural college with the aim of establishing a programme of vocational training and related educational opportunities that play to the strengths of the partners in the area of environment, animal management, horticulture and equine studies. Saltholme had agreed to the extension of the grazing land/buffer zone as a means of addressing key issues such as, alleviating problems with horses and livestock on the allotments through the provision of good quality grazing land. This provided benefit to the community from the reserve, assisting in the development of the allotment site for horticulture and providing land and facilities required for the delivery of Environmental bases studies in line with the BELP programme. Resources had also been secured to employ 22 community caretakers, with 8 of these deployed to the Clarences to provide support in addressing issues, such as security, maintenance, fly tipping, allotment issues, management and community cohesion.

Council budget provision of £100,000 was currently in place for the facility and it was proposed that the 2010/2011 budget up to £100,000 be used to support the

partnerships first year development and set up costs, and from year 2 onwards, a recurring EIT saving of £100,000 per annum for the Authority would be realized to offset any costs thereon. Terms for the disposal of the land to Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd had been negotiated in recognition of the benefit that Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd, together with BELP, could bring to the community and the Borough by retaining and enhancing the facility for community use.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Cabinet approve the transfer of the land at Clarences Community Farm to Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd in partnership with Billingham Partnerships Environmental Link Programme known as (BELP) at an undervalue and Heads of terms for the sale of the land with Know How North East be delegated to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources and Director of Law and Democracy, such terms to ensure the provision of the services substantially in line with the submitted report and restrict the future sale of the land by Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd to ensure it remains of benefit to the community.
2. Cabinet agree the use of 2010/2011 budget up to £100,000 to assist Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd with the establishment costs of the project as a one-off sum.
3. Cabinet note the recurring £100,000 per annum saving to the Council of these proposals from 2011/12 onwards.

**CAB
35/10**

Carbon Management - Annual Report

Cabinet considered a report that presented progress made in the delivery of the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan and detailed planned actions for 2010/11.

Members were reminded that first year of the carbon management programme had focussed on some 'quick wins' resulting in a 7% carbon reduction. As the programme moved into its second year, it became clear that achieving the projected carbon savings would be challenging, particularly in an environment where there was a constant upward pressure on electricity consumption, for example increased use of ICT and increased opening hours of schools and Council buildings.

Despite this the carbon management programme was projecting carbon savings for the 2009-10 to be in the region of 8%, demonstrating a continued trend to achieving the Council's target of a 25% reduction by 2013. However, there had been several in year variables which had perhaps slanted this figure. These included the severely cold winter requiring extended heating in Council facilities and the fact that Billingham Forum, one of the largest contributors, had been offline. A comparison to a normal year's operation was being developed to understand what the actual carbon reduction would have been without those variables.

Cabinet was provided with details of progress made against the Strategy and Implementation Plan and new activities that were contributing to the programme objectives. Details of how Salix funding had been spent was also provided as were details of planned actions for 2010/11

RESOLVED that:-

1. the progress made in the delivery of the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan be noted.
2. the planned actions for 2010/11 to continue delivery of the programme be noted.

**CAB
36/10** **Update on EIT Review of Facilities Management**

Cabinet considered a report that provided an update on the progress in implementing the aims and recommendations outlined in the EIT review of Property and Facilities Management and presented proposals for phase one of organisational structure requirements in response to the agreed operating model.

Cabinet were reminded of the recommendations it had agreed in December 2009, coming from the EIT review of Facilities Management.

An action plan, that had been developed for the delivery of the recommendations was detailed.

Members were reminded that the proposed operating model was the consolidation of management arrangements and responsibilities of all buildings (excluding schools) and that there should be a clear distinction between the delivery and strategic arms of facilities management. It was essential that structures were developed that would deliver the agreed operating model and Cabinet considered phase one of the proposed structures relating to facilities management:-

The delivery element of Facilities Management, which included facilities management, building services, architects, land and property, planned maintenance would be integrated within Technical Services. This would require the transfer of some services and staff from CESC and Resources.

Given this key change and the need to drive the action plan implementation it was considered an opportune time to fill the post of Head of Technical Services and it was proposed to advertise this post internally as soon as possible. A Members appointment panel would be established in the normal way.

It was also proposed that finalisation of the details of the functional changes to the job role, including the further development of the job description and determination of the grade for the post, once evaluated, be delegated to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services in agreement with the Head of Human Resources.

