

At a Meeting of the CABINET held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER on WEDNESDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2000 at 4.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor C.R. Anderson in the Chair

Councillors Bainbridge, Bate, Bohill, Charlton, Mrs. Farthing, Mrs. M. Forbes, Galbraith, Mrs. Handy, Holt, Howe, Mawston, O'Connor, W. Scott, Stephenson, Stewart, Symonds, Timmins and Trueman.

PART I

RECEPTION OF PETITION

The Cabinet received a petition presented by Councillor C. Anderson, on behalf of residents of the City, requesting the Council to seek to acquire, restore and display the vessel "Carrick", originally named "City of Adelaide", and constructed in Sunderland in 1864.

1. RESOLVED that the petition be received and referred to the appropriate Director for consideration.

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th July, 2000, Part I, (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report - see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Mrs. F. Anderson and Greenfield.

REPORTS OF THE PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE

The reports of the meetings of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 26th July and 6th September, 2000, Part I (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

3. RESOLVED that the reports be noted.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Holt declared an interest in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 12 of the National Code of Local Government Conduct in relation to the undermentioned item of business, “Report of the Education Sub-Committee”.

REPORT OF THE EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

The report of the meeting of the Education Sub-Committee held on 12th September, 2000 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the report be approved and adopted.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor O'Connor declared a non-financial interest in the undermentioned item of business, “Report of the Housing Stock Transfer Sub-Committee” and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

REPORT OF THE HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER SUB-COMMITTEE

The report of the meeting of the Housing Stock Transfer Sub-Committee held on 13th September, 2000 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

5. RESOLVED that the report be approved and adopted.

COMPACT OR CODE OF PRACTICE BETWEEN: VOLUNTARY/COMMUNITY SECTOR AND THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) presenting a Compact for relationships between the Voluntary/Community Sector and the Public and Private Sectors within Sunderland being a general framework of understanding to be supplemented by

specific detailed agreements between the Voluntary/Community Sector and individual organisations as necessary.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the report be approved and that agreement be given for the City Council, as a member of the City of Sunderland Partnership, to endorse the Compact.

ENGLISH FORUM OF NUCLEAR FREE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) reviewing the Council's Membership of the English Forum of Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA).

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that approval be given for the Council's membership of the NFLA to be terminated.

LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) updating Members on developments in relation to Public Service Agreements for Local Government.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman advised the Cabinet that he had just returned from a meeting in London between Ministers and Council leaders of the seven authorities which had been chosen to pilot Local Public Service Agreements. The theme of Sunderland's proposal had been developed around children and young people. He advised that the Council's programme would need to be negotiated during the following three months and that there would be a final report back to Cabinet before proceeding further. The Chairman having then moved the recommendations contained in the report and upon the matter being put to a vote with 16 Members voting in favour of the recommendations and 3 Members having abstained, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given for the submission of a Local Public Service Agreement to Government by 30th September, 2000, without commitment at this stage, and subject to detailed negotiations on terms and conditions,
- (ii) authority be given for the Chairman and the Chief Executive to approve the draft before submission in order to meet the tight deadline of 30th September, 2000, and

- (iii) further reports be brought to Cabinet as detailed negotiations develop and before any final commitment is made with the Government.

A COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR SUNDERLAND

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) updating the Cabinet on the progress made in developing a Community Strategy for Sunderland and providing details of a response to the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions on its Draft Guidance for Preparing Community Strategies.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

- 9. RESOLVED that the consultation process outlined in the report and the proposed response to the DETR consultation paper on Preparing Community Strategies be approved.

SUNDERLAND ARC : UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) advising the Cabinet on progress which had been made on the Sunderland ARC initiative and requesting that consideration be given to proposals for initial next steps.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

- 10. RESOLVED that:-
 - (i) approval be given for the payment of an additional sum of up to £50,000 to cover the costs of Secretariat and Economic Appraisal activity, such amount to be funded from contingencies, and
 - (ii) a further report be submitted to Cabinet following a formal Government response to ARC proposals.

CITY OF SUNDERLAND PARTNERSHIP SRB 6 BID – ACTION IN ARC – REGENERATING THORNEY CLOSE

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) updating Members on the City of Sunderland Partnership's successful bid for SRB Round 6 funding resulting a total grant award of £10.5 million.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

11. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the approval of SRB 6 funding for the Regenerating Thorney Close bid be noted,
- (ii) the Council's role as Key Partner, Programme Manager and Accountable Body be agreed, and
- (iii) further reports on the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund be submitted as and when information becomes available.

URBAN 2 COMMUNITY INITIATIVE : CONNECTING THE COALFIELD

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) advising that the Council's expression of interest to include the Hetton and Murton area in the URBAN Community Initiative had been successful.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

12. RESOLVED that the successful outcome of the submission of expression of interest and the work being undertaken to secure participation in the URBAN Community Initiative be noted.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

The Chief Executive and the Director of Administration submitted a joint report (copy circulated) providing a brief outline of the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 including the promotion of economic, social or environmental well-being; executive arrangements; the conduct of Members and employees; elections and a number of miscellaneous items.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chief Executive having highlighted various aspects of the report for the information of Members, it was:-

13. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

LAND AT NORTH MOOR, SUNDERLAND – SITE OF PROPOSED NEW FIRE STATION

The Director of Administration submitted a report (copy circulated) proposing that the Tyne and Wear Fire and Civil Defence Authority be granted an option to purchase land at North Moor for the possible future development of a replacement fire station as part of the Fire and Civil Defence Authority's current strategic review of its property requirements as part of a proposed Government Public Private Partnership scheme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

14. RESOLVED that approval be given for the grant of an option, for a term of three years, for the sale of 0.7 hectares of land at North Moor, as shown by bold verge on the plan displayed at the meeting, to the Tyne and Wear Fire and Civil Defence Authority on terms to be agreed by the Property Services Manager.

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF DAME DOROTHY MAISONNETTES – SALE TO CHEVIOT HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

The Director of Administration and the Director of Health and Housing submitted a joint report (copy circulated) advising the Cabinet that the proposed sale of the Dame Dorothy Maisonnets to Cheviot Housing Association Limited as part of the proposed redevelopment of the land had encountered site condition problems and proposing that the Council agree to undertake the remedial site works necessary in order to facilitate the sale and redevelopment.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

15. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given for the Council to bear the costs of the additional remedial works to the site as outlined in the report, and
- (ii) the sale of land at Dame Dorothy Street to Cheviot Housing Association Limited be approved on the basis outlined in the report and otherwise on terms to be agreed by the Property Services Manager.

PROPOSED STOCK TRANSFER : NOMINATIONS FOR LOCAL SHADOW BOARDS

The Director of Health and Housing and the Director of Administration submitted a joint report (copy circulated) proposing that the Cabinet consider identifying Council nominees for the Shadow Boards of the proposed local housing companies.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman proposed that 4 Council Members be nominated to serve on each of the five Shadow Local Boards comprising in total 17 Members from the Majority Group; 2 Members from the Majority Group in Opposition and 1 Member from the Minority Group in Opposition. Councillor Mrs. Forbes moved, and was duly seconded by Councillor Bohill, that the seat proposed for the Minority Group in Opposition Member be allocated to a further Member from the Majority Group in Opposition. Upon the matter being put to a vote with 3 Members voting in favour of the motion and 14 Members voting against the motion was defeated, and it was:-

16. RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the undermentioned Members be nominated to serve on the respective Shadow Local Boards indicated:-

Local Company	Members
North Sunderland	Councillor M. Dent Councillor M. Higgins Councillor G. Scott Councillor J. Walton
Central Sunderland	Councillor K. Cameron Councillor K. O'Connor Councillor P. Watson (Liberal Democrat Vacancy)
South Sunderland	Councillor M. Forbes Councillor R. Kirby Councillor L. Scott Councillor R. Wares
Washington	Councillor J. Bedlington Councillor W. Craddock Councillor J.K. Murray Councillor W. Stephenson
Hetton and Houghton	Councillor A. Hall Councillor J. Heron Councillor J. O'Hara Councillor C. Simpson

APPROVAL OF HIGHWAY WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT – LAND NORTH OF DAIRY LANE AND EAST OF MOORSFIELD, HIGH DUBMIRE, HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING

The Director of Environment submitted a report (copy circulated) seeking approval for the construction of a new access road and improvements to existing roads associated with the redevelopment of land at Dubmire, such works to be funded by the developer, Persimmon Homes.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

17. RESOLVED that approval be given for the implementation of the works as outlined in the report.

HIGH LEVEL FLOOD TARGETS

The Director of Environment submitted a report (copy circulated) advising the Cabinet of recent requirements which had been placed upon the Council by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with regard to flood and coastal protection.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

18. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the content of the report and the actions to date of the Director of Environment, as outlined be noted, and
- (ii) the Director of Environment be authorised to prepare a policy statement and take other necessary actions to comply with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food High Level Targets.

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN FOR TYNE AND WEAR 2001-2006

The Director of Environment submitted a report (copy circulated) advising the Cabinet of details of the Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear 2001-2006, which had been submitted to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions by the stipulated deadline of 31st July, 2000.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Holt advised the Cabinet that Councillors Foster and Lawson represented the City Council on the Tyne and Wear Joint Lead Members (Transportation) Group and not Councillors Dodds and Lawson as mentioned in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

Consideration having then been given to the matter, it was:-

- 19. RESOLVED that the actions of the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Environment Portfolio Holder, in contributing towards the preparation of the joint Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear (2001-2006) be endorsed.

HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME SUBMISSION

The Director of Health and Housing submitted a report (copy circulated) presenting a Housing Strategy Update for 2000 and the Housing Investment Programme Bid for 2001/2002.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

20. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Housing Strategy Update for 2000 as outlined in the report be agreed, and
- (ii) approval be given to the Housing Investment Programme Bid as summarised in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1999/2000

The City Treasurer submitted a report (copy circulated) presenting for approval the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2000.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

21. RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March, 2000 be approved subject to audit.

STREET LIGHTING AND HIGHWAY SIGNS OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The City Treasurer, the Director of Environment and the Director of Contracting Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) advising Members of the outcome of the Outline Business Case for Street Lighting and Highway Signs and seeking authority for it to be submitted to the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions for consideration by PFI credit support.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

22. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the findings of the Outline Business Case on Street Lighting and Highway Signs be noted and approval be given for its submission to the DETR for PFI credit support by 29th September, 2000 and
- (ii) approval in principle be given for the inclusion in the Environment Medium Term Financial Plan of a sum of up to £320,000 with effect from 2002/03 to recognise the “reasonable authority” budget sum on which the Outline Business Case is predicated.

