



This information is available free of charge in electronic, audio, Braille and large print versions on request.

For assistance in understanding or reading this document or specific information about this Agenda or on the "Public Participation" initiative please call Democratic Services on 01629 761133 or e-mail committee@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

2 September 2015

To: All Councillors

As a Member or Substitute of the **Community & Environment Committee**, please treat this as your summons to attend the meeting on **Thursday 10 September 2015 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Matlock.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra Lamb", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sandra Lamb
Head of Corporate Services

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Please advise Democratic Services on 01629 761133 or e-mail committee@derbyshiredales.gov.uk of any apologies for absence and substitute arrangements.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To enable members of the public to ask questions, express views or present petitions, **IF NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**, (by telephone, in writing or by electronic mail) **BY NO LATER THAN 12 NOON OF THE WORKING DAY PRECEDING THE MEETING.**

3. INTERESTS

Members are required to declare the existence and nature of any interests they may have in subsequent agenda items in accordance with the District Council's Code of Conduct. Those interests are matters that relate to money or that which can be valued in money, affecting the Member her/his partner, extended family and close friends.

Interests that become apparent at a later stage in the proceedings may be declared at that time.

4. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO RULE OF PROCEDURE NUMBER 15

To answer questions from Members who have given the appropriate notice.

Page No.

5. PROPOSALS FOR CHRISTMAS REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

To consider proposals for Christmas Refuse and recycling collections in light of the agreed Christmas closure

REPORT TO FOLLOW.

6. BAKEWELL VISITOR CENTRE

3 - 7

To consider further steps to be taken in respect of staff and services at Bakewell Visitor Centre, in accordance with the Tourism Services Review approved by Members in July 2014.

7. HOUSING REVIEW

8 - 26

To consider the outcome of the Housing Service Review.

8. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY

27 - 35

To consider approval of consultation on a draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Derbyshire Dales District Council.

9. REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

36 - 38

To consider approval of the scope and methodology for a Review of the District Council's Environmental Health Service

10. REVIEW OF LICENSING

39 - 43

To consider approval of the scope and methodology for the District Council's Licensing Service Review, and for the establishment of a Member Panel to take part in the service review, as recommended by the Licensing and Appeals Committee at the July 2015 meeting.

Members of the Committee - Councillors Jason Atkin, Jennifer Bower, Richard Bright, Sue Bull, Martin Burfoot, Albert Catt, Ann Elliott, Susan Hobson, Vicky Massey, Tony Morley, Joyce Pawley, Mike Ratcliffe, Lewis Rose, OBE, Andrew Statham (Vice Chairman), Colin Swindell, Philippa Tilbrook, Jo Wild (Chairman)

Substitutes - Councillors Deborah Botham, Phil Chell, David Chapman, Tom Donnelly, Richard FitzHerbert, Steve Flitter, Alyson Hill, Neil Horton, Angus Jenkins, Tony Millward, BEM, Jean Monks, Garry Purdy, Irene Ratcliffe, Mark Salt, Jacque Stevens, John Tibenham

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
10 SEPTEMBER 2015

Report of the Head of Regeneration and Policy

BAKEWELL VISITOR CENTRE

SUMMARY

The report proposes further steps to be taken in respect of staff and services at Bakewell Visitor Centre, in accordance with the Tourism Services Review approved by Members in July 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Peak District National Park Authority be formally notified that the District Council will terminate the joint management agreement for Bakewell Visitor Centre on 1 April 2016.
2. The District Council continues to work with the Peak District National Park Authority regarding visitor information provision in Bakewell.
3. Steps be taken to secure alternative VIP provision in Bakewell should negotiations with the National Park Authority be unsuccessful.
4. The TIC Assistants employed by the District Council be formally notified their posts are at risk.

WARDS AFFECTED

Bakewell

STRATEGIC LINK

Economic development is highlighted in the District Council's Corporate Plan in which one of the two improvement priorities is to *Increase business growth and job creation*. The three specific target areas for 2015/16 are to *help new businesses to start*, to *help existing businesses to grow* and to *promote key development sites*. The District Council adopted its Economic Plan in September 2014 and its Visitor Economy Plan in April 2015.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 18 September 2014, Members adopted a Derbyshire Dales Economic Plan which noted that tourism accounts for 7% of employment, but pays wages typically half the average of all sectors. A Visitor Economy Plan was adopted in April 2015 with the aim of developing a higher value visitor economy in the Derbyshire Dales.

- 1.2 The context for these decisions was a comprehensive Tourism Services Review carried out by the District Council in 2014, and considered by the Environment Committee on 17 July 2014. This review drew on previous decisions made by Members in 2011.
- 1.3 In considering Tourism Services it was noted that, as a discretionary service, the District Council was not obliged to provide a tourism service at all; and furthermore any service that is provided did not have to be provided by the District Council. The review found that Bakewell Visitor Centre was a key area which should form the focus of delivering future savings and economies.

2 TRANSFORMATION OF TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICES

- 2.1 At the Council meeting held on 27 October 2011, Members gave consideration to reducing spending levels across all services and specifically, identified Tourism as an area where significant savings were needed. This was in the light of the public sector austerity provisions introduced by the Government at the time and which still pertain.
- 2.2 In order to achieve savings of this magnitude, Members endorsed an approach which sought to change the delivery of tourism services, away from conventional Tourist Information Centres in favour of developing a network of partnership Visitor Information Points (VIPs).
- 2.3 In recent years, the Tourism Services has undergone significant transformation as the District Council has gradually sought to move away from being a direct provider of tourism services to a facilitator of tourism services. In 2007, the District Council was the direct provider of three Tourist Information Centres (TICs) - Matlock, Matlock Bath and Ashbourne - and provided staff support and resources to Bakewell Visitor Centre.
- 2.4 Since that time, the District Council has rationalised expenditure on tourism services through the closure of TICs at Matlock Bath (2008), Matlock (2012) and Ashbourne (2013). In each case, a Visitor Information Point (VIP) has been established in partnership with partners to provide similar services at much lower cost. In addition, the District Council no longer has any Tourism Officers – these posts having been combined with Economic Development (Corporate Committee, 18 September 2014).
- 2.5 The sole remaining TIC the District Council currently maintains costly support to is the Peak District National Park Authority Visitor Centre at Bakewell. Support is through the provision of premises on a leasehold basis, financial contributions and the provision of staff.

3 TOURISM SERVICES REVIEW, JULY 2014

- 3.1 Full details of the background and operations of Bakewell Visitor Centre are contained within the Tourism Services Review report approved by the Environment Committee on 17 July 2014. In summary:

- Bakewell Visitor Centre is located in the Old Market Hall, a 17th Century Grade II* listed building in the centre of the town. The building is owned by the District Council and is leased to the Peak District National Park Authority from 1 November 1968 for a period of 99 years at a rent of £1 per annum. The lease states that the building may only be used as a public information centre and may not be sub-let.
 - in 1985, it was refurbished by the PDNPA to become a joint National Park and Tourist Information centre in partnership with the District Council. The refurbishment costs of £46,000 were met equally by the PDNPA and the District Council, assisted by a grant from the English Tourist Board
 - there is a joint Management Agreement for the centre, under which operating costs are apportioned on an agreed basis
 - the District Council provides three TIC Assistants, who are District Council employees. The centre manager is a PDNPA employee
 - the Centre fulfils the PDNPA's role in promoting understanding of the National Park, and the District Council's objective of providing visitor information
 - the Agreement provides termination clauses of no less than 6 months where changes in revenue budgets make it necessary for either party to discontinue services and/or operations.
- 3.2 The District Council's financial support for the Bakewell Visitor Centre remains significant. This is anomalous compared to other Dales towns, where visitor information is provided by partners at very low cost.
- 3.3 Whilst it is important that visitor information continues to be provided in Bakewell, this does not necessarily have to be provided by the District Council / PDNPA at public expense. The Tourism Services Review was clear that the continued deployment of TIC Assistants to support Bakewell Visitor Centre at the District Council's expense was no longer a feasible proposition.
- 3.4 Whilst consideration was given to negotiating the transfer of existing Bakewell Visitor Centre staff to the Peak District National Park Authority on their existing terms and conditions, the PDNPA advised that this is not a proposition that they could accommodate due to the need to make ongoing savings in their existing operations. However, the Peak District National Park Authority was supportive of the District Council reducing its TIC staffing establishment further via a review of service provision and staffing levels at the centre. The Tourism Services Review found that this objective could be achieved by the District Council and the PDNPA working in partnership to develop business opportunities at the centre.
- 3.5 Therefore in approving the Tourism Service Review on 17 July 2014, Members resolved that:
- The Peak District National Park Authority and District Council work strenuously together in partnership to develop business opportunities within the visitor centre, based on an options appraisal to be completed during 2015/16, to ensure that the centre operates on a cost neutral basis reducing District Council funding support to zero by 1st April 2016.

- In the event that the options appraisal to be completed during 2015/16, does not ensure that the centre operates on a cost neutral basis in the 2016/17 financial year, the District Council will consider withdrawing entirely from Bakewell Visitor Centre in accordance with the notice periods included within the Service Level Agreement.
- 3.6 The Council meeting in July 2014 confirmed the savings due from ceasing contributions to Bakewell TIC from April 2016 of £23,000 per annum would be incorporated in the Medium Term Financial Plan. An update on negotiations with the PDNPA was considered by Council in April 2015.

4 PROGRESS SINCE JULY 2014

- 4.1 Officers wrote to the PDNPA on 25 July 2014 to commence negotiations on the basis of Members' resolutions, and also spoke to the TIC staff about the situation. Unfortunately the PDNPA were unable to meet officers until 5 November 2014. After clarifying property issues which the PDNPA wished to raise, officers hoped that discussion on options appraisal could begin – a meeting was arranged by the District Council for 2 February 2015 to this end. In the meantime, a further meeting was held with the TIC staff in December 2014.
- 4.2 Following the meeting on 2 February 2015, the PDNPA stated it would be late May or early June when they would be able to have the information needed for options appraisals. In June 2015, the PDNPA stated they had not been able to move anything forward yet although they were aware of the 1 April 2016 deadline. As a result, the Chief Executive raised the matter with her counterpart at the PDNPA.
- 4.3 PDNPA finally met officers on 28 July 2015, at which meeting it became clear that they still had no information to discuss options but were open to doing so in future (further meeting dates have been arranged to that end). On 28 July 2015, PDNPA stated their position. They:
- wish the property lease to continue as it is, and not to be ceased or varied
 - want to stop the joint Management Agreement
 - do not want the existing TIC Assistants to be transferred to PDNPA
 - do not intend to have any agreement with the District Council for the provision of tourist information at the present time.

