BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting, Wednesday, 31st July, 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 25th June, 2014 (copy attached) (Pages 1-22).

6. Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members.

FOR DECISION

(D) 7. Asset Management Strategy (Pages 23-26).

(R) 8. IT Services Strategic Plan 2014-2015 (Pages 27-28).

(R) 9. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2015-2016 (Pages 29-32).

(R) 10. Universal Credit (Pages 33-37).

(D) 11. Replacement Pay and Display Machines (Pages 38-39).

(D) 12. Housing Market Renewal Programme – North Central Renewal Area Clearance Site (Pages 40-41).

(D) 13. Housing Market Renewal Programme – North Central Renewal Area – 287-329 Rawlinson Street (Pages 42-43).

(D) 14. Clusters of Empty Homes Fund – Landscaping Project (Pages 44-45).

(D) 15. Car Parking Enforcement - Morecambe Bay Hospitals Trust (Pages 46-47).

(D) 16. Enforcement of On-Street Parking Regulations (Pages 48-49).

(D) 17. Award of Design and Build for New Coastal Revetment at West Shore, Walney Island (Pages 50-51).

(D) 18. Replacement of Roa Island Jetty (Pages 52-53).

PART TWO

(R) 19. Regrading Applications (Pages 54-55).

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH 1 OF PART ONE OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

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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Published: 22nd July, 2014.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting: Wednesday 25th June, 2014
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Pidduck (Chairman), Barlow, Bell, Biggins, Garnett, Graham, Guselli, Hamilton, C. Thomson and Williams.

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

RESOLVED:- That by reason of the special circumstances outlined below the Chairman is of the opinion that the following item of business not specified on the agenda should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Item	Reason
Property Searches Litigation – Proposed scheduled Settlement (Minute No. 29)	The next meeting was not to be held until 30th July, 2014 and a decision was required by 1st July, 2014.

16 – 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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 5 (Minute No. 29) of Part One of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

17 – Declarations of Interest

Councillor Biggins declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 10 – Craven House (Minute No. 23). He was an employee of BAE Systems. He left the meeting during consideration of the item.

18 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May, 2014 were agreed as a correct record subject to it being noted that Councillor Garnett had submitted his apologies for that meeting.

1

19 – Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Irwin, Richardson, Seward and Sweeney.

Councillors C Thomson and Williams substituted for Councillors Irwin and Richardson respectively for this meeting only.

20 – Housing Management Forum: Recommendations

The recommendations of the Housing Management Forum held on 12th June, 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:-

Appointment of Representatives to Working Groups

That the Members for 2014/2015 be as follows:-

Tenant Scrutiny Working Party

Council Representatives (2:1) Councillors Barlow, Hamilton and Williams.
Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Homelessness Funding Working Group

Council Representatives (2:0) Councillors Hamilton and Pointer.
Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Tenants Complaints Panel

Council Representatives (1:0) Councillor Hamilton.
Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Stock Condition Survey

To agree that Officers progress the completion of a 100% stock condition survey with the additional resources being required met from the existing agreed Maintenance Budget.

Decoration Voucher Allowances

1.	To note the background information;

2.	To agree Recommendation at 1 to increase the allowance value per room with immediate effect;

3.   To agree the Proposed Process at 2 and the further steps needed to fine tune and implement; and

4.   To note the caveat.

Public Space/External Maintenance (PS/EM)

To agree the following:-

1.   Officers to consider targeting areas on estates where such resources were already agreed to further enhance the planned works, namely at Roosegate, Ormsgill and Vulcan;

2.   Priority be given to fencing which adjoins a public area or highway;

3.   That for any fencing required on an area that adjoins a public area or highway, replacement fencing should be "metal fencing" of the style and colour that the Council have widely used in recent years;

4.   Officers have discretion in consultation with resident groups within the above areas to consider providing "new fencing" where it is seen to improve the appearance of the property (this will be most likely for no more than one block of properties);

5.   Some internal fencing may be completed as necessary and will either be a post and mesh wire or of similar standard to fencing completed through the Community Payback Scheme with Probation; and

6.   Owners who request assistance with fencing be offered a contribution as outlined in the Report or be considered under the Community Payback scheme.

Provision of Site Facilities

To agree the use of residential accommodation for site office facilities as deemed necessary and appropriate when delivering investment works to property.

Housing Management Performance Report 2013/14

1.   To note the information contained in the report and at **Appendix A**; and

2.   To agree Actions 1-3 for 2014-15.

21 – Business Improvement Team

The Director of Resources reminded the Committee that the Council had operated a pilot Business Improvement Team for over a year and now recommended that the remit of that corporate resource be formalised. The report set out the purpose and aims of the Business Improvement Team along with the membership and terms of reference.

RESOLVED:- To endorse the formalisation of the Business Improvement Team and approve the terms of reference.

22 – Burlington House

The Executive Director reminded the Committee that Burlington House had been constructed in 1887, was a Grade Two listed property situated on Michaelson Road, Barrow-in-Furness.

The property was owned by the Council and was currently occupied by NACRO under the terms of a lease dated 12th March, 2009. The rental was £10,000pa.

Following the recent failure of the central heating system and following concerns about the structural integrity of certain other elements of the property a condition survey had been commissioned by the Council. The survey had identified, over a period of five years, urgent and necessary building works required to maintain the property in a 'fit for purpose' state. The estimated cost for those works was £200,000.

Whilst NACRO had occupied the property under the repairing covenant to keep the internal parts of the property in good repair they had indicated that they cannot afford to replace or renew the heating system nor could they afford the replacement/renewal of those urgent items identified in the condition survey. They had requested landlords approval to terminate their lease agreement and vacate the property leaving it in its current state of disrepair. Should landlords approval be granted all liability for the property and its upkeep would revert to the Council.

The following options were available to the Council:

(i) enforcement of the lease covenants against NACRO;

(ii) acceptance of the lease termination and commitment to capital investment in the asset to bring it back into repair; and

(iii) acceptance of the lease termination and disposal of the asset.

On consideration of the options it was considered that the most appropriate course of action would be to accept the termination of NACRO's lease and, following vacant possession, to dispose of the asset by auction.

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

(ii) To authorise the Executive Director to terminate the lease of Burlington House and seek to dispose of the property on the terms reported.

23 – Craven House

The Executive Director reminded the Committee that Craven House was a 1960's four storey office block situated on Michaelson Road.

The current occupation details were as follows:

James Fisher and Sons	Part of ground floor, first and second
Job Centre Plus	Part of ground floor, first floor and basement
Agilisys	Part of third floor
Cumbria County Council	Fourth floor
Vacant	Part of second floor, part third floor

Provisional Heads of Terms had been agreed with BAE Systems Marine Limited for 5458sq.ft on the 2nd floor and 5,000sq.ft on the 3rd floor.

A successful completion of the letting would secure full occupation of Craven House.

RESOLVED:- To approve the proposed lease to BAE Systems Marine Limited on the terms reported.

24 – Email and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Executive Director informed the Committee that the Council's email and internet facility was made available for the business purposes of the Council. The facility had been made available to a significant number of Members, Staff and contractors and it was essential that the Council ensure it was secure for its proper purpose.

The Council was a member of the Public Sector Network (PSN) which meant the Council could link directly to Government Information Technology systems for some services. The Government would only allow that if they were confident the Council's IT operating systems were secure. Membership of the PSN was critical to minimising the Council's operating costs and delivering services effectively.

To ensure that robust systems and controls were in place all Information Technology Policies would be reviewed. The Email and Internet Acceptable Use Policy had been reviewed to make it more robust. That policy applied to all employees and contractors of the Council who accessed the Councils email and internet facilities.

RESOLVED:- To agree to adopt the Email and Internet acceptable use policy.

25 – Efficiency Support Grant

The Executive Director informed the Committee that he had received confirmation that the Council would receive Efficiency Support Grant (ESG) of £1,175,000 in 2014/15. That was based upon the Department of Communities and Local Government assessment that the Council had made sufficient progress against its

ESG plans for 2013/14. The Grant Determination had no conditions relating to clawback of 2014/15 grant.

DCLG had also decided that ESG for 2015/16 would be rolled into the Local Government Settlement for 2015/16 but before funds were rolled in Departmental Officials would be reviewing progress on submitted plans for 2014/15 in Autumn 2014. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Members had already assumed that it was rolled in to the settlement.

ESG had been offered to help authorities reduce their net expenditure to levels the Government considered sustainable in the longer term. Based on updated plan for 2014/15 ESG savings, expenditure of the Grant in 2014/15 should be prioritised to the following broad areas.

1. Staff savings and senior management restructuring. The Council had already agreed to continue to pursue shared management arrangements with other local authorities and savings opportunities that come from turnover would also be realised - £100,000.

2. Capital Investment to reduce costs and increase revenue – forecast economic growth in Furness offered good opportunities to increase commercial rental income and reduce Council costs on vacant property. In order to do that the Council may need to invest in some of its commercial portfolio - £500,000.

3. Transformational programme for Council services – to decide more efficiencies from services the Council needed to invest in training officers and members to give them the skills necessary. Some investment in services may also be required. The Council Leader and the Executive Director had addressed all staff in April to begin that programme and indicated significant funds would be earmarked - £200,000.

4. Review of contracts – The Council was in continuous negotiations with principal GRF contractors and finance may be required for contract re-negotiation - £200,000.

He commented that the planned expenditure figures were indicative at that stage. Expenditure on cost saving initiatives and predicted savings would be brought to future meetings.

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

(ii) To approve the broad areas of expenditure for Efficiency Support Grant.

26 – National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers

The Executive Director informed the Committee that a request had been received from the Barrow Branch of the National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers to incorporate the Borough Crest into their Union ties.

RESOLVED:- To approve the request from the National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers to incorporate the Borough Crest into their Union ties.

27 – Extension of Term for Lease of Cavendish Park to Barrow Island Community Sports Trust

The Executive Director reminded the Committee that in February 2014 it had agreed to offer a 25 year lease to Barrow Island Community Sports Trust (BICST) for Cavendish Park and consequent surrender and variation in the current lease to Barrow Playing Field Users Association. BICST had since requested that the lease be extended to 30 years to meet the requirements of the Big Lottery.

RESOLVED:- To agree that the term of the new lease being developed with Barrow Island Community Sports Trust be extended from 25 to 30 years.

28 – Town Hall – Ground Floor Alterations and Refurbishment

The Committee considered a detailed report of the Assistant Director (Regeneration and Built Environment) relating to the internal alterations to parts of the ground floor of the Town Hall in order to accommodate the Housing Department, currently located externally at Cavendish House.

The Executive Director informed the Committee that the amount of original fabric to be lost was minimal and related to small sections of original stud partitions and two openings formed in the internal, masonry walls.

The under-mentioned tenders for the alterations and refurbishment of the Town Hall ground floor had been received and opened by the Chairman of this Committee on Friday 30th May, 2014.

Contractor 1	£252,761.00
Contractor 2	£275,474.51
Contractor 3	£282,634.00
Contractor 4	£297,325.00

The schedule of works and provisional sums had been reviewed and the two lowest tenders had been analysed in detail. The tender award value for the award to Cox and Allen (Kendal) Ltd had been revised downwards to £211,000, following the review. Subject to Government Office approval the works had been programmed to commence in mid-July 2014 and the works were planned to last for approximately 12 weeks.

RESOLVED:- To appoint Cox and Allen (Kendal) Ltd under the JCT Minor Works Building Contract with contractor's design 2011 (NWD 2011) to carry out the proposed works for the contract sum of £211,000.