CITY LEARNING CENTRE AT SANDHILL VIEW – PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE PFI PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The City Treasurer and the Director of Administration submitted a joint report (copy circulated) providing an update on the progress of the Sandhill View PFI Project which had received ministerial approval on 1st August, 2000 and outlining the next steps in the procurement process.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

23. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the progress on the procurement arrangements for the new Sandhill View Centre be noted, and
- (ii) authority be given for an exception to the requirements of Standing Order 46 to be made in respect of the entering into of contracts for the execution of works in connection with Private Finance Initiative Projects by replacing those requirements with the process referred to in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

CONTRACTING SERVICES – QUARTERLY REPORT TO 30TH JUNE, 2000

The Director of Contracting Services and the City Treasurer submitted a joint report (copy circulated) outlining the trading results of the Contracting Services Department for the 13 weeks to 25th June, 2000.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

- 24. RESOLVED that the financial outturn, as set out in the report, for the former Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 Services within City Contracting Services for the quarter ended 25th June, 2000 be noted.

REFERENCE FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW 2000/2001 : STREETCARE – PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Director of Administration submitted a report (copy circulated) appending a report on the above which had been considered by Scrutiny Committee and seeking endorsement of the Action Plan arising from the Best Value Service Review 2000/2001 on Streetcare.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

25. RESOLVED that the Action Plan as outlined in the report together with the comments of the Scrutiny Committee as contained in the report of the Director of Administration be endorsed.

REFERENCE FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW 2000/2001 : SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE – PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Director of Administration submitted a report (copy circulated) appending a report on the above which had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee and seeking endorsement of the Action Plan arising from the Best Value Service Review 2000/2001 on Special Educational Needs for Young People.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

26. RESOLVED that the Action Plan as outlined in the report be endorsed.

SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

27. RESOLVED that in accordance with Standing Order 35.4 the Cabinet shall sit as the Council's Social Services Committee for the undermentioned item of business during which it shall be deemed to be the Council's Social Services Committee for the purposes of Section 2 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970.

ANNUAL REPORT : REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION UNIT

The Director of Social Services submitted a report (copy circulated) presenting the annual report on the Registration and Inspection Unit for the period April 1999 to March 2000 and summarising the salient points therein.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

28. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

29. RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it contains exempt information relating to particular employees of the Authority, to particular applicants for financial assistance provided by the Authority, to information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons, the terms proposed or to be proposed to be incurred by the Authority under a particular contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services or to consultations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 11).

(Signed) C.R. ANDERSON,
Chairman.

NOTE:

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other business are included in Part II.

**COMPACT OR CODE OF PRACTICE BETWEEN:
VOLUNTARY/COMMUNITY SECTOR AND THE
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents for Cabinet's approval a Compact for relationships between the Voluntary/Community Sector and the Public and Private Sectors within Sunderland.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS OF THE COMPACT

- 2.1 The City of Sunderland Partnership, in accordance with National guidelines, has developed the Compact or Code of Practice to further improve working relationships with the Voluntary and Community Sector of the City.
- 2.2 This Code sets out a general framework of understanding that can be supplemented by specific detailed agreements between the Voluntary/Community Sector and individual organisations as necessary. A copy of the draft document is attached.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 Following the agreement of individual organisations and endorsement by the City of Sunderland Partnership, the intention is to formally launch the Compact at the annual conference of the Voluntary Sector Partnership scheduled for 20 October 2000.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the report and agree to the City Council, as a member of the City of Sunderland Partnership, endorsing the Compact.

DRAFT

THE CITY OF SUNDERLAND PARTNERSHIP

SUNDERLAND

“COMPACT”

or

‘CODE of PRACTICE’

for working between the
voluntary/community sector
and the
public and private sectors
within Sunderland.

Logo’s of all Partnership organisations

DRT 11 08 00

1. Introduction

Why do we need a 'Code of Practice'?

This Code of Practice will set out effective and agreed principles for joint working across the sectors for the benefit of the people of Sunderland.

It will help all those involved to build on the principles and existing partnership working, to guide the voluntary / community, public and private sectors in their work.

What is the Voluntary / Community Sector?

The voluntary / community sector includes charities, community organisations, housing associations, campaigning organisations, religious (faith based) organisations, sports groups, art groups and environmental groups.

These organisations / groups are independent, defining their own aims and objectives and choosing methods by which they achieve them. They often have a small group of people known as a management committee who take responsibility for the running of the project. Sometimes the management committee employ staff to assist in this. The groups usually have a constitution, which guides the activities and development of the future work.

An important principle for the Code of Practice is that there is an inclusive approach. If a group wishes to be included within in the term 'voluntary /community sector' then every effort will be made to do so.

There may be a requirement for separate and specific agreements between the voluntary /community sector and individual organisations in the City. Any such agreements must supplement and not replace this Code of Practice.

Key Principles for joint work.

Partnership

- Working together and building on the City's strong tradition of partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors.

- Making the best use of resources as we continue to develop a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to common goals.
- Encouraging a creative spirit of enterprise which will enable businesses and individuals to succeed.

Participation

- Making the City's strong community spirit even more vibrant by better and clearer communication and consultation.
- Seeking new ways of involving individuals and groups in decision-making processes.

Protection

- Equal Opportunities – making sure there is no discrimination against individuals or groups on the grounds of disability, race, age, sex, marital status, social and economic status or political beliefs.
- Vulnerable People – protecting and helping vulnerable children and adults to achieve lives that are safe and secure; helping them to join in, and contribute to, the life of the community via access to a choice of lifestyles.
- Sustainability – making sure that meeting today's needs will not rob future generations of the ability to meet theirs. We will protect the environment and use natural resources carefully while we pursue high and stable levels of economic growth and employment, together with social progress.

Independence and Accountability

- An independent and diverse voluntary /community sector is fundamental to the well being of a democratic society.
- The voluntary /community sector has a responsibility and entitlement to campaign and act as advocates, within the law.
- All partners are accountable both individually and collectively for their actions and aim to act with integrity, objectivity, openness and honesty.

3. The Voluntary /Community Sectors' commitments to the Public and Private Sectors

The voluntary /community sector recognises the responsibility it has to the residents of Sunderland and others who may come into contact with it. The voluntary /community sector will:

- Maintain high standards of governance, conduct and openness.
- Meet legal, reporting and accountability obligations to funders and services users.
- Observe the appropriate guidance from the Charity Commission including that on political activities and campaigning.
- Develop quality standards that are relevant and appropriate to each group.
- Consult service users, carers, volunteers, and members.
- Consult the public and private sectors.
- Accurately communicate the views put to them in the course of a consultation or when presenting a case.
- Promote effective working relationships within the community/voluntary sector and with partners.
- Campaign to improve practice, policy and services.
- Continually monitor and review partnership working to ensure that best practice is achieved.

4. Public and Private Sector's commitments to the Voluntary / Community Sector

The public and private sectors recognise and value the contribution that the voluntary / community sector makes to society and will:

- Actively encourage the participation of the voluntary /community sector in the development of policy and strategy.
- Actively encourage the involvement of the voluntary /community sector in the planning and delivery of service provision.
- Consult the voluntary /community sector.
- Promote clear and co-ordinated funding guidelines and appropriate written funding agreements when appropriate.
- Respect and value the campaigning role of the voluntary /community sector.
- Continually monitor and review partnership working to ensure best practice is achieved.
- Recognise that, in the interests of equality, account has to be taken of the low level of resources available to some groups when compared to large public and private sector bodies.
- Respond flexibly and sensitively towards each other.
- Endeavour to provide non-financial support including advice, training and access to accommodation and other resources.

5. Joint commitments

The public, private and voluntary / community sectors will:

- Work together to strengthen the community's infrastructure and networks and build it's capacity for development.
- Make arrangements to ensure that all members of the community and users of services are included in their plans, consultations and actions.
- Establish clear processes for jointly evaluating the impact of the Compact and compliance with the stated principles.

6. Adoption of the Code of Practice

It is important to stress that this is a voluntary Code of Practice intended to help the promotion of best practice and effective partnership working.

Any organisation or group in the voluntary / community sector in Sunderland or any organisation working with the voluntary / community sector may choose to adopt the Code of Practice.

How will we know who has done so?

Any organisation or group that adopts the Code of Practice is asked to complete the attached form and return it to the Voluntary Sector Partnership so that an accurate record can be maintained.

The City of Sunderland Partnership has collectively adopted this Code of Practice.

The Partnership comprises: -

City of Sunderland Council
Sunderland City TEC
University of Sunderland
City of Sunderland College
Sunderland Health Authority
North East Chamber of Commerce
Sunderland Voluntary Sector Partnership
Northumbria Police

SUNDERLAND

"COMPACT"

or

'CODE of PRACTICE'

**for working between the
voluntary/community sector and the
public and private sectors within Sunderland.**

Name of organisation or group

Adopted the Sunderland 'Compact' Code of Practice on

Date _____

Signed _____

Please complete this form and return to:

Voluntary Sector Partnership

Address

Address

Address

Etc

For further information please contact:

Name

Tel

Fax

E-mail

at the above address

CABINET

20 SEPTEMBER 2000

ENGLISH FORUM OF NUCLEAR FREE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review the Council's membership of the English Forum of Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA).

2. Introduction

- 2.1 NFLA was formed in 1980 at a time when the nuclear industry had close associations with the development of military weapons and was seen as a major and growing contributor to satisfying an increasing national demand for energy. During this period, the social perception of the industry was one which carried a distinct uncertainty in relation to the risks which it posed to public safety and, consequently, the issue carried a high public profile.
- 2.2 Today the nuclear industry is in a period of transition as it shifts from a commitment to military weapons/nuclear energy to the rear-end problems of clean up, decommissioning and the long-term management of radioactive waste. Public attention, at perhaps a generally less intensive level now, is focused upon where these reprocessing and waste management activities are located.
- 2.3 Current NFLA activity reflects this situation with its agenda centred on such things as marine radioactive pollution, nuclear health and safety, radioactive waste management, alternative sustainable energy solutions and liaisons with the Government, the European Union, and the nuclear industry.

