


## THE CABINET

### AGENDA



Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Committee Room No. 1) on  
Wednesday, 12 March 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

#### Part I

ITEM		PAGE
1.	<b>Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 12 February 2014 Part I</b>  (Copy herewith).	1
2.	<b>Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any)</b>	
3.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
4.	<b>The Duty to Co-operate – Agreement of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the North East Local Planning Authorities</b>  Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy herewith).	15
5.	 <b>Review of the Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy</b>  Report of the Head of Financial Resources (copy herewith).	27

Contact: Hazel Mackel, Governance Services Team Leader Tel: 561 1042  
[hazel.mackel@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:hazel.mackel@sunderland.gov.uk)

Information contained in this agenda can be made available in other languages  
and formats on request.

- |    |   |  |    |
|----|---|--|----|
| 6. |  | <b>Collective Energy Switching Scheme</b>  | 35 |
|    |   | Report of the Executive Director of People Services<br>(copy herewith).  |    |
| 7. |  | <b>People Services – Adult Social Care Grant Assistance Process</b>  | 47 |
|    |   | Report of the Executive Director of People Services<br>(copy herewith).  |    |
| 8. |  | <b>Low Carbon Social Housing Pilot – Biomass District Heating System and Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) Supply Chain Training</b> | 57 |
|    |   | Report of the Executive Director of People Services<br>(copy herewith).  |    |
| 9. |  | <b>School Admissions Arrangements from September 2015</b>  | 67 |
|    |   | Report of the Executive Director of People Services<br>(copy herewith).  |    |

**Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006**

The reports contained in Part II of the Agenda are not for publication as the Cabinet is considered likely to exclude the public during consideration thereof as they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority). (Paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**Part II**

- |     |   |     |
|-----|---|-----|
| 10. | <b>Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 12 February 2014 Part II</b> | 105 |
|     | (Copy herewith).  |     |

11.  **Sunderland Riverside at Stadium Park: Proposed land transfer from the Homes and Community Agency (HCA)** 111

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy herewith).

 **Denotes Key Decision.**

\* **Denotes Regulation 10 Notice issues – item which is a key decision which is not included in the 28 Day Notice of Key Decisions.**

ELAINE WAUGH  
Head of Law and Governance

Civic Centre  
SUNDERLAND

4 March 2014



**CABINET MEETING – 12 MARCH 2014**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**

MINUTES, PART I

**Author(s):**

Head of Law and Governance

**Purpose of Report:**

Presents the minutes of the last meeting held on 12 February 2014 Part I.

**Action Required:**

To confirm the minutes as a correct record.



**At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 2.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor P. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Gofton, Kelly, G. Miller, P. Smith, Speding and H. Trueman

**Also present:-**

Councillor Oliver

**Part I**

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 January 2014 Part I (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report - see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**Receipt of Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **Ombudsman's Annual Review 2012 - 2013**

The Chief Executive and the Head of Law and Governance submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to advise of the number and outcome of complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2012 – 2013 and to inform of the increase in transparency within the Ombudsman service.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman in highlighting the report drew particular attention to there being no findings of maladministration against the Council for the municipal year 2012 – 2013 and this meant that the Council had now maintained this level of performance for over a decade. He added that the Ombudsman also reported that Sunderland had received a lower number of complaints than the average for a Metropolitan Council.

Cabinet Members were advised that last year the Ombudsman made decisions on 32 complaints. Of all the complaints considered, in only one did the Ombudsman recommend the Council make an amendment. In all other complaints the Ombudsman made no recommendations for alternative outcomes or compensation to that that the Council had made during its in house consideration of the complaints.

The Chairman reported that from April 2013 to increase transparency and awareness of the complaints her office handles, the Ombudsman had published all final decisions on complaints. He explained that these were anonymised to protect the identities of the complainants.

Cabinet Members having commended the report and congratulated the officers from across the Council and in particular the Council's Complaints and Feedback Team, for their hard work in dealing with complaints and improving customer services, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the contents of the Ombudsman's annual review and in particular that there were no findings of maladministration against the Council for the municipal year 2012 – 2013 be noted.