29 – Property Searches Litigation – Proposed Settlement

The Executive Director informed the Committee that the Council was one of 370 local authorities in negotiation through solicitors with private search companies to

achieve a settlement relating to private land charge searches between 2005 and 2010. A settlement had been achieved with the claimants.

RESOLVED:- To agree that the settlement agreed by Bevan Brittan be accepted.

REFERRED ITEM

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS ARE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

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30 – Adoption of the Walney Island Coastal Management Strategy

The Executive Director reminded the Committee that Walney Island was approximately 13km long and up to 1.5km wide, orientated north west to south east. The west coast of the island was exposed to the Irish Sea and the northern end was influenced by the Duddon Estuary. The east coast was separated from the mainland by Walney Channel and Piel Channel. The southern end formed the north-western entrance to Morecambe Bay. The whole of the coastline of Walney and surrounding inter-tidal areas, apart from a small section from Hillock Whins to Sandy Gap, was designated internationally due to the important habitats and species it supported.

A coastal defence management strategy for Walney Island over the next 100 years had been developed and, following thorough public consultation, was now presented as a final strategy document. The full study had involved the compilation of existing data and examination of the issues and that was presented within the appendix documents.

The Strategy Appraisal Report (StAR) presented the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) 'business case' for investment in a strategic programme of future capital schemes to manage the risks to people and the developed, natural and historic environments from sea flooding, coastal erosion and coastal slope instability over the next 100 years.

The StAR had summarised the key risks in the Study Area from these sources and was seeking approval from the Environment Agency's Large Projects Review Group.

Once approval of the StAR had been received, the Council would begin to implement the recommendations.

A key conclusion of the study, based on current information, was that for the foreseeable future (of the order hundreds of years) Walney Island was not at risk of a 'permanent' breach caused by coastal erosion. However, the island was currently experiencing 'temporary breaches', or flood water linkage caused by waves overtopping defences during extreme storms, but the problem abated as the tide receded over a period of days.

The preferred strategic approach was for no active intervention over the majority of the shoreline, with hold the line and managed realignment in selected locations in accordance with the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2). In the short term a

capital scheme was required at Earnse Bay (identified as West Shore Park) to reduce the risk of erosion for up to 20 years, whilst a managed realignment property roll-back/relocation scheme would be developed for the longer term.

RECOMMENDED:- To recommend the Council:-

(i)   To adopt the Walney Island Coastal Management Strategy;

(ii)   To recommend the Strategy to the Environment Agency for adoption; and

(iii)   To agree that a presentation be made to the Executive Committee by the Council's Consultants on the longer term strategy for the protection of residential properties and this be taken into account for a future review.

The meeting ended at 3.15 p.m.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 12th June, 2014
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Hamilton (Chairman), Barlow, Irwin, Johnston and Murray.

Tenant Representatives:- Mr A. McIntosh and Mr W. Ward.

1 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27th February, 2014 and the special meeting held on 16th April, 2014 were taken as read and confirmed.

2 – Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Pointer and Tenant Representative Mr W. McEwan.

3 – Appointment of Representatives to Working Groups etc.

The Executive Director reported that at the Annual Council meeting on 13th May, 2014 the allocation of seats in respect of Forums, Panels, Working Groups etc. were agreed.

The Housing Management Forum were requested to nominate Members and Tenant Representatives to the Tenant Scrutiny Working Party, the Homelessness Funding Working Group and Tenants Complaints Panel for 2014/2015.

Three Member representatives by proportionality indicated in the report and three Tenant representatives were required for the Tenant Scrutiny Working Party, two Member representatives by proportionality indicated in the report and two Tenant representatives were required for the Homelessness Funding Working Group and one Member representative by proportionality indicated in the report and two Tenant representatives were required for the Tenants Complaints Panel.

RECOMMENDED:- That the Memberships for 2014/15 be agreed as follows:-

Tenant Scrutiny Working Party

Council Representatives (2:1) Councillors Barlow, Hamilton and Williams.
Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Homelessness Funding Working Group

Council Representatives (2:0) Councillors Hamilton and Pointer.
Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Council Representatives (1:0) Councillor Hamilton.
Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

4 – Stock Condition Survey

The Housing Manager reported that it was the Council's normal practice to complete a Stock Condition Survey every five years. A survey was due this year and in setting the Housing Revenue Account for this year resources of £20k were included for this purpose.

The purpose of a Stock Condition Survey was to take a snap shot of the condition of the stock at a particular point in time. The survey was based on a "sample" of stock based on "typical archetypes" of property that was statistically reliable across the whole stock. The data collected was used alongside the Council's own history of responsive repair requests and tenants aspirations to direct primarily a five year plan of upgrades based on a component by component approach.

Officers were currently progressing the commissioning of a Survey and would be looking to appoint and complete the survey by the end of the calendar year.

In progressing the commissioning of the survey it would appear beneficial following the introduction of "self-financing" of the HRA to look to complete a 100% condition survey across the stock.

To do so would have a number of benefits:-

- Have update information on all properties – this will also assist in RTB and year end valuations as all property information will be validated.
- To aid future asset management planning and co-ordination of investment
- To assist in the development of a 30 year business plan
- To ensure we have a comprehensive data base of stock condition which can be updated as investment progresses
- To enable the Council to develop appropriate financial requirements – to assist in the facilitation of componentisation following the period of transition in HRA accounting, i.e. components (roofs, kitchens, bathrooms) will need to be clearly identified in tenant's dwellings.

The information collected would be used for a number of purposes but with regards Investment Plans, whilst the information would influence the 2015/16 Investment Plan it was likely to be 2016/17 before the updated information would be fully incorporated in annual plans.

Should Members agree this proposal, it would be appropriate to look to ensure having invested in a 100% survey such information was maintained. This would be achieved by ensuring ongoing Investment works were recorded against the data produced and a rolling 20% survey on a year by year basis in year four after completion of the 100% survey be commenced.

It was likely that a figure in the region of up to £100,000 would be required to complete a 100% survey. It was likely that the additional cost could be funded from the underspends in the Maintenance Budget and it was not likely that any additional resources would be needed to be allocated at this time.

RECOMMENDED:- To agree that Officers progress the completion of a 100% stock condition survey with the additional resources being required met from the existing agreed Maintenance Budget.

5 – Decoration Voucher Allowances

The Business Support Manager reported that an allowance towards the cost of redecoration to new tenants was considered cost effective and promoted a sense of responsibility and choice to the tenant. It also sped up the re-letting process.

Currently, Decoration Vouchers were authorised by the Housing Officer inspecting a property prior to re-letting. If the property was eligible vouchers were issued at the following rates:-

£20 per room (kitchen, bathroom, lounge, parlour, bedroom).

The vouchers were processed as repair work orders (usually 1 work order per property) through In-house and then issued to the tenant who later redeemed the voucher(s) at a small number of local supply outlets in exchange for a specified range of décor products.

The Council then received an invoice from the outlet for each and every voucher and payment was scheduled and processed. In-house was then updated.

In 2013-14 around 800 vouchers were issued, 357 work orders and the cost was £15,949.

The following issues were raised with the current process:-

- The value of the vouchers was out of step with the real cost of redecoration;
- No provision was made for the redecoration of staircase/landing areas; and
- The administrative process was top heavy and time consuming.

An increase to the allowance with immediate effect and a change to the process was proposed as follows:-

1.   Recommended Allowance

Property		Per room/area	Maximum
1 bed flat		£30.00	£120.00
2 bed flat		£30.00	£150.00
3 bed flat		£30.00	£180.00
1 bed bungalow		£30.00	£150.00
2 bed house/bungalow		£30.00	£180.00

3 bed house/bungalow		£30.00	£210.00
4 bed house		£30.00	£240.00

The increased cost could be estimated at:-

Voids per year	300
% Properties in need of decoration not qualifying as major works	60%
Rooms falling outside major works	3
Per room	30
	£16,200

This scale would also apply to properties undergoing major works outside of the void process (for example rewiring).

Caveat

The Void Scrutiny Panel may look to include kitchen and bathroom redecoration to properties undergoing major work improvements and repairs as standard. Therefore the Business Support Manager anticipated that around 60 voids would qualify for major works and have their kitchens and bathrooms decorated by the contractor prior to letting.

2.   Proposed Process

A very simple outline of how the process might work was as follows:-

- Pre purchase denominated decorating cards/vouchers/e-vouchers from local suppliers willing operate the scheme in batches;

- One invoice per batch;

- Work order to total amount authorised by Senior Housing Officer and input to In-house as paid;

- Issue to tenants eligible for the allowance as per the scale above with the facility to endorse voucher with customers' name and address;

- Tenants redeem cards/vouchers which are systemically controlled to a permissible range of décor products at the store; and

- Unspent values can be credited back to the council or retained by the tenant against future decorating purchases.

The Benefits would be as follows:-

- Password protected 'activation' of card batches;
- Tenants could choose suppliers card/voucher;
- Tenants had a broad range of manufactures from which to choose; and
- Home delivery available from some retailers.

The next steps were to:-

- Fine tune the process;
- Invite local suppliers to operate the scheme and negotiate favourable discounts;
- Issue service level agreements; and
- Collate indicative price comparisons to help tenant select their supplier.

RECOMMENDED:-

i)   To note the background information;

ii)   To agree Recommendation at 1 to increase the allowance value per room with immediate effect;

iii) To agree the Proposed Process at 2 and the further steps needed to find tune and implement; and

iv)   To note the caveat.

6 – Public Space/External Maintenance (PS/EM)

The Housing Manager sought Members agreement for the targeting of financial resources to complete Public Space/External Maintenance works throughout the Council's Housing Stock.

In the Housing Revenue Account a figure of c£190k was identified for this purpose and a number of previously agreed schemes were being progressed and were being consulted on at present with a view to delivery as soon as practical.

However, it was likely when these schemes were priced there would remain resources available to progress additional works this financial year and the Housing Manager requested further direction on how these resources should be targeted. The Housing Manager asked Members to agree:-

- Officers to consider targeting areas on estates where such resources are already agreed to further enhance the planned works, namely at Roosegate, Ormsgill and Vulcan;

- That priority be given to fencing which adjoins a public area or highway;

- That for any fencing required on an area that adjoins a public area or highway, replacement fencing should be "metal fencing" of the style and colour that we have widely used in recent years;

- That Officers have discretion in consultation with resident groups within the above areas to consider providing "new fencing" where it is seen to improve the appearance of the property (this will be most likely for no more than one block of properties); and

- That some internal fencing may be completed as necessary and will either be a post and mesh wire or of similar standard to fencing completed through the Community Payback Scheme with Probation.

Fencing requests from residents generally would continue to be progressed in accordance with normal practice, which was either to directly carry out such work if on a public highway and of risk to health and safety, or through the Community Payback scheme with Probation if appropriate.

The difficulty in progressing "fencing" projects was added to by the mixed nature of ownership of property on estates. From time to time owners did approach the Service for a contribution, or to pay the cost, to replace damaged fencing. Such issues were normally progressed on a case by case basis to try and establish a solution, but were often time consuming. In the majority of instances responsibility was joint between the Council and owner.

To limit the time required, the Housing Manager proposed in future with such requests the Council offers such owners a contribution to any replacement based on half the cost of the materials if the work was completed through the Community Payback Scheme, and/or if they were eligible to make benefit of the scheme and contribute to the cost.