The proposed changes to the organisational structure would allow the release of up to £50k efficiencies by confirming the alternative management arrangements beneath the Head of Service position.

Members noted that the feasibility of delivering Land & Property, Valuers and Facilities Management services in partnership with Darlington Borough Council was being explored. This work was expected to be complete by the autumn, at which point a detailed Business Case would be prepared for consideration by Cabinet. Upon completion of this a final Operating Model would be determined. It was important however, that work progressed in the short term to ensure momentum was maintained and the potential savings identified in the EIT review were delivered.

It was explained that the Strategic Asset Management function was delivered was delivered in two areas, Resources and CESC. This function would be amalgamated and be delivered by the Finance & Assets Service within Resources. This would ensure that all capital, asset and investment planning was within one area, consolidate strategic work and align this with financial planning.

RESOLVED that:-

1. progress of phase 1 implementation of the agreed operating model be noted.
2. the action plan and work to date on investigating partnership options be noted.
3. the Head of Technical Services post be amended to reflect the functional changes to the job role and that the post be confirmed on a permanent basis.
4. the finalisation of the details of the changes, including the further development of the job description and determination of the grade for the post of Head of Technical Services, once evaluated to reflect the functional changes, be delegated to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services in agreement with the Head of Human Resources.
5. the arrangements for the appointment to the post of Head of Technical Services be agreed.

**CAB
37/10** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of various bodies.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings, attached, be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Tees Valley Unlimited Leadership Board - 31 March 2010
Western Area Partnersership Board - 24 May 2010

**CAB
38/10** **Employee Engagement**

Members considered a report detailing a range of measures, currently in place

or in the process of development, which had been designed to promote Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council as an employer of choice and improve the working lives of its employees.

The importance of engaging employees had been well researched and showed that those organisations that were annually ranked as being the best to work for were also ranked among those that were the most profitable with lower absenteeism, greater productivity, lower employee turnover and greater efficiency savings. Being perceived as a good employer was also important in terms of recruitment and retention, particularly in areas where there were increasing workload pressures such as in Children's social care. Members noted measures that were part of a long term core strategy taking a balanced approach to developing a range of measures for employees, which would provide good value for money. Measures included

- Back Care Programme and Physiotherapy Service
- Flexible Working
- Salary Sacrifice
- Long Service Awards
- Employee suggestion scheme

Members requested that all members be advised of staff receiving long service awards. It was also suggested that names appear in Keeping You In Touch.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CAB 39/10 Duty to Respond to Petitions-Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009

Consideration was given to proposed amendments to the Council's procedures for responding to petitions in the light of a new duty introduced to local authorities by the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009.

The Act contained wide ranging provisions aimed at reinvigorating local democracy, including the Duty to Respond to Petitions. Statutory guidance in relation to this duty was issued by the previous Government on the 25th March 2010 and set out a requirement for local authorities to have adopted a petition scheme from the 15th June 2010; and to have implemented an electronic petition (E-Petition Scheme) by the 15th December 2010. The new duty therefore now made it a statutory requirement for local authorities to respond to petitions and to tell local people what action was going to be taken to address their concerns and sought to ensure that everyone, no matter where they live, would easily be able to find information about how to petition their local authority, and would know what to expect from their local authority in response.

The Act stipulated some minimum standards required of the petition scheme, such as:-

- i) anyone who lives, works or studies in the local authority area, including under 18's can sign or organise a petition and trigger a response;
- ii) a facility for making electronic petitions must be provided by the local

authority (a requirement as from 15th December 2010);

iii) petitions must be acknowledged within a time period specified by the local authority;

iv) among the many possible steps that the principal local authority may choose to take in response to a petition, the following steps must be included amongst the options listed in the scheme:-

- taking the action requested in the petition,

- considering the petition at a meeting of the authority,

- holding an inquiry,

- holding a public meeting,

- commissioning research,

- a written response to the petition organiser setting out the authority's views on the request in the petition,

- referring the petition to an overview and scrutiny committee.

v) petitions with a significant level of support trigger a debate of the full Council. (Councils will determine this threshold locally but it must be no higher than 5% of the local population.);

vi) petitions with a requisite level of support, set by the local authority, trigger a senior local government officer to give evidence at a meeting of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee(s);

vii) petition organisers can prompt a review of the local authority's response if the response is felt to be inadequate.