## **Collection Fund 2013/2014**

The Head of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) on the estimated balance on the Collection Fund in respect of Council Tax, for 2013/2014 and the amounts available to the Council and its major precepting authorities for use in setting Council Tax levels for 2014/2015.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding reported that where a surplus is projected on the Collection Fund, the Council had a legal requirement to return those surpluses to the Council and its Precepting Bodies so that they could be taken into account in calculating the Council Tax for the following year.



The attention of Cabinet Members was drawn to paragraph 4.3 of the report and Councillor Speding reported that it was estimated that there would be a projected surplus on the Collection Fund as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and that £567,359 would be used in 2014/2015. Accordingly, of this sum £500,000 was available to the Council to take into account when determining the Council Tax for 2014/2015. This positive position reflected the continued excellent performance of the Council in terms of Council Tax collection.

Councillor Speding advised that the Precepting Bodies had been notified of their share of the surplus and these amounts were detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report for information.

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

3. RESOLVED that the overall positive position in relation to the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund for 2013/2014, and the surplus of £500,000 which will be taken into account when setting the Council Tax level for the Council for 2014/2015 be noted.

### **Capital Programme 2014/2015 and Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2014/2015, including Prudential Indicators for 2014/2015 to 2016/2017.**

The Chief Executive and the Head of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an update on the level of capital resources and commitments for the forthcoming financial year and to seek a recommendation to Council to the overall Capital Programme 2014/2015 and the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy (including both borrowing and investment strategies) for 2014/2015 and to approve the Prudential Indicators for 2014/2015 to 2016/2017.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding highlighted that the report proposed a Capital Programme for 2014/2015 of almost £81million. He explained that this was made up of new starts of almost £18 million and the costs of continuing schemes from previous years of over £63 million. He added that this was a substantial programme of works despite ongoing reductions in government grants.

Cabinet Members were advised that significant resources had been earmarked to transport and other infrastructure projects that would support the economic regeneration of the City and help stimulate economic growth and improve job prospects for our residents.

Councillor Speding drew attention to the continued support to projects that benefited the neediest and that grants allocated to Education and Health and Housing Services were earmarked for priorities within these services. He explained that the approach would enable programmes such as disabled facilities grants, school asset management and free school meals, for example, to progress.

Cabinet Members were advised that there were also other invest to save projects that were necessary in order to help the Council to reduce its ongoing revenue budget requirements.

Turning to the technical aspects of the report, Councillor Speding highlighted that the Prudential Indicators were in accordance with the Prudential Code of Practice which were set annually and monitored regularly to ensure that the Council's capital plans were affordable, sustainable and prudent.

Finally, Councillor Speding requested the Cabinet to reaffirm its Treasury Management Policy statement. He reported that the Council was not proposing any major changes to the overall Treasury Management Strategy in 2014/2015 which would continue to maintain the careful and prudent low risk approach adopted by the Council in previous years. The Strategy complied fully with the Treasury Management Code of Practice and observed best practice.

Cabinet Members having commended the report, that the proposals would provide benefits across City and demonstrate the Council's confidence in moving the City forward, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council to approve the:-
  - (i) the proposed Capital Programme for 2014/2015,
  - (ii) the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2014/2015 (including specifically the Annual Borrowing and Investment Strategies),
  - (iii) the Prudential Indicators for 2014/2015 to 2016/2017, and
  - (iv) the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2014/2015.

### **Revenue Budget and Proposed Council Tax for 2014/2015 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/2015 to 2016/2017**

The Chief Executive and the Head of Financial Resources submitted a joint report (copy circulated) on:-

- the overall revenue budget position for 2014/2015;
- the projected balances position as at 31st March, 2014 and 31st March, 2015 and advise on their level;
- a risk analysis of the Revenue Budget 2014/2015;
- a summary of the emerging medium term financial position facing the Council from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017; and
- any views received from the North East Chamber of Commerce and Trade Unions.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding reported that the final settlement had now been announced and disappointingly it had not resulted in any change to the overall position. He explained that the Council was faced with significant Government grant reductions and cost pressures resulting in a savings requirement of £35.6million for 2014/2015. He highlighted that Cabinet colleagues had worked over many months to identify proposals to address this very difficult and challenging position.