3. Council Membership

- 3.1 The Council has been a member of the NFLA for over 10 years and currently pays an annual subscription of £1,780 to Manchester City Council which originally proposed the Forum and acts as its Secretariat.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Cabinet is asked to review the Council's membership of the English Forum of Nuclear Free Local Authorities and indicate if it wishes to continue to participate.

REPORT ON LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS

Report of the Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose of Report

To make Members aware of developments in relation to Public Service Agreements for Local Government

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Government set up Public Service Agreements (PSA) in 1998. These were agreements between Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) and Government Departments about what would be delivered by them in return for the resources allocated to them.
- 2.2 The 2000 Comprehensive Spending Review set out PSAs for the next 3 years covering around 160 targets for Government departments. The PSA White Paper has extended this approach to cross cutting issues such as Sure Start and The Criminal Justice System. It also applied the concept to Local Government and has since issued a Prospectus for Pilot Authorities as part of Local Public Service Agreements (LPSA)
- 2.3 The Government envisages an initial 3-year pilot of up to 20 Local Authorities in the year 2001/2002 with plans to include all non-Shire Authorities on a voluntary basis in the next 2 years.
- 2.4 A LPSA can be summarised as follows:
- Local Authorities would agree to improve performance by achieving stretched targets (defined as a target over and above those set out in the Best Value Performance Plan) around 12 outcomes related to key issues such as education, health, crime and democratic renewal.
 - Government would remove inhibitors and inflexibilities effecting Local Authorities' performance to support the achievement of stretched targets.
 - Government would provide incentives to support the achievement of targets.
 - A Performance Reward Grant (PRG) would be back end loaded to provide financial payments dependent on achieving targets and milestones in the LPSA.

3.0 Sunderland's Involvement

- 3.1 HMT set up initial informal discussions with a small number of Local Authorities through the Local Government Association (LGA) about what a local PSA might look like in practice. Sunderland took a lead in these discussions, between the Chief Executive and H.M. Treasury, and put forward a model of how a PSA might work and the details of what might be included within it.
- 3.2 These proposals were very much welcomed with the Sunderland concept leading national thinking on the matter. As a result of the work the Council has been invited to submit proposals for a pilot starting in April 2001 along with 6 other Local Authorities. (Camden, Kent, Milton Keynes, Norfolk, Stockton and Warwickshire). A further 13 authorities will be chosen in the very near future.
- 3.3 The Council is now further developing its proposal around the theme of **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** by building on its strengths in this area. The proposal has been commended by Government for its vision and strategic approach to tackling issues effecting young people including crime, education, employment, health, democratic renewal and the electronic delivery of local services. This involves a mix of national and local targets designed to dramatically improve opportunities for young people in Sunderland. The LPSA offers a unique opportunity to build upon the Council's commitment to young people and its successful Best Value pilot and Youth Review.
- 3.4 There will be detailed negotiations with Government from October to December 2000. There is no commitment required from the Council to proceed with a LPSA until these negotiations are successfully completed.

4.0 Benefits for Sunderland

- 4.1 There are a number of opportunities that involvement in this ground breaking pilot represents. They include:
 - £50k in 2001/02 administrative costs for setting up the LPSA
 - Up to £1million capital pump priming money
 - Unique opportunity to influence developments on PSAs and the future of local government
 - Enhancing the Youth Strategy and improving young people's lives
 - Extending Sunderland's reputation for innovative work
 - Links to other funding initiatives including Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Local Government Online
 - Potential rewards of 2.5% of net budgetary requirement for 2000/01 on fully achieving PSA targets.

- 4.2 Although the national and local targets for young people are consistent with the Council's strategic priorities, there will be a need to provide support for the LPSA through the minor redirection of some main programme resources.

5.0 Timescale

- 5.1 The Government has set out the following timetable for the pilots:

- 4th September 2000: Expressions of Interest
- 13th September 2000: Meeting of 7 pilot authorities with HMT, DETR and LGA
- 20th September 2000: Meeting of Ministers and pilot Council Leaders
- 30th September 2000: Proposals submitted
- December 2000: Agreements concluded after negotiations with Government
- 1st April 2001: local PSA comes into effect
- September 2003: First monitoring report and Performance Reward Grant claim
- By December 2003: First grant payment
- September 2004: Final monitoring report and Performance Reward Grant claim
- By December 2004: Second grant payment
- April 2005: Third Performance Reward Grant payment

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The Government has signalled its intention to develop a LPSA system for Local Authorities. Being at the forefront of this development affords Sunderland a significant opportunity to take part in leading edge negotiations to influence the future of local government and deliver its strategy for young people.
- 6.2 The LPSA represents a considerable challenge for the Government to deliver flexibilities and freedoms as well as Local Authorities to deliver stretched targets. Detailed negotiations will determine Sunderland's actual commitment for April 2001.

7.0 Recommendation

- 7.1 The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) Agree to submit a LPSA to Government by 30th September 2000, without commitment at this stage, and subject to detailed negotiations on terms and conditions
- (b) Authorise the Chairman and Chief Executive to approve the draft before submission in order to meet the tight deadline of 30th September 2000.

- 7.2 Further reports will be brought to Cabinet as detailed negotiations develop and before any final commitment is made with Government

A COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR SUNDERLAND

Report of the Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet on the progress made in developing a Community Strategy for Sunderland, and to provide details of a response to the Department for Environment Transport and the Regions on their Draft Guidance for Preparing Community Strategies.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting held on 19th July 2000, Cabinet received a report on the role of the City Council in leading the development of a Community Strategy for Sunderland, on behalf of the City of Sunderland Partnership. Cabinet was advised that the requirement to produce a community strategy was included in the Local Government Act 2000 under the power to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community.

3.0 Progress to Date

- 3.1 Cabinet previously endorsed the draft Vision, Principles and Priorities developed by the City of Sunderland Partnership, which subject to community consultation, would form the foundation of the full Community Strategy document.
- 3.2 Community participation is a key requirement in the production of community strategies. In order to seek the views of the people of Sunderland on the strategy for their City, the draft Vision, Principles and Priorities have been incorporated in a consultation paper which is being distributed to every household in the City as a supplement of City News. (The timescale for distribution of the consultation paper is set out under 5.0 below).

4.0 DETR Consultation Document: Preparing Community Strategies – Draft Guidance for Local Authorities

- 4.1 The Council received a copy of the above consultation document in late July, with voluntary responses required by 31st August, 2000. Local authority comments are to be used to help finalise the guidance for publication in October 2000.
- 4.2 A copy of the City of Sunderland's response is attached at Annex 1. Members will note that the response is generally supportive of the draft guidance which mirrors the approach adopted by the City Council and its partners towards the development of a Community Strategy for Sunderland.

- 4.3 It is the Government's intention to publish further guidance on the use of the wider local authority 'well being' power during the Autumn.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 The Community Strategy supplement referred to at 3.2 above, will be circulated with City News between the 20th and 27th September 2000. Local people are encouraged to forward their views and opinions on the development of Sunderland's Community Strategy by completing a questionnaire and returning it to the City Council by mid October.
- 5.2 During the same period, an article will be circulated in the Council's staff magazine, Citytalk, requesting feedback from employees. Mechanisms are to be put in place by City of Sunderland College and the University of Sunderland to obtain student feedback, and the views of children will be sought through schools. Partner organisations are also to consult their members.
- 5.3 The feedback on community views will be used to develop the final version of the Community Strategy to be published in April 2001. This relatively early publication is a demonstration of the close and effective partnership working arrangements which have been a strong feature of City life for many years.
- 5.4 When published and widely distributed in 2001, the final Community Strategy will set out aims, objectives and an action plan for taking the City forward over the medium term. It will be a key feature in guiding and co-ordinating the work of the main agencies active within the City.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the consultation process outlined above and the response to the DETR consultation paper on Preparing Community Strategies.

Alastair James
Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
5/D1
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1R 5DU

Dear Mr James,

Preparing Community Strategies - Draft Guidance Consultation

I am pleased provide the City of Sunderland's response to DETR's consultation on the draft guidance to local authorities for preparing community strategies.

The City Council is generally supportive of the draft guidance and it is felt that the statutory guidance once published, will be of great use to us in continuing to work with our partners on the City of Sunderland Partnership, to produce a Community Strategy for Sunderland.

Comments on specific points contained in the consultation paper are set out below:

- **Purpose and Aims of Community Strategies**

The purpose, aims and objectives of community strategies as outlined in the consultation paper, are very much in accordance with the approach the City of Sunderland Partnership has taken to date in its early preparations on a Community Strategy for Sunderland.

- **Key Objectives of Community strategies**

The main 3 objectives set out in the draft guidance mirror exactly the Partnership's intentions for the Sunderland Community Strategy. A comprehensive consultation document has been prepared for distribution to every household in the City for the very purpose of encouraging 'local communities to articulate aspirations, needs and priorities' as advised in the guidance. It is also stated in the Partnership's consultation document that a key objective of producing and implementing the Community Strategy is to build on the Partnership's work over the past 6 years in order to achieve joined up delivery of services focusing on agreed priorities.

- **Principles**

Each of the principles outlined in the draft guidance are already in accordance with Sunderland's approach, and it is agreed that the process by which community strategies are produced is as important as the final strategy itself.

- **Timing**

It is evident from the above comments that Sunderland has made good progress in preparing to produce a Community Strategy and it is therefore intended to publish our Strategy sooner rather than later. Once full public consultation and participation is complete, the proposed publication date for a Community Strategy for Sunderland is April 2001. It is of course acknowledged that the processes through which the strategy is produced and implemented will need to continue to evolve, and mechanisms, for example with regard to partnership working and ongoing community involvement, will be put in place to ensure this happens.

