

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting, Wednesday, 19th February, 2014
at 2.00 p.m. (Committee Room No. 4)

NOTE: Group Meetings at 1.15 p.m.

A G E N D A

PART ONE

1. To note any items which the Chairman considers to be of an urgent nature.
2. To receive notice from Members who may wish to move any delegated matter non-delegated and which will be decided by a majority of Members present and voting at the meeting.
3. Admission of Public and Press

To consider whether the public and press should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations by Members and/or co-optees of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the revised Code of Conduct, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Members may however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, as well as any other registrable or other interests.

5. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January, 2014 (copy attached) (Pages 1-18).
6. Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members.

FOR DECISION

- (D) 7. Council Finances Quarter 3 2013-2014 (Pages 19-24).

- (R) 8. Marina Village, Future Development Options (Pages 25-27).
- (D) 9. Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Planning Policy Update (Pages 28-30).
- (D) 10. National Landlords' Association Accreditation Scheme (Pages 31-33).
- (D) 11. Licensing Fees - Environmental Health (Pages 34-36).
- (D) 12. Feasibility Study: Business Improvement District for Barrow (Pages 37-39).
- (D) 13. Homelessness Strategy 2014-19 (Pages 40-41).
- (D) 14. Lease Arrangements for Cavendish Park (Pages 42-45).

**NOTE (D) - Delegated
(R) - For Referral to Council**

Membership of Committee
Councillors

Pidduck (Chairman)
Sweeney (Vice-Chairman)
Barlow
Bell
Biggins
Garnett
Graham
Guselli
Hamilton
Irwin
Richardson
Seward

For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting: Wednesday 22nd January, 2014
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Pidduck (Chairman), Sweeney (Vice-Chairman), Barlow, Bell, Biggins, Garnett, Hamilton, Irwin, Seward and Williams.

96 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th December, 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

97 – Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Graham, Guselli and Richardson.

Councillor Williams substituted for Councillor Richardson.

98 – The Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 and Access to Information (Variation) Order 2006

Discussion arising hereon it was

RESOLVED:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 (Minute Nos. 102 and 109) and Paragraph 3 (Minute Nos. 103 and 104) of Part One of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

99 – Housing Management Forum: Recommendations

The recommendations of the Housing Management Forum held on 16th January, 2014 were submitted for consideration.

N.B. The Minutes are reproduced as **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this meeting.

RESOLVED:- That the recommendations of the Housing Management Forum be agreed as follows:-

Housing Maintenance Investment Programme 2014/15

To agree the annual Investment Profile shown at Appendix C of the report.

Scrutiny of Anti-Social Behaviour Policies and Procedures

1. To note the content of the report;

2. To note the four-stage scrutiny process for future scrutiny reviews within the Housing Service;
3. To agree the final draft of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedures which will form the operating basis for management of anti-social behaviour by the Housing Neighbourhood Management Team; and
4. To agree to continue the Service Level Agreement with ASB Action Ltd for 2014/2015.

100 – Local Government Association – Corporate Peer Challenge

The Committee were reminded that it had agreed to support a Peer Challenge in June 2013. The team had visited the Council between 18th and 20th September, 2013. Their report had been placed on the Council's website and could be viewed at www.barrowbc.gov.uk.

The report had raised a number of key issues and in response Officers had prepared an Action Plan explaining how the Council should respond to the various actions proposed. The Committee considered the Action Plan.

RESOLVED:- To agree that the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan be approved.

101 – Efficiencies Grant Projects

The Committee were informed that research and trials of low energy, LED lighting had been completed in a number of Council properties with a view to confirming the suitability of the lighting for a share of the efficiency grant.

The Executive Director reported that the current fittings in the Town Hall were at least five years old and many were in need of re-lamping if not replacement of the fittings. LED technology had improved dramatically over the last couple of years and now performed well compared to existing fluorescent light fittings. Replacement of all fittings in the offices and corridors with LED panels would deliver a saving of 60,000 kwh per year worth nearly £7,000 per annum.

Replacement of all floodlights on the poolside at the Park Leisure Centre with new LED floodlighting would save 7kw per hour whilst also reducing repair costs and improving light levels. These lights had been designed to work in air temperatures of up to 70°C and 60% humidity and had been widely used in Dubai. The replacement floodlights would save 34,640kwh per annum worth nearly £4,000 per annum.

Based on the light fittings proposed for the leisure centre and town hall offices a draft plan for new LED lighting in Barrow Indoor Market would reduce consumption from 400w per fitting to 94w. Further strip lights around the hall could also be replaced with LED equivalents delivering a 50% saving. That would reduce consumption by 33,262 kWh per year worth nearly £3,700 per annum. Introduction of light boxes and LED ribbons could also be used to follow some of

the creative ideas used in the Mall into the main hall enhancing light levels and the appeal of the Market.

RESOLVED:- To approve allocation of the efficiency grant to the following projects:-

1. Changing Town Hall Lights to LED panels - £43,265;
2. New Lighting on Poolside at the Park Leisure Centre - £13,365;
3. New Lighting to the Market Hall, landlord areas - £30,000; and
4. Allocate £40,000 from the efficiencies grant to cover the LED lights already installed on the rooftop car park.

102 – Efficiency Support Grant – Senior Management

The Head of Internal Audit informed the Committee that as a condition of obtaining the Efficiency Support Grant, the Council had committed to consider sharing a Chief Executive and/or Management Board. A detailed evaluation of the potential savings had been prepared independently by Furness Audit.

The Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and Borough Treasurer left the meeting during consideration of the item.

RESOLVED:- (i) To note the report; and

(ii) To agree to continue with the process to investigate further options for shared management arrangements.

103 – Units 9 and 10 James Freel Close – Re-roof

The Executive Director reminded the Committee that Units 9 and 10 James Freel Close had been acquired by the Council under the terms of a North West Development Agency Land Reclamation Programme in 2002.

The units, held for regeneration purposes, were currently occupied by Cumbria Karting (Unit 9) and Dandy's Furniture (Unit 10). The income from the assets was in a 'ring fenced' account outside of the Council's General Fund Account and was to be reinvested in the assets to stimulate regeneration in Barrow.

Following a survey of the building in 2013 it had been identified that the units required a total re-roof. M and P Gadsden Consulting Engineers Limited had been instructed to draw up a schedule of works and carry out a formal tender process to identify a potential roofing contractor. The process had resulted in three submissions.

M and P Gadsden Consulting Engineers Limited recommended acceptance of the Leaffield Projects submission.

RESOLVED:- (i) To note the report; and

(ii) To authorise the Commercial Estate Manager to award the contract to re-roof Units 9 and 10 James Freel Close to Leaffield Projects on the terms reported.

104 – Fell Street Public Convenience Cleaning

The Executive Director informed the Committee that cleaning of the public conveniences at Fell Street in Barrow Town Centre had not been undertaken as part of the Council's buildings cleaning contract which was the case with the other conveniences in the Borough. These conveniences had been cleaned by a local company, who had provided an attendant during daily opening hours.

That arrangement had been in place for approximately 10 years and no formal agreement was in place. The Streetcare Manager had been examining the arrangement in an attempt to reduce the costs associated with the operation at the conveniences and had received an assurance from the company that they could reduce the annual running cost.

Contract Standing Orders allowed contracts to be extended for up to two years where it could be shown that significant financial savings could be made.

RESOLVED:- (i) To approve the extension of the existing informal agreement with the company, through the development of a formal agreement from April 2014 until the end of March 2016, to clean Fell Street conveniences; and

(ii) To note that these conveniences would be included in the wider Council building cleaning contract which would be tendered in 2015 for a start in April 2016.

REFERRED ITEMS

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS ARE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

105 – Housing Revenue Account 2014-2015

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Housing Management Forum held on 16th January, 2014 on the Housing Revenue Account.

N.B. The Minutes are reproduced as **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of the meeting.

RECOMMENDED:- To recommend the Council:-

1. To note the information at (1) of the report;
2. To note the information on balances and Voluntary Repayment Provision at (2) of the report;
3. To note the information in point (3) of the report and agree the 2014/15 budgets as shown in Appendix A of the report;
4. To agree the Dwelling Rent increase of 3.7% at (4) of the report and note the information in Appendix B of the report;
5. To agree the Garage increase of 3.7% at (5) of the report; and

6. To note the information at (6) of the report.

106 – Budget Proposals 2014-2015

The Committee considered a detailed report from the Borough Treasurer regarding the budget proposals for 2014-2015. The General Fund revenue budget had been based on the Budget Strategy that had been agreed on 24th January, 2012; 2014-2015 would be the third year of the four year plan. The Housing Revenue Account for 2014-2015 had been proposed as a balanced budget. The Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2014-2015 had also been included as was the position on reserves and balances.

The Executive Director informed the Committee that a letter had been received from Keep Our Future Afloat Campaign requesting the Council to contribute £5,000 a year for a period of three years to help it deliver strategically important research and deliver information designed to support presentation of a robust resilient business case for continued investment in naval shipbuilding capability aimed at safeguarding UK's ultimate national security and thousands of jobs shipbuilding provides locally.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To agree the proposed budget consultation process as referred to in the report;
2. To note that the Budget Council was to be held on 4th March, 2014 at 5.30 p.m;
3. To agree to contribute £5,000 a year for a period of three years to Keep Our Future Afloat Campaign (KOFAC) from reserves; and

To recommend the Council:-

4. To approve the revised 2013-2014 General Fund revenue budget as £12,769,580 together with a contribution to reserves of £414,570;
5. To approve the creation of five Trainee posts, together with the required movements in reserves as set out in Section 3;
6. To set the 2014-2015 General Fund revenue budget as £10,638,490 including £93,640 for parish precepts, together with a contribution to reserves of £116,440 and a 1.9% increase in the borough element of the Council Tax;
7. To agree the items included within the 2014-2015 budget as set out in Sections 6.2, 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8;
8. To agree the prices increases referred to in Section 6.11 and that car parking prices were not increased for 2014-2015;
9. To agree the movements in reserves set out in Sections 6.12 and 6.13;

10. To decline the Council Tax Freeze Grant offered for 2014-2015 referred to in Section 6.15;
11. To approve the Housing Revenue Account budget and the individual recommendations contained in the report referred in Section B;
12. To approve the Capital Programme for 2013-2014 to 2016-2017 as referred to in Section D; and
13. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 as referred to in Section E together with the borrowing Approval Limit of £55m.

107 – Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Uprating

The Borough Treasurer reminded the Committee that the Council had adopted the Local Council Tax Reduction Default Scheme for 2013-2014 and again for 2014-2015.

For 2013-2014 Statutory Instrument 2012/2886 had set out the Default Scheme which continued to use the same data for assessments as used for Housing Benefit determinations.

In his written statement to Parliament on 5th December 2013, the Minister of State for Pensions had announced his proposals for the social security benefit rates that would apply from April 2014. There would be no Statutory Instrument issued for the Default Scheme for Council Tax Support to uprate allowances as that was now a matter for individual billing authorities; these were Local Schemes.

The uprating of Housing Benefit for 2014-2015 had been published in the Housing Benefit Circular A24/2013 (revised), issued by the DWP in December 2013. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-benefit-for-local-authorities-circulars>. The Committee recommended applying the uprating of Housing Benefit for the purposes of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. That continued the effect of applying the Default Scheme and meant that Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support were determined on the same underlying basis. It was proposed that the Scheme be adopted as a policy so that the annual uprating could be applied to Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support each year.

RECOMMENDED:- To recommend the Council to approve the policy of applying the annual uprating issued for Housing Benefit, to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

108 – Armed Forces Covenant – Long Term Empty Premium

The Borough Treasurer reminded the Committee that on 19th September, 2012 it had agreed a number of technical changes to Council Tax discounts and premiums. Those changes had been implemented from 1st April, 2013, to mitigate the costs of adopting the default Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

A case had arisen concerning the premium charged on a long term empty property owned by Armed Forces personnel. The 50% long term empty premium had been applied to the Council Tax charge for the property, as it was applied to all long term empties.

Given that armed forces personnel stationed away from home or still serving would have a restricted amount of time to work on an empty property and as a signatory of the armed forces covenant, Members were recommended to vary the application of the premium and not apply that to properties owned by armed forces personnel that were liable for a long term empty premium and to apply that retrospectively from 1st April, 2013.

As an indication of the costs involved, the Band D element of Council Tax attributable to the Council (unparished) was £212.89 for 2013-2014, so the 50% premium would be £106.45. It was not known how many properties that may apply to but it was not believed to be many.

RECOMMENDED:- To recommend to Council that the long term empty premium be not applied to properties owned by Armed Forces personnel that were liable for a long term empty premium and to apply that retrospectively from 1st April, 2013.

109 – Establishment – Budget 2014-2015

The Executive reported that there were a number of establishment changes that had been included in the proposed General Fund revenue budget for 2014-2015. These were set out in the report that was considered by the Committee.

The Deputy Executive Director and Borough Treasurer left the meeting during consideration of the item.

RECOMMENDED:- Subject to consultations with recognised unions, to recommend the Council:-

1. To agree the voluntary redundancy of the Deputy Executive Director with an effective date of 31/08/2014;
2. To approve the appointment of the Borough Treasurer to the post of Director of Resources effective from 01/04/2014;
3. To approve the appointment of the Housing Manager to the post of Assistant Director – Housing effective from 01/04/2014;
4. To approve the appointment of the Deputy Monitoring Officer (the Democratic Services Manager) as Monitoring Officer effective from 01/04/2014; and
5. To approve the revised grades as set out within the report including the deletion and establishment of new posts.

The meeting ended at 3.40 p.m.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 16th January, 2014
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Barlow, Irwin, Johnston and Pointer.

Tenant Representatives:- Mr M. Burton, Mr A. McIntosh and Mr W. Ward.

40 – Appointment of Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman, nominations had been invited for Chairman for this meeting only.

It was moved by Councillor Irwin and seconded by Councillor Pointer that Councillor Barlow be appointed as Chairman for this meeting only.