Cabinet Members were advised that the Council had continued to address the cuts by maximising savings from non-front line services and utilising corporate resources released as previous years plans had reached full fruition. However, the compound impact of the reductions meant that front line service changes were unavoidable. A range of reductions would come from re-commissioning services, reprioritising spend, greater collaboration and use of alternative delivery models particularly going forward into 2015/2016.

Councillor Speding reported that after taking account of these savings it was proposed that some limited one off funding was temporarily applied to enable the phased implementation of proposals. He added that the proposals represented a robust approach to ensure a balanced budget. He drew attention to the continuing support for the Council's overall approach to meeting the budget challenge when the budget consultation was undertaken.

Councillor Speding believed that these proposals represented the most appropriate balance taking all factors into account.

Councillor Speding then drew the attention of Cabinet Members to Appendix G tabled separately at the meeting, which set out the Council's proposal to freeze council tax for the fourth consecutive year. He reported that the Council was still awaiting confirmation of the precept proposals from the Police and Crime Commissioner and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and these might require an amendment to the final proposal to Cabinet in due course. He added that again by proposing a Council Tax freeze, the Council was recognising the harsh economic climate and the challenges facing the residents of the city and this Council would continue to do everything it could to try to mitigate the impact of these external challenges.

In conclusion, Councillor Speding reported that the Council was aware that the future outlook was one of further government funding reductions and at this stage the Council was looking at potential reductions of almost £113m over the next three years. He drew attention to the medium term strategy set out at Appendix H which would be regularly updated as new information emerged and plans developed with the communities to address it.

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

5. RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council to:-
  - (i) approve the proposed Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 set out at Appendix K;

- (ii) note the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/2015 to 2016/2017 as set out in Appendix H;
- (iii) note that the proposed Council Tax Requirement for the Council for 2014/2015 for its own purposes is £76,564,392 (excluding Parish precepts) and represents a freeze to Council Tax for 2014/2015,
- (iv) note that at its meeting on 29th January 2014 the Council approved the following amounts for the year 2014/2015 in accordance with the amended regulations made under Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the 'Act'):
  - a) £64,559 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with the above regulation of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2012, as its Council Tax Base for the year (Item T).
  - b) £ 3,230 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with the Regulations, as the amount of it's Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in the area of the Parish of Hetton Town Council.
- (v) that the Council Tax Leaflet be made available via the Council's website rather than enclosed with Council Tax bills which reflects a relaxation of the rules and that, to meet timescales for publication, responsibility for finalising the document be delegated to the Head of Financial Resources in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Secretary
- (vi) that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014/2015 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:
  - a) £678,802,893 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
  - b) £602,196,156 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.

- c) £76,606,737 being the amount by which the aggregate at (iv) (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (iv) (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax Requirement for the year including Parish precepts (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act)
- d) £1,186.6159 being the amount at (vi) (c) above (Item R) all divided by Item T ((iv) (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- e) £42,345 being the precept notified by Hetton Town Council as a special item under Section 34 (1) of the Act.
- f) £1,185.9600 being the amount at (vi) (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (vi) (e) above by the Item T ((iv) (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
- g) £1,199.0699 being the amount given by adding to the amount at (vi) (f) above the amount (vi) (e) divided by the amount at (iv) (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in the area of the Parish of Hetton Town Council.
- h)

Valuation Bands	Parts of the Council's Area	
	Hetton Town Council	All other parts of the Council's Area
A	£ 799.38	£ 790.64
B	£ 932.61	£ 922.41
C	£ 1,065.84	£ 1,054.19
D	£ 1,199.07	£ 1,185.96
E	£ 1,465.53	£ 1,449.51
F	£ 1,731.99	£ 1,713.05
G	£ 1,998.45	£ 1,976.60
H	£ 2,398.14	£ 2,371.92

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (vi) (f) and (vi) (g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (vii) that it be noted that for the year 2014/2015, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria have supplied their best estimate of their proposed precepts, which have still to be approved by their respective Authorities. Consequently, the following amounts for both the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria represent the provisional precepts for 2014/2015, which may be issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings as follows:

Valuation Bands	Precepting Authority	
	Northumbria Police Authority	Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
A	£ 57.74	£ 48.77
B	£ 67.36	£ 56.90
C	£ 76.99	£ 65.03
D	£ 86.61	£ 73.16
E	£105.86	£ 89.42
F	£125.10	£105.68
G	£144.35	£121.93
H	£173.22	£146.32

- (viii) that having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (vi) (h) and (vii) above but not having received confirmation of the precept in paragraph (vii), the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, estimate the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2014/2015 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below at this point in time. The exact levels will only become known once formal notification of the precepts from the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria are received.