- **Scope and Key Elements of a Community Strategy**

It is felt that these sections of the draft guidance are slightly repetitive of the earlier Aims and Objectives sections and this may be of help to you in finalising the statutory guidance. That said, the contents of the Scope and Key Elements sections are fully supported by the City Council and again mirror our approach to producing the City's Community Strategy.

- **Councillors and Other Organisations' Involvement**

Again, the recommendations made in the draft guidance with regard to the role of elected Members and other organisations are largely in accordance with the intended approach of the City Council and its partners. The City Council, as suggested in the draft guidance, has taken the lead role in preparing to produce a community strategy, as part of its new power to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of its community.

It has been established that the City of Sunderland Partnership, comprising all of the key agencies operating in the City, will actually write the Community Strategy, and a process is in place for obtaining the views and input of the many other groups and organisations in Sunderland, as well as, of course, individuals via the community consultation document discussed earlier.

- **Community Planning Partnerships**

It is considered appropriate that there is to be no prescribed approach to developing community planning partnerships and determining their membership. This is very much supported, as you will note from the above comments that Sunderland already has a firm base in the City of Sunderland Partnership on which to develop an effective community planning partnership.

Implementing Community Strategy priorities and objectives through a rationalised and co-ordinated approach to strategic planning has the full commitment of all partners, particularly with a view to linking existing, specific partnerships and initiatives under the over-arching community planning umbrella as suggested in the draft guidance.

In this connection, early Government guidance on the Community Strategy/Community Planning Partnership role in the implementation of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal would be welcomed.

- **Involvement of the Community and Recommended Organisations**

The guidance provided under both of these sections is accepted and again reflects much of the intended practice with regard to community capacity building programmes in the City and the development of the Community Strategy. Much thought has been given as to how the public can be genuinely engaged and encouraged to participate in the production of a Community Strategy for their City, and the consultation document due for circulation in September has been drawn up with this in mind.

- **Establishing a Vision, Priorities and an Action Plan**

Sunderland is most supportive of these elements of the guidance as it was agreed very early in the Partnership's discussions that a vision and priorities agreed by the community were needed to underpin all actions and activity relating to the City's development, through the implementation of the Community Strategy. Integral to the final Community Strategy will be a clear action plan and arrangements for reviewing and reporting progress.

- **Other Plans and Strategies/Best Value/Development Plans**

The importance of Community Strategy linkages to the above was recognised at an early stage in Sunderland and indeed such linkages are seen as being one of the real benefits of putting a community strategy in place.

Issues surrounding reporting of progress through the Council's BVPP, the need for cross-cutting Best Value Reviews and the need to put in place the appropriate performance measurement and reporting arrangements have also already been acknowledged.

Government guidance on the links between community strategies and development plans would be most welcome.

- **Co-ordinating and Rationalising Local Activity**

As indicated through a number of the comments made above, the City Council sees better co-ordination amongst organisations and a common focus for activity and allocation of resources, as being one of the major benefits of producing and implementing a community strategy.

- **Monitoring and Review and Reporting Progress**

Establishing effective monitoring and review mechanisms and processes for reporting progress to the public are to be key, early considerations of the Partnership in consulting with individuals, groups and organisations and in the writing of the final Community Strategy. Initial ideas include providing regular progress updates in City News – the Council's free newspaper which is delivered on a regular basis to every household in the City, although whether the public would consider this an effective way of being updated will be determined during the aforementioned consultation period.

I hope these views and comments are of help to you in finalising the statutory guidance and should you wish to discuss any point further, please do not hesitate to contact my Policy Team Leader, Graeme Farnworth, on 0191 553 1146. In the meantime we look forward to receiving further guidance on the use of the 'well-being' power and community strategy linkages to Neighbourhood Renewal and Development Plans.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive.

SUNDERLAND ARC: UPDATE

Report of the Chief Executive

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates Cabinet on progress on the Sunderland ARC initiative and requests consideration of initial next steps proposals.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will recall that a report was submitted to Cabinet in June 2000, which summarised progress towards development of the initial ARC report. The ARC report was completed shortly thereafter. It represents an independent consultant's view of possibilities for regeneration within the ARC area as requested by the Secretary of State in July 1999 when the ARC initiative was launched in the wake of the Grove and Vaux closures.

3.0 UPDATE

- 3.1 A small delegation comprising key players within the Sunderland ARC Task Group presented the ARC consultant's report to Stephen Byers MP in London on 3rd July 2000. The report was to be circulated to relevant Government Departments for consideration. A formal response is expected from the Minister over the next month and a full report on this will be submitted for Cabinet consideration at the earliest opportunity thereafter.
- 3.2 In the meantime, the ARC Task Group has been encouraged to carry on its investigation of major proposals and themes contained within the consultant's report. These include major physical redevelopment projects, innovative means of delivering regeneration in the area and the possibility of improving co-ordination and effectiveness of local service delivery through Neighbourhood Management pilots.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Anticipating a broadly positive response from Government, the ARC Task Group has proposed that:
- i. an independent Economic Appraisal of key physical redevelopment proposals be commissioned. This would analyse major capital investment proposals for value for money to the public purse and overall feasibility in a manner which is consistent with the requirements of HM Treasury. It therefore represents a key step towards potential future Government funding for these projects.

- ii. the Council acting on behalf of the City of Sunderland Partnership, should explore options for actual delivery of ARC proposals.
 - iii the Council should take the lead in examining the potential for piloting new approaches to Neighbourhood Management within the area in view of its wider interest in the subject and role as a major deliverer of local services.
- 4.2 In view of the need to support and co-ordinate this activity the ARC Task Group also proposed to extend the lifetime of the current full time ARC Secretariat until the end of December 2000. It is estimated that the cost of this and of the Economic Appraisal (4.1 i above) will be approximately £100,000.
- 4.3 The costs of supporting the initial development stages of the ARC initiative have been met equally by the City Council and One NorthEast. It is therefore proposed to continue this arrangement. A Council contribution of £50,000 to support initial next steps activity is therefore requested, to be funded from contingencies.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Sunderland ARC is approaching a critical point in its development with a formal Government response to the ARC Task Group's vision document expected at any time. In order to maintain the momentum of the initiative it is recommended that:
- i. An additional sum of up to £50,000 to cover the costs of Secretariat and Economic Appraisal activity is approved, this is to be funded from contingencies.
 - ii. Cabinet agrees to receive a further report following a formal Government response to ARC proposals.

**CITY OF SUNDERLAND PARTNERSHIP SRB 6 BID –
Action in the ARC – Regenerating Thorney Close**

Report of the Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the City of Sunderland Partnership's successful bid for SRB round 6 funding.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) has been the Government's main source of funding for local area regeneration over the last six years. In Sunderland it is the role of the City of Sunderland Partnership to submit bids and oversee programmes funded through the SRB. The City Council acts as Accountable Body for the programmes, which involves full financial accountability, audit and programme management functions.
- 2.2 The Partnership's most recent bid, to the sixth round of the SRB, is for an area surrounding the Thorney Close estate and including East Farringdon, Plains Farm, Springwell and parts of Grindon. The bid also includes a smaller element aimed at community capacity building city-wide.

3.0 Bid Outcome

- 3.1 The Government has announced that the Partnership's SRB 6 bid has been successful with a total grant award of £10.5 million, 100% of the resources requested. The grant is expected to lever in a further £26 million from other public and private sector sources, giving a total programme of some £37.5 million. This represents the second largest district-wide grant award in the region, and confirms the City of Sunderland Partnership's position as the region's most successful Partnership in accessing SRB. The successful bid is attached.
- 3.2 This announcement brings the total SRB accessed to £69.521 million as follows:

<i>Round</i>	<i>£m</i>
SRB1	10.917
SRB2 – Work and Learn	17.486
SRB3 – Pride in Pennywell	17.878
SRB4 – Hendon and the East End	2.34
SRB5 – Focus on Ford and Pallion	10.4
SRB6 – Regenerating Thorney Close	10.5
Total	£69.521 million

In addition, a further £1.7 million of SRB 2 funding was attracted to the Racecourse Estate as part of a region-wide community safety bid. This brings the actual total to over £71 million.

- 3.3 When all programmes are complete, it is expected that a further £69.721 million other public funding and £78.721 million private sector funding will have been levered into the programmes, providing a total figure of £217.963 million. This represents the most substantial investment in regeneration programmes ever achieved in the City.
- 3.4 It has recently become clear that round 6 is the last SRB round. The SRB will be replaced by a new Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), and by increased funding for Regional Development Agencies. It is unclear how the NRF will operate at this stage, but it is clear that the Regional Development Agencies will have a key role.

4.0 Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- i) Note the approval of SRB 6 funding for the Regenerating Thorney Close bid;
- ii) Agree the Council's role as key partner, programme manager and Accountable Body;
- iii) Receive further reports on the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund as and when information becomes available.

CABINET MEETING: 20th SEPTEMBER 2000

URBAN COMMUNITY INITIATIVE: CONNECTING THE COALFIELD

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 19 July 2000, Cabinet approved the submission of an expression of interest in the participation of the Hetton and Murton area in the URBAN Community Initiative. The submission, which was titled Connecting the Coalfield (CtC), was submitted by the City Council in partnership with Easington District Council and Durham County Council

2. INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN URBAN

- 2.1 Following a regional and national selection process, the City Council and its partners have been invited to submit a full programme for the participation of Hetton and Murton in URBAN. It is one of 9 areas in England, and the only area in the North East, to receive this invitation.
- 2.2 The final decision will depend upon negotiations with the European Commission regarding the number of URBAN bids for the U.K. and the content of the detailed proposals for CtC. The successful programmes should be in operation by mid 2001.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 In line with the Cabinet decision, work has commenced on the preparation of the programme to meet the submission deadline of 20 October. The City Council is co-ordinating this work at this stage in close liaison with Easington District Council, Durham County Council and GO-NE.
- 3.2 Extensive local consultation, including briefings of ward members, will be undertaken as part of the programme preparations. An informal partnership consisting of local community organisations, the voluntary sector and the main public and private agencies is to be established to enable this consultation to proceed.
- 3.3 A more formal partnership will be created before the programme commences in mid 2001. It is essential that, for the purposes of URBAN, the partnership reflects the whole of the Hetton and Murton area and that it is designed to encourage participation from “hard to reach” groups.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the successful outcome of the submission of the Expression of Interest and the work which is being undertaken to secure participation in the URBAN Community Initiative

CABINET – 20th September 2000

The Local Government Act 2000

A report by the Chief Executive and Director of Administration

Introduction

The Local Government Act received Royal Assent on 28th July 2000. It makes provision with respect to the promotion of economic, social or environmental well being; executive arrangements; the conduct of members and employees, elections and a number of miscellaneous items.