5 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Under the terms of the Management Agreement, six months' notice is required to terminate the agreement. In accordance with Members' resolutions on 17 July 2014, it is recommended that such notice now be given to the PDNPA.
- 5.2 At the same time, the TIC Assistants would formally be informed that their posts are at risk. An informal meeting was held with the staff on 7 August

2015, and a meeting with the Trade Unions was held on 8 September. Further meetings will be held in due course.

5.3 Prior to 1 April 2016, discussions would continue with the PDNPA regarding visitor information provision in Bakewell – meetings to this effect have already been arranged.

5.4 However, it would also be necessary, in parallel, to take steps to secure alternative VIP provision in Bakewell. Tourist information services elsewhere in the Derbyshire Dales are now delivered entirely by the private/voluntary sector. There is no cogent reason why a similar model could not be adopted in respect of Bakewell.

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Legal.

The employment issues relating to any posts at risk will need to be considered in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1998. The legal risk is assessed as medium.

7.2 Financial.

The report identifies an annual saving of £23,000 built into the District Council's Medium Term Financial Plan from April 2016. Should it become necessary to fund redundancy payments, it is estimated that the potential cost would be less than one year's saving. However there is no budget identified for this. The financial risk is therefore assessed as medium.

7.3 Corporate.

The report recommends that steps be taken to secure alternative visitor information provision in Bakewell. The corporate risk is therefore low at this stage.

8 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

C&E Bakewell TIC report sep2015 SAC.docx

CONTACT INFORMATION

Steve Capes, Head of Regeneration and Policy
01629 761371, email steve.capes@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Environment Committee, 17 July 2014: Tourism Services Review

ATTACHMENTS None

Report of the Head of Housing

HOUSING SERVICE REVIEW

SUMMARY

The Community Housing Team has been the subject of a service review which considered a number of key issues concerning the provision of the service, performance and future challenges.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 In order to generate capital finance, assess the feasibility of ending the discounted property scheme to generate new investment in affordable housing.
- 1.2 Note the service recommendations contained in Appendix 2

WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

STRATEGIC LINK

The delivery of the housing services supports the District Council's wider corporate priorities including enabling the development of affordable housing and improving the housing options available for vulnerable households.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 26th September 2013, the Council considered the Medium Term Financial Plan which showed that over the next three years, savings of over £1.4 million are required. At the same meeting, the Council considered a report on 'Planning for the Future', which approved a series of service reviews, including a review of Housing Services, which would be carried out with the intention of achieving savings to contribute towards the overall savings target. Update on savings required?
- 2.2 The District Council's Community Housing Team was established following the transfer of the Council's housing stock to Dales Housing Ltd. in 2002. Over the last 13 years the Community Housing Team in partnership with both internal and external services has generated substantial inward investment. This has led to the delivery of over 1,000 new affordable homes and life changing services for thousands of vulnerable people through the relief of homelessness, debt and other issues. Of the 9 staff (7.6FTE), 6 have permanent contracts and 3 have contracts which continue subject to achieving income and contributions to cover the costs of providing the posts.
- 2.3 The District Council's longstanding commitment to affordable housing provision, tackling homelessness and working in partnership with neighbouring councils to provide services has ensured the Council has a very positive working relationship with key funding bodies such as the Homes and Communities Agency. The service has continued to evolve in order to reflect national funding priorities which can be delivered at the local level.
- 2.4 Since 2002 there have been many external changes which have tested the District Council's ability to respond to new and emerging challenges. These include a gradual reduction in overall grant to support housing development, a move away from grant to loan finance for development, a seemingly constant

demand for new affordable homes, a reduction in the availability of revenue resources from external funding agencies to tackle local issues, economic changes brought about by the credit crunch and recession together with changes to the welfare system.

- 2.5 Working with partner agencies has been a core feature of the Community Housing Team both internally with many other services across the Council and numerous external organisations, including statutory agencies, housing associations, voluntary and community sector organisations and private developers. One of the most prominent partnerships remains Home-Options and comprises three other councils, three principle housing associations along with many others who use the system to advertise and let properties. The economic and legislative changes over the last few years have also impacted on the ability of partner agencies to deliver services, either through a reduction in capital grant from government or revenue funding services from Derbyshire County Council.
- 2.6 The Peer Challenge carried out in 2012 noted the affordability issues residents face, with house price to income ratios the 2nd worst in the East Midlands and challenges that an ageing population will place on public services. The Peer Challenge also reflected on the Council's success in attracting £51m of inward investment to support new affordable housing. However it also warned that it may be difficult to maintain a continuing programme of support for new affordable homes should one of the sources of funding, notably Right To Buy receipts, begin to taper off. The Peer Challenge was not aware of the likely increased S106 contributions that should arise from some of the larger market housing schemes across the district and as such this should alleviate any risk of a reduction in the number of affordable homes delivered.
- 2.7 The Peer Challenge recommended that the Council will need to *consider better financial management information and a corporate long term view* of a number areas of activity. Specifically in relation to affordable housing the Peer Challenge recommended *new working arrangements with housing associations and the Homes Communities Agency to deliver affordable housing in the longer term*. In addition a future operating model of the Council *should consider a long term strategy for affordable housing as the opportunities for council contributory funding are being reduced*.
- 2.8 Since the Peer Challenge government policy has continued to evolve, impacting on local authorities and housing associations. This includes the rise of City Regions and the growing devolution agenda both of which raise new and separate challenges and opportunities for the housing service.
- 2.9 The officer team for the review of the Community Housing Team changed during the course of the review due to staff turnover. Input was provided by Rob Cogings (Team Leader), Simon Beynon, members of the Community Housing Team as required, Neil Moulden (DCVS), Paul Hambleton, Lucy Prime, Caroline Sharkey and Tim Braund.
- 2.10 In the short term the review intended to identify further opportunities to improve the service whilst delivering cost savings. The medium to longer term objectives of the review were to answer the questions raised by the Peer Challenge concerning capital resources and reflect on the alternative delivery options available to the District Council.
- 2.11 As with all service reviews, the Housing review must consider three questions: does the service need to be provided at all; does the service need to be provided by the District Council, and what level of service is needed? Following on from these questions the review will need to produce three options, all of which should produce efficiency savings. These options should be low, medium and high risk. The review should also aim to move transactions onto the District Council's website and consider agile working.

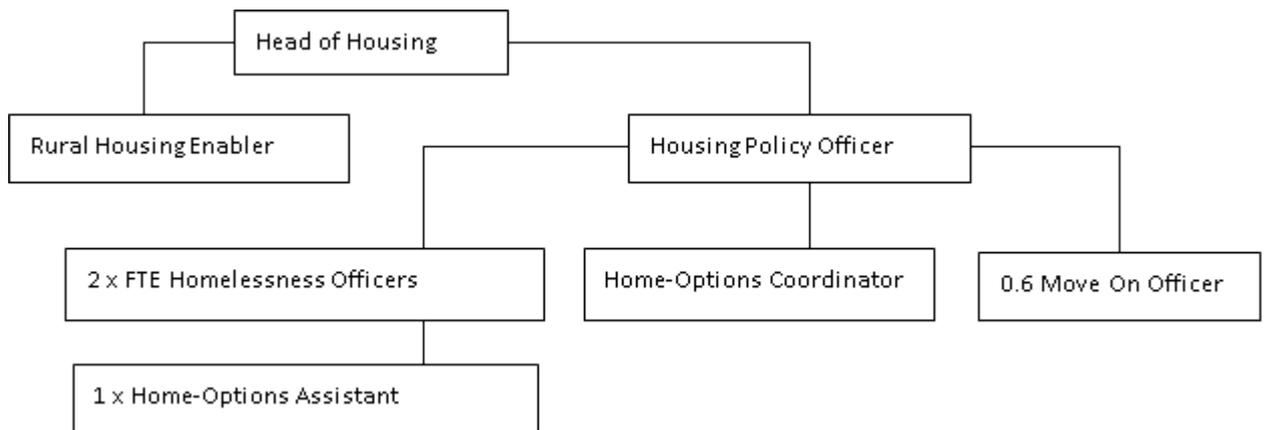
3 PART 1: THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE COMMUNITY HOUSING TEAM

- 3.1 The housing service comprises 4 distinct but closely related services, each informed and shaped by the other. For example housing development responds to the needs identified through the work of the homelessness and housing advice service. Similarly the Home-Options and the Move On partnerships help to generate housing choices for people that are unlikely to obtain a social tenancy. Finally the Housing Strategy brings all the services together and informs partner agencies on the housing needs of the district.
- 3.2 The Community Housing Team is widely regarded as a strong deliverer of housing services, preventing homelessness, building homes and contributing to local regional and national priorities. The service has

been recognised for its efforts through shortlisting and winning national housing awards. The staff retain a high level of knowledge, qualifications and competence. Established and effective partnerships exist with a range of internal and external agencies in the delivery of services. There is limited external assessment of local authority housing services following the demise of the Audit Commission and Government Office for the East Midlands. However in 2009 the Housing Service took part in a pilot short notice inspection to assist the Audit Commission in the development of a new approach to inspections for local authority services. Of six areas of assessment the service was found to have strengths which outweighed weaknesses in four areas, and weaknesses which outweighed strengths in two areas.

3.3 The results of the inspection were not published but did form the basis of an action plan to address the issues identified.

3.4 The Community Housing Team structure is set out below. A description of each element of the service then follows through sections A to D.



3.5 SECTION 1: HOUSING STRATEGY.

3.6 The purpose of the local authority strategic housing role was set out in the Green Paper 'Homes for the Future: more affordable, more sustainable'. It describes the decisions and activities associated with effective planning and delivery to meet the housing needs of all residents across all tenures as:

- assessing housing need;
- making the best use of existing stock;
- planning and facilitation of new supply;
- planning and commissioning housing support services; and
- securing effective housing and neighbourhood management.

3.7 The Housing Strategy is the document which describes the story of housing issues within the District, setting out the priorities, identifying partners and resources to improve housing outcomes for local people. The District Council's Housing Strategy is currently being revised. However the aim of the Strategy is to make the case for housing investment and to set out the District Council's broad approach to housing in the Derbyshire Dales. There are three principle objectives:

- to continue enabling new affordable homes for local people
- seek to ensure that appropriate services for vulnerable households are in place
- respond to the needs of residents experiencing poor housing conditions

3.8 The majority of the Strategic Housing function is delivered by the Head of Housing. The current approach involves a combination of;

- pursuing strategic priorities, i.e. identifying and responding to housing needs of a particular town or village and directing resources to bring about new homes in that area and,
- responding to opportunities presented by funding bodies, e.g. bidding for grants to explore new ways of delivering or enhancing existing services.