Valuation Bands	Parts of the Council's Area	
	Hetton Town Council	All other parts of the Council's Area
A	£ 905.89	£ 897.15
B	£ 1,056.87	£ 1,046.67
C	£ 1,207.86	£ 1,196.21
D	£ 1,358.84	£ 1,345.73
E	£ 1,660.81	£ 1,644.79
F	£ 1,962.77	£ 1,943.83
G	£ 2,264.73	£ 2,242.88
H	£ 2,717.68	£ 2,691.46

To note that under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, that the Authority's relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2014/2015 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined under Section 52ZC(1) of the Act.

(i.e. the proposed Council Tax freeze for 2014/15 means that the Council does not need to hold a referendum on its proposed council tax. The regulations set out in Section 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires all billing authorities (councils and precept authorities (i.e. Fire and Police authorities)) to hold a referendum on their proposed level of basic Council Tax each year if they exceed government guidelines set out annually.

For 2014/15 the guideline increase for the council was 2.0%.

As the council is proposing a Council Tax freeze for 2014/15 then the above regulations have no impact for 2014/15).

- (ix) note the record of the State of the City debate and the views expressed by the North East Chamber of Commerce and Trade Unions at Appendix F.

### **Procurement of a Direct Payments Support Service**

The Executive Director of People Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek authority to procure a Direct Payments Support Service.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Miller highlighted that Age UK had been commissioned to provide a Direct Payments Support Service (Go Direct) since 2009 however the current grant funding arrangement for this service was due to end in March 2014. He explained that usage of the service had increased in recent years and it was expected to rise further due to the Government and Council priorities to offer all adults who received social care services a personal budget which they had the option to take as a Direct Payment.

Cabinet Members were advised that a tender process had been conducted in January 2014. One provider would be sought to provide the service which would support the following groups of people and would commence on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014:

- Adults receiving a Social Care Direct Payment
- People with responsibility for a disabled child who receive a Direct Payment for the child's care
- People aged 16-17 who receive a Direct Payment for their social care
- People receiving a Personal Health Budget Direct Payment for their Continuing Health Care services

The service would consist of three elements, namely Direct Payments Support Services around employment of personal assistants, managed accounts where the provider would manage the Direct Payment on behalf of the client or a group of clients to enable them to purchase services and payroll services.

Councillor Miller reported that in order to ensure a smooth transition to the new service, Age UK would be funded for three months to continue to provide the service until 30 June 2014. He advised that the annual value of the contract would be up to a maximum of £150,000 and the total contract value including the extension would be £600,000. He explained that commissioning the service via a contract would encourage competition from the market and ensure value for money and it would also allow more in-depth monitoring via quarterly contract management meetings.

6. RESOLVED that approval be given for the procurement of a Direct Payments Support Service to support the following groups of people who are eligible for social care or continuing health care and who choose to take their personal budget as a Direct Payment:-

- Adults receiving a Social Care Direct Payment,
- People with responsibility for a disabled child who receive a Direct Payment for the child's care,
- People aged 16-17 who receive a Direct Payment for their social care, and
- People receiving a Personal Health Budget Direct Payment for their Continuing Health Care services.

### **Procurement of Independent Adults Advocacy Services**

The Executive Director of People Services submitted a report (copy circulated) seeking approval for the procurement of the provision of Independent Adult Advocacy Services as the value of the contract would be over £250,000 and as such Cabinet approval was sought for the procurement to proceed.

(For copy report – see original minutes).



Councillor Miller reported that the People Services Directorate currently commissioned a number of Adult Independent Advocacy Services for vulnerable adults and mental health services. He explained that by undertaking the procurement, the Council could provide a service that met statutory and non-statutory obligations in regard to the provision of Independent Advocacy and allow options for improving the service to be explored.