This report can only give a brief outline of its provisions as the Act extends to over 100 sections and a number of schedules. In addition much of the finer detail will be contained in regulations and statutory guidance made under the Act. These regulations and guidance are not expected to start to appear until the Autumn.

The Act will come into force in tranches over the next year through Commencement Orders. The first Order has been made to bring into operation the various Regulation making powers and some miscellaneous items.

Summary of the Act

Promotion of Economic, Social and Environmental well being

Part I of the Act gives Local Authorities the power to promote the economic, social or environmental well being of their area.

This includes the power to incur expenditure, give financial or other assistance and work with any person to facilitate this, but not to raise money. The Secretary of State can repeal enactments which prevent this but otherwise the power is subject to existing statutory limitations and guidance to be issued. It is not a general power to trade with the private sector.

There is also a duty placed on Local Authorities to prepare a Community Strategy for promoting economic, social and environmental well being. Work on this Council's Community Strategy is already well advanced.

Part II

Executive Arrangements

Local Authorities (except those with a population of less than 85,000) will have to adopt one of the three forms of executive arrangements:

- Directly elected Mayor with Cabinet executive appointed by Mayor
- Leader and Cabinet executive appointed by the Council
- Directly elected Mayor and Council Manager

The total size of the executive including either Mayor or Leader is limited to 10. It is not subject to political balance and must meet in public when making certain key decisions (to be defined in regulations).

Authorities are placed under a statutory duty to draw up proposals for executive arrangements for their area after consulting on the options.

A referendum must be held if the proposals include a directly elected mayor or if a petition is submitted by 5% or more of the electorate. The result is binding. The Secretary of State can also order an authority or class of authority to hold a referendum.

At least one overview and Scrutiny Committee must be established to scrutinise the exercise of the authority's functions.

Those functions will be divided between executive and non executive. The executive will carry out all functions unless specifically prevented by regulations. Some matters e.g. the budget, policy framework and constitutional matters will require Council approval.

Executive functions can be carried out by the Mayor or Leader or Council Manager (depending on the option chosen), the executive as a whole or individual members of the executive or by an officer in accordance with the constitution adopted by the Council. In the case of the Mayor model, the Mayor will decide who exercises executive functions. The Mayor also decides the composition of the Cabinet.

The voting arrangements for an elected mayor are the first past the post system if there are 2 candidates and the supplementary vote system in other circumstances. If the Mayor is already a member of the Council on election, a casual vacancy arises for the office of Councillor. In law the mayor is treated as a Councillor. The term of office will be 4 years except possibly for the first Mayor.

The current office of a Mayor would be replaced by a Chairman of the Council who cannot be a member of the Executive.

Implementation

The Government has indicated that it would wish all local authorities to introduce new Executive arrangements under the Act by May 2002. On that basis an outline timetable has been drawn up which is attached as an appendix, showing how that might be achieved. Members need to bear in mind however that the timetable could change as a result of directions from the Secretary of State.

Part III

Conduct of Local Government Members and Employees

This part of the Act introduces the new ethical framework. The Secretary of State is empowered to develop general principles of conduct and to issue a model code of conduct. There will be mandatory and optional provisions providing for some local discretion.

Standards Committees containing at least one co-opted member will have to be set up to promote and maintain standards of conduct. A Standards Board for England will be set up by the Secretary of State to promote and maintain standards of conduct. Ethical Standards Officers (ESO's) appointed by the Board will undertake investigations. Case tribunals will consider the funding and determine penalties which can include suspension for up to one year or in particularly serious cases, disqualified from office.

A new statutory code of conduct for all local government employees forming part of their terms and conditions of employment will be introduced following consultations.

Part IV

Elections

This part of the Act empowers the Secretary of State to order one of three options for the election of Councillors for authorities:

- Every fourth year
- Every second year by halves
- Three out of four years by thirds

Part V

Miscellaneous

The final part of the Act makes a number of miscellaneous amendments including:

- Abolition of surcharge of Councillors
- Ability of Secretary of State to pay grants for certain welfare services
- Changes to detail of Access to Information provisions
- Abolition of requirement to have a Social Services Committee for authorities operating executive arrangements
- Power for schools to take steps to prevent bullying as a result of homosexuality

Recommendation

At this stage Members are requested to note the contents of this report. Further reports will come forward as work on the Act progresses and the regulations and guidance are produced.

CABINET

20TH SEPTEMBER 2000

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

LAND AT NORTH MOOR, SUNDERLAND – SITE OF PROPOSED NEW FIRE STATION

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Tyne and Wear Fire and Civil Defence Authority is currently undertaking a strategic review of its property requirements as part of a proposed Government Public Private Partnership scheme. This involves the replacement of the existing fire station at Grindon and Tunstall with a single station strategically located within this area. The Authority has undertaken a study to establish the preferred location for effective fire cover and has identified land at North Moor owned by the City Council as meeting its requirements.
- 1.2 Following the demolition of North Moor maisonettes, new sites had been identified for residential and commercial development and part of the latter, comprising 0.7 ha's in area and indicated by bold verge on the attached plan, has been identified as particularly suitable for the new fire station.

2.0 THE SITE

- 2.1 The land identified for the replacement fire station is Council owned although it is affected by covenants restricting its use for the benefit of the owners of the adjacent site of the former Double Maxim Public House.
- 2.2 Discussions are on-going, with the current owners, concerning the future of the former Double Maxim Public House site and, as part of the negotiations, it is anticipated that restrictive covenants affecting the Council's site will be released to permit development of a commercial nature to proceed.
- 2.3 On this basis, the Fire Authority has requested that this site be reserved for its eventual development as a replacement fire station when the current review of its requirements has been completed and means of progressing it through a Private Finance Initiative has been agreed.
- 2.4 The Director of Environment has confirmed that development of a new fire station in this location is acceptable in planning terms.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 In order to support the Fire Authority's initiative, it is proposed that it will be granted an option, for a period of three years, for purchase of the site at North Moor for development of a new fire station.

3.2 The grant of the option will be conditional upon agreement being reached for release of the restrictive covenants affecting the site and terms of sale being agreed by the Property Services Manager.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the grant of an option, for a term of 3 years, for the sale of land at North Moor to Tyne and Wear Fire and Civil Defence Authority on terms to be agreed by the Property Services Manager.

REPORT TO CABINET

20TH SEPTEMBER 2000

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION AND DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND HOUSING

PROPOSED RE-DEVELOPMENT OF DAME DOROTHY STREET MAISONNETTES – SALE TO CHEVIOT HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 20th September 1999, Health and Housing Services Committee agreed to the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the Dame Dorothy Street Maisonettes to Cheviot Housing Association Limited, on terms to be agreed by the Property Services Manager. The extent of the site is indicated on Plan No 1809 to be displayed.
- 1.2 This was on the basis that Cheviot would be responsible for the demolition of the remaining maisonettes, the construction of 55 family houses for rent and 10 for shared ownership, and providing basic improvements around the 3 blocks of multi-storey flats which are to be retained by the Council. The costs of demolition, associated site clearance and environmental improvements would be reflected in the land value and the Council would have 100% nomination rights in the first instance, to allow the existing estate residents to be rehoused into new properties.
- 1.3 In partnership with Cheviot, the Council has carried out extensive consultation with the estate residents and the proposed mix of properties and layout has been carefully designed to meet the needs of the returning residents whilst providing a quality housing scheme for rent in the area.
- 1.4 The proposed development is to be carried out in two phases. The occupiers of the first phase have been decanted and the demolition of the maisonettes carried out by the Council, to help prevent the area deteriorating further, and to demonstrate to the remaining residents that progress with the scheme was being made.
- 1.5 On 2nd February 2000, Cheviot obtained planning consent for the development. Housing Corporation funding has also been secured to carry out Phase I of the scheme with a "pre-allocation" for Phase 2 set aside for 2001\02.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

- 2.1 In preparation for Phase I of the redevelopment, Cheviot has carried out detailed site investigations of the overall site which comprises 2.66 hectares in area. This has revealed extensive ground condition problems and site contamination which, in order to be overcome, will incur additional development costs.

2.2 These costs which have been evaluated and agreed by the Council Officers exceed the value of the site by approximately £300,000. On this basis, the site is not viable for the proposed redevelopment unless the funding deficit can be overcome.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

3.1 It is considered important that this scheme proceeds having regard to the condition of the remaining maisonettes, the commitment given to estate residents and the quality of life of Council tenants in the adjacent multi-storey blocks.

3.2 It has been provisionally agreed with Cheviot Housing Association that the funding deficit could be overcome if the Council, as part of the agreement undertakes to bear the cost of these additional works and the City Treasurer has confirmed that resources have been identified, for this purpose, in the Housing Capital Review Programme.

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to approve the sale of land at Dame Dorothy Street to Cheviot Housing Association Limited on the basis outlined in the report and otherwise on terms to be agreed by the Property Services Manager.

**JOINT REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND HOUSING AND DIRECTOR OF
ADMINISTRATION**

PROPOSED STOCK TRANSFER: NOMINATIONS FOR SHADOW LOCAL BOARDS

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to identify Council nominees for the Shadow Boards of the proposed local housing companies.

2. BACKGROUND

The proposed stock transfer would be to a group of companies comprising a parent and five local companies. The local companies are based on existing housing areas, North, Central and South Sunderland, Washington and Houghton and Hetton. The local companies would plan and deliver local housing services and decide on priorities for improvement within the group business plan. Each company has a board made up of 1/3 Council nominees, 1/3 tenant members and 1/3 Council independent members. Each of the boards would have 15 members.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

The parent board has been established and the Council has five nominees in place each representing one of the five proposed local companies. It is now essential to establish the local boards in order that they are fully operational in time for registration by the Housing Corporation. Tenant members for all the local boards have been elected and expressions of interest have been obtained from potential independent members.

