

1. Housing

- Priority One:** Bring Empty Properties back into use
- Priority Two:** Strengthen the connection with Area Committee and all Social Registered Landlords
- Priority Three:** All agencies collectively ensure there is an adequate supply of housing which meets the needs and demands of people of Washington
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Key Facts and Background

A report was made to Area Committee November 2009 by Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services re Anti Social Behaviour, Private Landlords and Empty Homes. That report outlined key facts and figures relating to empty properties:

- 291 private properties in Washington are classed as long term empty residential homes. This equates to 1.7% of private stock in that area.
- 22 empty properties in Washington were brought back into use or demolished in 2008/09. To the end of September this year a further 10 have since been added to that total.
- Washington has very few void properties within Gentoo stock.

Current Activity

- The Empty Property Officer and Private Sector Housing Officer both work across the whole of the city to bring empty properties in the private rented sector back into use. The Housing Options Team works with the public and Council Tax to identify empty properties.
- Gentoo staff link with Neighbourhood Relations Team/Empty Property Team
- Work is ongoing to finalise the strategy to promote affordable housing and integrate potential requirements of the development of a Local Housing Company into the economic regeneration strategy for the City.
- Demolition of existing former care home and construction of new extra care housing at The Woodlands, Oxclose Road, creating Woodridge Gardens
- Gentoo are reviewing the allocations systems in partnership with the City Council, who retain the strategic/regulatory responsibility for housing.

Gaps, Needs and Issues

- Only 2 x Empty Homes Officers for whole of City
- Marketing could be used to make residents more aware of the services of the empty property officers in the Council.
- Liaison and consultation with Lettings Agency required
- Barmston Village centre flats – demolition delayed for 7 years due to ongoing negotiations with remaining shopkeeper.
- RSLs need to be more involved with regard to co-ordination of demand and supply of housing.

Options

1. Review of Service

Lead: Health, Housing and Adult Services

Committee is requested to note the contents of the information contained under priorities one, two and three, and in previous report by Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services, and agree to accept an update report at a future meeting focusing on empty properties, private landlords, and housing supply and demand in Washington.

2. Public Transport

Priority Five: Improve public transport services, including railway lines, accessibility and signage

Priority Six Increase influence over private bus operators

Key Facts and Background

- Satisfaction levels of residents in Washington with the local bus service are lower than the City average. Satisfaction with local transport information is considerably less than the City average. With respect to travel times, connectivity and the provision of information is something which needs to be addressed.
- Public transport access to the centres of Concord and The Galleries is high overall, well above the average comparison for the rest of the City.
- More residents in Washington have access to a car (68.8%) than the city average of 60%
- There are just over 15km of cycleways across Washington wards

Current Activity

- Tyne and Wear Bus Strategy
- Washington Road Safety Scheme
- Nexus provide a range of services to Washington, including paying for regular bus services (evening and Sunday 'W' services, 77 and 50, and daytime 73 and 184), scholars services and works services.
- Nexus also operate Taxi Card scheme and Link Up demand-responsive services and subsidise group travel and Age Concern Shopper Services. Nexus also administer Network Travel ticket scheme and Teen Travel, and free concessionary travel scheme
- Nexus Secured Services Strategy is currently out to consultation and should be available for publication after end of January 2010
- Nexus are currently in the process of designing a network of secured services to provide enhancements to existing commercial services. From March 2010 public consultations on the proposals in Washington will take place. Councillors will have the opportunity to view and feed back on the network. It is planned to implement the project in late summer 2010

Gaps, Needs and Issues

- Access to/from Washington and the rest of the City by public transport is limited. This is reflected in the satisfaction levels with public transport
- Some services operate circuitous routes and this is positive in an inclusive theme because areas which would not be served if buses followed direct routes are catered for. There must therefore be a trade off between accessibility and journey times within existing service capacities (i.e. there are not an infinite number of buses)
- Levels of service to other parts of the City are good from the main interchange areas of Washington, but it is recognised that some areas require travel on more than one service to access the main routes.
- Clarity with regard to the forms of information which is lacking is required

Options

1. Review of Service

Lead: Nexus

Committee is requested to note the contents of the information contained under priorities five and six, and agree to accept an update report at a future meeting re Nexus Secured Services Consultation.

3. Accessibility

Priority Four: Transform grass verges into parking bays on housing estates

Priority Seven: Establish options re accessibility – cycle routes, pavements, access for wheelchairs and buggies

Priority Eight: Install traffic measures in known high risk areas

Key Facts and Background

- There are many areas across Washington where car parking is at a premium and there are not enough places for residents to park vehicles. Requests are common for grassed areas to be removed. Funding is the main issue.
- LA reviewing pathways, subways, crossing points
- A range of issues have been identified relating to speeding, traffic calming, bus links and footway links

Current Activity

- As part of the Washington Road Safety Scheme the Bus Link removal pilot schemes at Parsons Road, Parsons Industrial Estate, Brandy Lane, Albany and Dunnock Drive, Ayton are currently being implemented. A further 12 are subject to a future Cabinet Report (April/June 2010)
- Funded through the Strategic Investment Plan footway links will be introduced at Cambrian Way, Burnhope Road, Pattinson Road, Stone Cellar Road, Sulgrave Road and Ayton Road South.