Cabinet Members having been advised that the contract term would be for two years with an option to extend for up to a further twelve months, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given to the procurement of Independent Adults Advocacy Services for the period of 2014 – 2016 to cover the specific needs relating to Independent Advocacy support for Adults, and
- (ii) it be noted that the current review of Independent Advocacy Services being undertaken will identify the specific services and outcomes to be achieved.

#### **Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006**

At the instance of the Chairman it was: -

8. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) (Paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(Signed) P. WATSON,  
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 items are included in Part II.



## CABINET MEETING – 12 MARCH 2014

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

**Title of Report:**

The Duty to Co-operate – Agreement of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the North East Local Planning Authorities

**Author(s):**

Deputy Chief Executive

**Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the new statutory requirement introduced by the Localism Act 2011 on all local planning bodies in respect of a Duty to Co-operate when preparing their Local Plans and to seek approval to a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the eight North East local planning authorities which sets out the formal mechanisms in order to comply with the Duty.

**Description of Decision:**

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the eight North East Local Planning Authorities in respect of the duty to co-operate and authorises the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to sign the MOU on behalf of the Council.

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? \*Yes/No**

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

To comply with the Duty to Co-operate

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

There are no alternative options. The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the duty to co-operate in respect of preparation of its new development plan documents. Developing a MOU is strongly advocated by the Planning Inspectorate as being an important tool in demonstrating compliance with the duty at the Local Plan Examination.

**Impacts analysed:**

Equality  Privacy  Sustainability  Crime and Disorder

**Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? Yes/No**

**Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? Yes/No**

**Scrutiny Committee**



**THE DUTY TO CO-OPERATE – AGREEMENT OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE NORTH EAST LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES****REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the new statutory requirement introduced by the Localism Act 2011 on all local planning bodies in respect of a Duty to Co-operate when preparing their Local Plans and to seek approval to a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the eight North East local planning authorities which sets out the formal mechanisms in order to comply with the Duty.

**2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the eight North East Local Planning Authorities in respect of the duty to co-operate and authorises the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to sign the MOU on behalf of the Council.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new “duty to cooperate” on all local planning authorities and other public bodies when preparing their local development plans. This is now included as a new Section 33A to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
- 3.2 Following the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, the new duty is now the primary legal requirement in terms of dealing with strategic planning matters that cross administrative boundaries. Co-operation is required on new and emerging local development plan issues (such as housing, economic development and transport infrastructure) where those issues are considered to be both strategic and would have a significant impact.
- 3.3 The duty applies to all local planning authorities in England and to a number of other public bodies including the Marine Management Organisation, Environment Agency, Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, Natural England, Homes and Communities Agency, Highways Agency, Integrated Transport Authorities and Highway Authorities.
- 3.4 In short, the duty relates to the preparation of local development plan documents and requires:-

- Councils and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing to address matters of development that may have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas;
- Joint working on strategic cross boundary issues;
- Consideration given to meeting the development needs of an adjacent Council who cannot wholly meet its own needs;

3.5 Crucially, the Duty does not impose a duty for all parties to “agree” when preparing their individual plans. Rather, it is an iterative process which must demonstrate that each local authority has worked together to seek to explore and address all strategic cross boundary implications which arise from their new and emerging development plans. Furthermore, when a local authority submits its new development plan document to the Secretary of State for independent examination, it must be able to demonstrate that it has complied with the duty to co-operate in respect of the preparation of the plan. Therefore, compliance with the duty is a ‘showstopper’ in plan making terms. Several authorities have recently had to suspend or withdraw their plans from the Examination stage as a consequence of non-compliance.

#### **4.0 MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DUTY IN SUNDERLAND**

##### **4.1 The North East Memorandum of Understanding**

4.2 In order to ensure compliance with the duty to co-operate, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been prepared between Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council.

4.3 The MOU sets out the appropriate governance structures and framework for decision making and provide the conduit for cooperation and consideration of strategic planning issues. Whilst the MOU is not a legally binding document, it sets out the agreed processes, links and roles of existing groups and structures and how strategic and cross-boundary matters in respect of emerging local development plans could be raised and resolved through an agreed governance structure.