4. PROPOSALS

The Council can nominate up to five members for each of the local boards and in order to establish the boards and proceed with the selection of the independent members it is suggested that in the first instance a minimum of three Members be nominated for each of the local boards. The existing five nominees to the parent board will each automatically have a seat on the appropriate local board leaving nominations required for two places on each of the five shadow boards.

5. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that a minimum of two Members are nominated for each of the five shadow local boards.

APPROVAL OF HIGHWAY WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT – LAND NORTH OF DAIRY LANE AND EAST OF MOORSFIELD, HIGH DUBMIRE, HOUGHTON LE SPRING

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the construction of a new access road and improvements to existing roads associated with the redevelopment of land at Dubmire, to be funded by the developer, Persimmon Homes.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A planning application has been received for the construction of housing, associated landscaping, highways, including a new bypass link road and stopping up of a number of existing highways, on land lying to the north of Dairy Lane, Dubmire.
- 2.2 Approval is required for the construction of the new link and improvement of existing roads which are to be funded by the developer.

3.0 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The development site is situated on land to the west of the proposed Central Route and adjacent to Dubmire Industrial Estate. Access to the site is required to be provided from a section of the Central Route, via a link road connecting Sedgelech Road and the industrial estate to the Central Route, as shown on the attached drawing no. 20/NH001/014.
- 3.2 The highway works, estimated at £1.8 million, are to be funded by the developer. It is anticipated that the works will be carried out in separate phases over a 3 year period commencing in 2001, subject to planning approvals and details of the highway works being agreed with the Director of Environment, in accordance with the scheme of delegation. A legal Agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 will be required.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the implementation of the works described above.

ITEM NO. 17 – CABINET – 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2000 – CENTRAL ROUTE – NORTH OF
DAIRY LANE (MAP) – SEE HARD COPY

HIGH LEVEL FLOOD TARGETS

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform cabinet of recent requirements placed upon the Council by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) with regard to flood and coastal protection.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the Easter floods of 1998 the Environment Agency was tasked with reviewing its flood warning procedures. In November 1999, following Ministerial agreement with the Environment Agency, the Local Government Association and the Association of Drainage Authorities, MAFF published a number of High Level Targets for flood and coastal defence operating authorities. The Targets are designed to ensure a more robust and consistent delivery by operating authorities of the Government's policy aims and objectives. Further background information and full details of the Targets may be found on the MAFF web-site at: www.maff.gov.uk/envIRON/fcd/hltarget.
- 2.2 In June 1998 this Council adopted a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) which had been prepared in accordance with the requirements of MAFF. Included within the SMP was a recommendation to undertake a study to formulate a Coastal Strategy Plan. This study is currently being undertaken and is due for completion in March 2001.

3.0 DUTIES OF THE AUTHORITY

- 3.1 The MAFF High Level Flood Targets require the Council to demonstrate how it will deliver the Government's policy aim and objectives. As an operating authority the Council will be primarily responsible for:
- Preparing and making publicly available a policy statement which is to be reviewed on a regular basis (Target 1)
 - Providing the Environment Agency with information on flood and coast defence assets (Target 4)
 - Undertaking regular inspections of coast protection assets and reporting annually to MAFF (Target 6)
 - Providing a prioritised capital and maintenance programme to MAFF (Target 7)
 - Completing the Coastal Strategy Plan and updating the Shoreline Management Plan (Target 8)
 - Considering and reporting to the Environment Agency and MAFF the environmental and biodiversity impact of flood and coastal defence works (Target 9)

- Completing in partnership with English Nature water level management plans where appropriate (Target 10)
- Reporting to MAFF and DETR on local development plans and planning applications in relation to coastal erosion (Target 13).

3.2 In addition to the primary responsibilities outlined above, the Council will be required to act in partnership with other bodies with respect to other Targets.

3.3 The requirement to comply with the Targets is another responsibility placed upon Local Authorities but without requisite/appropriate new resources.

3.4. Information has already been given to the Environment Agency regarding assets of the Council as required by Target 4, and as noted above the coastal strategy study has commenced. Some other requirements are also partially addressed as part of the ongoing work of the Environment Department. However, much of the work needed to ensure compliance with the Targets has yet to be undertaken and will be in addition to the current workload.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) Cabinet notes the contents of this report and the actions to date of the Director of Environment,
- (ii) Cabinet authorises the Director of Environment to prepare a policy statement and take other necessary actions to comply with the requirements of the MAFF High Level Targets,

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN FOR TYNE AND WEAR 2001-2006

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with details of the Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear 2001-2006 (the LTP), which was submitted to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions by the stipulated deadline of 31 July 2000.
- 1.2 A copy of the draft LTP was placed in the Members Room on 26 June 2000, for inspection. The draft was approved by the Tyne and Wear Joint Lead Members (Transportation) Group on which the City Council is represented by Councillor Dodds and Councillor Lawson, on behalf of the constituent authorities. Councillor Holt also represented the City Council in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of the Passenger Transport Authority.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 LTP's are the centerpiece of Government transport proposals and replace the previous annual Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) submission. In Metropolitan areas they are prepared jointly between the District Councils, as Highway Authorities, and the Passenger Transport Authority.
- 2.2 A collaborative and consultative approach, which exemplifies the principles of Best Value, has been developed to prepare and deliver this LTP. This has involved a partnership comprising the Cities of Sunderland and Newcastle upon Tyne; the Borough Council's of Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside; and Nexus on behalf of the Passenger Transport Authority, with contributions from other stakeholder organisations such as Government Office for the North East and the Tyne and Wear Public Transport Operator's Panel.
- 2.3 The 'full' LTP for 2001-2006 continues the process of change that commenced with the submission of the "Provisional" LTP for 2000-2001. This encourages a more multi-modal approach to transport policy and enables a shift towards closer integration between land use and transportation policy.
- 2.4 This multi-modal and strategic approach to transportation planning gives much greater emphasis on initiatives to assist public transport operations, walking and cycling, and there is a closer relationship between the LTP, other corporate documents, regional initiatives and the Local Agenda 21 process.

3.0 DETAILS OF THE JOINT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

- 3.1 The LTP comprises a joint strategy statement and six individual district annexes, and is structured around the following series of thematically based transport strategies: - Access for All; Cycling; Public Transport; Highway Maintenance; Safety and Security; Traffic and Travel Demand Management; Economic Development; and Environmental Protection.
- 3.3 Access for All relates primarily to pedestrians and people with impaired mobility. Specific schemes include improving accessibility and safety through infrastructure improvements; information availability and bringing special transport needs into 'mainstream' public transport.
- 3.4 Cycling is an important mode of transport for short and medium distance journeys and this strategy seeks to develop a safe and convenient cycle network and to encourage the provision of cycle parking.
- 3.5 Improving Public Transport is essential in providing an attractive alternative to the private car for medium and longer distance journeys and this strategy is based on the development of bus, Metro, and rail networks. Development of a core network for buses through Quality Partnerships will involve investment in vehicles, implementation of traffic management measures, and improvements in passenger information and co-ordination.
- 3.6 Extension of the Metro system to Sunderland and South Hylton is currently underway. A number of Metro Complementary Routes (using light rail or guided bus) are under consideration, with the intention of enhancing public transport provision to areas not served by Metro.
- 3.7 Whilst new construction forms an important element in the plan, it is important to preserve and enhance existing infrastructure, and the Maintenance Strategy covers Principal Roads, Bridges and Structures and Street Lighting.
- 3.8 The Safety and Security strategy covers road safety and personal security when travelling. The road safety element is based on the application of the Road Safety Code of Good Practice framework, which includes engineering measures, enforcement and deterrence, education, training and publicity.
- 3.9 School journeys are an important issue and the 'Safer Routes to School' programme has been developed with the intention of encouraging walking and cycling to school, and reducing the number of car journeys at peak times.

- 3.10 Using traffic management to achieve wider integrated transport objectives is an important element in the LTP strategy. The use of Intelligent Transport Systems, traffic reduction and travel demand restraint, and traffic restraint mechanisms will be considered to help to achieve these objectives. Other forms of restraint through the application of development control policies and parking management will continue to be applied.
- 3.11 The LTP has an important role to play in contributing towards broader strategies such as global climate change and local air quality. Measures to encourage the use of more fuel-efficient modes such as public transport, in addition to encouraging cycling and walking, and reducing the need to travel, form the basis of this LTP.
- 3.12 The City Council's approach to the strategies put forward in the LTP is outlined in the Sunderland District Annex, which forms an integral part of the plan.
- 3.13 Copies of the printed document were circulated to all Cabinet Members, Chairmen, and Vice-Chairmen of the Area Committees and the Planning and Highways Committee, immediately following publication. Copies of an Executive Summary of the LTP have also been circulated to all Members of the City Council.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The Local Transport Capital Expenditure Settlement will be announced in December 2000. Given the 5-year time horizon of the LTP, the settlement on this occasion will give an indication of spending over the full 5-year period. Additional finance announced in July as part of the Government's 10-year transport plan would be allocated as part of the settlement. Early indications suggest that this will be more favourable than in recent years.
- 4.2 The LTP will be subject to continuous monitoring and review and, as a consequence, the consultative and collaborative arrangements will continue to develop and evolve. It is likely that the LTP will need to be replaced or amended before the end of the 5-year period to reflect various regional factors, such as the Regional Transport Strategy and Tyneside Area Multi-Modal Study, or local land use changes such those that will arise from the development of the Sunderland ARC. Monitoring and updating will ensure that the LTP continues to reflect the dynamic nature of change in the City.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The Cabinet is recommended to endorse the actions of the Environment Portfolio holder and Director of Environment in contributing towards the preparation of the joint Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear (2001-2006).

CABINET

20 SEPTEMBER 2000

REPORT TO THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND HOUSING

HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME SUBMISSION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the Housing Strategy Update for 2000 and the Housing Investment programme bid for 2001/02

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Housing Investment Programme (HIP) is submitted to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) on an annual basis and consists of the following:

Housing Needs Appraisal
Operational Information Form questionnaires
Annual Plan Bidding document
Home Energy Conservation Act progress report
Housing Strategy

- 2.2 Members may be aware that although the Council is pursuing total stock transfer to the proposed housing company, the HIP process will be a requirement of the Council, as well as the production of Housing Strategy.