The Act also required top tier authorities to respond to petitions which relate to an improvement in the economic, social or environmental well-being of the authority's area to which any of its partner authorities could contribute. Therefore, these local authorities, including Stockton, must deal with petitions which relate to the functions of partner authorities as well as petitions which relate to their own functions; including petitions which are sub-regional and cross-authority.

The following matters were excluded from the scope of the petitions duty:-

- any matter relating to a planning decision, including about a development plan document or the community infrastructure levy;

- any matter relating to an alcohol, gambling or sex establishment licensing decision;

- any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal

conferred by or under any enactment

-petitions calling for evidence from an officer are excluded from the requirement to hold a debate at full Council.

Whilst generally it was assumed that a Council would respond to every petition it received, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) advocated that a threshold of 50 signatures be set as the minimum amount required before the Council would regard the petition as falling within the parameters of the duty to respond.

Section 15 of the Act required that petitions which received a significant level of support should be debated at a meeting of the full Council. Principal local authorities were required to set out in their petition scheme the number of signatures needed to trigger a debate as part of the authority's response. Should the petition organizer be not satisfied with the way an authority has dealt with a petition, he/she may subsequently ask the authority's overview and scrutiny committee to review that authority's response. In Stockton's case, it was proposed that the overview and scrutiny committee would be the Executive Scrutiny Committee (ESC) unless Council, as part of its response to the petition, had already requested it to carry out a review of the matter, in which case the matter would be referred to an appropriate Select Committee. In considering an appropriate threshold for triggering a full Council debate, and following comparison with thresholds being set by other local authorities in the region, it was proposed that the threshold be set at 2000 signatures, approximately 1% of the population and in line with guidance set by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

A further key provision of the legislation was the right for local people to petition for a senior member of Council staff to attend a public meeting of an overview and scrutiny committee and answer questions about their work. The Act therefore provided that local authorities must determine which of their officers are able to be called to account in this way and for such details to be included in their petition scheme. As a minimum requirement, schemes must provide that the head of paid service (the Chief Executive) and the most senior officers responsible for the delivery of services, be required to provide information on their activities at public meetings of the Executive Scrutiny Committee, and in Stockton's case it was proposed that officers of the Corporate Management Team (or nominated substitute) be deemed eligible to be required to give evidence and that the threshold for triggering such a requirement be set at 1,000 signatures (0.5% of the population), again in line with the recommended practice of the DCLG.

If a petition organiser is not satisfied with the way an authority has dealt with a petition, he/she may ask an overview and scrutiny committee to review that authority's response. It was proposed that in Stockton's case, the Executive Scrutiny Committee be delegated responsibility for carrying out such a review, provided that the matter had not already been considered by this Committee. In such cases it was proposed that the petition review be carried out by the most appropriate Select Committee to be determined by the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the relevant Committee Chair and/or Vice Chair.

The DCLG had drafted a model scheme setting out how an authority may

decide to implement the duty to respond to petitions and this model was considered appropriate upon which to base this authority's own scheme and details of this Council's proposed scheme, containing the threshold proposals, were submitted. To date, there had been little co-ordination of the authority's response to petitions received however, in order to ensure accountability for the authority's responsiveness to petitions received, it was proposed that the Head of Democratic Services be now designated as the Council's responsible officer for the receipt, recording and acknowledgement of petitions received and for ensuring that the authority's response to any petitions received was in accordance with its approved scheme with reasons given for any decisions/action taken, including any reasons for not accepting petitions, eg as a result of them being considered vexatious, abusive or otherwise. The proposed designation of the Head of Democratic Services Officer as the responsible officer for receiving, recording, acknowledging and rejecting any petitions received, would assist the Council to monitor the effectiveness of its petition scheme and its responsiveness to the new duty introduced; and it was therefore proposed that the Head of Democratic Services be also authorized to carry out such a review after 12 months operation and the findings be included in an annual report to be submitted to Cabinet/Council.

Given the need for the Council's petition scheme to include an e-petition facility, and the obvious links to both full Council and the Council's scrutiny committees already administered electronically via the Council's E-Genda system, the Head of Democratic Services had also, in consultation with the Council's Procurement and Performance Manager, made a delegated decision to procure the development of an appropriate E-Petition scheme for the authority with Associated Knowledge Systems (the providers of E-Genda). The costs of this development had been funded from existing budgets.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. The requirements of the statutory duty for responding to petitions introduced by the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 be noted.