- 3.9 The work is varied and challenging and ranges from working with specialist groups such as the Derbyshire Learning Disability Partnership to develop user friendly tenancy agreements for vulnerable adults through to representing the District Council's interests within the Housing Directors Group of Sheffield City Region. Considerable partnership work takes place with other Derbyshire authorities, internal services, housing providers, health agencies and the voluntary sector. The post also contributes to the corporate leadership of the council and several of the internal hubs.
- 3.10 The requirement to produce a Housing Strategy has recently been removed by government and there is some scope to reduce the time spent on writing such a document. Instead more time could be spent engaging with the devolution agenda and the city regions. Some partnerships could also be reviewed with a view to withdrawing altogether or developing capacity within other members of the team to attend such meetings.
- 3.11 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY
- 3.12 The District Council has a statutory duty to carry out a Homelessness Review and to develop a Homelessness Strategy based upon the results of that review. The Strategy is informed through an extensive review of existing services and issues facing households at risk of becoming homeless. The Review involves significant consultation with a wide range of agencies including the statutory sector such as health, probation and social services. The voluntary sector is also key because many of the services delivered to support homeless households are delivered by them.
- 3.13 There is considerable scrutiny of homelessness performance by Government which requires the completion of online returns. These returns go into considerable detail and form the basis of future funding programmes and initiatives.
- 3.14 The District Council maintains a productive working relationship with a wide range of agencies concerned with homelessness. This is achieved in part through the Housing and Advice Services Forum which brings together local agencies on a quarterly basis to deliver training, assess the impact of policy changes and generally respond to national and local priorities. Increasingly much of the District Council's work on homelessness is delivered in partnership with the other Derbyshire authorities and Derby City. The Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group works to ensure a countywide strategic response to homelessness issues and has attracted significant inward investment from Government to tackle common issues across the county.
- 3.15 The delivery of the Homelessness Strategy includes the procurement of services that will help reduce homelessness overall and support those who become homeless. Further details about the funds available and the services provided are contained later in the report.
- 3.16 The service is required to engage with county level matters particularly in relation to the protection of children and accommodation and support for offenders (MARAC, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference and MAPPA, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement). Close liaison with the Police and other agencies takes place to help ensure the wider community are protected.
- 3.17 The previous Government introduced a new 'Gold Standard' for Council Homelessness Services to aim for. The standard assists in delivering enhanced front line services, upskilling staff to enhance the customer journey. The standard involves peer review by neighbouring authorities and to date Derbyshire Dales has been part of the review team which assisted Derby City Council to achieve the standard. Derbyshire Dales will be the subject of the review in 2016. A precursor to the Gold Standard Review includes undertaking a Value For Money assessment which will take place using a national system during September 2015.
- 3.18 Each year the service makes applications and supports other organisations to bid for funding from health, lottery and government programmes. There has been some notable success in recent months including over £240,000 for a county wide service to provide programmes linked to rough sleeping, hidden homelessness (sofa surfing) and work with hospitals to improve hospital discharge.

3.19 SECTION TWO: HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS

- 3.20 The Housing Advice and Homelessness part of the service is the principle customer facing part of the Community Housing Team and is delivered by 2 FTE Homelessness Officers (1FTE and 2 job share), and 1FTE Home-Options Assistant. This team is line managed by the Housing Policy Officer who also oversees some of the more complex and sensitive cases. The total cost of the service in 2015/16 is £108,765 financed by the General Fund. The service provides advice and support to homeless households or people threatened with homelessness, provides housing advice, assesses applications for the Housing Register (Home-Options), nominates homeless families to temporary accommodation and makes nominations and allocations to over 4000 social rented properties across the district. Information on each of these areas of work are set out below.
- 3.21 The District Council provides a choice-based lettings service for the allocation of social housing tenancies. It does this in partnership with three other local councils and three housing providers (also known as housing associations) – The Derbyshire Home-Options Partnership. The tender for the provision of the computer system which provides Home-Options was recently awarded to the existing contractor following an extensive procurement process led by one of the Home-Options partners. There is now a significant programme of work already in place to upgrade the current website and further improve the service to the customer. Several recommendations in the report relate to these upgrades.
- 3.22 The District Council has a legal obligation to hold a housing register for people seeking social housing in the area. The District Council manages the applications for anyone seeking accommodation with the exception of existing tenants of Dales Housing, who look after their own transferring tenants. There are over 1400 households on the Register which receives over 800 applications per year. There is considerable ‘churning’ of the Register as it is regularly reviewed and over 300 households are accommodated each year.
- 3.23 Predominantly, applicants apply online using an online application form. Since the online application form was introduced on 1 May 2013, 1401 applications have been received; of these 338 have been completed by a third party (including 254 which were completed by Home-Options staff). Latest figures indicate that 97% of all applications to the Register are now made online. This represents a substantial shift in how residents engage with the service and has saved considerable resources both financial and officer time in the processing of applications.
- 3.24 The District Council processes housing applications and deals with nominations to housing providers who have properties within the area. Every application is verified so that the applicants’ information is confirmed and proof of identity and address are verified for the applicant and their household. Applicants eligible to join Home-Options who haven’t supplied the information required will be contacted to ask them to supply the required information (90% of communication by letter, 10% by email, with additional phone calls to those who have supplied some, but not all, of the supporting information required).
- 3.25 The District Council has a statutory duty to investigate homelessness which includes assessing applicants who present as homeless, providing advice, assistance and temporary accommodation and securing accommodation for applicants to whom the Council owes a legal duty. Homelessness information from 2011/12 to 2014/15 is provided in the table below. Homelessness cases vary in complexity but often involve vulnerable adults and families with health and/or other issues which affects their housing options. Each case must be investigated following a statutory framework. Where an applicant is unhappy with a homelessness decision made by the Council, they can seek legal recourse.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*
	Total of all Ethnic Groups			
	(w)	(w)	(w)	
1. Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need	37	37	67	51

2. Eligible, homeless and in priority need, but intentionally so	3	8	1	1
3. Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	34	49	54	44
4. Eligible, but not homeless	58	57	42	46
5. Ineligible	0	0	0	0
6. Total decisions (sum of rows 1 to 5 above)	132	151	164	176

3.26 Homelessness across the District Council's Rural benchmark group varies considerably;

Authority	homeless per 1000	homeless acceptances	total decisions
East Devon	0.12	7	44
Suffolk Coastal	0.16	9	27
South Hams	0.4	15	28
Craven	0.64	16	64
Chichester	0.72	37	93
Teignbridge	0.77	43	131
Cotswold	0.78	29	151
West Dorset	1.1	50	91
New Forest	1.22	96	179
Hambleton	1.23	48	99
Wealden	1.47	131	214
Stratford-on-Avon	1.6	85	174
Lewes	1.79	78	135
Derbyshire Dales	1.91	60	176
Wychavon	3.03	153	232
south Lakeland	No data	No data	13

3.27 Working in partnership with Nottingham Community HA the Council has access to 16 units of Temporary Accommodation. These units previously belonged to the Council but were transferred in 2009 in order to re-provide and repair many of the homes. Had the homes remained with the Council it would have resulted in significant capital investment being required. In 2013/14, 30 households were placed in NCHA temporary accommodation units with an average length of stay of 129 days. The Homelessness team work with the residents in temporary accommodation to ensure they are bidding for available properties and maintaining their tenancies.

3.28 In addition to a diary system managing appointments, the Homelessness Team provides a drop in service for members of the public. The service proves popular with 1123 drop ins recorded in 2013/14.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number</i>
-------------	---------------

2010/11	1415
2011/12	1422
2012/13	1251
2013/14	1123
2014/15	940

- 3.29 Channel shift in the service has been adopted to a very high degree. Whilst the drop in figures show that the public still in many cases wish to see officers face to face, significant business is conducted over the phone with 19,000 calls per year received and nearly 7000 calls made per year. As previously mentioned 97% of application forms are now processed on line freeing up staff to do more follow up work with vulnerable clients.
- 3.30 The Council is expected, but not obliged, to provide a housing advice service. However, it is recognised that an effective advice service can prevent homelessness and reduce costs, reduce prison and hospital admissions. Whilst the Home-Options website is up to date, the housing pages of the District Council's website were identified as being in need of updating.
- 3.31 The District Council works in partnership with a number of local agencies who it supports to provide a holistic housing advice service. These agencies include Derbyshire Districts CAB, Adullam Housing Association, Age UK, and No Second Night Out. The Community Housing Team also fund additional staff resources in the housing benefits team (provided under contract by Arvato) to improve the processing time of housing benefits for council clients. The number of people presenting as homeless and seeking advice has increased year on year and has been absorbed by the housing team with the same level of staffing. This has been achieved in part by the channel shifting mentioned previously.

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number of homeless preventions	466	517	715	719	838	936
Population	32586	32834	32965	33097	33231	33395
	32.586	32.834	32.965	33.097	33.231	33.395
Preventions per 1000 population	14	16	22	22	25	26

- 3.32 The District Council has nomination rights to certain housing association properties within the district. The Council operates a choice-based lettings scheme (Home-Options) through which available properties are advertised to people who are registered for housing.
- 3.33 Housing associations have access to Home-Options and some advertise the properties themselves; others send the details to the District Council and the Homelessness Team prepares the property adverts on their behalf.

Allocation Processing	2012	2013	2014	Total
DDDC	86	78	57	221
Other	295	277	247	819
Grand Total	381	355	304	1040

- 3.34 Where the Council manages the process on behalf of housing associations, a shortlist of applicants will be sent to the association. Due to the rural nature of the district, properties are often advertised with a requirement for a five or ten year local connection, which requires additional work to verify applicants and check they qualify before the nominations can be sent.
- 3.35 Due to the local connection requirement, properties may be required to be re-advertised due to a lack of expressions of interest. This in itself creates some duplication.