RESOLVED:- To agree to appoint Councillor Barlow as Chairman for this meeting only.

COUNCILLOR BARLOW IN THE CHAIR

41 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th November, 2013 were taken as read and confirmed.

42 – Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Hamilton (Chairman) and Williams.

43 – Housing Maintenance Investment Programme 2014/15

The Housing Manager submitted a report to agree the spend profile for the 2014/15 Housing Maintenance Investment Plan. The plan included the resources available to respond to day to day repair requests, void properties and the ongoing upgrading of the main components of properties.

The principles of the asset management Plan were to:-

- Ensure the Council achieved the Decent Homes Standard;
- The aspirations of tenants were considered and incorporated within the plans; and
- To work collaboratively with other housing providers and contractors to improve delivery and responsive repairs service.

The upgrading of key components such as central heating systems, bathroom upgrades and kitchen upgrades were ahead of the agreed targets. Additional

resources were also agreed at the Housing Management Forum meeting on 13th June, 2013 to further increase the rate of replacement of these components.

Details of progress against Targets would be available for the next Housing Management Forum meeting along with proposals of which properties should be targeted.

Progress on delivery throughout the year would continue to be reported to this Forum on a regular basis through the Information Report.

Suggested Investment Profiles for 2014/15

The Housing Manager submitted a proposed investment profile for 2014/15 which is attached at **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

The proposals were based on the following resources:-

• Maintenance Allowance (£1,360 per property)	:	£3,650,294
• Major Repairs (£716 per property)	:	£1,922,000
Total		<u>£5,572,294</u>

With reference to Appendix C attached to these Minutes the Housing Manager identified a number of changes on the Plan which differed from previous years:-

- Stock Condition Survey: It was normal practice to complete a stock condition survey every five years. However, good progress had been made against the targets for the upgrading of key components and it would be appropriate to complete a new survey during the year to ensure resources were targeted appropriately in future years.
- Re-pointing both Houses and Flats: resources had been included as a specific item. This reflected one of the objectives to keep homes “warm and watertight”. During the current year the Council had carried out a re-pointing scheme but it had become apparent that a number of properties, particularly on exposed locations required work. It would be appropriate to tackle this issue on a scheme basis rather than an individual property basis which had generally been the case over the recent past.
- Window Refurbishment and Replacement: resources had been included as a specific item. All properties except a very small number where it was not appropriate, had UPVC double glazed windows. They were now some years old and the Council were aware of failures in certain types of window and locations.
- Communal Lighting and Doors: additional resources were identified during 2013/14 to start to replace such fittings in specific areas. These resources would enable the process of communal door replacement to continue and incorporate the opportunity to consider energy efficient lighting arrangements where it was appropriate.

- Fences and Gates: additional resources were identified during 2013/14 to carry out improvements. These resources would enable an ongoing programme to be developed.
- Garages: additional resources were identified during 2013/14 to carry out improvements. These resources would enable an ongoing programme to be developed.
- Void Major Works: resources had been increased for 2014/15. As previously identified, in some circumstances it would be appropriate to complete additional work on a property over and above the normal void repairs.
- Re-Roofing of Houses and Communal Flat Roofs: resources had been included to commence a replacement of problematic flat roofs on communal entrances and houses.

Except for the resources for the Stock Condition Survey all other items identified would be on-going areas of expenditure.

Delivery of Cyclical, Major Improvement and Capitalised Work

Delivery of the ongoing upgrading schemes would continue through the arrangements previously agreed with Cumbria Housing Partners. There were a number of “new” areas of work included in the Plan and the Housing Manager would be considering the options for delivering these works through the Cumbria Housing Framework or on an individual scheme by scheme basis.

RECOMMENDED:- To agree the Housing Investment Plan for 2014/15 as attached at **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

44 – Scrutiny of Anti-Social Behaviour Policies and Procedures

The Housing Manager submitted a report to provide Members with an update on progress of the Scrutiny Review of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedures. The Scrutiny Project commenced in September 2013 with the final draft of policy and procedures completed in December 2013. Copies of the final drafts were appended to the report. The Tenants Scrutiny Working Party agreed the scope and timeframe of the project based on a four stage approach:-

- Stage 1: Fact Finding;
- Stage 2: Further investigation, compare and challenge;
- Stage 3: Analysis and recommendations; and
- Stage 4: Implementation and review.

A thorough review of the policy and procedures had now been completed by Tenants Scrutiny Working Party in partnership with ASB Consultants - ASB Action Ltd. As part of the review consideration was given to information obtained from the ‘Star Survey’ and a good practice review of the organisations service literature and website. A ‘Tenants Audit’ had also been completed to ensure the views of tenants who had been victims of anti-social behaviour had been incorporated into

the 'scrutiny process' to ensure the Council learned from any 'positive and negative comments'.

The Housing Service was committed to being accountable to its residents and ensuring greater transparency in the way it operated. The Housing Service believed its new residents' scrutiny arrangements enabled those residents involved to gain a real understanding of how the Housing Neighbourhood Management Team managed cases of anti-social behaviour and also how easily accessible expert advice and assistance could be obtained through the 'Service Level Agreement' with ASB Action Ltd which was vital to the success of the service.

The Housing Service Neighbourhood Management Team would implement the new policy statement and procedures from January 2014. A further area to be examined as part of the wider service review was:-

- Tenancy Agreement; and
- Continual improvement to the website and service literature.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. Note the content of the report;
2. Note the four-stage scrutiny process for future scrutiny reviews within the Housing Service;
3. To agree the final draft of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedures which would form the operating basis for management of anti-social behaviour by the Housing Neighbourhood Management Team; and
4. To agree to continue the Service Level Agreement with ASB Action Ltd for 2014/2015.

REFERRED ITEMS

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS ARE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

45 – Housing Revenue Account 2014/2015

The Business Support Manager submitted a report to agree the Housing Revenue Account Budget for the coming financial year 2014/15. Information about the Expected Outturn Budget and balances for the current year was also included.

The current year Outturn and proposed 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account budget is attached at **Appendix B** to the Minutes.

Previous assumptions on rent increases were based on guidance that stated that the annual RPI +0.5% plus an additional uplift to bring Local Authority rents up to market (Target) rents by 2015/16 should be used and rents within the HRA 30-year business plan were predicated at 3%.

Guidelines now suggested that the Council should use the annual CPI (2.7%) + 1% to determine future rent increases. In November 2013 the Housing Management Forum agreed that the Council could bring forward convergence to Target (market rents) in 2014/15 and dispense with Target rents in any future rent considerations. Attached at **Appendix C** to these Minutes are examples of the effect of applying the increases to a range of property types.

The Committee also agreed that Garage rents increased at the same % rate as dwellings

It was expected to manage expenditure incurred in maintaining tenancies and stock from the rents collected and it was suggested that any surpluses be applied across the following:-

- (1) debt repayment;
- (2) increased investment in stock; and
- (3) investment projects where the need or the return was clearly identifiable.

1. Expected Outturn Budget 2013/14

The outturn for the year forecasts a net surplus of £10,370. Key factors were:-

- HRA Income would be higher than expectations;
- Water charges, Repair and Leasehold Major Work recharges account for the increased revenue under other services and facilities;
- Water repayment charges also account for the above budget expenditure;
- Right to Buy sales were on course to meet budget expectations leaving a dwellings stock of 2685 by 31st March, 2014;
- Increased time taken to relet voids, particularly 2 bedroom flats, had reduced dwelling rent income; and
- Tenancy terminations had increased by 40% ytd which was mainly attributed to under/over occupation movement.

2. Balances on the Expected Outturn for 2013/14

The Expected Outturn Budget 2013/14 was likely to result in the following movement in balances.

2.1 Major Repair Reserve balance as at 31st March, 2013 : £130,562

The above funds were not expected to be spent by year end and would carry forward.

2.2 Housing Revenue Account balance 31st March, 2013 : £1,991,094

2.3 Breakdown of Balance on Account

Housing Revenue Account as at 31st March, 2013	: £1,991,094
(of which the £788k was the Maintenance element)	
Forecast Surplus 2013/14	: <u>£ 10,370</u>

Estimated Balance at year end : **£2,001,464**

2.4 Voluntary Repayment Provision

Provision as at 31st March, 2013 : **£1,739,934**

Set Aside for 2013/14 : **£1,069,970**

Provision at year end : **£2,809,904**

3. Proposed HRA Budget 2014/15

In proposing the budget for 2014/15 the following factors had been taken into account:-

- 3.1 The Settlements Payments Determination provided a budgetary and business planning framework for rental income and management of tenancy, major repair and maintenance expenditure. However, guidelines now suggested increases in line with the annual CPI of 2.7% + 1% raising gross rent income to £10.46 million (including convergence uplift).
- 3.2 Bringing forward convergence adds another £94k to rent income which was marginally less than it would have been a year later. The additional increase, when applied to individual properties, remained within the £2 limit (Constraint).
- 3.3 The 30 year business plan expects an annual Set Aside of £869,970; however the Set Aside for 2014/15 would be £295,690 higher making a total Set Aside for 2014/15 of £1,165,800.
- 3.4 The Welfare Reforms had had a knock on effect on arrears and loss of rental income because of the increased number of voids. The bad debt provision would need to be increased by £33k.
- 3.5 The net income from water charge collection would be £188,912.
- 3.6 The Housing Manager proposed that the Council opened up a training opportunity and career path through Housing Service by way of an apprenticeship. It would be Scale 1 total annual cost of £18,000 and whilst provided for within the proposed budget the Council would hope to work with Cumbria Housing Partnership to recover some of the cost.
- 3.7 It was necessary to carry out Housing Stock survey to update and inform the programme of major works improvements at an estimated cost of £30k.
- 3.8 The budget had allowed for investment projects to be considered which improved the appearance and safety of certain neighbourhoods and this was further considered within the Maintenance budget.
- 3.9 There was a further need to employ a Planned Maintenance Project Manager on SO2 at total cost of £33,000 to manage and co-ordinate the various investment projects and a Mobile Caretaking handyman to carry out minor

repairs to voids and around the estates on Scale 1 with a total annual cost of £18,000.

- 3.10 The Housing Department conducted a walkabout of the estates looking at repairs and overall condition during 2013/14. The Housing Management Forum Chairman had asked that bi-annual site inspections for the whole Forum be organised for 2014/15. Provision had been made within the budget to accommodate the cost.

4 Dwelling Rents

- 4.1 The effect for this Authority was as follows:-

Calculation for 2013/14

CPI in September 2012 = 2.7% + 1% = 3.1% increase to Barrow Borough Council rents

Plus or minus a maximum of £2.00 to move the property to its individual target rent.

	52 Weeks	48 Weeks	Average Rent increase over 48 weeks
2013/14	£71.40	£77.35	
2014/15	£75.34	£81.62	
Increase	5.52%	5.52%	

Attached at **Appendix C** to the Minutes are further details of the resultant rents for different property types. Rents on an individual property basis would differ.

- 4.2 The Housing Major Repairs and Maintenance budget had been increased to allow for additional stock investment and environmental improvements and allowed a total £2,075 per dwelling based on a stock level of 2,685.

5 Other Charges

- 5.1 Garage Charges

It was approved by the Housing Management Forum on 28th November, 2013 to apply the same uprate to garage rents. Therefore the proposed budget included a 3.7% increase on garage charges which generated £7,547. The effect on individual garage charges would be as follows:-

	2012/13	+3.7%
Garage rate 1 (27)	£6.43	£6.67
Garage rate 2 (459)	£8.88	£9.21
Increase	£203,977	£211,525

There was a 160 strong waiting list for garages with few vacancies and the proposed new rent appeared on par with the private sector.

- 5.2 The Housing Department had recently reviewed the service and facility charges for supported, furnished and dispersed properties and concluded that they were about right. The Housing Manager suggested that they were left as was provided and continued to recover their cost.

6 Business Improvement Initiatives

Initiatives for 2014/15 would include:-

- Moving the Housing Service to the Town Hall and using the opportunity to redesign the structure, design and processes to fit in and improve service delivery;
- Reduce the management effort of administrating and managing the Responsive Repair contract in particular the way that the payments were structured and processed;
- In consultation with tenants develop a more meaningful Rent Strategy which outlined how rent increases were determined in the future and how the collection and arrears service and processes could be improved; and
- Maximise the online technology to meet customers' needs.

RECOMMENDED:- That the Executive Committee agree the following:-

1. Note information at point (1) of the report;
2. Note the information regarding balances and Voluntary Repayment Provision at point (2) of the report;
3. Note the information in point (3) of the report and agree the 2014/15 budget as shown at Appendix A of the report;
4. Agree the Dwelling Rent increase of 3.7% at point (4) of the report and note the information at Appendix B of the report;
5. Agree the increase of Garage charges of 3.7% as show at point (5) of the report; and
6. Note the information at point (6) of the report.

The meeting closed at 2.50 p.m.

