



CABINET AGENDA

Wednesday, 14 October 2009

The Jeffery Room

6:00 pm

Members of the Cabinet:

Councillor: Tony Woods (Leader of the Council)

Councillor: Brian Hoare (Deputy Leader)

Councillors: Sally Beardsworth, Richard Church,
Trini Crane, David Perkins, Paul Varnsberry

Chief Executive David Kennedy

If you have any enquiries about this agenda please contact Jo Darby 837089

PORTFOLIOS OF CABINET MEMBERS

CABINET MEMBER	PORTFOLIO TITLE
Councillor A. Woods	Leader Partnership and Improvement
Councillor B. Hoare	Deputy Leader Engagement
Councillor S. Beardsworth	Housing
Councillor R. Church	Planning and Regeneration
Councillor T. Crake	Environment
Councillor D. Perkins	Finance
Councillor P.D. Varnserry	Communities

SPEAKING AT CABINET MEETINGS

Persons (other than Members) wishing to address Cabinet must register their intention to do so by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

Registration can be by:

Telephone: (01604) 837101, 837089, 837355, 837356
(Fax 01604 838729)

In writing: The Borough Solicitor,
The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE
For the attention of the Democratic Services Officer

By e-mail to democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk

Only thirty minutes in total will be allowed for addresses, so that if speakers each take three minutes no more than ten speakers will be heard. Each speaker will be allowed to speak for a maximum of three minutes at each meeting. Speakers will normally be heard in the order in which they registered to speak. However, the Chair of Cabinet may decide to depart from that order in the interest of hearing a greater diversity of views on an item, or hearing views on a greater number of items. The Chair of Cabinet may also decide to allow a greater number of addresses and a greater time slot subject still to the maximum three minutes per address for such addresses for items of special public interest.

Members who wish to address Cabinet shall notify the Chair prior to the commencement of the meeting. Such addresses will be for a maximum of three minutes unless the Chair exercises discretion to allow longer. The time these addresses take will not count towards the thirty minute period referred to above so as to prejudice any other persons who have registered their wish to speak.

KEY DECISIONS

 denotes the issue is a 'Key' decision:

- Any decision in relation to the Executive function* which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of saving which are significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates. For these purpose the minimum financial threshold will be £50,000;
- Where decisions are not likely to involve significant expenditure or savings but nevertheless are likely to be significant in terms of their effects on communities in two or more wards or electoral divisions; and
- For the purpose of interpretation a decision, which is ancillary or incidental to a Key decision, which had been previously taken by or on behalf of the Council shall not of itself be further deemed to be significant for the purpose of the definition.



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held in The Jeffery Room,
The Guildhall, Northampton, on Wednesday, 14 October 2009 at 6:00 pm.

D Kennedy
Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES
3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
5. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
6. CAMP HILL MUGA
Report of the Director of Environment and Culture
7. DUSTON CONSERVATION AREA - REAPPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN
Report of the Director of Planning and Regeneration
8. ELECTORAL REVIEW
Report of the Chief Executive
9. CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT
Report of the Director of Environment and Culture
10. PROPOSED BID TO THE HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY FOR ROUND TWO FUNDING FOR COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING
Report of the Director of Housing
11. NEW TENANT PARTICIPATION STRUCTURE
 Report of the Director of Housing Services
12. ANNUAL LETTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN
Report of the Director of Finance and Support
13. ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE DIRECTORATE - IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PLAN
 Report of the Director of Environment and Culture
14. CONSULTATION ON NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP PROTOCOL

Report of the Chief Executive

15. PERFORMANCE

(A) PERFORMANCE MONTHLY REPORT - JULY 2009

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

(B) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009-10 MONITORING REPORT,
PERIOD 4: PROJECT APPRAISALS AND VARIATIONS

Report of the Director of Finance and Support

(C) HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) MONITORING
2009-10

Report of the Director of Finance and Support

(D) REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2009-10 POSITION AS
AT JULY 2009

Report of the Director of Finance and Support

16. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

THE CHAIR TO MOVE:

"THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE
REMAINDER OF THE MEETING ON THE GROUNDS THAT
THERE IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF SUCH
CATEGORIES OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED BY
SECTION 100(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS
LISTED AGAINST SUCH ITEMS OF BUSINESS BY
REFERENCE TO THE APPROPRIATE PARAGRAPH OF
SCHEDULE 12A TO SUCH ACT."

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

**Exempted Under Schedule
12A of L.Govt Act 1972
Para No:-**

17. AWARD OF BANKING CONTRACT (3)
🔑 Report of Director of Finance and Support
18. GROSVENOR/ GREYFRIARS (3)
🔑 Report of Director of Planning and Regeneration

Appendices

1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

6

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Camp Hill Multi-Use Games Area
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AGENDA STATUS:

PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 th October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Environment and Culture
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Paul Varnsvery
Ward(s)	West Hunsbury

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for NBC to manage and maintain a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in Camp Hill, and act as the Accountable Body for a Big Lottery grant to fund it's installation.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve that:

- 2.1 NBC acts as Accountable Body for the anticipated capital funding from the Big Lottery 'Changing Spaces' programme of £50,000.
- 2.2 NBC manages the facility as a council asset, on land leased from Northamptonshire County Council.
- 2.3 NBC provides the ongoing, weekly maintenance and inspection of the facility, with any damage and repairs covered through additional external funding.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 Camp Hill has a lack of sports and recreational space, with any current provision unsuitable for young adults ages 11+
- 3.1.2 The Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment of Needs and Audit (2006) identified deficiencies town-wide in the provision of outdoor sports facilities for young people.
- 3.1.3 The Playing Pitch Strategy (2005) identified a town-wide pitch deficit for junior football and mini-soccer. It recommended securing community use of new sites to address this.
- 3.1.4 There is demonstrable support from local residents, young people, resident groups, Neighbourhood Management Board, and Safer Communities Team for a Multi-use games area. A needs analysis has been carried out, which supports building the facility (see Background Papers).
- 3.1.5 The Hills Community, a local residents association, has reached the second stage of a £50,000 'Changing Spaces' Big Lottery application for a MUGA with the support of the Doing Better For Communities Neighbourhood Coordinator. The Big Lottery has given a deadline for submission of the completed Stage 2 application, demonstrating ability to proceed with the scheme, by October 26th 2009.
- 3.1.6 Northamptonshire County Council owns the land in question, and on 12th August 2009 their Cabinet agreed to lease a portion of this land for a MUGA to the Council.
- 3.1.7 A planning application has been submitted on the recommendation of NBC Planning, though based on the nature of the development work can proceed without formal planning permission. Planning has indicated there are no reasonable grounds for rejecting the application. To date no objections have been received from residents in the adjacent streets.
- 3.1.8 A dedicated Project Management Group composed of Council officers, professionals and councillors as appropriate has been convened, and is following established project management protocol.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 NBC would act as Accountable body for the Big Lottery capital grant in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined by the Big Lottery. NBC would agree to the Big Lottery asset-monitoring period of five years, in

essence ensuring that the MUGA remains suitable for sporting activities and accessible to all residents during this time.

- 3.2.2 NBC would become the leaseholder of land sufficient to contain the MUGA with a two metre buffer surrounding. Council would take on the ownership and management of the proposed MUGA as a council asset. The desired lease term is twenty years, with a peppercorn rent, agreed in principle through a County Council drafted Heads of Terms of Agreement.
- 3.2.3 The County Council has proposed a fifteen-year break clause in the lease. The MUGA would be in place for a minimum of fifteen years. After this time the County could terminate the lease and have indicated they would require that NBC reinstate the land to its previous condition. This would cost c. £4000 at current market prices. This cost can be met through top slicing the maintenance budget for the MUGA over the fifteen-year period. It should be noted that in any event the MUGA playing surface would need replacing at 15 – 18 years. If the MUGA remained in place beyond this time the accrued reserve fund could then cover the costs of a new playing surface if required.
- 3.2.4 Under the proposed scheme NBC would take on the weekly maintenance and inspection of the MUGA. Parks and Open Space have confirmed their capacity to carry out the superficial cleansing, maintenance and inspections of the MUGA. NBC is not being asked to fund any additional maintenance required in the event of damage or vandalism to the facility. A funding reserve to the value of £10,000 will cover this for a period of five years. This will comprise of a mix of cash and equipment. This mirrors similar agreements for the maintenance of other multi-use games areas in the town (such as Victoria Park). The scheme will not proceed before this additional funding is confirmed.
- 3.2.5 Crime Prevention Design Advisor, Sharon Henley, of Northamptonshire Police, has conducted a thorough environmental audit of the site. Her assessment approves the chosen location subject to provision of regular landscaping works to increase the visibility of the site. The County Council have agreed to carry out this work as part of the lease agreement. The site is well protected from the most likely source of damage; cars driving into fencing and/or being burnt out on the tarmac surface.
- 3.2.6 Noise has been the main source of concern for local residents near existing MUGAs in Northampton. It should be noted that the chosen site is more than thirty metres from the nearest housing (in line with the Fields In Trust 'Six Acre Standard' : 2001). There are large trees shielding housing from the site. The tender specifications demand low noise rebound fencing. Construction will be put out to tender using the ESPO procurement framework. Key elements of this tender include long guarantee periods for materials, anti-bullying and vandal-resistant design.
- 3.2.7 Fees accrued in the preparation of the bid cannot be recouped through the Big Lottery Funding. This includes internal recharges between NBC departments.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 Council agrees to the administration of the Big Lottery grant, the maintenance and management of the proposed Camp Hill Multi-Use Games Area under the terms outlined in this report.
- 3.3.2 Council agrees to the action described in paragraph 3.3.1 and in addition agrees to waive internal recharges (cost of officer time) resulting from work preparing the Stage 2 lottery application.
- 3.3.3 Council rejects one or more elements of the project, either to act as Accountable Body for the Big Lottery grant, and/or to the maintenance and management of the facility. This will result in failure to secure capital funding from the Big Lottery.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17) states that local authorities should avoid erosion of recreational function and maintain or enhance the character of open spaces. Based on the supportive outcome of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey (see Background Papers) a MUGA could be considered an enhancement to the recreational function of the area.
- 4.1.2 Planning Policy Recommendation 13: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPR13) states that we should look to secure formal community use of sites currently inaccessible to the community to help address an overall deficit. The Equalities Impact Assessment (see Background Papers) notes the facility would promote a more diverse community use of the site
- 4.1.3 Taking into account survey evidence this scheme would be consistent with local planning policy, including the designation of the site as an area of acknowledged conservation (Policy E18) and of part of the site as an area of skyline conservation (Policy E7).
- 4.1.4 The report has no direct implications for other policies, though may act as an exemplar for the delivery of recreational facilities through partnership working and direct community involvement.
- 4.1.5 As such the report may prove useful to strategy development around recreation and open space, including the upcoming Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Capital

This scheme would bring £50,000 of Big Lottery capital funding into the town, specifically to the area of Camp Hill. A capital appraisal has been submitted and is part of the capital monitoring report also presented to this cabinet.

4.2.2 Revenue

- The main revenue liabilities generated by the project relate to the ongoing maintenance of the facility (excepting costs for replacing parts in incidents of damage and vandalism) and officer time expended in the general course of cleaning and inspecting the facility. These are estimated at £500 per annum, and will be covered through existing budgets.
- A reserve will be set up to replace parts in incidents of damage and vandalism and will total £10,000 for a five-year period (£2000 per year). This will comprise of a mix of revenue and equipment. Any funding or materials remaining after this time will continue to benefit the project. Thereafter Parks and Open Space will bid for this funding as part of the budget build process at the appropriate time.

Funding Source	Amount (£)
Sustainability Grant (Big Lottery)	3,500
Lottery Fund replacement parts element (included within Stage 2 application)	3,000
Grant Funding	2,000
Tournament revenue	1,500 (£300 per annum)
Total (5 years)	10,000

Breakdown of reserve fund for Camp Hill MUGA

- It is anticipated there will be minimal officer time incurred in the management of the facility and the land's lease by the Councils Asset management department. The workload is within their capacity to deliver effectively and with value for money.
- To maximise any revenue funds available to the project on completion the Council is asked to waive any internal recharges associated with its development.

4.2.3 Risk Management

Risk	Action
Difficulty fulfilling responsibilities as Accountable Body	The legal and financial implications related to acting as an Accountable body for the capital grant have been reviewed by the Councils legal representative and the Finance team. The project will not proceed without approval from the Finance team of the conditions for acting as Accountable Body. The submission of a grant application does not bind the Council to any grant they may be offered as the Accountable Body.
Unable to secure revenue from community	Work with residents to establish steering group (through the Hills Community Residents Association), which is capable of generating revenue for the facility. Hills Community also provides community

organised events	group capable of applying for grant funding to support the project.
Poor standard of construction	To avoid risks associated with the commissioning of works and adoption of a new facility there will be close monitoring and oversight of the tendering, construction and sign off of works by a dedicated, external Lead Professional. This is in accordance with Big Lottery guidelines and will be funded through the capital grant. The Lead Professional will liaise closely with the Project Management Group.
Vandalism of facility	Ongoing engagement work with local residents, particularly young people, to encourage ownership of the facility. Design and location aims to reduce potential for criminality through maximum visibility and blocking access to vehicles. Reserve fund set aside to cover any such maintenance requirements.

4.2.4 NBC's Insurance Officer confirms the facility can be covered under the existing Public Liability insurance held by the council, without incurring an additional charge.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The Council would effectively be acting as a guarantor in acting as the Accountable Body for this project. The risks associated with this and taking on a lease of land are referred to within this report.

4.3.2 The Council's ultimate commitment to this project will be strictly subject to negotiating satisfactory lease terms with the County Council and officer satisfaction with the terms of the Big Lottery Grant Agreement when received.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out for the consultation process and community use of the facility (see background papers).

4.4.2 The Equalities Impact Assessment noted a specific need to ensure young female residents and young disabled residents feel engagement with the project and able to make use of the facility on completion. These have built into the consultation process and the design and ongoing management of the facility.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 There has been continuous consultation with internal departments including Finance, Legal, Housing, Procurement, Asset management, Planning, Policy and Community engagement and Neighbourhood Environmental Services. This has involved one to one meetings and participation in the Project Management Group. Ward Councillors and Portfolio Holders for Communities and for Environment, The Heads of Finance, Policy and Community Engagement, Leisure and Culture and Neighbourhood Environmental Services have all been consulted directly.

- 4.5.2 External consultation has encompassed residents adjacent to the site, all local residents, resident/local interest groups and young people. Methods employed include open meetings, door-to-door work, questionnaires, information stalls at local amenities, residents meetings, workshops with young people and street-based/school based outreach with young people. This work has been instrumental in identifying a suitable location, producing a specification for the MUGA and securing the support of other agencies. The agencies and their representatives consulted include Northamptonshire County Council Property Asset management, County Councillors (Portfolio and Ward), Northants Police (Safer Community Team, Sector Inspector, Crime Prevention Design Advisor) and The Wildlife Trust.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 Partnership and Community Engagement : Effective working with voluntary and community sectors. This Project is an exemplar for partnership working and community involvement in the delivery of recreational facilities.
- 4.6.2 Safer, Greener and Cleaner communities : Provide good quality open spaces and parks, Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 4.6.3 Housing, Health and Wellbeing : Healthier living for young people

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 Feasibility Study
- 5.2 Needs Analysis
- 5.3 Site Plan
- 5.4 Equalities Impact Assessment
- 5.5 Crime Prevention Assessment
- 5.6 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Pete Staffell, Neighbourhood Coordinator (Doing Better For Communities)
x. 8598



No	Revision	Chk	Date

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
Finance and Support
Asset Management Corporate Property Maintenance Team

Camp Hill MUGA
Proposed Location

Scale: 1:500 At A3

Drawn	WJ	Date	08/2009
Checked			
Approved			

Drawing No. 00901-008

Appendices
4



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

7

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Duston Village Conservation Area re-appraisal and management plan
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	No
Listed on Forward Plan:	Yes
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	Yes
Directorate:	Regeneration & Growth
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Cllr Richard Church
Ward(s)	Nene Valley

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise the Cabinet of the Council's duty to re-appraise Conservation Areas within the Northampton Borough administrative boundary. To inform Cabinet of the responses to a draft Duston Conservation Area Appraisal and management plan. To seek approval of the conservation area appraisal and management plan following amendments made as a result of public consultation including significant amendments to the boundary of Duston Conservation Area.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that

- 2.1 That the responses to the consultation and officer responses are noted.
- 2.2 That the attached appraisal and management plan, including the proposed boundary amendments, be approved

3. Issues and Choices

Background

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 69 and 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate as and formulate proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation.
- 3.2 The Duston Conservation Area was first designated on 24 March 1977 and the boundary remained unchanged since that date.
- 3.3 Consultation took place on a draft of an appraisal and management plan. The draft defined the special character of the area to make it worthy of conservation area status. It also identified measures to maintain and enhance the identified character. The conservation area boundary defines the historic core of the former village of Duston, which is characterised by many traditional buildings.
- 3.4 The draft appraisal proposed major alterations to the existing boundary. The purpose of the alterations is to include areas currently outside the boundary but which make a significant contribution to the character of the area. It also seeks to regularise boundaries to ensure it includes all of a building's curtilage or garden. See Appendix 1 for the proposed boundary changes that were consulted upon.
- 3.5 Consultation took place both internally and externally on the draft appraisal and management plan. Consultation took the form of a leaflet being distributed to every property within the extended conservation area, local residents associations and amenity groups, partner organisations (WNDC, English Heritage), ward members, portfolio holder and Historic Environment Champion. A number of copies of the draft appraisal were made available at the Parish Council office at the Duston Community Centre. Copies were also placed in local libraries the Central Library and other civic buildings like Northampton Borough Councils One Stop Shop. The Council's Communications Team also put out a press release. The consultation ran from 29th of June 2009 to 24th August 2009.

Main changes proposed as a result of consultation

- 3.6 A schedule of detailed responses, officer replies and resultant changes to the appraisal and management plan is included at appendix 2. There has been no significant alteration to the document as a result of consultation feedback, although the boundary of the conservation area has been amended in three areas. One of these changes (the extension to the south) was made as a direct result of comments by local residents. Another minor change was made to rationalise the boundary so that it included an entire domestic property. Most respondents completed a feedback questionnaire that was also circulated (Copy attached at appendix 3). A total of 31 responses were received. The principal issues raised were:
 - safeguarding the character of the area
 - emphasising the survival of the village
 - establishing the proper boundary for the conservation area

- 3.7 The revised appraisal and management plan taking into account the changes made as a result of the consultation is included in appendix 4. NBC Natural and Built Heritage team request that Cllr Richard Church is able to provide a forward for final appraisal and management plan as per the comments he made for the recent Hardingstone re-appraisal.

Options

- 3.8 The appraisal and management plan could either be:
- a) adopted by Cabinet with the changes made as a result of the consultation as recommended
 - b) adopted by Cabinet as above, but with other changes Cabinet feel are appropriate,
 - c) rejected by Cabinet either as a whole or in part.
- 3.9 Option A is considered the most appropriate action as it would provide the Duston Conservation Area with a more detailed analysis and evaluation of its status which will enable more informed statutory protection. It will give a more up to date evaluation of the special characteristics of the area that are deemed worthy of protecting or enhancing. The management plan will also assist in ensuring that the future of the area is appropriately protected and enhanced.
- 3.10 Option B could be considered appropriate if the changes suggested by Cabinet are regarded as sound and in accordance with best practice guidance with regard to appraisals and management plans.
- 3.11 Option C is not considered to be appropriate. There would not be an up to date character appraisal and management plan. This is inconsistent with national policy. It would weaken the Council's potential to carry out to the best of its ability the statutory duty placed upon it in seeking to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

The Council has a statutory duty to evaluate areas of the Borough for designation as conservation areas. It has a 5-year rolling programme relating to the re-appraisal of all existing conservation areas. It also has a duty to formulate proposals for their preservation and enhancement once designated. When undertaking the re-appraisal and formulating proposals for management, regard has been given to national guidance such as Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment and guidance published by English Heritage relating to conservation areas. The Northampton Local Plan: policy E26 is also relevant. The appraisals and management plans assist in considering the appropriateness of planning applications and potential future improvement works.

4.2 Resources and Risk

Re-appraisals and management plans form part of the remit of the natural and built heritage team. Therefore the fieldwork and consultation necessary to inform the

documents is incorporated into existing resources. The Built and Natural Heritage team has a Conservation and Improvements budget which can be used to assist with the implementation of the management plan, but whilst this may contribute to some of the improvements, the majority of expenditure to effect change will be undertaken by third parties such as the Highway Authority.

4.3 Legal

Boundary amendments to existing conservation areas will require advertisement in the London Gazette and one local newspaper. Legal Services provide this service on behalf of the Council and they have been consulted on the proposal. The cost of advertisement will be met from existing budgets.

4.4 Equality

No equality and diversity issues have been identified relating to this report. An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken and approved. The opportunity to have copies of the document in large print, Braille, audiotope or translation to another language was provided

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

Local residents, businesses, residents' associations and amenity groups, Duston Parish Council, partner organisations (WNDC, English Heritage), ward members, portfolio holder and Historic Environment Champion.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

Protecting the historic environment helps improve the quality of the environment, conserving Northampton's unique sense of place and identity. This can be regarded as being consistent with Priority 1 'we will help our communities become a safer, greener, and cleaner' and Priority 4 'we will promote economic development and growth in Northampton'.

4.7 Other Implications

None

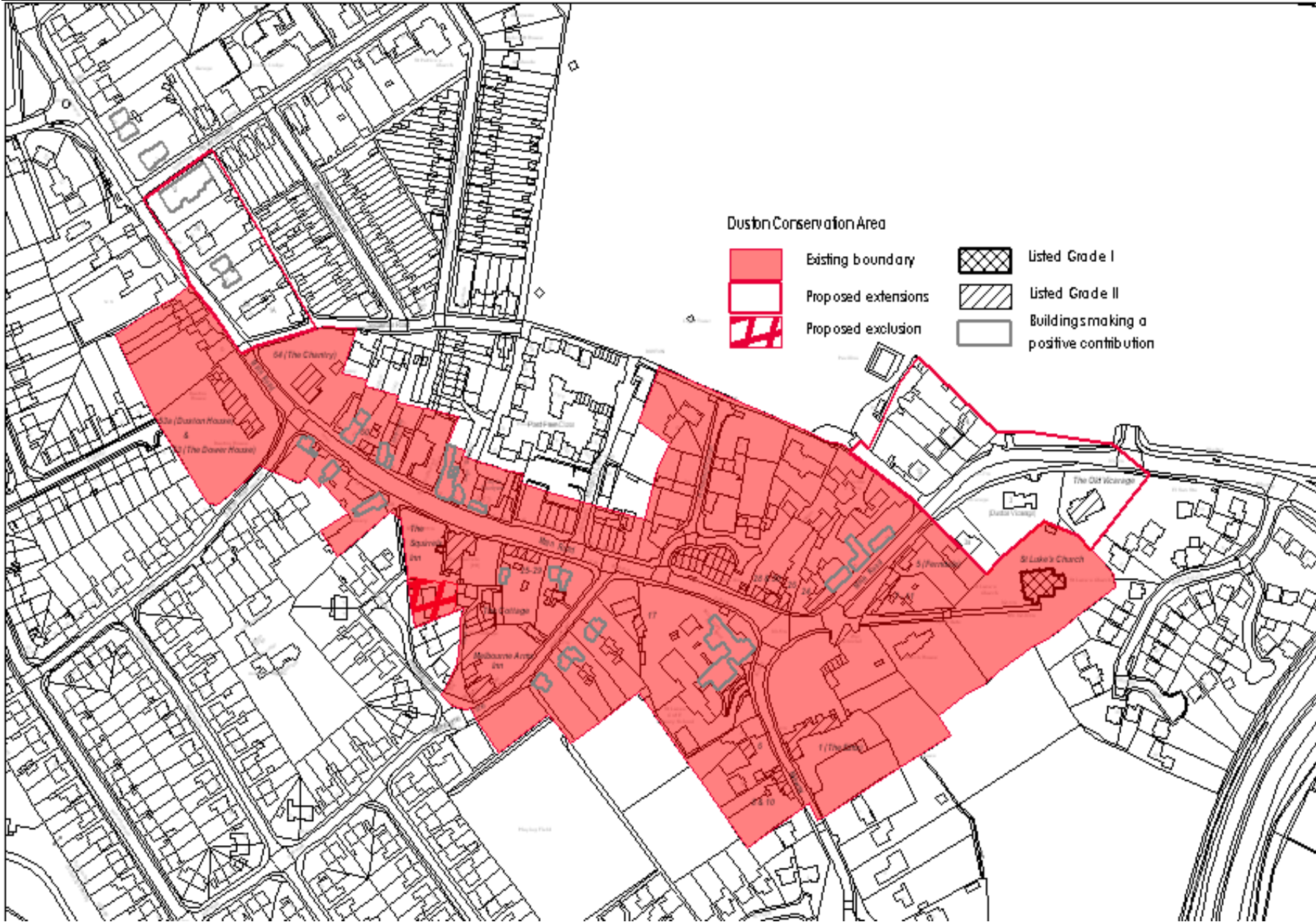
5. Background Papers

5.1 File 348/04 – Collingtree Conservation Area

Jane Jennings, Team Leader, Natural & Built Heritage
Tel.01604 837637
jjennings@northampton.gov.uk

Duston Conservation Area

- Existing boundary
- Proposed extensions
- Proposed exclusion
- Listed Grade I
- Listed Grade II
- Buildings making a positive contribution





Duston Conservation Area

Appraisal & Management Plan

Summary of Consultation

June – August 2009

Annotated



Planning Policy & Conservation Section
Cliftonville House, Bedford Road, Northampton NN4 7NR
Tel: 01604 837637 e-mail: conservation@northampton.gov.uk
September 2009

Comments received in consultation exercise, June to August 2009

If the views represent those of an organisation, the organisation name appears in the left-hand column.

[square brackets] indicates any necessary clarification (added by the questionnaire analyser).

Text in Italics denotes the Council's response to the comments received.

Do you have any comments on the proposed boundary changes?	
	Overdue and welcome
	It is a good idea.
Duston Village Bakery	<p>You have 3 properties north of Peveril Road. Why are they not included with the boundary?</p> <p><i>It has been noted that the dwellings contribute positively to the character of this part of Duston, however it was felt that Peveril Road forms the best boundary to the Duston Conservation Area. Having studied the historic maps it is clear that the houses mentioned in this comment were built at different times. No's 78 & 80 Main Road were built prior to 1901 at the same time as no's 70-76 Main Road, No 3 Peveril Road (Oak Lodge) and No's 3, 5, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14 Peveril Road. These buildings (with the exception of Oak Lodge), are built using a similar style and palette of materials, although the scale differs. These buildings were assessed and it was felt that due to the level of unsympathetic alteration made, they would not be appropriate for inclusion in the conservation area. Similarly with number 1 Peveril Road, it was felt that because the property was built much later, and all the original windows replaced, it should not be included in the Conservation Area.</i></p>
	<p>Your leaflet denotes three properties which are making a positive contribution which do not appear to be in the conservation area (near Peveril Road) - why?</p> <p><i>See response above</i></p>
	<p>Could the N-W extension be extended further to include the three properties beyond Peveril Road?</p> <p><i>See response above</i></p>
Duston CAAC	<p>Extension should include No1 Peveril Road (opposite side of road to Oak Lodge)</p> <p><i>See response above</i></p>
	<p>Why is the copse, which is behind my property and next to St Luke's School, not included in the conservation area? [This is W1 of TPO 166]</p> <p><i>As the trees in the copse already benefit from protection under a TPO they would not benefit from an increased level of protection if they were to be included in the conservation area. However having assessed the impact of the trees on the character of the conservation area from Melbourne Lane, and considering that the copse and the playing field form part of the curtilage of St Luke's Primary School, the boundary should be regularised to address this. As such the boundary in the final document will be amended to include the copse area.</i></p>
	<p>I would like to believe that the proposed boundary extensions are made permanent and future developments within the area are appropriate to the existing buildings, and most importantly enforced.</p> <p><i>Yes, once the boundary is extended then the properties within it would benefit from protection under the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990.</i></p>
Duston Dental Practice	<p>Concerns exist over unnecessary red tape with regulations to tall trees affecting building foundations / public pathway wall.</p> <p><i>It is not considered that the current approach to this issue constitutes unnecessary regulations. When damage to foundations or walls is proven to be caused by tree roots then the tree is removed. Evidence must be provided to back up the claim that the tree is the cause of the damage.</i></p>

Do you have any comments on the proposed boundary changes?

See marked leaflet with respect to pockets of land adjacent to Holmleigh Close. Holmleigh Close is "unadopted" and subject to Residents Association - registered with Companies House as a limited company (Sec. Mrs R A Martin at 6 Holmleigh Close).

Noted

[Comments in marked leaflet: "Why does the boundary cut 36 Main Road in half?" Area adjacent to 7 Holmleigh Close shaded, with the comment "This area (formerly allotments) is property of Holmleigh Close residents"]

36 Main Road - Noted – The Boundary will be changed accordingly.

Land Adjacent to 7 Holmleigh Close - It is not considered appropriate to include this land within the conservation area, as it has no material benefit for the conservation area as a whole. The land is enclosed by private property which is not visible from the public realm, therefore its contribution to the character of the area is diminished.

What improvements / changes would you like to see?

Duston Dental Practice	<p>Concentrate efforts on preserving character within existing boundaries before considering extension.</p> <p><i>NBC takes every opportunity to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area through the planning application procedure. The extensions are being proposed to increase the amount of heritage protection afforded to the village of Duston, which cumulatively will benefit the area as a whole.</i></p>
	<p>1. Limit, if not suspension of "infill" development. 2. Encourage property owners to maintain their properties to a reasonable level. 3. Old Duston School is currently becoming badly neglected and must be maintained.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Any proposals for infill development will be considered on their planning merits with the aim of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.</i> <i>It is the sole responsibility of property owners to maintain their properties. As a council we can only offer a reasonable level of information and advice to facilitate successful maintenance, we cannot place owners under any obligations to carry out works (unless it concerns unauthorised works to a listed building or works carried out without conservation area consent)</i> <i>A proposal was approved recently (19th of May 2009) by WNDC for the refurbishment and reuse of the building as a nursery, community centre and business units. This scheme should ensure the successful long term use of the building.</i>
	<p>1) The copse as above [TPO166] to be included. 2) Planning department not allowing removal of trees like they did at dentist's in Main Road [no 21].</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>See comment above.</i> <i>The scheme that was approved at the dentists has a condition on requiring box hedging to be planted 1m above the highest ground level. The planting scheme is actively being dealt with by the NBC planning Enforcement Team.</i>
	<p>Reinstatement of the trees around the car park area on No 21 Main Road now used as a dental surgery. The removal of the original trees has spoilt the character of the village.</p> <p><i>The NBC Planning Enforcement team are actively seeking to resolve this issue.</i></p>
	<p>The properties on Main Road opposite the Old School (nos 28 & 30 on the map) appear to be in need of some preservation work.</p>

What improvements / changes would you like to see?	
	<i>Noted, however, the maintenance of these properties is the responsibility of the owner.</i>
	<p>Policy of tighter control over changes of use i.e. residential houses being used for businesses. Some houses are not being kept in good repair and are in focal positions at the bottom of the village – perhaps they need help.</p> <p><i>All Planning applications will be determined based on their planning merits. Any decision made will take into consideration the need to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.</i></p>
	<p>To keep our green areas. There is too much building.</p> <p><i>Noted.</i></p>
	<p>Village shops to have more attractive shop fronts with appropriate signage which is more in keeping with the age of the village. Traffic calming in the village to stop the erosion of the stone walls.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1) Shop fronts will be dealt with as and when applications come forward. A view will always be taken to promote development that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.</i> <i>2) The traffic in the village does have a significant and detrimental impact upon the character and setting of the conservation area. Issues relating to traffic reduction and calming are dealt with by the Northamptonshire County Highways authority. The issue of the erosion of front wall is an important one which needs to be addressed by the owners of the individual properties concerned. NBC will offer as much advice and guidance as is required to those owners wishing to carry out repair works to their boundary walls.</i>
	<p>The Stables at the rear of the bakery in Main Road should be classed as special interest, as I understand they have the original 1020 stables. Lower speed limit and weight limit through the village - the traffic needs to be controlled in a better way.</p> <p><i>Noted</i></p>
	<p>I would like to see the plans outlined by the WNDC for the development of the old St Luke's Lower School (application 09/0055/FULWNN) put into operation as soon as possible. I would also like to see some kind of restrictions on the use of Millway by heavy lorries.</p> <p><i>The developments at St Lukes Primary School have WNDC Planning approval, therefore the developments will come forward in due course.</i></p> <p><i>Restriction of certain vehicles from the village is a matter for the County Highways Authority. As part of the management plan action points NBC could approach the County Highways authority to request that street furniture and highway arrangements within the Conservation Area be improved.</i></p>
	<p>Greater enforcement of planning policy to preserve the conservation area. Also, traffic on Main Road is an issue.</p> <p><i>NBC Conservation takes every opportunity to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation utilising the full extent of the relative primary and secondary legislation.</i></p>
	<p>Re-route traffic away from Main Road</p> <p><i>A Matter for Northants County Highways Authority.</i></p>
	<p>Millway has become a through road from Main Road to Weedon Road bypassing the lights etc, of Tollgate Way. It is frequently used by heavy and large commercial vehicles which I suspect will in time damage the fabric and structure of those listed buildings on this road. If at all possible vehicle restrictions should be placed on this road.</p> <p><i>Noted</i></p>
	<p>Heavy lorries banned from Millway throughout. They are damaging the infrastructure and, in the conservation area, putting ancient building at risk. Also 20 mph speed limit throughout the road.</p> <p><i>Noted</i></p>

What improvements / changes would you like to see?

	<p>20 miles per hour speed limit as per town centre</p> <p><i>Noted</i></p>
	<p>Speed signs up.</p> <p><i>Noted. However NBC would not wish to instigate a scheme that would increase the amount of detrimental signage and street clutter in the Conservation Area.</i></p>
	<p>Traffic calming through conservation area. Large heavy goods vehicles to be banned. Additional Zebra crossing near Peveril Road on Main Road.</p> <p><i>Noted. NBC could approach NCC highways to discuss the possibility of resolving these issues.</i></p>
	<p>Improved parking. Reduced through traffic. More village activity.</p> <p><i>Noted</i></p>
	<p>Better car parking to keep the road clear of parked cars (ie they should be away from Main Road ideally). More litter picking. Maybe some signage so that people will be more aware this is a conservation area.</p> <p><i>Noted</i></p>
Duston CAAC	<p>Bus stop outside Faulkners' Bakery and bus stop near Holmleigh Close, could be more sympathetic to the area. Barriers by school and Squirrel's garden could be like that outside Bank cottages (25 -29).</p> <p><i>Noted. As and when a new scheme for bus stops comes forward Northants County Council and Northampton Borough Council will work collaboratively to ensure a more sympathetic form of development is used in the conservation area.</i></p>
Duston Village Bakery	<p>The bus stop that has illuminated adverts and sits in front of one of the oldest buildings should never have been put there, maybe it was financed, but if I had wanted to build it I should have been laughed at!!!</p> <p><i>Noted. Proposals for advertisement consent are determined by the relevant authority under the 2007 Advertisement Regulations. Unfortunately the controls for adverts within conservation area are not particularly stringent unless the area is designated as an area of special control. It will be considered as to whether a designation of this type is suitable for Duston Conservation Area. As part of the Management plan, NBC will cooperate proactively with others to try to secure a higher standard of Bus stop which is more sympathetic to an area of historic sensitivity such as this.</i></p>
	<p>Bus stop is a disgrace and an eyesore in a conservation area! Corner shop needs a lot of T.L.C. Railings outside school have been bent for months! Not enough litter bins, as we get a bagful of rubbish every week in our driveway. Path on our side is a disgrace and has never been redone since we lived here (32 years). Why didn't we get some road calming in the village area!</p> <p><i>Noted. NBC questions the need to retain the galvanised steel railings to the front of St Lukes primary school, as they have a detrimental visual impact upon the character of this part of the conservation area.</i></p>

Suggested alterations to the Appraisal / Management Plan

Duston CAAC	– Oak Lodge - Graded as definite value not high value as in draft, The house is not as old as it would appear.
-------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Suggested alterations to the Appraisal / Management Plan

Despite being built in an Elizabethan style, NBC Conservation is aware that the house was built in 1898. However, within the context of the Duston Conservation Area it is considered that architecturally Oak Lodge represents a significant departure from the more vernacular traditional buildings that are common in the rest of the Village. Therefore Oak Lodge defines an important stage in the development of the village, when an influx of new money as a result of quarrying in the area, led to the development of grand town houses.

- Cottages nos 55,57,59 - These should be high value, not general. They were cottages for employees of Duston House.

Noted. However the amount of alteration to the frontages of these dwellings has detracted from their overall character.

- The Clock Tower at Duston House - was formally over the Stable Block there and should be included with 53B.
- The front façade of 65 - should be high value as it was originally part of the Blacksmiths.

Noted

- Nos 56, 58 and Starmers Yard - should all be classed as high value. They probably date back to c1800.

Noted – will amend document to suit.

- No 54 - this is a stone building very similar to 52 under the rendering and as such should be classed as definite value.

Noted – The building does add significant value to the character of the historic core of the village. As such the appraisal will be amended accordingly.

- No 50 - this building is comparable to Bank Cottages opposite. It was formerly thatched and should be classed as high value.

If it was still thatched then it would certainly be worthy of being designated as of high value. However, due to the loss of this key feature of the building, and the use of modern clay tiles on the roof it is considered that this building is no longer of high conservation value.

- No 47 - This former thatched cottage which dates back some 400+ years should be high value as it is more intrinsic to the old village than no 51.

Noted. See previous comment.

- The Bakehouse complex should be high value.

Noted – document will be amended accordingly.

- No 7 - The roof at the rear needs urgent attention as the Solar panels are far too heavy for the roof.

Noted – But this issue is the responsibility of the property owner.

- Why has No 10 been graded as neutral when the bungalows next to it are classed as general?

It is considered that while the three properties at the start of Main Road contribute to the character of the area at the entrance to the village, the dwelling at number 10 does not. This is in part due to the overall appearance of the exterior of the dwelling.

- Several of the house walls on buildings opposite the school are in urgent need of attention due to salt damage.

This has been noted in the Management Plan, however it is the responsibility of the individual owners to address this issue.

It should be noted that these comments relate to the designations given to the document on the Character Assessment map in Appendix 1 of the Duston Conservation Area Appraisal and management plan. These designations were given to provide a snapshot of the character of the village at the time of the appraisal. These designations are not statutory and are subject to change depending on the future treatment of the buildings in question.

I think the conservation area should extend along Millway to include 21 Millway - an old thatched cottage.

Suggested alterations to the Appraisal / Management Plan

	<p><i>The cottage is some distance from the proposed extended boundary and the area between the two would make little contribution to the conservation area. It is therefore difficult to justify its inclusion within the boundary without undermining the overall designation. Perhaps it would be better to apply to English Heritage to have the building listed, which would offer it far more protection than the Conservation Area would.</i></p>
Duston Village Bakery	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The cottages just past Duston House should be included in the grey (positive contribution). 2. In the northern area why are only the centre houses grey and not the whole row? <p><i>1. Whilst it is noted that the cottages make a contribution to the character of the conservation area, and that they have a strong historical association with Duston House. However due to the considerable changes that have been made to the external appearance of the cottages – roof tiles, plastic windows and satellite dishes – it is considered that their character has been diminished.</i></p> <p><i>2. In the final character appraisal map this row of buildings has been categorised as being of definite value to the character of the conservation area.</i></p>
	<p>It would be good to see the extension of the conservation area to include the school field and recreation area behind the old school to safeguard these green spaces from development.</p> <p><i>Conservation areas should not be used to safeguard areas from development. The retention of open space for play and recreation areas is governed by other elements of UK planning policy.</i></p>
	<p>The copse [TPO166] to be included.</p> <p><i>As the trees in the copse already benefit from protection under a TPO they do not need to be included in the conservation area to protect the trees. However as they form part of the curtilage of the school they should be included in the conservation area boundary. Furthermore it is considered that the trees do make a positive contribution to the character of Melbourne Lane.</i></p>
Duston Dental Practice	<p>Remove the NW extension.</p> <p><i>The proposed NW extension to the boundary of the Duston Conservation area is integral to the protection and enhancement of the conservation area as a whole. It is noted that this comment comes from the dentist based in one of the town houses outlined for inclusion in the conservation area. It appears that the Consultee is under the impression that the conservation area will lead to severe restrictions on development which is not the case.</i></p>
	<p>The road has been dug up every year since we lived here. Why didn't we get the road resurfaced and paths done in the oldest part of the village! Please, no more food outlets we are fed up with the smell 7 days a week and the irresponsible parking of vehicles using these premises.</p> <p><i>Not issues that can be dealt with under conservation legislation.</i></p>

What makes Duston CA special to you?

Duston CAAC	It has retained its village atmosphere and the character that it has had for over 100 years, and encourages the community spirit and for people to regard it as central to the wider Duston area.
	We have lived in Old Duston since 1964 and wish to retain some if not all of the character of the <i>village</i> , rather than become just a suburb of a large town – which is also rapidly losing its own character.