Re-Advertised Properties: No of Bedrooms	2012	2013	2014	Total
1	267	139	198	604
2	354	512	336	1202

3	36	51	87	174
4		8		8
Total	657	710	621	1988

- 3.36 The Homelessness and Housing Advice team provides support for low cost home-ownership within the district, through managing the discounted properties scheme built on gifted Council land, and by working with housing associations to develop low cost and shared ownership homes. The discounted property scheme is particularly onerous to administer and ties up staff in housing, legal and estates with very little gain. The scheme operates by passing on an initial discount provided at the time of construction by the Council through discounted land. The review concluded that it would expedient to find a way of bringing the discounted scheme to end and reinvest any capital receipt in new affordable homes. The rationale for this is outline later in the report.
- 3.37 PART C: MOVE ON AND HOME-OPTIONS:
- 3.38 Work undertaken in partnership with other Derbyshire authorities, specifically the delivery of Home-Options and Move on.
- 3.39 The District Council hosts the Derbyshire Move-on Officer role which operates on a 3 days per week basis. The post costs £27,000 and is funded entirely from grants and contributions from district and borough councils across Derbyshire. The Officer works strategically across the county with Derbyshire Accommodation and Support Team (DAST), (some) local councils, housing providers and support service providers. The purpose of the role is to promote and improve move-on from supported accommodation into independent living. The post is financed by contributions from the Derbyshire districts and boroughs. The review identified the need to widen the range of partner agencies that could support the post in future years.
- 3.40 Initially there was no co-ordinated approach to move-on across the County and individuals were unable to access services due to people being unable to move-on into independent living. A review led by Derbyshire Dales DC, into the process enabled a uniform approach to be applied across the County ensuring timely and effective move-on. Some of the issues preventing move-on within the Derbyshire Dales included the high cost of private rented accommodation, lack of one bedroom social housing and reluctance from housing providers to accommodate individuals with complex needs. The Move-on Officer was able to facilitate increased access to a bond scheme for move-on applicants, influence new build developments to contain one bedroom accommodation and assist housing providers in gaining increased knowledge and information on vulnerable people to ensure that appropriate support and crisis management plans were in place.
- 3.41 Move-on has increased steadily from 2012 to the present date; however, 2015 will see a significant reduction in support services within Derbyshire which will leave many vulnerable people without support which will undoubtedly result in an increase in homelessness and poverty. The Community Housing Team will endeavour to assist people to find accommodation but with the current lack of social housing and high cost of private rented accommodation this will be difficult.
- 3.42 The Move-on Officer will continue to work with all key agencies and enable local authorities and housing providers to understand and prepare for the impact of the forthcoming reduction in support services. In addition to the core role of Move-on, development in other areas has been instrumental including:
- The Escape Programme which enables vulnerable people to access meaningful activities within the Derbyshire Dales including walking, swimming, football etc. The provision of these activities has resulted in a reduction in social isolation an increase in confidence and an improvement in health. The Escape Programme is a joint venture between Derbyshire Dales District Council, Leisure Services and Derbyshire Dales Community Voluntary Services.
 - Co-ordinating and administering the Housing Advice and Support Forum which is a meeting of voluntary and statutory services that work with vulnerable people in the Derbyshire Dales. The forum allows joint working and development of new pathways for homeless people.
 - Assisting in the review of homelessness strategies and collating information and data to support

the accurate development of a homelessness action plans.

- Identifying and meeting the training needs of staff and organisations that work and assist vulnerable people.

3.43 The Move-on Officer has achieved:

- A planned and co-ordinated approach to move-on from supported accommodation for vulnerable people across Derbyshire
- a reduction in tenancy failure through tenants being better prepared and landlords providing more support for vulnerable households
- changes to the allocation policies of constituent councils and the way data is recorded centrally by Derbyshire County Council enabling vulnerable people to access accommodation when they most need it.

3.44 HOME-OPTIONS

3.45 The District Council hosts the Home-Options Co-ordinator role which comprises. The Co-ordinator works strategically across the four local authority areas (Amber Valley, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, High Peak) and with housing providers to ensure the service is provided effectively. Providing Home-Options has two main costs, financing the Co-ordinator (£32,000) and the District Council's share of the cost of providing the website and associated back office functions (£7,500). The post is financed by contributions from AVBC, HPBC, DDDC and EBC (a total of £22,000) together with subscriptions from the housing associations (a minimum of £10,000) who use the scheme. The surplus is used to fund in year website developments and safeguard the future delivery of the Co-ordinator. The contribution from the Derbyshire Dales to the salary costs is financed from external grants.

3.46 The Co-ordinator takes a lead role in:

- Ensuring the software used by the partnership to deliver the choice-based lettings and homelessness services works effectively
- Project-managing upgrades and amendments to the software
- Managing the Home-Options website, developing marketing and information campaigns for new properties, properties for re-sale, etc.
- Training for Home-Options partners and external agencies
- Supporting the Home-Options Executive and Working Groups
- Providing performance information
- Development of procurement documentation i.e. software specification
- Reviewing the Home-Options allocation policy and ensuring the policy is up to date in response to legislative changes.
- Preparing bids for funding to further develop the services offered through Home-Options.

3.47 The Home-Options Coordinator is also a member of the District Council's Transformation Hub and leads on Channel Shift.

3.48 PART D: ENABLING THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOMES

3.49 Enabling the development of new homes is primarily the focus of the Rural Housing Enabler (1FTE). The post costs £40,000 and is financed entirely from external grants and contributions which includes the 2nd Homes Programme, PDNPA, housing associations and developers who provide affordable housing as their main business. The RHE works with internal and external partnerships, to provide

homes for people in housing need, predominately in villages. The Head of Housing retains some involvement in the more urban sites, though the review identified that the RHE should take responsibility for all of the development programme within the district. The RHE is also a member of the Community Engagement and Communications and Marketing Hubs.

- 3.50 The service performs well in comparison to other Derbyshire districts. In 2013/14 the average number of new homes per Derbyshire local authority, including Derby City, was 54. In the same year Derbyshire Dales DC achieved 79. If the performance is adjusted for the 3 stock holding councils who built their own council houses (something DDDC can't do) the average falls to 43. The performance of the Derbyshire Dales is noteworthy because housing delivery takes place in the most protected environment of any of the Derbyshire districts and housing associations have to compete with the highest land values in the county.

Authority	HCA Rent	HCA ownership	S106 Rent	S106 ownership	Other	Council house new build	Total
AVBC	32	0	8	0	0	0	40
CBC	24	0	9	3	2	0	38
BDC	33	0	0	2	0	13	48
DCC	47	11	0	0	2	26 LA 45 PFI	131
NEDDC	4	3	0	0	0	22	29
HPBC	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
SDDC	11	5	0	0	2	0	18
DDDC	79	0	0	0	0	0	79

- 3.51 Comparing performance (2013/14) with the Council's benchmark group is also useful, although it should be noted that there is a significant north/south divide at play in the allocation of resources and the availability of land. Of the northern authorities, Craven only completed 9 homes, whilst Hambleton (76) and South Lakeland (83), both comparable to the 79 completed in the Derbyshire Dales. Using Pearson's statistical test, there is no discernible correlation between lower quartile house prices/incomes and the number of homes built within the benchmark group.

Authority	ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile income	new affordable homes
Suffolk Coastal	7.09	56
Craven	7.38	9
south Lakeland	8.06	83
Wychavon	8.26	309
Derbyshire Dales	8.58	79
Hambleton	8.69	76
Stratford-on-Avon	8.89	132
East Devon	8.92	237
Teignbridge	9.02	214
West Dorset	9.61	51
New Forest	9.89	71
Lewes	10.05	8

Wealden	10.2	215
South Hams	10.46	84
Cotswold	11.15	74
Chichester	11.78	127

- 3.52 The development of new homes involves considerable work from a range of partner agencies which needs to be managed and coordinated in order to be effective. This is at the heart of the RHE's activities;
- working with landowners to bring sites forward,
 - helping parish councils and communities understand why specific sites have been brought forward,
 - identifying need through parish based surveys
 - working with planning and highways to ensure sites are viable
 - establishing the grant route that best fits the development opportunity and
 - working with colleagues in the housing team to ensure homes developed meet the needs of residents.
- 3.53 Together with the Homelessness and Housing Advice team, the Enabling service will experience change brought about by new government policy. Right To Buy has both a positive and negative impact. Within the Derbyshire Dales RTB in the former council stock now owned by Dales Housing generates a capital receipt that helps fund development. Whilst a new policy approach to RTB will see government proposals that will extend RTB to housing associations. The impact of this approach is not yet clear in the Dales as no firm proposals have yet been published. However from discussions with local associations it is clear that a loss of stock will undermine their ability to provide new homes, especially in rural settlements where it can take several years to provide replacement homes.
- 3.54 Although not as concerning as the proposed extension to the RTB, changes proposed by government in the 2015 Budget concerning rent caps in social housing will also impact on housing associations. The proposed 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review is also expected to announce changes to the funding of affordable housing by government with a focus on discounted ownership schemes.
- 3.55 The review identified that parish housing needs surveys and Home-Options carry similar information about customer needs. It would help reduce 'double handling' if people in housing need could simply join the Home-Options or if the systems could be developed whereby people in housing need pre-register with Home-Options. This would allow sufficient information to be collected to assess the needs of a locality and at the same time support residents to access Home-Options.
- 3.56 Fundamental to future programmes of affordable housing will be the continuing financial support provided by the District Council and the availability of appropriate sites on which to build. Capital finance comes from developer contributions from private sector housing schemes required to provide an affordable housing contribution. In the short term this source of funding is relatively secure given the recent increase in applications although emerging government policy could have an impact on the future availability of this resource. Receipts from the sale of the former council stock now owned and managed by Dales Housing are another source of income. A recent upsurge in sales (not to be confused with the recent policy announcements concerning RTB in housing association stock) has meant that the current programme of new homes is completely funded.
- 3.57 There are other sources of funding which could potentially be explored and whilst there is some risk involved, the potential gains could fund a substantial part of a future housing programme. During the 1980s the District Council took advantage of new powers to dispose of land at a discount to private developers who would then pass the value of the discount on to future owners of the properties provided. This scheme proved popular with discounts of 15%-24% available. Future purchasers could also benefit on resale through a covenant which is controlled by the Council. Since the 1980s house prices have risen significantly and to such an extent that very few local people in housing need can now

afford to buy the homes, even with the discount applied. Occasionally existing owners or purchasers 'buy out' the covenant and the Council receives a 'windfall' payment in the region of £30,000 to £40,000, depending on the property value and the percentage discount. It is therefore proposed that for the 60 remaining properties which have covenants, a policy approach is adopted which will seek to encourage the purchase of the covenants in order to raise new finance for future housebuilding.