- 13 Accident Cluster Schemes have been approved. 3 traffic calming schemes are already underway at A1231/A182, Castle Rd and Heworth Rd (LTP funding). The remaining 10 sites (funded through SIP) are being evaluated by Jacobs with preliminary designs expected by Dec 09.
- The Council will seek to develop a Policy and Strategy which will contain guidelines to enable roads in the vicinity of schools and roads/sites 'of local concern' to be evaluated. Officers are consulting with Senior Managers with regard to drafting a brief to commission the proposed Strategy. The commission is likely to take at least 1 year (City wide). The Jacobs Report mentioned above will also identify some schemes and relevant issues.
- Site works re Front Street Concord Loading Bays commence January 2010, expected completion March 2010
- Puffin crossing to be installed at Parkway/Roche Court

Gaps, Needs and Issues

- Schemes which have been identified and require funding resources include additional parking bays at Coach Road Estate, dropped kerbs at Coverdale, Warwick and Essex Drive, parking layby at Inkerman Road, and parking provision at Kestrel Close.

Options

1. Review of Service

Lead: Highways

Area Committee is requested to receive a report to a future meeting outlining recommendations of the Jacob's report re issues and solutions for Accident Cluster Sites

2. Review of Service

Lead: Highways

Area Committee is requested to note the progress made as part of the Washington Road Safety Scheme and agree to receive a report to a future committee with regard to outstanding gaps and issues

4. Environment Issues

- Priority Nine:** **Develop a safe environment and healthy living, educating people on neighbourhood management**
- Priority Ten:** **Improve green spaces, underpasses and unlit walkways**
- Priority Eleven:** **Improve opportunities to recycle materials**
- Priority Twelve:** **Take enforcement action against fly tipping, where relevant, poor private landlords and tenants**
- Priority Thirteen:** **Encourage healthier living in communities by reducing the amount of unhealthy options. i.e. limit the number of fast food outlets, etc.**
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Key Facts and Background

- A report was made to Area Committee November 2009 by Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services re Anti Social Behaviour, Private Landlords and Empty Homes. That report outlined key facts and figures relating to Anti Social Behaviour
- A number of initiatives tackling anti social behaviour are detailed and reported through the Washington Safe Action Plan. See Washington Area Action Plan: Feedback Report.
- Environmental Crime Data is available to identify fixed penalty notices re litter and dog fouling

Current Activity

- Dedicated team to investigate cases of anti social behaviour within the private rented sector with regard to anti social behaviour.
- There are currently three Officers employed to cover the City. Officers are committed to reducing the level of anti social behaviour within the private sector and regularly work outside of their office hours (9-5) to investigate cases and attend community meetings.
- The Council works with its partners to tackle anti social behaviour through Local Multi Agency Problem Solving groups (LMAPs).
- Partners, such as Gento and the Police also have resources to deal with anti social behaviour and it is necessary to ensure that, along with the Council's own resources, they are used to maximum effect.
- Gento already take action where perpetrators are identified of fly tipping.
- Neighbourhood Housing Managers are proactive in inspecting estates through the Neighbourhood Plans.
- Enforcement teams in CCS being developed
- LA working with schools to develop environmental activity in parks.
- Groundwork operating community allotment in Washington funded through TPCT
- Community Health Information Points being provided across Washington

Gaps, Needs and Issues

- At its meeting on 7 July 2009, Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee agreed proposals for a review of anti social behaviour actively. The suggested areas to be included within the review are as follows;
 - To gain an understanding of approaches of the Council and its partners in tackling anti social behaviour and ensure that a strategic approach is being taken
 - To map service provision to identify hotspots or any gaps in provision
 - To examine the issue of underage drinking (note – Children's Services Review Committee scrutinised Alcohol and Young People in 2008/09)
 - Strengthen the environmental services connecting with LMAPS
 - To consider the balance between preventative and enforcement action
 - Developing activities and interventions for young people and families that helps meet their needs

- Look at perceptions of anti social behaviour (Local Area Agreement)
- Progress of Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Groups

Options

1. Review of Service

Lead: Health, Housing and Adult Services

Committee is requested to note the contents of the information contained under priorities above and agree to accept an update report at a future meeting focusing on anti social behaviour.

Committee is also asked to note the initiatives already taking place to tackle Anti Social Behaviour

- Fly tipping is a big issue around Washington plantation areas and open land/garage locations.
- Issue with regard to the number of fast food outlets operating from business units – this results in both litter and anti social behaviour on surrounding estates, e.g. Swan Industrial Estate.
- Issues raised with regard to the number of premises in High Streets and shopping areas having a large number of fast food and drink premises or outlets.

Options

1. Escalation to Scrutiny

Lead: Area Committee

Escalate to relevant Scrutiny Committee: A number of business units on Trading Estate (start up, nursery units) have been approved as fast food outlets. This has resulted in an increase in litter and anti social behaviour on nearby estates. In addition, the excessive number of food and drink licenses being granted has resulted in a high proportion of food and drink premises centralised on high streets and shopping areas. Area Committee requests Scrutiny looks at guidelines, regulations and protocols re licensing and how qualitative data and reporting can be taken into consideration when applications are presented to the Licensing Committee.