Housing Maintenance Investment Plan: 2014/15

APPENDIX A

Total Budget £5,572,294

Routine Property Repairs

£1,085,671	Tenant Demand Repairs
-£9,315	<i>Routine Repairs Income</i>
-£10,000	<i>Rechargeable Repair Income</i>

Void Property Repairs

£238,243	Void Property Repairs
-£15,000	<i>Void Repairs Income</i>

£1,289,599

Cyclical Repairs

£99,049	Gas Servicing
£19,176	Door Entry Maintenance
£115,880	External Decoration
£80,700	Electrical Testing
£14,485	Ground Maintenance
£11,588	TV Aerials
£30,000	Consultancy Fees
£7,800	Legal Fees
-£17,279	<i>Service Charge Income</i>

£361,399

Major Improvement Work

£100,000	Disabled Adaptations
£5,000	Asbestos Surveys
£45,000	Decoration (After Major Works)
£189,600	Fencing and Gates
£238,000	Repointing - Flats
£464,000	Repointing - Houses
£120,465	Window Refurbishment
£392,000	Window Replacements
£34,200	Communal Lighting
£62,500	Communal Doors
£48,600	Garage Improvements
£9,679	Shop Improvements
£5,000	Community Centres
£25,000	EEB Improvements
£300,752	Void Major Works
£30,000	Stock Condition Survey
-£70,500	<i>Major Repair Income</i>

£1,999,296

MRA - Capitalised Improvement Work

£150,000	Rewires (CHP)
£525,000	Heating and Insulation (CHP)
£360,000	Bathrooms (CHP)
£500,000	Kitchens (CHP)
£255,000	Re-Roofing - Houses
£132,000	Communal Flat Roofs

CHP = Cumbria Housing Partners

£1,922,000

APPENDIX B

Housing Revenue Account				
Budget 2014-2015				
	Actual 2012-2013	Original 2013-2014	Revised 2013-2014	Budget 2014-2015
Expenditure				
Repairs and maintenance	2,178,955	2,967,370	2,967,370	3,650,300
Supervision and management	2,171,720	2,300,510	3,022,860	3,204,620
Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	3,395	2,300	4,460	3,700
Negative HRA Subsidy payable	1,896	0	0	0
Depreciation and impairment of dwellings	1,822,044	1,659,770	1,659,770	1,660,950
Depreciation and impairment of non-dwelling assets	128,926	127,010	127,010	126,460
Debt management costs	13,897	15,560	15,560	13,910
Movement in the allowance for bad debts	145,582	213,480	213,480	247,290
Total Expenditure	6,466,415	7,286,000	8,010,510	8,907,230
Income				
Dwelling rents	(9,493,714)	(9,869,530)	(9,798,860)	(10,280,770)
Non-dwelling rents	(343,109)	(336,800)	(336,960)	(348,610)
Charges for services and facilities	(238,384)	(206,090)	(975,880)	(1,136,440)
Contributions from other Local Authorities	(590)	0	0	0
Total Income	(10,075,797)	(10,412,420)	(11,111,700)	(11,765,820)
Net Total	(3,609,382)	(3,126,420)	(3,101,190)	(2,858,590)
HRA services' share of Corporate and Democratic Core	226,391	384,320	348,720	246,590
HRA share of other Non Distributed Costs	(813)	0	0	(820)
Net (Income)/Expenditure for HRA Services	(3,383,804)	(2,742,100)	(2,752,470)	(2,612,820)
HRA share of operating income and expenditure:				
Gain or (loss) on sale of HRA non-current assets	(327,035)	0		0
Interest payable and similar charges	920,400	950,290	950,290	945,930
Pensions interest cost and expected return on pension assets	186,000	158,000	158,000	190,000
(Surplus) or deficit for the year on HRA services	(2,604,439)	(1,633,810)	(1,644,180)	(1,476,890)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations				
Reversal of depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(1,659,763)	(1,659,770)	(1,659,770)	(1,660,950)
Reversal of revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(162,281)	(127,010)	(127,010)	0
Reversal of amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale	(297,206)	0	0	0
Add the voluntary provision for the financing of capital investment	1,739,934	1,069,970	1,069,970	1,165,800
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal	624,240	0	0	0
Reversal of Major Repairs Reserve credited to the HRA	1,904,924	2,265,920	2,265,920	1,922,000
Debt rescheduling premium and discounts released	35,679	33,360	33,360	(1,030)
Reversal of technical items relating to retirement benefits	(356,869)	(158,000)	(158,000)	(190,000)
Employer's pension costs	313,686	209,340	209,340	241,070
Reversal of accumulated absences charges	(7,228)	0	0	0
Total Adjustments	2,135,116	1,633,810	1,633,810	1,476,890
(Surplus)/Deficit for the Year	(469,323)	0	(10,370)	0

APPENDIX C

Sample Rents 2014-15										
Archetype		No. Beds	Area/Sub Area	Constrained 2011/12	Constrained 2012/13	Constrained 2013/14	Constrained 2014/15	48 Week Difference	% Change	52 week 2014/15
House	End Terrace	2	ORM/OR1	£70.82	£75.36	£77.92	£81.28	£3.36	4.31%	£75.03
Ground Floor Flat	Low Rise	1	ORM/OR1	£58.78	£62.53	£64.65	£67.41	£2.76	4.27%	£62.22
Ground Floor Flat	Medium Rise	3	CEN/CEN	£74.79	£79.50	£82.11	£85.46	£3.35	4.08%	£78.88
Bungalow	Semi Detached	1	ORM/GRI	£66.57	£70.63	£72.84	£75.55	£2.71	3.72%	£67.74
House	Mid Terrace	3	WAL/NWA	£79.79	£85.61	£89.24	£94.57	£5.33	5.97%	£87.29
Bungalow	End Terrace	1	WAL/NWA	£66.57	£70.63	£72.84	£75.55	£2.71	3.72%	£67.74
Ground Floor Flat	Medium Rise	2	ROO/NBN	£68.30	£73.08	£76.00	£83.13	£7.13	9.38%	£73.97
Upper Floor Flat	Medium Rise	2	ROO/NBN	£67.60	£72.53	£75.61	£80.13	£4.52	5.98%	£73.97
House	Mid Terrace	2	CEN/HIN	£71.27	£76.10	£78.96	£82.91	£3.95	5.00%	£76.53
House	End Terrace	3	ROO/ROO	£76.42	£81.80	£85.09	£89.78	£4.69	5.51%	£82.88
Ground Floor Flat	Medium Rise	1	CEN/CEN	£60.57	£64.44	£67.78	£71.46	£3.68	5.43%	£65.96
Upper Floor Flat	Low Rise	1	WAL/NWA	£60.64	£65.09	£67.89	£72.03	£4.14	6.10%	£66.49
House	Semi Detached	2	ROO/GGS	£72.85	£77.77	£80.26	£84.23	£3.97	4.95%	£77.75
House	Mid Terrace	4	ROO/GGS	£83.86	£89.78	£94.52	£100.50	£5.98	6.33%	£92.77
Upper Floor Flat	Low Rise	3	ROO/NBN	£72.74	£78.25	£81.79	£87.12	£5.33	6.52%	£80.42
House	End Terrace	5	ROO/GGS	£91.41	£97.85	£101.77	£107.39	£5.62	5.52%	£99.13
Bungalow	Mid Terrace	3	ORM/OR2	£82.51	£87.99	£91.18	£95.51	£4.33	4.75%	£88.17
Bungalow	End Terrace	3	ORM/OR2	£83.21	£88.55	£91.57	£95.51	£3.94	4.30%	£88.17
Upper Floor Flat	Low Rise	2	ORM/OR2	£66.11	£70.84	£73.77	£78.01	£4.24	5.75%	£72.01
Ground Floor Flat	Low Rise	2	ORM/GRI	£69.06	£73.95	£76.95	£81.23	£4.28	5.56%	£74.99
House	Semi Detached	3	WAL/WAL	£81.82	£87.44	£90.80	£95.51	£4.71	5.19%	£88.17
Upper Floor Flat	Medium Rise	1	CEN/LHI	£58.83	£63.05	£66.05	£69.46	£3.41	5.16%	£64.12
House	End Terrace	4	ROO/ROO	£83.32	£89.25	£92.89	£98.15	£5.26	5.66%	£90.60
House	Semi Detached	5	ROO/ROO	£97.76	£105.31	£109.94	£117.70	£7.76	7.06%	£108.65
Bungalow	Semi Detached	3	ROO/NBN	£83.21	£88.55	£91.57	£95.51	£3.94	4.30%	£88.17
House	Semi Detached	4	DAL/DAL	£88.90	£94.95	£98.55	£103.55	£5.00	5.07%	£95.58
Bungalow	Semi Detached	2	DAL/DAL	£74.24	£78.88	£81.43	£84.67	£3.24	3.98%	£78.16
Bungalow	Mid Terrace	1	DAL/DAL	£64.49	£68.98	£71.70	£75.05	£3.35	4.67%	£69.74

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		(D) Agenda Item 7
Date of Meeting:	19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer:	Borough Treasurer	
<p>Title: Council Finances Quarter 3 2013-2014</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>This report provides a summary of the Council's finances for 2013-2014, as at the end of December 2013. The report includes all revenue, capital and treasury items.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>To note the report.</p>		

Report

A. General Fund revenue budget

The General Fund revenue budget was last reported on 22nd January, 2014, as £12.77m. This has not altered and remains the outturn forecast for the year.

B. General Fund spend to date

The direct costs net of external income for the period 1st April to 31st December, 2013, excluding housing benefits, is set out below:

Quarter 3	Actual £000	Budget £000	Year to date
Staff pay	3,321	4,503	74%
Staff other costs	104	165	63%
Transport costs	75	108	69%
Property costs	1,479	2,091	71%
Supplies and services	2,118	2,597	82%
Contracts	4,889	6,575	74%
External income	(5,002)	(6,978)	72%
Total	6,984	9,061	77%

There are no significant variances to report. The percentage spent against the budget is within tolerance of the 75% mark apart from 'staff other costs'. These are for training costs incurred in the second half of the financial year, in line with term times and the organisation of management training.

C. Main Income Streams

The Council's main income streams in terms of value are:

Commercial property rents (excluding ring-fenced properties) – the income budgeted for the first three quarters of 2013-2014 has been achieved and in addition changes in tenancies and rents has resulted in a cumulative net saving of £24k.

Cemetery and Crematorium services – the income for the first three quarters of 2013-2014 is £502k. At this point last year the income was £431k.

Car parking pay and display sales – the income for the first three quarters of 2013-2014 is £458k. At this point last year the income was £462k.

Park Leisure Centre facilities – the income for the first three quarters of 2013-2014 is £465k. At this point last year the income was £456k.

D. Treasury Management

The capital programme for 2013-2014 was last reported on 22nd January, 2014, as £9.77m and includes borrowing of £2.68m.

The Council's existing borrowing of £39.5m is all fixed rate PWLB loans maturing over the mid to long term. The debt belongs to the General Fund £13.4m and the HRA £26.1m. No loans are maturing in 2013-2014.

The interest on these loans is payable in six monthly instalments, linked to the drawdown of the principal:

Date	Interest £000	General Fund £000	HRA £000
28 th September 2013	236	-	236
1 st October 2013	489	292	197
28 th March 2014	236	-	236
1 st April 2014	489	292	197
Total	1,450	584	866

The limit for external debt for 2013-2014 is £58m and this has not been exceeded.

The interest received on matured temporary surplus cash deposits for the first three quarters of 2013-2014 is £52k. As at 31st December, 2013, the Council's funds were placed with:

Financial institution	£m
Building Societies:	
• National Counties	2
• Nottingham	2
• Skipton	1

• West Bromwich	2
• Manchester	1
• Principality	1.5
• Cumberland	2
Salford City Council	1.5
Total of fixed term deposits	13
HSBC overnight deposit account	1.95
Total funds invested	14.95

E. Reserves

The reserves brought forward and the projected balances at 31st March, 2014, were last reported on 22nd January, 2014. These have not altered and are:

Reserve	31/03/2013	Movement	31/03/2014
	£000	£000	£000
VAT exemption	250	-	250
Insurance excesses	80	- 20	60
Uninsured losses	500	-	500
Public buildings	725	- 260	465
Trainees (ex. pay and grading)	176	74	250
Cremator relining	45	-	45
Festival Fund	12	- 12	-
Market Refurbishment	51	- 51	-
Sports Facilities	56	-	56
Grants to External Bodies	241	- 183	58
Welfare Support	-	245	245
CCTV	138	- 50	88
Budget Setting Support	1,800	- 600	1,200
Restructuring	1,456	1,125	2,581
Specific Grants (ring-fenced)	1,071	- 498	573
Woodbridge Haven (ring-fenced)	22	- 22	-
James Freel Close (ring-fenced)	494	- 72	422
General Reserve	1,000	-	1,000
Total	8,117	- 324	7,793

Summary	31/03/2013	Movement	31/03/2014
	£000	£000	£000
Committed	5,529	268	5,798
Ring-fenced	1,588	- 592	995
General Reserve	1,000	-	1,000
Total	8,117	- 324	7,793

F. General Fund Balance

The General Fund balance is held for potential emergencies, unexpected events or unbudgeted statutory expenditure. The balance also serves to cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing.

The General Fund balance at 31st March, 2013 was £2m and this is not expected to change during 2013-2014.

G. Efficiency Support Grant

The Council has received £1.175m of Efficiency Support Grant (ESG) for 2013-2014 and has been allocated, but not yet received a further £176k for going further and faster than the targets for 2013 in the ESG business plan.

The ESG is currently allocated to:

- Capital investment to reduce costs and increase revenue; £600k
- Invest to save to reduce costs; £127k
- Investment in efficiency savings to reduce costs; £424k (includes further and faster)
- Contract negotiations to reduce costs; £200k

The projects and purchases will be commissioned in accordance with the aims of the ESG business plan to achieve efficiency savings by reducing costs or increasing revenue.

H. Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account budget was last reported on 22nd January, 2014, as a balanced budget. This has not altered and remains the outturn forecast for the year.

I. Housing Revenue Account spend to date

The direct costs net of external income for the period 1st April to 31st December, 2013, is set out below:

Quarter 3	Actual £000	Budget £000	Year to date
Income			
Dwelling rents	(7,552)	(9,799)	77%
Other income	(1,131)	(1,313)	86%
Expenditure			
Supervision and management	1,828	2,602	70%
Repairs and maintenance	2,283	2,967	77%
Total	(4,572)	(5,543)	82%

There are no significant variances to report. The other income is ahead of the 75% straight profile as leaseholder service charges are all raised in April and most of the tenant's water service charges have been raised for the full year.

J. Collection Fund

Council Tax – the percentage of Council Tax collected at 31st December, 2013, is 82.9%. For the previous year this was 83.31%.

NNDR – the percentage of NNDR collected at 31st December, 2013, is 89.05%. For the previous year this was 86.97%.