4 PART 2: DOES THE SERVICE NEED TO BE PROVIDED?

- 4.1 As previously set out the housing service comprises 4 distinct but closely related services, each informed and shaped by the other. A change in one or more elements of the housing service would have an impact on the delivery of the other parts.
- 4.2 The Housing Review proceeded on the basis that the majority of the service has a statutory footing. There are specific obligations that require councils to provide housing services particularly in relation to homelessness and housing advice. Recent Case law has lowered the vulnerability threshold (a key test in homelessness legislation) which will likely mean that some vulnerable households who would previously have not been eligible for assistance will now qualify. This will place a greater burden on the service going forward. Government also plans to implement a reduction in the welfare cap from £26,000 to £23,000; working age benefits, tax credits and child benefit to be frozen for two years; limited entitlement to housing benefit for 18-21 year olds, who will have to 'earn or learn'. This policy will not help to reduce demand for housing services.
- 4.3 The Council's desire to enable affordable homes adds considerable weight to the need to provide the service. If the Council reduced the level of service this would have a negative impact on performance affecting vulnerable households, delivery of key partnerships with other authorities and the number of new homes provide.
- 4.4 The Council commissions various services to help prevent homelessness and support people who are homeless. Each year over 800 households receive specialist advice and support from one of the commissioned services. These services are all funded from external resources which in themselves are discretionary, but by their very nature each service supports the council in its delivery of the statutory homelessness services. For example, a specialist housing support service for the most vulnerable households in the district is able to assist approximately 80 households each year to find and maintain a tenancy in the private sector. The council has no capacity to support anywhere near that number of people or help them to view properties, complete forms and establish links in the community. If the service was not provided, 80 households would be seeking direct support from the council and given their vulnerable nature would be entitled to costly B&B accommodation until the Council could find a suitable tenancy. This would tie up staff trying to manage people often with chaotic lifestyles and vulnerabilities that would eventually begin to impinge on residents and other public services.
- 4.5 The accumulative effect of all the commissioned housing services is substantial. If these services did not exist then the effect would have dramatic consequences for many and the impact on the public purse would be significant.
- 4.6 "A number of research studies have attempted to calculate the total costs to government of homelessness. These studies have a number of methodological limitations and concern different groups of homeless people. Estimates of the annual costs to government from these studies range from £24,000 - £30,000 (gross) per person, anything up to circa £1bn (gross) annually." (Evidence review of the costs of homelessness, DCLG 2012).
- 4.7 Taking the 888 Derbyshire Dales homelessness preventions in 2014/15 and the lower estimate of cost per household, the council's preventative work saves the public purse approximately £21.3m/yr.
- 4.8 Providing new affordable homes absorbs much of the Council's remaining capital resources which in turn come from RTB sales of former council housing stock and developer contributions from private house builders. Why is the provision of new homes such a priority for the district and what would happen if the Council hadn't helped to enable over 1100 new homes since 2002? People born and wishing to live and work in the derbyshire dales face a real struggle to access a home of their own. In 2013;
- the average house price was £253,483 higher than the England average and the 2nd worst in the east midlands

- average private rents at £647 per month
- Average annual earnings in 2013 were £29,084.
- The ratio of house price to income was 8.7, the 4th worst in the region
- Income required for an 80% mortgage was £57,939, higher than the England average and the 2nd worst in the east midlands

4.9 Faced with these economic realities, the only affordable option open to many local people is to rent or buy a shared ownership home from a housing association. Each year the council receives an average of 800 applications and makes 346 allocations to social tenancies. The housing register had 1261 'live' applicants as at 31 March 2015. In 2014/15 the housing team received 887 new applications for housing and 330 properties were let by housing associations in the district.

4.10 New homes account for between 25% and 30% of all allocations and are built to reflect local need rather than the supply generated from turnover of existing stock. As such new supply is a vital part of the council's provision to meet housing need. Had the council not adopted such a proactive stance on the development of affordable housing and instead relied on 'windfall' from private developments and housing association finance, it is estimated that less than half of the number of homes built would have been provided. Given the reduction in government grant for new affordable homes, the Council's financial support is now more vital than ever. The forward programme of new development up to 2018 includes 292 homes of which 46 will be provided by private developers. 50% of the other housing schemes will require a financial contribution from the council without which the viability of such schemes will be significantly affected.

5 PART 3: DOES THE SERVICE NEED TO BE PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL?

5.1 There is some scope to consider a range of options given the alternative models to providing the service. Three options were explored, remaining with the council, externalising the service and developing some form of mutual company that would leave the council but deliver the majority of services currently provided. Taken as a whole, the housing team preferred to remain as an in-house service. Key issues were considered such as the potential savings that could be achieved and the impact on service provision. This follows a rigorous assessment of the available options which highlighted several significant issues namely;

- the limited potential for savings by contracting out the service or mutualisation
- no evidence of any former council housing services being successfully provided by a mutual organisation
- the requirement for the service to remain well connected with internal partners to deliver affordable homes
- the requirement for the service to remain well connected with internal and external partners to deliver homelessness services.
- A strong brand, through Home-Options, which residents understand
- A strong development focus which engages well with residents and developers

5.2 The Review group felt that if cost was the sole driver for change, then a radical service model would be required. This would potentially be high risk with questionable financial benefits. Potentially a more evolving/incremental model of change would be more appropriate. Such an approach could respond positively to staff turnover, developments in web based systems and new opportunities provided by the Transformational Challenge Awards. Recent successful TCA bids provide some real opportunities for the service and include;

- A new approach to Choice Based Lettings (CBL) which could see a wider partnership of authorities working with the Home-Options partnership. This would lead to some savings, a sharing of costs to fund the Home-Options coordinator post and safeguard housing association subscriptions to Home-Options. Funding of £40,000 has already been secured to deliver a

feasibility study to assess the opportunity.

- A second TCA bid has also been allocated £40,000 and will also undertake a feasibility study that would consider the potential for sharing enabling and development resources across the D2 area.
- South Derbyshire DC have submitted a proposal and been allocated funding to establish a Development Company that will bring forward new homes, predominately on public sector land. This has the potential to link with the shared enabling and development team
- A fourth housing bid has also been successful and concerns youth homelessness and care leavers. When implemented the lessons learnt from this work could be successfully applied to other specific groups of vulnerable people who require focused housing support.

6 PART 4: WHAT LEVEL OF SERVICE IS NEEDED?

6.1 The Housing Review proceeded on the basis that the District Council will continue to receive a significant number of service requests from customers who will require a high level of service, both in terms of homelessness and development of new homes. The implications of not providing a high level of service would be dramatic, impacting on the lives of vulnerable people and lead to legal challenges and increased costs for the council in the longer term. The Council has a highly regarded housing service, evidenced by;

- Performance in delivering over 1100 new affordable homes since 2002 including rural, market town, through S106, Community Led and conversion schemes.
- Year on year improvements in preventing homelessness rising from 466 in 2009/10 to 838 in 2013/14.
- Successful entries for national awards including the 2012 Development Team of the Year (Winner), 2010 Supporting Social and Economic Inclusion (Finalist), 2010 Housing and Regeneration and 2014 (Highly Commended), Development Team of the Year (Finalist)

6.2 The review undertook a PESTLE, SWOT and Force Field Analysis which helped to provide a framework for the issues the service faces and the social needs the service helps to satisfy. Given the change in government policy concerning welfare reform and RTB there is only likely to be a continued growth in demand for the service. For the Homelessness and Housing Advice team the challenge will be to find ways of creating capacity within the service, predominately through a continued channel shift, that frees up time for staff to focus resources on individuals in most need. In terms of the strategic, enabling and partnership elements of the service, the challenge will be to find ways of retaining income that delivers the service, whilst responding to opportunities such as the TCA awards. There will be opportunities (as well as challenges) within the new approach by government. Finding these opportunities and continuing to reinvent the service in response and meeting customer needs will be the focus of the service going forward.

7 PART 5: COMMISSIONED SERVICES AND FUTURE GRANT FUNDING

7.1 The Housing Review Team met on the 18th Feb to consider specifically the funding streams the service has access to and how these ought to be prioritised. It was felt this would be a useful exercise for the following reasons;

7.2 In trying to demonstrate savings, the housing service has already made substantial progress in reducing printing, postage and generally 'channel shifting' activities. This has dramatically reduced the amount of paper based work and freed up staff to spend more time focusing on individuals

7.3 The savings referred to above will only show as savings in the overall corporate budget and as such it is very difficult to identify the exact amount of money saved.

7.4 The team itself only comprises 9 individuals (8 FTE), 3 of which are part time and three are funded by a combination of external grants.

7.5 The two main sources of funding represent a considerable investment and include £138,000 in

Homelessness Grant funding and £300,000 in extra revenue generated from the council tax on 2nd homes.

7.6 Total investment in 2015/16 will be £308,000 across 7 projects. The main priorities for the team included provision of bungalows to higher design standards, continuing the debt service, older people and rural housing.

7.7 High, Medium and Low prioritisation of 2nd Homes funding

2nd Homes	2014/15 Programme	Priority
Bungalows to Life Time Home standard	£85,000	H
Debt Advice – Derbyshire Districts CAB	£50,000	H
Older Persons Housing Advice – Age UK	£93,000	H
Rural Housing Enabler – DDDC	£33,500	H
Domestic Violence – DCC	£11,500	M
Escape Project – Derbyshire Dales CVS	£35,000	M
Total (includes a small cfwd from 2013/14)	315,000	

7.8 This grant programme stems from a partnership agreement between Derbyshire Dales DC, High Peak BC and Derbyshire County Council to reinvest the additional investment raised from the council tax on 2nd homes. In the Derbyshire Dales the main themes of investment over the years has focused on older people, debt advice, building new affordable homes, bungalows and other specific projects to support vulnerable adults

7.9 The Homelessness Grant allocation for the Derbyshire Dales is £138,000, the 2nd highest in the county, reflecting the corporate priority of housing and the work undertaken in previous years that successfully bid for additional funding when the grant programme was a competitive process.

7.10 There are 12 separate areas of work within the Homelessness Grant programme. The Housing Review Team considered each area of work and put them in to a simple High, Medium and Low table, below.

7.11 High, Medium and Low prioritisation of Homelessness Grant.

Homelessness grant	2014/15 Programme	Priority
Adullam – PSA16 vulnerable adults (spent)	40,000	H
Move On Officer (spent)	10,000	H
Home-Options coordinator (spent)	5,000	H
DHP top up (increased)	6,000	H
Homelessness prevention (spent)	6,000	H
Young Persons project (spent)	10,000	M
Escape project (spent)	6,000	M
Sharers project - Adullam (spent)	14,000	M
financial capability CAB (spent)	35,000	M
Rent Deposit (not spent)	1,000	L
HB officer time top up (spent)	2,000	L
schools project (carried forward)	7,000	L
Total (includes a small cfwd from 2013/14)	142,000	

7.12 This grant was until 2013 a separate grant from government with a ring fence restricting use to housing activities. However the ring fence has since been removed and the grant is now a notional figure for

homelessness within the Council's Revenue Support Grant (RSG). Some councils have simply swallowed up this funding to support other functions, whilst others have used it to cover the employee costs of their housing services. Some councils, such as Derbyshire Dales have retained the funding to support services which directly support homeless people.

- 7.13 The overwhelming priority for the team was the vulnerable adults scheme delivered by Adullam HA. The other High priorities reflected the need to retain posts in the team which provide capacity in the delivery of services and which provide direct funding to help pay rents or prevent homelessness.

8 PART 6: FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- 8.1 The Housing Service has made substantial progress in moving away from paper based systems. The Choice Based Lettings system, Home-Options is a shining example of how a service can be transformed, with 97% of applications to join the housing register now completed on line. Many other business processes linked to Home-Options, the Homelessness Service and the ordering and payment for services are now completed on line. There is still some scope to progress further as more staff are provided with ipads, make more use of home working and other corporate systems evolve to improve overall efficiency. With the procurement complete, we're now working on the implementation of the new software. We will have an improved online pre-assessment process with a downloadable action plan so applicants can see their housing options before they apply. As well as the online application form we're also introducing automated register reviews and an online change of circumstances form, further reducing printing and postage costs and freeing staff time to help more vulnerable applicants while the majority self-serve online

- 8.2 Derbyshire Dales is part of 2 Local Enterprise Partnerships, Sheffield City Region and D2N2. There are potential opportunities for Derbyshire Dales within both. Within Sheffield City Region (SCR), housing directors meet monthly and have been considering the strategic priorities for the SCR. There is some potential for the Derbyshire Dales to benefit from new opportunities that emerge from the SCR and as such it would be wise for the Dales to play a greater role in the SCR on housing matters. The Head of Housing attends the Housing Directors Group and is joint lead on one of five themes being taken forward by the SCR.