3. HOUSING STRATEGY

- 3.1 In 1998 a 5 year City Housing Strategy was produced covering the period up to 2005. As a new strategy was not required this year, an update has been provided to the DETR outlining progress, achievements and new priorities.
- 3.2 The update was submitted to the Government Office for the North East on 31 July 2000. Since that date, the document has been circulated to key officers and partner agencies for comment. Once the draft has been agreed by Cabinet, the document will be re-printed and re-submitted to the DETR.
- 3.3 Members of the Cabinet and Chief Officers have received copies of the document in advance, however additional copies will be available at the meeting.

3.4 The update highlights achievements and priorities in relation to the four strategic objectives of the City Housing Strategy. An extensive consultation programme including private landlords, tenants and residents and registered social landlords, has been held throughout the year to ensure key issues are reflected in the document.

4. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME BID FOR 2001/2002

4.1 The draft programme has been prepared based on the following development objectives which reflect the four main objectives set out in the Housing Strategy.

OBJECTIVE ONE - Promote Social and Economic Regeneration of Communities:

- Promoting economic regeneration through the Repair and Improvement Programme.

OBJECTIVE TWO - Promote Health and Welfare of all Citizens especially the Vulnerable and Disadvantaged:

- Promoting the physical and emotional well-being of residents by improving the standard of existing council homes to meet current aspirations
- Improving the environment aesthetically and improving safety and security for people, dwellings and vehicles
- Promoting energy efficiency and environmental protection to contribute to the overall development of a 'green' and healthy City
- Recognising and responding to the special needs of residents in the design and delivery of repair and improvement works

OBJECTIVE THREE - Promote Physical Regeneration of the City:

- Promoting the physical regeneration of the City by encouraging good design and implementing quality building programmes
- By restructuring existing stock to match supply and demand - thus bringing empty properties into use
- Resolving maintenance problems and minimising future repairs by the careful but pioneering selection of design and materials
- Encouraging and enabling investment in private sector housing to improve standards, minimise voids and meet the need for new homes

OBJECTIVE FOUR - Demonstrate Best Value in the Management of the Council's Housing Stock and Delivery of Services:

- Ensuring value for money by exploring alternative methods of procurement, contractual arrangements, construction methods and improved services by adoption of the principals set out in the Taskforce report, "Rethinking Construction"
- Delivering the repair and improvement programme in a customer caring and consultative manner

The specific priorities for the proposed capital programme for 2001/2002 remain unchanged and are:

- Improving comfort levels by the provision of affordable warmth, heating and energy efficiency
- Protecting the fabric of the dwellings by replacing and effectively maintaining windows, doors and roofs
- Improving basic amenities to kitchens and bathrooms
- Providing amenities and services for vulnerable people and those with special needs
- Enhancing the environment and community facilities
- Regenerating the private sector
- Improving the security of homes and neighbourhoods

- 4.2 The HIP submission has been prepared in accordance with the Government's guidelines which limit the bid to last years Annual Capital Guideline (ACG) plus 25%. A separate bid for Coalfields support has also been submitted. At this stage the bid should not be taken as an indication of the actual level of resources that will be allocated for 2001/2002.
- 4.3 In the event of the Housing Transfer proposals being approved the bid would relate to Private Housing only with Chronically Sick and Disabled Person Adaptations (CSDP's) becoming Disabled Facilities Grants which are included within Housing Renovation Grants.

Summary of Bid

	2001/2002 Expenditure £000's
PRIVATE HOUSING	
Housing Renovation Grants	1,917
Area Renewal	250
Coalfields Support	125
COUNCIL HOUSING	
Modernisation	3,350
Affordable Warmth (Heating and Energy Efficiency)	3,500
Multi Storey Improvement Programme	3,000
Area Regeneration at Albany	1,300
Bungalow Improvement Programme	750
Fencing, Environmental and Security Improvements	1,000
Structural Improvement Programme	1,500
Demolition	860
Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Adaptations (CSDP's)	1,050
Community Care Alarm Systems (CCAS)	100
Sub Total	18,702
Commitments	7,752
TOTAL	26,454

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Cabinet is requested to agree the Housing Strategy update for 2000.
- 5.2 The Cabinet is requested to agree the Housing Investment Programme bid as summarised in 4.4. above.

Statement of Accounts 1999/2000

Report of the City Treasurer

1. Introduction
 - 1.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 require that the Statement of Accounts (the statutory financial statements under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain 1999) has to receive approval by a Committee of the Authority before 30th September each year.
2. Statement of Accounts 1999/2000
 - 2.1 As part of the continuous drive to improve service performance the Accountancy Division of the City Treasurers Department have reviewed procedures for closing the accounts in order to speed up the process.
 - 2.2 The review has allowed the accounts to be closed two months ahead of previous years with the Audit commencing 4th September 2000. This earlier closedown will assist the division in tackling the many demands best value is placing upon the service.
 - 2.3 The Statement of Accounts is attached for Members Approval but as indicated is still subject to audit approval.
 - 2.4 The final Statement of Accounts will be published following the conclusion of the Audit and will include an audit certificate.
3. Recommendation:

Members are recommended to approve the Statement of Accounts for the financial year end 31st March 2000, subject to audit.

ITEM NO. 21 – CABINET – 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2000 – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS –
SEE HARD COPY

Report of City Treasurer, Director of Environment and Director of Contracting Services

Street Lighting and Highway Signs Outline Business Case

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To advise Members of the outcome of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for Street Lighting and Highway Signs and seek authority for the OBC to be submitted to the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) for consideration for PFI Credits support.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Members will recall that at the meeting of Cabinet on 19th July 2000, a report by Council Officers and external advisors was considered on an initial option appraisal study on Street Lighting.
- 2.2. The report recommended that an OBC be prepared and that a further report be produced for Cabinet in September to consider the findings of the OBC and determine whether it should be submitted to DETR for PFI Credits support.

3. Outline Business Case

- 3.1. The OBC has been completed, subject to some further refinements on presentation, and will be ready for submission to DETR following printing. Applications to DETR must be received by 29th September 2000 for consideration in the next Project Review Group (PRG) cycle, which begins on 2nd October 2000 and lasts for 6 weeks.
- 3.2. The initial options appraisal report considered three alternatives:
 - do minimum option, which seeks to sustain the delivery of the current service in the medium term with capital replacement at the average level of the past 5 years;
 - accelerated replacement, which is a fast track investment to modernise the lighting infrastructure
 - targeted replacement, informed by risk analysis of column life expectancy, to modernise the lighting infrastructure.

For the purposes of the OBC 'do nothing' and 'full replacement' options were also considered.

The conclusion of the initial option appraisal report was that an accelerated replacement approach supported by PFI Credits from DETR could secure major investment in the City's street lighting infrastructure. The need for significant capital investment had also been identified in a Best Value Review report on Street Care to Scrutiny Committee in July 2000.

3.3. The OBC examined in greater depth the conclusions of the initial options appraisal report by a more detailed financial analysis incorporating:

- comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the risks inherent in the project, drawing on guidance from the 4Ps, to facilitate options appraisal;
- cost benefit analysis utilising methodology contained in the 'New Approach to Appraisal' published by DETR;
- maintenance and energy costs and efficiencies using market sounding feedback and a database established by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Council's financial advisers on the project;
- further affordability analysis.

As a consequence of the more detailed approach, the conclusions of the initial options appraisal were revisited as an iterative process updating and refining the original findings. For example, the targeted replacement non-financial analysis was marked down in the light of the results of the cost benefit analysis.

In addition, details of illuminated and non-illuminated highway signs were considered. In the initial option appraisal study they had only been recognised in principle.

3.4. The conclusion of the OBC is that a PFI delivery of the Accelerated Replacement option is the preferred solution. In this option, all lighting infrastructure anticipated to be at the end of its useful life during the proposed PFI contract term (25 years) is replaced and modernised to the appropriate British and/or European standard in the first 5 years. This will enable the replacement of 51,665 columns and traffic signs.

This option achieved value for money against the conventional public sector comparator and meets the business need articulated in the City Strategy and the Local Transport Plan.

In addition, the Accelerated Replacement option also achieves the best score in the benefit to cost ratio analysis. This underlines the value of this preferred option compared with other options and the positive community value associated with investment in the street lighting service.

3.5. The report to Cabinet in July 2000 referred to the need to include a 'top up' sum in the Environment budget to reflect spending at the 'reasonable authority' level. This was quantified as £220,000. This as after taking account of £100,000 resources from capital

through the Local Transport Plan bidding process. As this cannot be guaranteed for the likely contract period of 25 years, it would be prudent to assume a 'top up' of up to £320,000. However, the exact amount that is required will only become known after submission of the OBC to DETR and discussions have been concluded. The rationale behind this approach by DETR to the 'reasonable authority' is that local authorities have already received Government support to capital replacement of lighting columns through the SSA system. The extent of that support is unhypothecated however, and will need to be negotiated. PFI Credit support would need to be abated therefore, to prevent double subsidy being paid by Government.

The OBC seeks Government support of £23.007m in support of capital investment of £27.365m in the first 5 years of the PFI contract.

4. Further Steps

- 4.1. A meeting has been arranged for Council Officers and external advisors to meet with David Locke, from 4Ps, to seek his views and support to the proposed OBC submission. 4Ps is represented on the Project Review Group, the body that will make the final decision on the OBC.
- 4.2. A further meeting has been scheduled to meet with DETR officials to discuss the OBC prior to formal submission.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1. Members are asked to note the findings of the OBC on Street Lighting and Highway Signs and recommended to agree to its submission to DETR for PFI Credits support by 29th September 2000.
- 5.2. Members are also asked to agree in principle, to the inclusion in the Environment Medium Term Financial Plan of a sum of up to £320,000 with effect from 2002/03 to recognise the 'reasonable authority' budget sum on which the OBC is predicated.