What makes Duston CA special to you?	
	My wife and I moved to No 1 Melbourne Lane thirty years ago, we were attracted to the Stone Cottages and the 'feel of the village'. In recent years we feel the Planning Authority has paid scant regard to preserving the conservation of Duston. Should the proposed conservation extension go ahead some positive enforcement will need to be established.
	The fact that Duston still retains its "villagey" feel which still makes it seem like a real community.
	It is a village, and we would like to keep it, as much as possible.
	Keeps the community as a village environment.
	Old Duston village still has the fine characteristics of an old village, which makes it special.
	My property is adjacent to the conservation area, and I enjoy the village and street scene from my amenity
Duston Village Bakery	I have lived and worked here most of my life and love to see the old village buzzing with life. It might not be Bourton-on-the-Water, but we can keep the best bits.
	Cohesive architectural feel
	It has character not legoland.
	Its original charm
	I have lived and worked here for 40 years.
	Safe and pleasant area to live in.
	The age and character of the buildings - part of the bygone era, but we need to preserve our heritage.
	With its history it is a very special piece of old England.
	Historic working community
	Buildings. Trees and open spaces
	I have lived here some time and love the rural feel to the area.
	We live in it
	I live in it.
	Only if the Council honours the 'CA' and doesn't allow further development like the dentist in Main Road.
	There are parts which are of historical value and have character although things are not as they were.
Duston Dental Practice	In principle it is a good idea to preserve character, but recent changes (e.g. conversion of lovely cottage / post office to unnecessary dental practice (private) demonstrate that it no longer is special to the Council.
	Nothing - it is blighted by high volumes of traffic, by almost constant roadworks, by various utilities, by high density development on the Timken site, cheek by jowl to both current & proposed conservation areas.

Any other comments?	
Duston CAAC	<p>The footpath from Meeting Lane to Main Road to the Main Road which is shown as being in the Conservation Area should be retained at all costs, as the Timken developers wish to change its course which would seriously impinge on the character of the village and this ancient right of way.</p> <p><i>This view is echoed by the NBC Conservation Team. This right of way appears on our earliest maps of the village, and was clearly an important route that supported local agriculture when farming was vital to the survival of the village. As such every effort will be made to protect the course of this significant footpath.</i></p>
	<p>To preserve and protect the area for residents, visitors and for future generations, it must be maintained, repaired and cleaned on a regular basis. In this respect, litter and graffiti must be removed regularly and to further protect the area a close and appropriate examination of proposed retail and other commercial activities must be maintained.</p>
	<p>One of the main concerns with regard to preserving the character of the village is the uncertainty regarding the future of the old school. It would be a tragedy were it to be demolished and replaced by modern development. An early decision as to its future is vital to avoid the building deteriorating beyond repair.</p> <p><i>A scheme has been approved to bring this building back into use.</i></p>
Duston Dental Practice	<p>The existing conservation area failed to prevent a second dental practice forming, cutting down trees, placing a car park and advertising banners over the whole site. How this extension to the existing area will benefit the community I fail to see.</p>
	<p>As an example [of positive enforcement] we would like to indicate the change of use of 21 Main Road from an established domestic property with a beautiful garden with mature Scots pine trees and hedge to a barren car park devoid of greenery. High level signs that took the authority weeks to have removed. 21 Main Road is shown on the brochure as a building making a “positive contribution” – this hardly seems to indicate a plan for conservation.</p>
	<p>Listen to what locals wish.</p>
Duston Village Bakery	<p>Please do not allow Wild Thyme Cottage to be turned into an Indian take away because if you do you might as well scrap your plans and save your money.</p>
	<p>There should be no change of use. Planning permission given on buildings making a positive contribution. Wild Thyme Cottage should NOT be granted planning to become a Chinese takeaway. 47 Main Road, Duston: planning appeal APP/V2825/A/09/2099559</p> <p><i>This application was REFUSED by NBC planning. As such the appeal against this refusal will be dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate. NBC will have no further involvement in the decision making process.</i></p>
	<p>It should be more helpful if you addressed the above listed issues [high traffic levels, constant roadworks & high density Timken development] before moving boundaries.</p>
	<p>Would like to see reduced traffic flow. Improved community centre – old school. Better parking to increase viability of shops (school car park)</p>
	<p>Traffic through the village does not help the upkeep of buildings and walls. Car parking would help the village shops.</p>
	<p>Whoever approved the monstrosities built this year opposite the Old Vicarage deserves to be sacked.</p>
	<p>I don't think enough people are aware of the conservation area. Perhaps this consultation will help.</p>
	<p>In my possession I have various photographs maps/docs relevant to Holmleigh Close/Timken properties - saved from my years as Dep Wks Eng at British Timken. I would be happy to give you sight of these. You have my address and tel number on file already and willing to talk.</p> <p><i>This individual will be contacted to discuss this matter. Information like this will be</i></p>

Any other comments?	
	<i>invaluable to the conservation team. We will try to obtain copies of the photographs for our records.</i>
	<p>I would like some feedback about the copse being included in the Conservation Area.</p> <p><i>Noted. The Consultee will be contacted to update them on the current status of the Conservation area appraisal. The Consultee will be informed of the dates of the Cabinet meeting and that the copse is proposed for inclusion in the Conservation Area Boundary.</i></p>

Appendix 3



Feedback Questionnaire

Duston Conservation Area Re-appraisal

The consultation period runs until **Monday 24th August 2009**

Northampton Borough Council has drawn up a Draft Conservation Area Re-appraisal and Management Plan for the Duston Conservation Area. This would, if approved, extend the boundary of the conservation area to include new areas to the east and west of the existing conservation area. Some of the buildings and structures within the conservation area are already protected through their listed building status.

How to take part in the consultation

You can comment on the plans using this questionnaire (with the accompanying leaflet), or by writing to or emailing the Conservation Team.

This questionnaire is designed to accompany the summary leaflet. A full copy of the draft Re-appraisal and Management Plan can be found in the locations detailed below.

Your feedback will help develop the final version of the Duston Conservation Area Re-appraisal and Management Plan.

Draft Re-appraisal & Management Plan

The full Draft Re-appraisal & Management Plan can be downloaded from the Northampton Borough Council web site:

www.northampton.gov.uk/consultation

(its size is 5Mb so broadband is recommended).

It is also available for viewing at:

- **Community Centre, Pendle Road:**
 - (1) **Duston Parish Council Office**,
(open Mon 9 - 3, Tue 9 - 12, Wed 9 - 3,
Thur 9 - 12, Fri 9 - 1. Tel. 583626)
 - (2) **Duston Library** (Mon-Fri 9am - 6pm,
Sat 10am - 2pm. Tel. 585882)
- **Central Library**, Abington Street
- **One Stop Shop**, The Guildhall, St Giles Sq.
- **Cliftonville House**, Bedford Road

If you require any further information please contact Edmund Fox on (01604) 837635 or email: conservation@northampton.gov.uk

Why do we need your feedback?

Feedback from residents and visitors to the area is important to us. It helps to shape and guide our decision-making processes so that we can work together with people to deliver effective services.

What happens to your feedback?

- Northampton Borough Council will record your response to this consultation questionnaire along with your contact details.
- All representations form part of the statutory planning process and will be made available for public viewing. However, we will not print contact details.
- Your details will be added to our database for the Duston Conservation Area Re-appraisal and Management Plan and we will keep you informed about the development of this Plan.
- On receipt, the consultation monitoring form will be removed from the main part of the questionnaire and analysed separately. It will not be possible to associate any particular individual with the replies on this form.

What will we do with your details?

The Data Protection Act 1998 requires Northampton Borough Council to notify you that the information you have provided to us will be held in a computer database. Your information will only be used in relation to developing the Conservation Area and consultation activities carried out for that by, and on behalf of, the Northampton Borough Council.

Please return your questionnaire or comments to this freepost address:

Conservation Team, Northampton BC
FREEPOST MID17237
Northampton
NN1 1WJ

email: conservation@northampton.gov.uk

Feedback Questionnaire



Please supply your contact details so that we can contact you again about this consultation.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel:

Email:

Do your comments represent those of an organisation (please tick)? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

If you answered yes, please state which organisation:

.....

The Local Development Framework (Consultation via Limehouse)

Future consultations on the Local Development Framework (the replacement for the Local Plan) will be carried out using a web-based consultation system called Limehouse. This will allow you to view these consultation documents online and complete your consultation response electronically. You will be able to manage your own online account and we can keep you informed about future consultations by emailing you.

Paper versions of documents will still be produced for those without web access. However, all Consultees' details will be kept on the web-based system.

- ☐ Please add my details to the Limehouse database. This will allow me to be kept informed about other PLANNING POLICY consultations in Northampton.

Alternatively you can log on yourself and register at: <http://consult.northampton.gov.uk>.

**If you would like a copy of this leaflet in
Large Print, Braille, Audiotape,
or translation into another language
please contact 01604 837 861.**

Feedback Questionnaire



Q.1: Do you live or work within the current Duston Conservation Area?	Live	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Neither	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q.1a: If Neither , do you live or work within the area proposed for inclusion within the Duston Conservation Area?	Live	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Neither	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.2: How often do you visit the Duston Conservation Area?	Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Less than once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.3: Why do you visit the Conservation Area (other than to reside or work)?	Shop	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Worship	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Dentist	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other (please state):	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.4: Do you support the eastward extension of the Conservation Area (along Main Road towards the former Timken factory site)?	Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No particular opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strongly do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.5: Do you support the north-western extension of the Conservation Area (along Main Road up to Peveril Road)?	Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No particular opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strongly do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.6 Do you have any other comments on the proposed boundary changes?

Q.7: What improvements / changes would you like to see within the Duston Conservation Area?

Q.8: Is there anything you would add or amend with regard to the Re-appraisal and Management Plan

Q.9: What makes the Duston Conservation Area special to you?

Q.10: Do you have any other comments that you would like to make?

Consultation Monitoring Form



This part of the questionnaire is designed to help us monitor our consultation activities. All responses will be confidential to you as an individual and processed in accordance with the data protection act. This sheet will be separated from the first part of the questionnaire so that it cannot be associated with any specific person. Thank you for your input.

Why are we collecting this information?

The following questions are designed to help us better understand the needs of our customers in delivering information and consultation. The feedback you provide will help us deliver consultation activities in the way that people tell us they want to access information.

How will the information collected be used?

The information you provide through this questionnaire will only be used by, and on behalf of Northampton Borough Council in delivering effective services to our customers.

If you have any questions regarding how we will use your information, or any aspects of community involvement in Planning and Conservation, please contact: **AJ Gray on 01604 837 861.**

Are you male or female? Male ☐ Female ☐

Age group? Under 16 ☐ 17-24 ☐ 25-40 ☐ 41-64 ☐ 65+ ☐

What is your **ethnic group**? Please tick **ONE** to indicate your cultural background or write in the shaded box:

W: White

- ☐ British
 - ☐ Irish
 - ☐ Eastern European
 - ☐ Any other White background (please state)
-

A: Asian

- ☐ Indian
 - ☐ Pakistani
 - ☐ Bangladeshi
 - ☐ Any other Asian background (please state)
-

M: Mixed

- ☐ White & Black Caribbean
 - ☐ White & Black African
 - ☐ White & Asian
 - ☐ Any other mixed background (please state)
-

B: Black

- ☐ Caribbean
 - ☐ African
 - ☐ Any other Black background (please state)
-

C: Chinese or Other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
 - ☐ Any other ethnic group (please state)
-

Please turn over

This part of the questionnaire is about how we provide information to you or collect feedback from you as part of our consultations. Your response to these questions contributes towards helping us to improve the way we communicate with our customers.

Do you have any information requirements (please tick as appropriate)?

Translation (please state) ☐

Any alternative methods ☐

Duston CA: Jun 09



DUSTON

CONSERVATION AREA



Main Road in 1905 (from a postcard in Northamptonshire Libraries Local Studies Collection)

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PLAN

Planning Policy & Conservation Section
Northampton Borough Council
October 2009

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in Large Print, Braille, Audiotape, or translation into another language please ring 01604 837 861.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats upon request by contacting us on 01604 837 861

POLISH

Informacje te mogą być dostępne w różnych językach i różnym formacie poprzez skontaktowanie się z nami

RUSSIAN

Эта информация имеется по просьбе на других языках и форматах — пожалуйста обратитесь к нам по номеру

SOMALI

Macluumaadkani waaxaad ku heli kartaa luqooyin iyo habab kale haddii aad dalbato adigoo nagala soo xiriiraayo

CHINESE

這資訊可用其它語言和格式，根據需要與我們聯繫

GUJARATI

આ માહિતી બીજા ભાષાઓ અને રૂપમાં નીચે આપેલા ફોન નંબર પર અમારો સંપર્ક કરીને વિનંતી કરવાથી મેળવી શકાય છે

BENGALI

এই তথ্য অন্যান্য ভাষায় এবং পদ্ধতিতে আমাদের সাথে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করে অনুরোধ করে পাওয়া যেতে পারে

Consultation

This document takes into account the comments and representations made over an eight week public consultation period between 29th June and 24th August 2009.

Foreword

Duston Conservation Area

Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan

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Introduction

The Importance of Conservation Areas

"Historic Areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well being and quality of life. Public support for the conservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest is well established. By suggesting continuity and stability, such areas provide points of reference in a rapidly changing world; they represent the familiar and cherished local scene".

English Heritage: "Management of Conservation Areas", Feb 2006

DUSTON CONSERVATION AREA was first designated in March 1977 as an area of distinctive character worthy of preservation or enhancement.

Conservation areas in Northampton are designated by the Borough Council. The Government requires that conservation areas must be reviewed from time-to-time to ensure that they are kept up to date.

This document sets out the appraisal of Duston Conservation Area undertaken during the autumn of 2008.

Planning context

Conservation areas are protected by a number of Acts and statutory guidance.

The Civil Amenities Act in 1967 first introduced the concept of conservation areas. This was succeeded by Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This Act places a duty on local authorities to designate as conservation areas, "areas of special architectural or historic, interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Local authorities must also formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas¹. This is normally in the form of generic guidance and a management plan specific to each conservation area.

Government Policy is set out in Section 4 of Planning Policy Guidance 15 Planning and

the Historic Environment. This provides local authorities with advice on the designation, and subsequent management, of conservation areas.

The objectives of conservation area designation are:

- To give effect to conservation policies for a particular neighbourhood or area
- To introduce a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and structures within the area
- To introduce a general control over the removal of important trees
- To provide the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all aspects of the character or appearance that define an area's special interest. This will necessarily include the identification of buildings and structures, open spaces, views, trees and areas of the public realm² which make positive contributions to the area.

Summary of special interest

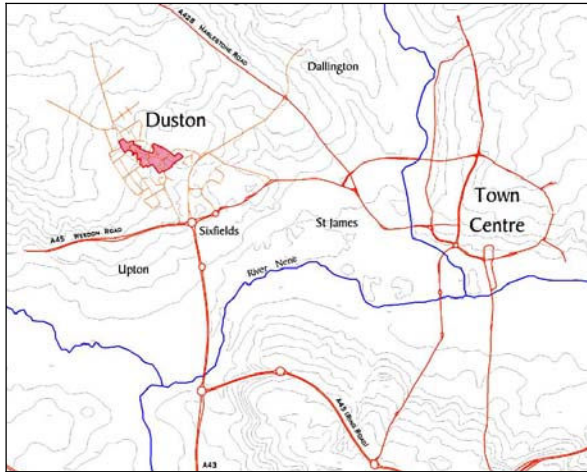
The ancient settlement of Duston once stood separate from the town of Northampton; however 20th century residential development has enveloped the village into the urban area. The historic buildings at the centre of the village help to retain much of the historic character of Duston, but the high volume of traffic that runs through the village has a considerable negative impact. Some of the historic character has been eroded as a result of piecemeal development, and modern infill. The vulnerability of the historic character reaffirms the need for the conservation area, and the deletions and extensions to it incorporated in October 2009.

The historic core of Duston has retained a sufficient amount of its historic character to warrant statutory protection. It is representative of how, over time, the layers of development can become a coherent collection of buildings; this informs us about the character and identity of the community throughout the history of the settlement.

¹ See Section 71 of the 1990 Act

² The public spaces, squares and pavements.

Location and context



The village of Duston lies approximately 3 miles west of Northampton town centre and sits at the top of the northern valley slope above the River Nene.

Historic Development

The high number of natural springs and the proximity to the fertile Nene River Valley made the area that is now Duston an ideal location for a successful settlement. The early inhabitants were Northern European Belgic Tribes, but later Duston became an important early industrial centre in the Roman period due to its position on the road from Towcester to Irchester – both important market towns. Significant evidence of a major medieval settlement has been revealed by archaeological artefacts recovered in the land to the south of Duston.

In 1068 a manor at Duston was established under the authority of William Peveril, who was rumoured to be William the Conqueror's illegitimate son. At this time Northampton would have been a crucial administrative centre, as the town was home to Simon de St Liz at Northampton Castle, the priory at St Andrews and St James Abbey.

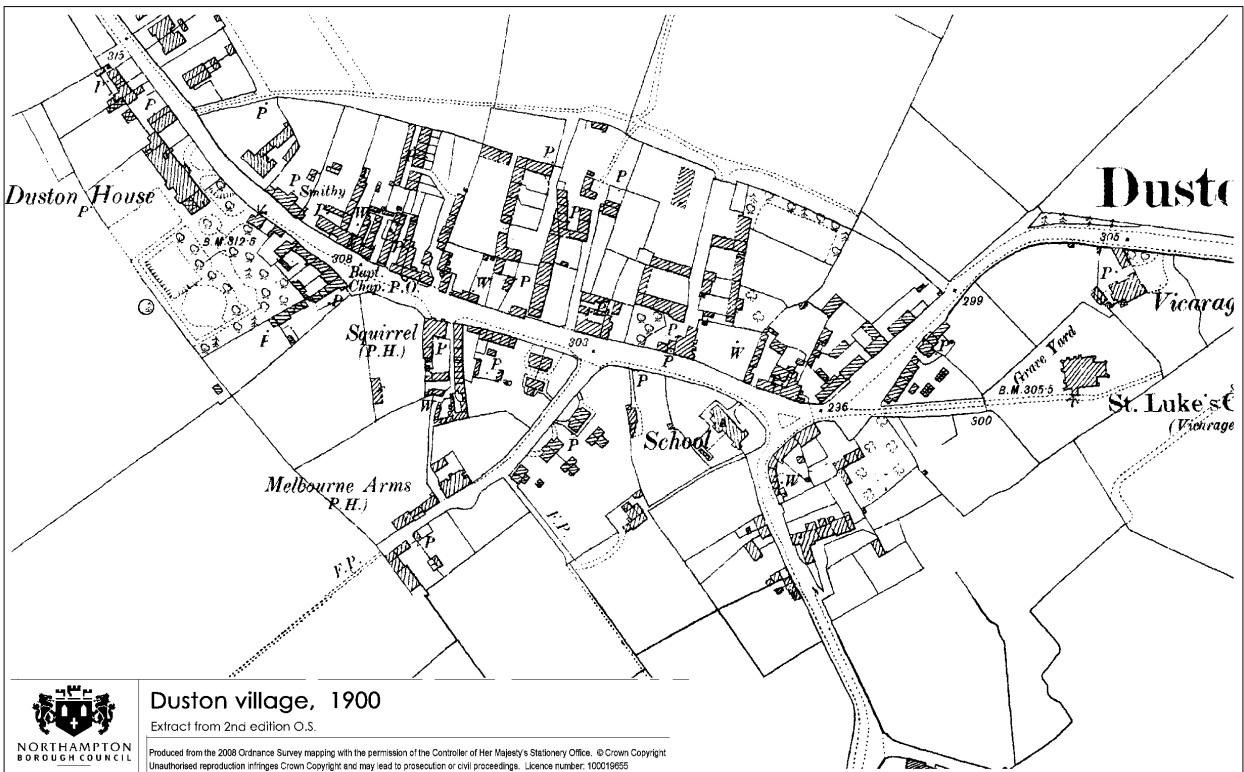
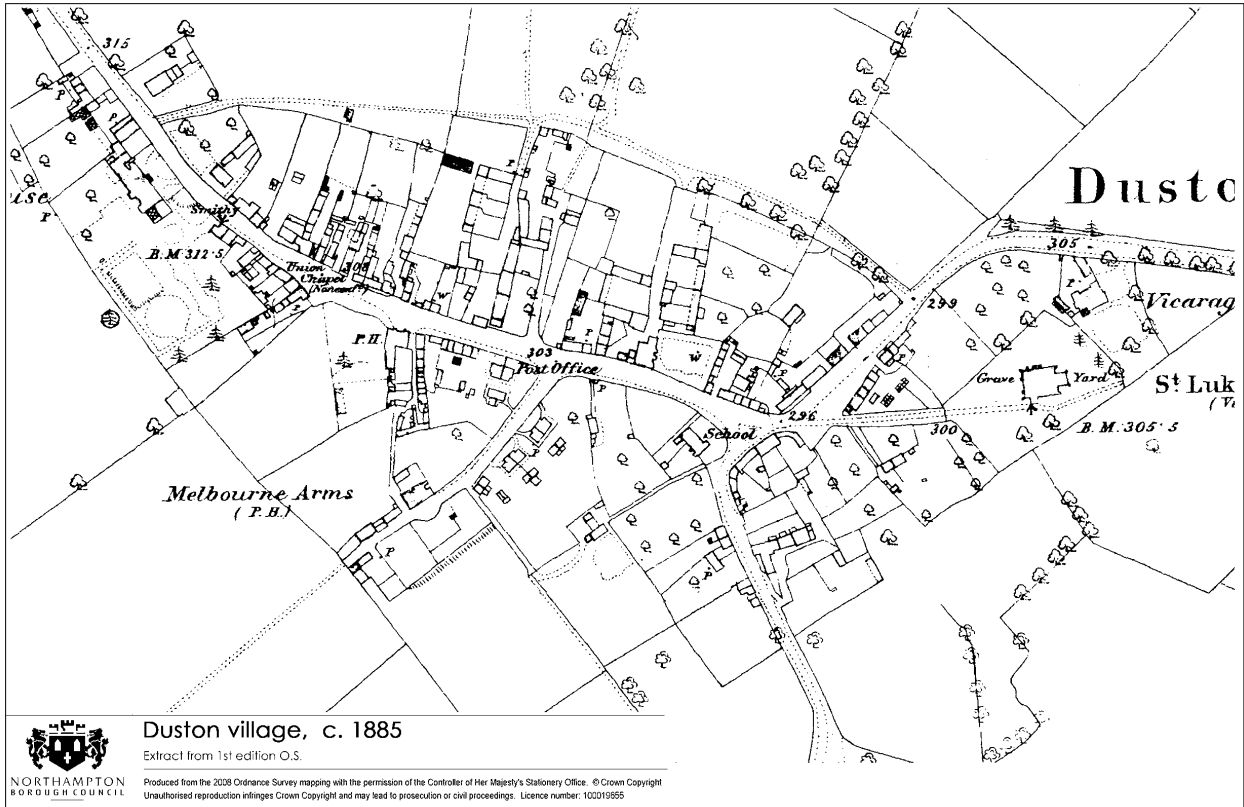
Many illustrious aristocrats have owned the manor at Duston over the years. Prominent members of this long list include Sir Charles Somerset who was the Admiral of the Fleet in the 1480's, Sir Christopher Hatton who was the Lord Chancellor and Peniston Lamb who was the 1st Viscount of Melbourne, hence Melbourne Lane and Melbourne Arms in Duston. Another significant owner was Viscount Palmerston, Foreign Secretary during the Crimean War, who gave consent for the first industrialised ironstone quarry on

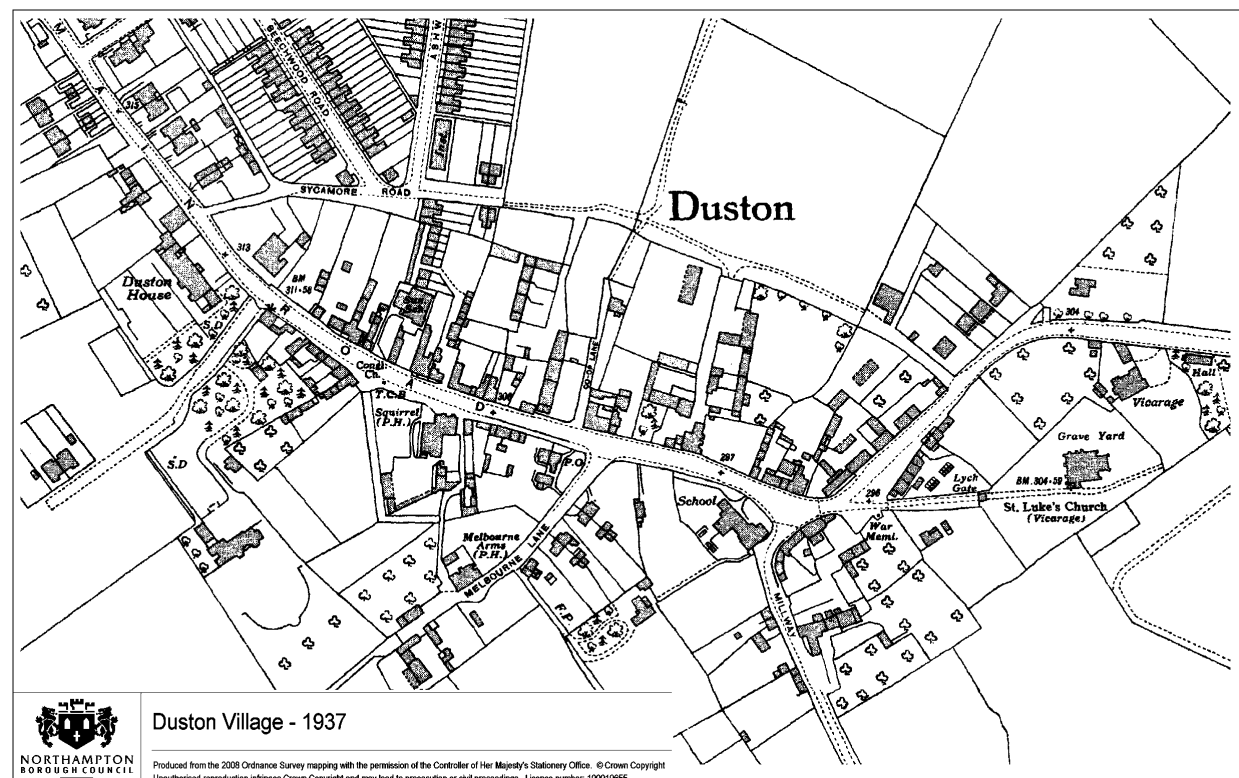
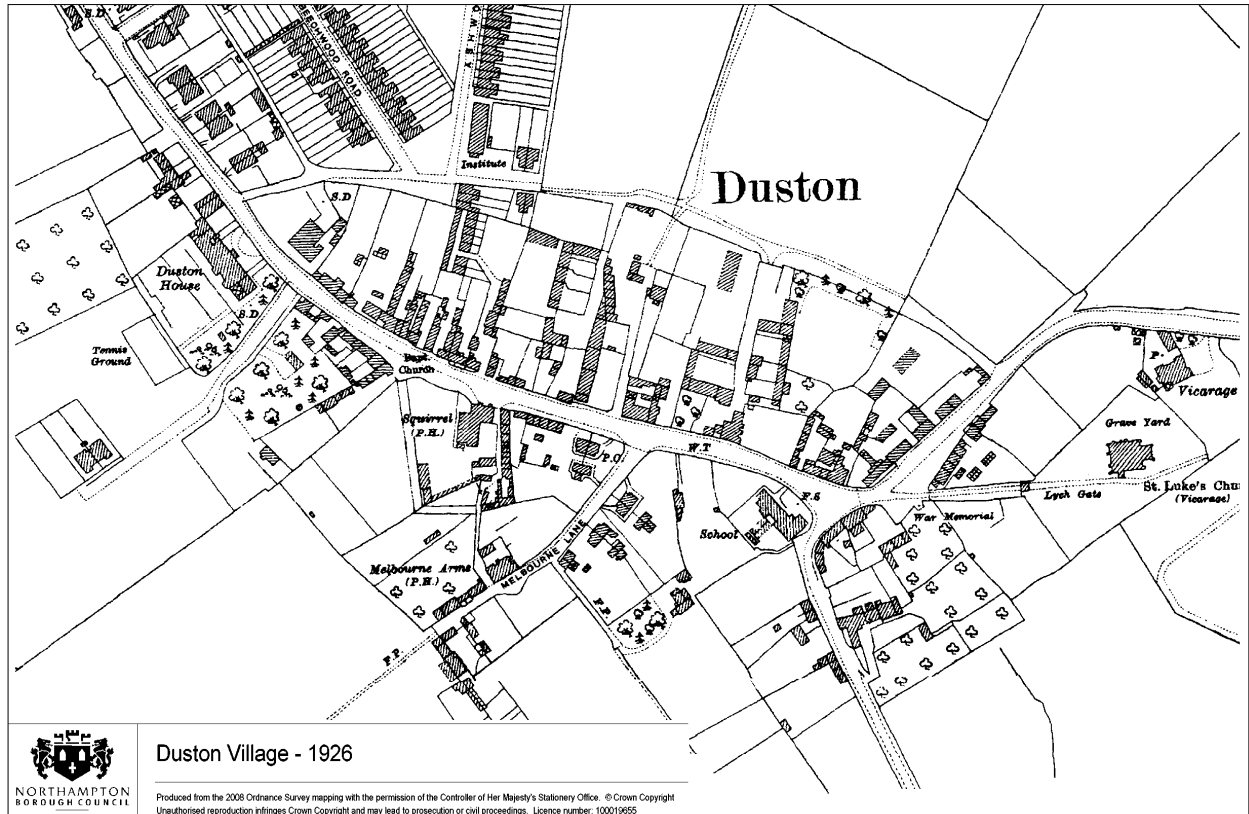
the land south of Duston. Work in the quarry began in 1855. The accompanying new wealth that was brought into the village as a result is clear from the character and style of architecture found in the more modern parts of the village to the north of the historic core.

The Duston of today was defined by the Kerr Family, when on the 3rd of July 1919 the owner, Sir Walter Kerr, had an estate sale auction at the George Hotel in Northampton. This led to the breaking up of this once great country seat. This sale not only brought about the splitting up of the lands but also the severance of the property from the Melbourne estate in Derbyshire. It also paved the way for a sustained period of speculative and industrial growth throughout the 20th century, which has led to the development of New Duston and the former British Timken Works. These developments led to the eventual integration of Duston into the Northampton conurbation.

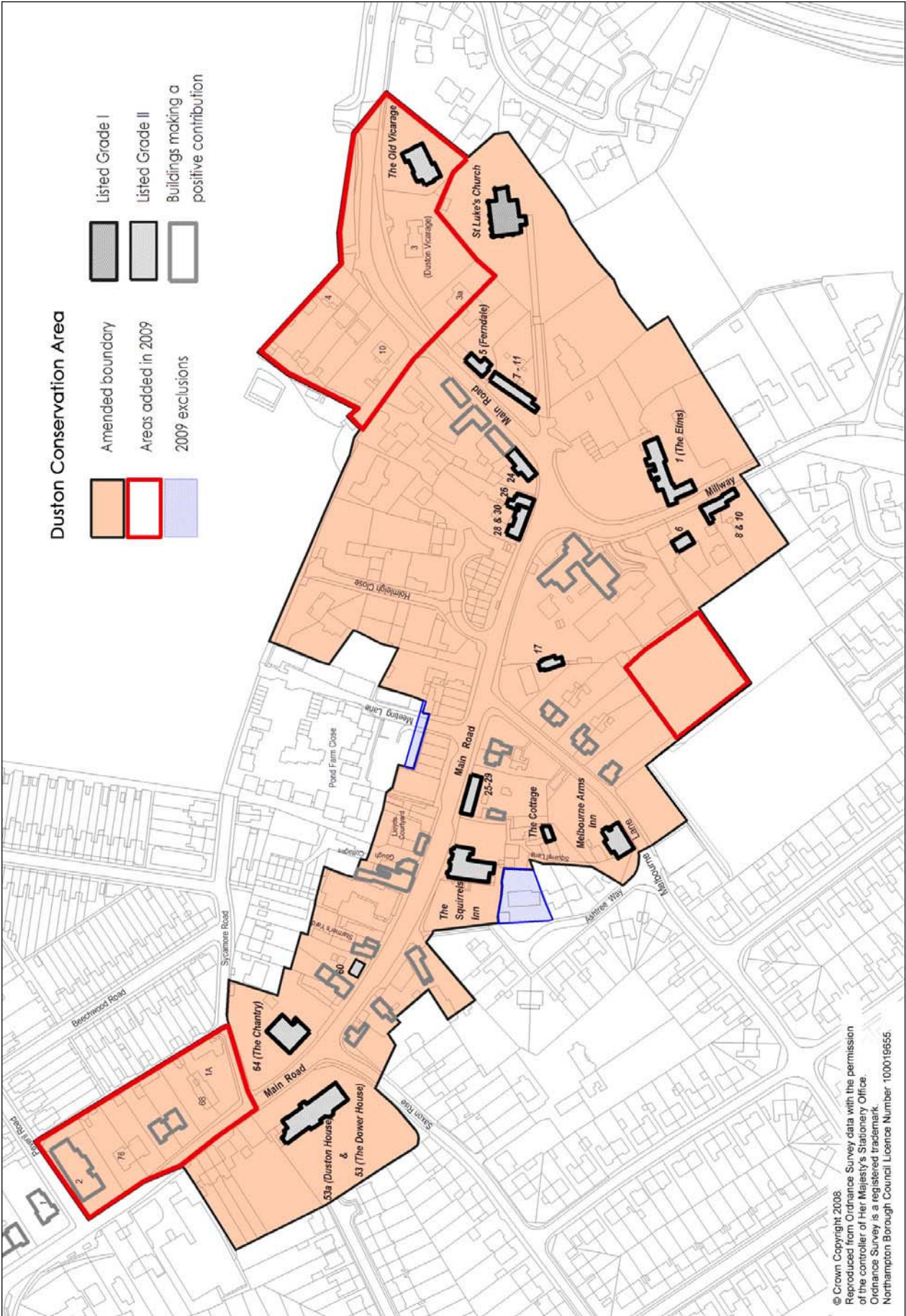
This growth is reflected in Duston's population, which doubled between 1811 and 1891 from 400 to 800. By 1901 there were nearly 1,000 inhabitants, and 1935 the census recorded a population of 2,500. In 1941 work began on the new British Timken roller bearings works. These works provided vital employment for local residents and eased the reliance on the shoe manufacturing industry that before the war had employed 50% of Duston's population. Timken's presence in the town led to the Northampton Technology College on St Georges Avenue (now the Avenue Campus of Northampton University), and established Northampton as a centre for engineering excellence.

Following the Second World War a programme of council house building was carried out north of Duston old village. This estate became known as the Kerrfield estate, after the Kerr family who were the last family to occupy the Duston estate in its entirety before they sold off the estate lands in 1919. The residential expansion of Duston continued into the 1950's, this growth has made the area of Duston the busy densely populated suburb that it is today. The historic core of old Duston continues and earns its right to heritage protection as it is one of the oldest and most important areas of Northampton.





Conservation area showing listed buildings, local list candidates and boundary changes



Duston Character & Plan Form

To facilitate proper protection the built environment must be properly understood. This is best achieved by dividing Duston into character areas, which share common elements, allowing significant features that contribute to the historic character to be highlighted.

Generally the character areas will share common architectural styles, building materials or uses, which will define them as a distinctive area. Furthermore these areas are vulnerable to change which can have a detrimental cumulative impact if allowed to continue unchecked.

Overall the character of the village is influenced to a large extent by Main Road, which runs NW – SE through Duston. Main Road has defined not only the use and character of Duston, it has also dictated the pattern of growth northwards toward the Harlestone Road and New Duston. The growth that came about in the mid to late 20th century was, in part, due to the sale of the lands of the Duston Manor estate by the Kerr family in 1919. This provided a large quantity of open land suitable for residential and employment development, like the Timken Works. When studying the plan form it is clear that remnants that reflect Duston's ancient history are still visible today. One of these is the footpath that links the access road from Rose Villa in the east, to Sycamore Road in the west. This footpath defines the northern extremity of the historic core, and would have been an important public access route into the once open fields to the north of Duston and can be seen on maps from as early as 1883.

The individual character areas are discussed in greater detail below:

Character Areas

Church & Churchway House

This area is defined by the special architectural and historic character of the ancient church, the secluded and tranquil nature created by the churchyard, and open fields to the south east of Churchway House and the churchyard. This area of Duston offers evidence of the fact that the village was once a separate entity with its own church and war memorial. The Millway Primary School fields behind Churchway House help to retain much of the historic character of the area.



Church of St Luke

St Luke's Church is the oldest surviving and the most architecturally significant building within the conservation area. It stands in a secluded spot at the end of a long lane in a large churchyard (4500m² approx). Parts of this building date from the 12th century, with the fenestration³ and tower being added in the 13th century. The approach to the church along the lane is characterised by the view through the lych gate⁴.



Lych Gate

³ The arrangement of windows in a building.

⁴ *Lych Gate* – A covered wooden gateway with open sides at the entrance to a churchyard, providing a resting place for a coffin (the word 'lych' is Saxon for corpse). Part of the burial service is sometimes read there. (Penguin Dictionary of Architecture)

On the south side of Church Lane are the two other key features of this character area – Churchway House and the War Memorial.

Churchway House is a large white rendered detached dwelling that was built in the mid-1930's and is very representative of that era, with rendered second floor, brick detailing and wide brick chimneys. The war memorial commemorates the Duston residents who died in the First World War 1914-1919. The memorial itself is a limestone pillar solemnly decorated with carved garlands and topped with a crucifix.



The churchyard appears secluded, and has many ancient gravestones within it, however the setting of the Grade I listed church is encroached upon by the modern houses that have been built in close proximity to the boundary wall of the churchyard. The visual impact of the houses is exacerbated by their design, which makes no attempt to allude to any rural or vernacular⁵ building form.

The most common material used in the churchyard is the local ironstone, which was used to construct the church, the churchyard walls and most of the gravestones. This gives the church and its surroundings a strong unifying characteristic, and could explain the

⁵ Traditional buildings using local building techniques, made from locally available building materials.

positioning of the church to the east of the village as this is closest to the ironstone mines that lie to the south-east of Duston.

Any more development in this area would have a detrimental impact upon the churchyard, and the war memorial. The open fields to the south of the churchyard and Churchway House add considerable value to the historic character of the area. The open land also maintains important views looking southwest toward St James' End and particularly the Express Lift Tower, which is clearly visible.

Main Road, Millway and Melbourne Lane

This area is characterised by the style and type of buildings, including the materials that are used. All the buildings are built using vernacular techniques and materials (ironstone or brick). This commonality is born out of the strong links, which most the buildings have, with agriculture. There is an exception in the Victorian School and the Old School House on Main Road.



7-11 Main Road

On the west side of Millway the street-scene is characterised by small traditional thatched cottages, which would have once housed local farm workers and their families. Later examples of the agricultural cottage can be seen on the south side of Melbourne Lane. These charming semi-detached cottages were built in the late 19th century to house agricultural workers in sanitary and humane conditions and represent an early example of rural liberal philanthropy⁶.

⁶ Philanthropy is the act of providing accommodation, or donating goods and money to support a socially beneficial cause, without material or financial benefit to the donor. In this case the donor was addressing the problem of squalid living conditions of agricultural workers. Philanthropic acts of this nature were common in the high Victorian era as wealthy people became more influenced by liberal politics and Christianity.



Melbourne Lane

Early agricultural cottages can be seen on the south side of Main Road, leading up to the junction with Millway.

Other dwellings in this area that relate to local farming are the converted barns, or vernacular barn-style houses, which run along the north side of Main Road before the junction with Millway. The converted barns in this area would have once been under the ownership of the farm, which operated from the former farmhouse now known as The Briars. The character of these former barns is unified through both their previous use, and their common building materials, generally ironstone, clay roof tiles (or pantiles) and timber lintels above the doors and windows.

As mentioned previously The Briars (no.20 Main Road) was once a farmhouse with land which ended at what is now Meeting Lane. Given the amount of outbuildings within this plot the farm may well have utilised the enclosed fields to the north of the village on what is now the Timken site. Another former farmhouse in this area is The Elms (1 Millway, Grade II Listed), which still has a significant amount of its original land shown on the historic map from 1887. The house has however lost its outbuildings, which once fronted on to what is now the mini roundabout at the junction of Main Road and Millway. These buildings can be seen on the historical maps as late as 1938.

Other buildings that add considerable value to the street-scene within this area are the group of grade II listed buildings at 24 and 26-30 Main Road, which stand on the north side of the Millway / Main Road junction. No 24 is a large ironstone village house, which may have had agricultural use in the past. It is essentially a classic Northamptonshire village

dwelling, representative of the local vernacular. The listing description says that 'it was originally constructed in the 18th century and was significantly altered' in the 19th century. The three-storey terrace at 26-30 Main Road could well have once served as some sort of agricultural store or barn. The dwelling at 26 Main Road was obviously added at a later date. This is clear from the different materials used, and the completely different style of architecture, another more obvious clue is the datestone at the apex of the gable, which reads 1899. The two other adjoining buildings date from the early 18th century. The height and close proximity to the highway of this group of buildings creates a very enclosed character to this area. This defines the approach north along Main Road into the heart of the historic core of Duston.



26-30 Main Road

Two exceptions to the general agricultural character of this area are the two former schools. The oldest is The Old School House (Ferndale) on the south side of Main Road, which is a low, early 19th century building with a gabled porch. This particular building is an exception because although it shares the vernacular style and materials of the surrounding buildings, it would have been built as a school rather than being associated with agriculture.

The second school in this area is the most prominent, as its red brick façade looks down on the junction of Main Road and Millway from an embankment to the south of the highway. The building is an excellent example of a Victorian Northamptonshire school, other examples of which can be seen in the Abington and Kingsthorpe areas of Northampton. The local red brick walls are contrasted with limestone details such as the door and window surrounds. The raised height of the school mirrors that found in the listed group of buildings that front on to the



Former St Luke's Primary School

north side of the Main Road / Millway junction. This historic school contributes a great deal to the character of the Duston conservation area, and is indicative of the significance placed on the provision of education in villages in mid 19th century Britain. Unfortunately the school currently stands empty, however there has been an application approved for its reuse.