2. That Council approves the proposed draft petition scheme attached at Appendix 2 to the report as this authority's preferred petition scheme required under the Act ; and confirms that:-

- In line with DCLG guidance, a threshold of 50 signatures be set as the minimum amount required before the Council will regard the petition as falling within the parameters of the duty to respond;

- In line with DCLG guidance, the threshold of petition signatures required for triggering a full Council debate be set at 2000 signatures;

- In line with DCLG guidance, the threshold of petition signatures required for senior members of staff being required to give evidence at a meeting of overview and scrutiny be set at 1,000 signatures;

- In respect of the senior members of staff required to give evidence under Section 16 of the Act, the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and the

Director of Law & Democracy and/or their nominees, be identified as the responsible officers for the purpose of this duty; and that this Council's Executive Scrutiny Committee be designated as the responsible overview and scrutiny committee of this Council for considering valid petitions requiring appropriate Council staff to give evidence;

- In instances where a petition organiser is not satisfied with the way this authority has dealt with a petition, and subsequently requests a review to be undertaken of the authority's response, the Executive Scrutiny Committee be authorized to carry out such a review provided that the matter has not already been considered by this Committee and in such cases, it is proposed that the petition review be carried out by the most appropriate Select Committee to be determined by the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the relevant Committee Chair and/or Vice Chair;

- The Head of Democratic Services be designated as the Council's responsible officer for the receipt, recording and acknowledgement of petitions received and for ensuring that the authority's response to any petitions received is in accordance with its approved scheme with reasons given for any decisions/action taken including any reasons for not accepting petitions, eg as a result of them being considered vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate; and that details of any petitions received be referred for the attention of the relevant Cabinet Member(s), Chief Executive and (Corporate) Directors, as well as to the appropriate ward councillors and all Group Leaders, as well as being publicized on the Council's website.

- The use of delegated powers exercised by the Head of Democratic Services in procuring the development of an E-Petition scheme, be noted;

- Subject to Council's agreement to the new procedures proposed by the scheme for the handling of both paper and electronic petitions, the necessary changes be made to the Council's Constitution setting out how the Council will respond to any petitions received.

- The Head of Democratic Services be requested to carry out a review of the operation of the Council's petition scheme in twelve months time and the findings be included in an annual report to be submitted to Cabinet/Council.

**CAB
40/10 Members' Allowances Scheme 2011/12**

Cabinet gave consideration to a report relating to the 'Members Allowances scheme 2011/12.

The purpose of the report was to recommend the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2011/12 to Council for approval

It was explained that following a further review by the Authority's Remuneration Panel on 19 June 2008, Cabinet asked Council to consider options for Allowances Schemes for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Members noted that the Scheme agreed for 2010/11 would come to an end on 31 March 2011. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) ("the Regulations") require Local Authorities to agree their Allowances Scheme for future years prior to the 1 April in each year. Council would, therefore, have to agree an Allowances Scheme for 2011/12 before 1 April next year.

Provided that neither Cabinet, nor Council wished to change or add to the current 2010/11 Allowances Scheme, it would be possible to agree that Scheme as the Scheme for 2011/12, without the requirement for any further review of allowances by the Remuneration Panel.

RECOMMENDED that Council agree that there be no increase in Members allowances and that the existing scheme be agreed as the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme for 2011/12.

CAB 41/10 Local Development Framework : Tees Valley Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Site Allocations Development Plan Documents

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF CHANGES
SUBMISSION DRAFT AND EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC**

Consideration was given to changes made to the updated Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Policies and Sites Development Plan Documents, the Sustainability and Environmental Report as a result of a six week consultation with the public.

Members recalled that the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit was preparing Joint Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents on behalf of the Tees Valley Local Planning Authorities. In setting up the arrangements for this joint working, it was agreed that each authority would separately approve any consultation and policy documents.

Two DPDs provided the policy framework for determining planning applications for minerals developments for the period to 2024 and waste developments to 2021, which were: -

1. The Core Strategy DPD which set out overall strategy and generic development control policies for determining applications for minerals and waste developments; and
2. The Policies and Sites DPD which identified specific sites for future development and which contained detailed policies for assessing planning applications.

The first stage was the Issues and Options Report, which were consulted on in May-June 2007.

The second phase of this process was the Preferred Options report, which was consulted on during February – April 2008. The Publication Documents and Supporting Documents were consulted upon for a six-week consultation period beginning in August 2009.