CABINET – 20TH SEPTEMBER 2000

CITY LEARNING CENTRE AT SANDHILL VIEW **PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE PFI PROCUREMENT PROCESS**

Joint Report of the City Treasurer and Director of Administration

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Sandhill View PFI project, which received ministerial approval on 1st August 2000, to outline the next steps in the procurement process and to seek Cabinet approval to an exception to Standing Orders in respect of this and future PFI Projects.

2. Sandhill View Project

- 2.1 Following a meeting of the Project Review Group (PRG), ministerial approval of the Sandhill View project was announced on 1st August 2000. The approval gives the Council authority to progress the project through the procurement process.
- 2.2 An 'expressions of interest' notice has been published in the European Journal (OJEC), inviting organisations to be considered to design, build, finance and operate the new facilities at Sandhill View. Organisations responding to the notice were sent an Information Memorandum (IM) and a Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ). The IM gave prospective bidders broad details of the facilities required by the Council under the proposed contract. The PQQ is required to enable the various bidders to be evaluated. The PQQ methodology for evaluation and selection has been discussed with the District Auditor to ensure that the process is transparent and equitable.
- 2.3 There have been over forty expressions of interest in the project. The deadline for receipt of completed PQs was 18th September 2000. Following evaluation of the returns by the Project Team, it is anticipated that about eight organisations will be selected for interview, to determine the best candidates a shortlist of four is expected.

3. PFI Procurement Process

- 3.1 The first stages of the procurement process are outlined above.
- 3.2 After short-listing, the successful organisations will be issued with an 'invitation to negotiate' (ITN). This will include a series of volumes consisting of guidance to bidders, an output specification and draft contract documentation.
- 3.3 Bid proposals will be required for the development in response to ITN. Following receipt of the proposals, bid evaluation by teams of Council officers and external advisers will commence to assess the bids in respect of quality, time and cost. The process will

include review meetings with bidders. Negotiations will be conducted with a view to selecting a preferred bidder. To enable the negotiations to be conducted smoothly, consideration needs to be given to the provisions of the Council's Standing Orders.

- 3.4 In carrying out a PFI scheme there are two major differences to a standard capital project where the Council draws up a detailed tender specification, priced by prospective contracts and the most economically advantageous is accepted.

The differences are:

- a) Prospective bidders are provided with an Output Specification rather than a tender document.
- b) The process involves members of the Project Team negotiating with prospective bidders to ensure that the Council obtains the best value for money with regard to how the bidder delivers the stated outputs.

The negotiations will revolve around design, funding, risk transfer (both to the Council and the bidder), standards, performance and operational issues. All of these matters can have financial implications.

4. Standing Orders

- 4.1 Standing Order 46.1 lays down certain requirements in respect of agreements for the execution of works by the Council and in particular Standing Order 46.1 (c) requires that where a contract for the execution of works exceeds £50,000, a tendering procedure shall apply. However, as explained in the previous paragraph the normal tendering procedure is not appropriate to PFI cases.

- 4.2 The Cabinet does however have authority under Standing Order 44.1 (b) to make exceptions to the provisions of Standing Orders and it is considered that it would be reasonable for such exception to be made subject to the following steps:

- i) Returns of expression of interest
- ii) Interviews of selected interested organization
- iii) Shortlisting
- iv) Issues of invitations to negotiate.
- v) Submission of bids (see proviso below)
- vi) Evaluation of bids

Provided that the submission and opening of the bids shall follow the procedure set out in Standing Order 51 with the substitution of the word "bid" for "tender".

Following completion of this process the Cabinet would:

- i) Select the preferred bidder, and
- ii) Approve the final financial terms for the project.

5. Sandhill View Project Evaluation

- 5.1 Project bids will be evaluated during January and February 2001 by groups of officers who will assess the proposals for their service, financial, legal and property content.
- 5.2 It is intended that Member and Governor views on the proposals will be sought through workshops in January 2001. An external advisor, who will analyse each of the bids with Council officers for their strengths and weaknesses, will facilitate the workshops.
- 5.3 The Project Team will continue to control the project on a detailed basis under the director of the Assistant City Treasurer (Project Manager) who will report to a Project Board consisting of relevant Chief Officers.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 6.1 Cabinet are asked to note the progress on the procurement arrangements for the new Sandhill View Centre.
- 6.2 Cabinet are asked, pursuant to Standing Order 44.1 (b) to authorise an exception to the requirements of Standing Order 46 in respect of the entering into of contracts for the execution of works in connection with Private Finance Initiative Projects by replacing those requirements with the process referred to in paragraph 4.1 above.

REPORT FOR CABINET – WEDNESDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2000

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CONTRACTING SERVICES AND CITY TREASURER

CONTRACTING SERVICES - QUARTERLY REPORT TO 30TH JUNE 2000

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As Cabinet will be aware, Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 has now been abolished. In practice this means that the activities grouped together as “defined activities” under the 1980 Act i.e. Highways, New Construction, Maintenance for reporting purposes no longer apply.
- 1.2 However the requirement still exists under Best Value to report on the performance of trading activities. The Director of Contracting Services has therefore established a number of trading accounts which more accurately reflect the contractual and managerial arrangements in place.
- 1.3 The revised arrangements, the results of which for the quarter ended 25th June are set out in Appendix 1, will provide greater transparency of financial performance and improved accountability.

2. FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The statutory requirement that the former defined activities break even after allowing for charges for the use of assets used in the provision of services no longer applies.
- 2.2 However, the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice requires that trading results should reflect the total cost of operations including charges for the use of assets. With this in mind the financial target for the attached trading activities would be a minimum requirement of break even after charges for the use of assets.

3. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 The trading results for the 13 weeks to 25th June 2000 are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Construction has performed on target with a surplus of £80,516 in line with the forecast for the first quarter of the year and expect to achieve the forecast year end surplus.
- 3.3 Housing Maintenance has performed better than expected with a surplus of £233,569 against a forecast of £43,397. This is due to extra work being requested by the client in the first quarter although it is anticipated that the position will revert to forecast levels as the year progresses.

- 3.4 The Education and Civic Buildings maintenance trading operation has produced a loss of £187,798 against a forecast deficit of £153,272. A deficit at the end of the first quarter is expected with this contract as much of the larger work in schools is undertaken during the summer break. Whilst the deficit exceeds expectations action is being taken to ensure the operation breaks even at the year end.
- 3.5 The Highways, Drainage and Street Lighting trading operation also shows a higher than anticipated loss of £67,719 against a forecast deficit of £44,339. This is due to delays in the release of work from the client department and it is expected the position will be rectified in the third quarter of the year.
- 3.6 The Other trading area has produced a loss of £15,213 for the first quarter which is in line with the forecast. The two main areas of work included in this section are the Housing Inspectors seconded to the Housing Department and the recoverable works for the private sector such as blocked drains or street lighting columns which is carried out by the Highways Division. The financial position is expected to improve through the 2nd and 3rd quarter and the forecast break even position for the year end remains realistic.
4. CONCLUSION
- 4.1 Overall City Contracting Services has produced a trading surplus of £43,355 against a forecast deficit of £89,180.
- 4.2 The performance of those trading areas which have performed below their expected level should improve to forecast levels during the remainder of the year.
- 4.3 The anticipated year end surplus of £1,466,000 seems realistic after the first quarter's trading.
5. RECOMMENDATIONS
- 5.1 Cabinet are recommended to note the financial outturn for the former 1980 Act Services within City Contracting Services for the quarter ended 25th June 2000.

ITEM NO. 24 – CABINET – 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2000 – SUMMARY TRADING
STATEMENTS FOR 3 MONTHS TO 25 JUNE 2000 (TABLE) – SEE HARD COPY

ANNUAL REPORT REGISTRATION & INSPECTION UNIT

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE BRING THEIR COPY OF THE ANNUAL REPORT WITH THEM

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Registration & Inspection Unit is required to produce an Annual Report to be presented to members of the Social Services Committee. A copy of the Annual Report for the period April 1999 – March 2000 has been circulated to Cabinet members. This report summarises the salient points noted.

2. *Current Situation*

- 2.1 The Registration & Inspection Unit carries out a range of responsibilities relating to the regulation of services for adults and children. A prime objective is the achievement of statutory responsibilities for inspection as set out in regulation. Once again, the Inspection Unit has achieved its target of 100% for the statutory inspection of all services. Timescales for processing registration applications were also dealt with in line with requirements. The continued achievement of the statutory targets will remain a priority for the Unit.
- 2.2 The statutory target for day care services for young children is one annual announced inspection. During the year we also carried out a number of unannounced inspections of these services.
- 2.3 The Unit has sought to improve performance in a range of areas related to Best Value principles. As part of our consultation process with those subject to inspection we make Post Inspection Questionnaires available. Feedback from providers confirms the professional standards of Inspection staff and the inspection process is viewed as a positive contribution to the development of services.
- 2.4 Questionnaires are also used as part of the process to obtain views of people using services. All parents/carers using day care services receive a questionnaire they can complete to contribute to the inspection process. For this year, following on from meetings previously held with the relatives of people who use residential care services, the questionnaire was made available for all relatives of people living in residential care homes for adults in the City of Sunderland. This gave us information about issues such as their awareness of complaints procedures as well as information about the individual service, which was contained in the Inspection Report.

- 2.5 The Annual Report sets out further information about this and the outcomes of inspection.
- 2.6 The Annual Report also notes the proposed changes for the future of social and health care regulation. The Care Standards Act received royal assent in July 2000, so the pace of movement towards the new arrangements is expected to increase. Currently it is planned that the Early Years Directorate (a new arm of Ofsted) will take over the regulation of day care services for young children in September 2001 following a lead in period for registration activity from June that year. The National Care Standards Commission is to be legally established in March 2001 and on 1st April 2002 will formally take over regulatory duties from Local Authorities and Health Authorities.

3. *Conclusion*

- 3.1 The Annual Report of the Registration & Inspection Unit comments on the year's activity which will, no doubt, increase over the coming year as the Unit will be expected to maintain existing workloads whilst engaging in preparation for the new arrangements. The scale and substance of the transfer will require substantial work to achieve a smooth transition process. This will be necessary to maintain the protection systems for vulnerable people that an effective regulatory regime provides.