The historic buildings in this part of the village are susceptible to negative forms of development such as the installation of modern plastic windows, boundary alterations (for example the removal of historic walls), the high volume of traffic at the Main Road / Millway junction mini-roundabout, and inadequate and inappropriate building maintenance. The approved scheme for the redevelopment of the school site for reuse as a community centre, nursery and business start-up centre should be implemented as soon as possible to avoid any further deterioration of the fabric of the former school.

Holmleigh Close & Rose Villa Farm

Holmleigh Close, with neighbouring (former) Rose Villa farm, on the north side of Main Road, is another area of the village with strong agricultural associations. The older buildings of Holmleigh Close (nos. 1-9) are converted barns of local ironstone, adapted



Holmleigh Close

to house employees of British Timken. The farmhouse itself was demolished in the 1960s. Likewise, the ironstone dwellings of 14, 16 & 22 Main Road were all originally farm buildings. There are also areas of modern residential infill, such as the terrace of four dwellings in Holmleigh Close that front on to Main Road, the bungalows at the east end of the cul-de-sac and the two large houses in the grounds of the former Rose Villa Farm. However, the buildings that add the most heritage value are the converted agricultural buildings, as they provide a glimpse of what a farm complex would have looked like in historic Duston.

The most important feature of this character area is the boundary wall and footpath that runs along the northern boundary of this area. The wall is the original wall, which would have marked the northern boundary of the farm at Rose Villa/The Briars. The wall also marks the boundary of an ancient path that can be seen on maps from the late 19th century. However it would have existed for centuries as it not only forms the boundary of the historic village of Duston but would also have provided access to the open agricultural land north of the village. The path was vital to the successful operation of agriculture in the area, as it would have enabled daily access for workers and their animals to the fields, which was key to the villagers' ability to remain economically viable. The path still exists today, although the western end of it was made into Sycamore Road when the terraced houses were built around the end of the 19th century. It now forms the boundary to the residential developments taking place at the former Timken works. It is a vital part of the conservation area as it is the boundary of Duston's historic core.

This area is vulnerable to piecemeal householder development such as rear extensions, porches and window replacements. The stone buildings in the north of the Close are more established than those at the Main Road end, and therefore are at greater risk of negative development. The properties at the south end are modern, but they still require tight controls to encourage sympathetic forms of development. As such the properties should be kept as close to the original form of development as is possible, with no significant external alterations being permitted.

Main Road

This central area of the village is characterised by the types of buildings within it and their uses. Predominantly the buildings are publicly accessible as they are generally shops, food outlets or pubs. While many of the business units in Duston have flats above, there are very few individual dwellings in the historic core (approximately 5-10). As such the character of the area is defined partly by the lively frontages that are features of the numerous business premises.

This part of the village has experienced significant alterations and infilling over the later part of the 20th century. The historic maps (on pages 7-8) show that many of the old buildings in the centre of the village were demolished to make way for commercial developments. This process of renewal was brought about by the rapid expansion of Duston northwards, as the new homes being built required local amenities. This area was so close to the Timken plant, that it is where many of the new residents would have been employed, as a result the area was attractive to local businesses. The volume of people coming to use the amenities would have necessitated the creation of parking facilities; which led to the demolition of a building next to the Squirrels Public House, and the demolition and rebuilding of the Co-operative Store. These new uses that were introduced into the village have irrevocably changed its character; Duston has become a local centre for a large areas of suburban Northampton like Upton, New Duston, Dallington and St James, and the villages to the north west of Northampton such as Nobottle, the Bringtons, and the Harlestons.

The changes made to Duston have also had an impact upon the physical character of the historic core. While many of the historic



The Squirrels PH

buildings have been retained some key units on the north side of Main Road have been constructed which do not assimilate well with the older buildings. The Co-operative building is just such a building, which is constructed out of modern wire cut bricks, which do not match the red locally made moulded bricks used in other buildings in the vicinity. It also introduces half-eaves dormer windows, which are not a feature of the other vernacular buildings in the street.



Main Road – new shops

The character of this part of Duston is vulnerable to changes of use. Currently the balance of uses; A1 (retail), A2 (estate agents, financial offices etc) and A3-A5 (food & drink) is fairly even; however if any one of these uses were to become more dominant, then the historic character of the area could be detrimentally impacted upon. As such development control should aim to prevent changes of use that could upset the balance. This area is also vulnerable to the installation of inappropriate shop fronts, advertisements and fascia signs. Many of the commercial units already have modern shop fronts, which cumulatively has had a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area. When the opportunity arises every effort will be made to ensure any replacement shop-fronts and adverts harmonise with the locality. The levels of traffic and on-street parking are also detrimental to the character of this area. The Borough Council will discuss the possibility of addressing these issues with the Northamptonshire County Highways Authority.

Saxon Rise Junction

This area to the west of the commercial centre is the location of some of the finest stylised architecture in Duston village; as such its character is representative of how increased affluence in Duston in the 19th

century led to stylistic developments in the nature of the village buildings. The Chantry (no. 64), on the north side of Main Road, is an important building dating from the early 19th century. This house shows how fashionable architectural features were slowly introduced into vernacular architecture. The form and general construction of the house has the appearance of a typical local building, especially the use of ironstone. However, features like the recessed sash casement windows and the canted bay window on the frontage are features from the Regency style common in late 19th century Georgian architecture.



The Chantry, 64 Main Road

Almost opposite, on the corner of Saxon Rise, is no. 51, is another architectural gem. Constructed from rough coursed local stone with limestone dressings, the house represents the 'Arts and Crafts' or 'Picturesque' style of architecture that was popular in the late 19th and early 20th century. This style references some elements of vernacular building, and focuses on utilising the work of craftsmen as opposed to using materials that are produced by mechanised or industrial methods.



Nos 47-51 Main Road

The largest and most architecturally fashionable house in this area is Duston House, which was built by William Samwell in 1822. The house was built in the middle of the period of Neo-Classical revival, and as such it utilises many of the archetypal elements of this style, such as a Corinthian⁷ porch, sash windows with decorative architrave surrounds and a pitched roof behind a balustraded parapet.

Adjacent to Duston House is a large classically proportioned house with Georgian features such as well-ordered fenestration with recessed vertical sliding sash windows, Flemish bond brickwork and a portico topped with a neo-classical pediment (a low pitched gable). The building adds considerable value to this part of the conservation area, as it is stylistically complimentary to Duston House itself and it has retained all its original external features.

Detrimental forms of development are limited through the exercising of listed building controls on The Chantry and Duston House. However the two other fine dwellings in this area, at 51 and 53b Main Road, which are not listed, are susceptible to detrimental piecemeal development such as replacement windows and rear extensions.

Boundary Extensions

Having carried out the character assessments necessary to complete the appraisal it was considered that there were areas of historic Duston that were outside the boundary designated in 1974. The buildings were considered to be of sufficient architectural or historical value to warrant inclusion in the conservation area. Therefore these were included within the boundary of the conservation area in October 2009.

Main Road East

This area of Duston is at the main eastern approach into the village, and as such its character influences the context for the rest of the village. This area also has some key features that inform the understanding of Duston's past, and some aesthetic elements that add significant value to the conservation area as a whole.

⁷ The Corinthian Order is the final order of classical Greek Architecture. The capitals (the decorated top section) of the pillars represent Ascanthus Leaves in stone.



Main Road in the eastern part of the conservation area

The first important feature of this area is the Old Vicarage, which stands on the south side of Main Road. There are five large trees to the front of this large detached building, which add considerable value to the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and Duston as a whole.

The former Rectory is built from local ironstone, with a Welsh slate roof with sections of the wall finished in cream render. This highlights decorative elements like the ironstone window surrounds and the ironstone quoins on the north-east facing façade. The north-west façade is the most decorative, as while finished entirely in local ironstone there is a gothic arch staircase window complete with simple bar tracery finished with trefoils in the top section.

The rear of the building, facing the churchyard, is finished in cream render and conforms to the Picturesque style popular in the early 19th century, and is characterised by the Gothic arched door and decorative hood moulded architraves.



The Old Vicarage

The next key feature of this area is the brick piers that were the gateposts for the 'arena' entrance to the British Timken Works. The site itself is currently being developed as a residential area, so very little of the actual factory remains except for these brick piers. The developer of the site has retained the gate piers; their inclusion in the conservation area is important because they are material

evidence of the significant role that the Timken works played in shaping modern Duston.

Another feature of this area which adds value to the conservation area is the row of three bungalows which front on to the north side of Main Road. These small bungalows are of the same late Arts and Crafts style, with centrally placed front doors with bay windows either side, timber detailing and verandas on the front façade.



Timken Gate Piers

Main Road North-west

This area is characterised by its architecturally styled residential buildings, which are built in a style complimentary to Duston House. Like the buildings in the Saxon Rise Junction Character Area, the dwellings in this area are also indicative of how the styles of architecture in Duston have changed. This shift from the vernacular buildings in the east and centre of the village, shows how the village moved north-west and how the many layers of development that have taken place over the centuries add to the rich variety of buildings in the village.



Main Road north-west

Even in this character area the shift in the general approach to architecture is apparent. The southern most building in this area (no. 1A Sycamore Road / 68 Main Road) is a semi-detached dwelling which probably dates from the early 19th century, and can

be seen on the 1887 map. The gable end of the building faces Main Road. The conjoined dwellings have the appearance of being a single house as the ridge line of the roof is the partition between the two dwellings, adding a sense of grandeur to the properties. The building has a Welsh slate roof, with exposed decorative purlins on the gable end. It is finished in coursed rough-cut ironstone with dressed ironstone blocks forming the decorative features such as quoins and window surrounds. The building has retained many of its original features, including its windows and the decorative brick chimneys; as such it adds considerable value to this part of the village.



No 1A Sycamore Road / 68 Main Road

Immediately adjacent to the north-west are two pairs of semi-detached town house style dwellings built in the late 19th century. They are brick built with some parts of the façade finished in stucco/render. They conform to the high Victorian principles of stylistic simplicity and respecting the truth of the materials, the result being well-proportioned dwellings with some brick detailing, vertical sliding sash casement windows and clay tiled roofs.

These elements of the buildings represent the movement away from mass produced building techniques that rely on mechanised means of production, towards a use of building techniques that rely on mechanised means of production, towards a use of materials and architectural styles which is more focused on utilising local crafts.

At the junction of Main Road and Peveril Road is Oak Lodge, a former dwelling that has since been converted into a nursing home and extended considerably to the rear. Oak Lodge was built in 1899 and



Oak Lodge

represents the high Victorian Gothic Revival style which again relies on local crafts, like stonemasonry, and includes features like double height canted bay windows with stone mullioned lights, parapet gabled ends and a below-eaves dormer window. All these features give the building the appearance of an Elizabethan Manor House: as such the building adds significant value to the built environment of Duston and is worthy of inclusion within the conservation area.



72-74 Main Road

St Luke's School – Copse

Due to the positive impact the copse has on the character and appearance of the Duston Conservation Area, the area is hereby included within the 2009 revised boundary. The trees in the copse are protected by a blanket Tree Preservation Order, however as the trees have such a positive impact upon the character of Melbourne Lane they are a key feature of the character and setting of this part of the Duston Conservation Area. Furthermore the copse forms part of the curtilage of the former St Luke's Primary School, so regularisation of the boundary

enables a consistent approach to be applied to the school site as a whole.

Deletion

The following area was removed from the conservation area in October 2009.

8 Ashtree Way

The original boundary of the conservation area was, in October 2009, altered to exclude the modern dwelling to the rear of The Squirrels Public House on the modern cul de sac, Ashtree Way. This area was originally included as part of the garden of The Squirrels in 1977 when the conservation area was first declared. The land has subsequently been sold off for a new dwelling. This is not visible from Main Road, and is built in a style that is not complimentary to the style and form of the buildings within the conservation area. It is not deemed appropriate for this dwelling to have its permitted development rights restricted should an Article 4 Direction be adopted in the Duston Conservation Area, as the permitted development at this property would not have a detrimental impact on the historic environment.

Furthermore any significant development proposals at this dwelling would, in any case, require input from the Conservation Team as it adjoins the boundaries of both the listed Squirrels Public House and the conservation area.

Management Plan

Introduction

The designation of Conservation Areas is an important aspect of the role of Local Authorities in recognising and managing the historic assets under their jurisdiction in a sustainable manner for the benefit of this and future generations.

Northampton Borough Council has currently designated 19 Conservation Areas, of which 9 lie within the urban areas of Northampton and 10 are villages or historic village centres.

Every area has a distinctive character derived from its topography or landscape, historic development, current uses and features such as the street pattern, trees and green spaces, buildings, structures and open areas. Understanding and appreciating these elements together with the shaping effect of the social and economic background is the starting point for making decisions about the management of a Conservation Area.

The character appraisal, which forms the first part of this document, has provided the basis for developing management proposals for Duston Conservation Area. These fulfil the general duty placed upon local authorities to draw up and publish such proposals.

Conservation Areas are distinguished as being of '*special local interest*' but this does not necessarily make them any less dynamic than other areas. Careful and active management is required if the essential character and appearance which makes an area special, is to be suitably protected and enhanced during periods of change.

Proposals for the enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are aimed at reinforcing those qualities and characteristics which provide the special interest that has warranted designation.

Government Advice

The primary Government advice relating to conservation areas is contained in Planning Policy Guidance note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment. This document offers clear advice on the designation of Conservation Areas and the importance of appropriately assessing the areas' special interest.

English Heritage offers advice on undertaking Conservation Area appraisals and this statement has been prepared in accordance with this advice.

Management proposals

These management proposals take the form of a strategy, setting objectives, addressing issues and making recommendations for action arising from the appraisal process.

The availability of resources will have an impact upon delivery of the plan. Northampton Borough Council recognises both the needs of the area and its own aspirations to meet those needs wherever and whenever they are able to do so within the constraints which will apply.

The principal ways in which the Conservation Area will be managed fall into two broad categories of protecting the existing fabric and works of enhancement.

These will be achieved by :

- The application of generic and specific policy guidance
- The provision of published and online policy guidance, augmented from time to time
- Protection of locally important buildings, structures and trees and the review of protection measures on a regular basis
- An enforcement strategy
- Ensuring that new development compliments the existing scene
- Ensuring that works within the public realm reinforce the character of the area
- Seeking pro-active opportunities for restoration of lost elements and repair of important historic elements which are damaged or in danger
- Monitoring change and modifying priorities and policies accordingly

Protection

Listed Buildings

Certain buildings are considered to be of national importance, and have been placed on a statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. The older and more rare a building type is, the more likely it is to be listed. These buildings have the benefit of added legal protection from demolition, and insensitive alterations and extensions. There are three different grades of listing: I, II* and II. The majority (over 92%) of buildings nationally,

are Grade II Listed. Grade I and II* listings apply to those which are of outstanding architectural and/or historical importance or rarer examples of a building type.

The conservation area contains 21 listed buildings (see Appendix 2). All material change⁸ to listed buildings (inside and out) is controlled through the listed building consent regime. Certain works will, in addition, require planning consent and maybe Conservation Area Consent.

Listed Building Consent is required for the demolition of, or any works of alteration or extension, which would affect the character or appearance of a listed building. The regulations apply to both external and internal alterations. For the purposes of listed building control any object or structure which is fixed to the building or has formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948 is also treated as part of the listed building.

Repair works undertaken on a like-for-like basis do not normally require Listed Building Consent. However, it is always advisable to consult the Council's Conservation Officers before commencing work on a Listed Building.

Consideration will be given to putting forward for listing any buildings and structures within the Conservation Area if additional information about their significance comes to light which makes them worthy of protection.

Important buildings not put forward for listing or not adopted for inclusion on the national list will be included on the Local List.

Locally Listed Buildings

In addition to buildings that are statutorily listed and of national importance, there are also buildings that are of local architectural and/or historic importance. The Council is producing a separate Local List of these, and will endeavour to secure their long-term future. In the current conservation area, 20 buildings are included on the draft Local List:

- Main Road: nos 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 39, 47, 50, 51, 52, 53b, 54, 58, 62, 70-72, 78-80 and (former) St Luke's Primary School.
- Melbourne Lane: nos 1, 3, 5, 7, 9.
- Peveril Road: nos 1 & 2
- Squirrel Lane: no 2

⁸ Alterations that are considered to affect the special architectural or historic character of the building.

Details are listed in Appendix 3.

These buildings do not benefit from the same extent of protection as those on the national Statutory List but will require careful appraisal and justification when applications for change are under consideration.

The general presumption will be in favour of retaining buildings and structures which have been included on the Local List. Those, which have been identified through the appraisal process, as making a positive contribution to the character of the area will receive special scrutiny where major changes are proposed.

Upkeep and repair of historic buildings

The general condition of buildings and structures within an area contribute to the overall ambience of well-being or decay and neglect. It is normally in the interests of owners to keep their historic and listed buildings in a good state of repair. The Borough Council has powers to take action and will consider using these where a historic building has deteriorated to the extent that its preservation may be at risk.

At present none of the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area give cause for concern with regard to their structural condition.

Demolition in Conservation Areas

Conservation Area Consent is required for certain demolition work within a conservation area. This includes:

- The demolition of a building with a cubic content of more than 115 cubic meters.
- The demolition of walls, fences or gates above 1 metre in height and adjoining the highway (2 metres elsewhere). The Council is unlikely to support the removal of significant boundary walls.
- Buildings subject to a statutory order or notice.

In the case of a listed building a separate listed building consent is required for demolition.

Enforcement strategy

Where there is clear evidence of a breach of planning law; national and local policy will be enforced. In cases where this is necessary, it will be carried out in a fair, clear and consistent manner. Information and

advice will be available before any formal action is taken and an opportunity provided to discuss the circumstances of the case and to resolve problems.

Article 4 Directions

Owners of residential properties can undertake some alterations to their property without the need to apply for planning permission – this is known as “permitted development” (permitted development rights only apply to buildings in single residential use, and not to flats or businesses).

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 enables Local Planning Authorities to remove specified permitted development in sensitive locations by introducing Article 4 Directions. These are used only in special cases where alterations which could normally be undertaken without planning permission would have an adverse effect on the local environment.

Article 4 Directions are generally (though not exclusively) used as a tool in conjunction with conservation area designation to strengthen the protection afforded to those elements which form part of, or add to, the character and appearance of the area. Such directions are not used lightly but are given careful consideration before introduction.

Consideration will be given to the appropriateness of an Article 4 Direction for specified works within the Duston Conservation Area. This is because there is evidence that the cumulative effect of minor alterations would erode the character of the area with a generally negative effect. It is important that this erosion of character is avoided in the future.

Management & protection of important trees

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 makes provision for the protection of trees in the interests of amenity and the Act makes special provision for trees within Conservation Areas. Well-established trees make an important and positive contribution to the local environment and therefore it is essential to safeguard these features for the benefit of the community.

Trees over 76mm (3”) in diameter within the Conservation Area are automatically protected from damage or felling. Six weeks prior written notice must be given to the

Council for any works likely to affect a tree within a Conservation Area (this includes work which may affect the roots). If a Schedule of Works cannot be agreed, the Council may decide to make a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Once a tree is protected by a TPO, it is an offence to cut down, uproot, prune, damage or destroy a tree without the written consent of the Council.

Duston Conservation Area contains a number of trees which are currently protected by Tree Preservation Orders. Consideration will be given to a review of these orders from time to time and to the undertaking of a review of those trees which fall within the boundary of the Conservation Area or its setting.

Local Plan Policy

The Northampton Local Plan was adopted in June 1997. The plan sets out the Council's aspirations for protecting and enhancing the Borough's historic assets. It states how applications affecting Conservation Areas will be assessed. These policies will be strengthened by this Character Appraisal, which will offer greater detail regarding those elements that give the area its distinctiveness.

Design Guidance

Within Conservation Areas detailed examination is required of the design, siting and layout of development proposals of all types. This is necessary to achieve a high standard of development and to help preserve or enhance the character of the overall area.

Street furniture and highway treatment

Many of the consultation comments related to the impact of the volume of traffic running through the village and the standard of the existing street furniture in Duston. These concerns are echoed by NBC as these factors can cause considerable material harm to the aesthetic and character of the Conservation area. Conversely sympathetic treatment of highways, public realm and street furniture can create successful places that promote interaction between the community and the historic environment.

Northampton Borough Council is fully committed to securing the protection of Duston's historic environment both now and in the future. As a result we will do our best to work in conjunction with our partners and

individuals to ensure a very high standard is achieved and maintained in Duston.

Below is a table containing a list of key issues that NBC would like to address.

Public realm action plan

Enhancement / Areas for enhancement

Location	Issue	Action	Term	Responsibility
Main Road (corner of Holmleigh Close) (photo 1, p. 26)	<i>Former gateway in stone wall at corner of Holmleigh Close and Main Road has been blocked with plywood. The wall itself is in a poor state of repair (especially the lower courses), and as such would benefit from refurbishment.</i>	Establish who the owner is, and encourage them to make the necessary repairs to the wall.	Short	Site Owner
Main Road, Peveril Road, Sycamore Road, Melbourne Lane (photo 2)	<i>The stone-walls throughout the historic core of the village make a positive contribution to the character of the area and therefore would benefit from a holistic process of assessment and reconditioning.</i>	Encourage owners to make the necessary repairs. This could be supported by Townscape Heritage Initiative funding which could be secured by Northampton Borough Council.	Medium	Respective site owners / Northampton Borough Council.
Main Road / Melbourne Lane	<i>The soft landscaping to the garden of the property on the corner of Melbourne Lane and Main Road has been removed. This is deemed to have a considerable detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the Conservation Area due to its prominent location.</i>	Northampton Borough Council enforcement team are currently pursuing works to fulfil the provisions of the landscaping condition on the Change of use application.	Short	NBC
Main Road (photo 3)	<i>The Squirrels Public House car park constitutes a wide void in what is otherwise a fairly densely populated street-scene. The fence that borders the highway is incongruous in heritage terms as it is a modern galvanised post and chain fence. This area would benefit immeasurably from the installation of some soft landscaping, i.e. some low-lying shrubs or small trees.</i>	Encourage the owner to introduce some sympathetic soft landscaping.	Medium	Site Owner with Northampton Borough Council
Main Road (photo 4)	<i>The beer garden of the Squirrels Public House has had some large trees removed from its road frontage. This has increased views into the area and also made the garden a lot lighter, however the loss of key trees on the frontage has had a detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the conservation area and suitable replacements should be considered.</i>	Discuss the issue with the owners of the Public House.	Short	Site owner.

Location	Issue	Action	Term	Responsibility
Main Road	<i>The large raised bed outside the Duston United Reform Church would benefit from having at least one tree planted in it.</i>	Discuss the issue with the Church.	Short	Site owner.
Main Road (photo 5)	<i>The area surrounding the bakery on Main Road would benefit from a comprehensive improvement scheme. Firstly the railings, bin and bench should be replaced with more heritage sensitive types of street furniture. Secondly there is unkempt vegetation including nettles and ivy, which should be removed and replaced with more sensitive plants and possibly a decorative native tree.</i>	This adopted area of highway would be the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council.	Medium	NCC
Squirrel Lane (photo 6)	<i>Squirrel Lane has a large bush of overgrown brambles, which is unsightly. This should be removed and replaced with more appropriate landscaping, which would have a positive impact upon the amenity of the conservation area.</i>	Discuss the issue with the owners	Medium	Site owners.
Main Road	<i>Main Road suffers from much unnecessary street clutter, in the form of signs, Bus stops and steel railings. The railings impact detrimentally upon the village like character of the Conservation Area. It should be considered whether Duston would benefit from the removal of the railings in front of St Luke's School, and adjacent to the zebra crossing in front of the Bakery. The removal of the barriers could be brought forward in conjunction with a reduction in the speed limit through the centre of Duston.,</i>	Approach NCC to discuss ways to secure a better public realm for the historic core of Duston.	Medium	NBC and NCC

For development within or adjacent to the conservation area the Council may seek financial contributions through Section 106 planning obligations to assist in delivering the improvements to the conservation area as set out in the Management Plan.



1- gap in wall near Holmleigh Close

2- stone wall near roundabout

3 – Squirrels car park fence

4 – Squirrels beer garden

5 – street furniture near bakery

6 – brambles in Squirrel Lane

Photographs referred to in the Public Realm enhancement table.

Opportunities for redevelopment

New development in the conservation area should aspire to a quality of design and use of materials which is clearly related to its context. This normally involves demonstrating that the values set out in the Conservation Area Assessment have been respected. To an extent the character of the area derives from its natural evolution over time. New development should complement this pattern and the established grain and settlement pattern.

New development within the grounds or curtilage of listed buildings and local list buildings will be discouraged, where it is considered that the setting of those buildings or the open character would be compromised.

Monitoring Change

The appearance of conservation areas is subject to change over time and results from the implementation of permitted alterations and approved schemes and sometimes unauthorised alterations. The physical fabric of the area and the public realm may also change for the better or worse. This will be monitored and the effects reviewed and policies modified accordingly with the aim of maintaining a sustainable equilibrium.

Mechanisms for monitoring change

Changes will be managed through the planning, listed building and conservation area consent regime and a logbook recording the formal planning history of the conservation area will provide an overview of accepted changes within the area.

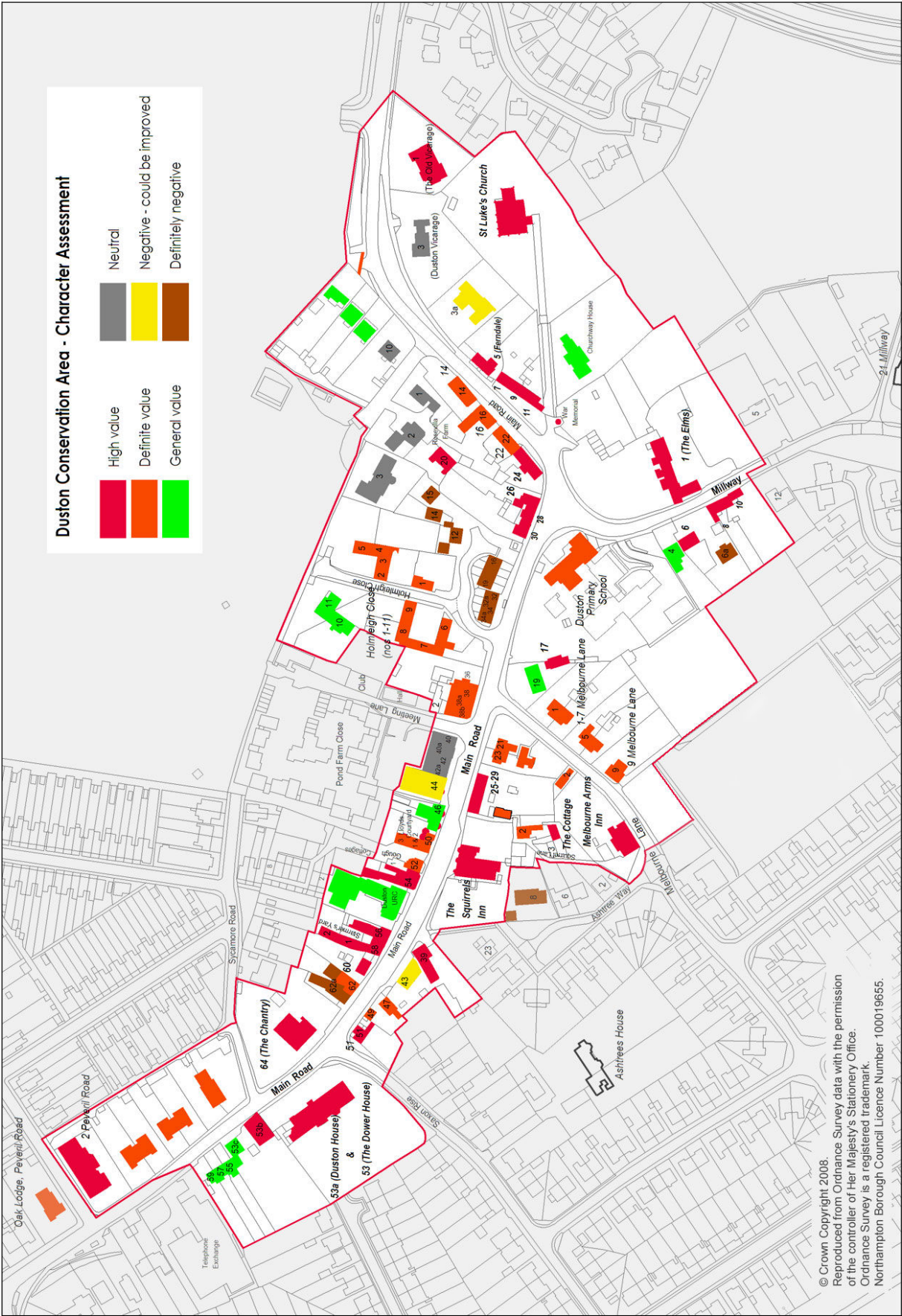
A dated photographic record of the conservation area will be created during the appraisal process and kept up to date to maintain its usefulness.

An annual visual inspection by a suitably qualified person will take place to monitor change within the conservation area.



Appendix 1

Character Assessment



Appendix 2

Schedule of Listed Buildings

The description is that given at the time of listing.

Photo	Building	Grade	
	Church of St Luke, Main I Road Late C12 parish church with C13 aisles & C14 chancel. Restored 1884.		
	The Old Vicarage, Main II GV Road C18, enlarged C19. Coursed rubble and ashlar ironstone, Roof: tile & Welsh slate.		
	No. 5 Main Road II GV (Ferndale). C19: squared rubble and ashlar. Welsh slate roof.		
	Nos 7,9 & 11 Main Road II GV C18 row of cottages. Coursed ironstone, partly whitewashed. Thatched roof.		
	No. 17 Main Road II C18 or earlier: ironstone, thatched roof. [Roof subsequently tiled].		
	No. 24 Main Road II GV C18, altered C19. Ironstone ashlar, tiled roof		
	Nos 25-29 Main Road II GV C18, altered: stone, thatched roof.		
	Nos 26 Main Road II GV 1890: coursed rubble.		
	Nos 28 & 30 Main Road II GV 1732 according to date panel under eaves. Ironstone ashlar, Welsh slate roof.		
			<p>The Squirrels Inn, Main II GV Road C17 or C18 with later back wing: ironstone, thatched roof</p> <p>Nos 53 (Dower House) & II 53A (Duston House) 1822, but much altered in mid C19. Stucco, Welsh slated roof behind balustraded parapet.</p> <p>No. 60 Main Road II C17 or C18, altered. Whitewashed cement rendering, thatched roof.</p> <p>No. 64 Main Road II (The Chantry). Early C19: coursed rubble with stucco back wing. Welsh slated roof.</p> <p>Melbourne Arms Inn, II Melbourne Lane Early C19: coursed ironstone rubble, Welsh slated roof.</p> <p>No. 1 Millway II GV (The Elms). C17, altered C19. Alternate bands of rubble and ashlar, Welsh slated roof.</p> <p>No. 6 Millway II GV C18: whitewashed cement rendering, thatched roof.</p> <p>Nos 8 & 10 Millway II GV C17 or C18: rubble and squared rubble, thatched roof.</p> <p>The Cottage, Squirrel II Lane C17: limewashed rubble, thatched roof.</p>

Appendix 3

Local List Candidates

Main Road: (former) St Luke's Primary School: Church of England School, 1856, built for the education of the poor.

14 Main Road: Squared rubble, tiled roof. Four modern casement windows. Central skylight window.

16 Main Road: Part of the former Rose Villa Farm buildings (see no. 22). Stone with tiled roof. Converted to dwelling.

21 Main Road: "The Old Post Office". Semi-detached building squared rubble, tiled roof. Modern windows under stone arches, dormer windows on first floor. Large brick chimney on RH side.

22 Main Road: Semi-detached building squared rubble, red tiled roof. Part of the former Rose Villa Farm buildings, which comprised a group of 3 buildings, 2 buildings adjacent to the road and 1 located within an inner courtyard.

No. 22 was a single storey barn, with two small windows near the eaves to right of centre. Along with no. 16, it has since been converted to residential, with new wooden windows and cross-ties. Four dormers and a brick chimney have been added to no. 22.

23 Main Road: Gabled front section, modern windows under flat stone arches. Plaque above first floor window with date 1876.

39 Main Road: Cottage of traditional character, stone, welsh slate roof. Modern bay windows either side of central door, modern casement windows on first floor.

47 Main Road: Cottage, heightened rubble walls, tiled roof. Modern casement windows, wooden lintels. Modern porch.

50 Main Road: Coursed rubble, tiled roof. Modern windows, wooden lintels. Central brick chimney.

51 Main Road: Squared rubble, tiled roof. Main section of the elevation set forward. Ashlar surround to windows, stone mullions divide the ground floor window into 3 lights and the first floor window into 2 lights.

52 Main Road: Ashlar, tiled roof. Central doorway with doric pilasters and entablature. Modern windows with glazing bars.

53b Main Road: a large house with Georgian features such as recessed vertical sliding sash windows, Flemish bond brickwork and a portico topped with a neo-classical pediment.

54 Main Road: Rendered (white), slate roof. Large modern shop windows, fold-away canopy above. Replacement casement windows first floor. Brick chimney on the left and stone chimney on the right.

58 Main Road: Ashlar, Welsh slate roof with coped side gable with kneeler. Stone band runs between ground and first floor. Casement windows under flat arches. Modern gateway to Starmers' Yard.

62 Main Road: Coursed rubble, red tiled roof. Central recessed doorway, large modern shop windows. Fold-away canopy above window.

Nos 70-72 & 78-80 Main Road: Large, late C19 semi-detached town houses. Red brick and render, with tiled roof. Wooden sash casement windows throughout. Some ironstone detailing.

Nos 1 & 3 Melbourne Lane: Semi-detached stone house with tiled roof. Central double gable, modern windows with stone sills, and flat arches above. Doorways set back (i.e. to the side of the gables). Central stone chimney. No. 1 has single storey extension and adjoining garage, modern casement windows with shutters. No. 3 has modern sash windows and a separate brick garage which is set back.

Nos 5 & 7 Melbourne Lane: Semi-detached stone house with tiled roof. As per 1-3, but has all sash windows and there are narrow slits above the first floor windows.

9 Melbourne Lane: Squared rubble, interlocking tiled roof. 2 modern casement windows in the centre, flanked by modern bay windows. Above first floor casement windows there is a plaque with "Melbourne Cottage". Central brick chimney.

Nos 1 & 2 Peveril Road: Semi-detached stone dwellings, constructed to look like one house. Coursed rubble, with ironstone quoins, architraves and drip-stones.

2 Squirrel Lane: Detached ironstone building of important local interest. Includes double-height brick porch, modern casement windows and bulls-eye window with brick surround.

Appendix 4

Glossary

Architrave	A lintel between two pillars, the bottom of an entablature (q.v.) or the moulded frame surrounding a door or window.
Ashlar	Blocks of stone with smooth faces and square edges laid in horizontal courses with vertical joints.
Balustraded parapet	A low wall made up of individual posts or pillars that support a rail or coping (a capping to a wall). Generally used in places with a sharp drop, like the tops of houses or retaining walls.
Bar tracery	A means of creating decorative windows from stone, whereby the stone work intersects and forms arches to create openings that can be filled with glass, whilst retaining structural strength.
Below eaves dormer	A dormer roof window which sits below the eaves of the roof line.
Bull's-eye	A small circular window.
Canted bay window	A bay window with angled corners, as opposed to one which is rectangular (known as a box bay).
Coursed rubble	Roughly dressed stone laid in regular courses.
Doric pilasters	Pilasters are columns (pillars), often flat rather than round, and attached to walls, not freestanding. Doric pilasters have fluted shafts with shaped plates on top and no base.
Drip stones	A projecting moulding or window-sill to throw off rain, on the face of a wall, above an arch, doorway or window. Also known as a hood mould.
Eaves	The bottom of a roof ridge, where it meets the exterior wall of a building.
Entablature	The section above a column (pillar) consisting of an architrave (the lowest part of the entablature), frieze (the middle section – can be decorated) and cornice (the top projecting section of the entablature).
Faced Rubble	Unhewn stone, generally not laid in regular courses, but with the outside face smoothed.
Fenestration	The arrangement of windows on the exterior of a building.
Flemish Bond	A means of laying bricks which is both decorative and strong. The bricks are laid alternate ways so that the headers (the sides of the brick) and the stretchers (the long side of the brick) make a regular pattern on the face of the wall.
Ironstone	Locally-quarried iron-rich Jurassic sandstone.
Listed building	A building of high architectural quality and/or with historical value, identified as such by the Secretary of State and subject to special protection measures to preserve its character.
Material change	Any works deemed to affect the special architectural or historic character of a listed building.
Mullion	A vertical post or other upright dividing a window or other opening dividing it into two or more 'lights' – often of stone in historic buildings
Neo-Classical	A style of architecture which uses visual details and proportions to emulate ancient Greek and Roman Architecture.
Parapet gable ends	The end profile of a building finished with a low wall.
Pediment	A low-pitched gable above a portico, door or window.
Portico	A porch with columns and pediment.

Purlin	A horizontal roof timber that supports the plane of the roof.
Pantile	A roofing tile of curved S-shaped section.
Paviors	Paving stones, usually of small size and laid in a pattern.
Quoins	Dressed stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid in alternating large and small blocks.
Regency	A transitional period between the Georgian and Victorian eras in the early 19 th century.
Rubble	Unhewn stone, roughly dressed and generally not laid in regular courses (if in regular courses it is coursed rubble).
Sash windows	Traditional wooden windows which use a system of weights and pulleys to facilitate the vertical opening of the window.
Stucco	Render. A plaster of gypsum, sand and slaked lime, with other substances to ensure durability, used as a protective coating to walls.
Trefoils	A lobe or leaf-shaped curve formed by the CUSPING (projecting points formed at the meeting of FOILS) of a circle or an arch. The number of foils involved is indicated by a prefix e.g. – trefoils, multifoil etc.
Vernacular	Method of construction using local materials and traditions of building.

Appendix 5

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Origin of Names:

- “Northamptonshire Place Names”, by Charles Whyne-Hammond, publ. Countryside Books (1994)

Useful web site: <http://www.duston.org.uk/history.htm>

Appendices
1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

8

CABINET REPORT

Report Title

ELECTORAL REVIEW

AGENDA STATUS:

PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 th October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Chief Executive's Office
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Tony Woods
Ward(s)	None

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Cabinet to note the commencement of the Electoral Review on Tuesday 27th October 2009.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet recommend to Full Council the establishment of an Electoral Review Member Working Party.
- 2.2 That the Member Working Party be made up of 2 representatives from each of the Political Groups and chaired by the Leader of the Council.
- 2.3 The Member Working Party be given delegated powers to consider, prepare and agree submissions to the Electoral Review on behalf of the Council. This will include the electorate forecast, political management arrangements and consequent size of the Council, warding patterns and any other information that is requested.

- 2.4 The Member Working Party invite contributions and input from members and the public in order to inform its proposals.
- 2.5 The Member Working Party only submit recommendations on issues that it is in full agreement about, but will identify within its submissions any minority views that are held within the Working Party.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 In January 2009, the Boundary Committee for England wrote to the Chief Executive highlighting that a review of the December 2007 electoral register had identified that 35% of the wards within the Borough have an electoral variance of over 10%, with Nene Valley Ward having an electoral variance of 33%.
- 3.1.2 The letter informed the Council that under Boundary Committee guidelines this necessitates that the Boundary Committee must consider the need for an Electoral Review. Prior to making the decision, the Boundary Committee requested a view from the Council as to whether the electoral imbalances that had been identified were likely to continue or whether they would be addressed through population changes as a result of new development etc. within the next three years. The Council responded that it did not envisage the imbalance being addressed through any known developments.
- 3.1.3 In March 2009, the Boundary Committee wrote to the Chief Executive to inform him that the Electoral Commission had analysed the evidence and submissions requested from those authorities that met the criteria for further electoral review, and had formally directed the Boundary Committee to commence an Electoral Review of Northampton Borough Council in the coming financial year. It was noted that this was anticipated to commence in October 2009.
- 3.1.4 On the 14th September 2009, the Boundary Committee wrote to the Chief Executive to inform him that the Electoral Review would formally commence on 27th October 2009.
- 3.1.5 On 21st September 2009, representatives of the Boundary Committee and Electoral Commission visited the Council to brief chief officers, members and Parish Council Clerks and Chairs on the electoral review process.
- 3.1.6 The four stages of the review are as follows:
- Stage One (October 2009 – January 2010)
Public invited to comment on council size and warding pattern
 - Stage Two (January – March 2010)
The Boundary Committee formulates Draft Recommendations

- Stage Three (March – June 2010)
The Boundary Committee publicises Draft Recommendations.
The Boundary Committee invites comments in support or opposition of its Recommendations
- Stage Four (June 2010)
Boundary Committee formulates Final Recommendations and submits them to Parliament. Parliament can either accept or reject the Recommendations.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 The Cabinet is asked to consider whether it recommends the establishment of a Member Working Group to develop a response on behalf of the Full Council to the Boundary Committee. During the Boundary Committee's briefings with staff and members it was reinforced that it welcomes the Council submitting a response that makes it clear where proposals have cross-party support and where they do not. The establishment of a Member Working Group would assist members in debating the issues and understanding where there is and is not consensus and reporting that back to the Boundary Committee in a clear and consistent manner.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 The Cabinet has the option not to recommend the establishment of an Electoral Review Member Working Group.
- 3.3.2 The Cabinet has the option to recommend to Full Council the establishment of an Electoral Review Member Working Group.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

At the beginning of Stage One of the review the Council will need to form a view on what the optimum size of the Council would be. This will involve taking a view on the number of Councillors that would be required to run the Council in the future.

4.2 Resources and Risk

The Boundary Committee's Final Recommendations are due to be put before Parliament in early autumn 2010. Whilst the Boundary Committee is confident that this will leave adequate time for Councillors to be elected according to the new warding patterns in the Borough Council elections in 2011, there is a risk that the review timetable might slip and subsequently the new warding arrangements would not be introduced until the 2015 elections. This is far from ideal as this would mean that the current levels of electoral inequality would not be addressed for another 6 years. The Borough Council and Boundary Committee must work together to ensure that this project meets the key

milestones and a decision can be made by Parliament sufficiently in advance of when candidates are being selected for the 2011 election.