9 RISK ASSESSMENT

Legal

- 9.1

Financial

- 9.2

Corporate Risk

- 9.3

10 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

11 CONTACT INFORMATION

- 11.1 Robert Cogings, Head of Housing, email robert.cogings@derbyshiredales.gov.uk Tel 01629 761354

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

none

13 ATTACHMENTS

13.1 None

Appendix 1: Statutory and non statutory housing services

Service	Does this service have to be provided at all?	Does it need to be provided by the District Council?	What level of service is needed?
Housing Strategy	A strategy document is required in order to present the housing issues in the district. Meetings with partner agencies are diverse in nature. Potential to withdraw from some groups	No, the strategy could be produced by a consultant or external agency at regular intervals, say every 2 or 3 years. Representing the Council at meetings with external partners could continue in the current form. However there is a certain level of understanding and knowledge required of housing issues to ensure the Council is properly represented	Housing strategies used to be externally assessed although this is no longer the case. They are however the basis for seeking inward investment for housing and so a high level of competence is needed to understand and communicate the housing issues of the district. The same is true for representing the council at various external meetings.
Housing Advice and Homelessness	Yes, there are significant statutory processes which must be followed when providing homelessness and housing advice services. Many of the services commissioned by the council to prevent homelessness are not themselves mandatory, however if they did not exist, the effect on the public would be dramatic and the burden on the housing service would be untenable	No, the service could be provided by an external agency. There are examples of other authorities where the homelessness service is provided by another organisation including Amber Valley BC and Newcastle Under Lyme BC. The commissioning of prevention services would usually remain with the host Council	The service supports 1300 people each year, many with complex and demanding problems that impact on other statutory services. The statutory framework requires a robust service is provided. Prevention services are needed to stop more people becoming customers of the housing team. A lesser service could result in increased costs for the council due to an over reliance on B&B and potential legal challenges
Enabling the development of new homes	As a central part of the Council's top priority, a service is required. Elements of the development service exist in other agencies such as housing associations and developers, but the housing service is	No, there are some examples of similar services being contracted out to 3 rd sector agencies, e.g. in Leicestershire, all of the councils have contracted out the service to a rural housing provider.	The service delivers on average around 90 homes per year across urban and rural settlements. The level of service must reflect the council's priority of providing new homes and the work involved in bringing development

	able to direct where development activity should take place and engage with communities, planners and funders to ensure the right homes are built in the right place		opportunities forward, particularly when the dales must battle inherent difficulties in provision, e.g. the cost of building to a high design standard relative to other areas.
Home-Options and Move On	No, although the impact of not doing so would be damaging to the interests of the council, its customers and partners. Home-Options is a partnership of 4 councils which advertises and lets all of the vacant affordable homes in DDDC, HPBC, AVBC and EBC. Move On supports the development of services and opportunities for people leaving supported accommodation aiming to achieve and a settled and sustainable home.	No, the district council hosts the two services on behalf of the other councils. However the council receives other benefits that result from the services being based here.	By their very nature the two services are specialist and technical in nature. A lesser service would not achieve the outcomes required of the council or the partner agencies.

Appendix 2 Service Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Risk
1	Reduce time spent on and length of housing strategy	L
2	Focus strategic resources on SCR and D2N2 work streams	L
3	In future PDIs of housing staff explore opportunities to develop roles which have a greater responsibility for specific housing strategy issues	M
4	Withdraw from partnerships which do not add sufficient value to the housing role of the council	M
5	Revise the housing advice information contained on the District Council's website	L
6	Develop new models of service delivery for vulnerable households in order to further reduce print and postage costs	L
7	Increase the number of agencies that contribute to the Move-On Officer	L
8	Promote housing options information with providers and clients to minimise the impact of	L

	cuts	
9	Introduce the on-line change of circumstances form to reduce the amount of time spent by officers on this task	L
10	Automate the Housing Register Review process to reduce postage costs and processing time	L
11	Develop and introduce a new pre assessment form for housing applicants which will allow households to better understand their housing choices and reduce the need for face to face advice with housing staff	L
12	Introduce a cycle-less bidding system to reduce advertising time, duplication and speed up arrangement of tenancies	L
13	Encourage other housing providers and local authorities to join Home-Options, thereby spreading costs and increasing income opportunities	L
14	The RHE should take responsibility for all affordable housing development across the district	L
15	Opportunities for attracting funding for the RHE post from other sources should be explored	M
16	Work with housing providers to understand the impact of RTB on their ability to invest in new affordable homes	M
17	Assess the implications of any changes brought about by the forthcoming CSR	M
18	Continue to channel shift survey processes to online systems using the council's website in the short term	L
19	Develop better links between the parish housing needs survey process and Home-Options to encourage people in housing need to join the housing register	L
20	In the light of government policy changes affecting vulnerable households, maintain the current workforce and service	L
21	Agree a new 2 nd homes programme with DCC	H
22	Retender services, seeking to make best use of resources	L
23	Focus retention of Homelessness Grant and 2 nd Homes funding on areas of highest priority	L
24	Pursue the TCA opportunities as set out in the report	L

Report of the Head of Regulatory Services

HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

SUMMARY

This report introduces a draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Derbyshire Dales District Council and seeks Members' approval to consult on its contents.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy be approved for the purpose of consultation;
2. That a further report be submitted to Council once the consultation has been completed for adoption of the final Strategy.

WARDS AFFECTED

All

STRATEGIC LINK

The District Council's role in promoting health and wellbeing impacts upon the vision of a Peak District with people of all ages who are healthy and safe.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Health and wellbeing is a term used to describe the overall health of people. It is a broad concept not limited to whether or not a person is ill and looks at complete physical, mental and social wellbeing.
- 1.2 Local authorities have a long history of working to improve the health and wellbeing of their populations, dating back to Victorian times and the creation of the first Public Health legislation. Originally this involved the improvement of housing, drainage, water supplies and so on. With the evolution of the National Health Service local authorities' roles in health and wellbeing changed and the specific role to promote the health of the general population transferred through various NHS related bodies.
- 1.3 This changed in April 2012 with the transfer of the Public Health function from the previous Primary Care Trusts back to local government. In two-tier local authority areas this transfer was to county councils and at that time Derbyshire County Council formed their statutory Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.4 One of the Health and Wellbeing Board's first tasks was to produce and adopt a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Derbyshire county area. Second tier authorities were consulted on the contents of the Strategy and the final document was formally published in October 2012.

2 REPORT

- 2.1 Since that time District Council officers have continued to work on health related issues with colleagues from Derbyshire County Council Public Health. This work progresses with individual key staff, through the Peak District Partnership's Health and Wellbeing Sub-Group and with the Derbyshire Dales Locality Manager. As these relationships have grown and matured the District Council's response to the health and wellbeing agenda has become more sophisticated, such that it was considered appropriate to form a cross-cutting Health and Wellbeing Hub to help co-ordinate the District Council's work in this area.
- 2.2 The Health and Wellbeing Hub consists of officers from Regulatory Services, Housing, Community Development and Regeneration and Policy. These services were selected to make up the core membership of the Hub as it was considered that they were the ones whose work had the most potential to positively affect health and wellbeing.
- 2.3 The Hub has met a number of times and has now produced a draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, attached as Appendix 1 to this report. It is now proposed to consult with key partners, broader stakeholders and the general public on the draft Strategy. Once this exercise has been completed a summary of comments received and a final Strategy will be submitted to Council for approval and adoption.

3 RISK ASSESSMENT

Legal

- 3.1 The Council's power with regard to the health and wellbeing of the District's inhabitants is derived from specific public health legislation and more general in the general powers of competence contained within the Localism Act 2011. The legal risk is therefore low.

Financial

- 3.2 The initiatives outlined in the Action Plans are all currently financed, therefore the financial risk is low.

4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

Tim Braund, Head of Regulatory Services, Tel: 01629 761118,
Email: tim.braund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board Health and Wellbeing Strategy

7 ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 – Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy

DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

2015/16

Introduction - What is Health and Wellbeing?

Health and wellbeing is a term used to describe a broad concept. It is not limited to whether or not a person is ill but instead focuses on how healthy they are. In this context health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organisation, 1946).

The actions of many bodies and agencies can impact on the general wellbeing of the population. The factors which can influence wellbeing are often referred to as the wider determinants of health and include issues such as socioeconomic, cultural and environmental factors. It is possible for local authorities to have a positive influence on these factors through their work, as some of the issues that they address through their day-to-day work impact on the wider determinants, such as housing, the work environment, sanitation, water supply, wealth, access to exercise and so on. The purpose of this Strategy is to identify the areas where Derbyshire Dales District Council can have this positive influence, highlight any gaps in our provision and specify actions to fill the gaps.

The Public Health Setting Within Derbyshire

Derbyshire Dales District Council is a second-tier local authority set within the county of Derbyshire. As such the most recent re-organisation of the National Health Service relocated the Public Health service that had previously been incorporated in the Primary Care Trust into Derbyshire County Council. This service is now headed by a Director of Public Health and reports through the democratically accountable body of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Health and Wellbeing Board has adopted a countywide Health and Wellbeing Strategy that sets out the following priorities:

- Improve health and wellbeing in early years;
- Promote healthy lifestyles;
- Improve emotional and mental health;
- Promote the independence of people living with long term conditions and their carers;
- Improve health and wellbeing of older people.

These priorities are currently being refreshed and a draft revised countywide Strategy has been produced for consideration by Chief Executives. For this reason it is thought appropriate to time limit the Derbyshire Dales District Council Strategy to 2015/16, so that it can be reviewed when the new countywide Strategy is adopted.

In addition to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is owned by the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Director of Public Health (DPH) for Derbyshire publishes an annual report. These reports set out what the DPH believes are the issues that could improve or harm public health at the time of publication and in the near future and make recommendations as to how the health and wellbeing of the people of Derbyshire can be maximised. The 4 areas addressed in the 2014 Annual Report are:

- Improving financial inclusion;
- Reducing child poverty;
- The importance of the economy and work;
- Reducing the impact of cold weather.

Derbyshire Dales District Council's Strategy outlines the local level influence that we intend to have on delivering against the priorities contained in both the countywide Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Director of Public Health's Annual Report. As the countywide priorities evolve over time it is intended that this Strategy will also evolve to reflect any changes.