#### **5.0 ESTABLISHED CROSS-BOUNDARY WORKING**

5.1 There has been a strong track record of co-operation between this Council and its neighbouring authorities on both strategic planning policy issues and establishing consistent methodologies to develop evidence to inform their respective development plans.

5.2 Cross-boundary meetings on common development plan issues have long been held at officer level on an informal basis with our neighbouring authorities. Under the duty to co-operate, these working relationships will become more formalised to provide clear evidence of co-operation as our respective development plans are advanced.

## **6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1 There are no alternative options. The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the duty to co-operate in respect of preparation of its new development plan documents. Developing a MOU is strongly advocated by the Planning Inspectorate as being an important tool in demonstrating compliance with the duty at the Local Plan Examination.

## **7.0 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial Implications**

- 7.2 There are no direct costs associated with adopting the MOU as the appropriate mechanism for considering cross-boundary issues in order to comply with the Duty to Co-operate.

### **7.3 Legal Implications**

- 7.4 The Council now has a statutory duty to co-operate with neighbouring local planning authorities and other public sector bodies in respect of the preparation of the new development plan documents by virtue of Section 33A of the 2004 Act. Further, at the examination stage for a new development plan document, the local planning authority must be able to demonstrate to the Secretary of State how it has complied with the duty to co-operate in preparing the local plan.

- 7.5 The MOU establishes an agreed framework between the seven North East Local Planning Authorities for the identification and discussion of strategic and cross-border strategic planning issues as part of the preparation of each authority's emerging new local development plans. This will assist in the Council discharging its obligation under Section 33A of the 2004 Act in respect of the new emerging development plan.

### **7.6 Human Rights**

- 7.7 There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

### **7.8 Equalities and Diversity**

- 7.9 there are no Equalities and Diversity issues directly arising from this report.

### **7.10 Environment and Sustainability**

- 7.11 The Memorandum of Understanding has no direct implications, but all matters contained within the City's emerging Local Plan must by law promote sustainable development and be subject of a separate Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

#### **Duty to Co-operate**

#### **Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland Councils and Northumberland National Park**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Memorandum of Understanding is the agreement between Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council (“the Partners”) to comply with the duty to co-operate on planning issues set out in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act) as well as those that relate to Strategic Priorities as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.2 Section 33A of the Act introduces a new ‘duty to co-operate’. This applies to all local planning authorities in England and to a number of other public bodies including the Marine Management Organisation, Environment Agency, Historic Buildings & Monuments Commission for England, Natural England, Civil Aviation Authority, Homes & Communities Agency, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Office of the Rail Regulator, Highways Agency, Integrated Transport Authorities and Highway Authorities.
- 1.3 Section 20 of the Act requires that in examining Local Plans the Secretary of State will be assessing whether the Local Planning Authority has complied with the duty to co-operate in preparing the Local Plan.

### **2. The purpose of our co-operation**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding is to set out how the Partners will comply with the duty to co-operate for their mutual benefit and for that of their joint plan making area. It will:
  1. Clarify and record the responsibilities of the Partners both individually and collectively; and
  2. Establish guidelines for joint working going forward in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.



### **3. Status of the Memorandum of Understanding**

- 3.1 The Memorandum of Understanding is an operational document. It is not a formally binding legal agreement and the partnership is not a legal entity.
- 3.2 The Partners individually and collectively agree to use all reasonable endeavours to comply with the terms and spirit of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 3.3 Under the Memorandum of Understanding the Partners cannot employ staff, let contracts or commit financial resources on behalf of the constituent Partners without their formal agreement.
- 3.4 Agreement to or withdrawal from the Memorandum of Understanding does not remove a Local Authority's duty to co-operate pursuant to the Act.