4.3 Legal

Once the decision on the Final Recommendation has been made by Parliament, the Council will be legally bound to implement the decision.

4.4 Equality

It will be necessary that any consultation that the Council leads on its own recommendations is accessible to all members of the public.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

Group Leaders

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

The Electoral Review will contribute to the Council's priority of becoming a well-managed organisation. It will ensure that there is electoral equality, whilst also ensuring that the electoral arrangements provide effective and convenient local government, which is reflective of local communities.

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

5.1 Electoral Reviews: what they are and how you can get involved

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/48500/Electoral-review-guidance-final-web_28075-20616_E_.pdf

5.2 Electoral Reviews Technical Guidance

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/48546/Tech-Guidance-final_28191-20728_E_.pdf

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14 September 2009

Electoral review of Northampton Borough Council

I wrote to you earlier in the year to let you know that the Electoral Commission had directed the Boundary Committee for England to undertake an electoral review of Northampton Borough Council. The review will formally start on 27 October 2009. This letter is to advise you that the preliminary period of the review, during which we are asking for certain information (outlined below), begins today.

The procedures that we will be following in conducting the review are set out in the Boundary Committee's *Electoral reviews: what they are and how you can get involved* pamphlet, copies of which are enclosed. I also enclose a number of leaflets explaining what the Committee is, and its functions. I would ask you to make copies of the guidance and leaflet available at your main offices, along with copies of this letter. Further copies of these publications are available on request.

A more detailed technical guidance document is available on the Boundary Committee's website at on the 'about electoral reviews' page of the boundary review section of the website, at:

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/48546/Tech-Guidance-final_28191-20728__E__.pdf.

This document contains all the statutory information about the review process. Please note that this document is not available in hard copy.

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Advertising the review

We will provide news releases to the local press announcing the start of the review. This release, and posters to publicise the review will also be sent to your Council. It would be appreciated if you could publicise the start of the review by placing copies on display in your information points, and by taking such other steps as you consider appropriate to bring the review to the attention of the public and other interested parties. We will also send posters to the County Council, and ask that these are displayed in the libraries in your Council's area.

Preliminary information sought

We would be grateful if you would provide our officers with the following preliminary information as soon as possible and in any case before the review formally starts on 27 October:

- contact names, telephone numbers and email addresses of your colleagues you expect to be working on the electoral review;
- names and addresses of all residents' associations and active community groups in Northampton; in particular we would appreciate your Council's assistance in engaging hard-to-reach groups throughout this review;
- an electronic copy of the full electoral register;
- a completed electorate spreadsheet – you will see that the *Technical Guidance* contains pro-forma spreadsheets for your officers to complete with electorate figures. We have recently updated these spreadsheets but have yet to replace them in the *Technical Guidance*. Our officers will provide the new spreadsheet directly to your Council. We would prefer to receive all information from only one contact within your Council;
- an explanation of the rationale for the electorate forecasts;
- a map of polling districts, and topographical maps for the area of Northampton

Borough Council showing existing district ward, parish and parish ward boundaries. **It would be most helpful in expediting the Committee's work if these could also be submitted in a GIS format that is compatible with MapInfo. It would also be helpful if the mapping to support any proposed warding arrangements could be received in this format.**

- copies of any statutory instruments or resolutions that have been made (either by your council or any other organisations) since your most recent electoral review that alter the boundaries, electoral arrangements or names of any parish, parish ward, district, district ward or county electoral division.

It is important that the electorate spreadsheets and mapping is made available locally so that all interested parties can use this information when submitting proposals to us. We will also make this information available on our website.

Review Timetable

We have arranged to meet with you and your colleagues to discuss the review in more detail and, in particular, the information we are requesting below, on 21 September 2009. We will also be briefing your group leaders, the full council and representatives from your parish and town councils on the same day. If you have any queries regarding the meetings, please contact my colleagues whose contact details can be found below.

Once we have formally begun the review, the Committee will follow a four-stage process, as indicated in our guidance, *Electoral reviews: what they are and how you can get involved*.

Stage One of the review will start on 27 October 2009 when the Boundary Committee will write formally to your Council and other interested parties, including parish councils, residents' associations and the community groups referred to above. We will invite proposals to be made to us on what the electoral arrangements for the authority should be, and highlight the date when people must submit representations to us (the end of Stage One).

The Committee will then prepare its draft recommendations for the electoral

arrangements of Northampton Borough Council. It is intended that these recommendations will be published in March 2010 on our website at www.boundarycommittee.org.uk. The draft recommendations will be sent to your Council and to those organisations and individuals listed at the end of this letter. We will also inform all those who submit representations during Stage One of the draft recommendations being published. There will then be a period of consultation on these draft recommendations prior to the Committee formulating its final recommendations. We expect to complete the review in Autumn 2010.

As you would expect, the Boundary Committee takes the consultation periods very seriously. As we may move away from the draft recommendations as a result of consultation, it is particularly important that everyone is encouraged to express their views on the draft recommendations, whether or not they agree with what has been proposed.

We will make available for public inspection full copies of all representations we receive. These will be made available both in our London office (by appointment) and on our website at www.boundarycommittee.org.uk. We will also send your Council a copy of all the representations and we request that you make them available for public inspection together with any representations your Council makes.

Correspondence and Enquiries

All correspondence relating to this review should be addressed to:

Northampton Review
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London
SW1P 2HW

or direct to your main contacts at the Committee who will be:

- Arion Lawrence, Review Officer, with specific responsibility for the day-to-day running of the review.

email: alawrence@boundarycommittee.org.uk; Tel: 020 7271 0674;

- Richard Buck, Review Manager, who leads the team dealing with this and other reviews
email: rbuck@boundarycommittee.org.uk; Tel: 020 7271 0695.

Yours sincerely

Archie Gall

Director

020 7271 0650

agall@electoralcommission.org.uk

cc Northamptonshire County Council
MPs with constituency interests in Northampton

Appendices

1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

9

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Carbon Reduction Commitment
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 th October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Environment & Culture
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Trini Crake
Ward(s)	All

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report is submitted to inform the Cabinet of the financial, reputational and resource implications of the Carbon Reduction Commitment on the Council.
- 1.2 The Council will be legally obliged to participate in the Carbon Reduction Commitment that starts in April 2010. The scheme is designed to encourage and promote energy efficiency through financial and reputational incentives. The Council's current participation in the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) pilot offers a positive approach to dealing with the CRC. The Council will need to prepare for the scheme and invest resources to do so. New skills sets will need to be developed to enable accurate monitoring and carbon trading expertise to be developed.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note and give consideration to the financial, reputational and resource implications for the Council of the new CRC scheme.

- 2.2 Agree to participate in Carbon Trading Public Sector 2009/10, which is a 'dry run' of the CRC scheme.
- 2.3 Agree the need for the skills, tasks and roles outlined in 4.2.4. of this report to be implemented to undertake the CRC.
- 2.4 Note that a carbon financial trading strategy will be prepared.
- 2.5 Note that TEAM (Energy Auditing Agency) Ltd will provide services to the carbon reduction work of the council.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The CRC is a UK-wide mandatory emissions trading scheme, which is aimed at large non-energy intensive organisations and places a statutory responsibility on organisations to understand their carbon footprint, monitor and accurately record the amount of energy that they use.
- 3.1.2 Under the terms of the scheme, NBC will have to:
- Collect and analyse the footprint data (monitoring) Calculate its emissions responsibly under the scheme (The CRC will require a data accuracy of at least 95% to avoid penalties.)
 - Purchase carbon allowances to cover its emissions,
 - Develop a compliance strategy
 - Monitor and report its annual energy consumption and surrender sufficient allowances to cover its stated emissions,
 - Keep an evidence pack, to provide an audit trail that demonstrates how it has calculated its total energy use,
 - Budget for carbon allowance purchase and a six-month delay before receiving any recycling payment (with a possible penalty or bonus).
 - Undertake trading activities and forecasting
 - Submit data to the scheme administrator
 - Understand and participate in the carbon auction process
 - Verify data and undergo audits
- 3.1.3 NBC must register under the CRC as during the 2008 calendar year the council consumed at least 6,000 MWh of electricity on all its Half Hourly meters. The energy usage of these meters for the period: 01.04.08 to 31.03.09 was 9,542.47 MWh. If Cliftonville House closed and staff and services not relocated the Council would still remain within the CRC requirements as it is estimated that the total electricity usage of NBC half hourly meters would reduce by 1,207.6 MWh to 8,334.7MWh.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 If energy savings cannot be made then financial penalties could be hefty but conversely, if the Council can put procedures in place and develop specific energy action plans to reduce energy in all of its activities and corporate assets there are clear financial benefits.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 The Council has limited options. The Council must participate in the CRC, it must identify which carbon trading strategy it wishes to adopt and identify a carbon reduction strategy to maximise the benefits of the league table position and thereby reduce the financial impact of the scheme on the Council.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

The CRC will drive NBC policy to reduce its carbon emissions.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Financial Implications:

NBC will need to:

- Provide a cash flow for the purchase of allowances, after a six-month delay will we receive the sum back (with a possible penalty or bonus depending on our position in the league table).
- The bonus and/or penalties have a maximum for each year and will be 10% in 1st year. A league table position will determine a bonus or penalty factor applied to NBC's recycling payment. The scheme's aim is to reward a well performing organisation while penalising those with poor performance. In the scheme's first year, the maximum bonuses to those at the top of the table and maximum penalties to those at the bottom will be equivalent to 10% of an organisation's emissions. This % will rise by 10 percentage points a year to +/- 50% in October 2015. Payments are proportional to 2010/2011 emissions so the actual financial penalty and bonus can be even greater or lower than these percentages.
- Prepare a budget contingency for possible fines for non-compliance.
- Budget for the cost of participating in the scheme to cover various registration and subsistence fees are payable (MTPO submitted);
- Budget for the manpower and systems needed to comply with the data collection and reporting requirements, this is predominantly for the Energy Manager
- Budget for energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures to improve the position in the league table and carrying out early action metrics (installing Smart Metering and achieving 'Carbon Trust Standard') will carry further operational costs.

Note: The Government's own Regulatory Impact Assessment estimates that **the average cost of administration for Local Authorities with 50+ sites – will be £28,500 per annum.** This cost is based on a fully

absorbed cost of £500 per day and reflects either the value of management time and the associated overheads – or the costs of contracting out the management of an organisation's CRC related activity.

A table of possible costs is contained in Appendix 1.

4.2.2 Reputational Implications:

The league table showing the position of the council ranked against 5,000 other organisations will be published along with any non-compliance. A low position relative to other organisations or incidents of non-compliance could be extremely detrimental to the council's reputation. Conversely a high position in the league table due to energy reduction would enhance the council's reputation.

4.2.3 Other resource Implications:

Commitment resources in manpower to achieve the terms of the scheme described in 3.1 above.

The Carbon Trust suggests that the resourcing levels for a team dealing with Energy Management should be such that the ratio of resources as FTE to utility spend (water, electricity + gas) are around 0.75 to 1.0 FTE per £1million. NBC has a £2 million spend. Indicative resources would therefore be 2 FTE. In order to fulfil the activities below the Council will need to create a team to undertake the core functions and where other expertise can be brought in to help and assist in the functions.

4.2.4 The Skills, Tasks and Roles Required to undertake these Activities include:

Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) – as a result of the pilot Carbon Trading Council's scheme suggest the following CRC tasks and roles:

TASK	POSSIBLE LEAD FOR ROLE
Identify if you qualify for CRC	Energy Management Asset Management Legal
Monitor your total emissions	Energy Management Asset Management
Identify if there are additional emissions that you are responsible for (e.g. PFI contracts)	Legal Procurement Asset Management
Provide a cash flow for purchasing carbon allowances in the initial sale	Lead councilors Finance Energy Management
Develop Trading Strategy	Lead councilors Finance Legal Risk Management
Decisions to initiate and negotiate trading deals	Finance Procurement
Predict cash flow implications, for instance	Finance

the revenue recycling payment	
Identify any relevant emissions that are exempt from the CRC	Legal Energy Managers
Decide + implement carbon reduction plans	Lead councilors Energy Management Asset Management

4.3 The Role of the Carbon Management Programme Board

- 4.3.1 The Carbon Management Programme Board's terms of reference have been changed to include the implementation of the CRC. Membership includes senior officers from Finance, Asset Management, Procurement and Legal and the Sustainable Development Officer. The meeting is chaired by the Director of Environment and Culture.
- 4.3.2 The roles, membership and responsibility of the Carbon Management Programme Board will continue to evolve as further understanding of requirements is gained.
- 4.3.3 During the first year of the scheme trading strategies will need to be established and skills developed in Finance and Asset Management to address elements of the scheme. In particular – delegated authority will have to be established in order to allow rapid trading decisions to be made as required.
- 4.3.4 The CRC is a “whole council issue”. The Director of Environment and Culture will have responsibility for leading and over-seeing the implementation of the CRC.

4.4 TEAM (Energy Auditing Agency) Ltd

- 4.4.1 There is currently a 1-year contract with TEAM to provide Bureau Services that ends on the 31st of March 2010. TEAM can continue to provide Bureau Service that is accurate energy consumption data as opposed to financial data and will ensure complete and accurate data.
- 4.4.2 NBC has received a proposal from TEAM to give an Initial Impact Assessment on CRC, which will provide a corporate review, a review of data to include 100% of our CRC sites in order to identify the 90% we need to report on, a risk reduction strategy and a senior management briefing/ presentation. The cost for the Impact Assessment is £5,500; this cost is in existing budgets.
- 4.4.3 TEAM are also developing a CRC module – which will be designed to help with the reporting under the CRC (80% of the work required for complying with the CRC). The council will need to either buy in service from TEAM or carry out these functions in-house.

4.5 Legal

The council must maintain accurate auditable information for the CRC as falsification of records may result in criminal action.

4.6 Equality

There are no Equality and Diversity issues.

4.7 Consultees (Internal and External)

Legal, Finance.

4.8 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

NBC has committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 35% by 2012.

4.9 Other Implications

None.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Management Board Report 16/07/09

Janet Millar, Sustainable Development Officer, Ex 7765.

Fine calculations based on emissions of 9617

Registration

I.e. notifying DEFRA that you qualify for the scheme

1 Month late = £5k + 20 * £500 = £ 15,000

Late Footprint Report

Initial Report accurately detailing your emissions

1 month late = £5k + (.05* 9617 *20) £ 14,617

Late Annual Report

Annual Report (31 July) accurately detailing emissions of previous financial year.

1 month late = £5k + (.05* 9617 *20) £ 14,617

Incorrect Reporting

Annual Report must be accurate within 95% (audited approx once every 5 years)

If only 94% accurate and we over report by 6% then fine = £ 23,082

If only 94% accurate and we UNDER report by 6% then fine = £ 46,164 assu

Evidence Pack

An evidence pack must be held including audit trail of all energy use data and carbon emission

Failure to maintain an evidence pack (£5 per tonne CO2) = £ 48,087

A Council Indicative Potential Fines for non-compliance			
Non-compliance type		Fine	
Late Footprint Report	1 month late	£	14,617
Late Annual Report	1 month late	£	14,617
Incorrect Reporting			
only 94% accurate and we OVER report by 6%		£	23,082
only 94% accurate and we UNDER report by 6%		£	46,164
larger inaccuracies mean larger fines			
Evidence Pack			
Failure to maintain an auditable Evidence Pack		£	48,087

James £40 incorrect reporting and £40 for submitting too few allowances.

1 calcs.

Appendices

2



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

10

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Proposed bid to the Homes and Communities Agency for Round 2 funding for Council house building
---------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 th October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	Yes
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	Yes
Directorate:	Housing
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Ward(s)	St David's

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To consider a second prospective bid to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for funding to build new council housing on council owned land.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be authorised to confirm the terms of a second bid to the Homes and Communities Agency for grant funding
- 2.2 To approve the extended procurement of the services of Orbit Housing Group partners who assisted the Council with the HCA Round 1 bid.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 On the 28th April 2009, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) wrote to local authorities inviting them to bid for resources under the Challenge Fund programme. The Challenge Fund was split into two separate rounds. Round 1 deadline was on the 31st July 2009, which the authority submitted a bid for 8 family units at the Woodside Way garage site. On the 9th September 2009, the authority was notified that they had been successful in obtaining £451,913 of HCA grant. The second round of funding has a deadline date of the 31st October 2009 for prospective bids.
- 3.1.2 The second round bid criteria is the same as round one. The authority will have to fund a minimum of 50% of the total scheme costs, with the remaining funds coming from the HCA in the form of grant.
- 3.1.3 Following further option appraisal work, Bondfield Avenue Garage Site has been identified as a potential site for a HCA Challenge Fund round two bid. A capital appraisal bid has been submitted to Finance and will be discussed as part of the Capital Monitoring reports on tonight's agenda.

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 Funding

As the Challenge Fund bidding criteria states, the authority will have to fund a minimum of 50% of the total scheme costs. Based on a feasibility report carried out by POD (see appendix 1), the total scheme costs are £955,259 based on building 6 family dwellings and achieving Code for Sustainable Homes level 4. This would require the authority to prudentially borrow £477,630.

3.2.2 Existing Garage Tenancies

From the remaining 18 garages, 12 are being used. A search of alternative garage sites in the area has been conducted and there are over 70 garage spaces available for existing garage tenants to re-locate to.

3.3 Choices (Options)

Option 1 prudentially borrow to match HCA Grant funding

- 3.3.1 This Option is the preferred option, as it will allow the authority to build homes and manage them. The homes will be within the Housing Revenue Account, but outside the subsidy system. This means rents can be retained to finance the prudential borrowing. This option offers better value for money as local authorities can borrow over longer periods than Registered Social Landlords (RSL) can currently.

- 3.3.2 Appendix 2 illustrates the detail for the financial model. The Assumptions apply subsidy calculations and take into consideration current levels of performance and anticipated improvements in performance. The main risk with this option is if the property is sold under Right to Buy. If the property is sold, the Council could lose a proportion, estimated at up to half of, its capital investment. It is currently understood that if the property is sold, the HCA will claw back its grant although it is not currently known whether the HCA would apply a sliding scale to reduce the clawback in later. Given the fact that the dwellings are new build, it is considered that less maintenance will be required in the earlier years at least.
- 3.3.3 See the table below, which highlights the assumptions used and the calculated revenue impact which is a beneficial impact of £1,578. The detail behind this is shown in appendix 2.

Data	
Void & Bad Debt Levels	3.5%
Average rate of interest on borrowing	4.79%
Management Costs per annum	£494.19
Maintenance Costs per annum	£1,000
Major Repair Costs per annum	£838.30
Total Impact on the HRA	-£1,578

3.3.5 Option 2 Do nothing

This is not the preferred option, as the site would remain under used, and continue to attract anti-social behaviour. Not proceeding with a bid would mean the Council could potentially miss out on £477,629 of HCA Grant funding to help build 6 more affordable family homes.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 The proposed prudential borrowing as part of the overall scheme will help deliver the following emerging priorities from the 2010-2015 Housing Strategy:

- Deliver well-designed, high quality homes and services; and
- Manage supply and growth for the future of Northampton

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 The 6 dwellings will be owned and managed by the Council, let on secure tenancies and therefore open to the Right to Buy. This means that potential future rent could be lost and HCA grant may have to be paid back. These issues have been raised with the HCA and dialogue is taking place to ensure we fully understand how this will work for local authorities as part of Round 1 submissions.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 None.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment screening form has been completed. A full impact assessment is not required.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 The following departments have been consulted:

- Finance
- Housing

It is proposed that following confirmation of a bid to the HCA, a full consultation exercise will take place with the local community.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 The development of the local authority new build scheme will help deliver the following:

Corporate Plan

- Housing health and well-being; and
- Partnerships and community engagement.

Northampton Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2011

- Living and thriving; and
- Fit and Healthy

Northamptonshire LAA 2008-2011

- NI 155 – Number of Affordable homes delivered

4.7 Other Implications

- 4.7.1 None.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 HCA Bidding letter and guidance

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Bondfield Avenue Level 1 – Development Appraisal

Appendix 2 - Option 1 Modelling

Gary Parsons, Housing Strategy & Policy Development Manager, x7970



Bondfield Avenue

Level 1 - Development Appraisal

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

17 August 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Architecturally, the team have developed two separate options for the site. The higher density scheme contains 6 * 4b7p houses. The lower density scheme contains one unit less with 5 * 4b7p houses and is more likely to be acceptable to the planners. An alternative site layout is provided for the five unit option.
2. The estimated works cost have been estimated by using the BCIS database. Works costs for similar projects were adjusted for both time and location to obtain a m2 rate. This have given us likely works cost in the range of £1,152 to £1,181 per m2 GIA.
3. Construction for the various options is likely to take approximately 12 months from start on site.
4. An RP could expect grant of £16,000 per person for social rented based on grant levels achieved during the most recent bid round. However, it should be noted that grant levels are currently in a state of flux due to the HCA's spending targets. Higher grant levels could potentially be supported although the most recent edition of Inside Housing (Friday 14th August) reported that the HCA will be driving down grant levels in the future.
5. NBC could expect to receive grant of £16,000 per person for social rented schemes. However, this will be limited to 50% of total scheme costs if lower, in line with LA bidding guidance. In terms of this site, the NBC grant is capped at 50% and therefore RSLs do achieve substantially higher grant rates compared to NBC.
6. NBC have provided the authors with their chosen financial assumptions for key elements. Assumptions have been made on some of the more minor financial assumptions such as long term rent and cost inflation.
7. The open market value for the completed units is £200,000 per 4 bed house. As this is a level 1 appraisal, these have not been verified by an independent valuer and are based on internet research and a chat with a local agent.
8. The scheme has been appraised using the Net Present Value method on a discounted cash-flow model.
9. For all options, the scheme costs are approximately 80% to 85% of open market sales values.
10. Both options for the site are comfortable viable to NBC if 50% grant can be obtained. Therefore, we recommend that NBC proceed with a funding bid.
11. The site is viable for all RPs at £16,000 per person grant if land is provided free. However, if land is provided free, grant should be reduced.
12. With NBCs assumptions set as detailed in the report, NBC are between an average and competitive Registered Provider in terms of competitiveness.

SITE OPTIONS

A feasibility study has been undertaken by Bell Phillips Architects to ascertain possible mixes of accommodation for the site. They have proposed two options for the site. The first is 6 no 4 bed houses and the second is 5 no 4 bed houes.

For the second option, there is an alternative layout which is called option 3. However, as the mix of accommodation is exactly the same as option 2, the 3rd option is not appraised separately.

The site layouts and other architectural details of these various options are attached as Appendix D.

The options are summarised below together with our estimate of the open market value for each property type. Comparables are shown in Appendix C.

OPTION 1								
TYPE	UNITS	BEDS	PERSONS	HAB ROOMS	NIA	CIRC'	GIA	OMV
4BH	6	4	7	5	115	0	115	£200,000
TOTALS	6	24	42	30	690	0	690	£1,200,000

OPTION 2								
TYPE	UNITS	BEDS	PERSONS	HAB ROOMS	NIA	CIRC'	GIA	OMV
4BH	5	4	7	5	115	0	115	£200,000
TOTALS	5	20	35	25	575	0	575	£1,000,000

WORKS COSTS

Works costs are the major cost item by far given that there is no land value. A search has been undertaken on the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) to gather details from comparable projects. The results gathered from BCIS are shown in Appendix A for reference

Residential construction projects were searched using the following criteria which found 14 matching projects on BCIS:

- Houses only
- New Build Only
- Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) between 300 & 1200
- No Air Conditioning
- No Basement
- Sites from 2001 onwards
- 2 Story only

The results were then adjusted to current prices (Q3 2009) and also adjusted for location (Northamptonshire) to get equivalent M2 rates.

The range of M2 rates ranged from £578 to £956. However, most projects were within the range of £700 to £850 looking at the graph in Appendix A.

Given the higher specification of social housing, we have made adjustments below, but used the average (median) as a basis for building up the works costs. The median works costs has a M2 rate of £740 per m2, which excludes external works, uplifts for Code for sustainable homes and contractors contingencies. Note that this is almost £200 less than the previous analysis which reflects the fact that houses cost less than flats to build and prices have fallen.

The works costs used in the appraisals is calculated on the following basis:

- Demolition: £25,000
- External Works: £50,000
- Main Works: £740 per M2
- CSH Level 4: £12,500 per unit
- Performance Bond £10,000
- Building Insurance £1,000 per unit
- Contractors Design: 7.5%
- Contractor Contingencies: 10% (Design & Build)

Using the above calculations we arrived at the following works costs.

	Option 1 - Six Unit Scheme	Option 2 - Five Unit Scheme
Works	£795,005	£679,150
Gross Internal Area	690m2	575m2
Works per M2 GIA	£1,152	£1,181
Works cost per unit	£132,501	£135,830

CODE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES - LEVEL 3

The above calculations assumed that a CSH level 4 would be required. An allowance of £12,500 per unit was allowed for this above the non-CSH schemes used as comparables.

The cost for obtaining the various CSH levels varies dramatically with unit types, each site and how the code is achieved. Therefore, for an initial appraisal such as this, the figures will be somewhat ballpark.

The typical cost per unit of achieving the various CSH levels is shown below.

Code level	Likely Costs per unit
CSH Level 1	£0
CSH Level 2	£1,000 to £1,800
CSH Level 3	£1,600 to £4,400
CSH Level 4	£5,000 to £16,000
CSH Level 5	£14,000 to £30,000

If CSH level 3 were obtained instead of CSH level 4, then I would expect the works cost to fall by approximately £8,000 per unit. This would therefore reduce the works cost by £48,000 for the 6 unit option and £40,000 for the 5 unit option.

The increase in NPV as a result of these changes would be about £50,000 for the 6 unit scheme and £42,000 for the 5 unit scheme. The reason for the increase being greater than the change in works levels is due to the fact that some professional fees based on works will reduce and so will interest costs.

ON-COSTS ESTIMATES

The On-Cost levels vary widely depending on how consultants are procured, the volume of work and complexity and schedule of services required on each project. The on-cost levels in the following table have been used in the feasibilities.

ON COST HEADING	AMOUNT OR RATE	BASIS
Soil Survey	£3,000 up to 20 units £4,000 for 20 to 50 units £5,000 above 50 units	Typical rates for Soil Surveys
Topographical Survey	£2,000 up to 20 units £2,500 for 20 to 50 units £3,000 above 50 units	Typical rates for Topographical Surveys
Other Surveys	£10,000	Allowance for other surveys that may be required such as asbestos surveys etc...
Valuation	£75 per unit	Achievable rate for ad hoc valuations
Legal Fees (Acquisition)	£5,000	Although land is already owned, work may be required concerning statutory services, covenants etc...
Legal Disbursements	£400	For searches, environmental reports etc...
Stamp Duty	Zero	No land transaction, and RPs are exempt if building for social housing
Land Finder	Zero	Not used
Planning Application Fee	£335 per unit	Rate per unit for submission fees
s106 Contribution	£3,000 per unit	Allowance for any s106 commuted sum
Architect	2.0% of works costs	Allowance for work to Stage D
Architect Disbursement	£1,000	Allowance for any models required or specialist presentation drawings
Employers Agent	2% of works	Based on Contract Sum Excluding VAT
Employers Agent Disbursement	Zero	No foreseeable disbursements
CDM Coordinator	0.5% of works	Achievable rate
CDM Coordinator Disbursements	£500	For H&S manual printing and other disbursements
Clerk of Works	0.75% of works	Achievable rate for weekly inspections
Building Regs	Zero	Included within works costs
NHBC/Zurich...	Zero	Included within works costs
Party Wall Fees	£5,000 per site	Estimate
Performance Bond	Zero	Included within works costs
Marketing Allowances	£5,000 per unit	Reasonable allowance for shared ownership/private units
Sales/Legal Fees	£600 per unit	Reasonable allowance for legal fees to sell shared ownership/private units
Contingency	3% of works	Normally within 2%-5% for D&B projects
Development Allowances	4%	Normally within 3% to 5%
Capitalised Interest	Various	Scheme specific based on cost/income profile and interest rate

TIMETABLE

The timing of the project and the drawdown of grant will have an effect on the amount of capitalised interest paid.

If NBC are to develop the site themselves or via an agent, there will be no acquisition sum. Therefore, in this instance, the duration of the works contract and letting period post completion will be the major factors in the determination of interest.

For a simple scheme under 25 units with no unusual site constraints it is reasonable to assume that the scheme can be delivered within a 12 month build period. Therefore, a period of 12 months has been assumed for all options irrespective of whether NBC develop the site themselves or sell it on to a RP.

There are lead-in periods for obtaining planning permission and some fees will be paid prior to start on site. However, these are relatively small amounts and have no significant impact the interest charged.

The assumed timetable for the development is detailed below

Event	Date
Exchange of Contracts	September 2009
Purchase Completion	September 2009
Planning Consent	December 2009
Start on Site	March 2010
Practical Completion	March 2011
Letting	April 2011

GRANT ASSUMPTIONS

Grant obtainable from the HCA can be estimated by looking at previous allocations and making a judgement if more or less grant is obtainable in the current market.

GRANT OBTAINABLE BY REGISTERED PROVIDERS

The last major bid round was for funding in 2008/2011 and therefore the allocations received following that bid round have been used as a basis to calculate the grant obtainable.

The tables below show the allocations awarded in Northampton for both rent and shared ownership bids together with the total allocations and average grant per person & per unit.

2008-2011 - RENTED NEWBUILD ALLOCATIONS ACHIEVED						
Lead Partner Organisation Name	Project Description	Grant	No of Units	No of Persons	Grant per Unit	Grant per Person
PCHA	Booth Rise	2,550,000	54	255	47,222	10,000
The Guinness Trust	MID Hazelwood Road	540,000	12	26	45,000	20,769
Orbit	Spencer St, Northampton	480,000	12	24	40,000	20,000
PCHA	Royal Mail Sorting Office,	4,158,000	77	254	54,000	16,370
Metropolitan	Upton Phase 2	2,378,000	41	173	58,000	13,746
Longhurst Group Limited	Arlington Mercedes	2,100,000	54	162	38,889	12,963
Logic Homes Ltd	Gate Lodge, Thorpeville	940,000	19	100	49,474	9,400
TOTAL		13,146,000	269	994	48,870	13,225

2008-2011 - LCHO NEWBUILD ALLOCATIONS ACHIEVED						
Lead Partner Organisation Name	Project Description	Grant	No of Units	No of Persons	Grant per Unit	Grant per Person
PCHA	Booth Rise,	1,080,000	54	214	20,000	5,047
The Guinness Trust	MID Hazelwood Road,	126,000	6	17	21,000	7,412
PCHA	Royal Mail Sorting Office,	608,000	32	130	19,000	4,677
Metropolitan	Upton Phase 2	360,000	12	42	30,000	8,571
Longhurst Group Limited	Arlington Mercedes	675,000	24	72	28,125	9,375
Logic Homes Ltd	Gate Lodge, Thorpeville,	332,500	19	76	17,500	4,375
TOTAL		3,181,500	147	551	21,643	5,774

It is assumed that the above allocations included an acquisition element as the allocation statement did not show any free land or other public subsidy. Therefore, the figures above are likely to be for acquisition and works schemes.

Given the slippage in grant take up and the desire for the HCA to deliver as many units as possible, it is assumed that higher grant rates could be achieved by Registered Providers for current schemes compared to those achieved in 2008/11. Therefore, for the purpose of this appraisal exercise, we have uplifted the grant achieved in 2008/11 by 20% and then rounded it to the nearest £500 on a per person basis. This gives us the following grant rates which we have used in our appraisals.

TENURE	GRANT PER PERSON FOR REGISTERED PROVIDERS
Social Rented	£16,000
LCHO	£7,000

It should be noted that anecdotally there are some very high grant levels being supported currently as the HCA concentrates on attempting to bring forward stalled projects and RSLs are re-profiling their financial appraisals and appetite for risk. Therefore it is difficult to estimate grant levels that could potentially be achieved in this economic climate when expectations are shifting very rapidly in the market.

NBC GRANT OBTAINABLE

It is assumed that NBC will not be able to achieve a grant per person in excess of that obtainable by the registered providers. This is a reasonable assumption not in the least because the schemes will be works only instead of acquisition and works.

In addition to the above, the HCA's bidding guidance for Local Authorities states that grant will be a maximum of 50% of total costs with the rest supported by borrowing.

Therefore, the grant rates used in the appraisals where NBC develop the land themselves (either via an agent or direct) will be as follows.

TENURE	GRANT PER PERSON NBC
Social Rented	lowest of 50% or £16,000
LCHO	Not an option for NBC

FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS USED

The financial assumptions used in undertaking a site assessment vary hugely across the social housing sector. The levels of some of these assumptions are more important than the capital costs themselves in determining site feasibility.

The key assumptions which determine the viability of social rented schemes if using the NPV method are the discount rate, cashflow projection period and on-going running costs. The other assumptions will have a significant effect, but less so.

In regards to shared ownership products, the assumption of whether or not staircasing occurs combined with the predicted house price inflation factor has a dramatic impact on scheme viabilities. Those developers that assume staircasing will occur will be able to pay dramatically higher prices for land or develop with dramatically reduced grant levels compared to those that assume staircasing will not occur.

	RP CAUTIOUS	RP TYPICAL	RP BULLISH	NBC
Rent Inflation (social rent)	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Rent Inflation (shared ownership)	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Management Cost Inflation	4.0%	3.5%	3.0%	3.0%
Maintenance Cost Inflation	4.0%	3.5%	3.0%	3.0%
Major Repairs Cost Inflation	4.0%	3.5%	3.0%	3.0%
Property Value Inflation	2.5%	3.5%	5.0%	3.5%
Target Rent Inflation to initial letting	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
NPV Period in years	30	45	60	50
Discount rate	6.5%	6.0%	5.5%	4.79%
Long Term Interest Rate	6.5%	6.0%	5.5%	4.79%
Standard Repayment Mortgage Length	30	45	60	50
Short Term Interest Rate (for cap int)	6.5%	6.0%	5.5%	4.79%
Short Term Deposit Rate (for cap int)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Weeks Per Year	52.18	52.18	52.18	52.18
VAT Standard Rate	15%	15%	15%	0%
Management Costs (Social Rent)	£700	£550	£400	£0
Maintenance Costs (New Build)	£700	£550	£400	£1,000
Maintenance Costs (Refurbishment)	£800	£600	£400	N/A
Sinking fund (Unit based option)	N/A	N/A	N/A	£838
Rebuild Costs (£/m2)	£1,300	£1,100	£900	N/A
Sinking Fund Start Year	1	3	5	11
Sinking fund rate (New Build)	0.8%	0.6%	0.4%	N/A
Sinking fund rate (Refurbishment)	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	N/A
Void rate	3%	2%	2%	2.0%
Bad Debts	1%	1%	1%	1.0%
Void Period from PC (Rent)	1	1	1	1
Development Allowance	4%	4%	4%	4%

RESULTS FOR SOCIAL RENTED SCHEMES

Financial appraisals of the five and six unit options have been done using cautious, typical and bullish RP assumptions as well as NBC assumptions. These appraisals are all based on a 100% socially rented units. Therefore, 8 appraisals were done in total. A summary of the results are below, but details of each appraisal can be seen in Appendix B.

In order to compare like with like, the land value has been kept at zero in all options.

OPTION 1 - 6 UNITS				
	RP CAUTIOUS	RP TYPICAL	RP BULLISH	NBC
Works	£795,005	£795,005	£795,005	£795,005
On-Costs	£170,300	£169,107	£167,919	£160,254
TOTAL COSTS	£965,305	£964,112	£962,924	£955,259
Grant	£672,000	£672,000	£672,000	£477,629
Borrowing	£293,305	£292,112	£290,924	£477,630
TOTAL FINANCE	£965,305	£964,112	£962,924	£955,259
Cost/Value Ratio	80%	80%	80%	80%
NPV	£147,602	£360,829	£606,082	£281,999
1st Year Net Rent	£25,445	£27,598	£29,398	£28,374
1st Year Interest	£19,065	£17,527	£16,001	£22,878
Surplus/Deficit per unit	£1,063	£1,679	£2,233	£916

OPTION 2 - 5 UNITS				
	RP CAUTIOUS	RP TYPICAL	RP BULLISH	NBC
Works	£679,150	£679,150	£679,150	£679,150
On-Costs	£150,367	£149,284	£148,205	£140,571
TOTAL COSTS	£829,517	£828,434	£827,355	£819,721
Grant	£560,000	£560,000	£560,000	£409,861
Borrowing	£269,517	£268,434	£267,355	£409,860
TOTAL FINANCE	£829,517	£828,434	£827,355	£819,721
Cost/Value Ratio	83%	83%	83%	83%
NPV	£97,906	£275,684	£480,149	£223,164
1st Year Net Rent	£21,204	£22,998	£24,498	£23,645
1st Year Interest	£17,519	£16,106	£14,705	£19,632
Surplus/Deficit per unit	£737	£1,378	£1,959	£803

From the tables above, it is clear as expected that both options are similar in terms of financial viability. There is a financial advantage in building the larger scheme as each unit generates a return, so the more units, the higher the return. In addition some efficiencies are achieved on the on-costs.

Although option 1 is better than option 2, it is clear in the report by Bell Phillips Architects that the six-unit option may be tricky to get through planning as there are issues regarding distances to boundaries, parking and the size of gardens. If the six unit scheme is achievable, then that should be the preferred option from a financial perspective as it houses more people and has the greatest NPV.

Despite the six unit option performing best financially, the five unit option still performs well. The design of the 5 unit scheme would seem to generate a better quality development with its large gardens that would obviously improve quality of life for the seven-person households that the units house.

In all options, any RSL and NBC obtain a positive NPV which would indicate that the scheme is viable to those organisations. This is stark contrast to the site at Woodfield Way where the finances did not stack up as well.

This is good news and it means that NBC would be on a sound financial footing if they were to submit a bid for grant and based on the work undertaken within this report, we would therefore recommend that NBC do submit a bid for grant on this scheme.

If NBC were to sell the site to a competitive RP which used the same financial assumptions that we have, NBC **may** be able to obtain a land receipt roughly equivalent to the Net Present Value. I.e., NBC could receive approximately £606k for the 6 unit scheme, or £480k for the 5 unit.

To pay NBC the above land values, it would require the RP in question to be unconcerned about a cost/value ratio above 100%. It is common for RPs to limit the maximum cost to value for rented housing to a level between 100% and 120%. The table below shows the maximum land offer NBC could expect to receive if cost/value was limited at 110%.

	Option 1 - 6 Units	Option 2 - 5 Units
Open market value	£1,200,000	£1,000,000
110% of open market value	£1,320,000	£1,100,000
Maximum Scheme Costs	£1,320,000	£1,100,000
All cost except land	£962,924	£827,355
Residual Land Value	£357,076	£272,645

How do NBC compare?

Comfort can be taken from the financial appraisal results as NBC are between a typical and a bullish RPs in terms of competitiveness. The borrowing over 50 years combined with the lower discount rate of 4.79% results in an increased capitalised value of the rental stream. However, the higher maintenance costs of £1,000 per unit go against NBC, but this is offset by the absence of management costs.

As the NBC calculations involve a lower grant rate (capped at 50% instead of £16,000 per person for an RSL), the NPV does not tell the full story in terms of the value of the revenue stream. Instead, the competitiveness of NBCs assumptions are best examined by looking at the capitalised value of the rental stream, i.e., the 'Affordable loan'.

	Option 1 - Six Units	Option 2 - Five Units
Cautious RSL Affordable loan	£440,907	£367,422
Average RSL Affordable loan	£652,942	£544,118
Bullish RSL Affordable loan	£897,006	£747,505
NBC RSL Affordable loan	£759,629	£633,024

The table above shows that the financial assumptions used by NBC result in them being towards the higher end of the market in terms of competitiveness. Therefore, there can be little doubt that NBC are being over cautious in their approach, whilst it is clear that NBC are not being too bullish as some of the extremely bullish RSLs would still be able to outbid them in a competitive situation.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The report has shown that five or six four-bedroom houses can be built on the site.

If the site was to be sold to an RSL, NBC could expect to receive a land receipt in the region of £250,000 to £400,000 if grant were available.

Based on the assumptions given, NBC could comfortably develop the site themselves; constructing either 5 or 6 units on the site with a strong net present value.

We conclude by recommending as before that NBC should consider the financial assumptions used in this report and decide if they need to be tweaked. The key assumptions have been provided by NBC, but there are still others made here such as rent inflation and maintenance inflation.

Subject to agreement of the financial assumption levels, we would recommend that NBC move forward with either scheme.