RECOMMENDED:- To agree the following:-

(i)   Officers to consider targeting areas on estates where such resources were already agreed to further enhance the planned works, namely at Roosegate, Ormsgill and Vulcan;

(ii)   Priority be given to fencing which adjoins a public area or highway;

(iii)   That for any fencing required on an area that adjoins a public area or highway, replacement fencing should be "metal fencing" of the style and colour that the Council have widely used in recent years;

(iv)   Officers have discretion in consultation with resident groups within the above areas to consider providing "new fencing" where it is seen to improve the appearance of the property (this will be most likely for no more than one block of properties);

(v)   Some internal fencing may be completed as necessary and will either be a post and mesh wire or of similar standard to fencing completed through the Community Payback Scheme with Probation; and

(vi)   Owners who request assistance with fencing be offered a contribution as outlined in the Report or be considered under the Community Payback scheme.

7 – Provision of Site Facilities

The Housing Manager sought Members agreement to use residential accommodation to provide temporary site office facilities to contractors completing work on the Housing Stock.

When delivering investment works it was sometimes necessary to provide site based facilities for the Contractor completing the work. This was normally required if the nature of the work was concentrated on a small geographical area. Often the Contractor would arrange the facilities and was usually a Portable Site Office/Container.

A scheme to replace roofs and carryout external fabric repairs on flats on the Roosegate estate was due to commence. The scheme would take approximately 26 weeks to complete starting in the middle of June.

There was a one bedroom ground floor flat vacant at 1 Thrum Street which would be suitable for the purpose of the site office and would remove the requirement of providing a temporary site office within the area of work.

RECOMMENDED:- To agree the use of residential accommodation for site office facilities as deemed necessary and appropriate when delivering investment works to property.

8 – Housing Management Performance Report 2013/14

The Business Support Manager reported on the end of year performance information as shown at **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

The performance indicator report showed Housing Managements' overall level of achievement against a set of benchmark targets. The benchmark was the Housemark 'median' cross sector performance scores from 2012/13.

The value for money section would be updated and reported in the next Housing Management Forum report when the benchmarked accounts were available.

The purpose of the report was to provide the background context which had directly strengthened or weakened the results and to suggest what the best opportunities and challenges were for the coming year.

Influence 1

Welfare reforms and the introduction of 'under occupancy' reduction in Housing Benefit.

Influence 2

Water rates were incorporated within the rents from April 2013.

Influence 3

Ongoing issues with the Repairs contractor.

Officers had already considered these influences and would address in the following way:-

Action 1: Continue to concentrate efforts in reducing arrears

- Supporting tenants to complete benefit claims and process as quickly as possible;

- Applying for reduced tariffs, grants and trust funds relating to utility debts;

- Promoting credit union membership;

- Creating vulnerable markers ready for Universal Credit to maintain direct payments;

- Preparing tenants for Universal credit with gathering and providing information; and

- Referrals to community and support services.

Action 2: Reduce the volume of repairs and turnaround of voids:

- Improve the condition and attractiveness of 'harder to let' properties; and

- Monitor new processes in dealing with voids.

Action 3: Move to the Town Hall:

- Use the opportunity to move towards paperless working; and

- Examine the current model and organisation of work with a view to improving front line delivery and quality of service to tenants.

RECOMMENDED:-

(i)   To note the information contained in the report and at **Appendix A**; and

(ii)   To agree actions 1-3 for 2014-15.

9 – Planned Investments and Planned Maintenance 2013/14 Year End Expenditure

The Housing Manager reported information relating to the Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance Programme for 2013/14 Year End Expenditure. The information is attached at **Appendix B** to these Minutes.

RESOLVED:- To note the information.

The meeting closed at 2.42 p.m.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT   APPENDIX A

Performance Indicator	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Target (Median)
£ Rents Collection				
£ Rent & Service Charges due	£9,228,558	9,728,187	10,687,981	£10,717,904
£ Rent collected	£9,134,875	9,604,739	10,482,254	£ 10,396,366
Rent collected as % of rent due (exc ft)	98.98%	98.73%	98.08%	97%
£ Current Arrears (dwellings)	£181,230	£203,623	£370,804	£175,679
£ Former Arrears (dwellings)	£92,499	£135,745	£162,969	£128,081
Write Offs (Gross)	£75,538	£38,573	£137,688	£50,000
Tenants evicted for rent arrears	6	5	15	10
Current tenants arrears % of rent owed	2.0%	2.1%	3.5%	5%
Former tenants arrears % of rent owed	1.0%	1.4%	1.6%	3%
£ Rent arrears Garages	£1,824	£1,452	£1,763	£ 3,750
£ Rent Arrears Shops	£16,602	£22,146	£15,464	£ 25,000
Void management				
Tenancy Turnover %	**10.3%**	**10.4%**	**12.7%**	8.05%
Total number of re-lets	278	245	340	217
No. of Voids	227	277	344	218
Ends due to Under Occupation			48	
Average relet time for dwellings (CORE)	37	32	35	28
£ rent loss through vacant dwellings	£ 100,227	£ 111,607	£ 165,336	£ 109,685
£ rent loss due to vacant garages	£5,098	£2,290	£2,157	£ 4,500
£ rent loss due to vacant shops	£16,546	£5,000	£1,022	£ 4,000
% properties accepted on first offer	86.4%	78.4%	76.5%	70%
Loss per Void (Rents, Repairs, Arrears)	£ 2,846	£ 2,684	£ 1,341	£2,000
Maintenance				
No. Repair Orders issued (Tenant Demand)	11,587	10,109	10,822	9,197
Responsive & Void repairs per property	4.3	3.7	4.0	3.4
P1 & P2 as a % of total repairs	61.7%	63.8%	63.0%	47.5%
% all responsive repairs completed on time	87.3%	77.1%	71.2%	96.3
P1 % emergency repairs completed on	94.6%	94.6%	89.0%	96.7
P2 % urgent repairs completed on time	78.9%	77.3%	73.0%	94.6
Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs (days)	12.25	19.78	17.46	8.2
Percentage of repairs completed 'Right First Time'	78.5%	79.79	N/A	88.8
Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	77%	61%	N/A	96.8
Appointments made as a percentage of repair orders (exc gas & voids)	NA	100%	N/A	94.1
Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.89%	100%	100.0%	99.8%
Percentage of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard	0%	0%	0%	0.2%
*Average energy efficiency rating of dwellings (based on RD SAP 9.83)	69.2	69.2	69.2	68.90%
Equality & Diversity				
ASB cases reported	82	72		143
Percentage of closed ASB cases that were successfully resolved	91%	99%	%	88%
% Diversity Information : Age	100%	100%	100%	100%
Gender	100%	100%	96.6%	98%
Ethnicity	95%	82%	93.4%	75%
Disability	100%	100%	96.1%	75%
Sexuality	56%	52%	48.1%	55%
Religion or belief	57%	53%	48.5%	55%
Percentage of Stage 1 complaints upheld	22%	40%		NA

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Satisfaction	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13		Target (Median)
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's services overall		88%		83%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance		87%		79%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are taken into account		78%		64%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of the home		90		N/A
Percentage of residents satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live		84%		82%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their rent provides value for money		90%		N/A
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their service charges provide value for money		81%		N/A

Value for Money - Direct Costs per property	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Target (Median)
Overhead per property	£ 324	£ 274		130
Major & Cyclical works	£ 1,256	1100		1200
Responsive Repairs	£ 480	391		375
Void Repairs	£ 167	166		150
Rent Arrears & Collection	£ 54	59		65
Community Involvement	£ 38	36		35
Anti Social Behaviour	£ 41	41		40
Neightbourhood Mgt (Estates/Tenancy	£ 102	105		100
Housing Options	£ 36	36		40
Leasehold	£ 70	134		
Total staff turnover	7.0%	5.9%	3.8%	
Ave. working days lost / sickness absence	14.0	18.9	18.1	

Housing Property	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14
HSE	1290	1284	1274
FLATS	1248	1245	1247
BUNGALOWS	157	157	157
TL DWELLINGS	2695	2697	2678
TL DISPERSED (FLATS)	10	10	8
COMMUNITY CENTRES	5	5	5
LEASEHOLDS	202	204	205
GARAGES	484	486	486
SHOPS	20	20	19
TOTAL PROPERTIES	3416	3422	3401

SOLD PROPERTIES	2011/12	2012-13	2013/14 £	2013/14 No.
HSE	3	252,750	365,040	10
FLAT	1	42,160	19,320	1
LAND	1	0		0
TL	4	294,910	384,360	11

HOMELESSNESS	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14
Homeless ave. days in temporary dispersed accommodation	59	57	56
Homeless ave. days in temporary B&B accommodation	20	27	35
Homeless Total Cases Closed	752	903	782
Homeless Advice	339	408	187
Homeless Prevention	114	170	492
Homeless Applications	185	147	103
Homeless Successful Preventions	85	148	277
Eligible Homeless (Owed a full duty)	29	30	19

HOUSING REGISTER	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14
Applicants on housing register			
Active Direct Applicants		1471	1162
Active Transfer Applicants		346	286
Cumbria Choice Register	1745	1817	1448

PLANNED INVESTMENTS 2014-15

SCHEME	CONTRACTOR OR SUPPLIER	AVAILABLE BUDGET	NO OF PROPERTIES (P) OR BLOCKS (B)	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS	Leasholders affected?
RE-ROOFING WORKS PITCHED ROOSEGATE ESTATE (2-3 YEARS DELIVERY PLAN)	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£255,000	56 (P)	£ -	16/06/2014	31.3.2015	DLP Roofing (via CHP)		No
RE-ROOFING WORKS FLAT ORMSGILL ESTATE	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£132,000	20 (B)	£ -	01/08/2014	31.3.2015	TBC		Yes
RE-POINTING/RENDERING DEVONSHIRE ESTATE	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£464,000	30 (P)	£ -	01/08/2014	31.3.2015	DLP Roofing (via CHP)		No
RE-POINTING/WALL TIES ROOSEGATE FLATS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£194,000	56 (P)	£ -	16/06/2014	31.3.2015	DLP Roofing (via CHP)		No
WINDOW REPLACEMENTS CENTRAL & WALNEY	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£300,000	137 (P)	£ -	01/09/2014	31.3.2015	TBC		No
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE LIGHTING UPGRADES - CENTRAL	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£64,000	14 (B)	£ -	01/10/2014	31.3.2015	TBC		Yes
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE PAINTING - CENTRAL	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£30,000	14 (B)	£ -	01/11/2014	31.3.2015	GEORGE JONES		Yes
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE DOOR UPGRADES - ORMSGILL	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£120,000	18 (B)	£ -	01/08/2014	31.3.2015	SS GROUP		Yes
GARAGE IMPROVEMENTS	CUMBRIA ROOFING	£48,600	10 (B)	£ -	01/04/2014	31.3.2015	CUMBRIA ROOFING	30% COMPLETE	No
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£150,000	120	£ 44,283	01/04/2014	31.3.2015	K WILSON	10% COMPLETE	No
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£360,000	200	£ 25,840	01/04/2014	31.3.2015	AB MITCHELL	10% COMPLETE	No
KITCHENS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£500,000	300	£ 55,513	01/04/2014	31.3.2015	AB MITCHELL	5% COMPLETE	No
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£525,000	200	£ 53,854	01/04/2014	31.3.2015	AB MITCHELL	10% COMPLETE	No
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£115,880	500	£ 2,288	09/06/2014	31.3.2015	G JONES	0% COMPLETE	Yes

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2014-15

	Funding Available 2014-15	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£ 1,085,671	£ 72,102	£ 20,878	7%
Voids	£ 238,243	£ 35,857	£ 4,582	15%
Gas Servicing	£ 99,049	£ 11,732	£ 1,905	12%
Decoration Vouchers	£ 45,000	£ 5,663	£ 865	13%
Disrepair Claims	£ 15,000	£ -	£ 288	0%
Environmental Impmts	£ 25,000	£ -	£ 481	0%
Disabled Adaptations	£ 100,000	£ 36,699	£ 1,923	37%
Electrical Testing	£ 80,700	£ 2,529	£ 1,552	3%
Door Entry Maintenance	£ 20,000	£ 187	£ 385	1%
Total	£1,783,663.00	£164,769.00	£32,858.90	

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	**(D)** **Agenda** **Item** **7**
Date of Meeting: 30th July, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Director of Resources	

Title: **Asset Management Strategy**

Summary and Conclusions:

The Asset Management Plan is currently being developed. As the previous Plan has now elapsed, this report extracts the Asset Management Strategy, for separate publication.