The Publication Document was published in August 2009, but a number of formal representations received raised issues, which required further investigation. A number of changes were proposed to the Publication Documents to overcome those issues.

It was expected that the DPD's would be submitted to the Secretary of State in October 2010, along with any representations made on both the initial Publication Documents and the proposed changes. The DPD's would then progress to Independent Examination in 2011 before adoption later that year.

Cabinet was provided with details of Notable proposed changes for the Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Site Allocations Development Plan Documents, they included changes to:

- . Aggregate Provision – Sand and Gravel
- . Aggregate Provision – Crushed Rock
- . General Locations of Waste Management Sites
- . Safeguarding Plan – Shallow and Shallow Resources
- . Notable Proposed Changes To The Policies And Sites Development Plan Document
- . Additional Chapter – Provision of Minerals Sites
- . Policy MWP3: Additional Aggregates Provision
- . Sustainability and Environmental Report & Habitats Regulation Assessment
- . Infrastructure Strategy
- . Haverton Hill
- . New Road, Billingham

RECOMMENDED to Council that

- 1. The proposed actions arising from the Schedule of Proposed Changes for incorporation into the Publication Draft of the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Policies and Sites Development Plan Documents; and Sustainability and Environmental Report; and Information in Support of a Habitats Regulation Assessment be agreed.**
- 2. Authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Chair of the Local Development Framework Members Steering Group to make any subsequent and necessary amendments to the Schedules of Changes, Development Plan Documents and all Supporting Documents and Evidence Base prior to their publication for public consultation and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination;**
- 3. The Infrastructure Strategy be agreed.**
- 4. The period of public consultation for the Publication Draft of the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Policies and Sites Development Plan Documents; Sustainability and Environmental Report; Information in Support of a Habitats Regulation Assessment; and Infrastructure Strategy**

be endorsed.

CAB 42/10 Local Development Framework: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report

Consideration was given to changes made to the updated Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report as a result of consultation with key stakeholders as follows:-

- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Sport England
- One North East.

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report recorded the process of deciding on the scope and level of detail for the Sustainability Appraisal of emerging Development Plan Documents that would make up the Local Development Framework. This would be a tool to be used to appraise the emerging Local Development Framework proposals and policies using the ten Sustainability Appraisal objectives that reflect the key sustainability issues within the Borough.

RECOMMENDED that Council agree the content of the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report.

CAB 43/10 Q4 Improvement Report - Finance/Performance

Cabinet considered a report that outlined the Council's quarter 4 medium term financial plan update and provided detail of service performance for the fourth quarter of 2009/10 and the year end outturn for all measures monitored in 2009/10. It highlighted achievements against objectives in the Council Plan, the Local Area Agreement, the National Indicator Set, consultation activity undertaken, summary of Freedom of Information requests, complaints, commendations and comments received and provided an update on progress with Efficiency Improvement and Transformation (EIT)

Members were provided with a table detailing the current MTFP position of each service and noted reasons for changes in the final quarter of the year.

It was noted that the General Fund Balances stood at £11.5m, a net improvement of £0.7m from the 2010/11 budget report position of £10.8m.

It was explained that the outturn position on the Housing Revenue Account was in line with the budgeted surplus at £1.34 million at 31st March 2010.

Details of capital budget was detailed together with the main reasons for variances. Specific reference was made to Billingham Forum Refurbishment and it was explained that although the scheme had made good progress the complexities around the building had meant the costs had increased by £2m and some delay was expected. Due to the additional works however the building was expected to have a longer life, the £2m could therefore be

accommodated through re-profiling of Prudential Borrowing over 30 years in line with the revised life cycle.

It was explained that the Government had announced that local government would make a contribution of £1.166bn to the overall savings of £6.2bn across Government, in 2010/11.

The impact of these reductions cuts on Stockton were summarised for members and it was noted that the Council needed to consider how to address the reductions of funding within the current year.

Area Based Grant would be cut by £2,471,000 . ABG received by the Council was approximately £20m and included a range of funding allocations such as Connexions, Working Neighbourhoods Fund, School Development and a range of Health and Community Safety related issues. These services were delivered both by the Council and through a range of partner organisations, including the Voluntary Sector. The spending proposals within this area had been assessed and there were a number of elements of the grant which had not yet been allocated by specific projects.