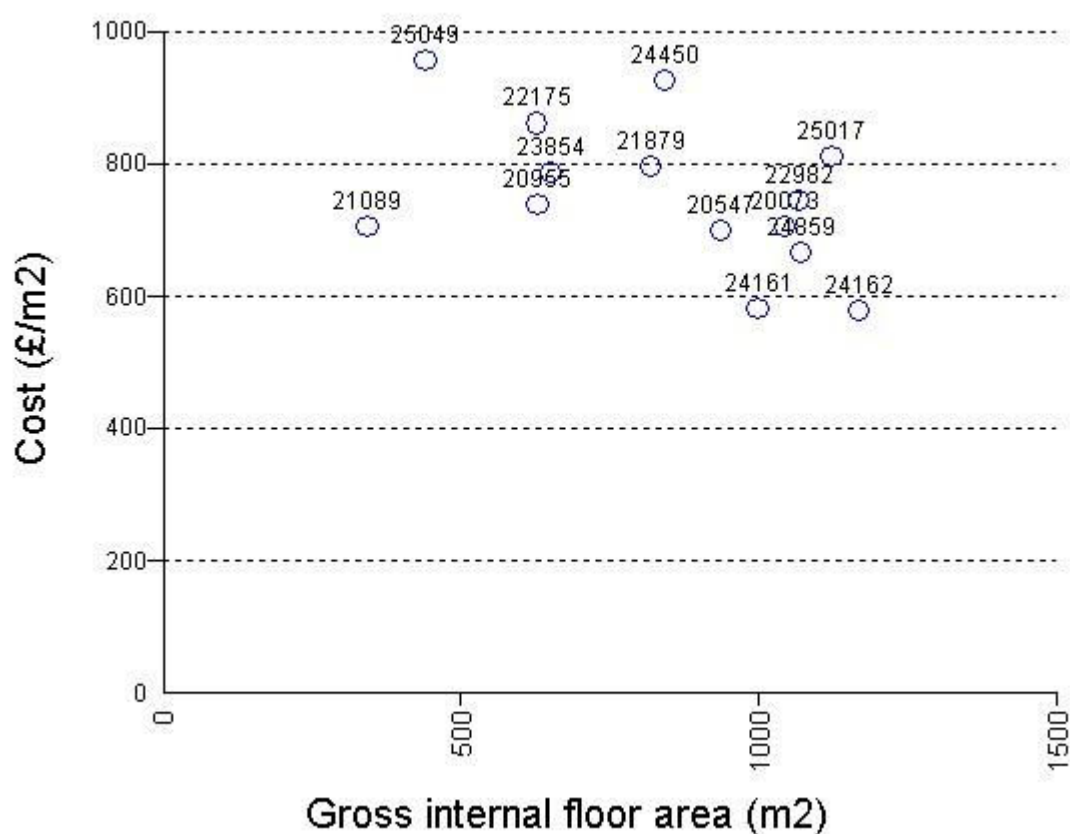
APPENDIX A

BCIS RESULTS: Statistical Summary

Price per m² gross internal floor area for the building, excluding external works and contingencies and with preliminaries apportioned by cost. Adjusted to a location index of 95 (Northamptonshire (Index: 95, Sample: 137)) . 14 Projects found

Mean	Median	Range	Standard Deviation	Sample
753	740	578 - 956	113	14

Deciles									Quartiles	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1 st	3 rd
607	685	704	711	740	778	797	831	907	700	807



SITE APPRAISALS

HCA Challenge Fund Round 2 Bid**Option 1****Standard look up data for input****Data**

Number of dwellings	6
Number of weeks	52
Target Rent	104.09
Void and Bad debt Level	3.5%
Average Rate of interest on Borrowing	4.79%
Management Costs per dwelling per annum	£494.19
Day to day Repairs per dwelling per annum	£1,000
Capital Repairs ave MRA per dwelling per annum	£838.30

Target Rent aprox (confirmed)

£

NOTES

(2011/12 rent figures)

4B properties Per week 624.54

52 weeks 32,476.08

Rent 32,476.08

1) Voids & bad debt 1,136.66

Total Net Income 31,339.42**Interest lost on principal**

£

2) Interest Only 15,766.22

3)

(2009/10 prices)Average £533.10 per household per ann, less £7.3% ,
£494.19 based on 2009/10 budget with reduced support
costs

4) Management 2,965.14

Average £1000 per household per ann, based on the
subsidy repairs allowance

5) Day to Day repairs 6,000.00

Average MRA capital allowance per property, plus 40%
representing the recognised shortfall on the allowance
£ 838.3.

6) Capital repairs 5,029.80

Total Cost to HRA 29,761.16**Total Net Income 31,339.42****Total Impact to HRA - Cost / (contribution) per
annum****-1,578.25***(Note costs have not been inflated and rents are at the forecast 2011/12 levels,*

OPTION 1 HCA CHALLENGE FUND ROUND 2 BID ASSUMPTIONS

1. VOID AND BAD DEBT PERCENTAGE APPLIED TO RENTAL INCOME

2.5% for void to reflect current level of voids. (note level running higher than this for all stock)

1.00% for bad debt provision built in however this is lower than current percentage contribution levels.

Total of 3.5%

2. INTEREST ON PRINCIPAL BORROWED

Interest rate of 4.79% used to calculate cost of borrowing. As the HRA's CFR is negative this represents the loss of interest on principal to the HRA.

The percentage for the term is prudent even taking into account that the immediate levels of investment interest are likely to fall in the short term.

3. GRANT LEVEL PER UNIT

Based on 50% of total cost of scheme.

4. MANAGEMENT COSTS

Provided by finance were based on budgeted costs for 09/10 adjusted for the reduction in central support costs reflected in the 2008/09 actual outturn. £533 a further reduction of 7.3% efficiency has been included which is intended to be delivered in 10/11 budget round for the HRA. There is a risk that this will not be deliverable. The second option reflects zero management costs on the basis that there would be no marginal increase in these costs to the authority

5. MAINTENANCE COSTS

Finance built in £1000 based on 2008/09 maintenance subsidy allowance which is a national formula need to spend assessment for the current HRA archetype groups. The actual 08/09 allowance was £1103.99. The 09/10 allowance is £1129.68.

The subsidy allowance is based on weightings for each stock archetype for Responsive Repairs and Preplanned Repairs. These are then adjusted further to account for relets and termination rates and voids and also for crime related repairs.

For the purposes of this assessment it is considered that this is a prudent level. Note the maintenance allowance does not include anything for environmentals.

6. MAJOR REPAIRS COSTS

Figures of £838 were put in based on 08/09 MRA allowance uprated for the publicised shortfall of 40% recognised nationally by the Councils Housing advisors HQN. In fact HQN were quoting between 43 and 90% as the shortfall in recent national seminars. The Major Repairs costs are average costs over the life of the asset. It is therefore prudent to include these in the appraisal as it represents the need to provide for major repairs over the asset life.

The latest CLG rent Reform Consultation document recognises this shortfall to be 24%. However this is not the accepted professional view.

OTHER

TARGET RENTS

Based on 52 week year and value at 2011/12 financial year

Appendices
2



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

11

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	New Tenant Participation Structure
---------------------	-------------------------------------------

AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	October 14 th 2009
Key Decision:	YES
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	HOUSING
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Sally Beardsworth
Ward(s)	All

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To report back to Cabinet the results of the consultation process by PEP on the tenant appointment methodology to the four area partnership boards and to make proposals for the way forward

2. Recommendations

That members agree the four recommendations as outlined in the PEP report as follows:

- 2.1 That the Council adopts the 'selection' methodology for choosing Tenant Board members as indicated as the preferred option by 50% of the tenants responding to the consultation and that it promotes further resident engagement in the process of establishing its new resident involvement structure.

- 2.2 That the Council agrees an initial Area Housing Partnership Board composition of two Members, three local senior staff and five tenants with an option for the Boards to further co-opt independent Board members.
- 2.3 That, during October to December 2009, the Council implements a programme to support the development of the Area Housing Partnership Boards by the promotion and provision of joint training and Board development sessions aimed at the relevant Members, Officers and tenants for each of the four Housing Areas.
- 2.4 That the Council note the initial suggestions made by tenants during the consultation about what should constitute the elements of a Board member person specification.
- 2.5 That the process of appointing tenants to the Area Partnership Boards begins in accordance with the timetables outlined in the report
- 2.6 That a further progress report is forwarded to Cabinet in March 2010.
- 2.7 That elected Member engagement as part of this process can commence.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 Cabinet considered a report on 4th February 2009 following a health check of the council's tenant participation arrangements. The health check, undertaken independently by PEP (Priority Estates Project) proposed an area- based approach to involvement via four area housing based partnership boards with an umbrella Housing Partnership Board.
- 3.1.2 The relevant minutes of that meeting are repeated in full below

Decision:

- 1. The report from PEP is noted.
- 2. For the purposes of consultation, recommendation 13 (c) of the PEP report is adopted as the basis of formal resident involvement in housing matters, through a process of selection of tenant board members who are not necessarily part of any formal or traditional structure to sit on four Area Housing Partnership Boards and a borough-wide Housing Partnership Board.
- 3. Recognition is formally withdrawn from the existing Tenant participation Agreement and work is to commence immediately on drafting a new agreement for consultation with all council tenants in the Borough.
- 4. A further report is to be presented to Cabinet once the outcome of consultation is known.

3.1.3 The decision of Cabinet was called in by Overview and Scrutiny Committee (20 and considered at their meeting on 23rd February 2009. the decision of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (2) was that:

“Resolved: That after all the evidence had been heard that the Call-In be rejected on the grounds that it was unfounded as consultation has taken place”.

3.1.4 Following the decision by Cabinet to commence further consultation, this additional process has now been completed and the aim of this report is to provide a path towards the implementation of the new area based boards.

3.2 The Wider Consultation Process.

3.2.1 The wider process of consultation was carried out initially between June/July of this year. Every tenant household (approximately 12,250) was sent a leaflet from PEP outlining the proposed customer engagement structure, which was also supplemented by a series of public meetings, held throughout the borough, hosted by PEP. The objective was to provide more information about the concept of area partnership boards and to seek tenant views on the appropriate method of appointing tenants to the four Area Boards.

3.2.2 The consultation exercise indicated overall agreement and support for the newly proposed structure of Area Boards plus an umbrella Housing Partnership Board. The following points were raised by tenants attending the public meetings:

- i) Tenants are keen to assist in the development of a board member job description and person specification.
- ii) Tenants would like to be involved in the development of local involvement plans to support the area boards.
- iii) Tenants were willing to become involved in training initiatives to underpin the proposals.

3.2.3 The results of the initial consultation, which included a tear-off response slip from the PEP leaflet and small attendance at public meetings, indicated no clear preference for one particular method of appointing Tenant Board members.

3.2.4 When these are added to other responses from members of the Tenants Sounding Board, a clear majority of the 207 tenants who responded to the consultation favoured a selection process for appointment of Tenant Board Members as opposed to an election method. Overall results were as follows: -

Selection Option – 104 (50%)

Election Option – 54 (26%)

Undecided – 43 (21%)

Abortive – 6 (3%)

(Appendix 1 of the PEP report provides a full breakdown of the results of the consultation undertaken by PEP)

3.2.5 Whilst it might be questioned whether 207 is representative of the wider tenant community, every tenant was given a chance to comment and the lack of response reflects a general apathy towards formal tenant engagement structures. With initiatives of this kind it is often the case that initially there is some scepticism and lack of interest, but that should change as the Area Boards find their feet and their work becomes known to tenants. The area boards are part of a menu of opportunities for tenants to become involved, which includes:

- The Tenants Sounding Board
- Residents Steering Groups (for capital contracts)
- Mystery Shopping
- Tenant auditors
- “Helping hands” (a programme aimed at younger tenants)
- Surveys

3.3 The recommended appointment process for Tenant Board Members.

3.3.1 As the consultation suggests that selection is the preferred option it is critical that the process of selection is conducted in an equitable and robust manner. This needs to be achieved through the delivery of two distinct phases.

- i) The identification and training of tenants for a selection panel (s)
- ii) The recruitment of tenants to the Area Partnership Boards by the selection panel.

Full proposals have been developed by PEP on how the above can be delivered and implemented (see appendix 2 of their report)

3.3.2 The proposal is for PEP to set up 4 selection panels, made up of tenants who do not wish to be area-board members. They would receive training on selection and it would be their role to appoint those who come forward as wanting to be a tenant board member. It should be noted that tenants sitting on the tenant selection panel would be unable to apply for the position of Tenant Board member. Should insufficient numbers be put forward for this role in each area, a selection panel could have a wider remit across the four areas.

3.4 Elected Member Representation on the Area Partnership Boards

3.4.1 In accordance with best practice and other similar national models it is recommended by PEP that the area partnership boards should initially consist of the following: -

- 5 x tenants
- 3 x officers
- 2 x ward councillors

3.4.2 As the Area Partnership Boards are intended to comprise a mixture of tenants, council officers and ward councillors, the active engagement of local members is a key element of the overall process.

3.4.3 As there is no legal or internal governance requirement (confirmed by Legal Services) for the representation of elected members to be politically balanced it is for members to decide themselves on how they are to be appointed to the Partnership Boards. To assist their decision a briefing note and informal meeting will be held separately by early November 2009.

3. 5. Area Board Development Timetable

3.5.1 PEPs full report (appendix 5) outlines timescale proposals which will ensure that the Area Partnership Boards will be formed by 1.1.2010 and will be “going live” and fully operational by 1.4.2010.

Activity	When
Promotion of the Area Boards and the recommended method of selection.	October 2009
Letter to all tenants who have expressed an interest	October 2009
Training for staff	October 2009
Members briefing	October 2009
Two day training course – joint training – develop terms of reference and board member person specification	November 2009
Tenant Board Member position advertised and application packs issued	November 2009
Shortlisting by selection panel	November 2009
Interviews, decision making and notification	December 2009
Area Board training commences	December 2009
Development of local involvement plans	January 2010
Area Board training	January 2010
Code of conduct agreed	January 2010
Terms of reference agreed	January 2010
Further development on local involvement plans	February 2010
Area Board training	February 2010
Progress report to Cabinet	March 2010
Area Boards go-live	April 2010

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

None

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Funding and resource support for the development of the Area Partnership Boards during this financial year is contained within the Customer Engagement Budget.

4.2.2 It is anticipated that the selection process recommended by PEP will assist in mitigating risks of former problems encountered by the previous Customer Panel and N-Tact structures. The process will be lead by independent external advisers (PEP) who have previous experience of this sort of development. In addition a detailed training programme will be delivered to all participants, which will be supported by clear terms of reference and codes of conduct once the boards have been formed.

4.3 Legal

This report contains no direct legal implications.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 This report does not deal specifically with equality and diversity issues although the new proposals are intended to result in wider inclusion of tenants that has not previously been experienced through previous structures.

4.4.2 The continued development of informal mechanisms through a wide involvement menu is intended to ensure that all groups identified through the customer profile have the opportunity to influence, shape and monitor services. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken before formal appointment of tenant board members takes place.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 The full PEP report at appendix 1 reports the outcome of extensive consultation undertaken by PEP since the previous Cabinet report in February 2009. All tenants of the borough were invited to contribute to this consultation through a range of personal mail shots, public meetings and direct contact from PEP.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 The proposals are consistent with the following corporate priorities as outlined in the Councils' Corporate Plan

- **Improve Housing Health and Well-being**
Improved participation and access to cultural opportunities
Vibrant neighbourhoods and engaged communities
- **Partnerships and Community Engagement**
Effective working with voluntary and community sectors
Increased customer consultation
- **A well managed organisation that puts customers at the heart of what we do**
Services with a local focus
Improved customer insight

4.6.2 The formation and development of the Area Partnership Boards is a key objective (5:2) of the Housing Service Improvement Plan 2008-10 which is the directorate driver for the achievement of a “ 2 star with excellent prospects for improvement” Audit commission rating by 2010.

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

5.1 PEP report (at appendix 1)

5.2 Previous report to cabinet 4th February 2009

:

Ian Mortimer – Performance Improvement and Systems Manager – Ext: 7156



Draft

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONSULTATION WITH TENANTS ABOUT A NEW
RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRUCTURE

June – September 2009

PRIORITY ESTATES PROJECT

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20th September 2009

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Report back to Northampton Borough Council regarding the consultation with tenants about a new resident involvement structure

June – September 2009

Introduction

During the period June to September 2009 PEP consulted with residents about the Council's proposals to establish a new structure for resident involvement: Area Housing Partnership Boards. In particular, we asked residents for their views about the methodology that the Council should adopt to identify Tenant Area Board members.

We received responses from over 200 NBC tenants about this issue using a range of different methods to obtain their views. These were:

- Tear-off slips in leaflets issued in early June (67 replies)
- Attendance at public meetings in June and July (28 tenants not including those who returned tear-off slips or attended more than one meeting)
- In early September a telephone and e-mail survey of Tenant Sounding Board members (112 replies) who had not returned tear-off slips nor attended a public meeting

Overall, the preferences expressed by tenants during the consultation were as follows:

Election option	54 (26%)
Selection option	104 (50%)
Undecided	43 (21%)
Abortive	6 (3%)

Total	207
-------	-----

Appendix 1 provides a detailed breakdown of these figures.

Recommendations

1. That the Council adopts the 'selection' methodology for choosing Tenant Board members as indicated as the preferred option by 50% of the tenants responding to the consultation and that it promotes further resident engagement in the process of establishing its new resident involvement structure. A draft methodology for establishing the tenant Board member selection process is attached as Appendix 2.
2. That the Council agrees an initial Area Housing Partnership Board composition of two Members, three local senior staff and five tenants with an option for the Boards to further co-opt independent Board members.
3. That, during October to December 2009, the Council implements a programme to support the development of the Area Housing Partnership Boards by the promotion and provision of joint training and Board development sessions aimed at the relevant Members, Officers and tenants for each of the four Housing Areas. See Appendix 3 for a draft action plan to implement this.
4. That the Council note the initial suggestions made by tenants during the consultation about what should constitute the elements of a Board member person specification – see Appendix 4 for details.

Appendix 1

NBC Consultation regarding Area Housing Partnership Boards

June - September 2009

Overall total:

Total 207

Supporting:

Election option	54 (26%)
Selection option	104 (50%)
Undecided*	43 (21%)
Abortive	6 (3%)

* Includes preference for more than one option.

The results of the tear-off slips are as follows:

Total returned 67

Supporting:

Election option	21 (31%)
Two or more options	13 (19.5%)
Selection option	12 (18%)
Undecided at this stage	11 (16.5%)
Abortive returns	6 (9%)

The results of those attending June / July public meetings:

Total 28

Supporting:

Election option	13 (46%)
Selection option	10 (36%)
Either option	3 (11%)
Undecided at this stage	2 (7%)

The results of the TSB phone – e-mail survey*:

Total responses	112
Supporting:	
Election option	20 (18%)
Selection option	82 (73%)
Undecided	10 (9%)

* Includes two tenants surveyed during an estate walkabout

These numbers reflect the number of different individual tenants. Some tenants participated in both the tear-off slips and public meetings. Tenants who participated in the tear-off slips or public meetings were not included in the TSB phone / e-mail survey to avoid double counting.

Appendix 2

Tenant Board member selection process

This process consists of two linked elements:

1. Identifying and training tenants on the Area Tenant Selection Panels
2. Appointment of tenants to be members of the Area Housing Partnership Boards

Identifying and training tenants on the Tenant Selection Panel

- Promotion of joint training / development sessions by letter to those tenants who have already expressed an interest in being kept informed
- Attendance at joint training / development session on Board terms of reference and agreement of Board member person specification that will form the basis of the advert and Tenant Board member application pack
- Tenants attending this session will agree which of the tenants attending will sit on the Tenant Selection Panel for their area. **It should be noted that tenants sitting on the Tenant Selection Panel would be unable to apply for the position of Tenant Board member.**
- Members of the Tenant Selection Panel attend a training session on shortlisting and interviewing skills.

Appointment of tenants to the Area Housing Partnership Boards:

- Promotion of Area Housing Partnership Boards and the selection process by advert in local newspaper, article in 'My Home' and letter to those tenants who have already expressed an interest in being kept informed.
- Advertising of the Area Tenant Board member positions
- Application period starts, issuing of application packs
- Application period ends (after two weeks)
- Shortlisting by Area Tenant Selection Panels
- Interviews by Area Tenant Selection Panels
- Decision and notification / publicity

Appendix 3

Action plan

Week commencing	
26.10.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of AHPBs and selection method by advert in local paper • Letter to interested tenants • Training for staff • Briefing for Members
02.11.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint training / development session: local Members, staff and tenants to develop terms of reference and Board member person specification
09.11.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Board member positions advertised and application packs issued
23.11.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date for applications
30.11.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortlisting
07.12.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews, decision and notification
14.12.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial meeting of Area Tenant, Member and staff Board members to agree next steps locally

It is likely that the Area Housing Partnership Boards will need require two to three months to fully establish themselves. They will need to consider whether to co-opt independents, they will also need to draw up a project plan for the following year including how the local involvement plan is going to be developed and implemented.

Appendix 4

Area Housing Partnership Board member person specification - suggestions made by tenants

During the June – July public consultation PEP asked residents to identify the qualities: skills, experience etc that they thought would be required to be an effective Board member. In addition PEP also delivered a training session in each Housing Area during August to consult further on these qualities as a start to agreeing a 'person specification' for Board members. Additional suggestions were also received by email.

Tenant Board member qualities identified by tenants

These are in no particular order of importance and will need to be consulted on further to develop a person specification as part of the selection process.

- Committed about turning up, carries out research and prepares in advance of Board meetings
- Committed to resident involvement and to delivering quality housing services
- Knowledgeable about Council structures, policies and procedures and Government rules / regulation of social housing
- Good verbal and written communication and presentation skills
- Capable of giving strategic leadership
- Able to influence and a skilled negotiator
- Understands tenant concerns and priorities
- Able to work within a team and a commitment to making the board effective
- Ability to learn and to 'self-improve'
- Integrity and impartiality
- Able to resolve conflicts, able to synthesise solutions – a problem-solver and to be solution-focused
- Knowledgeable about diversity and committed to equality of opportunity
- Will provide regular feedback and be the link for residents
- Approachable and easy to speak to
- Good listener
- Transparency
- Perseverance
- Trustworthy and being willing to trust others
- A willingness to raise issues not their own or with which they disagree
- Adaptability
- Local knowledge or experience of the area
- Relevant business or educational skills

Appendices 3

Item No.



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Tenant Participation Health Check
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	4 February 2009
Key Decision:	YES
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	HOUSING
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Sally Beardsworth
Ward(s)	ALL

1. Purpose

1.1 To report on an external review of tenant participation in Northampton and to make proposals for the way forward.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the report from PEP is noted.

2.2 That the Cabinet adopts, for the purposes of consultation, recommendation 13 (c) of the PEP report as the basis of formal resident involvement in housing matters, through a process of selection of tenant board members who are not necessarily part of any formal or traditional structure to sit on four Area Housing Partnership Boards and a borough-wide Housing Partnership Board.

2.3 That recognition is formally withdrawn from the existing Tenant participation Agreement and that work commences immediately on drafting a new agreement for consultation with all council tenants in the Borough.

2.4 That cabinet receive a further report once the outcome of consultation is known.

3. Issues and Choices

3.5 Report Background

3.5.1 Following a procurement process restricted to “Independent Tenant Advisors” (ITAs) approved by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), PEP were selected. PEP have a long history of working as ITA to many residents groups around the country, having their roots in the Government’s Priority Estates Project of more than 20 years ago but now operating as independent consultants.

3.5.2 The process of selection commenced before issues arose with the former N-TACT Committee, who have been denied officer support and time since an insufficient number of members refused to sign unqualified individual undertakings about the conduct of meetings. No meetings of N-TACT Committee have taken place on Council premises or involving council officers since October 2008, although PEP have involved individual committee members in focus groups and interviews.

3.5.3 The PEP report is attached as appendix A. The brief initially was to provide a progress report and advice on best practice, to assist the Housing Service to reach “Two stars” (good) by 2010. PEP’s overall assessment was that the tenant participation service was “one Star” (Fair) and they have made a number of practical recommendations which have been accepted and will be part of an action plan for 2009.

3.5.4 During the review the issues with N-TACT Committee came to a head. Although N-TACT Committee members dispute issues of fault and reporting of alleged incidents, the disruption caused by security staff and the police being called to disputes within the N-TACT Committee, not involving council officers, reached an intolerable level and they were all individually advised that all support would be withdrawn until a written undertaking as to future conduct was made by each individual member. This was not forthcoming. The focus of the latter part of the PEP review therefore became increasingly on the way forward. This report is primarily concerned with that aspect of the review.

3.6 Issues

3.6.1 Council Members and officers want to work constructively with tenants who are the service users and residents on Council estates in Northampton. A dialogue with leaseholders is also important and the re-structure of the housing service includes the establishment of leaseholder services officer. The challenge is to establish a structure where; -

- tenants and service users' views can be established
- constructive dialogue can take place, and
- consultation can be monitored and acted upon.

- 3.6.2 Some time ago the Council established a "Customer Panel" through which resident representatives could make known their views. This did not meet the aims of paragraph 3.2.1 above and was abolished in 2005. In its place N-TACT was established and on 19 December 2006 Cabinet approved a draft tenant involvement strategy and tenant participation agreement.
- 3.6.3 The role of N-TACT, the fact that every council tenant in the Borough was automatically a member, and the n-TACT Committee established annually at the Annual General Meeting, has always been problematic. At that time housing services were spread across five different Corporate Management Areas and it is clear that there was no ownership of the Tenant Participation Agreement in the main housing service areas. This is a criticism in the PEP report which is accepted, although attempts were made to improve matters in 2008 and in the lead in to the creation of the housing directorate, by the creation of a Joint Council/N-TACT Steering Group, chaired alternately by the Chair of the N-TACT Committee and the Portfolio Holder.
- 3.6.4 The role of the N-TACT Committee has been unsatisfactory. Given its own constitution, it could not speak for all tenants. Its membership was too big, its meetings have been dysfunctional and its relationship with the council has irretrievably broken down as set out in the PEP report.
- 3.6.5 In summary, the criticism of council officers implicit in the report is accepted. At this stage, we do not know the views of former N-TACT Committee members, but they do not escape a share of the responsibility in the report. The main challenge is to deliver a robust structure which promotes customer engagement and tenant involvement, in which tenant representative and council officers can have confidence and which will deliver the improvements set out in the recommendations from PEP

3.7 Choices (Options)

- 3.7.1 The PEP report proposes an area based approach to involvement through area based housing partnership boards, with a borough-wide Housing Partnership Board made up of representatives from the area based structure. How this would look in diagrammatic form is set out at Appendix 1.
- 3.7.2 It is proposed that the Area Housing Partnership Boards should mirror the four housing management and maintenance areas created in the housing directorate re-structure and due to be finalised by 31 March 2009. The exact composition can be decided after consultation but a working arrangement would be three tenant representatives, three ward councillors and two officers, representing housing management and housing maintenance. Individual capital works projects will have their own arrangements, such as a Joint Project Board for Northampton East PFI, and will report to the relevant Area Housing Partnership Boards. Resident representatives from recognised

tenants and resident associations and other ward members who are not formal members of the area housing partnership boards could attend as observers and address the meeting. Matters which are not strictly related to housing services would continue to be referred to Neighbourhood Management Boards and links between the two structures will be explored during consultation. It is suggested that the Area Boards would meet every two months.

3.7.3 The borough-wide Housing Partnership Board would consist of tenant representative's from the Area Boards, the Portfolio Holder and ward members of the area boards, plus the Director of Housing and the three Heads of Service. It would meet four times a year, but would also commission small working groups to review particular policy developments and monitor their progress.

3.7.4 The PEP report put forward three options for the method of selecting tenant representatives:

- Election
- Restricted election of "approved" candidates
- Selection

3.7.5 As the PEP report states, there is little advantage of an elective process which might give the misleading impression that tenant representatives have a mandate to speak for a particular constituency. Equally, a process of the council selecting representatives is open to criticism. The proposal is therefore to set up a selection panel, made up of tenants who do not wish to be representatives. They would receive training on selection and it would be their job to select from those who come forward as wishing to take part in the partnership boards. Tenants on the selection panel would be debarred from standing as prospective partnership board members and vice versa.

3.7.6 A customer engagement strategy for housing is being developed. It will include the following features:

- A representative "Sounding Board" of about 500 tenants
- A developed "Tenants Profile" to assist Equality Impact Assessments and consultation with hard to reach groups
- Tenant "Auditors" who will review works such as voids and capital works for quality assurance
- Support to setting up local tenants and residents associations
- Support to specific customer groups, such as the "Helping Hands" initiative to involve the 16-25 age group
- Area Housing Partnership Boards
- Ad hoc policy development groups
- Joint project groups
- The Housing Partnership Board

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.8 Policy

None (see paragraph 4.6 below)

4.9 Resources and Risk

4.9.1 The development will be contained within the proposed participation budget for 2009/10. The key risk identified is that the problems of the Customer panel and the existing Tenant participation agreement will be repeated. This is mitigated by the use of external advisors with previous experience of this sort of development, coupled with the creation of a Customer Engagement Team as part of the Housing service re-structure, and by the form of selection of tenant board members as proposed. Any prospective tenant board member will be expected to sign up to a code of conduct which would be applicable to all participants and in a form similar to that which N-TACT Committee members did not respond positively to in the autumn.

4.10 Legal

None for the purpose of this report.

4.11 Equality

4.4.1 This report does not deal specifically with equality and diversity issues, but the development of new forms of involvement as set out in paragraph 3.3.6 above is intended to ensure that all groups identified through the customer profile have the opportunity to shape and monitor services. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken before formal recruitment of tenant board members takes place.

4.12 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.12.1 The PEP report at appendix 2 is the outcome of extensive consultation carried out by PEP over the autumn of 2008, although its conclusions have not been shared widely. It is proposed to consult with the sounding board about the Area Housing Boards and the borough-wide Housing Partnership Board and to bring back to cabinet any material changes proposed following that exercise.

4.13 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.13.1 The proposals are consistent with the following corporate priorities as set out in the Corporate plan in support of the Sustainable Communities Strategy: -

- **Housing Health and Well-being**
 - Improved participation and access to cultural opportunities
 - Vibrant neighbourhoods and engaged communities
- **Partnerships and Community Engagement**
 - Effective working with voluntary and community sectors
 - Increased customer consultation

- **A well managed organisation that puts customers at the heart of what we do**
 - Services with a local focus
 - Improved customer insight

4.14 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

5.1 PEP report January 2009

Brian Queen, Interim Housing Advisor, ext 7174

Appendices**1**

NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.**12****CABINET REPORT**

Report Title	Annual Letter of Local Government Ombudsman
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Finance and Support
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor Tony Woods
Ward(s)	N/A

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To receive the Annual Review from the Local Government Ombudsman for the year ended 31 March 2009.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the contents of the annual letter

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Council has now received the Annual Review from the Local Government Ombudsman for the period April 1st 2008 to March 31st 2009.

- 3.1.2 The Local Government Ombudsman has received a total of 76 Enquiries of which 47 were investigated as Complaints. There has been a reduction in complaints investigated compared to 07/08 although the report advises against direct comparisons as the LGO have changed the way in which they operate and now deal with all enquiries and complaints.
- 3.1.3 Of the 76 complaints and enquiries 31 were about housing issues, 30 related to Revenues and Benefits and 5 were planning related.
- 3.1.4 Of the 47 Complaints which were investigated, in 14 of those cases (30%) no maladministration was found. A further 9 cases were also not investigated either because they were outside of the LGO's jurisdiction or there was no significant injustice to the complainant.
- 3.1.5 The reports issued and local settlements in relation to the complaints investigated are detailed fully in the Appendix Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for the year ended 31 March 2009.
- 3.1.6 The Local Government Ombudsman makes mention of the reduction in response times from 48.2 days 07/08 to 34.4 days in 08/09.

3.2 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 That the contents of this report inform planned improvements to complaints handling.
- 3.3.2 That copies of this report are made available to other members, our customers and officers in the Council.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

There are no policy implications at this stage.

4.2 Resources and Risk

There are currently no resource or risk implications to the Council.

4.3 Legal

There are no legal implications to the Council.

4.4 Equality

This report does not identify any specific issues in relation to equalities.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

This is an external letter from the Local Government Ombudsman.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

The report supports the Council's priorities and outcomes in particular to provide excellent customer service. The effective handling of complaints links closely to the delivery of the Council's Customer Excellence Strategy.

4.7 Other Implications

None identified.

5. Background Papers

Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for the year ended 31 March 2009

Marion Goodman, Head of Customer Services and ICT, Ext. 8273

**The Local Government Ombudsman's
Annual Review**

Northampton Borough Council
for the year ended
31 March 2009

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) provides a free, independent and impartial service. We consider complaints about the administrative actions of councils and some other authorities. We cannot question what a council has done simply because someone does not agree with it. If we find something has gone wrong, such as poor service, service failure, delay or bad advice, and that a person has suffered as a result, the Ombudsmen aim to get it put right by recommending a suitable remedy. The LGO also uses the findings from investigation work to help authorities provide better public services through initiatives such as special reports, training and annual reviews.

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Section 1: Complaints about Northampton Borough Council 2008/09

Introduction

This annual review provides a summary of the complaints we have dealt with about Northampton Borough Council. We have included comments on the authority's performance and complaint-handling arrangements, where possible, so they can assist with your service improvement.

I hope that the review will be a useful addition to other information your authority holds on how people experience or perceive your services.

Two appendices form an integral part of this review: statistical data for 2008/09 and a note to help the interpretation of the statistics.

Changes to our way of working and statistics

A change in the way we operate means that the statistics about complaints received in 2008/09 are not directly comparable with those from 2007/08. Since 1 April 2008 the new LGO Advice Team has been the single point of contact for all enquiries and new complaints. The number of calls to our service has increased significantly since then. It handles more than 3,000 calls a month, together with written and emailed complaints. Our advisers now provide comprehensive information and advice to callers at the outset with a full explanation of the process and possible outcomes. It enables callers to make a more informed decision about whether putting their complaint to us is an appropriate course of action. Some decide to pursue their complaint direct with the council first.

It means that direct comparisons with some of the previous year's statistics are difficult and could be misleading. So this annual review focuses mainly on the 2008/09 statistics without drawing those comparisons.

Enquiries and complaints received

Our Advice Team received 76 complaints and enquiries during the year. Of these 31 were about housing issues, 19 were in the public finance and local taxation category, 11 were about benefit matters and five concerned planning-related matters.

We treated 32 of those complaints and enquiries as premature and in a further 13 cases advice was given (usually to make a complaint direct to the Council). The remaining 31 complaints were forwarded to the investigative team either as new complaints or as premature complaints that had been resubmitted.

Complaint outcomes

I decided 47 complaints against the Council during the year. In 14 of those cases (30%) I found no evidence of maladministration. I used my discretion not to investigate a further five. Typically these are cases where even though there may have been some fault by the Council there is no significant injustice to the complainant. In four cases I took the view that the matters complained about were outside my jurisdiction and so they were not investigated.

Reports

When we complete an investigation, we generally issue a report. This year we issued 13 reports about the same matter. Thirteen residents of an approved gypsy and traveller site in Northampton, complained about refurbishment work undertaken to the site; in particular to amenity blocks housing kitchen and bathroom facilities.

I upheld the majority of the complaints made and said, "it is hard to conceive of a more poorly managed project from start to finish". While I did not uphold complaints about inadequate consultation on the refurbishment proposals, I criticised the Council for not consulting residents subsequently to advise what the refurbishment would cover.

I highlighted the following "fundamental errors", in that the Council failed at the outset:

- a) to adequately involve its own Asset Management Team in the planning and preparation of the works;
- b) to enter into a written contract with the contractor; and
- c) to ensure there was an adequate schedule of works.

As a result the budget was insufficient for the planned work, there was insufficient attention given to matters of health and safety, it was unclear in places what the schedule of works was expected to cover, there was insufficient prioritising of work and a lack of record as to the condition of amenity blocks on handover. I also said, "The Council must accept criticism for its failure to respond sooner to warnings that the refurbishment was going badly wrong". There were multiple faults in the quality and extent of the work carried out including a failure to address serious health and safety issues with a failed drainage system, exposed electrical wires and poor electrical repairs.

The complaints also highlighted other failings. The contract for management of the site was allowed to lapse with insufficient attention given to a new arrangement. While I accepted the Council faced challenges managing the site, I found that insufficient attention has been given to the needs of residents in this regard.

I found maladministration causing injustice. The Council agreed to apologise to the 13 complainants and pay compensation of between £200 and £500 each, totalling £4,200.

The Council also agreed to commission specialist surveys to consider the condition of roofs and a report of damp conditions in amenity blocks already refurbished, and to complete the final outstanding refurbishment to two amenity blocks commencing in September 2008. The Council said it would seek funds to put the recommendations of the specialist report into effect. The Council also agreed to ensure that measures are put in place to ensure consultation with residents on matters of site management (including a transparent complaints procedure) and will be reviewing certain decisions in the light of further consultation.

I further recommended that the Council reviewed whether current electrical supply arrangements were sufficient for the needs of residents, given evidence that this might be inadequate. I also asked the Council to share with residents the outcome of the specialist surveys referred to above and asked it to conduct further visits to residents to check any other outstanding repairs not covered by the specialist surveys.

I understand the Council has carried out the specialist surveys and arranged for further work to be done as a result.

Local settlements

A 'local settlement' is a complaint where, during the course of our investigation, a council takes or agrees to take some action that we consider to be a satisfactory response to the complaint. In 2008/09, 27.4% of all complaints the Ombudsmen decided and which were within our jurisdiction were local settlements. Of the complaints we decided against your authority 11 were local settlements (23.4%).

In one case about a housing benefit matter, the Council had failed to honour a remedy to which it had agreed in a previous complaint which was the subject of a published report. The complainant is a Council tenant. Part of the remedy was to write off a housing benefit overpayment of £79.46, but the Council instead recovered this from the complainant's housing benefit. This in turn created rent arrears of £40.46 which the Council then recovered by deductions from her Income Support. During this period the Council also refused her request for a garage on the grounds she had rent arrears. The complainant was caused a considerable degree of anxiety and uncertainty which was aggravated by the fact she has leukaemia, about which the Council knew. The Council apologised, refunded the sums of money it had wrongly deducted, offered the complainant a garage to rent and paid her £500 compensation.

In one of two settled cases about housing repairs the complainant's central heating had broken down during the winter months and the Council took over a month to arrange a repair. It also took three months to adjust a leaking down-pipe that was causing dampness inside her property and over three months to arrange an inspection of the damp problem. The complainant was without heating for over a month. The Council paid the complainant £200 compensation. It agreed to repair the heating system and to meet the complainant's concerns about asbestos in the system. It also inspected the cause of the damp problem and agreed to visit during heavy rain to see if the down-pipe was still leaking. The Council also said it would contact the County Council about possible measures to deal with water run-off from the County Council's land onto the complainant's property.

In another housing case the Council failed to deal effectively with an unoccupied property next door to the complainant and failed to communicate properly with the complainant. The property attracted burglars and vandalism. It flooded and damaged the complainant's property. Although we couldn't say these events wouldn't have happened if the maladministration had not occurred, and the flood damage was properly an insurance issue, I decided that the complainant had been caused avoidable worry, uncertainty and distress for more than ten months. The Council apologised, paid the complainant £1000 and changed its working practices.

In a complaint about leisure and culture the Council owned a vacant property next to the complainant, where a rampant creeper grew unchecked damaging both the boundary fence and the complainant's hedge. The Council had offered to replace the fence but the complainant was not satisfied. After our involvement the Council agreed to pay £100 in addition to replacing the fence. My staff felt the Council's response to the complaint had been very muddled with several senior officers all trying to deal with it, when it should have been relatively straightforward to resolve much sooner.

There were five settled complaints about local taxation issues. In one case the complainant understood there was a stay on recovery proceedings while she disputed liability. But the Council failed to act on correspondence from the complainant and issued a summons for unpaid council tax adding court costs to the bill. The Council apologised, reviewed and revised its complaint handling procedures and made a payment of £119 to the complainant to cover the court costs and to recognise the inconvenience she experienced.

In a second complaint in this category the Council failed to handle post from a complainant properly, even though she had sent it by recorded delivery and it had been signed for at the

Council. As a result the bailiffs were sent to recover the debt which caused the complainant unnecessary anxiety. The Council paid the complainant £150 and agreed to review its procedures.

In a third case the Council issued a summons and obtained a liability order in respect of council tax arrears. The Council accepted it had been too quick to resort to formal recovery action and paid the complainant £200 compensation. It also accepted that it had failed to properly investigate the complaint until it reached stage three of its procedure and its earlier replies had been negative and defensive.

In the fourth case the complainant and the Council disagreed about whether a Council Tax exemption should apply to the complainant's property. Rather than telling the complainant about the right of appeal to the Valuation Tribunal it took recovery action and issued a summons. The complainant attended court and discussed the matter with a Council officer, who then did not seek a liability order. Once we made enquiries the Council reconsidered the matter, obtained more information and agreed that the property was exempt. The Council apologised and paid the complainant £50 for receiving a summons and £50 for the inconvenience of attending court. I am concerned that the Council put this through its corporate complaints procedure and then referred the matter to me rather than the Valuation Tribunal. But I am pleased to note that it was very willing to settle the complaint and sought advice from us about how to handle future situations.

In the fifth case the Council had failed to notify the complainant of court action in respect of council tax arrears and failed to send him a notice that bailiffs had been instructed. The complainant thought he had been keeping to an agreed repayment schedule but had actually failed to pay the agreed sums. The Council refunded the bailiff's charges of £278 and paid an additional £100 in recognition of the anxiety and inconvenience caused.

The Council remedied these complaints in ways which I considered was appropriate and paid a total of £7,247, as well as providing other benefits, to the people affected.

Liaison with the Local Government Ombudsman

Last year I asked your Council to make special efforts to improve the speed of its response to my enquiries as its average response time was 48.2 days. This year we made 25 enquiries and I am pleased to see that the response time has significantly improved to 34.4 days. But this is still outside our target time of 28 days. I understand there was one exceptional housing complaint where the response took 91 days for a number of reasons. However even discounting this figure, the average response time is only slightly reduced to just under 33 days and I ask the Council to continue taking steps to improve things further.

My officers have also commented that on occasion the Council's responses are sometimes incomplete and further enquiries are often necessary. I would be grateful if the Council could continue to ensure files are reviewed by senior officers before responses are sent to me to ensure this problem is resolved.

I am pleased to see that during the year Sharon Chappell, Assistant Ombudsman and other staff gave a presentation on my role to a management meeting. I hope you found this useful.

Training in complaint handling

Part of our role is to provide advice and guidance about good administrative practice. We offer training courses for all levels of local authority staff in complaints handling and investigation. All courses are presented by experienced investigators. They give participants the opportunity to practise the skills needed to deal with complaints positively and efficiently. We can also provide

customised courses to help authorities to deal with particular issues and occasional open courses for individuals from different authorities.

In previous years we have provided training in Good Complaint Handling to staff from your authority. We have extended the range of courses we provide and I have enclosed some information on the full range of courses available together with contact details for enquiries and bookings.