K. Write Offs

The write offs approved under delegated authority for the period 1st April to 31st December, 2013, are:

	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Quarter 3 £000	Total £000
Housing rents	2	16	32	50
NNDR	17	(6)	-	11
Council Tax	-	97	-	97
Total	19	107	32	158

The write offs for 2012-2013 were:

	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Quarter 3 £000	Quarter 4 £000	Total £000
Housing rents	24	3	7	1	35
NNDR	-	67	19	42	128
Council Tax	-	191	-	19	210
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	44	44
Total	24	261	26	106	417

The bad debt provisions remain sufficient to cover the remaining debts.

L. Discretionary Housing Payments

The Council received £100k from the DWP to fund applications for Discretionary Housing Payments. The awards from the fund made for the period 1st April to 31st December, 2013, are:

	Number of awards	Amount awarded £000
Under occupancy	112	24
LHA restrictions	54	15
Benefit cap	3	2
Other assistance	71	18
Total	240	59

M. Medium Term Financial Plan

There are no updates to the Medium Term Financial Plan since it was last reported on 22nd January, 2014. The Medium Term Financial Plan will be fully updated following the approval of the 2014-2015 budget and will continue to be updated quarterly to reflect any major changes as far as possible.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(R) Agenda Item 8
Date of Meeting: 19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Executive Director	
<p>Title: Marina Village, Future Development Options</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>Your current policy is to pursue concurrent development of the residential and marina elements of Marina Village. The marina will require significant public sector funding and no timescale for its implementation can be given. There appears to be an opportunity to put the residential elements of scheme, excluding land close to the marina, out to market providing this is done on a commercially pragmatic basis to reflect the risk in the house building market in Barrow.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>To recommend the Council:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To agree to market the residential element of the Marina Village site, excluding the waterfront land, in accordance with the process outlined in the report; and 2. To agree that the sum of £50,000 be allocated from reserves for this process. 	

Report

The Council's policy is to support the development of Marina Village as a transformational project in the Borough. In practice this has meant you have continued to assemble the small number of privately owned sites by voluntary agreement. Significant progress has been made with this and the Council controls 95% of the required land. Six privately owned plots of land in three ownerships remain to be acquired. Negotiations with one landowner, owning three of the plots are well advanced. In my opinion it is almost certain the Council will have to rely on compulsory purchase of land to assemble the whole site but the criteria required to prosecute a successful Compulsory Purchase Order – particularly the requirement to demonstrate viability of any scheme, are unlikely to be met for the foreseeable future.

The marina element of the proposal requires creation of a new dock access in addition to marina infrastructure. The estimated cost of this is around £15M and will require substantial public sector investment, and given the withdrawal

of government funding from regeneration initiatives, I cannot give members any assurance about when this element of the scheme would progress.

Marina Village has always planned to be implemented as a comprehensive development with the residential and marina elements being developed concurrently and this is the approach set out in the Barrow Port Area Action Plan. De-coupling the two elements and pursuing each element independently would be a new policy for the Council.

Whilst I cannot give you a timescale for progressing the marina there is potentially more opportunity to bring forward the residential elements of the scheme. In particular it is significant that the Council controls the whole Salthouse Road frontage of the site. This allows the Council control over phasing and planning. In addition, nationally, there is greater activity from residential developers than at any time over the last five years. Clearly this is relative and the Barrow housing market remains fragile, in part reflecting the national position and there is minimal interest from the house building sector for large speculative outright acquisitions of land. Again, Council control of the Marina Village residential site places it in an advantageous position by enabling it to reflect the risk in the market by flexibility around the scale, nature and timing of land receipts. This is clearly subject to any renegotiation of NWDA offer letter conditions which would be required.

I am aware that Members are concerned that bringing forward the residential element of Marina Village should not prejudice your longer term aspirations for delivering the marina. I have taken advice on this matter and on this basis I do not believe that would be the case. The additional land values arising from a marina would reduce significantly with distance and an area of land (including the remaining plots to be acquired) would be excluded from the residential proposal at this stage. This approach also requires reduced infrastructure costs as the current port access road would need to be planned, but not constructed until later phases of the residential development.

In summary, the advice I received has concluded that if the residential site of Marina Village excluding the waterfront is taken to the market in a commercially pragmatic manner it will attract developer interest. In order to achieve this, preliminary market testing would need to be carried out to determine regional and national house builder views of the Barrow market and the Marina Village site. Whilst a developer may be attracted by the preliminary marketing stage, its main purpose is to inform the principles of a development agreement likely to be of interest to developers. This would be followed by a formal marketing exercise.

The process set out briefly above will require significant funding. I am recommending a built in phased approach it seems reasonable to fund the market testing element first with additional preliminary reports to Members if further resources are required.

(i) Legal Implications

If the Council were successful in attracting a developer the Development Agreement would be a legally binding document.

(ii) Risk Assessment

Large areas of the site are contaminated from former industrial uses. Development would remove this potential risk.

(iii) Financial Implications

£50,000 would be required to carry out the first phase of the study.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Correspondence held by the Executive Director

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 9
Date of Meeting: 19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Executive Director	
Title: Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Planning Policy Update	
Summary and Conclusions:	
<p>The 2004 Planning Act requires Local Planning Authorities to prepare an LDS. The LDS is intended to set out the targets for the stages of production of each of the relevant planning policy documents, identify the resources that will be required to ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the timetable and identify any risks that could result in delay.</p>	
<p>The previous LDS was published in January 2013; there has been some slippage against the timetable that it set out.</p>	
<p>The purpose of this report is to present a revised LDS for approval, illustrating the timetable for the production of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report, an updated Statement of Community Involvement and a single Local Plan document.</p>	
Recommendation:	
<p>To agree the Revised Local Development Scheme and Planning Policy update which would take effect on 27th February, 2014.</p>	

Report

Background

Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Local Plan to guide development within the Borough. This can be made up of several separate planning policy documents e.g. a document concentrating on strategic policies, a document concentrating on development control policies and a proposals map or it could be produced as a single Local Plan document (similar to the Borough Council's saved Local Plan Review). A single Local Plan document is considered the best vehicle for developing a coherent and effective planning strategy for the Borough. This format was agreed upon by this Committee in January 2013.

The Development Plan

- The Development Plan for the Borough currently comprises:

- 'Saved' planning policies in the Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review 1996-2006 and the Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review 1996-2006 - Housing Chapter Alteration 2006.
- The Barrow Port Area Action Plan (the Action Plan) 2010

Until the adoption of the new Local Plan, these policies will be afforded weight according to their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Local Development Scheme

The LDS sets out the targets for the stages of production of each of the relevant planning policy documents, identifies the resources that will be required to ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the timetable and identifies any risks that could result in delay.

The previous 2013 LDS identified three local planning policy documents to be produced and set out the targets for the stages of production. The three documents were:

1. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
2. Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)
3. Local Plan

The 2014 LDS sets out the revised timetable for the production of three documents. It also lists the various 'evidence base' documents which will be produced to inform the Local Plan and their anticipated completion dates. The 2014 LDS is attached as **Appendix 1**.

The Local Plan

It is proposed that the new Local Plan will form a single document, including an Ordnance Survey based map(s), to set out the vision for the Borough and how the Council intends to achieve its vision up to 2031. It will incorporate both strategic and detailed policies and it will contain borough wide and site specific policies that address employment, housing, the environment, community facilities, transport, retail, leisure and tourism. It will include land allocations and detailed development control policies, and in due course, replace the current 'saved' local policies.

The Local Plan will exclude the area covered by the Barrow Port Area Action Plan; however it may replace some individual policies from the AAP which are considered not to be in keeping with national guidance and are therefore out of date.

The LDS indicates that the Council intends to have a draft Local Plan for consultation (under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012) by June/July 2014.

(i) Legal Implications

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires Local Planning Authorities to prepare and maintain a local development scheme.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The LDS timetables the commencement of the Local Plan Hearing for November 2015. The Hearing is part of the Local Plan Examination process. The Local Plan Examination will have financial implications for the Council, although it is not possible to determine what these will be, as the cost will be dependent upon the course and duration of the Examination.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implication

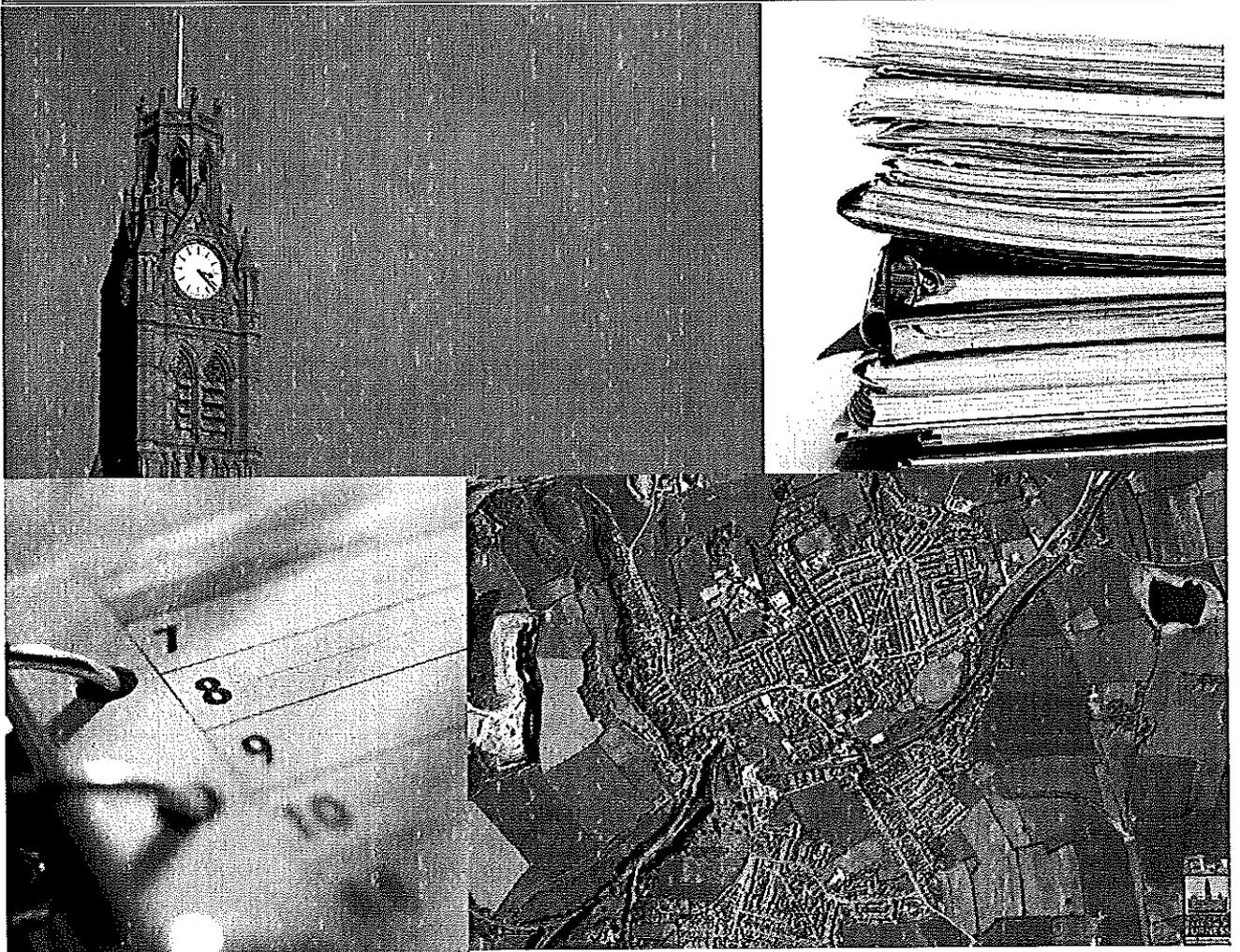
The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

Local Development Scheme

February 2014



Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council

Local Development Scheme – February 2014

Scheme takes effect from 27th February 2014

**Executive Director
Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council
Town Hall
Duke Street
Barrow in Furness
Cumbria LA14 2LD**

Contact:

**Planning Policy Team
(01229) 876388 or 876363
Email: developmentplans@barrowbc.gov.uk**



**BOROUGH OF
BARROW IN
FURNESS**

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Planning System and the Local Development Framework (Pre-2012)

As a result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (The 2004 Act), the national system for producing planning policy documents changed and the 'old' development plan system of a County Structure and Borough-wide Local Plan was replaced by a 'new' system comprising a Regional (Spatial) Strategy and a Local Development Framework.

To take account of the transitional period, older style development plans and supplementary planning guidance were formally saved, to be gradually replaced by new documents in a Local Development Framework.

The majority of local planning policies for Barrow borough, contained within the old style Borough-wide Local Plan Review (adopted August 2001) and the Local Plan Housing Chapter Alteration (adopted June 2006), were saved. Some have since been replaced by policies within the Barrow Port Area Action Plan in 2010.

1.2 The Planning System, the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (Post 2012)

The introduction of the Localism Act and new planning policy guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in March 2012, resulted in further significant changes to the national system for producing planning policy documents.

Local Planning Authorities are now required to produce a Local Plan rather than a Local Development Framework. This can be made up of several Local Development Documents e.g. a document concentrating on strategic policies, a document concentrating on development control policies and a proposals map, or it could be produced as a single Local Plan document (similar to the Borough Council's saved Local Plan Review, which was produced pre 2004).

The Council intend to produce a single Local Plan document.

Until the production of a new Local Plan, the NPPF allows due weight to be given to all relevant planning policies according to the degree of consistency with the NPPF.

1.3 The Development Plan

The Development Plan for Barrow Borough currently comprises the following;

- 'Saved' planning policies in the Barrow in Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review, 2001, and the Barrow in Furness Local Plan Review Housing Chapter Alteration 2006
- The Barrow Port Area Action Plan, 2010
- Cumbria Minerals & Waste Development Framework

'Saved' Planning Policy

The Council have formally 'saved' the following local planning policy:

- Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review 1996-2006; and
- Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review 1996-2006 - Housing Chapter Alteration, 2006.

The Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review 1996-2006 (the Local Plan Review)

policies were automatically saved under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for a three year period from the commencement of the Act (i.e. until 27th September 2007).

A request to extend the saved period for most of the policies within the adopted Local Plan Review was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 30 March 2007 and a Direction to that effect was received on 18 September 2007.

The policies of the Barrow in Furness Borough Council Local Plan Review 1996-2006 - Housing Chapter Alteration 2006 (the Housing Chapter Alteration) were automatically saved under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for three years from their date of adoption.

A request to extend the saved period for all but one of the policies within the Housing Chapter Alteration was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 19 December 2008 and a Direction to that effect was received on 3 February 2009.

The policies were saved with the caveat that "the extended policies should be read in context. Where policies were adopted some time ago, it is likely that material considerations, in particular the emergence of new national and regional policy and also new evidence, will be afforded considerable weight in decisions."

As neither the Local Plan Review, nor the Housing Chapter Alteration were adopted in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it is important to note that weight is afforded these policies according to the degree of conformity with the NPPF.

The Annual Monitoring Report sets out a list of all saved policies.

The Barrow Port Area Action Plan

The Barrow Port Area Action Plan (the Action Plan) was adopted in July 2010. Under the NPPF, the policies in the Action Plan will be afforded weight according to their consistency with the NPPF. The new Local Plan will exclude the Action Plan area as it is still considered to be up-to-date as a whole. Where individual policies in the Action Plan are considered to be out of date and not in conformity with the NPPF, they will be deleted and replaced where necessary in the Local Plan.

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents (SPG and SPD) support and expand on existing planning policy contained within the Development Plan.

The Council continues to regard the following SPG and SPD as material planning considerations:

- Parking Guidelines in Cumbria SPG (1997)
- Layout of New Residential Development SPG (1996)
- Shopfront & Advertisement Design SPD (2010)

The Local Plan

Barrow Borough Council intends to produce a single Local Plan document that will include an Ordnance Survey based map(s), to set out the vision for the borough and how the Council intends to achieve its vision. It will incorporate both strategic and detailed policies and it will contain borough wide and site specific policies that address employment, housing, the environment, community facilities, transport, retail, leisure and tourism.

The Plan will be borough wide (with the exception of the Action Plan area) and will include land allocations and detailed development control policies.

The preparation of the Local Plan will be guided by the Council's Local Development Scheme and its production and content will be influenced by the Statement of Community Involvement. Its performance and progress will be monitored by the Annual Monitoring Report.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS)

The 2004 Planning Act requires Local Planning Authorities to prepare an LDS. The LDS is intended to set out the targets for the stages of production of each relevant planning policy document, identify the resources that will be required to ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the timetable and identify any risks that could result in delay.

The Council's first LDS was produced in March 2005 and updated, firstly in June 2006, and then in August 2007, September 2009, July 2010 and January 2013.

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

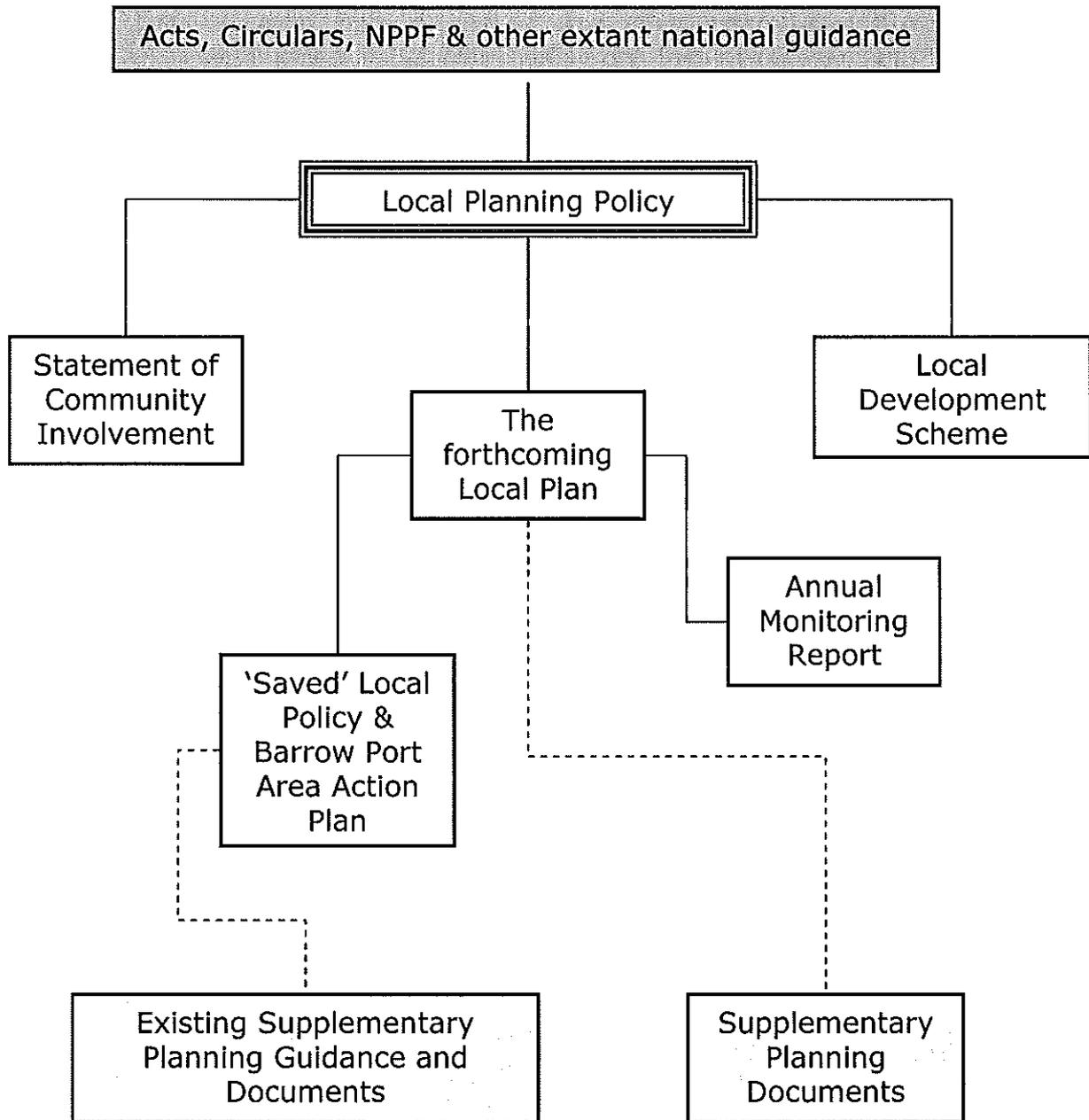
The 2004 Planning Act requires each Local Planning Authority to prepare an SCI. The SCI describes how the Council will engage with the community and others in preparing other planning policy documents and also in dealing with planning applications.

The Barrow in Furness SCI was originally adopted by the Council in July 2007 and an updated version was adopted in November 2010. The Council intends to consult on and update its SCI in Spring 2014.

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

The AMR assesses the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which planning policies within adopted planning policy documents and 'saved' documents are being successfully implemented. In the transitional period it also sets out which policies continued to be saved. The Council's latest AMR was published in February 2014.

Figure 1: Barrow in Furness Planning Policy Summary Diagram



2 The Local Development Scheme (LDS)

2.1 The 2013 LDS

The previous 2013 LDS identified three local planning policy documents to be produced and set out the targets for the stages of production for these. The three documents were:

1. The Local Plan
2. Annual Monitoring Report
3. Statement of Community Involvement

2.2 The Revised LDS

The Key Issues to be addressed

Although planning policy legislation and guidance has changed significantly recently, the key issues that Barrow Borough faces have, to a large extent, not changed. The key issues that need to be addressed include the social and economic challenges the area continues to face. The Council, Cumbria County Council and the former Barrow Regeneration (formerly known as West Lakes Renaissance, the Urban Regeneration Company for Furness and West Cumbria) worked closely over recent years to develop a number of projects and initiatives to stimulate the regeneration of the area.

The Council, through Furness Partnership (the now disbanded Local Strategic Partnership for Barrow Borough), prepared the Sustainable Community Strategy for the Borough. The Sustainable Community Strategy's vision is that:

“Barrow Borough will become recognized, both by local people and by those outside the area, as a prosperous, pleasant, healthy and safe place to live and work.”

To achieve this vision the Partnership will concentrate on eight key priorities:

- Worklessness: providing more and better jobs for local people
- Health: improving health and life expectancy for people living in the area
- Lifestyle and environment: developing a more attractive place to live
- Housing: offering higher quality housing choices
- Community safety: reducing levels of crime, and people's fear of crime
- Children and Young People: ensuring our young people have the start in life that they deserve
- Learning: delivering better education for people at all levels
- Deprivation: giving extra help to those in the greatest need

The Council's Corporate Vision is:

“To enhance the economic and social future of the Borough to meet the needs and aspirations of the community.”

The Key aims to support the vision are:

- Effective community leadership.
- Investing in our economic future.

- Creating an enhanced quality of life for local residents.
- Developing a safe confident and socially inclusive community.
- Delivering high quality accessible services.

The former Barrow and Furness Peninsula Task Force was charged with overseeing regeneration activity in the Furness Peninsula. The Task Force comprised senior representatives from a range of organisations from Furness, Cumbria and the Northwest Region who worked together to revitalise the economic health of Furness and address the main issues facing the peninsula at the beginning of the 21st Century. The aim was, and remains, to create a physical renaissance in Barrow that can complement a 'step-change' in the performance of the Furness economy.

Although the Barrow and Furness Peninsula Task Force no longer meets, the Barrow-in-Furness Peninsula Task Force Action Plan, February 2008, remains relevant. This sets out the key infrastructure (whether commercial property, new residential or improved transport) and skills development needed in order to help stimulate private sector investment and to help build sustainable communities. There are six key strands of activity that form the basis for the Task Force action, all aimed at supporting a diversified economy in Barrow. These six main strands are:

- Strengthening and diversifying Barrow's economy
- Investing in new businesses, skills and reducing worklessness
- Creating a Vibrant Town Centre
- Renewing the Housing Market
- Creating new gateways and connections
- Culture, Leisure and Lifestyle

The Council is also a partner in the Furness and West Cumbria Housing Market Renewal initiative which aims "To create the right housing for sustainable communities to support the new economy in Furness and West Cumbria". The initiative will involve large scale public sector investment to improve the choice and quality of homes, neighbourhoods and access to services; including through targeted demolition in Barrow and the conversion of some existing properties into larger units.

These Strategies, along with the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal, will be key considerations in developing a new Local Plan, as will the timetables to secure appropriate funding for the regeneration programmes.

The Revised Planning Policy Documents and Timetable

As a result of the significant changes to national planning policy legislation and guidance, the Council has reviewed its LDS and timetable. The revised list of documents, their profile and the proposed timescales for production are summarised in Appendix A. An overall summary timetable, indicating the production milestones of planning policy documents is included at Appendix B.

2.3 Resources and Contingencies

Preparation of planning policy documents will be led by the Council's Planning Policy Team within the Regeneration and the Built Environment Directorate. This small team consists of two full-time Senior Planning Officers and one part-time Senior Planning Officer, who is currently seconded from the Council's Development Control Section.

The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to produce 'sound' Local Plans and the NPPF defines soundness as 'positively prepared', 'justified', 'effective' and 'consistent with national policy'. Local Plan soundness is dependant upon the production of an adequate, up to date and relevant evidence base to underpin it. For Barrow Borough Council this will include the production of a Strategic Housing Land Area Assessment, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, a Retail Study, an Open Space Audit, an Employment Study, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment an Infrastructure Assessment (Infrastructure Delivery Plan) and any other audits, assessments, studies or surveys deemed necessary.

The possibility of engaging consultants to prepare specialist evidence base studies is limited but has been undertaken in relation to the preparation of a Retail Evidence Base Study, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment is being explored in relation to the Environmental and Sustainability Assessment of the Local Plan.

Where consultants are employed, the responsibility for the content of the document will remain with the Council and therefore wherever possible, preparation in-house is preferred as the content of the studies also forms a key part of the Examination of the Local Plan, which officers need to explain and defend.

The LDS includes anticipated and target dates for the Pre-Examination meeting and the Examination Hearing for the Local Plan. The meeting of these targets will depend on the capacity of the Planning Inspectorate to deal with the workload. The time allowed between the various stages in the process is in line with currently available guidance.

The length of Examination of the Local Plan has been anticipated and the timetable for this is in line with the Planning Inspectorate document 'Examining Local Plans Procedural Practice' (PINS, December 2013). The Council will seek to minimise the volume of issues to be resolved at Examination through early and wide public participation and consultation. The Council will seek to minimise the risk of the Local Plan being found unsound by ensuring that the Local Plan is based on an adequate and relevant evidence base, it is realistic and able to be implemented, and has taken proper account of the views of the community.

2.4 Other Documents

In preparing the Local Plan, regard needs to be had to a number of other plans and strategies, including:

- The Sustainable Community Strategies (Cumbria and Barrow)
- The Local Transport Plan

A number of other studies have been commissioned to develop the planning policy evidence base or, although not directly commissioned for planning policy, are considered to form a key part of the evidence base. These documents include:-

- Barrow Port Masterplan (2004)
- Barrow Town Centre Urban Design Framework (2005)
- Housing Needs Survey (2006)
- Barrow Marina Village Masterplan (2006)

Further specialist studies have been/will be undertaken, mostly in-house by the Planning Policy Team, to support policy development as required. These are listed in table A below, along with their anticipated completion dates. This is not an exhaustive list and other audits, assessments, studies or surveys may be deemed necessary.