Recommendations:

To approve the publication of the Asset Management Strategy as a standalone document until the Asset Management Plan is produced.

Report

The Council's Asset Management Plan is currently being developed. The HRA assets are dealt with in their 30 year Business Plan. As the previous Plan has now elapsed, this report extracts the Asset Management Strategy from that document and proposes that the strategy be published as a standalone document whilst the new Plan is produced.

The following text is extracted from the existing Plan and sets out the Council's Asset Management Strategy in four elements:

- Operational property
- Non-operational property
- Surplus property
- Property acquisition

Operational Property Strategy

- The Council will own a highly rationalised portfolio of property to deliver services and which provides users with a good standard of efficient, accessible accommodation and facilities by making buildings Cleaner, Greener and Safer in the right location and at the right cost.
- All service property will be efficient and effective in supporting delivery of the Council's key priorities.
- The Council will occupy freehold property where appropriate.

- The Council will hold leasehold property only when necessary to deliver accommodation required on a flexible basis, or when freehold is not available.
- The Council will develop partnership working with other local authorities, public sector bodies, the community and voluntary sector to co-locate services.

The following policy principles are to be applied to enable delivery of the service property strategy:

- Investment should be made only through the three year Capital Programme where:

  - The property is required for the medium or long term use of the Council, and
  - The investment:
    - enhances service delivery
    - improves sustainability
    - improves utilisation
    - increases efficiency
    - adds value
  - It addresses statutory obligations.

Non-operational Property Strategy

- The Council will own property that helps to deliver the corporate priorities.
- The Council will investigate new medium and long-term development opportunities that will support delivery of Barrow Urban Design Framework and economic development policies.
- The Council will own property that provides a regular sustainable income stream, as a component of the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- The Council will strive to improve the performance of the income stream through effective Estate management and development.

The following policy principles are to be applied to enable delivery of non-operational property strategy:

Commercial property will only be held where:

- It provides an acceptable financial return.
- There is potential for Council involvement to deliver economic development objectives.
- It contributes effectively to the delivery of other Council priorities.
- It improves future sustainability of income.
- It addresses legal or contractual liabilities and obligations.

Surplus Property Strategy

The Council will dispose of assets that it does not require at a time and in a manner which best suits the needs of the community.

In the absence of overriding factors, the following policy principles are to be applied to enable delivery of the surplus property strategy:

- All operational and non-operational property will be sold unless:
  - It is occupied efficiently and effectively for services in the right location, at the right price.
  - It can be used to deliver social, economic or environmental benefits.
  - It is a long-term strategic investment.

Property Acquisition Strategy

The Council will only acquire assets if there is a business case to support the improvement in service delivery in the Capital Programme.

The Council will acquire assets that assist with the delivery of social and economic development policies if there is a business case in the Capital Programme.

The Council will develop opportunities, in partnership, to assemble sites to deliver Council objectives.

The following policy principles should be applied to enable delivery of the property acquisition strategy:

- Property will only be acquired in the following circumstances:
  - Where the service cannot be delivered without it.
  - Where it is required to deliver social and economic policies.
  - Where it is required to support the delivery of other Council priorities.

The Strategy will be published on the Council's website.

(i)   Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii)   Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv)   <u>Health and Safety Implications</u>

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(v)   <u>Equality and Diversity</u>

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

(vi)   <u>Health and Well-being Implications</u>

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

<u>Background Papers</u>

Nil

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	**(R) Agenda Item 8**
Date of Meeting: 30th July, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Director of Resources	

Title: **IT Services Strategic Plan 2014-2015**

Summary and Conclusions:

The IT Services Strategic Plan for 2014-2015 has been prepared and is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Recommendations:

To recommend the Council to approve the IT Services Strategic Plan 2014-2015.

Report

The IT Services Strategic Plan 2014-2015 is attached at **Appendix 1** and covers key issues such as the internal IT Service provision, its fit within the corporate framework and the Council's IT Development framework.

The Plan has been developed for 2014-2015 alone as a number of future updates were identified during its compilation and many of those can be incorporated into the Strategy in the short term, providing a more comprehensive and robust Strategy document for future years.

Some key items within the Strategy are, the purpose of the IT Service:

- The IT (Information Technology) Service helps the Council in two main ways, by providing systems which improve the way the organisation works; and enabling staff and Members to use those systems. To achieve these objectives IT needs to be aligned to the core strategy, rather than follow a course of its own. Most importantly, the IT Services team has to be customer focussed.

Establishing of a Council-wide IT Steering Group:

- Representatives of all areas of the Council make up the IT Steering Group. Its purpose is to evaluate potential IT developments, formally propose agreed projects to Management Board and to direct those projects during their delivery. This ensures a corporate approach to IT developments.

The ongoing IT development work:

- Six major areas of work will dominate 2014-2015: virtual desktops, disaster recovery arrangements, Web Content Management System, Information Technology Infrastructure Library, project management and complying with imposed standards for Public Sector Network and Information Management.

(i)   Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii)   Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(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

IT Services Strategic Plan 2014-2015

1. Background

The Council's corporate strategy framework is consolidated in the Council Plan and is supported by four high level strategies:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Workforce Strategy
- IT Services Strategic Plan
- Asset Management Strategy

To achieve the Council Plan, four priorities have been identified:

- Housing
- Regeneration and Public Realm
- Local Economy
- Service Delivery

To deliver the Council's Priorities, objectives have been set for the period 2013-2016. The IT Strategy feeds into the Council's Objectives and also supports the delivery of the Council's Priorities. The four high level strategies and the Council Priorities must be complimentary to each other to avoid any conflict of resources or effort.

2. IT Service

The IT (Information Technology) Service helps the Council in two main ways, by:

- providing systems which improve the way the organisation works; and
- enabling staff and Members to use those systems.

To achieve these objectives IT needs to be aligned to the core strategy, rather than follow a course of its own. Most importantly, the IT Services team has to be customer focussed.

Central Government places demands on Council IT too, particularly through its Public Sector Network compliance requirements and the Government ICT Strategy (ICT; Information and Communication Technology). IT can contribute to the Council's Objectives in three main ways:

- by encouraging customers to move to cheaper channels to receive the same information and service delivery;
- by using existing resources more effectively;
- and by transforming services through re-engineering business processes and working through partnerships.

3. Purpose of the IT Services Strategic Plan

The IT Services Strategic Plan describes the purpose of IT activity within the Council and relates those activities to the overall direction and objectives of the Council.

It outlines the policies and procedures that are in place, the plan for development of IT together with the staff and skills required to deliver against that plan. It describes the relationships between the various initiatives, working groups and plans that involve IT.

Relevant material also exists in separate documents, for example, the Information Security Policy. To make all of this material more accessible, the IT Services Strategic Plan provides a summary of such documents. In this way the document acts as a single point of entry to all relevant IT related documentation.

IT is often seen as a support function and, of course, it is very important to support the systems in place and the staff that use them. However, IT has an equally important role to play in enabling the development of the organisation. The IT Services Strategic Plan has four main purposes:

- it is a useful starting point for anyone seeking to get a better understanding of the use of IT within the Council, such as an Auditor, new member of staff, or colleague in another council;
- it describes where IT fits within the Council;
- it illustrates the purpose of IT and what the Council hopes to achieve with it;

- and it acts as a high level project plan.

4. **The IT Services Strategic Plan in Context**

This section describes the plans, working groups and requirements to which the IT Services Strategic Plan relates.

4.1. <u>Council Plan</u>

Every organisation needs to have some sort of overall plan. Top-level objectives in that plan need be reflected in more detailed plans down to the level of personal objectives for individuals.

The Council Plan describes a number of priorities and within each priority it describes a number of strategic objectives. The priorities and objectives that the IT Service can most directly contribute to are these:

Council Priority	Strategic Objective
Housing	Maintain decent home standard for the Council's housing stock
Local Economy	Young people's employment scheme for the Council
Service Delivery	Achieve the budget reductions identified for the Council
	Partnership working and shared services
	Improving the customer experience
	Measure customer satisfaction
	Implement the Workforce Strategy

4.2. <u>Public Sector Network and the Code of Connection</u>

The Public Services Network (PSN) will substantially reduce the cost of communication services across the UK Government and enable new, joined-up and shared public services for the benefit of citizens. PSN is creating one logical network, based on industry standards, and a more open and competitive ICT marketplace at the heart of the UK public sector.

PSN is at the heart of one objective of the Government's ICT Strategy. PSN provides an assured network over which Government can safely share services, including many G-Cloud services, to collaborate in new ways, more effectively and efficiently than ever before.

PSN Compliance – A Zero Tolerance Approach to the PSN Code of Connection
PSN is not simply a replacement to the GSi Convergence Framework (GCF); PSN is a fully meshed infrastructure that far exceeds the scope of the hub and spoke GSi community system. It offers the opportunity for organisations to benefit from accessing and using shared services right across Central Government as well as the wider public sector. The new infrastructure is essential in reducing the overall cost of IT across Government and in delivering the capability for more citizen centric services to be handled at Council level. However, a greater ability to share requires more accountability to be placed on connected organisations and a much greater focus on Compliance.

Why the Code of Connection (CoCo) is important
The secure and economic sharing of information and services relies on Public Sector organisations implementing their Information Assurance (IA) controls effectively. The CoCo submission, and implementation of its controls, remains a cornerstone of the IA Trust Model. It proves to other organisations with which information is shared that the Council has implemented appropriate IA controls. To ensure the Council remains connected, the CoCo submission will need be completed and returned annually in advance of expiry.

4.3. Government ICT Strategy

The Government's ICT Strategy aims to deliver better public services for less cost. Through reusing and sharing ICT assets to improve productivity and efficiency, and reduce waste and the likelihood of project failure. This in turn will improve and open up public service delivery by supporting online transactional services for citizens and businesses, and create channels for collaboration and policy debate. The Strategy has four parts:

- Reducing waste and project failure, and stimulating economic growth.
- Creating a common ICT infrastructure.
- Using ICT to enable and deliver change.
- Strengthening governance.

On 27 October 2011, the Government published 4 strategies covering G-cloud, end user devices, ICT capability and greening Government ICT.

4.3.1. Government Cloud Strategy

Cloud computing has brought about a step change in the economics and sustainability of ICT enabled service provision. Government is committed to the adoption of cloud computing and delivering computing resources to users as needed (an on-demand delivery model). By exploiting innovations in cloud computing we will transform the public sector ICT estate into one that is agile, cost effective and environmentally sustainable.

4.3.2. Government End User Device Strategy

This strategy will fundamentally redefine the way that Government departments work. Increasing the productivity, flexibility and mobility of the public sector workforce will free up staff, buildings and revenue spend so that Government can deliver better, more agile and more responsive public services, at lower cost.