Conclusions

I welcome this opportunity to give you my reflections about the complaints my office has dealt with over the past year. I hope that you find the information and assessment provided useful when seeking improvements to your Council's services.

**J R White
Local Government Ombudsman
The Oaks No 2
Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8JB**

June 2009

Section 2: LGO developments

Introduction

This annual review also provides an opportunity to bring councils up to date on developments – current and proposed – in the LGO and to seek feedback. It includes our proposal to introduce a ‘statement of reasons’ for Ombudsmen decisions.

Council First

From 1 April 2009, the LGO has considered complaints only where the council’s own complaints procedure has been completed. Local authorities have been informed of these new arrangements, including some notable exceptions. We will carefully monitor the impact of this change during the course of the year.

Statement of reasons: consultation

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 made provision for the LGO to publish statements of reasons relating to the individual decisions of an Ombudsman following the investigation of a complaint. The Ombudsmen are now consulting local government on their proposal to use statements of reasons. The proposal is that these will comprise a short summary (about one page of A4) of the complaint, the investigation, the findings and the recommended remedy. The statement, naming the council but not the complainant, would usually be published on our website.

We plan to consult local authorities on the detail of these statements with a view to implementing them from October 2009.

Making Experiences Count (MEC)

The new formal, one stage complaint handling arrangement for adult social care was also introduced from 1 April 2009. The LGO is looking to ensure that this formal stage is observed by complainants before the Ombudsmen will consider any such complaint, although some may be treated as exceptions under the Council First approach. The LGO also recognises that during the transition from the existing scheme to the new scheme there is going to be a mixed approach to considering complaints as some may have originated before 1 April 2009. The LGO will endeavour to provide support, as necessary, through dedicated events for complaints-handling staff in adult social care departments.

Training in complaint handling

Effective Complaint Handling in Adult Social Care is the latest addition to our range of training courses for local authority staff. This adds to the generic Good Complaint Handling (identifying and processing complaints) and Effective Complaint Handling (investigation and resolution), and courses for social care staff at both of these levels. Demand for our training in complaint handling remains high. A total of 129 courses were delivered in 2008/09. Feedback from participants shows that they find it stimulating, challenging and beneficial in their work in dealing with complaints.

Adult Social Care Self-funding

The Health Bill 2009 proposes for the LGO to extend its jurisdiction to cover an independent complaints-handling role in respect of self-funded adult social care. The new service will commence in 2010.

Internal schools management

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill (ASCL) 2009 proposes making the LGO the host for a new independent complaints-handling function for schools. In essence, we would consider the complaint after the governing body of the school had considered it. Subject to legislation, the new service would be introduced, in pilot form, probably in September 2010.

Further developments

I hope this information gives you an insight into the major changes happening within the LGO, many of which will have a direct impact on your local authority. We will keep you up to date through LGO Link as each development progresses but if there is anything you wish to discuss in the meantime please let me know.

**J R White
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June 2009

Appendix 1: Notes to assist interpretation of the statistics 2008/09

Introduction

This year, the annual review only shows 2008/09 figures for enquiries and complaints received, and for decisions taken. This is because the change in the way we operate (explained in the introduction to the review) means that these statistics are not directly comparable with statistics from previous years.

Table 1. LGO Advice Team: Enquiries and complaints received

This information shows the number of enquiries and complaints received by the LGO, broken down by service area and in total. It also shows how these were dealt with, as follows.

Formal/informal prematures: The LGO does not normally consider a complaint unless a council has first had an opportunity to deal with that complaint itself. So if someone complains to the LGO without having taken the matter up with a council, the LGO will usually refer it back to the council as a 'premature complaint' to see if the council can itself resolve the matter. These are 'formal premature complaints'. We now also include 'informal' premature complaints here, where advice is given to the complainant making an enquiry that their complaint is premature. The total of premature complaints shown in this line *does not include* the number of resubmitted premature complaints (see below).

Advice given: These are enquiries where the LGO Advice Team has given advice on why the Ombudsman would not be able to consider the complaint, other than the complaint being premature. For example, the complaint may clearly be outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. It also includes cases where the complainant has not given enough information for clear advice to be given, but they have, in any case, decided not to pursue the complaint.

Forwarded to the investigative team (resubmitted prematures): These are cases where there was either a formal premature decision, or the complainant was given informal advice that their case was premature, and the complainant has resubmitted their complaint to the Ombudsman after it has been put to the council. *These figures need to be added to the numbers for formal/informal premature complaints (see above) to get the full total number of premature complaints. They also needed to be added to the 'forwarded to the investigative team (new)' to get the total number of forwarded complaints.*

Forwarded to the investigative team (new): These are the complaints that have been forwarded from the LGO Advice Team to the Investigative Team for further consideration. The figures may include some complaints that the Investigative Team has received but where we have not yet contacted the council.

Table 2. Investigative Team: Decisions

This information records the number of decisions made by the LGO Investigative Team, broken down by outcome, within the period given. **This number will not be the same as the number of complaints forwarded from the LGO Advice Team** because some complaints decided in 2008/09 will already have been in hand at the beginning of the year, and some forwarded to the Investigative Team during 2008/09 will still be in hand at the end of the year. Below we set out a key explaining the outcome categories.

MI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice.

LS (local settlements): decisions by letter discontinuing our investigation because action has been agreed by the authority and accepted by the Ombudsman as a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

M reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration but causing no injustice to the complainant.

NM reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the council.

No mal: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because we have found no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration.

Omb disc: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation in which we have exercised the Ombudsman's general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that we have found no or insufficient injustice to warrant pursuing the matter further.

Outside jurisdiction: these are cases which were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.

Table 3. Response times

These figures record the average time the council takes to respond to our first enquiries on a complaint. We measure this in calendar days from the date we send our letter/fax/email to the date that we receive a substantive response from the council. The council's figures may differ somewhat, since they are likely to be recorded from the date the council receives our letter until the despatch of its response.

Table 4. Average local authority response times 2008/09

This table gives comparative figures for average response times by authorities in England, by type of authority, within three time bands.

LGO Advice Team

Enquiries and complaints received	Adult care services	Children and family services	Housing	Benefits	Public Finance inc. Local Taxation	Planning and building control	Transport and highways	Other	Total
Formal/informal premature complaints	1	0	15	4	5	3	1	3	32
Advice given	0	1	5	2	2	1	0	2	13
Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematures)	0	0	4	0	4	0	0	1	9
Forwarded to investigative team (new)	0	0	7	5	8	1	0	1	22
Total	1	1	31	11	19	5	1	7	76

Investigative Team

Decisions	MI reps	LS	M reps	NM reps	No mal	Omb disc	Outside jurisdiction	Total
01/04/2008 / 31/03/2009	13	11	0	0	14	5	4	47

Response times	FIRST ENQUIRIES	
	No. of First Enquiries	Avg no. of days to respond
1/04/2008 / 31/03/2009	25	34.4
2007 / 2008	34	48.2
2006 / 2007	45	48.0

Average local authority response times 01/04/2008 to 31/03/2009

Types of authority	<= 28 days %	29 - 35 days %	> = 36 days %
District councils	60	20	20
Unitary authorities	56	35	9
Metropolitan authorities	67	19	14
County councils	62	32	6
London boroughs	58	27	15
National park authorities	100	0	0

Appendices
0



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

13

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Improvement and Efficiency Plan Directorate of Environment and Culture
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AGENDA STATUS: Public

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	Yes
Listed on Forward Plan:	Yes
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Environment and Culture
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Trini Crake/Paul Varnsberry
Ward(s)	Non-specific

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Further to the appointment of the Council's value for money partner, Northgate Kendric Ash, the purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's agreement to the implementation of the first phase of the improvement and efficiency plan for the Directorate of Environment and Culture.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note that the Directorate of Environment and Culture's improvement and efficiency plan will be delivered in partnership with Northgate Kendric Ash, using an innovative risk and reward model to deliver customer focused service improvements, greater value for money and significant efficiency gains.
- 2.2 Agree the first phase of the improvement and efficiency plan for the Directorate of Environment and Culture, as outlined in this report.
- 2.3 Note the estimated savings, as set out in paragraph 4.2, projected to arise from implementation of the improvement and efficiency plan.

- 2.4 Agree the financial proposals associated with the first phase of the improvement and efficiency plan, also set out in paragraph 4.2.
- 2.5 Agree that the Council join Northamptonshire County Council and Daventry District Council in a project to develop a business case to assess the feasibility of a shared back office for environmental services.
- 2.6 Further to paragraph 2.4, agree expenditure for the shared back office project, as set out in sub paragraph 4.2.9.
- 2.7 Note that further reports will be brought forward in relation to the first phase of the improvement and efficiency plan, if necessary or as required by Cabinet, as work is progressed and more detail emerges.
- 2.8 Note that it is expected that there will be further phases to the improvement and efficiency plan over the course of the contract with Northgate Kendric Ash and such phases will be brought to Cabinet for approval in due course.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 In a report to Cabinet of 5th August 2009, it was agreed to appoint Northgate Kendric Ash (NKA) to be the Council's value for money partner, to work primarily with the Directorate of Environment and Culture to identify opportunities to achieve efficiency and service improvement and to see such opportunities through to implementation.
- 3.1.2 As Cabinet will recall, NKA operates a robust risk and reward model that means 100% of its fees are dependent on the realisation of cashable savings. Furthermore, its fees are capped at an agreed level so as to protect the Council from cost escalation that might otherwise arise if savings achieved are considerably higher than predicted.
- 3.1.3 Following August's Cabinet decision, NKA was invited to assess the services provided within the Directorate of Environment and Culture to identify how improvements can be delivered and how significant cashable savings can be achieved.
- 3.1.4 To date, NKA have undertaken a feasibility study of a range of services within the Environment and Culture Directorate to assess key opportunities for savings, efficiency gains and improvement and have used this information to develop the first phase of a proposed work programme, the agreement of which is the main purpose of this report.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 The key challenge for the Council at this time is to continue to improve services while at the same time reducing expenditure and improving value for money.
- 3.2.2 This challenge is made more difficult because of the tight time constraints that apply and the impact of year on year budget reductions.

3.2.3 The development of the Directorate of Environment and Culture's improvement and efficiency plan has therefore been developed against the following background:

- **Budget pressures.** Council-wide pressures on the General Fund, translated into a need to address challenging savings targets within the Directorate of Environment and Culture in the current year and realise further significant efficiencies in future years.
- **Growth of town.** The scale of recent new residential developments has increased the cost of providing cleansing and grounds maintenance services. Whilst developers have made contributions under s.106, the service revenue budgets have taken the strain.
- **Market testing of waste/ street cleansing/ grounds.** Market testing of services in conjunction with Daventry DC is currently underway with a target 'go live' date of July 2010. It is imperative to drive out service efficiencies prior to this date so as to ensure that the Council can make a robust decision as to whether or not to externalise all or any of these services and, if a decision is taken to externalise, to ensure benefits are retained by the Council through reduced contract costs.
- **Area management focus.** The Council is seeking to improve its focus on neighbourhoods through improving the co-ordination of services at a local level, whether delivered by the Directorate of Environment and Culture, other Council departments or external partners, in order to deliver safe and clean streets and open spaces.
- **Option appraisal for leisure.** A management options appraisal is currently underway in relation to Leisure and Sport services.
- **Partnership working.** The Council has been actively exploring options to develop shared service delivery with other partners, including the Police and the County Council.

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 Cabinet is invited to consider proposals in relation to the improvement and efficiency plan to agree which elements it supports and which it wishes to decline or defer.

3.3.2 The improvement and efficiency plan proposals reflect a number of factors:

- the development of an area-based approach to the delivery of environmental services and improved working methods
- the need for appropriate levels of management and supervision across environmental services
- the impact of potential externalisation of waste and/or environmental maintenance services
- the opportunity to combine administrative and support functions across the Directorate, developing generic skills and enabling efficiencies to be delivered
- the need to review functions to reflect customer demand, requiring changes to opening hours and more closely matching staffing levels to the needs of customers

- implementation of measures to reduce non-contractual overtime
- implementation of measures to reduce accidental damage to vehicles
- review of charging policies, fees and income for a range of service areas
- improved utilisation and more effective procurement and management of vehicle, plant, fuel and supplies

3.3.4 Shared back office

- 3.3.4.1 The shared back office project is worthy of specific comment as it is an innovative initiative that it is proposed we deliver in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council and Daventry District Council.
- 3.3.4.2 The purpose of the project is to develop a business case to assess the feasibility of a shared back office for environmental services. The project will encompass all administrative and strategic functions for the three Councils in relation to those areas, as well as an integrated client function for any externalised services.
- 3.3.4.3 The combining of functions into a single unit has the potential to provide improved performance and significant efficiency gains.
- 3.3.4.4 This project is complimentary to the market testing exercise. Whilst it will be influenced by the outcome of that exercise it is not dependent on it and it is proposed that it will be implemented regardless of the outcome of market testing.
- 3.3.4.5 This project also has clear links to the council wide project to review non-specific administrative functions and will pay due regard to that project to ensure the best possible outcome from both projects for the Council as a whole.
- 3.3.4.6 Approval for the project has already been secured through the Northampton Waste Partnership Shadow Board. Cabinet approval is also requested before the Council formally commit to the project.

3.3.5 Market testing

- 3.3.5.1 Earlier this year Cabinet agreed to undertake a full market testing exercise to determine the most cost effective and efficient way to deliver waste management, street care and grounds maintenance services.
- 3.3.5.2 A fundamental part of the market testing process will be to make a comparison with the cost and performance of the in-house service. It is very important when we do so that the comparison takes account of the most efficient and effective service the in-house team is able to deliver.
- 3.3.5.3 It is proposed therefore that one of the key work streams in the improvement and efficiency plan is focused on elevating the performance of the current service to its optimum level.
- 3.3.5.4 Subject to Cabinet approval, the work stream will comprise the following elements:

Waste and environmental services

- Ensure robust controls and targets in place to reduce non-contractual overtime and temporary staff. This to be achieved in part by ensuring greater flexibility between refuse and cleansing crews.
- Ensure that managers operate robust management of short and long term sickness, including a focus on preventing muscular-skeletal injuries
- Review existing operation of 'job and finish' to ensure appropriate utilisation of staff and vehicles during normal working hours – this to include any appropriate duties across refuse/ cleansing/ grounds
- Introduce second shift within the MRF to increase throughput, commencing with the additional material from South Northants DC.

Street cleansing

- Implement revised area management structure in order to strengthen area-based co-ordination and revise the levels of and approach to supervision.
- Develop clear output based specifications and schedules with targets for cleanliness. Ensure co-ordination with refuse collection rounds
- Ensure robust controls and targets in place to reduce non-contractual overtime and temporary staff. This to be achieved in part by ensuring greater flexibility between refuse and cleansing crews.

Grounds maintenance

- Develop clear output based specifications and schedules with targets for maintenance of open spaces.
- Ensure co-ordination with area based cleansing teams
- Develop more generic and flexible Area Teams with streets operatives.
- Identify appropriate recharges to service departments and the HRA

Depots

- Implement changes to administrative structure as part of overall re-organisation. Remove unnecessary processes and simplify invoicing procedures
- Review Westbridge depot security and out-of-hours service in line with possible outsourcing and requirements for depot
- Undertake detailed audit of existing satellite depots to determine which are necessary for operation of area management

Transport

- Remove surplus hire vehicles through improved utilisation and ensure appropriate value obtained from existing and available contracts for the supply of vehicles, fuel and tyres
- Develop simple vehicle costing system to ensure that the effectiveness of each vehicle within the Council's fleet can be identified and managed

- Ensure that damage and neglect is managed proactively and robustly in order to reduce repairs expenditure, including use of banksmen when reversing.
- Also ensure that vehicle suppliers meet their repairs obligations

Public toilets

- Develop the Community WC Programme for Northampton, including:
 - Carry out a detailed feasibility study which identifies existing provision and potential set-up and running costs (including payments to providers). Consult with local businesses and other stakeholders
 - Identify the appropriate scope for the initial scheme (eg Town Centre or Market Square)
 - Market the scheme and recruit providers and put in place appropriate payment and monitoring procedures
 - Determine any alternative usages for existing buildings

3.4.1 In-house team option

- 3.4.1.1 Instead of working with the value for money partner to deliver the Directorate of Environment and Culture's Improvement and Efficiency plan, Cabinet could choose to establish an in-house team to undertake the intensive work that is required to deliver the improvements and savings needed by the directorate.
- 3.4.1.2 To enable Cabinet to make a comparison between this option and the VFM partner option the cost of establishing an in-house team broadly similar to the resource to be provided by NKA, for a period of 18 months, has been estimated to be approximately £275k.
- 3.4.1.3 It would be likely to take six months to put such a team in place. The loss of savings over that period is estimated to be £500k.
- 3.4.1.4 Other factors associated with the in-house team option, would include difficulties that may be experienced in recruiting staff of the right calibre and with the right skill set and the cost of severance after the fixed term has expired.
- 3.4.1.5 In considering this option, Cabinet need to take account of the risk and reward model operated by NKA which provides the Council with guaranteed level of savings which clearly would not be a feature of an in-house team.

3.5 Opportunities

- 3.5.1 In addition to the proposed improvements identified for waste, grounds maintenance and street care services, many opportunities for improvement have also been identified in relation to
- Leisure and Sport
 - Town Centre Operations and
 - Public Protection

3.5.2 These opportunities include:

Leisure and Sport

- Strengthening of the management of the 3 leisure centres, enabling more responsibility to be taken by centre managers
- Review of functions of the museum service to reflect customer demand

Town Centre Operations

- Fundamental review all aspects of car park operations and charges
- Upgrade of ticket machines, to take debit/credit cards, and payment by phone
- Review IT system and reengineering of support functions in order to reduce manual input
- Multi-skilling of staff, including review of shift and work patterns

Public Protection

- Combining of administrative and support functions across the Directorate, developing generic skills and enabling efficiencies to be delivered
- Implementation of Mobile Technology, including potential to implement web services to provide real time access to data and the ability to update the back office in real time to assist in the scheduling of inspections and improve general efficiency.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1 There are no policy implications arising from this report.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 It is proposed that the Council work with NKA for a further period of 18 months, commencing October 2009, to implement the improvement and efficiency plan. NKA's risk and reward model will guarantee a certain level of savings to the Council, below which their fees are rebated on a pound for pound basis up to the total of their fees, whilst any over performance on savings is retained in full by the Council.

4.2.2 NKA will charge a monthly fee of £31,170 plus VAT, a total of £561,130. The model will work as follows:

£000	Total	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Potential savings	4,227	475	1,830	1,922
Contractually guaranteed savings	3,163	309	1,427	1,427
NKA fees	561	187	374	0
Net savings potential	3,666	288	1,456	1,922
Net savings guaranteed	2,228	122	1,053	1,053

4.2.3 Over the 18 month period, NKA will guarantee contractually to deliver £1,736,000 in savings, which net of fees is £1,175,000. Should the target not

be delivered then NKA's fees will be rebated on a pound for pound basis up to the full value of their fees (£561,000). Progress will be monitored on a monthly basis, with profiled monthly targets measured against actual savings delivered as agreed by the Council. There will be a potential contract termination point at the end of 2009/10 if progress is not on target and NKA has not as a minimum delivered savings to cover the level of fees.

- 4.2.4 Furthermore, NKA will commit that the level of guaranteed net savings for 2010/11 will be sustainable and will continue at least at the same level in 2011/12 and if not will agree to provide support to the Council in bringing them back into line. This commitment is on the proviso that measures put in place through the work of NKA during 2009/10 and 2010/11 remain in place in 2011/12.
- 4.2.5 Although a flat monthly fee is charged, NKA will be providing a higher level of resource (around 20% higher than that paid for) during the first 6 months in order to secure some of the major savings areas. NKA have assessed that they will need to provide an average of 2.5 full time consultants over the initial phases of the partnership, although this level of resource will reduce towards the final few months of the contract if savings are running at the contractually agreed level or above. Conversely, if a higher number of consultants are required to meet the target then NKA will need to contribute such additional resource at no extra cost to the Council.
- 4.2.6 The agreement to provide a higher level of resource at the beginning of the contract increases the risk transfer to NKA in the event of non-delivery. It is recognised that of the activities that NKA will be undertaking particularly in the first 6 months, for example implementation of a new staff structure, the required timetables for consultation limit the financial impact that will be seen during the current financial year.
- 4.2.7 Although the contractually guaranteed level of savings is set at around 75% of the total identified by NKA (reflecting risk factors around delivery), they will work with the Council to deliver the higher level of savings and will continue to identify further areas that are not yet included within the work programme as set out in this report.
- 4.2.8 It is proposed that the focus of NKA's work as delivery partner will largely be as follows:
- providing the capacity to identify, agree and implement the revised organisational structure
 - developing the skills of staff in relation to the requirements of the new roles, structures and organisational culture, including the implementation of area management, the development of an efficient Directorate-wide administration resource and improving the flexibility of staff between service areas to meet requirements
 - developing the business skills of the organisation in relation to generating income through active marketing intelligence, modelling of costs and income and performance management
 - implementation of appropriate new technologies to improve productivity

- developing and implementing models of shared service provision between the Council and other public sector partners, including appropriate governance and management arrangements
- supporting managers to ensure that sufficient rigours are in place to manage and reduce discretionary expenditure, including overtime and temporary staff, sickness and vehicles
- providing additional expertise/support on the management of contracts

4.2.9 In respect of the shared back office project, which, if agreed, will be undertaken in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council and Daventry District Council, the cost of developing the business case is estimated at £150k. Funding of £20k has been secured from the Northamptonshire Waste Partnership. It has been proposed that the balance of £130k will be met either by a contribution of £65k from the County Council and £32.5k each from ourselves and DDC, although subject to further negotiation the project may be funded through the NKA risk/reward model.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The procurement of NKA has been undertaken in accordance with procurement regulations and council policy. Proposals to move ahead with the improvement plan are also consistent with policy and statute and any further approvals, should the need arise, will be sought as and when required.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no equalities issues directly associated with this report. The Council has stringent standards in relation to equalities and any changes introduced will be fully consistent with these standards. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as required by council policy.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 The key consultees to date have been relevant portfolio holders and senior officers. Further consultations will be undertaken as necessary.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 The proposals contained in this report will contribute to the priority outcome of 'a well managed organisation that puts the customer at the heart of what we do'.

4.7 Other Implications

4.7.1 None.

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

Julie Seddon, Director of Environment and Culture

Appendices

4



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

14

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Consultation on Northamptonshire County Council's Partnership Protocol
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	No
Listed on Forward Plan:	No
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Chief Executive's Office
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor A Woods
Ward(s)	No specific ward

1. Purpose

1.1 In July 2009 Northamptonshire County Council launched a consultation on a Partnership Protocol which will form the basis for the County Council's approach to partnership working in the future. The consultation closes on 19th October 2009 and Cabinet are requested to endorse the proposed response on behalf of Northampton Borough Council.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet endorse the response to the Northamptonshire County Council consultation on the Partnership Protocol as detailed in Section 3.3 in the report.

2.2 That the Leader of the Council respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council by the 19th October 2009 putting forward proposals for a common protocol.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 The draft Partnership Protocol, attached as Appendix 3 to the report, was agreed by the NCC Cabinet for consultation at its meeting on 14th July 2009. The purpose of the protocol is

1. To convey to partners what they can expect of the County Council when working in partnership, as a starting position from which to strengthen partnership working.
2. To act as a tool for councillors and officers to assess whether a partnership approach to working is the most effective way of working or whether an alternative arrangement is required.

3.1.2 There are three key documents which form the County Council's protocol.

1. A Policy Statement that summarises the County Council intentions in relation to partnership working. (Attached as Appendix 2)
2. The Partnership Protocol itself that sets out a definition of partnerships, what this Council expects from good partnering and critically sets out the parameters for when the Council will enter a partnership arrangement. (Attached as Appendix 3)
3. The partnership checklist enables officers and Councillors to ask a set of questions to gain information that will help establish what sort of working arrangement is required. (Attached as Appendix 4)

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 Local authorities are expected to hold a register of key partnerships and establish governance arrangements which include monitoring, evaluating and reporting on partnership activity. This expectation is within the Governance Section of the Use of Resources part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment. The County Council sees this toolkit as being key to collecting and assessing that information.

3.2.2 It is not intended that the protocol will replace the Compact arrangements that the County Council have in place with the Voluntary Sector; it is designed to compliment those arrangements.

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 The Cabinet has the option to reply only to the questions asked within the consultation.

3.3.2 The Cabinet has the option to reply to the questions asked within the consultation and make proposals for a common protocol, based on the following key points:

1. It is acknowledged that the general principles outlined in the protocol would be helpful as a tool for all agencies which may be involved in partnership working.
2. The consultation seeks views from partners with regard to whether it would be of use for the documents, or parts thereof, to be adopted by a wider body of organisations (Question 5, Appendix 1).
3. Northampton Borough Council is supportive of the need for more effective partnership working and recognises that there will be clear economic drivers towards greater partnership working in future years. It is therefore acknowledged that a common protocol on partnership working, adopted by all agencies that may either lead or contribute to partnerships, would facilitate a common approach and understanding to partnership working in Northamptonshire.
4. However, the current document is internally focussed towards the perspective of the County Council and the role it may assume in partnership working. The documents identify that NCC could be either the lead partner in a partnership arrangement or a loosely engaged partner, but does not adequately address the potential expectation of other partners of the County Council where it is a member, not the lead, in partnership arrangements.
5. It is recognised that not all partnerships will necessarily operate on a county-wide basis and that there will be partnerships which are more appropriately lead by borough and district authorities, as well as other statutory partners. In such circumstances generic protocols which outline the broad role and expectation of partners in the various roles they may assume within partnership arrangements would be a valuable framework for the organisations across the county to adopt.
6. It is proposed that the principle of adopting a generic protocol should be supported but that it should be considered at a Public Service Board level to ensure that it is reflective of and relevant to all partners and that there is common understanding from inception about the roles and expectations of partners within partnership arrangements. A common protocol, once adopted, could then be reflected within the internal procedures of each agency as appropriate.
7. The proposal that the NCC protocol could be adapted and amended individually by each partner organisation would likely result in a greater lack of clarity between organisations. It is therefore proposed that support is given for the principle of partnership protocols but that consideration should be given to developing generic arrangements which meet the needs of all partners rather than individual adapted arrangements.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

There are no implications of policy associated with this report

4.2 Resources and Risk

There are no resource or risk implications associated with this report

4.3 Legal

There are no legal issues associated with this report

4.4 Equality

There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this report

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

Northampton Borough Council is a consultee of the County Council and internal consultation on the response has been carried out with the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the Partnership Director, the Chief Executive, the Assistant Chief Executive and the Head of Policy and Community Engagement.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

The Partnership Protocol itself that sets out a definition of partnerships, what this Council expects from good partnering and critically sets out the parameters for when the County Council will enter a partnership arrangement.

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

Nicci Marzec, Partnership Director, 07717 542661



Consultation on Northamptonshire County Council's Partnership Protocol

Respondents Name		Address	
Organisation		Department	
Date		Email	
Questions		Response	
1. Do you think that our Partnership Protocol is an appropriate tool for strengthening the County Council's Partnership working?			
2. From these documents do you understand the County Council's approach to Partnership Working? Are they easy to understand?			
3. Do you agree with the County Council's approach to Partnership working, outlined in the Protocol? If not how could this be strengthened?			
4. Does the Protocol and supporting documentation meet your expectations in relation to partnership involvement with the County Council? Is there any aspect of Partnership working missing from these documents?			
5. Do you believe it would be useful for this document or parts thereof to be adopted by a wider body of organisations? If so which parts and by whom?			
6. Any other Comments			

Please return your feedback by 19th October 2009 to Janet Doran, Head of Policy, Northamptonshire County Council. Room 226, County Hall, Northampton.



Partnership Protocol Policy Statement

Northamptonshire County Council recognises the strength and value of effective partnerships in contributing to the improvement of the well-being of the county's communities. The Council encourages partnership working wherever appropriate.

We believe partnerships are necessary when:

- The delivery of outcomes for our communities can be more effective, and sometimes only, delivered by us working together with other partners or agencies.
- They are required by Government (e.g. Crime and Disorder Partnerships).
- To strengthen our ability to access external funding.
- The Council does not have the capacity, the knowledge or expertise on its own to deliver new services or service improvements.
- Better value would be gained from delivering services in partnership with others.

We believe that partnerships can:

- Give critical mass through strength in negotiation, greater influence and better use of resources.
- Achieve benefits greater than the sum of what could be achieved by the individual partners, by sharing knowledge, finding new ways of working and pooling and aligning resources.
- Achieve economies of scale and lever new resources into the county.
- Enhance local democracy by actively involving customers, communities, businesses and the third sector.

When considering whether to get involved in a partnership, the Council will make a decision having examined the issues set out in the Partnership Protocol checklist.

The Council will only join a partnership if it can resource the investment (of time, assets, knowledge and money) required to do so effectively.

We all appreciate the need to ensure that partnerships we engage in, work to achieve our shared outcomes and our individual organisations outcomes and priorities. In evaluating the Council's contribution to a partnership we will work with partners to ensure that our involvement is appropriate and relevant. Our involvement will vary from being the lead accountable body in a partnership to other partnerships where we only receive papers for information. In making a judgement about the nature of our involvement we will ensure all partners are clear about what we can offer to support the work of that partnership.

Any partnership which the Council is involved in will have appropriate performance management frameworks to ensure that the partnership is always moving forward towards achieving its objectives.

July 2009



**Northamptonshire
County Council**

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Northamptonshire County Council

Partnership Protocol

July 2009



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SECTION 1 - Introduction To And Purpose of the Partnership Protocol Framework

Northamptonshire County Council has highlighted the need for a corporate protocol on partnership working. This protocol is the first step in setting out a framework for partnership working that will assist Councillors and officers when considering our engagement in partnership arrangements.

The County Council is fully committed to partnership working because we recognise the strength and value of effective partnerships in contributing to the improvement of the well-being of the County's communities. The council encourages partnership working wherever appropriate. This protocols framework is designed to provide guidance for staff about how we will engage and behave in partnership working. This protocol reflects our core values and behaviours.

This protocol identifies:

- How the Council defines a partnership;
- Why the Council enters and engages in partnerships;
- Definition of a partnership and what constitutes a significant partnership; and
- Tools for identifying, managing and supporting partnerships arrangements, including good governance.

The protocol is supported by a partnership checklist which includes a series of points to consider before entering a new partnership. There is also an overarching policy statement that summarises the main points of the partnership protocol.

As a Council we recognise:

- There are issues to be addressed in Northamptonshire which require resolution and which we can not, and should not, undertake on our own. We need, therefore to work positively and constructively in partnership with other organisations;
- That this county has three tiers of local government, with a diversity of partner authorities and other local bodies. We have overlapping roles and responsibilities and we need to establish greater clarity regarding our approach to these roles and responsibilities for the benefit of our communities;
- We need to establish clearly the difference between legal bodies, informal partnership arrangements and contractual agreements;
- Our communities would like to have greater clarity on who is responsible for what services and support arrangements and who is accountable for delivering them. Similarly we need to clarify these issues with our partners; and
- Partners would like us to be clearer, as a Council, about what it means to work in partnership with the Council and how we will mutually hold one another to account.



SECTION 2 - The Benefits Of Working In Partnership

Partnerships should, ultimately, improve the quality of services being provided to Northamptonshire citizens. They should enable organisations to achieve outcomes for communities that individual agencies could not achieve alone. There are a number of ways they can help to do this, including:

- improving service delivery through **better coordination** especially where services are provided by a range of organisations;
- tackling **complex and county-wide issues**;
- facilitating and increasing **community engagement** through improved information, consultation and participation;
- through community engagement helping to ensure that services are developed in **alignment with customers' needs**;
- stimulating **more creative approaches** to problems by bringing together people with different backgrounds, skills and assumptions, and sharing risks and rewards more widely;
- wielding **greater influence** than individual partners could achieve, thus enhancing the impact on other parties;
- tackling complex **cross-cutting issues**;
- reducing waste and/or duplication, pooling resources (e.g. buildings, information) and improving **economies of scale**;
- gaining access to **new resources**;
- meeting **statutory or structural requirements**; and
- providing **opportunities for** learning from people in different organisations and with different perspectives.



SECTION 3 - Definition Of A Partnership

A partnership is a group of stakeholders brought together from a range of organisations, to be responsible for tackling challenges, and exploiting opportunities in which they have a shared interest. A partnership can be described as a joint working arrangement where the partners:

- are otherwise independent bodies
- agree to co-operate to achieve common goals or outcomes
- create a new organisational structure or process to achieve these outcomes
- plan and implement a jointly agreed programme, often with joint staff or resources
- share relevant information, and pool risks and rewards

Northamptonshire County Council defines a partnership as:

- An arrangement involving the Council and one or more other organisations, from any sector, **who share the responsibility for agreeing and then delivering a set of actions and outcomes** which improve the economic and/or social environmental well-being of people living in, working in, or visiting Northamptonshire.
- *For example: local authorities working together to reduce the environmental and financial impact of domestic and commercial waste. This is defined as a partnership because the local authorities involved are working together to agree aims and objectives and also sharing the tasks which will deliver on those aims and objectives.*

Northamptonshire County Council does not define as a partnership:

- An arrangement made by the Council with a third party to deliver one or more services on its behalf. This is a contract for services. The Council is defined as the procurer/commissioner of the service and the third party as the contracted provider of that service.

An example might be to deliver a meals on wheels service in the county with a local provider.

- Forums or groups of elected members and/or officers from local authorities and others who come together to discuss forthcoming issues, policy and strategy.

For example: the council is part of an local authority bench marking group which is formulate better practice to improve service delivery.



- Contractual arrangements that include partnership arrangements and partnership arrangements that include contractual arrangements:

For example: The Health Care Act flexibilities or 's75 agreements'

(a) What Constitutes A Significant Partnership

Northamptonshire County Council has a large number of partnership arrangements. However, they do not all carry the same level of significance.

Northamptonshire County Council defines a significant partnership as being one that:

- Develops policy and manages resources which have an impact on the ability of the Council and other public sector organisations to deliver statutory services or duties. *For example: The Children and Young People's Partnership arrangements.*
- Assists the Council and partners to identify and deliver high level strategic priorities for the County. *For example the Public Service Board is responsible for the county-wide Sustainable Community Strategy.*
- Assists the Council to meet a particular service. directorate or corporate outcome, and without which engaging in partnership the Council would risk significant reputational damage.



SECTION 4 - Tools for Identifying And Managing Partnerships

Partnership working can be very rewarding and deliver outstanding results for communities, however it can also be difficult and is generally resource intensive, especially in the early stages. Therefore the Council should consider other options before taking the decision to enter into a new partnership. These could include:

- using an existing partnership to deliver the objective – this will almost certainly deliver results more quickly and effectively because the partnership is already established, even if it requires some adjustment to existing scope and membership of the partnership.
- Consulting others on proposals but ensuring that one agency retains responsibility for decisions and actions.
- Contractual arrangements, if different benefits are to be produced for different partners.

(a) Legal Status

It is important to understand the distinction between what many normally refer to as partnership working and a formally constituted legal partnership. This protocol talks about the former although in many cases they will contain aspects that are legally binding. It is also important to ensure that the Council has the legal power to enter into the partnership.

The status of any partnership should be clear. An “agreement” may well be required to define how partners will work together, who will be responsible for what, what the reporting arrangement are, how services will be provided, how decisions will be made, how the funding will be shared, what are the exit strategies etc.. The length and status of this document will vary between partnerships. It may be that some parts of the agreement will have the status of a protocol or memorandum of understanding while other parts are legally binding.

The different roles that the Council can play in partnerships need to be understood. Which role it plays can have a significant impact on the responsibilities and liabilities of the Council. Early advice from Legal and Democratic Services should be sought to ensure this is clear.

Legal and Democratic Services may need to be involved in the development of the partnership (in particular regarding legal powers, legal structure and to help identify and consider legal liabilities) and must be involved in the drawing up of any legally binding agreements.

The responsibilities of all partners should be clarified and be in the agreement. These can include health and safety, community safety, race equality, or other



statutory responsibilities. While the partnership may not be bound by statutory duties in these areas, the Council must ensure that it fulfils its statutory duties in its work through the partnership.

Representation of the Council on the partnership should be made clear. If it is a significant partnership then it is likely to require Councillor and officer representation. Others may only require officer representation. Substitute representatives should also be identified as required.

(b) Risk Management

Risks should be understood and evaluated at all stages of partnership development. In considering risks, these could be viewed in two timeframes:

- At the point of deciding whether to enter into a partnership, the risks to the Council should be considered using the Council's risk management approach. These should form part of any documentation that is used to support the development of a partnership, and the mitigation plans should be clearly understood by all involved.
- When the decision to enter into a partnership has been made, if the Council is the lead body the Council will ensure that the governance arrangements of the partnership include effective management of risk. As the lead agency the Council will ensure that the risks associated with the partnership working are recorded with service plans or associated documents. If the Council is not the lead agency, the representatives should seek to ensure that minimum standards of risk management are in place, and that the representatives understand the level of risk attached to the County Council's involvement.

(c) Roles and accountability

- The Council will be represented on any agreed partnership by specified councillors or officers. Each partnership that the Council is represented on will be allocated a sponsoring officer who (usually a Head of Service) , although they may personally not be the representative on the partnership, they will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of this protocol in respect of the relevant partnership.
- Any specified officers or Members attending approved partnerships will represent only the Council and no other organisation, unless by specific agreement of the Chief Executive (for officers) or the Leader in consultation with the Chief Executive (for Members). They shall abide by their respective Council Codes of Conduct at all times.
- The terms of reference for any Council representative will include requirements for them to:



- Act on behalf of the Council within specific parameters
- Ensure activities are co-ordinated across the Council to meet the Council's commitments to the partnership
- Seek agreement with Corporate Management Team/Head of Service or, if the Constitution requires it, the Council, for any new resources not already agreed or budgeted
- Representation on any partnership does not permit any officer or Member to commit the Council to use of resources not contained within approved budgets nor to act as a public spokesman for the Council.
- The Assistant Chief Executive Policy and Partnership/ appropriate director will, from time to time, review the appropriateness of representation on Partnerships to ensure that the Council is represented by the right people at any given time, matching skills with needs.
- The Legal Services can provide any necessary advice and guidance to its representatives on partnerships regarding potential liabilities for them and the Council, and on their responsibilities and accountabilities.

(d) Resources

- Before entering into any partnership the Council will give consideration to its ability to contribute effectively to the partnership. The Council will not enter into any new partnership where it considers it cannot fully and effectively contribute to its success. The Council will be mindful of the resource implications, particularly for staff, finance and operational assets, existing commitments, and its corporate priorities in taking decisions on new partnerships and in extending existing partnerships.
- The Council will maintain a database, through the Head of Policy, of all partnerships it is involved in. This will allow Members, staff and public to be directed to organisations appropriate to their individual needs, to facilitate mutual activity and also to minimise duplication.
- The appropriate Assistant Chief Executive or Director will evaluate each partnership to assess the risks and rewards to the Council and local communities, including legal issues, insurance, implications arising from the Council's Constitution, issues of partnership procurement and whether the benefits from the partnership are likely to justify the costs involved in membership.



- The appropriate Assistant Chief Executive or Director will ensure that agreed partnership involvement, activity and outcomes are contained within the Council's performance management systems, ensuring in turn that the continuing effectiveness of specific partnerships is properly, consistently and corporately monitored and reviewed.

(e) Information Sharing

- The Council's Data Protection Policy will apply where Council business is concerned.
- The Council will normally seek to secure an Information Sharing Protocol within a partnership and between partnership organisations. This should be consistent with the Partnership Sharing Statement agreed through the Northamptonshire Partnership.

(f) Succession Planning

- In entering into any partnership the Council will consider, together with other partners, the lifespan of the partnership and the need to regularly review the purposes and membership of any partnership to ensure it stays focussed on its purpose and remains relevant. The Council will also wish to regularly review the pertinence of partnership membership against its corporate outcomes, particularly to ensure best use of scarce resources.
- It is inevitable that some schemes/initiatives/ programmes will need to be sustained. In these circumstances, it is essential that partnerships have succession strategies in place in advance to address such circumstances. It is likely that different partners may be needed for different stages of any scheme/initiative/ programmes.
- Many partnerships will reach a point where their purpose is complete, where alternative arrangements are needed, or where the need for a partnership is redundant. The Council will seek to ensure that succession strategies are in place or developed for such eventualities.
- The Council will also develop exit strategies for situations where it wishes to withdraw from a partnership for corporate and strategic reasons.

(g) Communication In A Partnership Setting

The Council requires all partnerships to develop a Partnership Communications Agreement with the lead communications contacts of all partners. This agreement should address branding, marketing and media issues and helps services identify which brand to use when working in partnership. Advice from Communication Team can be sought to assist with this.



The agreement is written on the following principles:

- Unless agreed with the communications leads of all partners, press releases and press contact must be done through an agreed communications contact at one of the partners' respective communications teams.
- Where possible the Council should be visually recognised in all partnerships.
- The creation of partnership logos and partnership branding should be avoided and only created in exceptional situations. Creation of partnership logos is not beneficial to the customer as it masks who the main players of the partnership are.

All partners should have a role in communicating and implementing partnership plans. Good communication of decisions and actions is required for the partnership to succeed. It should also be clear what information is available to whom and when through the life of the partnership.

The Council will endeavour to ensure that any consultation programmes and publicity exercises for the Council, its partnerships and its partners are co-ordinated as effectively as possible.

It is important to recognise the council's investment within partnership working. Public satisfaction surveys indicate that residents are not always sure about where the council spends their money. This lack of awareness can be compounded by partnerships within which the council is invisible.

The Council is committed to ensuring that when it communicates, (either directly or through partnerships) this communication is appropriate, professional and done in a way that represents value for money.



SECTION 5 – Partnership Toolkit

(a) Partnership Protocol Policy Statement

A partnership protocol policy statement is detailed in Annex 1. For our potential partners this policy statement sets out circumstances in which the Council will say “yes” or “no” to partnerships.