Table A: Evidence Base Documents supporting the Local Plan

Document	Carried out by...	Progress	Anticipated completion date
Appropriate Assessment (Habitats Regulation Assessment)	BDP Consultants	Underway	Final AA Report will be completed prior to the publication of the Local Plan.
Cumbria Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment	ARC4 on behalf of all Cumbrian Authorities	Complete	November 2013
Employment Land Review	In-house	Underway	First draft by Spring 2014, final document will be completed prior to publication of the Local Plan
Green Wedge Review	In house	Underway	Spring 2014
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	In house	Underway	Final draft will be published alongside the Publication Draft of the Local Plan in March 2014
Open Space Audit	In-house	Underway	Mid-2014
Retail and Town Centre Uses Study	Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Consultants	Complete	February 2013
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	In-house	Underway	Incorporate into Sustainability Appraisal. See below.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Capita	Underway	Spring 2014
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Review	ARC4	Underway	Spring 2014
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Review	In-house	Complete	December 2013
Sustainability Appraisal	In-house	Underway	SA Report to be produced alongside first draft of Local Plan in June/July 2014. SA is an ongoing process which continues following the adoption of the Local Plan.

2.5 Monitoring and Review

The LDS and the Local Plan will be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report and this will;

- Track the Council's performance against the timescales set out in the LDS and indicate whether a review of the LDS is necessary.
- Provide an up to date list of saved policies and documents together with an indication of when saved policies are likely to be cancelled or replaced.
- Monitor the extent to which policies in the local plan and saved documents are being achieved.
- Provide an up to date list of background studies.
- Conclude whether any planning policy documents need reviewing in advance of their scheduled review date.

The AMR will be publicly available, including through the Council's Website and will be submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with the relevant Regulations.

Appendices

Schedule of Development Plan Documents

Appendix A

Document Title	Role & Content	Geographic Coverage	Consultation	Adoption/ Completion
Local Plan	<p>A single document that sets out the Council's vision for the borough up to 2031. It will incorporate both strategic and detailed policies and it will contain borough wide and site specific policies that address employment, housing, the environment, community facilities, transport, retail, leisure and tourism, to replace, in due course, 'saved' policies and some policies within the Barrow Port Area Action Plan.</p> <p>The Barrow Port Area Action Plan will be retained and will 'hook onto' the Local Plan. Its policies will still remain, however some will require updating (for example, phasing of development policies) and will therefore be replaced with policies in the new Local Plan.</p> <p>The Local Plan will include an Ordnance Survey based proposals map(s) setting out the allocations, policies and proposals of the Plan and this will be revised as necessary.</p>	Whole Local Authority Area, excluding Barrow Port Area Action Plan area	<p>Oct 2012 to July 2014 – Reg. 18 consultation (This included a formal round of consultation that ran from 7 Aug to 2 Nov 2012, which asked for comments on what the Plan should include. It will also include a formal round of consultation in June/July 2014 on a draft plan)</p> <p>March 2015 – Publication</p> <p>August 2015 – Submission</p> <p>Oct 2015 – Pre Hearing Meeting</p> <p>Nov 2015-Feb 2016 – Examination</p> <p>March 2016 - Adoption</p>	March 2016
Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA)	<p>All Local Plans must be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and most to a Strategic Environmental Assessment, the latter being incorporated into the former.</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal seeks to assess the environmental, social and economic effects of the implementation of the policies contained in the documents or the effects of not having these policies, and to influence them in an attempt to ensure they produce sustainable development.</p> <p>Where a Local Plan would have a significant effect on a European Nature Conservation Site, it must also be subject to an Appropriate Assessment under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.</p>	Whole Local Authority Area, excluding Barrow Port Area Action Plan area	SA is an iterative process and consultation will be carried out during the development of, and consultation on, the Local Plan.	N/A

Barrow-in-Furness Borough Local Development Scheme 2014

Annual Monitoring Report	Assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which planning policies are being successfully implemented. In the transitional period it also sets out which policies continue to be saved.	Whole Local Authority Area	N/A	N/A
Statement of Community Involvement	This explains, to stakeholders and the community, how and when they will be involved in the planning process and the steps that will be taken to facilitate this.	Whole Local Authority Area	Apr 2014	June 2014

Gantt Chart

Appendix B

Barrow Borough Council Local Development Scheme 2014

Year	2014												2015												2016											
Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Local Plan Stages																																				
AMR																																				
SCI																																				
Key Consultation stages																																				

- KEY**
- First draft of Plan produced
 - Publication Draft of Local Plan produced
 - Submission of Local Plan to Planning Inspectorate
 - Pre-Hearing meeting
 - Adoption of Local Plan
 - Annual Monitoring Report published
 - Statement of Community Involvement published
 - Formal Local Plan consultations



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 10
Date of Meeting: 19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Executive Director	
<p>Title: National Landlords' Association Accreditation Scheme</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>The Council closed its landlord accreditation scheme approximately two years ago. A number of other local authorities in Cumbria operate landlord accreditation schemes and are finding that they are not cost-effective. It is proposed that District Councils in Cumbria formally recognise the National Landlords' Association (NLA) Accreditation Scheme. At present there are no practical implications for the Council, but general promotion of the scheme may help to spread good practice in the private rented sector.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>To agree that the Council recognise the NLA accreditation scheme and authorise the Executive Director to sign up to the local authority agreement.</p>	

1. Background

- 1.1. The Council previously operated an Accredited Landlords' scheme for a number of years. The aims of the scheme were to encourage the improvement of standards and good practice in the private rented sector, to give prospective tenants some indication of quality assurance in the sector and thereby to give accredited landlords a market advantage.
- 1.2. When the scheme was set up, accredited landlords had access to grants to provide energy saving or home security measures. When these grants ceased to be made available, the popularity of the scheme amongst landlords dwindled. For this reason, and because of the staff time required to operate the scheme, the Council closed the scheme in 2012 (Minute 111, 01/02/12 refers).
- 1.3. A number of the other district councils in Cumbria operate landlord accreditation schemes. These offer a variety of incentives, and some of these schemes are well subscribed. However, providing the staff resource to administrate the schemes is becoming increasingly problematic.
- 1.4. It has therefore been proposed to recognise the National Landlords' Association (NLA) accreditation scheme across the county.

2. The NLA Accreditation Scheme

- 2.1. The NLA currently represents over 20,000 landlords nationwide. Their accreditation scheme provides a set of standards relating to the management and condition of privately rented housing. Landlords who join the scheme and abide by the required standards are accredited. The use of the NLA logo is widely recognised and identifies members as good landlords.
- 2.2. To qualify for accreditation through the scheme, landlords must attend a foundation course or complete core subjects online. They do not need to be Full Members of the NLA, and can access the course by payment of a separate fee, or by joining as Basic Members.
- 2.3. To maintain accreditation, landlords must complete 10 hours of Continuing Profession Development (CPD) each year. CPD can be accrued by attending branch meetings, completing modules online or by attending training events.
- 2.4. The NLA will undertake to organise branch meetings in Cumbria at a variety of locations, will maintain the online material, and will operate a complaints and adjudication process.
- 2.5. Landlords who are members of the scheme will sign up to the NLA Code of Practice and subject themselves to the complaints and adjudication process.
- 2.6. These principles will be incorporated into a local authority agreement between the districts and the NLA.
- 2.7. None of the above will interfere with or compromise the local authorities' enforcement and regulation duties and powers.
- 2.8. It is recommended that the Council recognises the scheme and signs up to the local authority agreement.
- 2.9. At this stage, it is not recommended that the Council take any steps to incentivise the NLA scheme, other than providing appropriate publicity to allow members of the public to easily identify landlords in Barrow who are accredited through the scheme, and to allow interested landlords to access the scheme details.

(i) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

No significant corporate risk has been identified.

(iii) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for the Council.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

There are no Health and Safety implications for the Council.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has a positive effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service by improving housing conditions.

Background Papers

Papers held by Housing Renewal Manager.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		Part One (D) Agenda Item 11
Date of Meeting:	19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer:	Executive Director	
<p>Title: Licensing Fees - Environmental Health</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>This report sets out the proposed locally set licensing fees based on full cost recovery, following a comprehensive review that has been carried out. The report also describes the establishment of a self-financing Licensing Team.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the proposed locally set licensing fees (Appendix 2); and 2. To proceed with consultation on the locally set licensing fees and refer to Council for approval on 8th April, 2014 with the consultation results included. 		

Report

Background

Councils are responsible for administering a range of licences and approvals resulting from both national legislation and discretionary functions that are agreed locally. For the majority of these regimes the costs are recovered through fees set by each council and paid by the licence applicant. Locally set fees are a vital means of ensuring that full costs can be recovered by the council, rather than relying on subsidy by local tax payers.

To establish the Licensing Team as cost neutral it must be funded entirely from the income generated carrying out the licencing role on behalf of the Council. Work on analysing the time involved with producing different licences is now complete, the work on the actual cost of issuing each type of licence has been used in conjunction with a predicted number of each type of licence (following a review of the last three years) to arrive at a predicted income figure.

Licensing taxis and Premises licences have previously been the largest income streams (over £145k per annum). However the cost for premises licensing is a statutory fee, rather than it being determined locally, although future legislation may mean this could change.

The gross cost of the current licensing function is £206,490; as per the 2014-2015 proposed budget. The original income for 2014-2015 was expected to be £172,300, leaving a £34,190 deficit.

The proposed locally set, cost recovery based fees are set out in **Appendix 2**. These fees are expected to generate £203,022 in income. This is £30,730 more income than the current 2014-2015 budget.

The proposed Fees will need to be advertised, together with a 28 day consultation period. We will also need to obtain legal advice on how any representations during the consultation period are dealt with by the Council and how this may impact on introducing the locally set fees.

The Licensing Team within the proposed restructuring has included for:

Senior Environmental Health Officer (Licensing):- Leads the new team. The post holder will take on responsibility from the Environmental Health Manager for the Licensing Committee and present reports to the Committee;

Senior Licensing Officer: - The existing Licensing Officer post will be upgraded to Senior Licensing Officer to reflect the level of work and responsibility currently undertaken. It is proposed that the Officer will prepare reports for Licensing and Licensing Regulatory Committee and deputise for the Senior Environmental Health Officer as required.

Licensing Compliance Officer: - New career graded post, to be brought in only once local premises licence fee setting is introduced (still to be confirmed) at a future date.

(i) Legal Implications

Legal advice will be obtained in relation to setting the proposed fees following the period of consultation.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. The locally set licensing fees will be reviewed on an annual basis.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

APPENDIX 2

Type of Licence	Current Licence Fees	Proposed Licence Fee
Renewal drivers licence – hackney carriages and private hire	Hackney £45 Private hire £39	£140.00
New/renewal vehicle licence –private hire	New £119 Renewal £106.50	£91.00
New drivers licence – hackney carriages and private hire	Hackney £44 Private hire £39	£173.00
New/renewal vehicle licence – hackney carriages	£117.00	£96.00
Change of taxi vehicle	£12.50	£80.00
Vehicle transfer plates/Change of Vehicle licence	£12.50	£74.00
Hackney carriage/private hire Operators licence	£135.00	£82.00
Street trading – renewal licence Town Centre & General	£202.00	£255.00
Street trading – new licence Town Centre & General	£202.00	£332.00
Street trading - promotional	£31 or £77	£122.00
Renewal pet shop, riding est., dog breeder, dangerous wild animals and animal boarding (excluding vets fee)	£39 Riding establishment £72 Dangerous wild animals £62	£157.00
New pet shop, riding est., dog breeder, dangerous wild animals and animal boarding (excluding vets fee)	£39 Riding establishment £72 Dangerous wild animals £121	£220.00
Home boarding establishment for dogs – new/renewal	£39.00	£130.00
New/renewal of Zoo Licence (additional fees apply)	£1,170.00	£451.00
Zoo special inspection	Recharge	£231.00
Skin and misc. treatments (Person only)	Tattoo/electrolysis £46.50 Ear piecing £25	£145.00
Skin and misc. treatments (Dual – premises with or without persons)	Tattoo/electrolysis £46.50 Ear piecing £93	£171.00
Boat Licence	£81.50	£127.00
Boatman’s Licence	£3.50	£95.00
Sex shop new	£2,529.00	£197.64
Sex shop renewal	£2,529.00	£111.00
Scrap Metal Dealers Licence	£306.00	£165.00
Scrap Metal Mobile Collectors Licence	£225.00	£106.00

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 12
Date of Meeting: 19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Executive Director	
Title: Feasibility Study: Business Improvement District for Barrow	
Summary and Conclusions:	
To commission a study into the feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District for Barrow-in-Furness. The methodology proposed will have a strong emphasis on local business engagement and involve:	
Consulting with local businesses and organisations Analysis of findings Guidance on BID legislation and administration Analysis of BID levy and area options Preparation of a Final Report with recommendations.	
Recommendation:	
That Kolek Consulting be engaged to undertake a Study into the feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District for Barrow at a fee of £3,840.	

Report

Background

What is a Business Improvement District?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a precisely defined geographical area of a town, city or commercial district, where business ratepayers are invited to vote to invest collectively in local improvements that are additional to those currently provided by Local Government. It is a business-led initiative taking advantage of Government legislation that gives local businesses the power to raise their own funds to spend on their priorities in order to improve their trading environment.

Local businesses collectively agree on priorities and how to invest their money to benefit themselves, their staff and their customers. Business ratepayers are asked to vote on an additional levy to their rates bill that, if supported, will be used to finance the delivery of projects, services and activities detailed in a business plan they have developed and agreed.

A BID has to have a:-

Business Plan developed and agreed by the businesses in the BID area based on an agreed levy

A BID Proposer

A Formal ballot and if successful

BID Management Board/Company

It normally takes around 2 years to go through this process.

Feasibility Study

It is proposed that a study is commissioned to test the feasibility of establishing a BID in Barrow-in-Furness. Its aims would be

- (a) To gauge opinion and assess the existing attitudes of business ratepayers towards the idea of a BID for Barrow.
- (b) To begin to explore the technical and financial feasibility of establishing a BID in the town, including a consideration of some of the options.