4.3.3. Government ICT Capability Strategy

This strategy addresses the people aspect of the future of Government ICT to complement the more technical strategies. Clearly the other strategic initiatives such as G-Cloud, and indeed areas such as cybersecurity, need new skills now, and their acquisition is a prerequisite for delivering those strategies. But the strategic challenge that this Capability Strategy addresses is how Government builds a cadre of expertise that continually and sustainably develops to keep up with a rapidly changing technical and commercial environment. This is a substantial task that moves the Government IT Profession forward significantly and quickly, and lays the foundation for many benefits in the future, including enabling more interchange between Government and other sectors.

4.3.4. Greening Government: ICT Strategy

The "Greening Government: ICT strategy" describes how Government ICT will contribute to those commitments and deliver financial savings in addition to efficient, green practices. It sets out the green ICT commitments and actions that central Government departments, their agencies and arms-length bodies, will take over the next four years. Aligning with the Government's transparency and efficiency agenda, it recognises the importance of clear reporting against them and sets out how Government will measure progress by departments, and aggregating this to give a whole of Government report on an annual basis.

4.4. IT Steering Group

Representatives of all areas of the Council make up the IT Steering Group. Its purpose is to evaluate potential IT developments, formally propose agreed projects to Management Board and to direct those projects during their delivery. This ensures a corporate approach to IT developments.

4.5. Business Improvement Team

Efficiency bids handled by the Business Improvement Team (BIT) may identify information technology needs and opportunities. These will be referred to the IT Steering Group to be assessed in the same way as any other projects that the IT Steering Group considers. This will be linked to the Efficiency bid process which requires a business case, including a cost benefit analysis.

5. **Policies and Supporting Strategies**

5.1 Information Security Policy

The information that the Council holds is one of its most valuable assets and, as such, it needs to be protected.

Information security involves the protection of information for:

- confidentiality – keeping sensitive information out of the wrong hands;
- integrity – making sure that information is accurate and complete; and
- availability – ensuring information is available to users when required.

The Information Security Policy includes:

- Responsibilities (IT, Users and Managers)
- Risk Management
- Malicious Software Protection
- E-mail and Internet Access Security
- Council Web Service Security
- User Access Management
- Password Policy

- Compliance Checking
- Network Access Control
- Firewall and Router Configurations
- Identification of Third Party Access Risks
- Third Party Agreements
- Operating System Access Control
- Application Access Control
- Monitoring System Access and Use
- Incident Management Procedures
- Fault Logging
- Documented Operating Procedures
- Business Continuity Management
- Capacity Planning
- Backup and Recovery
- Information Classification & Handling
- Authorisation of New Information Processing Facilities
- Information Technology Inventories
- Software Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights
- Equipment Maintenance
- Secure Equipment Reuse and Disposal
- Equipment Protection
- Power Supplies
- System Information Security Requirements
- Change Control Procedures
- System Acceptance
- Technical Compliance
- Control of Operational Software

The policy is needed to ensure that the information that the Council holds is kept safe.

IT is directly responsible for managing a number of assets, such as hardware and software. There is an IT Asset Register that describes these asset types and where the information is held about them.

5.2. Web Strategy

The Web Strategy will outline the web-related work to be carried out over the next two years. The Content Management System (CMS) is under review as the current version is at the end of its life. The management of online information within departments is also being reviewed to determine the most appropriate model for the Council and its resources.

5.3. Green IT Policy

A recent study revealed that ICT contributes to about 2% of global carbon dioxide emissions, the same amount that the aviation industry produces. Researchers involved in the study have projected that the emission of carbon by the ICT sector is likely to double by the year 2020.

Changing the ways that people work in order to reduce the amount of materials and power that is wasted will minimise the environmental impacts and save money.

The Council has virtualised 53 physical servers over recent years. In effect, this means that the 53 physical servers have been replaced with 3 physical machines currently running 55 virtual servers. This reduces power consumption both directly and for air conditioning. The Council has also rationalised printer and photocopier usage. Wasteful desktop printers have been removed and only efficient, networked, duplexed printers are used. Colour printing has been significantly reduced. This has reduced power consumption and the amount of printer consumables (toner and paper).

To achieve further savings, the Council is currently replacing desktop personal computers with thin clients (virtual desktops). A thin client is a physically small box that looks a bit like a tiny PC; the main difference is that programs are running on the server, not on the desktop. Thin client devices last longer, use fewer materials and consume far less power.

5.4. Service Management Policy

The IT Service has had a number of good processes in place for some time, such as those involving the Help Desk. These processes allow tasks to be assigned, tracking of fault resolution and monitoring of performance.

The Council is looking to formalise more IT processes, by adopting ITIL (the Information Technology Infrastructure Library).

ITIL is the most widely accepted approach to IT service management in the world. It provides a cohesive set of best practice, supported by a comprehensive qualifications scheme. It is owned by HM Cabinet Office but it is practised widely in the private sector as well as the public sector.

One of the key things that ITIL recognises is that it is 'crucial for an organisation to be able to learn from experience in order to implement continuous quality improvement'.

ITIL is to service management as PRINCE2 is to project management. The Council will develop an approach to ITIL; one of the key components is a tighter approach to Change Management, which should lead to fewer surprises and less downtime.

5.5. Procurement Policy

All hardware and software must be purchased and installed through the IT Section. This is set out in the Purchasing Procedure and in the Council's Financial Regulations.

For Service Managers, the easiest way to ensure compliance whenever considering any form of IT purchase is to contact the IT Team Leader first. The IT Team Leader will advise of any required steps to take. This also applies if any IT equipment is broken or is surplus to requirements.

5.6. PC Disposal

It is important that users have good quality equipment to work with. Apart from staff satisfaction, the support burden is reduced when equipment is retired and replaced, rather than patched and repaired to extend its life.

The virtual desktop roll-out will be complete by the end of 2014. Whenever possible, users with any PC issues are now given a thin client instead of a normal desktop PC. Thin clients are: cheaper; longer lasting; more energy efficient; easier to support; far quicker to set up; much more secure – no data is held locally,

End of life PCs are taken away by a salvage company, which cleans all data from the machine, removes toxic components for safe disposal and recycles the rest. Data cleansing and recycling are certificated.

5.7. Recharging Policy

Service users are charged for IT services and supplies based on their direct attribution where applicable (service specific software), a charge based on the number of PCs and any service specific project time.

5.8. Disaster Recovery Plan

The Disaster Recovery Plan describes the course of action to be taken in the event of a disaster. It identifies who is responsible for which tasks. One of the most important aspects for staff, in particular service heads, is the prioritised list of systems. This gives an estimated maximum recovery time for each live system that is supported. The Disaster Recovery Plan is tested annually.

The Council operates virtual machines. There are many benefits to this, but from the point of view of recovery, the main benefit is the ability to restore the system image of a virtual machine to a completely different physical server. This should remove the need to re-install software and so reduce the reliance on third parties.

A further benefit is that the virtual server could be restored onto hardware in a totally different location.

5.9. Project Management Policy

The PRINCE2 methodology has been taken up by many Councils. This is a rigorous and potentially onerous methodology, but the Council is looking to introduce a slimmed down version and have this adopted as the standard for all major projects within the Council.

6. Support

6.1. Performance Measurement

Performance measurement provides the information to enable effective change or adaption to customers' needs. The performance of the IT Service is measured in a number of ways:

- percentage of help requests satisfied within agreed timescale;
- availability of email;
- availability of Internet access;
- set up of new user access.

An area not currently covered, is customer satisfaction. A customer satisfaction survey is subjective but nonetheless important. A random sample of customers will be surveyed during 2014.

6.2. Help Desk and Support

The IT Section operates a Help Desk, and staff should register all requests for support, rather than telephoning or seeking out someone from IT in person. This enables the IT Section to gather important performance indicators and, perhaps even more importantly, it enables better time management for the Help Desk staff and it allows for a fair queuing system.

6.3. Service Level Agreement

Users have a right to know what to expect from IT and this will be detailed in the Service Level Agreement (SLA). This is the IT equivalent of a customer charter.

The IT SLA will be very straightforward, describing what IT will provide in terms of equipment, it also describes the different priorities that are assigned to Help Desk calls, and the length of time for a response. The SLA will also describe the incentives for logging support calls through the Help Desk, since this aids efficiency within IT and provides performance indicators.

7. <u>Development</u>

Six major areas of work will dominate 2014-2015: virtual desktops, disaster recovery arrangements, Web CMS, ITIL, project management and complying with imposed standards for PSN and Information Management.

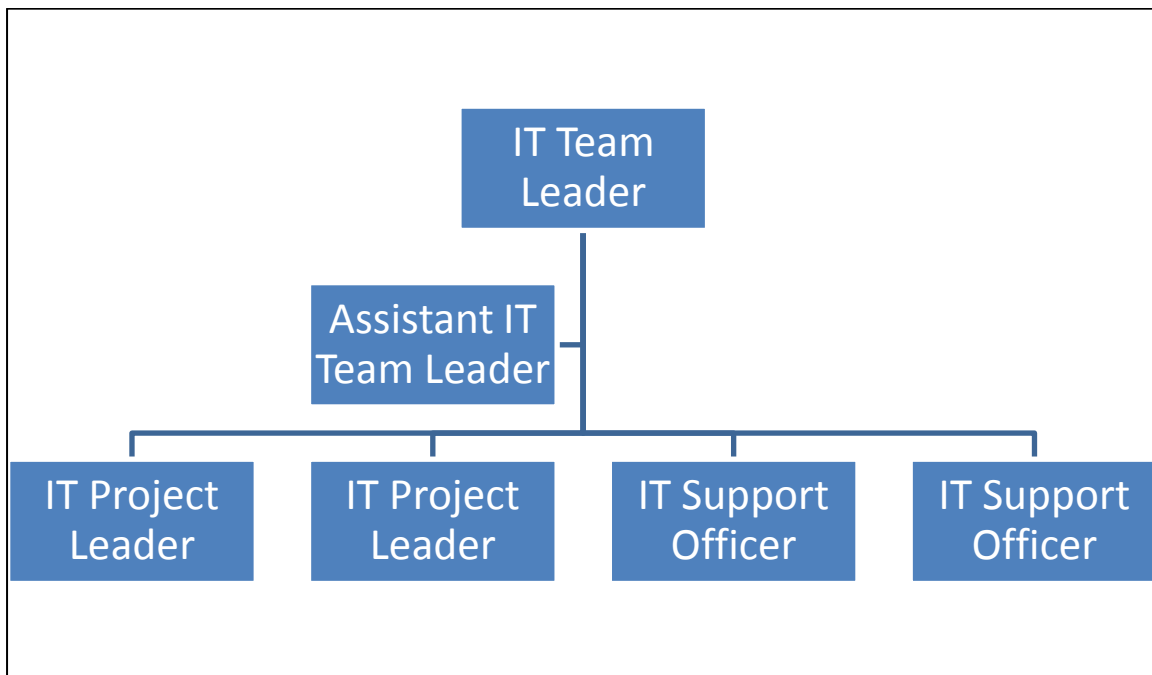### 7.1. <u>Requesting an IT Development</u>

Staff can also identify potential developments outside of one of the major plans. The procedure for requesting developments will be part of the overall project management methodology. The steps are summarised here: the initial idea should be recorded as a project bid. This should be taken to the IT Steering Group for consideration. If the IT Steering Group believes that the idea is worth pursuing, then the originator will be asked to produce a project brief; the project brief will include a business case for the proposed development. The brief is considered by Management Board, and if considered suitable, the project is given the go ahead; the project continues under the direction of the IT Steering Group, being responsible for key decisions about the project; once complete, Management Board will expect to see a post-project review, incorporating a lessons learned report.