(b) Partnership Protocol Checklist - Gaining Approval for new partnerships

- To ensure consistency, the Head of Service/ Director/ Assistant Chief Executive involved will evaluate the Council’s proposed membership of a partnership using the Partnership Checklist (Annex 2). If judged to be a significant partnership the Corporate Management Team (CMT) will be approached for formal approval. For other partnerships approval is delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive or Director.
- Where a representative on a partnership needs authority beyond the existing Council Constitution or Scheme of Delegation to take part in decision-making, a report will need to be submitted to the Council for its consideration.
- The council representative(s) should report on partnership achievement against targets/ outcomes. Officer representatives will report to Corporate Management Team (CMT) annually.
- The Council will seek to ensure that the partnerships of which it is a member undertake an annual review or self-assessment of their effectiveness.



Partnership Protocol Checklist

The checklist will allow the Council to judge whether a partnership is appropriate and to provide guidance on ensuring the partnership has a good foundation for success.

The checklist should be completed before setting up or entering into a new partnership arrangement.

Name of Partnership			
Other potential members			
Council Lead Officer	Name Contact	Date Checklist completed	
Assessed	Name Contact	Date assessed	
What are the key desired outcomes of the partnership?			
Which Council Corporate Outcomes (one or more) does this partnership address?	Safer, freer and stronger communities <input type="checkbox"/> A secure, healthy and independent future for our children, our young people and our adults <input type="checkbox"/> A cleaner, greener and more prosperous county <input type="checkbox"/> A smaller more enabling council focused on our customers <input type="checkbox"/>		
How does it address these Corporate Outcomes?			
Why does this require a partnership approach?			
What would be the Council's role in the partnership? (e.g. Lead organisation, major/minor partner, observer)			



Who will be the Council's proposed representative on the partnership?	
Have you consulted legal services and sought legal advice about the legal implications of the partnership.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If it is a Statutory requirement that a partnership is formed, name the statute or legal instrument.	
Is the Council the accountable body? If yes, do we have the financial capacity, cash flow and audit capabilities?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If the Council is not the lead organisation who will be?	
What will be the Council's contribution in terms of costs (money and other resources)?	
What are the risks involved in entering into this partnership arrangement?	

		Yes (✓)	No (✓)	Please verify & insert comment.
	Structure and Partnerships			
1	Have you identified the added value partnership working brings?			
2	Is there already a partnership in place with a similar remit, which can take on this work?			
3	Will the partnership contribute to streamlining existing partnerships?			
4	Have partners critical to the success of the partnership been identified?			
5	Are all identified partners willing to participate?			
6	Is the partnership time limited or set up on a task & finish basis?			
	Governance			
7	Does the partnership have a vision/mission statement?			
8	Does the partnership have clear outcomes that it wants to achieve?			
9	Does the partnership have agreed terms of reference or a constitution?			
10	Are there clear procedures for making decisions and resolving conflict?			
	Commitment of Resources			
11	Does the partnership have a clear action plan and does this link to your directorate/ divisional/ service plan? (please specify)			
12	Is the action plan resourced and agreed by all partners?			



13	Is there an agreed process for identifying and managing risk?			
14	Are there appropriate financial control measures in place?			
Monitoring and Review				
15	Are there SMART targets and ways to measure progress/ achievements of objectives?			
16	Is there a process for monitoring progress against the partnership action plan?			
17	Is there a forum(s) where performance reports will be provided? If yes, state how often and in what format they will align with Council performance reporting. If no, what mechanisms are in place to achieve alignment to the Council's reporting framework?			
18	Are there arrangements to ensure there is annual review of the purpose, focus, value for money and governance of the partnership?			
19	Is there a process in place to provide an exit strategy to consider on-going council liabilities?			
Communications				
20	Is there a protocol for reporting and sharing of information?			
21	Is there a signed agreement?			
22	Will formal records be kept of agreements to decisions taken by the partnership? If yes, Who will they be sent to and how?			
23	Is there access for the public to meetings, reports and decisions of the partnership?			
24	Are there arrangements for consulting and involving customers and interested groups in the work of the partnership?			
25	Is there a marketing communications agreement signed by a member of the Council's Communications Team?			

Any other relevant information:

Agreed Next Step/ Milestones, if appropriate:



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Document Control Details

Head of Service	Name	Sign	Date
Date to CMT if relevant		Date for Review :	



CABINET REPORT

Report Title

Performance Monitoring Report

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Portfolio:	Engagement
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor Brian Hoare
Ward(s)	N/A

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the Council's performance for the monthly performance indicators for August 2009.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the contents of the report.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1. Performance data is collected across a range of locally developed indicators and National Indicators (NIs). Most indicators are collected monthly, with others collected either quarterly or annually. The reporting of NIs, together with a small number of locally determined indicators forms the basis of our performance monitoring process.
- 3.1.2. Performance data is available by the 20th of the following month; this allows for data to be transferred onto our database and quality assured to ensure that data quality standards are met. This report summarises monthly performance data for August 2009.

- 3.1.3 In June data for all of the performance measures detailed in service plans began to be collated by Performance Plus for the first time. Systems and processes are being tested and in the meantime the Cabinet report format will remain unchanged. Once testing has been satisfactorily completed, future reporting will focus on showing progress against the Council's priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

3.2 Overall Performance

3.2.1 Monthly Indicators

- 53% of indicators have 'green' status and have achieved target, compared to 47% last month
- 13% of indicators have 'amber' status and have performed just below target, compared to 22% last month
- 31% of indicators have 'red' status and have not achieved target compared to 28% last month
- 53% of all monthly indicators show improved performance against the same time last month, compared to 22% last month
- 31% of all monthly indicators show improved performance against the same time last year, compared to 19% last month

Notable performance trends across all monthly performance data for August 2009 include:

3.2.3 Performance Improvement

Public Protection

- 50% (2 of 4) of indicators are within their targets (BV127b, BV 128)
- Although the target has not been met, action has been taken which has resulted in a decrease in domestic burglaries by 28% when compared to last month and 3% compared to the same time last year. A combination of factors, including arrests and disruption tactics around hotspot areas are being introduced to minimise burglaries (BV 126).
- Robberies and vehicle crimes have both recorded their lowest figures this year. (BV 127b BV 128).

Revenues & Benefits

- 33% (3 of 9) indicators are within target (NI 180, BV 10 and BV 76d)

Revenues

- The percentage of NNDR received has increased above the profiled target and is higher when compared to the same time last year. There has been a good take up of the Business Rate Deferral Scheme and this is forecast to have an impact on the collection rates from October onwards (BV10).

Benefits

- The time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax new claims/changes has significantly reduced over the last month, by 4 days but remains over target. The improvement is due to robust monitoring of work allocation together with the appointment of new assessors (NI 181)
- The average time for processing new benefit claims has decreased by 3.54 days compared to last month, but remains 3.86 days higher in comparison to last year (BV 78a). The average time for processing notifications of change of circumstances has improved significantly by 4.42 days since last month (BV 78b). Prior to the credit crunch, performance levels were high. Workload has increased significantly.

Although the targets have not been achieved for both BV 78a and 78b, there have been significant improvements, which are due to robust work allocation procedures. This has resulted in the outstanding work count being reduced so that incoming work can be dealt with more quickly.

- The number of Housing Benefit fraud investigations increased by 68% in August. The improvement is due to overcoming problems with HB assessments of fraud cases. However, the overall performance remains significantly outside the profiled target and has deteriorated in comparison to the same time last year (BV 76c.)
- The percentage of cases from complete to determined, within 14 days has again achieved the highest percentage this year and sustained improvement over the last 5 months. However, it has still not achieved the target set and performance has deteriorated when compared to the same period last year (LI 364).

Housing Needs & Support

- 67% (2 of 3) of indicators are within their targets (NI 156 and HI 15)
- The number of households living in temporary accommodation has reduced by 50% since last month, continuing the downward trend of the last four months. The Housing Options team have worked closely with families and friends and in partnership with other statutory agencies to achieve the improvements. The overall performance to date is well within the current profiled target (NI 156).
- The average time taken to re-let local authority homes have decreased from last month by 7 days compared to last month. However, the overall performance to date has not met the profiled target and performance has deteriorated compared to the same time last year (HI 6).

3.2.4 Performance Deterioration

Neighbourhood Environmental Services

- 20% (1 of 5) indicators have not met their targets (NI 192)
- The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting has deteriorated for the last two months and against the same time last year. Lower recycling tonnages this month for paper and mixed glass have resulted in the figure for August being slightly below target (NI 192)

Public Protection

- 50% (2 of 4) indicators have not achieved their target (BV 126, 127a)
- The number of violent crime incidents increased by 5% when compared to last month and 14% against the same time last year. A number of initiatives are being undertaken and action plans drawn up to reduce violent crime, including experimental traffic order closure (BV 127a).

Human Resources

- 100% (2 of 2) indicators have not achieved their targets (BV12, BV 12r¹)
- The number of working days lost to sickness absence overall has not met the profiled target. However, sickness in August decreased by 2% compared to last month (BV 12).

Customer Services & ICT

- The number of contacts that could have been avoided increased by just over 2%, in line with expectation as fewer people contact us during the holiday period (NI 14).

¹ This is a rolling 12 month period measure for sickness absence
Jmd/committees/cabinet report template/06/10/09

Revenues & Benefits

- 67% (6 of 9) indicators are currently not achieving their target (NI 181, BV 9, BV 76c, BV 78a, BV 78b, LI 364).
- The percentage of council tax received in the year deteriorated by 1.43% when compared to the same time last year and performance is below the profiled target. As previously reported, this is primarily down to the current economic climate. The increase of direct debit take up is yet to make an impact. It is anticipated that there will be a gradual improvement through the year (BV 9).

Landlord Services

- 100% (2 of 2) indicators have not achieved their targets (HI1 and HI3)
- Rent collection improved from last month by 9.42% due to the August rent free period. This is a slight improvement against the same time last year, but the overall target has not been achieved (HI 1).

3.3 Data Quality

The Council has processes in place to ensure that the data and information it provides to support management decision-making is as reliable as possible. The Council has a strategy to improve data quality and service areas are working to achieve the objectives within it. This is closely linked to the Council's risk assessment processes and is monitored monthly as part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

Current Key Risks and Issues;

The recent upgrade to the Agresso system is being closely monitored and reports enabling data to be reported are being created, tested and validated to ensure data quality.

3.5 Choices (Options)

None

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

None.

4.2 Resources and Risk

Failure to deliver performance in line with targets exposes the council to reputation risk and impacts on improvement progress.

4.3 Legal

None

4.4 Equality

None

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

Internal – Performance data is published across the Council

External – The Lead Official; Audit Commission; partners; publication of performance data on our website.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

Improvement Plan – Performance management, including the monitoring of data, is a key priority in the Improvement Plan.

Corporate Plan – Performance management, including the monitoring of data, is critical in ensuring the Corporate Plan objectives are delivered.










4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers










5.1 Monthly Performance Report for August 2009

Dale Robertson, Head of Performance & Improvement
Performance & Improvement - Ext 7110

PERFORMANCE REPORT: July 2009 - Environment Portfolio - Councillor Trini Crane													KEY TO STATUS COLOURING KEY TO QUARTILE & TARGETED QUARTILE COLOURING				KEYS	
CURRENT STATUS													GREEN:				~	Interim figures, still to be validated
	7	77.8%		1	11.1%		0	0.0%	NO DATA		1	11.1%	Overall performance on or exceeding target Top or Upper Median Quartile					
MONTH ON MONTH TREND													AMBER:					
	1	11.1%		4	44.4%		2	22.2%	NO DATA		2	22.2%	Overall performance within range stated in "Target Tolerances" column Lower Median Quartile					
YEAR ON YEAR TREND													RED:					
	1	11.1%		3	33.3%		1	11.1%	NO DATA		4	44.4%	Overall performance outside the stated "Target Tolerances" Bottom Quartile					










Please contact Dale Robertson Ext 7110, if you require further information or support.

	ID	NAME	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	OVERALL PERFORMANCE TO DATE	ANNUAL TARGET	CURRENT PROFILED TARGET [if any]	TARGET TOLERANCES	PERFORMANCE AGAINST LAST REPORTING PERIOD	OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST SAME TIME LAST YEAR	NBC 08/09 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	NBC 07/08 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION																			
Neighbourhood Environmental Services [Simone Wade]																						<div><div></div><div>G</div></div>	6	<div><div></div><div>A</div></div>	1	<div><div></div><div>R</div></div>	0	No Data or N/A		0											
Monthly Indicators																																									
↓	NI 191	Number of kilograms of residual household waste collected per household	46	41	40	41									167.53kg	495kg	173.43kg	+15kg	↓	New NI 2009/10 - No comparable data																					
↑	NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	40.91	41.77	44.77	41.49									42.22%	40.00%	42.51%	5%	↓	↓	43.26%	37.88%	38.74%																		
↑	LI 105 (previously ELPi 5)	Percentage of fly-tips removed in 2 working days	99.86	100	100	100									99.96%	97%		5%	↔	↑	99.66%	99.82%	99.83%																		
↓	LI 784 (previously ELPi 6)	Number of missed refuse collections per 734,350 collections made	239	74	143	127									583	2,100	669	5%	↑	Change in calculation methodology - No comparable data																					
↑	LI 785 (previously ELPi 10)	Percentage of missed collections put right within 24 hours	100	100	100	100									100%	100%		2% points	↔	↔	100%	100%	98.92%																		
Quarterly Indicators																																									
↑	BV 91a	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of recyclables			100										100%	100%		2% points	↔	↔	100%	100% Top	98.5% Lower Median																		
↑	BV 91b	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables			100										100%	100%		2% points	↔	↔	100%	100% Top	98.5% Lower Median																		
Public Protection [Steve Elsey]																						<div><div></div><div>G</div></div>	1	<div><div></div><div>A</div></div>	0	<div><div></div><div>R</div></div>	0	No Data or N/A		1											
Quarterly Indicators																																									
↑	NI 182	Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulation services			No data available										No data available	80%		5%	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data																						
↑	NI 184	Food Establishments that are compliant			88%										88%	82%		5%	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data																						

PERFORMANCE REPORT: July 2009 - Finance Portfolio - Councillor David Perkins															KEY TO STATUS COLOURING KEY TO QUARTILE & TARGETED QUARTILE COLOURING				KEYS	
CURRENT STATUS															GREEN:				~	Interim figures, still to be validated
	5	33.3%		5	33.3%		5	33.3%	NO DATA or N/A		0	0.0%	Overall performance on or exceeding target Top or Upper Median Quartile							
MONTH ON MONTH TREND															AMBER:					
	5	33.3%		0	0.0%		9	60.0%	NO DATA or N/A		1	6.7%	Overall performance within range stated in "Target Tolerances" column Lower Median Quartile							
YEAR ON YEAR TREND															RED:					
	5	33.3%		1	6.7%		6	40.0%	NO DATA or N/A		3	20.0%	Overall performance outside the stated "Target Tolerances" Bottom Quartile							










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	ID	NAME	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	OVERALL PERFORMANCE TO DATE	ANNUAL TARGET	CURRENT PROFILED TARGET [if any]	TARGET TOLERANCES	PERFORMANCE AGAINST LAST REPORTING PERIOD	OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST SAME TIME LAST YEAR	NBC 08/09 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	NBC 07/08 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	
Finance & Assets [Gavin Chambers]							<div><div></div></div> 1					<div><div></div></div> 1	<div><div></div></div> 0			No Data or N/A		0					
Monthly Indicators																							
↑	BV 8	The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services paid by the authority within 30 days of being received	94.37	86.84	94.69	96.08									94.28%	95%		2% points	↑	↑	93.94%	94.38% Lower Median	91.51% Lower Median
Quarterly Indicators																							
↑	NI 179	Value for money (reported bi-annually)				Outturn 2008/9 5,352,521			Forecast 2009/10						£5,352,521 Outturn 2008/9	£1,351,000 Target 2008/9		5%	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data				
Revenues & Benefits [Robin Bates]							<div><div></div></div> 4					<div><div></div></div> 4	<div><div></div></div> 5			No Data or N/A		0					
↑	NI 180	Changes to Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit entitlements within year	290.00	469.90	109.47	90.51									936.58	940.50	313.50	5%	↓	New NI 2009/10 - No comparable data			
↓	NI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax new claims/changes	15.85	15.34	14.36	15.63									15.29 Days	14 Days		2 Days	↓	New NI 2009/10 - No comparable data			
↑	BV 9	Percentage of council tax received in the year	11.25	9.01	9.24	9.23									38.90%	97.50%	39.40%	0.5% points	↓	↓	40.30%	96.94% Lower Median	97.95% Upper Median
↑	BV 10	% of non domestic rates due for the year which were received by the authority	11.62	9.55	10.18	9.69									41.39%	99.50%	40.40%	0.5% points	↓	↓	41.83%	99.12% Top	99.79% Top
↑	BV 76c	Housing Benefit Security: the number of fraud investigations	76	52	71	57									256	950	350	5%	↓	↓	363	949	847
↑	BV 76d	Housing Benefit Security: the number of prosecutions and sanctions	8	7	10	6									31	87	32	5%	↓	↑	27	91	74
↓	BV 78a	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing new claims	23.50	21.76	18.90	19.42									20.86 Days	19 Days		2 Days	↓	↓	16.3 Days	16.1 Days Top	23.8 Days Upper Median
↓	BV 78b	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing notifications of change in circumstances	11.77	12.07	12.18	13.69									12.46 Days	8 Days		1 Day	↓	↓	8 Days	8.0 Days Upper Median	10.9 Days Lower Median
↑	LI 364 (Previously BEN LPI 1)	Percentage of cases from complete to determined within 14 days	84.10	84.71	90.62	92.67									88.14%	92%		2% points	↑	↓	97.85%	96.82%	86.74%
Quarterly Indicators																							
↑	BV 79a	Accuracy of processing (a) percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available for the decision for a sample of cases checked post-decision			98.40										98.40%	98%		2% points	↑	↔	98.40%	97.80% Lower Median	97% Bottom
↑	BV 79b(i)	The amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered during the period being reported on as a percentage of hb deemed recoverable overpayments during that period			73.86										73.86%	55%		2% points	↑	↑	71.90%	67.54% Lower Median	70.44% Lower Median
↑	BV 79b(ii)	Housing benefit overpayments recovered during the period as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus amount of hb overpayments identified during the period			12.44										12.44%	40%	15%	5%	↑	↑	9.95%	27.29% Lower Median	29.59% Lower Median
↔	BV 79b(iii)	Housing benefit overpayments written off during the period as a percentage of the total amount of hb overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus amount of hb overpayments identified during the period			0										0%	7%	2%	5%	↓	↑	1.22%	4.43%	4.04%

PERFORMANCE REPORT: July 2009 - Housing Portfolio - Councillor Sally Beardsworth														KEY TO STATUS COLOURING KEY TO QUARTILE & TARGETED QUARTILE COLOURING				KEYS	
CURRENT STATUS														GREEN:				~	Interim figures, still to be validated
	3	42.9%		0	0.0%		4	57.1%	NO DATA		0	0.0%	Overall performance on or exceeding target Top or Upper Median Quartile						
MONTH ON MONTH TREND														AMBER:					
	2	28.6%		1	14.3%		2	28.6%	NO DATA		2	28.6%	Overall performance within range stated in "Target Tolerances" column Lower Median Quartile						
YEAR ON YEAR TREND														RED:					
	1	14.3%		0	0.0%		2	28.6%	NO DATA		4	57.1%	Overall performance outside the stated "Target Tolerances" Bottom Quartile						










Please contact Dale Robertson Ext 7110, if you require further information or support.

	ID	NAME	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	OVERALL PERFORMANCE TO DATE	ANNUAL TARGET	CURRENT PROFILED TARGET [if any]	TARGET TOLERANCES	PERFORMANCE AGAINST LAST MONTH	OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST SAME TIME LAST YEAR	NBC 08/09 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	NBC 07/08 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	
Housing Needs & Support [Fran Rodgers]							<div>G</div> 2				<div>A</div> 0				<div>R</div> 1	No Data	0						
Monthly Indicators																							
↓	NI 156	Number of households living in Temporary Accomodation	25	22	17	12									12	25	28	5%	<div>↑</div>	New NI 2009/10 - No comparable data			
↓	HI 6 (previously BV 212)	Average time taken to re-let local authority homes	33.04	24.19	24.81	28.41									28.02 Days	23 Days	25.25 Days	5%	<div>↓</div>	<div>↓</div> 24 Days	30 Days Upper Median	34 Days Lower Median	
↓	HI 15 (previously LHPI 183a)	The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need (working days)	0	0	0	0									0 Days	5 Days	3.38 Days	20%	<div>↔</div>	Previously reported quarterly - No comparable data	1.68 weeks Upper Median	1 week Top	
Quarterly Indicators																							
↑	HI 18 (previously BV213n)	Number of household who considered themselves homeless who approached the local authority housing advice service and for whom advice casework intervention solved their situation			180										180	720	180	2%	New local indicator - no comparable data				
Housing Strategy, Investment & Performance [Brian Queen]							<div>G</div> 0				<div>A</div> 0				<div>R</div> 1	No Data	0						
Quarterly Indicators																							
↑	NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)			66										66	300	84	10%	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data		288	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data	
Landlord Services [Christine Ansell]							<div>G</div> 0				<div>A</div> 0				<div>R</div> 2	No Data	0						
Monthly Indicators																							
↑	HI 1 (previously BV 66a)	Rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owed on HRA dwellings	93.06	94.56	97.28	94.12									94.92%	97.50%		1% point	<div>↓</div>	<div>↑</div> 94.02%	96.26% Bottom	96.76% Bottom	
↓	HI 3 (previously BV 66d)	Number of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0	9	6	2									17	36	12	1 per quarter	<div>↑</div>	<div>↓</div> 7	55	26	

PERFORMANCE REPORT: July 2009 - Communities Portfolio - Councillor Paul Varnsverry															KEY TO STATUS COLOURING KEY TO QUARTILE & TARGETED QUARTILE COLOURING			KEYS	
CURRENT STATUS															GREEN:			~	Interim figures, still to be validated
	7	77.8%			0	0.0%			2	22.2%		NO DATA	0	0.0%	Overall performance on or exceeding target Top or Upper Median Quartile				
MONTH ON MONTH TREND															AMBER:				
	3	33.3%			1	11.1%			3	33.3%		NO DATA	2	22.2%	Overall performance within range stated in "Target Tolerances" column Lower Median Quartile				
YEAR ON YEAR TREND															RED:				
	1	11.1%			0	0.0%			6	66.7%		NO DATA	2	22.2%	Overall performance outside the stated "Target Tolerances" Bottom Quartile				

























Please contact Dale Robertson Ext 7110, if you require further information or support.

	ID	NAME	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	OVERALL PERFORMANCE TO DATE	ANNUAL TARGET	CURRENT PROFILED TARGET [if any]	TARGET TOLERANCES	PERFORMANCE AGAINST LAST MONTH	OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST SAME TIME LAST YEAR	NBC 08/09 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	NBC 07/08 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	
0							<div><div></div>G</div>	4			<div><div></div>A</div>	0			<div><div></div>R</div>	2	No Data or N/A		0				
Monthly Indicators																							
↓	BV 126	Domestic burglaries per year per 1,000 households in local authority area	1.71	1.77	1.24	1.51									6.23	15	5.00	5%	↓	↓	6.1	20.7 Bottom	20.9 Bottom
↓	BV 127a	Violent crime per year, per 1,000 population	2.13	2.17	2.10	2.35									8.74	23.20	7.73	5%	↓	↓	7.8	23.6 Bottom	26.8 Bottom
↓	BV 127b	Robberies per year, per 1,000 population	0.26	0.21	0.19	0.19									0.85	2.70	0.90	5%	↔	↓	0.7	2.5 Bottom	2.7 Bottom
↓	BV 128	The number of vehicle crimes per year, per 1,000 population in the local authority area	1.01	1.13	0.97	0.95									4.05	15	5.00	5%	↑	↑	5.5	13.9 Bottom	16.2 Bottom
Quarterly Indicators																							
↓	NI 16	Serious acquisative crime (number of crimes)			1,192										1,192	15% reduction over 3 years from 2007/08 baseline 5,659 (baseline 12 month rolling total)		5%	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data				
↓	NI 20	Assault with injury crime (number of crimes)			464										464	8% reduction over 2 years from 2008/09 baseline 1,654 (baseline 12 month rolling total)		5%	New NI 2009/10 - no comparable data				
Culture & Leisure [Ian Redfern]							<div><div></div>G</div>	3			<div><div></div>A</div>	0			<div><div></div>R</div>	0	No Data or N/A		0				
Quarterly Indicators																							
↑	BV 170a	The number of visits to/usage's of local authority funded or part funded museums per 1,000 population			203.41										203.41	691.97	189.29	5%	↑	↓	229	804 Upper Median	886 Upper Median
↑	BV 170b	The number of those visits to local authority funded or part funded museums that were in person per 1,000 population			184.65										184.65	662.37	176	5%	↑	↓	204	714 Top	786 Top
↑	BV 170c	The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups			1,737										1,737	8,500	1,350	5%	↓	↓	1,980	7,876 Upper Median	6,929 Upper Median

PERFORMANCE REPORT : July 2009 - Partnerships & Improvement Portfolio - Councillor Tony Woods													KEY TO STATUS COLOURING KEY TO QUARTILE & TARGETED QUARTILE COLOURING				KEYS	
CURRENT STATUS													GREEN:				~Interim figures, still to be validated	
	1	33.3%			0	0.0%			2	66.7%		NO DATA	0	0.0%	Overall performance on or exceeding target Top or Upper Median Quartile			
MONTH ON MONTH TREND													AMBER:					
	1	33.3%			0	0.0%			2	66.7%		NO DATA	0	0.0%	Overall performance within range stated in "Target Tolerances" column Lower Median Quartile			
YEAR ON YEAR TREND													RED:					
	1	33.3%			0	0.0%			0	0.0%		NO DATA	2	66.7%	Overall performance outside the stated "Target Tolerances" Bottom Quartile			

Please contact Dale Robertson Ext 7110, if you require further information or support.

	ID	NAME	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	OVERALL PERFORMANCE TO DATE	ANNUAL TARGET	CURRENT PROFILED TARGET [if any]	TARGET TOLERANCES	PERFORMANCE AGAINST REPORTING PERIOD	OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST SAME TIME LAST YEAR	NBC 08/09 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	NBC 07/08 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	
Human Resources [Catherine Wilson]							<div><div></div><div>G</div></div>	0				<div><div></div><div>A</div></div>	0			<div><div></div><div>R</div></div>	1	No data		0			
Monthly Indicators																							
↓	BV 12	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	0.96	0.83	1.03	1.15									3.98 Days	11 Days	3.67 Days	5%	↓	↑ 4.18 Days	12.86 Days Bottom	11.89 Days Bottom	
↓	BV 12r (Roling 12 months)	The average number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence for rolling 12 month period	13.18	13.02	13.05	13.16									13.10 Days	11 Days		5%	↓	New measure with rolling cumulative figures - No comparable data			
Customer Services & ICT [Marion Goodman]							<div><div></div><div>G</div></div>	1				<div><div></div><div>A</div></div>	0			<div><div></div><div>R</div></div>	0	No data		0			
Monthly Indicators																							
↓	NI 14	The percentage of customer contact that was 'Avoidable'	16.69	12.19	19.03	11.51									15.65%	50%		10%	↑	New NI 2009/10 - No comparable data			

PERFORMANCE REPORT: July 2009 - Planning & Regeneration Portfolio - Councillor Richard Church															KEY TO STATUS COLOURING KEY TO QUARTILE & TARGETED QUARTILE COLOURING				KEYS				
CURRENT STATUS															GREEN:				~ Interim figures, still to be validated				
	7	77.8%		0	0.0%		1	11.1%	NO DATA		1	11.1%	Overall performance on or exceeding target Top or Upper Median Quartile										
MONTH ON MONTH TREND															AMBER:								
	2	22.2%		2	22.2%		3	33.3%	NO DATA		2	22.2%	Overall performance within range stated in "Target Tolerances" column Lower Median Quartile										
YEAR ON YEAR TREND															RED:								
	4	44.4%		0	0.0%		3	33.3%	NO DATA		2	22.2%	Overall performance outside the stated "Target Tolerances" Bottom Quartile										
Please contact Dale Robertson Ext 7110, if you require further information or support.																							
	ID	NAME	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	OVERALL PERFORMANCE TO DATE	ANNUAL TARGET	CURRENT PROFILED TARGET [if any]	TARGET TOLERANCES	PERFORMANCE AGAINST LAST REPORTING PERIOD	OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST SAME TIME LAST YEAR	NBC 08/09 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	NBC 07/08 OUTTURN & QUARTILE POSITION	
Planning [Susan Bridge]								7		0		1	No data		1								
Monthly Indicators																							
↑	NI 157a LM	Percentage of "large scale major" planning applications determined within 13 weeks	No applications	No applications	No applications	No applications									No applications	0%		5%	No comparable data	First full year of reporting - No comparable data	100%	No comparable data	
↑	NI 157a SM	Percentage of "small scale major" planning applications determined within 13 weeks	100	No applications	No applications	No applications									100%	60%		5%	No comparable data	First full year of reporting - No comparable data	54.55%	No comparable data	
↑	NI 157b (previously BV109b)	Percentage of "minor" planning applications determined within 8 weeks	100	100	94.74	88.89									95.24%	65%		2% points		 96.55%	92.19% Top	BV109b 87.42% Top	
↑	NI 157c (previously BV 109c)	Percentage of "other" planning applications determined within 8 weeks	100	87.80	98.53	89.04									94.19%	80%		2% points		 94.80%	95.70% Top	BV109c 95.21% Top	
↑	LI 541 (Previously PLI 188)	The number of decisions delegated to officers as a percentage of all decisions	100	100	96.55	97.80									98.36%	90%		2% points		 95.48%	96.07% Top	94.77% Top	
Quarterly Indicators																							
↑	BV 106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land			55.84										55.84%	40%		2% points		 41.92%	51.15% Bottom	54.85% Bottom	
↔	BV 200b	Has the local Planning authority met the milestones which the current local Development scheme set out?			Yes										Yes	Yes		N/A		 No	Yes	No	
↓	BV 204	Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications			30										30%	33%		5%		 63.6%	37.5% Lower Median	39.5% Bottom	
↑	BV 205	Quality of Service checklist for Planning			66.7										66.7%	100%		2% points		77.8%	66.7% Bottom	77.8% Bottom	

Appendices

1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

15B

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009-10 – POSITION AS AT END OF JULY 2009
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	YES
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Finance & Support
Accountable Cabinet Member:	David Perkins
Ward(s)	Not Applicable

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- Request approval for capital schemes to be added to the Council's capital programme for 2009-10
- Request further approval for a capital scheme in the Council's capital programme for 2009-10.
- Request approval for a capital scheme to be added to the Council's capital programme for 2010-11
- Request approval for a variation to a capital scheme in the Council's capital programme for 2009-10
- Advise Cabinet on the latest 2009-10 capital programme monitoring position, including forecast outturns and slippage into 2010-11.
- Advise Cabinet as to how the 2009-10 capital programme will be funded

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet approve the following schemes to be added to the capital programme for 2009-10

Scheme Reference, Description & Directorate	Narrative	2009-10 £	Future Years £	Funding Source
2009-10/GF067 Camp Hill Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) Environment & Culture	The installation of a new Multi Use Games Area in Camp Hill. This work will be funded by a grant from the Big Lottery.	50,000	-	The Big Lottery
2009-10 GF068 Bus Station ANPR Environment & Culture	Purchase and installation of an automated number plate recognition (ANPR) system at the bus station to enable the monitoring and management of vehicles as part of the Health & Safety Executive Action Plan improvement works.	30,000	-	Prudential Borrowing

Further details of these appraisals can be seen at Annex A to this report.

2.2 That Cabinet further approve the following scheme in the Council's capital programme for 2009-10

Scheme Reference, Description & Directorate	Narrative	2009-10 £	Future Years £	Funding Source
2009-10 GF031 One Stop Shop Transformation Finance & Support	The One Stop Shop concept needs to transform and modernize to match demand, and be fit for purpose. To maximize space to the full, enabling staff to respond more professionally to clients needs. This will include an effective queue management system, easily identified waiting areas, plasma information screen, a better variety of seating options, and a children's play area.	250,000	-	£100k Third Party Contributions, £150k Prudential Borrowing

Further details of this appraisal can be seen at Annex A to this report.

2.3 That Cabinet approve the following scheme to be added to the capital programme for 2010-11

Scheme Reference, Description & Directorate	Narrative	2010-11 £	Future Years £	Funding Source
2010-11 HRA018 Challenge Fund Round 2 Bid (NBC New Build Scheme) Housing HRA	The project is to seek funding from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) challenge fund round 2 bid; to build approximately 6 new council owned family houses. The challenge fund requires at least 50% of the total scheme costs to be funded by the local authority through prudential borrowing, with the remaining cost being funded through a bid to the HCA for Grant funding.	955,259	-	£477,630 Prudential Borrowing, £477,629 HCA

Further details of this appraisal can be seen at Annex A to this report.

2.4 That Cabinet approve the following variation to a scheme in the capital programme for 2009-10.

Scheme Reference, Description & Directorate	Narrative	2009-10 £	Future Years £	Funding Source
2008-09/GF068 V03 Market Square Planning & Regeneration	The original costs of the gateway aspect of the project were estimated by the cost consultant, however these have now been revised upwards by the contractor, and are now more than the budget. Therefore the use of section 106 monies is required to fund these additional costs. If the use of the section 106 monies were not approved major items agreed by project board would have to be omitted.	40,052	-	£38,052 Section 106. £2k NEL

Further details of this variation can be seen at Annex B of this report.

2.5 That Cabinet note:

- a) The capital programme monitoring position as at end of July 2009, including forecast outturns and slippage into 2010-11, as set out at Annex C and D.

- b) The funding arrangements for the 2009-10 capital programme as set out at Annex E.

2.6 Cabinet approve the usage of section 106 funds as outlined in paragraph 2.3 variations to the capital programme.

- 2008-09/GF068 V03 Market Square

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The latest approved capital programme for 2009-10 was approved by Cabinet on 23 September 2009.

3.2 Issues

Approval of Capital Projects and Project Variations

- 3.2.1 Approval is sought to add schemes to the Council's capital programme for 2009-10, as set out at paragraph 2.1 above.
- 3.2.2 Further approval is sought for a capital scheme that is already in the Council's capital programme for 2009-10, as set out at paragraph 2.2 above.
- 3.2.3 Approval is sought to add a scheme to the Council's capital programme for 2010-11, as set out at paragraph 2.3 above.
- 3.2.4 Approval is sought for a variation to a scheme that is already in the Council's capital programme for 2009-10, as set out at paragraph 2.4 above.
- 3.2.5 All proposals put forward for approval with this report have been submitted on capital project appraisal or variation forms, which have been signed off by, amongst others, the relevant Director, the Section 151 Officer and the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder. Copies of the capital project appraisals and variation forms, which are listed as background papers, are available on request.
- 3.2.6 Approval is sought to use the section 106 funds for the purposes outlined in paragraph 2.4.
- 2008-09/GF068 Market Square
- 3.2.7 Cabinet need to be aware of the Revenue implications of the capital scheme HRA018 HCA new build, Bondfield Ave which are estimated between £7.9k - £5k per annum over the 50 year life of the asset. There are potential RTB implications from this scheme, dependent on the requirement to repay grant. The details of these have yet to be fully notified to the authority.
- 3.2.8 The funding implications of proposed programme changes are discussed in the capital programme funding section of this report at paragraphs 3.2.19 to 3.2.31 below.

Capital Programme position as at end of July 2009

3.2.9 In line with best practice and with CAA requirements, capital programme monitoring information is brought to Cabinet on a monthly basis. The information in this report relates to the period to the end of July 2009.

3.2.10 Annex C shows the position at summary level as at the end of July 2009. The information includes

- Latest proposed capital programme, incorporating the original programme for 2009-10, slippage from 2008-09, other agreed changes, and the further amendments and additions proposed in this report.
- Actual expenditure to the end of July 2009
- Planned expenditure to the end of the year
- Forecast outturn for the year
- Forecast slippage to 2010-11

3.2.11 Annex D provides a summarised narrative of project variances at service level.

3.2.12 The forecast outturn position and forecast slippage position on each project have been put together from information supplied by budget managers, who are each responsible for financial control of their projects.

3.2.13 Actual capital programme expenditure to the end of July 2009 is £3.486m. This represents 13.5% of the latest approved budget of £25.768m, and 13.5% of the forecast outturn figure of £25.884m.

3.2.14 Included in the above figures are schemes that are now classed under accounting regulations as revenue expenditure funded by capital. The expenditure on these schemes to the end of July is £1.117m, the latest approved budget is £4.286m and forecast outturn for these schemes is £4.288m.

3.2.15 The above figure is likely to increase throughout the year, as there are a number of schemes that will have both capital expenditure and items of revenue expenditure funded by capital. These have not been included in the above figures.

3.2.16 It is usual at this early stage in the financial year for capital expenditure to be low in relation to budget, as capital schemes naturally take time to get up and running due to the need, for example, for contract tendering and consultation. Furthermore, invoices are not due for payment until goods are received or works are complete, or part complete in the case of staged payments.

3.2.17 The forecast provided by management for the HRA programme is a full spend on the programme. Finance have some concerns with regard to this forecast due to some unresolved issues surrounding the delivery of certain aspects of the programme. If these issues remain unresolved, then there is likely to be significant slippage which has yet to be accurately forecast.

3.2.18 Of the total forecast of £116k at year-end, £120k will be covered through the approval of project variations and appraisals brought to this Cabinet.

Capital Programme Funding

3.2.19 All schemes in the capital programme, whether included in the original programme, arising from slippage, or added to the programme during the year, are fully funded, either from borrowing, internal resources or from external funding arrangements.

3.2.20 The financing of the programme for 2009-10 is set out at Annex E.

3.2.21 Increases or reductions in overall financing requirements resulting from the appraisals and variations brought to Cabinet with this report, excluding self balancing items are as follows:

Scheme	2009-10 Value	Future Years Value	Funding Impact
	£	£	
Camp Hill MUGA	50,000	-	The Big Lottery
Bus Station – ANPR	30,000	-	Prudential Borrowing
Challenge Fund Round 2 Bid (NBC New Build Scheme)	-	955,259	£477,630 Prudential Borrowing £477,629 HCA
Market Square	40,052	-	£38,052 Section 106 £2k NEL

3.2.22 Funding of £50k has been secured from The Big Lottery for the Camp Hill MUGA project. Therefore this project will require no capital funds from NBC, however the ongoing maintenance and cleaning of the MUGA will be the responsibility of NBC but can be met from existing revenue budgets.

3.2.23 The Bus Station - ANPR project requires a further £30k of additional prudential borrowing in 2009-10. The total additional prudential borrowing requirement in 2009-10 is now £327k.

3.2.24 The Challenge Fund Round 2 (NBC New Build Scheme) project has no financial impact on 2009-10. However, a decision on the prudential borrowing element of this scheme is required before the bid can be submitted to HCA for the remaining 50% of the funding, the deadline for which is October.

3.2.25 There are two reasons for the increased budget for the Market Square project. The classification of NEL funding, between years and between capital and revenue expenditure, has changed a number of times as the project has progressed. Each of these changes are reported to NEL and the latest has resulted in an additional £2k being included in the 2009-10 capital programme. However, it should be noted that there is no change in the overall amount awarded by NEL. The original costs of the project were estimated by the cost consultant, however these have now been revised upwards by the contractor. Therefore the use of section 106 monies is required to fund these additional costs. In approving this variation, agreement is given to use £38k of section 106 monies (references H026 and H096) for the purposes of this project.

- 3.2.26 The One Stop Shop Transformation project is already included in the 2009-10 capital programme; therefore there will be no impact on the financing requirements as a result of this capital appraisal.
- 3.2.27 The value of useable RTB capital receipts received at mid September is £64k. These will be placed in a capital reserve and used in the future to support the HRA programme.
- 3.2.28 Changes from the previously reported financing position are summarised in the table below.

Capital Programme 2009-10			
	Programme	Financing	In Year Financing Variance Excess/ (Shortfall)
	£000	£000	£000
Latest approved programme (23 September Cabinet)	25,768	34,204	8,436
Appraisals brought to this Cabinet (2009-10 starts only)	80	80	
Variations brought to this Cabinet	40	40	-
Rounding		1	1
Latest proposed programme	25,888	34,325	8,437

- 3.2.27 The in year funding variance shown above can be broken down as follows:

2009-10 Capital Financing Variance			
	GF	HRA	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Earmarked pending project appraisals 2009-10			
Budgeted Prudential borrowing	30		
Grants and Contributions	62		
Revenue Financing	64		

Earmarked carry forward to 2010-11			
Budgeted Prudential Borrowing	1,700		
Revenue Reserve		6,580	
Rounding	1		
Total	1,857	6,580	8,437

3.2.28 Changes to the carbon management projects have resulted in £125k of unallocated funding. This is the excess of the projects that have been removed from the capital programme and those put forward for inclusion. This money is ring fenced for the carbon management scheme and will be required for future projects to meet the terms and conditions of the external funding. The £125k is made up from the following: £30k prudential borrowing, £31k Salix funding and £64k revenue contribution.

3.2.29 Grant funding of £31k for the Choice Based Lettings sub-regional scheme remains unallocated pending the development of the scheme.

3.2.30 The re-profiling of the Grosvenor Centre Car Park project, over two financial years, has resulted in £1.7m of prudential borrowing not being required until 2010-11.

3.2.31 The amount of £6.580m shown above as being carried forward to 2010-11 is needed to fund continuations of the existing HRA programme in future years.