The data gathered from the survey will be analysed to provide a detailed report of business attitudes, priorities and development needs for the proposed establishment and operation of a BID. It will cover

1. *Awareness and Understanding of BIDS*

Informing and educating takes time and considerable effort but is essential if business ratepayers are to make well-informed decisions. The survey will determine

- Awareness of the Business Improvement District terms
- Understanding of how BIDs operate

2. *Attitudes to Collaboration*

A BID is a formal arrangement of businesses and organisations working in collaboration. The survey will determine

- Willingness to work with each other to benefit the town and themselves
- Attitudes and experiences of collaborative working

3. *Suggestions for Improvement*

The analysis of the survey will reveal a number of thoughts, ideas and suggestions

4. *Perceptions of Barrow-in-Furness*

BIDs can have a positive effect on business confidence so it is helpful to consider how business ratepayers currently perceive their town and the potential for improvement.

5. *Threats and Concerns.*

External influences and drivers of change will shape the future of Barrow.

6. *Priorities*

It will be possible to draw-up an initial shortlist of proposed priorities for the BID to tackle to inform any development of a BID proposal and business plan

7. *Willingness to Pay*

8. *BID area and Levy options*

Engaging a Consultant

It is proposed that Chris Kolek of Kolek Consulting be appointed to undertake this work. He has specific expertise in the development of Business Improvement Districts and as a senior policy advisor working for a Government Advisory Body was involved in establishing the first small town BID in the UK as a pilot in the development of the national BID Regulations for England. Chris Kolek has been involved with the successful BIDs in Penrith and Kendal and has also recently undertaken a feasibility study for Ulverston. He is based in Cumbria and understands the geography and has detailed understanding and experience of investigating and establishing BIDs in the County. It is considered that this company is in a unique position to undertake this task. The fee for this work would be £3,840.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

£3840 would be required to fund the Feasibility Study.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

BID Feasibility Study Proposal submitted by Kolek Consulting.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 13
Date of Meeting: 19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Housing Manager	
Title: Homelessness Strategy 2014-19	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this Report is to provide you with a draft Homelessness Strategy for your consideration and approval.	
Recommendations:	
To agree the Homelessness Strategy 2014/19.	

Report

The Council is required to have a Homeless Strategy describing the actions it will take to tackle homelessness in its area.

Previously the Council met this requirement by being a partner on the Cumbria Homeless Strategy.

As the Cumbria Strategy is now out of date, officers have drafted a Strategy specific to this Council area.

The draft Strategy is attached at **Appendix 3** for your consideration and agreement.

The Strategy follows the relevant guidance and looks at the levels of recent homelessness and reasons for people leaving their homes, what additional factors may impact on the issues in the foreseeable future and then includes an action plan on proposed actions to respond.

In considering the draft, I would ask you to note the general approach suggested to co-operation and work with other agencies, particular emphasis on 'prevention' and recognition of the possibility of working closer with the private sector.

The Council receives an annual grant of c.£93K which funds the delivery of much of the preventative work described. In addition, a grant of £20K has also been secured through the 'No Second Night Out' initiative to start looking to help non-statutory homeless applicants.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications. The Council is in receipt of grants to fund the preventative work described in the Strategy.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil



Barrow Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2014-2019

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1. Introduction

The Homelessness Act (2002) requires all Local Authorities to develop a homelessness strategy, every five years, to reduce homelessness based on a review of the homeless situation in the area. The review looks back at what has happened and looks forward to what needs to happen in the future to respond to and prevent homelessness in the area.

Barrow Borough Councils review looked at:

- The current homelessness situation in the area including population demographics
- Trends in the causes of homelessness within the area
- The resources currently being used to prevent homelessness and support those facing homelessness

Based on this review, BBC's strategy identifies priorities and objectives that strive to be achieved over the next 5 years in terms of future provision and identifies the issues that are likely to affect homelessness in the future with some consideration to how these will be managed.

It is BBC's intention to continue to review the strategy in light of changes that may come into effect given the nature of change within the UK's Government and economy.

2. Homelessness in the area- A Review

Earlier this year, a review was carried out looking back at the previous 12 months with the aim of:

- Providing an evaluation of the demographics and causes of homelessness in the borough
- Identifying how effective current provision is in meeting needs and preventing homelessness
- Identify where there are gaps in service provision
- Use the above information to formulate BBC's priorities and objectives moving forward

2.1. Key Findings

- The number of homeless presentations and acceptances has reduced over the last 12 months whilst the amount of prevention work has increased significantly. This is a reflection of BBC's commitment to preventing homelessness by addressing and identifying housing need prior to a person reaching 'crisis point' and statutory intervention being necessary, therefore reducing the number of statutory decisions needing to be made.
- Homeless acceptances generally include those with dependent children and/or expectant mothers, which follows the national trend.
- Those people approaching the Local authority for assistance that have vulnerability through mental health has significantly increased and we are providing advice and assistance to a growing number of people who have multiple needs affecting their ability to secure and sustain accommodation.
- A large proportion of those approaching the Local Authority for advice and assistance or to make a homeless application are single people (males in particular) aged under 35 and this has remained relatively consistent over time. A key issue being their ability to access the private rented sector due to affordability issues.
- Those approaching for advice and assistance are typically those who are unemployed and benefit dependent. This is increasing in light of Welfare Reform and is expected to continue to rise with future changes

2.2. Causes of Homelessness

The two key issues, which remain the main factors influencing homelessness, are:

- a) Security of tenure- people being asked to leave by their landlord and subsequently being served with a S21/S8 (less commonly) notice. There is also an issue within the borough that private landlords do not follow the correct procedure for regaining possession
- b) Relationship breakdown within the family, relationship or between friends where parents, family, partner or friends are no longer willing to accommodate a person

Overall, the causes of homelessness within the borough have seen little change over the period of the review and a wide array of issues continues to play a role in homelessness, which include:

- Domestic abuse
 - Those being discharged from hospital, particularly those discharged from mental health facilities
 - Those being released from prison
 - Mortgage repossession
-

3. Where are we now?

3.1. Accommodation for homeless households

- There are 33,257 dwellings in the Barrow Borough with 14.2% represented by the private rented sector, 12.1% by the social housing sector with the remaining 73.7% being made up of owner occupiers of other tenures.
- Barrow Borough Council has 2692 properties, with ten of the properties forming part of their stock being used as interim accommodation for homeless households.
- Bed and breakfast accommodation is also used for single people where properties within our own stock are unsuitable/unavailable. Use of bed and breakfast is not the desired choice of BBC and our own stock is utilised where possible.
- There are also a number of supported housing schemes within the borough that offer accommodation for young people, those with additional needs e.g. mental health/ substance dependence.

3.2. Prevention of Homelessness

BBC has achieved significant success with the prevention of homelessness ever since Government priorities shifted towards the prevention of homelessness and this has been particularly evident in the last 12 months where the number of preventions has almost doubled in one period compared to the same period in the previous year. BBC utilise a number of prevention methods to help achieve their aims of preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity including:

The Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DIGS)

This scheme, funded in the Barrow area by BBC, was set up to help people in need move to private rented accommodation. The DIGS provides a deposit guarantee in the form of a written bond to cover the deposit required by a private landlord for damage/theft. The DIGS scheme is a key landlord incentive scheme used by BBC to prevent homelessness and accounts for a significant proportion of our prevention work enabling people to access the private rented sector.

Close links with Cumbria Choice Based Lettings

BBC's Housing Options team have the scope within the Cumbria Choice policy to award preference to those households accepted as homeless as well as those who are identified as being at risk of homeless. This additional preference increases their opportunities to secure social housing.

The Central Access Point (CAP)

Cumbria County Council, through Supporting People funding, provide housing related support services to vulnerable people to enable them to live independently. This support can be in the form of short term accommodation or floating support and is accessed through the CAP. Where a person is identified as having vulnerability and there is a need for additional support with their housing needs, a referral is made to the CAP. Throughout its operation, BBC have developed a good working relationship with the CAP's Local Area Coordinator and drop-in sessions are now held at the Housing Department so that those presenting as homeless/approaching for advice can be seen quickly and captured when their crisis point arises. Given the nature of the client group and increasing number of people approaching for assistance who are vulnerable through mental health and lack of specialised accommodation for this client group within the borough, this support service is becoming increasingly useful to ensure tenancies are sustainable.

Working with statutory, voluntary and third sector agencies to develop the way we deal with homelessness

BBC's Housing Options team have developed strong links with partner agencies to identify and address homelessness within the area and represent the Local Authority at many multi-agency meetings relating to a number of different client groups including:

- MARAC- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference, which provides support to victims of domestic abuse
- MAPPA- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, which manage offenders and plans for their re-integration into the community
- JAG- Joint Action Group, a multi-agency intelligence led partnership dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime and disorder
- Core Meetings with Children's Services- to discuss young people with multiple needs, those leaving care and families with children
- Young People's Panel, which meets to discuss 16-24 year olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and in need of support

Homeless Prevention Fund

This fund was established to provide deposits, rent in advance payments and administration fees for those households who would be accepted as homeless and that the Local Authority would have a duty to if they presented as homeless. This fund, like the DIGS is a key prevention method to assisting homeless households into the private rented sector

Case study- Homeless Prevention Fund

A single woman with a child under school age had recently come to the area after fleeing domestic abuse; she had secured full time work (shifts) and needed to be close to her family to enable them to assist with childcare. She had found a private rented property in the area but she could not afford the full deposit or rent in advance. An income and expenditure assessment established that she could afford the rent on the property and that it was sustainable therefore she was able to access the homeless prevention fund to have the deposit paid to the landlord, which at the end of the tenancy will be paid back to the Local Authority to enable us to assist further clients.

3.2. Prevention of Homelessness continued...

Identifying risk of homelessness

It is BBC's aim to identify those at risk of homelessness and address any issues they may have at the earliest possible opportunity to avoid people reaching 'crisis point' and needing to access the statutory homeless process. There are a number of ways BBC strives to do this including:

- **Identifying those facing difficulties with their mortgages/secured loans-** following a directive from the Government that all lenders notify the Local Authority of clients who are experiencing difficulties with their mortgage/secured loans, BBC contact all clients we are notified of that are facing such difficulties inviting them for a Housing Options interview to discuss their situation and to provide advice on their housing options
- **Offering Housing Options interviews to those on the housing register-** BBC are part of Cumbria Choice Based Lettings, a county wide policy that deals with the allocation of social housing across Cumbria. Applicants who apply to BBC to be part of Cumbria Choice who indicate in the registration process that they are at risk of homelessness e.g. have been served a notice **or** are facing issues which could make them at risk of homelessness e.g. suffering some form of abuse or harassment, are written out to as part of the registration process inviting them to make an appointment with the Housing Options team to discuss their situation
- **Identifying debt issues-** BBC's housing options interviews request information regarding a household's income and any debt problems they may have to identify where they may need to be signposted for advice on benefits, maximising their income and addressing debts. BBC funds a weekly Money Advice Surgery through the Citizens Advice Bureau that appointments can be made through to discuss these issues.

Sanctuary Fund

BBC has a fund available that can be accessed to support victims of domestic abuse to enable them to stay in their home and feel safe and secure there. Examples of the type of assistance the fund has been used to provide is:

- Window locks
- Lock changes
- Extra lock/safety keeps fitted to doors
- Security lighting

4. Priorities and Objectives

Based on the review of homelessness in the local area and identified gaps in service provision, BBC has set the following priorities over the next 5 years:

I. A continued commitment to preventing homelessness

Preventing homelessness enables people to be part of their own housing submission rather than being dependent on the statutory legislation for an outcome empowering them in the process of resolving their situation and addressing the issues they may face. For this reason, BBC are committed to continuing to make good use of the resources available to us and will endeavour to pursue other means of preventing homelessness to adapt to the changing nature of homelessness in the future.

- One such opportunity BBC are keen to progress is the Government's commitment to 'No Second Night Out (NSNO)' and a bid for funding has been made by BBC to develop a scheme, which will work in similar way to the Homeless Prevention fund providing deposits, rent in advance payments and administration fees to enable access to the private rented sector but will be aimed at non-priority single homeless people who currently cannot access the additional funding the homeless prevention fund offers. A priority for BBC will be to develop their NSNO scheme and ensure its sustainability where possible to maximise the number of people who can benefit from the funding.
- BBC will also seek to utilise access to 'Ways to Welfare' as an alternative means of support in view of crisis loans and community care grants being abolished where help can be provided by the County Council (in some cases) to those facing hardship.

II. Increase access to & strengthen links with the private rented sector

A key part of the prevention work we carry out to find solutions to peoples housing problems involves the private rented sector. Due to the limited supply of social housing within the borough and the huge demand for this type of accommodation, private rented accommodation is often an alternative that customers are asked to consider in order to address their housing needs.

Accessing the private rented sector can be an issue for households due to the large costs that are often involved at the outset in terms of deposits, admin fees and rent in advance payments. The abolition of social fund loans including crisis loans and community care grants has made it increasingly difficult for people to have sufficient money to access the private rented sector. To address this issue and increase access to the private rented sector, BBC intend to:

- Develop the NSNO scheme (explained above) to improve the accessibility of the private rented sector for single non-priority homeless households assisting them with access fees such as rent in advance and admin fee payments repayable at an affordable amount at a frequency in line with their income
- Continue to fund the DIGS scheme to bond deposits to landlords and educate landlords of the advantages of this in view of changes in the law requiring landlords to register cash deposits in a recognised scheme

- Continue to allocate funding to priority homeless households in the form of the homeless prevention fund, which provides assistance to access the private rented sector
- Continuously review the Private Landlords Accommodation List, which provides details of some of the private landlords in the area including their eligibility criteria, access costs/requirements and contact details to ensure it is up to date, as informative as possible and encompasses any new landlords we become aware of to make the process of seeking private rented accommodation easier for people

Strengthening the links that BBC has with private landlords is essential to ensure that customers wanting to access the private sector or those seeking advice following issues with security of tenure in the sector can be given the best possible advice and a joint approach can be taken to resolve peoples housing problems. There are two different approaches that will facilitate this happening:

- Working with existing and prospective landlords to develop private rented provision within the local area relative to the demographics of the boroughs populations and needs (predominantly single under 35's who are benefit dependent) is particularly important to ensure that suitable and affordable accommodation is available to those at risk of homelessness or to those who are not owed statutory duties under the homeless legislation.
- Another important factor in strengthening links with the private sector needs to encompass educating landlords on the procedure for regaining possession of privately rented properties to ensure this is carried out legally and causes minimum distress to tenants. Issues around security of tenure is one of the main factors influencing homelessness within the borough and whilst we may not be able to prevent landlords seeking possession against their tenants, educating them the correct way to approach this and encouraging them to notify us/advise the tenant that they can seek advice from the homelessness service, will reduce the anxieties faced by tenants. This would then allow sufficient time for BBC to address any issues that may enable them to stay in the accommodation or help them find an alternative before court action is necessary, which is in the interests of the landlord and the tenant.