Local Priorities

Underneath the life course priorities set out within the Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy Derbyshire Dales District Council also has general priorities to help steer the ways in which we wish to develop and offer our services. Our broad objectives are:

- To improve the general health of all our population;
- To reduce health inequalities across the District.

The first of these objectives is largely addressed through our general leisure provision, particularly at our 4 leisure centres in Ashbourne, Bakewell, Matlock and Wirksworth and is effectively part of the core service offered by the District Council. The main purpose of this Strategy is to focus some of our other, less obviously dedicated resources to addressing our broad objectives. To help us in developing this focus we have set 3 specific priorities for the work to be covered during the period of this Strategy:

1. To improve wellbeing in areas of disadvantage;
2. To improve the wellbeing of vulnerable groups;
3. To tackle wellbeing challenges associated with rurality.

In developing this Strategy we have also considered a number of sources of local health intelligence, including the Health Profile for Derbyshire Dales produced by Public Health England and Summary Profile for Derbyshire Dales District produced by Derbyshire County Council. These documents are produced annually and consequently this Strategy will be reviewed each year to ensure that it is in tune with the most recent intelligence. Key facts taken from these documents for 2014 include:

- Life expectancy gap for men = 5.0 years
- Life expectancy gap for women = 4.6 years

These figures show that the most deprived people in Derbyshire Dales can expect to die approximately 5 years before the least deprived.

- Smoking prevalence amongst mothers at the time of delivery is significantly worse than the England average
- Incidence of malignant melanoma is worse than the England average
- Deaths and serious injuries on the roads is significantly worse than the England average

These notes show the areas in the standard suite of indicators for which Derbyshire Dales shows a worse than average out-turn as compared to the rest of England.

Directly addressing some of these issues is outside the scope of the services offered by the District Council, but it is appropriate to have regard to this intelligence in designing future interventions.

Derbyshire Dales District Council's Actions

Derbyshire Dales District Council is not an agency whose functions are specifically aimed at improving health. However, many of the services that we are responsible for delivering or commissioning have the potential to help with this aim. Our role is to ensure that those services contribute towards improvements in public health whilst still meeting their core objectives.

A number of key areas have been identified by various services within Derbyshire Dales District Council for 2015-16. These are:

Community Development

- Focus development work on areas of deprivation and rural communities
- Better understanding and use of data to inform service delivery
- Reduce the number of inactive people living in the Derbyshire Dales
- Encourage strong, resilient communities via positive community engagement

Economic Development

- More higher paid jobs in local businesses
- Develop a higher value visitor economy in the Derbyshire Dales
- Better rural broadband to benefit residents and business thereby enabling better quality jobs

Housing

- Using resources effectively to deliver health outcomes
- Joining up services to increase benefit
- Increasing the number of lifetime homes

- Preventing homelessness
- Increasing income and helping households to manage debt

Regulatory Services

- Reducing the number of households in fuel poverty
- Improving the standard of private housing, including adaptations for disabled people
- Improving access to healthier food choices
- Help to promote the Healthy Workplaces project
- Preventing exposure to tobacco smoke
- Helping to regulate irresponsible alcohol consumption

In order to deliver against these priorities each of the services has contributed to a series of action plans for 2015-16.

Partnership Working

As previously stated Derbyshire Dales District Council is a second tier local authority in a shire county area. The statutory responsibilities of the District Council can be fairly narrow and the resources available to the authority can be relatively small. In order to be effective it is necessary for us to work collaboratively with a wide range of partners. Some of these partnerships are well established, such as those with Derbyshire County Public Health and others still require development.

Work is now progressing at a locality level with Public Health providing a co-ordinating role and the long established Peak District Partnership Health and Wellbeing Sub-Group provides an excellent melting pot for a wide range of organisations. However, it is expected that further work will need to be undertaken at the local level to create and develop specific partnerships to help to deliver the District Council's priorities. These principles are becoming embedded within the roles of District Council officers and form a key part of the role of our Community Development service.

Emerging Issues

The principle upon which this Strategy is intended to work is to set out the general ways in which the District Council operates in order to impact positively on health and wellbeing and then to set out action plans for the year ahead. These action plans are intended to be reviewed and refreshed annually. However, it is also considered appropriate to identify emerging priorities to help shape the potential future work of the District Council. Those emerging issues that have been identified in 2015/16 are:

- Poverty, especially child poverty;
- Isolation, especially rural isolation;
- Aging;
- Winter wellbeing.

ACTION PLANS FOR 2015-16

Community Development

Objective	Tasks and Outcomes	Lead	Timescale
Work in areas of deprivation and rural communities	<p>Deliver the Derbyshire Dales Village Games programme in rural communities</p> <p>Deliver the Active Everyone programme in priority areas</p> <p>Deliver the Walking for Health programme</p> <p>Deliver the Go Cycling Programme</p> <p>Deliver the Clubs First Programme</p>	Leisure	<p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p>
Better understanding and use of data to connect services	<p>Implement the Gladstone member management system across Leisure Centres and Sports Development</p> <p>Use data such as Derbyshire Quilt, Active People Survey to enhance service delivery and target priority groups</p>	Leisure	March 2016
Reduce the number of inactive people living in the Derbyshire Dales	<p>Increase attendances at leisure centres through a range of appropriate programmes.</p> <p>Deliver a range of community based Sports Development programmes to target areas of highest inactivity, underrepresented groups and workplaces</p>	Leisure	<p>March 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p>
Community Engagement	<p>Create an effective community engagement hub which connects work across the District Council, partners and communities</p> <p>Support ongoing work with locality partners on community resilience</p>	Community Engagement	March 2016

Economic Development

Objective	Tasks and Outcomes	Lead	Timescale
More higher paid jobs in local businesses	Provide support to 100 established businesses in the Derbyshire Dales by March 2016, enabling the creation of local jobs	Giles Dann	March 2016
Develop a higher value visitor economy in the Derbyshire Dales	Support the delivery of the annual Eroica Britannia Vintage Cycle Race and promote the route as a year round visitor attraction for the Dales	Giles Dann	March 2018
Better rural broadband	Work with partners via Enterprise Peak District to identify gaps in broadband provision and seek solutions	Giles Dann	March 2018

Housing

Objective	Tasks and Outcomes	Lead	Timescale
Effective use of resources	Implement the findings of the Housing Review specifically to re-commission support services for the start of 2016/17	RC	March 2016
Joining up services	Enhance the links between complimentary services commissioned by the Community Housing Team	RC	Ongoing
Increasing the number of lifetime homes	Including bungalows to LTH standard on all new affordable housing sites and private developments which have an affordable housing contribution	IF	Ongoing
Preventing homelessness	Funding a range of services to prevent 850 homelessness acceptances in 2015/16	SB	March 2016
Improving financial inclusion	Providing financial support to Erewash Credit Union, £60,000 in 2015/16	RC	July 2015

Regulatory Services

Objective	Tasks and Outcomes	Lead	Timescale
Reducing fuel poverty	Promote the Healthy Home project with GP pilot surgeries	HoRS	March 2016
	Work with CCG to increase the number of GP surgeries engaged	HoRS	March 2016
Improving private sector housing	Reduce processing times for DFGs	Env Health	March 2016
Improving access to healthier food choices	Increase number of businesses engaged with Heart of Derbyshire	Env Health	March 2016
	Increase number of pledges made by each business in Heart of Derbyshire	Env Health	March 2016
Help promote the Healthy Workplaces project	Ensure District Council engages with the project as an employer	HoRS	Sept 2015
	Promote the project to business throughout the district	Env Health	March 2016
Preventing exposure to tobacco smoke	Prepare for introduction of smoke free car legislation	Env Health	Oct 2015
	Work with taxi trade to improve smoke free compliance	Licensing	March 2016
Regulating irresponsible alcohol consumption	Undertake 'Safe and Responsible' compliance visits to at least 10 premises	Licensing	March 2016

Report of the Head of Regulatory Services

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

SUMMARY

This report identifies both the scope of the Environmental Health service review and the suggested methodology.

RECOMMENDATION

That the scope and methodology of the Environmental Health Review are approved.

WARDS AFFECTED

All

STRATEGIC LINK

The effective administration of the Environmental Health Service has strong links to 3 of the 4 District Council's aims, notably to improve quality of life; protect and enhance the environment and provide excellent services.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The review of the District Council's Environmental Health Service is one of 4 reviews scheduled for 2015/16 and acts as a formal trigger for the service to re-evaluate what, why and how things are done. Whilst reconfiguration of staff resources and service delivery have and continue to evolve on a needs must basis i.e. following the launch of 'agile' working, the creation of the Head of Regulatory Services post and latterly the BSU; the formality of the review (whilst still pulling on resources from the service to make it happen), does require more fundamental questions to be explored which adopt a much more cross-cutting approach.
- 1.2 The service 'as is' comprises of two distinct teams: the Commercial Team (4.2 FTE) whose dominant activities include reactive and proactive Food Safety enforcement inspections in manufacturing and retail premises through-out the district, plus reactive and proactive Health & Safety enforcement; and the Public Health Team (4.5 FTE) who inspect and enforce as regards Industrial Permitted Processes, Air Quality, Contaminated Land, Housing Standards, Nuisance and the delivery of Disabled Adaptations for example.
- 1.3 Essentially the collective Environmental Health Service is a front facing service which delivers a significant proportion of the regulatory duties placed upon the local authority via statute, whilst also providing some discretionary/enabler functions in order to provide a 'joined-up' service. The service has dealings with approximately 3,700 commercial businesses within the district and on average responds to some 1,875 requests for service throughout the year. The service is also a key consultee in terms

of Planning and Licensing activities, a key player in the national Better Business approach to regulation and a key contributor to Health & Wellbeing based initiatives and the wider Public Health agenda.

2 REPORT

- 2.1 The officer team for the review of Environmental Health was in part selected by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and consists of Amanda Goodwill (Principal Officer – Environmental Health) as Review Lead, Tim Braund (Head of Regulatory Services), Helen Bowmer (Resources), Esther Smith (Regeneration & Policy), plus Environmental Health colleagues Andrew Cairns and Karen Carpenter. As regards the critical friend dimension the review team will consider a cross-section of activity within the Environmental Health sector from the reorientation of Regulatory Services within Worcester, to the learning associated with the Derbyshire Health & Safety Advice project (delivered via the Better Business Regulation Scheme); whilst also taking some soundings from the business community as to how they feel regulatory services should respond to business. Political input will be provided by the nominated Member Champion for Regulatory Services, Councillor Andrew Statham.
- 2.2 The review will consider 3 key questions: Does the service need to be provided at all? Does the service need to be provided by the District Council? And what level of service should be provided?
- 2.3 Fundamentally the efficiency and effectiveness of the current service approach needs to be considered in parallel to other challenges such as:
- Increased customer expectation and lower tolerance
 - Local accountability for local services
 - Better Regulation and the ‘red tape’ agenda
 - Increased business growth and business start-ups
 - Increased recreational and ‘event’ activities within the district
 - Growth in the private rented housing sector
 - The requirement to build more homes in the district
 - National reductions in fee income for industrial regulation
 - Central government accountability and annual performance reporting
 - The diverse range of specialist knowledge required at a local level
 - Service resilience
 - The prospect of increasing financial pressures on council services
- 2.4 It is therefore recommended that the review adopts a much more strategic focus in the first instance i.e. what the service should look like going forwards and the terms of general engagement as opposed to process and procedural detail.
- 2.5 In order to answer the 3 questions posed in section 2.2 above (whilst having due regard to the challenges stated in section 2.3), it is recommended the review adopts a tiered approach whereby current mandatory and discretionary activities are formally identified and their stakeholder value objectively considered. The outcomes of the former should then allow the benchmarking of service provision with other council led Environmental Health Services of similar size and geographical make-up. The combined outcomes should then enable natural progression to the consideration of different delivery models and their level of risk to the Council.