7.2. <u>People</u>

IT revolves around three things – people, processes and technology. Of these, people are by far the most important – both the people providing the services (within IT) and the people consuming services (in the rest of the Council). To be successful at embedding IT in the heart of the business, IT Services staff must demystify their trade and speak a common language.

7.3. Roles and Responsibilities

The current organisation of the IT Services Team is:

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   IT Team    │
                    │   Leader     │
                    └──────────────┘
          ┌──────────────┐
          │ Assistant IT │
          │ Team Leader  │
          └──────────────┘
   ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
   │IT Project│ │IT Project│ │IT Support│ │IT Support│
   │  Leader  │ │  Leader  │ │  Officer │ │  Officer │
   └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘
```

With such a small team, most people contribute in a wide variety of ways.

7.4. IT Skills Matrix and Staff Development

The Council will produce a matrix of the skills needed within the IT Services team and identify at least a primary and secondary person for each skill.

Reliance of any single person for a particular system's support introduces both a risk to the Council, and a bottleneck in developing services. There is an ongoing skills transfer programme in place.

The IT Team was restructured in April 2014. The workload and services provided by the Team will be under review for 2014.

7.5. Legislation

There is a significant amount of legislation relating to data and the uses to which it is put. This legislation includes:

- The Data Protection Act;
- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act;
- The Computer Misuse Act;
- The Copyright Act;
- The Freedom of Information Act;
- The Equality Act;
- The Human Rights Act.

8. **Future Updates**

The IT Services Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually.

The actions from this initial IT Strategy for 2014 are:

- CoCo compliance and submission;
- re-establish the IT Steering Group;
- develop a Web strategy;
- introduce a version of ITIL;
- review the Disaster Recovery Plan;
- introduce a version of project management (a version of PRINCE2);
- carry out a customer survey;
- establish performance indicators and an IT SLA; and
- carry out an IT skills matrix for staff development.

Identified additions to the next IT Strategy will be:

- annual achievements of the preceding year;
- the Council's IT infrastructure (and diagram);
- systems supported by the IT Services Team (corporate IT systems); and
- the role of the Serious Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and the Data Protection Officer.

	(R) Agenda Item 9
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	
Date of Meeting: 30th July, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Director of Resources	

Title: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2015-2016

Summary and Conclusions:

The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme ('Scheme') for 2015-2016 must be adopted by 31st January, 2015. There are consultation requirements if changes are to be made to the existing scheme, so this report is brought some time before the next financial year to allow for that process to potentially occur.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to either recommend to Council that the existing Scheme be continued for 2015-2016, or to instruct the Director of Resources to model a scheme that delivers reductions in the cost to the Council by reducing the support available to working age claimants.

Report

2013-2014 was the first year of the Scheme and the Council adopted what was referred to as the default scheme; a scheme that mirrored council tax benefit. The Council also approved the policy of uprating in line with housing benefit. The borough share of the support awarded was £855,599.38 and was funded as follows:
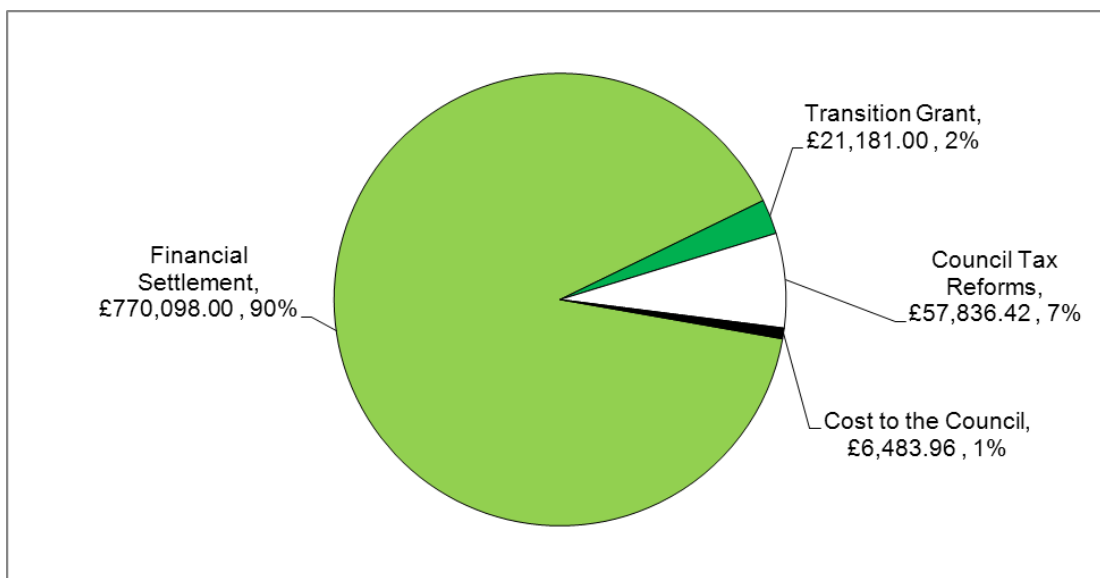
For **2014-2015**, the Scheme continues unchanged and the current estimated support awarded for the Borough share is £873,608.71, funded:
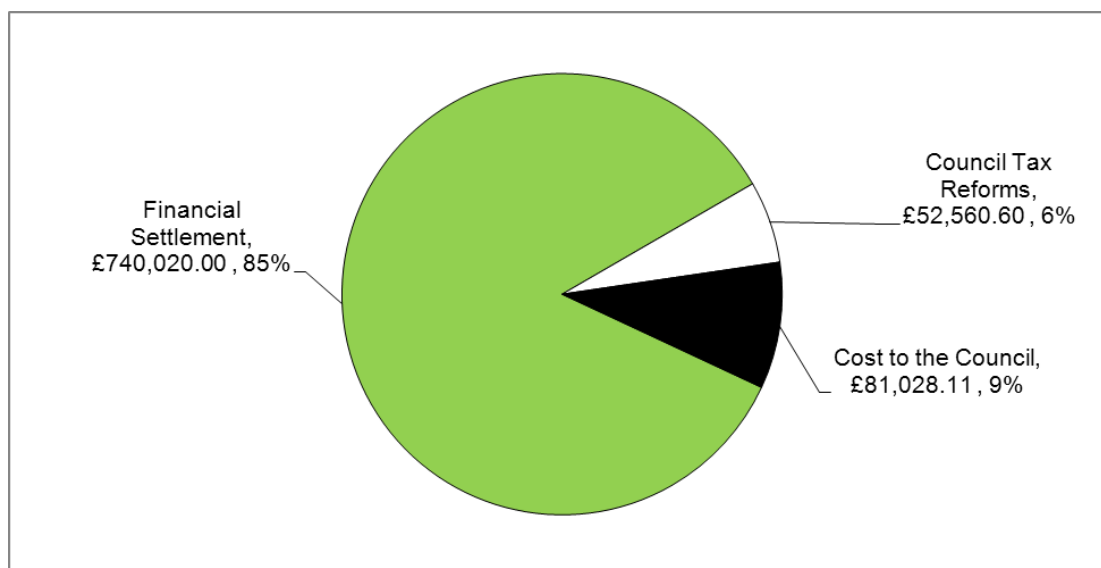
The Scheme funding within the financial settlement is no longer shown separately. The overall reduction in revenue spending power of 5.88% has been applied to the amount of grant shown separately for 2013-2014; this is being used as a baseline.

For **2015-2016** the costs of maintaining the Scheme are similar to this year, with a potential increase in cost to the Council of £8k if the overall reduction in revenue spending power is as anticipated.

Using the current caseload information and 2014-2015 council tax figures, a cost neutral Scheme would have the following impact on working age cases:

Excluding council tax reforms:

Total support awarded (Borough)	£873,608.71
Less: financial settlement (estimated)	£740,020.00
Less: council tax reforms (estimated)	£52,560.60
Shortfall	**£81,028.11**
Working age caseload	4,345
Working age support awarded	£506,750.31
Reduction to achieve cost neutral scheme	**15.99%**
Full council tax liability:	
Reduction in support per case	£253.77 p.a. £4.88 per week
Borough element only:	
Reduction in support per case	£34.69 p.a. £0.67 per week

The reductions could be modelled to have different values for different circumstances. The policies adopted in modelling a reduced Scheme would be consulted on and would form the local Scheme for the year as approved.

Risks

There are a number of risks to be considered when making the recommendation to Council:

- Funding the Scheme shortfall.
- The Scheme is adopted by the billing authority and the major preceptors have to be consulted prior to proposed changes.
- Should the Council design its own Scheme, transitional relief would have to be granted for a reasonable time.
- The potential complications in designing or modelling a Scheme covering all of the groups of people with different factors to achieve the reduction in support.
- The timeframe for public consultation and feedback of proposed Scheme changes.
- The impact on residents currently receiving support if it is reduced.
- The impact of other benefit changes.

(i)   Legal Implications

The Council is required to have adopted a Scheme by 31st January for the following financial year.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The risks are set out in the body of the report.

(iii)   Financial Implications

The estimated 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

Changing the Scheme may have an adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:	**30th July, 2014**
Reporting Officer:	**Director of Resources**

Title: Universal Credit

Summary and Conclusions:

The DWP have approached the Council in order to propose a Local Authority Delivery Partnership Agreement. This is an Agreement where the Council would provide parts of the Universal Credit journey to claimants and would receive some grant towards that. Further reports will be submitted in order to inform the committee's decision on whether to sign up to the Agreement.

Recommendations:

To recommended the Council to delegate the signing of the Local Authority Delivery Partnership Agreement to the Executive Director, should the Executive Committee agree to sign up.

Report

Current Overview

Universal Credit replaces Jobseeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Employment and Support Allowance and Income Support.

Universal Credit requires a 'Claimant Commitment' which sets out what is expected of the claimant in return for receiving assistance, taking into account personal circumstances and capability to earn.

Claimants will be able to apply for their benefits online. The DWP estimate that nearly 80% of benefit claimants already use the internet. Telephone and other support services will be available if needed.

A single payment will be made to a household rather than an individual. This will include housing costs and will be paid monthly in arrears. The Council's currently pays housing benefit four weekly in arrears by BACS.

Universal Credit is designed to make work pay. As claimants earn more money, financial support will be withdrawn at a slower rate than under the current system. The Real Time Information (RTI) link with HMRC will facilitate this.

Local support will be available to help claimants where appropriate. This will be provided through the DWP and delivery partnerships.

For Cumbria, Universal Credit will be live by December 2014 for the initial claimant scope.

Initial Claimant Scope

The initial claimant scope for Cumbria is for single new claimants that are unemployed and may have rental housing costs (no mortgage). The DWP estimate that around 60% of these are less than 25 years old. This scope will be extended to couples with similar criteria and then families, mid to late 2015.

Local Support

The DWP estimate that 30-40% of claimants will need some form of assistance in personal budgeting support. There will also be the need for supported online access and the facilities for unsupported online access.

There will be a period of time where the DWP require information from the Council in order to prepare their systems for the claimants and case history that is currently held. In addition, the information currently accessed by the Council for administering Local Council Tax Support will change from a computerised exchange, to secure emails that will need to be manually processed.

The DWP is proposing to fund the resources required to pass case history across and for manually processing Local Council Tax Support data until that is automated under Universal Credit.

Current Arrangements

The Council's housing benefit administration function is outsourced until October 2018. It is expected that Universal Credit will be fully implemented by this time, so the housing benefit administration responsibilities will no longer belong to local authorities.

The Council's welfare advice is provided under a service level agreement by Barrow Citizens Advice Bureau which provides money advice as part of its services.

The Council does not have computers available for public use, but does have kiosks with basic self-service facilities available at the Town Hall and at the Forum.

The Council runs a local Landlord Forum to facilitate an exchange of information and views. When there are significant changes, the DWP and other bodies are invited to make presentations.

<u>Local Authority Delivery Partnership Agreement</u>

The DWP have approached the Council in order to propose a Local Authority Delivery Partnership Agreement. This is an Agreement where the Council would provide parts of the Universal Credit journey to claimants and would receive some grant towards that.

The Council would undertake to:

1. Provide computers at supported and unsupported locations that could be used for claiming Universal Credit. Supported in this context, means somebody able to assist with using the computer and when claimants need help with the form. The form cannot be saved and returned to at present. There is no grant available for providing or supporting computers. There is grant available, on a formula basis, for providing support to claimants in getting online. The DWP estimate that around 5% of claimants will need online support. In practice, this could mean that the Job Centre Plus would refer claimants to the Town Hall in order that they can sit and use a computer, with or without assistance (as required) to complete their Universal Credit claim.

2. Provide personal budgeting support to claimants. This is a step above providing money advice or debt advice and is not an area that the Council directly has any expertise in. The DWP estimate that 30-40% of claimants will need some form of assistance with personal budgeting. There is grant available for this service, again on a formula basis.

3. Triage and explain the new services, particularly while they are being introduced in incremental stages. This could include helping claimants to set up bank accounts, preparing schedules of the information required to complete a claim, helping them make changes online, directing them to the necessary support if their money has not been received in their account and so on. There is no grant funding for this service.

For the grant funded services (1 and 2 above), where the actual numbers of claimants using these services varies significantly from the estimates, it will be possible to speak with the DWP regarding the grant levels.

<u>Gap Analysis</u>

The following table summarises the current position of Council provision against the DWP requirements:

DWP Requirement	Council Currently	Grant Available
Support for the Universal Credit Service Centre – migrating claims.	This can be achieved through existing contractual arrangements.	Yes, formula based.
Manual processing of Local Council Tax Support.	This can be achieved through existing contractual arrangements.	Yes, formula based.

Communications to Landlords.	The DWP have indicated that they will attend the next local Landlord Forum.	N/A.
Computer access.	No public computer access.	No.
*Supported online access.	No provision or expertise, no computers or accommodation.	Yes, formula based.
Personal budgeting support.	Barrow Citizens Advice Bureau provides money advice under the service level agreement.	Yes, formula based.
Triage (explaining the service).	Not currently provided other than (current regulation) housing benefit advice that is contracted out until October 2018.	No

The DWP would train a small number of officers to then pass on that knowledge to others; train the trainer. This would cover how to complete a Universal Credit application online.