III. Ensure all front line staff dealing with Housing Options interviews are suitably trained and have the capacity to deal with increasingly complex workloads

Training is essential to ensure front line Housing Options staff are kept up to date with changes in legislation and new initiatives that are introduced to ensure they can provide the most effective and reliable service to homeless people. Training also ensures staff are equipped with the necessary skills for dealing with homelessness and its associated issues, for example being able to identify and swiftly act upon disclosures of domestic abuse and make the appropriate referrals to ensure safeguarding.

As identified throughout the review, BBC's homelessness service is dealing with increasingly complex cases and is being required to develop new solutions to peoples housing issues alongside developing solutions to an increasing variety of housing problems.

IV. Strengthen links with other agencies

Whilst BBC has developed strong links with some agencies, there is work still to be progressed in certain areas to ensure a holistic approach to dealing with homelessness is taken, including:

- Linking in with the county-wide protocol being developed for dealing with 16/17 year olds to ensure that these individuals are provided the support they need
- Developing a process for dealing with discharge of patients from mental health units/hospital to ensure a more consistent, seamless approach is taken to the discharge process and housing issues are identified and addressed early in the treatment plan to prevent distress and a 'crisis point', which is much more difficult to deal with for all concerned

V. Continue to review & improve our interim accommodation provision

As a stock retaining Local Authority, BBC has available for its use, 8 units of accommodation as interim/temporary accommodation. These are dispersed throughout the borough and contain a mix of accommodation to meet a variety of need including family sized accommodation, ground floor accommodation and accommodation with disabled facilities. In order to ensure the supply of interim/temporary accommodation continues to meet the needs of homeless households effectively, we recognise that it is important that:

- The supply of interim/temporary accommodation is monitored to ensure it is inclusive of a variety of need groups giving due regard to the Equalities Act 2010
- Consider when the properties may need to be changed to maintain anonymity
- Regularly review the standards of temporary accommodation including renovate and redecorate as necessary to ensure they maintain a reasonable standard using the dispersed accommodation budget

5. Predicting future levels of homelessness

It is essential that BBC's strategy considers what factors may impact upon future levels of homelessness in order to deliver an effective service responsive to the needs of its users and capture the issues people may face early, taking the necessary action to reduce their impact. The keys issues that BBC feel will affect future levels of homelessness include:

- **Welfare Reform**

The review has shown that a significant number of those approaching the Local Authority are those under 35 who are benefit dependent. Welfare Reform has seen significant changes introduced that directly affect this group of people including the introduction of a single room rate for under 35's and the abolition of crisis loans and community care grants. This means this client group are increasingly suffering financial hardship and are struggling to access and sustain tenancies in the private sector. The introduction of Universal Credit is likely to compound this further as these groups as well as other vulnerable people will have to change the way they manage their money and expenditure, which for some will be very difficult and it is these people that will need referring on to relevant support services.

BBC have methods in place and an allocations policy that has recently been reviewed to identify and offer support to people affected by the impact of welfare reform at the earliest opportunity and the introduction of the NSNO scheme should help improve access to the private rented sector. Despite this however, the changes past, present and future will affect future levels of homelessness due to the potential for hardship and issues around sustainability.

- **Lack of private rented accommodation for single people, particularly those under 35**

There is a need for more one bedroom accommodation within the Borough which is affordable for people who are benefit dependent and under the age of 35 where the rent is affordable relative to the amount of local housing allowance they are entitled to. This is increasingly becoming an issue in the area with those under 35 requiring rent guarantors due to landlord doubting the ability of this client group to maintain top-up payments. Many people in this client group do not have access to a rent guarantor so cannot secure a property. BBC's commitment to developing links with the private rented sector should go some way to addressing this issue but the impact this will have will require continuous monitoring.

- **The economy**

The current economic situation and cutbacks by key agencies in the services they are able to provide e.g. mental health, social care agencies are resulting in an increasing number of people approaching the Local Authority with multiple needs that ordinarily couldn't be met with generic housing and floating support. However due to the limited capacity of some services to provide specialised support, people with complex needs are having to be accommodated in generic housing with little support due to the lack of alternative options. This will continue to be an issue whilst the economic downturn continues.

6. Barrow Borough Council Action Plan 2014-2019

I.	Continued commitment to preventing homelessness		
	Priorities	What we'll do	When we will aim to do it by
	One of the main factors influencing homelessness is security of tenure	Develop information leaflets for tenants and landlords on their rights and the correct procedure for regaining possession respectively	April 2014
	Another major factor influencing homelessness is relationship breakdown	Fund mediation services that people can be referred to if appropriate	Ongoing
	Debt and financial hardship are increasingly prevalent issues affecting homeless households	Fund Citizens Advice Bureau to carry out Money Advice Surgery appointments on a weekly basis to address debt issues/mortgage advice/money management	Ongoing
	Domestic abuse continues to be a factor in homelessness and those approaching for advice and assistance	Provide a sanctuary fund to support victims of domestic abuse to stay in their homes where appropriate	Ongoing

II.	Increase access to & strengthen links with the private rented sector		
	Priorities	What we'll do	When we will aim to do it by
	Review the Private Landlords Accommodation List	Contact all existing along with any prospective landlords that have shown interest in being included on the list	April 2014
	Work to increase the accessibility of the private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to employ a third member of staff for the Homelessness Advice service who can prioritise working with the private rented sector (both landlords and agents) and develop the way the local authority works with the private sector liaising with new landlords looking to rent property in the area to advise them of the client groups requiring accommodation • Develop the No Second Night Out scheme with the £20,000 of funding separately allocated by the CLG to provide funding assistance to single non-priority homeless households to access the private rented sector • Provide money from the budget for the Homeless Prevention Fund to provide funding assistance to priority need households to access the private rented sector • Provide money from the budget to fund the DIGs scheme to cover the cost of deposits 	<p style="text-align: center;">2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dec 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>

III.	Ensure all front line staff dealing with Housing Options interviews are suitably trained and have the capacity to deal with increasingly complex workloads		
	Priorities	What we'll do	When we will aim to do it by
	Ensure all front line homelessness staff are up to date with changes in the legislation or changes that will impact upon the work they do	Provide money from the budget to pay for the homelessness service to be able to access Destin, a desktop programme which provides information and advice on the legislation, recent changes and new case law and also provides templates for decision letters and legal paperwork	Ongoing
	Ensuring staff have the ability to cope with current and predicted levels of homelessness and are able to develop new ways to solve the problems that homeless households experience	Look to employ a third member of staff and develop individual areas of expertise for each of the staff members	2014

IV.	<u>Strengthen links with other agencies</u>		
	Priorities	What we'll do	When we will aim to do it by
	Improve working with young people aged 16 and 17 to ensure a more consistent approach that best supports the young person	Link in with work to develop a local protocol and work with this to guide the way in which BBC deal with presentations by 16 and 17 year olds.	April 2014
	Improve the approach taken to supporting those people being discharged from hospital	Develop a hospital discharge procedure and roll this out to agencies involved	April 2014

V.	<u>Continue to review & improve our interim accommodation provision</u>		
	Priorities	What we'll do	When we will aim to do it by
	Ensure reasonable standards of interim/temporary accommodation are maintained and adapted to meet the needs of homeless households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use dispersed budget to ensure high standards are maintained • Regularly inspect interim/temporary accommodation to monitor/assess for improvements • Give due regard to the Equalities Act 2010 in considering the standard and facilities offered by our interim accommodation 	Ongoing

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 14
Date of Meeting: 19th February, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Assistant Director – Community Services	

Title: Lease Arrangements for Cavendish Park

Summary and Conclusions:

This report asks members to consider the circumstances which are required to transfer the lease on Cavendish Park playing fields, changing room and car park from Barrow Playing Fields Users Association to a newly formed body, Barrow Island Community Sports Trust.

Members will be aware that Barrow Island Community Trust was established in 2012 as part of the Big Local programme set up by the Big Lottery Fund. This fund has awarded Barrow Island up to £1m which has to be spent over the next 10 years. Barrow Island Community Trust's Community Plan has an objective to improve sporting facilities and create a community centre. This plan has programmed £600k towards achieving this objective. Barrow Island Community Trust have recently established Barrow Island Community Sports Trust as the body take the lease on Cavendish Park in order to invest this money in the facilities thereon.

The Barrow Playing Fields Users Association have agreed to surrender the lease on Cavendish Park because they recognise the benefit that the level of investment these changes will make. Members should be aware however, that the Barrow Playing Fields Users Association have expressed concern that they may find it more challenging to schedule local association football fixtures on the pitches which will remain in their control.

This report will recommend that members should approve the change in leasing arrangements for Cavendish Park, subject to some assurances being sought regarding the capability of the newly formed Barrow Island Community Sports Trust to enter into a lease arrangement and any future liability which may rest with the Council connected to the improvements made possible by the Lottery Grant.

Recommendation

To approve the following, (subject to satisfactory answers to the assurances sought):-

- (i) The acceptance of the early surrender of the lease for all four playing field sites, (including Cavendish Park) from Barrow Playing Fields Users Association;

- (ii) The development of a new lease until 31st March 2021 with BPFUA for the remaining three sites, to include a variation in the rent and grant arrangements based on the removal of the Cavendish Park Facilities;
- (iii) The development of a new 25 year lease with Barrow Island Community Sports Trust for Cavendish Park; and
- (iv) An agreement to waive the rent on Cavendish Park for an initial period of 5 years in consideration of the proposed investment to the facility.

Report

Cavendish Park, Barrow Island is a managed playing field area of approximately 28,000m², marked out for association and rugby football. It includes a changing room facility and a small car park. Cavendish Park is leased on a 12 year basis to the Barrow Playing Fields Users Association, (BPFUA). This lease will be subject to renewal on 31st March 2016. This lease includes Cavendish Park as one of 4 playing field locations in the Borough. As part of the terms of this lease and also a grant arrangement, BPFUA manage the use of the pitches and their changing facilities on behalf of the Council.

Cavendish Park also provides the location for Barrow Island Bowling Club, which has a separate lease arrangement running until 2031. This lease gives the Bowling Club right of access across the car park. An unwritten agreement exists between the Bowling Club and the BPFUA which means that the Bowling Club have access to the changing rooms and the services therein.

Members will be aware that Barrow Island Community Trust, (BICT) was established in 2012 as part of the 'big local' programme set up by the Big Lottery Fund (BIG). BIG has awarded Barrow Island up to £1 million funding, which has to be spent over the next ten years. Barrow Island is one of the first round of 50 pilot areas to receive this award and is currently one of only two such schemes in Cumbria. BICT is at present a non-constituted body, which is funded through a 'Getting people involved' Development Grant from the Community Development Foundation. This funding has been set aside specifically to aid the development of the Trust and engage local people to be part of it. Advice and officer support to this group is being provided by Cumbria Voluntary Services. BICT's Community Plan has an objective to improve sporting facilities on the Island and create a Community Centre. This plan sets out that approximately £600k of the £1m funding will be programmed to achieve this objective.

BICT have been lobbying BPFUA to surrender their lease on Cavendish Park to the Council, so that the Council can arrange a new lease arrangement with BICT, which would allow them to develop the facility in line with their plan. BPFUA have agreed to surrender the lease. Members should be aware that BPFUA have expressed some concerns that they may find it more challenging to schedule local association football league fixtures from the pitches that will remain in their control. Members should also be aware that BPFUA have also advised the Council that they will not surrender the lease until one of the football clubs associated with

BICT have cleared all outstanding debts to BPFUA. Members should note that the rent in the existing lease for the four playing field sites, (including Cavendish Park), is £17k per annum. Based on the total site area of the four playing field sites, the annual rent for Cavendish Park is £3234 and new leasing arrangements will reflect this. It is also proposed to reduce the annual grant to the BPFUA by 20% once the new arrangements are in place.

BICT have advised the Council that a new body, Barrow Island Community Sports Trust, (BICST) has been constituted as the potential future leaseholder of Cavendish Park from the Council. Members should note that the Assistant Director Community Services will seek assurance that this is a properly constituted body which is legally capable of entering into such an arrangement. The Assistant Director Community Services will also obtain assurance regarding any future liability for the Council, which may arise as a result of the proposed £600k expenditure which BICT has planned for Cavendish Park. The annual rent for Cavendish Park is £3,234, and members are asked to consider waiving this amount for 5 years, (at which point this will be reviewed), in consideration of the level of investment which will be made to the facility through the application of Big Local funding.

(i) Legal Implications

New lease arrangements will be developed in conjunction with Council's Estates Department and legal advice will be sought where appropriate.

(ii) Risk Assessment

There is a risk that Barrow Island Community Sports Trust are unable to manage the site in the longer term and the site may revert to Barrow Borough Council. Assurances will be sought on future liability to the Council, should this occur, prior to completing the lease.

(iii) Financial Implications

On surrender of the existing lease, there will be a 20% reduction in the annual grant made to the BPFUA.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on the built environment or public realm.

(v) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service

Background Papers

Nil