- 2.6 The review is also taking place against a backdrop of other significant activities such as the Countywide Building Control project, the implementation of the Development Management review action plan, the Licensing review, the Derbyshire County Council transformation bid for their own in-house Disability Design Agency (which has links to our disabled facilities grant [DFG] activities) and preliminary discussions around the commercial value of Environmental Health via the Derbyshire Chief Environmental Health Officers group. Any associated learning/outputs will be considered accordingly.

3 RISK ASSESSMENT

Legal

- 3.1 There are no legal risks arising from this report.

Financial

- 3.2 It is anticipated the review will free-up a limited amount of officer capacity enabling the service to be more targeted in its approach, whilst also exploring additional opportunities for income generation and further embedding agile working and channel shift. Hence the financial risk is low.

Corporate Risk

- 3.3 The corporate risk associated with undertaking this review is low. However, the purpose of the review is to produce 3 options at low, medium and high risk levels. Depending on the option considered most appropriate the level of corporate risk could therefore be low, medium or high.
- 3.4 Due to the strategic nature of the review, it is anticipated key milestones and periodic updates will be reported to CLT on a regular basis in order to maintain focus, momentum and ultimately ensure tangible outcomes.

4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

Amanda Goodwill, Principal Officer – Environmental Health, Tel: 01629 761316,
Email: amanda.goodwill@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Tim Braund, Head of Regulatory Services, Tel: 01629 761118,
Email: tim.braund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7 ATTACHMENTS

None

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
10 September 2015

Report of the Head of Regulatory Services

REVIEW OF LICENSING SERVICE

SUMMARY

This report informs the Committee of the scope of the District Council's Licensing Service Review and outlines the suggested methodology. It also seeks approval to establish a Member Panel to take part in the service review, as recommended by the Licensing and Appeals Committee at the July 2015 meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the scope and suggested methodology of the Licensing Service Review are approved.
- 2) That progress reports be discussed at the Licensing and Appeals Committee meetings prior to the final report being brought back to the Community and Environment Committee.

WARDS AFFECTED

All

STRATEGIC LINK

An effective licensing regime supports the core values and key aims set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, in particular, the vision of a safe Peak District.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The review of the District Council's Licensing Service is one of 4 reviews scheduled for 2015/16. It provides an opportunity to assess the level and quality of the service currently provided and, aims to identify ways in which the service can be delivered more effectively and efficiently for the same or a lesser cost.
- 1.2 The effectiveness of the way in which the Licensing Service is currently provided and the existing policies and procedures used to provide it, will be considered with a view to:
 - Streamlining service provision – to include an increase in the number of licensing transactions available on the District Council's website.
 - Rationalising resources - to include investigation of partnership working/shared service/joint working
 - Maintaining a good customer experience
 - Maintaining performance standards
 - Identifying and implementing service efficiencies and removing duplication of effort.

- 1.3 As with all service reviews, the Licensing Service Review will need to produce 3 options, all of which should produce efficiency savings. These options should be low, medium and high risk.
- 1.4 The service currently comprises a team of 4 officers (3.8 FTE) plus an apprenticeship position. The positions are Licensing Manager, Senior Licensing Assistant and two (1.8 FTE) Licensing Assistants. In January 2015 these positions were reviewed when the then Licensing Officer left the Authority. Salary savings are funding the Apprenticeship position.
- 1.5 The main areas of licensing administered include alcohol, entertainment & late night refreshment, taxis, gambling, animal welfare, and cosmetic piercing etc. More recently, scrap metal licences and street trading consents have been added to functions undertaken.
- 1.6 The activities of the Team include producing and implementing policies and procedures; processing and determining applications for various licence types; dealing with requests for service and complaints; and providing licensing advice to applicants, existing licence-holders, other agencies, and the general public. Close partnership working with Environmental Health, Police, Fire, Trading Standards and Community Safety helps to jointly deliver enforcement/compliance visits to licensed premises across the district, and to carry out ad-hoc taxi and scrap metal site operations.
- 1.7 Licensing is a statutory service and is part of the District Council's regulatory responsibility. Each year the service has dealings with around 900 licence applications, in addition to the requests for services and complaints from residents and businesses. The service is an active partner in the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales Violence & Alcohol Licensing Theme Group (VAL) of the Community Safety Partnership; a regular attendee and contributor to the Derbyshire-wide Licensing Group and the East Midlands Regional Meetings of the Institute of Licensing (IoL). It supports the national Better Business approach to regulation, Health & Wellbeing-based initiatives and the wider Public Health agenda.
- 1.8 Licensing Authorities are legally required to deliver a licensing service which only recovers "reasonable costs" and this takes precedence over a Council's corporate charging policy and any requirement to maximise income. There has been recent case law to ensure that licensing fees are not being used to generate a profit for councils and that they are reviewed regularly to ensure that a significant surplus/deficit is not created. (*Hemming v Westminster City Council* 2015). Any proposals to revise fee structures as part of the review process should take this into consideration.

2 REPORT

- 2.1 The review team has been proposed by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT):

Eileen Tierney (Licensing Manager - Regulatory Services) – Review Lead;
Tim Braund (Head of Regulatory Services);
Rachael Ayre (Resources);
Katie Hamill (Corporate Services);
Nicola Wildgoose & Karen Cooper (Community Services); and
Stacey Lindfield (Regulatory Services – Licensing).

- 2.2 In addition to this team, it is proposed that an Officer from another licensing authority in Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire and/or from one of the licensing service's regular partners, (for example police, fire, trading standards) should be asked to be part of the review team, on an ad-hoc basis. It is also intended to ask licensing customers, (business and public), for their input into shaping the future of the service.
- 2.3 Licensing is a public facing service and Members will be aware that some licence applications attract a large amount of public interest, in much the same way as some planning applications do. Officers support the view that Members will need to be engaged in the review process and the consideration of service options. At the Licensing and Appeals Committee held on 15 July 2015 Members asked to be kept up-to-date with the progress of the Review and this is reflected in the officer recommendations.
- 2.4 The review will consider 3 key questions: Does the service need to be provided? Does the service need to be provided by the District Council? What level of service should be provided?
- 2.5 To consider the service as detailed in paragraph 1.2, the following elements will be included in the review for consideration:

Service Standards and Customer Care

- Review of Current Service Standards
- Review of Current Performance
- Customer experience and satisfaction
- Interaction with Business Support Unit
- Pre Application advice and introduction of charges
- Effectiveness of current guidance and advice to customers
- Streamlining Information Requirements
- Website and on-line information and service delivery (channel shift)
- Arrangements for invoicing and debt recovery

Casework Management and Utilisation of Resources

- Application process and procedures
- Electronic Document Management and workflow management
- Team roles
- Allocation of staff resources
- The effective use of ICT systems
- Delegation arrangements
- Taxi testing via the District Council's Depot

Effective Consultation and Engagement

- Proportionate consultation and engagement – who, when, how
- M3 public consultation system – internal and external
- Publicity arrangements
- Efficiency and effectiveness of enforcement procedures including legal support
- Links to other Regulatory Services

- 2.6 In a similar way to the Council's other regulatory services under-going a service review this year, the efficiency and effectiveness of the current service approach needs to be considered in parallel to other challenges being faced, such as:
- Increased customer expectation and lower tolerance
 - Local accountability for local services
 - Better Regulation and the 'red tape' agenda
 - Increased business growth and business start-ups
 - Increased recreational and event activities within the district
 - Central government accountability and annual performance reporting
 - The diverse range of specialist knowledge required at a local level
 - Service resilience
 - The prospect of increasing financial pressures on council services.
- 2.7 The licensing review not only needs to adopt a strategic focus in terms of what the service should look like and can be sustained in the future, but a critical look at the processes and procedures in detail is also needed as a result of new licensing software being used and the move towards a 'paperless office' with the increased use of the website and the on-line application portal.
- 2.8 It is recommended the review identifies mandatory and discretionary activities carried out by the licensing team, and evaluates them objectively. This will enable the benchmarking of service provision with licensing services of other councils of similar size and geographical make-up. In this way it will be possible to compare staffing levels, support services and income with authorities in our CIPFA family group.
- 2.9 An investigation will be made into a shared or joint licensing service, or partnership working. There are councils in England where these approaches are operating. Feedback from licensing authorities where the practice is relatively well-established, will add value to any future decision to consider the route.
- 2.10 Examples of a single licensing service for more than one district/borough council area are:
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Licensing). In Worcester, the Licensing, Environmental Health & Trading Standards services have merged to become one Shared Service. This amalgamates the six licensing districts of Worcestershire.
 - At Rother and Wealdon District Councils, licensing is part of the Environmental Health department which is run as a Shared Service.
 - In December 2014, Basingstoke & Dean issued a Decision Notice to enter into a shared Licensing Service with Hart District Council.
- 2.11 A combination of learning from the experiences of those authorities that have already explored this method of working, plus discussions with neighbouring authorities will help form recommendations in relation to shared services.
- 2.12 Whilst these proposals describe a demanding service review, officers expect to be able to produce final recommendations by the end of March 2016.

3 RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 Legal

There are no legal risks arising from this report.

3.2 Financial

The review should free-up a limited amount of officer capacity enabling the service to be more targeted in its approach, and allow development of the licensing software to increase channel shift opportunity. Hence the financial risk is low.

3.3 Corporate Risk

The corporate risk associated with undertaking this review is low. However, the purpose of the review is to produce 3 options at low, medium and high risk levels. Depending on the option considered most appropriate the level of corporate risk could therefore be low, medium or high.

The findings of an investigation into partnership working/joint working/shared service provision will require periodic updates to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT); this will also provide an opportunity for an update on the progress made in reviewing the processes and procedures element of the Review.

4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

Eileen Tierney, Licensing Manager,
Tel: 01629 761374
Email: eileen.tierney@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Tim Braund, Head of Regulatory Services,
Tel: 01629 761118
Email: tim.braund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7 ATTACHMENTS

None