Where the Council does not currently provide a service, it could be contracted. The Local Authority Delivery Partnership Agreement would be with this Council who could then procure the required services from other parties. There would be a risk of any grant shortfall being a burden on the Council's finances and a provider would have to be identified before signing up to the Agreement.

Members will be aware that the County Council has computers in its libraries that are available for public use. That may provide enough locations for the claimants that will wish to submit their claim this way. However, these are usually available for hourly slots and the claim cannot currently be saved and returned to. The Job Centre Plus has a number of computers that are already utilised in this way and there are plans for their provision to be enhanced and include Wi-Fi.

Timescale

The Local Authority Delivery Partnership Agreement would be signed by the end of November 2014. The Agreement will be rolled into the Local Services Support Framework around October 2015.

Recommendation

The DWP will shortly be providing more information to the Council. Further reports will be submitted in order to inform the committee's decision on whether to sign up to the Agreement. Consideration needs to be given to the capacity to deliver or commission the services that will be covered initially by the Agreement and in time, the Local Services Support Framework.

Given the timescale involved I recommend that signing the Agreement be delegated to the Executive Director, should the Executive Committee agree to sign up. The final report will be presented to the 22nd October meeting, where a decision must be made.

(i)   <u>Legal Implications</u>

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii)   <u>Risk Assessment</u>

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii)   <u>Financial Implications</u>

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv)   <u>Health and Safety Implications</u>

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(v)   <u>Equality and Diversity</u>

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

(vi)   <u>Health and Well-being Implications</u>

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

<u>Background Papers</u>

Nil

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	**(D)** **Agenda Item 11**
Date of Meeting: **30th July, 2014**	
Reporting Officer: **Executive Director**	

Title: **Replacement Pay and Display Machines**

Summary and Conclusions:

The Council has 22 pay and display machines that are up to 14 years old. This report sets out the requirement to replace the Council's pay and display ticket machines and identifies the required funding.

Recommendations:

To approve the use of the funding identified in the report for the replacement of the pay and display machines.

Report

The Council collects over £600k in pay and display ticket sales each year. The 22 machines currently in operation are up to 14 years old and repairs are regularly carried out by the Civil Enforcement Officers and also by the current supplier, for which we pay.

To secure the Council's income, prevent customer dissatisfaction when they can't buy tickets and, to reduce and not increase maintenance costs, the machines should be replaced.

The Parking and Admin Services Manager has sought the required number of quotations and performed an assessment to identify the potential supplier of new machines. The new machines have an alpha numeric keypad which will assist in the enforcement process as the tickets will be vehicle specific.

This purchase is not included in the current Capital Programme and this report seeks Members approval to have this project added in.

The purchase can be funded from re-investing savings realised in the revenue budget this year from contract related savings of £50,070, and the use of £17,660 from reserves.

Members are recommended to approve the use of the funding identified in the report for the replacement of the pay and display machines.

The project will then continue to follow the Council's Purchasing Procedure. The current machines are redundant and can be sold for spare parts as part of the replacement programme. This will also save the Council any disposal costs and the estimated proceeds are included in the project costs.

(i)   Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

Each car park has two machines to mitigate the risk of no tickets being available. However as the machines get older, they become less reliable and there may come a point where a car park has no working machines until maintenance can be arranged.

(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

Correspondence held by the Parking and Admin Services Manager.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:	**30th July, 2014**
Reporting Officer:	**Executive Director**

Title: **Housing Market Renewal Programme – North Central Renewal Area Clearance Site**

Summary and Conclusions:

Members have previously granted a period of exclusivity for developers to agree a scheme for this site. The developers with whom this scheme was agreed subsequently decided that the scheme was not viable. The Council has had approaches from other developers, and it is recommended that a further exclusivity agreement is entered into to allow further scheme proposals to be worked up.

Recommendation:

To agree to enter into an exclusivity period of three months with Copperplane Ltd to allow them to draw up more detailed scheme proposals and agree Heads of Terms.

Report

The site created by the demolition of properties on Sutherland Street, Arthur Street and Marsh Street was cleared during 2012. At a previous meeting, Members agreed to grant Bridgehouse Property Consultants a period of six months exclusivity to work up a viable development in partnership with Leck Construction (Minute 84 12/12/12 refers). This exclusivity period was subsequently extended for a further six months.

During that time, various investigation works were been carried out including:

- Desktop and intrusive ground investigation studies;
- Enquiries and initial negotiations with utilities concerning service requirements and potential diversion of existing services;
- Initial discussions with the highways authority concerning requirements for highways alterations and street lighting.

More recently, a further approach has been made by Copperplane Ltd. This company owns approximately 50 privately rented properties in Barrow, and has done for about ten years. It has also carried out a number of small development projects, although none in Barrow. Interest in this site has been very limited since the site was cleared. It is therefore considered to be reasonable to incentivise

potential developers by granting them a period of exclusivity to reduce their risk of incurring abortive costs in drawing up a detailed scheme and agreeing Heads of Terms.

As a substantial amount of background work has already been done, a period of three months' exclusivity with Copperplane is suggested.

(i)   Legal Implications

Any final contract of sale will require agreement by Council and will be subject to advice from the Council's solicitors.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

A substantial corporate reputational risk exists if the site is not brought forward for development within a reasonable timescale. A financial risk exists if a fair value for the site is not realised at the point of development. The actions proposed in this report are designed to minimise these risks.

(iii)   Financial Implications

No additional implications from previous report.

(iv)   Health and Safety Implications

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 a positive effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service by improving housing conditions in the long term.

Background Papers

Nil

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	
Date of Meeting: **30th July, 2014**	
Reporting Officer: **Executive Director**	

Title: **Housing Market Renewal Programme – North Central Renewal Area – 287-329 Rawlinson Street**

Summary and Conclusions:

An update on the progress of this project is provided, and a proposal set out for joint development of 166 Rawlinson Street.

Recommendation:

1. To note the progress of the project;
2. To include the properties 285 Rawlinson Street and 166 Rawlinson Street in the scheme; and
3. To agree in principle to assist the refurbishment of 166 Rawlinson Street with any potential purchasers using up to £25,000 of grant funding from this element of the Capital Programme in accordance with the Council's private sector housing assistance policy.

Report

At a previous meeting, Members agreed to carry out an external improvement scheme to this area of the North Central Barrow Renewal Area. A broad scope of works was agreed, which would include improvements to front elevations, replacement rainwater goods, new back walls and gates and replacement of timber windows and front doors with PVC. It was further agreed that the contracts that were in place at that time with Arcus Consulting (for professional services) and Thomas Armstrong Ltd (for the building works) covering Sub Areas A and E of the Renewal Area (the Thwaite Street and Silverdale Street areas) would be extended to cover the new phase of work (Minute 68; 16/10/13 refers).

The extension of the contractual arrangements with Arcus and Thomas Armstrong were based on a cost estimate extrapolated from the costs of the work in Sub Areas A and E. In the event, Thomas Armstrong's detailed cost estimate was well in excess of the estimate presented to Members, and it was not therefore possible to proceed.

A new tender exercise for the professional services has now been undertaken, and Arcus Consulting have once again been appointed as the lowest tenderer. They have started to carry out the survey and scheme design works. The building works will be the subject of a separate tender exercise run by Arcus.

During the development of the project, it has become clear that to maximise the impact of the scheme, two further properties should be included in the scheme – 285 and 166 Rawlinson Street. These are both prominent corner properties which have a high impact on the streetscape in this area.

166 Rawlinson Street is currently owned by the Council. It was bought some years ago because of its prominent location. However, it has not been possible to date to find either a buyer who will redevelop the property, or a suitable on-going use in Council ownership. The property is in very poor condition, and a number of potential purchasers have pulled out because of this. It is proposed that to incentivise prospective purchasers, the property is included in this Group Repair scheme. The terms of the Council's private sector housing assistance policy would then allow a grant of up to £25,000 to be offered to contribute to essential external repairs.

(i)   <u>Legal Implications</u>

No significant legal implications have been identified.

(ii)   <u>Risk Assessment</u>

No significant corporate risk has been identified.

(iii)   <u>Financial Implications</u>

Sufficient provision for this project will be made in the capital programme.

(iv)   <u>Health and Safety Implications</u>

This project will be subject to the Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 2007. Arcus Consulting have been appointed as CDM Co-ordinators to ensure that all matters related to Health and Safety are effectively managed.

(v)   <u>Equality and Diversity</u>

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

(vi)   <u>Health and Well-being Implications</u>

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

<u>Background Papers</u>

Arcus Consulting feasibility report held by Property Services Group Manager

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	**(D)** **Agenda** **Item** **14**
Date of Meeting: **30th July, 2014**	
Reporting Officer: **Executive Director**	

Title: **Clusters of Empty Homes Fund – Landscaping Project**

Summary and Conclusions:

An update on the landscaping element of the Clusters of Empty Homes plan is provided.

Recommendations:

1. To note the progress of the project to date; and

2. To authorise the Executive Director, after consultation with the Chairman of the Executive Committee, to award the contract for landscaping works to the lowest tenderer in the current tender exercise in line with Standing Orders.

Report

1. Background

1.1. In May 2012, a bid was submitted to the Government's Clusters of Empty Homes Fund. This resulted in £3.442m being allocated to the Council to tackle the problem of empty homes within Barrow Island Flats. Of this sum, £1.15m was allocated to improve the public realm in the vicinity of the Flats (Minute 16 20/06/12 refers).

1.2. The landscaping element of the project is intended to help to make the flats more desirable and therefore more lettable by improving the physical environment around the flats. The area concerned consists principally of the highway surrounding the flats, and three areas of open space which are either owned or leased by the Council.

1.3. At the suggestion of the Government's Empty Homes Advisor, a competition was set up to appoint suitably qualified landscape architects to be appointed to develop a design for the scheme. The Landscape Institute (the professional body for landscape architects) ran the competition on behalf of the Council. Members agreed to appoint the winners of the competition (Minute 48; 04/09/13 refers) and Farrer Huxley Associates (FHA) were appointed on this basis.

2.   Progress Report

2.1.   FHA have developed their competition entry into a detailed scheme. Apart from the technical work required, this has involved considerable consultation with local residents, the County Council (in their role as the Highways Authority) and statutory undertakers. A planning application for the proposed scheme has now been submitted.