If no further funding allocations were made from this area, it would release savings in 2010/11 of £1.3m without affecting services already planned and commissioned. The main areas were outlined:-

| £000's | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| School Development Grant | 340 |
| Connexions | 100 |
| Children's Services & Activities | 170 |
| Community Safety | 85 |
| Climate Change | 22 |
| Working Neighbourhood Fund | 535 |

Members were reminded that the MTFP for 2011/12 onwards included savings which would be delivered through the EIT programme. A number of reviews had been concluded and reported through Cabinet which would deliver savings in 2010/11, in advance of the MTFP requirement, which would generate an in year saving of approximately £500,000.

An overall saving to contribute to the reduction in funding of £1.8m could be identified. In order to avoid any cuts to front-line services in 2010/11, it was recommended that the £1.8m be approved to contribute to the £2.47m ABG reduction, with the remaining £0.7m being funded from the available balances outlined above and in paragraph 6 of the report.

The Kickstart grant of £109,000 was to be used to fund a bus service to run between Teesside Park and Stockton Town Centre. Originally it was anticipated that there would be 3 years funding, however, given the cut announced, this service would not be able to commence.

The Housing and Planning Delivery grant had been removed in its entirety. In the current financial year the Council had estimated receiving £50,000, however, the actual amount would not have been known until later in the year. This would leave a pressure of £50,000 within Development & Neighbourhood

Services, which would be assessed as part of the MTFP review going forward.

It was explained Integrated Transport had been cut by £540,000, however, an assessment had been made of the Integrated Transport Block and spend had been reduced by a combination of re-prioritising schemes and also re-profiling to following years.

The above actions would resolve the issues within the current year. Members were reminded that the current MTFP covered up to the period of 2012/13 and was based on a 3.3% cash reduction in Revenue Support Grant in each year of the plan. Indications were that the Comprehensive Spending Review, which the budget announced would be delivered in October, would cover the period up to the remainder of the Parliament i.e. 4 years. There were also indications of a 25% real terms reduction in funding across Government departments, although it was unclear how this would translate in local government. The Council's MTFP would be extended to cover the additional two years covered by the Spending Review, and if the indication of reductions was accurate, there would clearly be additional pressures in the subsequent two years of the MTFP. These would be assessed and Members would be briefed accordingly. The Council would continue with the managed approach for dealing with the financial pressures, with the focus being on the Value for Money programme to address the challenges ahead.

It was explained that there were a number of projects the Council was involved in which could potentially be affected by funding announcements and areas where it had been informed that schemes at a national level, were under review. Officers were assessing the current position and considering risks associated with these schemes on an ongoing basis and may need to make decisions at short notice in relation to whether the Council progressed with development and preparation work. It was recommended therefore, that these decisions be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

Members moved on and considered Council's performance against Council Plan objectives, the Local Area Agreement, the National Indicator set, details of resident feedback on consultation activity undertaken and a summary of Freedom of Information requests received. A series of appendices had been prepared to support the report and provided members with a full picture of performance.

Of the National Indicator measures where information is available at year end , 53% (73 indicators) across all themes had achieved targets or were within the agreed tolerance set, this compared to 58% at year end last year.

The current Local Area Agreement (LAA) was at the end of year two of the three-year agreement with Central Government. Progress continued to be made against some very stretching targets. The key focus of the Council's LAA was the worklessness agenda and as such the economic climate had impacted on outturn for year ending 2009/10 with 45% of targets being achieved or on track for achievement once all data for year ending March 2010 became available.

Performance against the achievement of the Council Plan objectives in 2009/10 was good with 70% of objectives/ targets achieved or on track. This was a slight

reduction on last year's outturn of 79%. The Council Plan contained actions that supported the Sustainable Community Strategy as well as actions and success measures on organisational effectiveness. Details of progress and slippage were provided.

RESOLVED that

1. the levels of performance and subsequent actions be noted.

RECOMMENDED to Council that

2. the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Capital Programme be approved.

3. In order to address the reductions in funding allocations within 2010/11:-

a. The 2009/10 Area Based Grants be reduced by £1.3m.

b. The savings generated through the Value for Money programme in advance of that required in the MTFP of £0.5m be utilised.

c. Corporate working balances of £0.7m be utilised.

4. That the remaining level of working balances be retained at £9.2m.

5. The funding associated with Billingham Forum be re-profiled over 30 years to reflect the anticipated life of the scheme and to reflect additional costs incurred.

6. where funding was in question the decision to cease new expenditure on previously approved schemes be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and appropriate Cabinet Member.