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 Cabinet are asked to approve or further approve the inclusion of the capital schemes at paragraph 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 into the Council's capital programme and to approve the variation to the agreed capital programme set out at paragraph 2.4.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 All schemes within the capital programme are within existing policy

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 All schemes included in the capital programme, or put forward for approval, are fully funded, either through borrowing, internal resources or external funding arrangements. The financing of the programme is set out at Annex E.

4.2.2 Schemes funded by prudential borrowing have an impact on the revenue budget arising from the repayment of debt principal and interest. Recent changes to regulations and guidance on the repayment of debt principal in the

accounts – known as ‘minimum revenue provision’ or MRP, mean that the annual revenue cost of repayment of debt principal now varies according to the nature of the expenditure, as it is fixed according to the life of the asset. Thus, debt relating to short life assets may have to be paid back over as little as three years, whereas for long life assets it may be over fifty or sixty years. The interest charge is approximately 4% to 4.5% per annum (on current borrowing rates).

- 4.2.3 The revenue costs of all prudential borrowing in the approved capital programme and in the proposed project appraisals and variations brought with this report are built into the Council’s draft revenue budget for 2010-11 and medium term plans for future years
- 4.2.4 All other revenue budget implications related to the capital projects are set out in the capital project appraisals, and fed into revenue budget planning as appropriate (i.e. through revenue budget monitoring, budget build or medium term financial planning).
- 4.2.5 Financial and non-financial risks related to the capital projects are addressed in the capital project appraisals.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 Legal implications related to the capital projects are addressed in the capital project appraisals.
- 4.3.2 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 Equalities implications related to the capital projects are addressed in the capital project appraisals. Many of the schemes in the programme are specifically targeted at addressing equalities issues. Project managers are responsible for ensuring that Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are completed for their schemes, and that any equalities issues associated with the project are correctly addressed.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 Each capital project appraisal and project variation for schemes in the programme has been put together by the Project Manager, in consultation with other officers and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder.

In respect of consultation with stakeholders on individual schemes, details are contained within the capital project appraisals

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 The extent to which each project meets the Council’s objectives and priorities is described within the individual capital project appraisals.

- The use of capital project appraisals to determine and agree capital schemes in accordance with the objectives and priorities of the authority, and the effective monitoring and reporting of capital programme activity both contribute to improving the CAA Use of Resources score. This supports the Council's priority to be a well-managed organisation that puts our customers at the heart of what we do.

4.7 Other Implications

4.7.1 There are no other specific implications arising from this report.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Cabinet & Council Reports – 2009-10 Capital Programme (Cabinet unless stated)

- 19 February 2009 - Capital Programme 2009-10 to 2011
- 26 February 2009 (Council) - Capital Programme 2009-10 to 2011
- 25th February 2009 – Capital Programme 2008-09 Position as at end of December 2008.
- 18th March 2009 – Capital Programme 2008-09 Position as at end of January 2009.
- 7th April 2009 (Cabinet) – Capital Appraisal
- 20th May 2009 (Cabinet) – Capital Appraisal
- 29th June 2009 – Capital Programme 2008-09 – Outturn Position.
- 5th August 2009 – Capital Programme 2009-10 Position as at end of May 2009.
- 5th August 2009 – Market Square Water Feature Project Appraisal.
- 23rd September 2009 – Capital Programme 2009-10 Position as at end of June 2009

5.2 Capital Project Appraisals

- 2009-10 GF067 – Camp Hill MUGA
- 2009-10 GF068 – Bus Station ANPR
- 2009-10 GF031 One Stop Shop Transformation
- 2010-11 HRA018 – Challenge Fund Round 2 Bid (NBC New Build Scheme)

5.3 Capital Project Variations

- 2009-10 GF068 V03 – Market Square

Bev Dixon, Finance Manager – Capital & Treasury, ext 7401

Project Appraisals put forward for Cabinet Approval

A1

1	Project Title	Camp Hill Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)					
2	Appraisal Reference	2009-10 GF067					
3	Directorate	Environment & Culture					
4	Service Block	Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services					
5	Outline description (including specific works)						
	The installation of a new Multi-Use Games Area in Camp Hill. Land will be leased from Northants County Council (with a peppercorn rent), with NBC responsible for the management and maintenance of the MUGA as a Council asset. A Big Lottery grant will fund the capital works including the preparation of the land, erection of fencing, laying tarmac surfacing, line painting and laying a link footpath from an existing highway.						
6	Consequences of not undertaking the project and impact on the community or employees						
	Loss of a £50,000 capital injection into play facilities into Northampton. Young people continue to play sports in inappropriate areas, including roads and in areas that cause disruption to other local residents. Lost opportunity to promote physical exercise and reduce obesity among young people in the area. Loss of resident goodwill and faith in partnership working as a means for delivering new community facilities.						
7	Project budget	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	Total £
	Capital costs	50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000
	Revenue consequences	0	500	500	500	500	2,000
8	Source of capital funding	SCE (R) Single Capital Pot	Prudential Borrowing	Major Repairs Reserve	Grant & 3rd Party Contribs	Other	Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£
		0	0	0	50,000	0	50,000
	Big Lottery Grant						

Project Appraisals put forward for Cabinet Approval

A2

1	Project Title	Bus Station - ANPR					
2	Appraisal Reference	2009-10 GF068					
3	Directorate	Environment & Culture					
4	Service Block	Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services					
5	Outline description (including specific works)						
	Purchase and installation of an Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system at the Bus Station to enable the monitoring and management of vehicles as part of the Health and Safety Executive Action Plan improvement works.						
6	Consequences of not undertaking the project and impact on the community or employees						
	The Council would fail to deliver the improvements promised in the bus station action plan presented to the Health and Safety Executive. Failure to implement the HSE Action Plan could result in the council being served another improvement notice by the HSE and / or impact upon passenger and user safety and well being in and around the bus station and / or the Council's reputation.						
7	Project budget	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	Total £
	Capital costs	30,000	0	0	0	0	30,000
	Revenue consequences	0	800	800	800	800	3,200
8	Source of capital funding	SCE (R) Single Capital Pot £	Prudential Borrowing £	Major Repairs Reserve £	Grant & 3rd Party Contribs £	Other £	Total £
		0	30,000	0	0	0	30,000
	0						

Project Appraisals put forward for Cabinet Approval

A3

1	Project Title	One Stop Shop Transformation					
2	Appraisal Reference	2009-10 GF031					
3	Directorate	Finance and Support					
4	Service Block	Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services					
5 Outline description (including specific works) <p>The current One Stop Shop function has 'outgrown' it's current layout. With more services on offer, customers struggle with the existing queuing and waiting system, and there is an agreed need to increase partnership working. The One Stop Shop concept needs to transform and modernize to match demand, and be fit for purpose. The council needs to create a comfortable environment where customers who need to access the Council's services face to face, can do so within a more flexible layout that is more appropriate for their requirements. To maximize space to the full, enabling staff to respond more professionally to clients needs. This will include an effective queue management system, easily identified waiting areas, plasma information screen, a better variety of seating options, and a children's play area. The transformation will involve a remodelling of the existing ground floor accommodation of the One Stop Shop. This project sits alongside proposals to become a 'cashless' operation. Specific works to be included are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Queuing system 2. Extension of customer positions 3. Effective interview room booking system 4. Replacement customer seating 5. Replacement carpet 6. Childrens play area 7. 'Self-serve' area 8. Provision for partnerships workstations (negotiations are ongoing with partners on potential capital and revenue contributions to this project - the appraisal will be updated as and when these amounts are agreed). 							
6 Consequences of not undertaking the project and impact on the community or employees <p>The physical environment is shabby, there has been no programme of investment, the furniture requires replacement and does not promote best practice in terms of DDA access or for individuals with disabilities. The impact of not undertaking this project will affect Northampton Borough Council's reputation, be used negatively by inspectors when undertaking Access to Services inspection, CCA. . Additionally, if the Council no longer takes cash payments, the empty cashier booths will be a reminder of a service lost.</p>							
7	Project budget	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	Total £
	Capital costs	250,000	0	0	0	0	250,000
	Revenue consequences	0	12	25	24	24	85
8	Source of capital funding	SCE (R) Single Capital Pot £	Prudential Borrowing £	Major Repairs Reserve £	Grant & 3rd Party Contribs £	Other £	Total £
		0	150,000	0	100,000	0	250,000

Project Appraisals put forward for Cabinet Approval

£100,000 grant / third party contribution. £150,000 prudential borrowing.

Project Appraisals put forward for Cabinet Approval

A4

1	Project Title	HCA Challenge Fund Round 2 Bid (NBC Newbuild Scheme)					
2	Appraisal Reference	2010-11/HRA018					
3	Directorate	Housing HRA					
4	Service Block	Housing Revenue Account					
5	Outline description (including specific works)						
	<p>The project is to seek funding from the HCA Challenge Fund Round 2 Bid, to build approximately 6 new council owned family houses. The Challenge Fund requires at least 50% of the total scheme costs to be funded by the local authority through prudential borrowing, with the remaining cost being funded through a bid to the HCA for Grant funding.</p>						
6	Consequences of not undertaking the project and impact on the community or employees						
	<p>The consequences of not undertaking the project would be the immediate loss of potentially £477,629 of HCA grant funding. The Challenge Fund was announced this year in May as new monies. However due to the current climate, and a new CSR in 2011, we will not know if any further funding will be made available for local authorities to bid for. A further consequence will be the impact on the Housing Register of not having a further 6 family homes to help re-house people off the Housing Register. The Housing Register would continue to experience increases in demand.</p>						
7	Project budget	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	Total £
	Capital costs	955,259	0	0	0	0	955,259
	Revenue consequences	4,500	0	0	0	0	4,500
8	Source of capital funding	SCE (R) Single Capital Pot £	Prudential Borrowing £	Major Repairs Reserve £	Grant & 3rd Party Contribs £	Other £	Total £
		0	477,630	0	477,629	0	955,259
	The Grant funding would be from a bid to the HCA, which requires submitting by no later than the 31st October 2009.						

Project Variations put forward for Cabinet Approval

B1

1	Project Title	Market Square Project					
2	Original Appraisal Ref	2008-09/GF068					
3	Variation Ref Number	2008-09/GF068 V03					
4	Directorate	Planning & Regeneration					
5	Service Block	Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services					
6	Reason for variation						
	<p>There are two reasons for the increased budget for the Market Square project. The classification of NEL funding, between years and between capital and revenue expenditure, has changed a number of times as the project has progressed. Each of these changes are reported to NEL and the latest has resulted in an additional £2k being included in the 2009-10 capital programme. However, it should be noted that there is no change in the overall amount awarded by NEL. The original costs of the gateway aspect of the project were estimated by the cost consultant, however these have now been revised upwards by the contractor, and are now more than the budget Therefore the use of section 106 monies is required to fund these additional costs. If the use of the section 106 monies were not approved major items agreed by project board would have to be omitted.</p>						
7	Summary of Budget Increases/(Decreases)						
I	Project budget	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	Total £
		40,052	0	0	0	0	40,052
II	Project funding	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	Total £
		40,052	0	0	0	0	40,052
III	Funding source						
	£2k NEL funding, £38,052 section 106 H026 and H096						

Capital Monitoring Programme 2009-10

Period 4 (to end of July 2009)

Division/Service	Approved Budgets				Proposed Budgets		Actuals			Forecasts			Slippage
	Original Approved Budget (19.02.2009)	Slippage	Approved Changes	Latest Approved Budget	Proposed Changes	Latest Proposed Budget	Exp to End of Prev Month	Exp Current Month	Exp to End of Current Month	Forecast Exp to End of Year	Total Forecast for Year	Forecast (Unspent Budget)/ Budget Overspends	Forecast Slippage
	£	£	£	£	£	£	Mth 1 to 3 £	Mth 4 £	Mths 1 to 4 £	Mths 5 to 12 £	Mths 1 to 12 £	£	£
General Fund													
Finance & Support													
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finance & Assets	126,800	282,247	374,709	783,756	0	783,756	47,833	57,373	105,205	676,706	781,911	(1,845)	0
Revenue & Benefits	68,100	3,000	5,000	76,100	0	76,100	30,519	17,255	47,774	28,326	76,100	0	0
Northampton Area Procurement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Consumer Services & ICT	639,200	78,380	443,180	1,160,760	0	1,160,760	11,826	34,559	46,386	1,114,874	1,161,260	500	0
Total Finance & Support	834,100	363,627	822,889	2,020,616	0	2,020,616	90,178	109,187	199,365	1,819,907	2,019,271	(1,345)	0
Environment & Culture													
Public Protection	128,179	51,605	(55,757)	124,027	0	124,027	117	13,860	13,977	110,655	124,632	605	0
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	100,000	47,750	147,297	295,047	0	295,047	37,686	0	37,686	257,361	295,047	0	0
Culture & Leisure	49,667	1,056,431	112,500	1,218,598	50,000	1,268,598	168	0	168	1,263,455	1,263,623	45,025	7,320
Town Centre Operations	0	0	0	0	30,000	30,000	0	0	0	30,000	30,000	30,000	0
Total Environment & Culture	277,846	1,155,786	204,040	1,637,672	80,000	1,717,672	37,971	13,860	51,831	1,661,471	1,713,302	75,630	7,320
Planning & Regeneration													
Planning	200,000	31,759	0	231,759	0	231,759	4,428	1,112	5,541	226,218	231,759	0	0
Regeneration & Development	977,915	2,006	103,000	1,082,921	40,052	1,122,973	15,420	6,297	21,717	1,101,256	1,122,973	40,052	0
Total Planning & Regeneration	1,177,915	33,765	103,000	1,314,680	40,052	1,354,732	19,848	7,410	27,258	1,327,474	1,354,732	40,052	0
Assistant Chief Executive													
Policy & Community Engagement	46,657	82,288	49,000	177,945	0	177,945	52,047	0	52,047	125,898	177,945	0	0
Communications & Consultation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Performance & Improvement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northampton Local Strategic Partnership	3,100	494	88,212	91,806	0	91,806	0	0	0	91,806	91,806	0	0
Total Assistant Chief Executive	49,757	82,782	137,212	269,751	0	269,751	52,047	0	52,047	217,704	269,751	0	0
Borough Solicitor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Borough Solicitor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing GF													
Strategy, Investment & Performance	0	0	873,155	873,155	0	873,155	0	0	0	873,155	873,155	0	0
Landlord Services	0	47,305	322,000	369,305	0	369,305	0	405	405	368,900	369,305	0	0
Needs & Support	1,494,317	2,165,491	698,325	4,358,133	0	4,358,133	925,068	191,922	1,116,990	3,243,119	4,360,109	1,976	0
Total Housing GF	1,494,317	2,212,796	1,893,480	5,600,593	0	5,600,593	925,068	192,327	1,117,395	4,485,174	5,602,569	1,976	0
TOTAL General Fund	3,833,935	3,848,757	3,160,621	10,843,313	120,052	10,963,364	1,125,112	322,784	1,447,895	9,511,730	10,959,625	116,313	7,320

Capital Monitoring Programme 2009-10

Period 4 (to end of July 2009)

HRA													
Housing HRA													
Strategy, Investment & Performance	12,129,192	1,885,782	340,957	14,355,931	0	14,355,931	1,017,653	513,161	1,530,813	12,825,118	14,355,932	1	0
Landlord Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Needs & Support	300,000	268,593	0	568,593	0	568,593	376,322	131,104	507,426	61,167	568,593	0	0
Total Housing HRA	12,429,192	2,154,375	340,957	14,924,524	0	14,924,524	1,393,974	644,264	2,038,239	12,886,286	14,924,525	1	0
TOTAL HRA	12,429,192	2,154,375	340,957	14,924,524	0	14,924,524	1,393,974	644,264	2,038,239	12,886,286	14,924,525	1	0
Total Capital Programme	16,263,127	6,003,132	3,501,578	25,767,837	120,052	25,887,888	2,519,086	967,048	3,486,134	22,398,016	25,884,150	116,313	7,320

Note :- Includes Revenue Expenditure funded from Capital

Division/Service	Latest Approved Budget £	Actuals to Period 4 £	Total Forecast for Year £	Forecast (Unspent) / Overspend £	Forecast Slippage £	Detail
General Fund						
Finance & Support						
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	There are no capital schemes in this division.
Finance & Assets	783,756	105,205	781,911	(1,845)	0	There is a forecast underspend of £1,845 on the Fire Door Improvements project, this is to cover the overspend on the Lings Forum Wetside Changing Rooms project (Environment & Culture division).
Revenue & Benefits	76,100	47,774	76,100	0	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Northampton Area Procurement	0	0	0	0	0	There are no capital schemes in this division.
Consumer Services & ICT	1,160,760	46,386	1,161,260	500	0	The forecast overspend relates to the One Stop Shop Transformation project. The costs provided are estimates, therefore it is possible that this overspend may not materialise.
Total Finance & Support	2,020,616	199,365	2,019,271	(1,345)	0	
Environment & Culture						
Public Protection	124,027	13,977	124,632	605	0	The forecast overspend on this division relates to a carbon management project. Costs on these projects can change until the point that they are commissioned, therefore a project variation will be submitted to Cabinet once the final cost is known. No additional funding will be required for this overspend.
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	295,047	37,686	295,047	0	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Culture & Leisure	1,218,598	168	1,263,623	45,025	7,320	There is a forecast underspend and forecast slippage of £7,320 for the projects that are funded by the Big Lottery. This is in line with the terms and conditions of the funding as the funding timescales are from September to August. There is a forecast overspend of £500 on the Playbuilder - Eastfield Park project, this is due to more funding being received from Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) than what was in the agreement. NCC have advised for this to be spent on the project rather than returned. The Lings Forum Wetside Changing Rooms will overspend by £1,845, this is due to additional unavoidable work being required which only became apparent once the work had started. The overspend will be covered by an underspend on the Fire Door Improvements project - see Finance & Assets division. There is a forecast overspend of £50k on the Camp Hill MUGA project, this is a new scheme and an appraisal form has been submitted to Cabinet with this report.
Town Centre Operations	0	0	30,000	30,000	0	The forecast overspend in this division relates to the Bus Station - ANPR project. This is a new project and an appraisal is being submitted to Cabinet with this report.
Total Environment & Culture	1,637,672	51,831	1,713,302	75,630	7,320	
Planning & Regeneration						
Planning	231,759	5,541	231,759	0	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Regeneration & Development	1,082,921	21,717	1,122,973	40,052	0	The forecast overspend in this division relates to the Market Square as a Flexible Space project. This is because the original costs for this project was estimated by the cost consultant and these have now been revised upwards by the contractor.
Total Planning & Regeneration	1,314,680	27,258	1,354,732	40,052	0	
Assistant Chief Executive						
Policy & Community Engagement	177,945	52,047	177,945	0	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Communications & Consultation	0	0	0	0	0	There are no capital projects in this division.
Performance & Improvement	0	0	0	0	0	There are no capital projects in this division.
Northampton Local Strategic Partnership	91,806	0	91,806	0	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Total Assistant Chief Executive	269,751	52,047	269,751	0	0	
Borough Solicitor	0	0	0	0	0	There are no capital projects in this directorate.
Total Borough Solicitor	0	0	0	0	0	
Housing GF						
Strategy, Investment & Performance	873,155	0	873,155	1	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Landlord Services	369,305	405	369,305	0	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Needs & Support	4,358,133	1,116,990	4,360,109	1,976	0	The overspend on this division relates to the Hot Property project. Contributions of £5,351 have been received which will cover this overspend.
Total Housing GF	5,600,593	1,117,395	5,602,569	1,976	0	
Total General Fund	10,843,313	1,447,895	10,959,625	116,313	7,320	

Division/Service	Latest Approved Budget £	Actuals to Period 4 £	Total Forecast for Year £	Forecast (Unspent) / Overspend £	Forecast Slippage £	Detail
HRA						
Housing HRA						
Strategy, Investment & Performance	14,355,931	1,530,813	14,355,932	1	0	All projects in this division are forecast to be fully spent.
Landlord Services	0	0	0	0	0	There are no capital schemes in this division.
Needs & Support	568,593	507,426	568,593	0	0	The capital project in this division is forecast to be fully spent.
Total Housing HRA	14,924,524	2,038,239	14,924,525	1	0	
Total HRA	14,924,524	2,038,239	14,924,525	1	0	
Total Capital Programme	25,767,837	3,486,134	25,884,150	116,314	7,320	

Capital Programme Financing 2009-10

Annex E

As at the end of July 2009

	GF Finance & Support £	GF Environment & Culture £	GF Planning & Regeneration £	GF Assistant Chief Executive £	GF Borough Solicitor £	GF Housing £	HRA Housing £	Unallocated £	GF Total £
Programme									
Latest Approved Budget	2,020,616	1,637,672	1,314,680	269,751		5,600,593	14,924,524		25,767,837
Proposed Budget Changes		80,000	40,052						120,052
Latest Proposed Budget	2,020,616	1,717,672	1,354,732	269,751	0	5,600,593	14,924,524	0	25,887,888
Funding									
Prudential Borrowing	3,369,056	274,001	5,000	3,100		1,729,689			5,380,845
Supported Borrowing							500,000		500,000
Capital Receipts	63,200	100,000				33,800	197,942		394,942
MRA							11,068,543		11,068,543
Grants		1,170,517	558,559	266,651		3,645,817	225,957		5,867,500
Third Party Financing	141,043	89,615	791,173			149,971			1,171,802
Revenue Financing	147,317	209,269				72,317	9,512,000		9,940,903
Total Funding	3,720,616	1,843,401	1,354,732	269,751		5,631,593	21,504,443		34,324,536
Unallocated Funding	1,700,000	125,730				31,000	6,579,919		8,436,648

Breakdown of unallocated funding

General Fund

Earmarked funding pending project appraisals

Prudential Borrowing		30,232							30,232
Grant		31,099				31,000			62,099
Revenue Contribution		64,399							64,399

Earmarked carryforward to 2010-11

Prudential Borrowing	1,700,000								1,700,000
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HRA

Earmarked Reserve C/fwd to fund 2010-11

Earmarked Reserve							6,579,919		6,579,919
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Unallocated Funding	1,700,000	125,730	0	0	0	31,000	6,579,919	0	8,436,648
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Appendices

1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

15C

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING 2009/10 – POSITION AS AT 31st JULY 2009
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Finance and Support
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Cllr D Perkins
Ward(s)	Not Applicable

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report identifies the projected outturn position for the current financial year for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Appendix 1 of the report provides further background information. The report also refers to management action being taken in response to the forecast and to minimise the impact on the Council's HRA working balances at the end of the financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet to note the report and the forecast overspend of £838k on the Net Cost of Services.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Council approved the 2009/10 HRA Budget on 19th February 2009. The 2009/10 budget preparation process delivered a balanced budget.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 Budget Managers, in conjunction with Finance, have undertaken a review to identify any emerging issues that cannot be contained within the approved budget with appropriate management action. Appendix 1 presents the identified variations from the approved budget that are giving rise to a forecast net overspend of £838k for Net Cost of Services.
- 3.2.2 Working Balances - It should be noted that Working Balances carried forward from outturn are higher than the budget by £160k. This variance was detailed in the HRA Budget 2008/09 Outturn Report presented to Cabinet on 29th June 2009. There was an additional £2.493m moved into earmarked reserves.
- 3.2.3 Housing Restructure - A fundamental review of the structure of the Housing Service has been undertaken. There has been no overall net increase in the cost of services.
- 3.2.4 HRA Subsidy & Dwelling Rent Income – net forecast underspend of £203k. The forecast figures reflect the Council's decision to reduce the approved rent increase (5.65% average) and implement a lower increase (approx' 2.82% average) from May 2009 in light of the Governments announcements post budget setting. The impact is lower than budgeted rental debits due (£910k), offset by a reduction in the amount of HRA negative subsidy payable to CLG (-£1,113k).
- 3.2.5 Repairs and Maintenance – forecast overspend of £950k. This forecast reflects the trend of the current level of expenditure on void properties and responsive repairs to housing stock. This forecast will be subject to further ongoing scrutiny to determine the level of capitalisation of costs and any other factors that can mitigate the projected overspend.
- 3.2.6 General Management – forecast overspend of £46k. Additional printing costs (£6k) are anticipated by the Customer Engagement Team to meet the costs of the quarterly "My Homes" newsletter sent to residents. Also reflects prior year costs relating to the Path Trainee Scheme that have not been budgeted for in the current year.
- 3.2.7 Rents Rates Taxes & Other Charges – forecast overspend of £50k. This reflects the estimated increase in Council Tax due on empty properties, This is as a result of a change to the Council Tax rules that no longer allow relief to be claimed on properties that have been vacant for longer than six months.

3.3 Other Areas for Information

- 3.3.1 An emerging issue has been identified relating to the settlement of equal pay claims. Due to ongoing negotiations, no figures have yet been included in the budget forecasts for this issue.
- 3.3.2 As indicated above, managers are already taking action to minimise the overall net impact on HRA working balances. This includes identifying where there is scope for efficiencies without detriment to public service delivery, and capitalisation of specific costs. Managers must continue to rigorously assess areas in which further efficiencies can be achieved to manage forecast overspends within the overall budget. Particular attention should be given to management of the employee establishment.

3.4 HRA Capital Programme Reserve

- 3.4.1 The opening balance on the Capital Programme Reserve for 2009/10 is £7m.
- 3.4.2 The Reserve has been set aside to fund future Capital Programmes and is considered prudent in order to support the delivery of the outcomes of the HRA Asset Management Strategy and the HRA Business Plan.

3.5 Leaseholder Capital Works Reserve

- 3.5.1 The opening balance on the Leaseholder Capital Works Reserve for 2009/10 is £1m.
- 3.5.2 The Reserve was set up in 2007/08 (see Cabinet Report 26th June 2008), in anticipation of the requirement for a sinking fund or similar mechanism to account for changes made for capital works and the actual costs of Capital repairs. A Leaseholder charging review is being undertaken and will be subject to a separate report when complete.

3.6 HRA Working Balances

- 3.6.1 The opening HRA Balance for 2009/10 is -£6,124k. The forecast Outturn for the year is -£5,360k, showing a net decrease to the Working Balance of £765k. This represents a decrease of £838k from the budgeted increase of £83k (see Appendix 1). This is summarised in the table below. The forecast Outturn position will be subject to continued and increasing scrutiny as the financial year progresses and more detailed analysis is possible.

Table 1 HRA Working Balances

	Revised £000	Forecast £000	Variance £000
Opening Balance	(6,124)	(6,124)	
Net Transfer (to) / from working balances	(83)	765	838
Working Balance C/Fwd	(6,207)	(5,360)	838

3.7 Choices(Options)

- 3.7.1 Cabinet is invited to note the report and the actions being taken to contain net expenditure to minimise the impact on the HRA's working balances at the end of the financial year.
- 3.7.2 Options for further constraining expenditure without detriment to front line service delivery must be considered corporately to address the projected net overspend.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 Appendix 1 shows that the controllable revenue budget is forecast to be overspent by £838k.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 This report informs the Cabinet of the provisional HRA budget outturn as at the end of July 2009.
- 4.2.2 There will be an ongoing impact on future year budgets of not delivering services or overspending budgets.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 Not applicable

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 Chief Executive, Directors, Corporate Mgrs, and Budget Managers have been consulted.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 Monthly budget monitoring relates to improving the CPA Use of Resources score, which contributes to the priorities of continuing to improve our weakest services and continuing to strengthen our financial management.

4.7 Other Implications

- 4.7.1 Not applicable

5. Background Papers

5.1 Cabinet Reports

- 29 June 2009 HRA Budget Outturn Position 2008/09
- 05 Aug 2009 HRA Budget Monitoring 2009/10 – Position at 31st May 2009
- 23 Sep 2009 HRA Budget Monitoring 2009/10 – Position at 30th June 2009

Isabell Procter, Corporate Director, ext 8757



HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL YEAR 2009/2010

As at: 31st July 2009

	2009/2010 £,000's Base Budget	2009/2010 £,000's Actuals	2009/2010 £,000's Forecast Outturn	2009/2010 £,000's Outturn Variance
INCOME				
Rents - Dwellings Only	-43,080	-13,861	-42,170	910
Rents - Non Dwellings Only	-1,157	-393	-1,157	0
Service Charges	-1,471	-567	-1,471	0
Other Income	-205	-64	-205	0
Total Income	-45,912	-14,884	-45,002	910
EXPENDITURE				
Repairs and Maintenance	9,407	4,566	10,357	950
General Management	4,589	978	4,634	46
Special Services	3,561	804	3,567	6
Rents, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	45	48	95	50
Increase in Bad Debt Provision	400	133	400	0
Rent Rebate Subsidy Deductions	1,324	441	1,324	0
Housing Revenue Account Subsidy	10,683	3,190	9,570	-1,113
Total Expenditure	30,008	10,160	29,947	-62
Net Cost of Services	-15,904	-4,724	-15,056	848
Net Recharges to the General Fund	5,392	1,797	5,392	0
Interest & Financing Costs	-28	-9	-28	0
Depreciation/MRA	7,957	2,652	7,957	0
Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	2,500	833	2,500	0
Net Transfer From / (To) Working Balance	-84	549	765	848
Working Balance b/f	-5,964	-6,124	-6,124	-160
Working Balance c/fwd	-6,048	-5,575	-5,360	688

Appendices



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Item No.

15D

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2009/10 – POSITION AS AT THE END OF JULY 2009
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Finance and Support
Accountable Cabinet Member:	David Perkins
Ward(s)	Not Applicable

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report identifies the projected outturn position for the current financial Year. Appendix 1 of the report provides further background information. The report also refers to management action being taken in response to the forecast and to minimise the impact on the Council's general fund reserves at the end of the financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet to note the report and the forecast over spend of £908k net of management action.
- 2.2 Cabinet approve that the unclaimed increase in members allowances from 2008/09 be appropriated to CEFAP for investment in communities.
- 2.3 Cabinet approve that any unclaimed increase in members allowances in 2009/10 be allocated to CEFAP for investment in communities in 2011/12.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Council approved the General Fund Revenue Budget on 26th February 2009. The 2009/10 budget preparation process identified a substantial gap in funding. This was bridged by a combination of policy, efficiency and base budget savings to the value of £9.42m. These savings are in addition to the £6.2m of savings that were approved and achieved as part of the 2007/08 and 2008/09 budget setting processes.
- 3.1.2 It is important that the savings built into the budget are achieved to minimise the impact on both the Council's general reserves at the end of this financial year and the impact on future year budgets. It is intended that all policy, efficiency and base budget savings that were built into the approved budget will be monitored and reported separately this financial year together with the regular monitoring of the revenue budget. Should any of the savings be unachievable, management action will be taken to identify alternative savings or income.
- 3.1.3 The Authority was notified of a revised provisional allocation of LABGI funding for 2009/10 of £124,425 on 29 July 2009. This allocation has been calculated in accordance with the revised methodology.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 Budget Managers, in conjunction with Finance, have undertaken a review of the progress being made towards achieving the savings contained within the budget. Work has also been undertaken to identify any other emerging issues that cannot be contained within the approved budget with appropriate management action.
- 3.2.2 Appendix 1 presents the identified variations from the approved budget that are giving rise to a forecast net over spend of £1,066k for services before management action and proposed use of reserves.

3.2.3 Table 1: General Fund Provisional Outturn Summary (£,000)

RAG	Directorate	2009/10 Original Budget	2009/10 Additional Budget	2009/10 Revised Budget*	Projected Outturn Actuals - End May 2009	Projected Outturn Variance to Revised Budget - End July 2009 pre actions	Proposed Application of Reserves & other Management Actions	Projected Outturn Variance to Revised Budget - End May 2009 post actions
		£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
R	Environment and Culture	12,227	(77)	12,150	13,320	1,170	(180)	990
G	Finance and Support	17,133	39	17,172	16,783	(389)	0	(389)
G	Planning & Regeneration	2,831	(6)	2,825	2,872	47	0	47
R	Assistant Chief Executive*	4,043	96	4,139	4,297	158	0	158
G	Borough Solicitor	1,171	(5)	1,166	1,196	30	0	30
A	Housing (GF)	1,472	(37)	1,435	1,485	50	0	50
	Total	38,877	10	38,887	39,956	1,066	(158)	886

Note small variations are due to roundings.

3.2.4 £920k of the projected over spend relates to policy and efficiency savings that Budget Managers have indicated still require further work. Appendix 2 contains details of the progress being made to achieve the savings.

3.2.5 Included within the forecast is a projected under spend of £362k relating to employee budgets. This is the position net of the corporate vacancy target.

3.2.6 The remaining £508k over spend before action and funding virements relates to emerging issues identified by Budget Managers.

3.2.7 Overall these items give a forecast over spend of £1,066k before management action.

3.2.8 Management action to the value of (£180k) has been identified to partially mitigate the forecast over spend. These actions give rise to a net forecast over spend of £886k.

3.2.9 The over spend of £886k includes the monitoring of the vacancy saving target. The position in relation to the employee budget is outlined below for clarity.

3.2.10 **Table 2: Effect of Use of Reserves and Management Action on the Forecast Overspend**

	£,000
Forecast outturn before proposed use of reserves and management action	1,066
Identified Management Action.	(180)
Total	886

3.2.11 **Table 3: Employees Position at the end of July 2009**

Directorate	Employee Forecast net of Vacancy Factor £,000
Environment and Culture	332
Finance and Support	(186)
Planning & Regeneration	(135)
Assistant Chief Executive*	(68)
Borough Solicitor	30
Housing	(335)
	(362)

Environment and Culture Directorate

3.2.12 The RAG status for Directorate of Environment and Culture is Red as the Directorate is forecasting an over spend above £100k. The reasons for the variance are explained below.

Service Area	Forecast Variance before Action	Forecast Variance after Action	Narrative
	£,000	£,000	
Director of Environ and Culture	4	4	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Public Protection	116	116	Mainly forecast non-achievement of the corporate vacancy target.
Head of Neighbourhood Environmental Services	745	565	See below
Head of Leisure and Culture	236	236	See below
Head of Town Centre Management	69	69	See below
Total	1,170	990	

Head of Neighbourhood Environmental Services

3.2.13 The service has indicated that it is unable to deliver savings to the value of £613k that were built in to the 2009/10 budget (see appendix 2).

3.2.14 The remainder of the variance is made up of minor variations totalling (£1,132k).

3.2.15 Management action of (£58k) has been identified by the service to partially offset the overspend detailed above. This includes £25k funding from NIEP for Market Testing (now confirmed) and £33k funding to be sought for the additional roll out of the glass recycling scheme from either the Corporate Improvement Fund or NIEP funds. Work is ongoing to implement these management actions.

3.2.16 In addition the Head of Service is working in a number of areas to manage costs to deliver the service on budget overall. These include a line by line review of budgets to identify where specific savings can be made, Head of Service approval for expenditure so that non essential expenditure can be challenged and avoided, review of overtime with VFM partners with potential savings of up to £122k, continued work with the VFM partner to identify further savings and efficiencies, and part year effect of the restructuring of NES to develop the neighbourhood model.

Head of Leisure and Culture

- 3.2.17 £151k overspend on staff costs in Leisure relating to non achievement of vacancy factor of £80k within Leisure and Culture and £71k overspend on wages and overtime.
- 3.2.18 £112k on advertising & publicity, catering, stationery, hardware purchase and training courses due to free swimming.
- 3.2.19 Additional income of £83k partly due to parents accompanying children to free swimming that will help offset the overspend.
- 3.2.20 £56k overspend relating to items below £50k.

Town Centre Management

- 3.2.21 Overspends on employees £54k.
- 3.2.22 Overspend on rents payable in respect of change of contract on St Peters Way Car Park of £53k.
- 3.2.23 Additional daily ticket income at car parks £107k.
- 3.2.24 Reduction in Market income £81k
- 3.2.25 Offset by net savings of £12k on items below £50k.

Finance and Support Directorate

3.2.26 The RAG status for Finance and Support is Green as the Directorate is forecasting an under spend. The reasons for the variance are explained below.

Service Area	Forecast Variance before Action	Forecast Variance after Action	Narrative
	£,000	£,000	
Director of Finance and Support	(40)	(40)	Employee savings net of the corporate vacancy target.
Head of Finance and Assets	(377)	(377)	See below.
Head of Revenues and Benefits	3	3	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Customer Services and ICT	22	22	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Human Resources	(3)	(3)	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Procurement	6	6	
Total	(389)	(389)	

Head of Finance and Assets

3.2.27 Employee savings net of vacancy target generate a forecast under spend of £105k.

3.2.28 Loss of external rent income £85K due to properties becoming vacant.

3.2.29 £351k saving on Concessionary Fares due to reimbursement rate being lower than budgeted for.

3.2.30 Offset by net savings of £6k on items below £50k.

Planning & Regeneration Directorate

3.2.31 The RAG status for People, Planning, and Regeneration is Green as the Directorate is reporting an over spend below £50k. The reasons for the variance are explained in the table below.

Service Area	Forecast Variance before Action	Forecast Variance after Action	Narrative
	£,000	£,000	
Director of Planning and Regeneration	(2)	(2)	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Planning	102	102	Non achievement of Building Control and Development Control income (£142k) due to credit crunch offset by net saving on items below £50k.
Head of Regeneration and Development	(53)	(53)	Employee savings net of corporate vacancy target offset by net saving on items below £50k..
Total	47	47	

Assistant Chief Executive

3.2.32 The RAG status for Directorate of Assistant Chief Executive is Red as the Directorate is forecasting an over spend of more than £100k. The reasons for the variance are explained below.

Service Area	Forecast Variance before Action	Forecast Variance after Action	Narrative
	£,000	£,000	
Assistant Chief Executives	(80)	(80)	Vacancy savings in excess of corporate vacancy target
Head of Policy and Community Engagement	223	223	The Community Centres saving of £190k will not be achieved in 2009/10. Negotiations are underway with savings to be achieved in future years.
Head of Performance and Improvement	4	4	Various minor items below £50k
Director of Local Strategic Partnership	1	1	N/A
Chief Executives	10	10	Various minor items below £50k
Total	158	158	

Borough Solicitor

3.2.28. The RAG status for the Borough Solicitor is Green as the Service is reporting an over spend of less than £50k. The reasons for the variance are explained in the table below.

Service Area	Forecast Variance before Action*	Forecast Variance after Action*	Narrative
	£,000	£,000	
Borough Solicitor	30	30	Forecast non achievement of corporate vacancy target
Total	30	30	

Housing Directorate (General Fund)

3.2.29. The RAG status for the Directorate of Housing is Green as the Directorate is reporting an over spend of less than £50k. The reasons for the variance are explained in the table below.

Service Area	Forecast Variance before Action*	Forecast Variance after Action*	Narrative
	£,000	£,000	
Director of Housing	(3)	(3)	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Housing Strategy, Investment and Performance	11	11	Various minor items below £50k
Head of Landlord Services	0	0	N/A
Head of Housing Needs and Support	42	42	Various minor items below £50k
Total	50	50	

Other Areas for Information

3.2.30. As indicated above, managers have already taken action to minimise the overall net impact on Council finances. This includes identifying where there is scope for efficiencies without detriment to public service delivery, seeking additional external funding and capitalisation of specific costs. Managers must continue to rigorously assess areas in which further efficiencies can be achieved. Particular attention should be given to management of the employee establishment.

3.2.31.Improvement Fund

3.2.32. The opening balance on the Improvement Fund Reserve for 2009/10 is £1m.

		£,000
	Improvement Fund Balance as at 01.04.2009	1,000
	Total estimated Improvement Fund balance at 31.03.2010	1,000

3.2.33. Corporate Initiatives (LABGI) Earmarked Reserve

3.2.34. The opening balance on the Corporate Initiatives Reserve for 2009/10 was £351k. The unearmarked element of this reserve has been ring fenced to Regeneration and Development by Council resolution of 26 February 2009.

	£,000
LABGI Balance as at 01.04.2009	351
Royal and Derngate Theatre Trust	-8
<i>Earmarked in 2008/09 B/fwd:</i>	
Fish Market	-26
Leisure Feasibility	-25
Leisure Feasibility – Conditional Element	-30
Car Parking Feasibility	-20
Market Square	-20
Links View Flood Investigation	-3
Total estimated LABGI balance at 31.03.2009	219

3.2.35. An amount of £8k has been drawn down from this Earmarked Reserve in line with the Council resolutions of 26 February 2009.

3.2.36. General Fund Balances

Following the completion of the closure of the year-end accounts 2008/09 the forecast opening General Fund Balance for 2009/10 was revised to £2,006k. This will be subject to the audit process and will be confirmed once the accounts of the authority have been approved by our external auditors.

3.2.37. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

A separate report detailing the HRA position appears elsewhere on the agenda.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 Cabinet is invited to note the report and the actions being taken to contain net expenditure to minimise the impact on the Council's reserves at the end of the financial year.
- 3.3.2 Consideration must be given as to whether further management action can be taken to achieve those savings that have been identified by Budget Managers as unachievable.
- 3.3.3 Options for further constraining expenditure without detriment to front line service delivery must be considered corporately to address the projected net overspend.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 The table at 3.2.4 shows that the budget is forecast to be over spent by £886k after management action and proposed use of reserves.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 This report informs the Cabinet of the forecast revenue budget outturn as at the end of July 2009.
- 4.2.2 There will be an ongoing impact on future year budgets of not achieving savings contained within the 2009/10 budget.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service, and Budget Managers have been consulted.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 Monthly budget monitoring relates to improving the CAA Use of Resources score, which contributes to the priority of being a well-managed organisation that puts the customer at the heart of what we do.

4.7 Other Implications

- 4.7.1 Not applicable

5. Background Papers

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.1 | Council Report | 26 th February 2009 (General Fund Revenue Budget 2009/10 – 2011/12), Cabinet Report of 29 th June 2009 (General Fund Budget Outturn 2008/09) |
| 5.2 | Cabinet Reports | 5 August 2009 Revenue Budget Monitoring Position as at End of May 2009
23 September 2009 Revenue Budget Monitoring Position as at End of June 2009 |

Rebecca Smith, Assistant Head of Finance, ext 8046
Isabell Procter, Director of Finance and Support, ext 8757

Agenda Item 17

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PARAGRAPH(S)3 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A
OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.

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Agenda Item 18

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