2.2.   A tender process for the construction of the landscaping works has been started, initially by requesting expressions of interest through The Chest, the Council's procurement portal. FHA will manage the remainder of the tender process, produce a tender report and manage drawing up the contract with the Council.

(i)   Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(iii)   Financial Implications

Funding for this project has been provided through the Clusters of Empty Homes Fund.

(iv)   Health and Safety Implications

This report 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 a positive effect on the Health and Wellbeing of residents.

Background Papers

Competition design briefs and correspondence held by the Property Service Group Manager.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	**(D)** **Agenda Item 15**
Date of Meeting: **30th July, 2014**	
Reporting Officer: **Assistant Director – Community Services**	

Title: **Car Parking Enforcement - Morecambe Bay Hospitals Trust**

Summary and Conclusions:

The Council was approached in the early part of 2013 by Morecambe Bay Hospitals Trust regarding the possibility of a partnership arrangement through which the Council would administer and enforce car parking restrictions at the Furness General Site.

Recommendation

1. To approve the submission of an expression of interest in undertaking car park restriction enforcement and associated administration at Furness General Hospital; and

2. To approve the submission of a tender for such work, provided that it is deemed in the Council's interest to do so.

Report

The Council was approached in the early part of 2013 by Morecambe Bay Hospitals Trust regarding the possibility of a partnership arrangement through which the Council would administer and enforce car parking restrictions on the Furness General Hospital site at some point in the future. Since that first approach there have been a number of meetings between senior officers of the Council and the Trust with the aim of exploring this further to determine whether such an arrangement could be viable. Officers from Lancaster City Council and SLDC have also been involved in these meetings as the Trust has been speaking to them about the same arrangements at Lancaster and Westmoreland General Hospitals.

The Trust had given all three Councils the understanding that, should they be interested in undertaking this work on their behalf, a short, partnership/shared service arrangement might be made. Initially, it was thought that the Council's could undertake the work for a two year period, issuing Penalty Charge Notices under the Traffic Management Act. A draft specification was drawn up for the Council's to comment on, and this comment has been given.

At the latest engagement meeting in July 2014, the Trust informed the Council's that they have received advice on procurement which means that they will be required to advertise the work under European Procurement Legislation. The Trust will be looking to advertise their contract in three lots, (one for each hospital site), with a start date of 2015. This has changed the situation from the partnership/shared service approach which the Council and the other Councils had been expecting, and had been working towards.

(i)   Legal Implications

A traffic management order will need to be made for any car park at Furness General Hospital to enable enforcement.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii)   Financial Implications

There will be a financial benefit to the Council, although this cannot be fully expressed until examination of the expected Invitation to Tender.

(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 Assistant Director – Community Services.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:	**30th July, 2014**
Reporting Officer:	**Executive Director**

Title: Enforcement of On-Street Parking Regulations

Summary and Conclusions:

The Council has been invited to submit a price for the operation of on-street parking enforcement across the Borough including the proposed on-street charging using meters. To meet the deadline submitted by Cumbria County Council, Officers have submitted a proposal subject to Members confirming today that you wish to participate.

Recommendations:

To agree to endorse the actions taken by your Officers.

Report

Members will be familiar with the current proposal to charge for on-street parking on various streets throughout the town centre of Barrow. The Council has not been formally notified of the location of the charged bays but we understand there are 20 meters to be located on the periphery of the town centre's retail area.

Installation of the meters has also precipitated a review of how wider on-street parking enforcement is carried out across Cumbria and the County Council Cabinet have resolved to take this service back in-house rather than it being provided by District Councils in most cases. However, Cumbria County Council have also agreed to enter into discussions with the Council about continuing to provide on-street enforcement of traffic regulations including management and enforcement of the metered streets and have requested that a cost proposal for providing the services is submitted to them by 18th July.

Currently, the Council's on-street enforcement costs are offset against penalty charges, contractors waivers and a £60,000 annual underwriting sum paid by Cumbria County Council. Penalty charge income has reduced over the last three years meaning that the net cost to Cumbria County Council of on-street enforcement (excluding residents permits) was £7,922 in 2011/12, £29,492 in 2012/13 and there was a net subsidy from the Council of £14,961 in 2013/14.

Cumbria County Council have prepared a basic specification for the on-street enforcement function requiring Civil Enforcement Officer coverage seven days per week, 8.00 am to 8.00 pm with the Council continuing to process penalty charges.

If the Council declined to participate, all on-street parking enforcement would be provided by Cumbria County Council through a contracted out service. In effect this would mean two local authorities managing and enforcing parking in Barrow Borough: the Council for its own car parks and Cumbria County Council for on-street parking. Following discussions with the Council Leader, officers have prepared and submitted an estimated cost for the Council providing on-street parking enforcement and management of meters to meet the Cumbria County Council deadline of 18th July, however I have made it clear that the final decision will be held over until today's meeting and that further refinement of cost will be required as the specification for the service is firmed up.

Officers have based cost estimates on the 2013/14 financial year.

The proposal to charge for on-street parking has clearly been a controversial issue and Members must determine if they wish to be responsible for management and enforcement of the system. However, in my view it is preferable to retain a single parking enforcement service for the Borough's public car parks and streets rather than fragment this across two local authorities which would further confuse the public operationally and in terms of cost efficiency.

(i)   Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications, though a service agreement/contract would be required if the Council's proposal is accepted.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii)   Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications. The price proposal submitted reflects the most recent estimates of cost of the service and would result in a net saving of £14,961 on the 2013/14 Budget.

(iv)   Health and Safety Implications

All Health and Safety implications would be addressed if the Council's proposal is accepted. The service is substantially the same as one we currently operate.

(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

Cumbria County Council specification for on-street enforcement.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:	**30th July, 2014**
Reporting Officer:	**Executive Director**

Title: Award of Design and Build for New Coastal Revetment at West Shore, Walney Island

Summary and Conclusions:

Design and build tenders for the West Shore Park coastal defence have been received. The cheapest is substantially below the estimated cost. Tenders have been checked by our consultants to ensure they will meet the specification. Several organisations are contributing to the costs of the West Shore works and have committed resources based on a higher scheme cost. The reduced cost releases £24,000 of the Boroughs estimated contribution and this should be used for other sea defence works on Walney Island.

Recommendations:

1. To approve the award of the contract to BAM Nuttall Ltd based on the selection criteria being for the most economically advantageous tender; and

2. To invest the £24,000 saved in the tender on increasing the density of the coastal defence in front of Bent Haw Tip, Walney Island.

Report

The Council has previously agreed to oversee the installation of a coastal defence to protect West Shore Walney. Funding has been granted based on consultation valuing the work at £384,000. Contributions have been agreed from the Environment Agency and Private land owner, Berkley Leisure Ltd supported by capital funds from the Council.

A competitive tender has been undertaken with the Environment Agencies shortlist of approved contractors. Quotes were requested from the following companies for the submission deadline of 4th July:

BAM Nuttall: £199,164.93
Company A – Withdrew due to other commitments.
Company B – Withdrew due to other commitments
Company C – Withdrew due to other commitments
Company D - £415.936.17

The most economically advantageous submission is therefore BAM Nuttall with a tender within budget: £199,164.93 and they are therefore the recommended

supplier. This is a significantly lower price that forecast which reduces the financial contributions of all three parties. The Councils original contribution had been agreed to be £50,000 but will now be £26,000. There is now an opportunity to reinvest the saved funds in an alternative coastal defence project on Walney Island.

Subject to Contract award being made on Friday 1st August the winning contractor is optimistic that they will complete the project by the end of September 2014.

(i)   Legal Implications

The contract value is below the OJEU threshold for European advertising and the Councils Standing orders allow for the adoption of other agencies frameworks. A minimum of four quotations has been requested although only two have been received. This Committee can agree to accept based on only two returns.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

The competency of the contractors has been previously assessed by the Environment Agency, the design will be overseen by Capita Symonds our coastal engineers and the practice of the contractors on-site will be monitored by Council officers.

(iii)   Financial Implications

The quotation submitted is within the expected budget used to attract external funding. The total fund is budgeted for £384,000 consisting of £105,000 from Berkley Leisure Ltd, £239,000 from the Environment Agency and £50,000 from the Council. With the quotation being less than projected the contribution from the Council can be reduced proportionally and reallocated to improve the erosion defence protecting Bent Haw tip.

(iv)   Health and Safety Implications

All companies making the shortlist have been vetted as competent by the Environment agency. A site specific risk assessment and method statement will be undertaken before commencement of work on site and approved and monitored by Council officers and our appointed CDM Co-ordinator: Baker Mallet.

(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

Date of Meeting: 30th July, 2014

Reporting Officer: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Built Environment)

Title: Replacement of Roa Island Jetty

Summary and Conclusions:

An update on the progress of this project is provided, and a recommendation made to appoint a contactor to carry out the work.

Recommendation:

1.   To note the progress of the project; and

2.   To appoint L&W Wilson Ltd as the principal contractors for the replacement of Roa Island jetty.

Report

The current jetty at Roa Island is in a very dilapidated condition, and has been supported by a temporary scaffold for some time. It has been agreed in principle that the jetty be replaced, and planning consent and the other necessary permissions and licences have been obtained. The work needs to be carried out before the end of November for ecological reasons and is scheduled to take 16 weeks. The work has been tendered on our behalf by the supervising engineers M & P Gadsden Ltd, and tenders returned as follows:

L&W Wilson   £183,313.37
Company A   £194,250.00
Company B   £224,063.93
Company C   £286,880.00
Company D   £256,014.90

It is therefore recommended to appoint L&W Wilson as the lowest tenderer.

(i)   Legal Implications

No significant legal implications have been identified.

(ii)   Risk Assessment

No significant corporate risk has been identified.

(iii)   Financial Implications

Additional provision of approximately £30,000 will need to be made from the Asset Investment Fund to ensure sufficient provision for this project is made in the capital programme.

(iv)   Health and Safety Implications

This project will be subject to the Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 2007. Arcus Consulting have been appointed as CDM Co-ordinators to ensure that all matters related to Health and Safety are effectively managed.

(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 the condition of the jetty.

Background Papers

File held by the Assistant Director (Regeneration and the Built Environment)