### **4. Governance Arrangements**

- 4.1. These arrangements are set out on the attached flowcharts ("the Flowcharts"). The arrangements are as follows:
- 4.2. Each local authority will be responsible for preparing and adopting their own Local Plan, development plan documents and local development documents and setting up their own governance arrangements to facilitate this.
- 4.3 Each Local Authority's Local Plan Governance Group will feed progress reports and strategic priority issues that have a cross-boundary interest to the Planning Heads of Service Group for discussion. The Planning Heads of Service Group will include representation from each of the seven local authorities. This will be the mechanism of co-operating on such issues.
- 4.4 The Planning Heads of Service Group will report their discussions and agreed actions back to the Local Plan Governance Groups and as appropriate to any or all of the following:
  - Economic Directors Group
  - LEP Transport Group
  - LEP Planning and Infrastructure Group
  - Chief Executives Group
  - Leaders and Elected Mayors Group
  - North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
- 4.5 These above groups may also refer issues to the Planning Heads of Service Group for discussion and or action and for feeding back to the Local Plan Governance Groups.
- 4.6 The Local Plan Governance Group is the relevant board or grouping of senior officers managing the production of the authority's Local Plan.

## **5. Scope of Co-operation**

- 5.1 Each Partner will engage constructively, actively, expediently, and on an on-going basis in any process which involves the following:
- The preparation of Local Plans;
  - The preparation of other local development documents;
  - Activities that can reasonably be considered to prepare the way for activities which any of the above that are or could be contemplated; and
  - Activities that support any of the above so far as they relate to sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including sustainable development or use of land for or in connection with infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.
- 5.2 Engagement for the purposes of 5.1 includes in particular:
- Considering whether to consult on and prepare and enter into and publish agreement on joint approaches to the undertaking of activities in 5.1; and
  - Considering whether to agree to prepare joint local development documents.
- 5.3 When complying with the duty to co-operate the Partners will have regard to guidance given by the Secretary of State.

## **6. Meetings**

- 6.1. The Planning Heads of Service Group will meet bi-monthly or as required.

## **7. Funding and Finance**

- 7.1. Each Authority will use its own staff to progress their Local Plans except where consultants are used.
- 7.2. If consultants are used on a joint basis their costs will be apportioned dependent upon the amount of work that affects each authority's area. The Project Directors responsible for each Local Plan Governance Group or in their absence the Project Owners as specified on the Flowcharts will be responsible for authorising the costs associated with any work prior to that work being commenced.
- 7.3. Each authority will invoice the other authority once every two months for expenditure it has incurred on the others behalf, providing supporting detail of the relevant transactions as appropriate.

## **8. Duration**

- 8.1. The joint governance arrangements will remain in place until the duty to co-operate is no longer required by legislation.

## **9. Dispute Resolution**

- 9.1. In the event of a dispute that cannot be resolved by the Planning Heads of Service Group the matter concerned will be referred to the Chief Executives Group. If the matter cannot be resolved by the Chief Executives Group it will be referred to the Leaders and Elected Mayors Group. If the matter is not able to be satisfactorily resolved the Partners put in writing and keep on file the matter.
- 9.2. Those decisions in respect of agreement and dispute will be clearly logged and submitted as part of the evidence to each respective local planning authority's Local Plan examination to demonstrate how the duty has been complied with.

## **10. Intellectual Property Rights**

- 10.1. Subject to the rights of third parties, the Partners will share equally the intellectual property rights to all data, reports, drawings, specifications, designs, inventions or other material produced or acquired including copyrights in the course of their joint work. The Partners agree that any proposal by one Partner to permit a third party to utilise the documents and materials produced by the partnership shall be subject to the agreement of all other Partners. Any changes, amendments or updates made to the documents and materials, if made under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, shall be jointly owned by the Partners.

## **11. Freedom of Information Requests**

- 11.1. If any partner receives a freedom of information request in respect of shared work associated with the Memorandum of Understanding it will be shared at the earliest opportunity with the other relevant authorities in order to determine and achieve a consensus as to what information shall be released.

## **12. Termination**

- 12.1. Any of the Partners may withdraw from the Memorandum of Understanding at any time. Any such withdrawal would need to be approved by the Chief Executives Group and Leaders and Elected Mayors Group.

12.2. If the Memorandum of Understanding is terminated, the Partners agree that any reports, studies or any other information which has been jointly prepared by the Partners can be used by each of the Partners separately.

### 13. Signatories



Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



Elected Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



South Tyneside Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

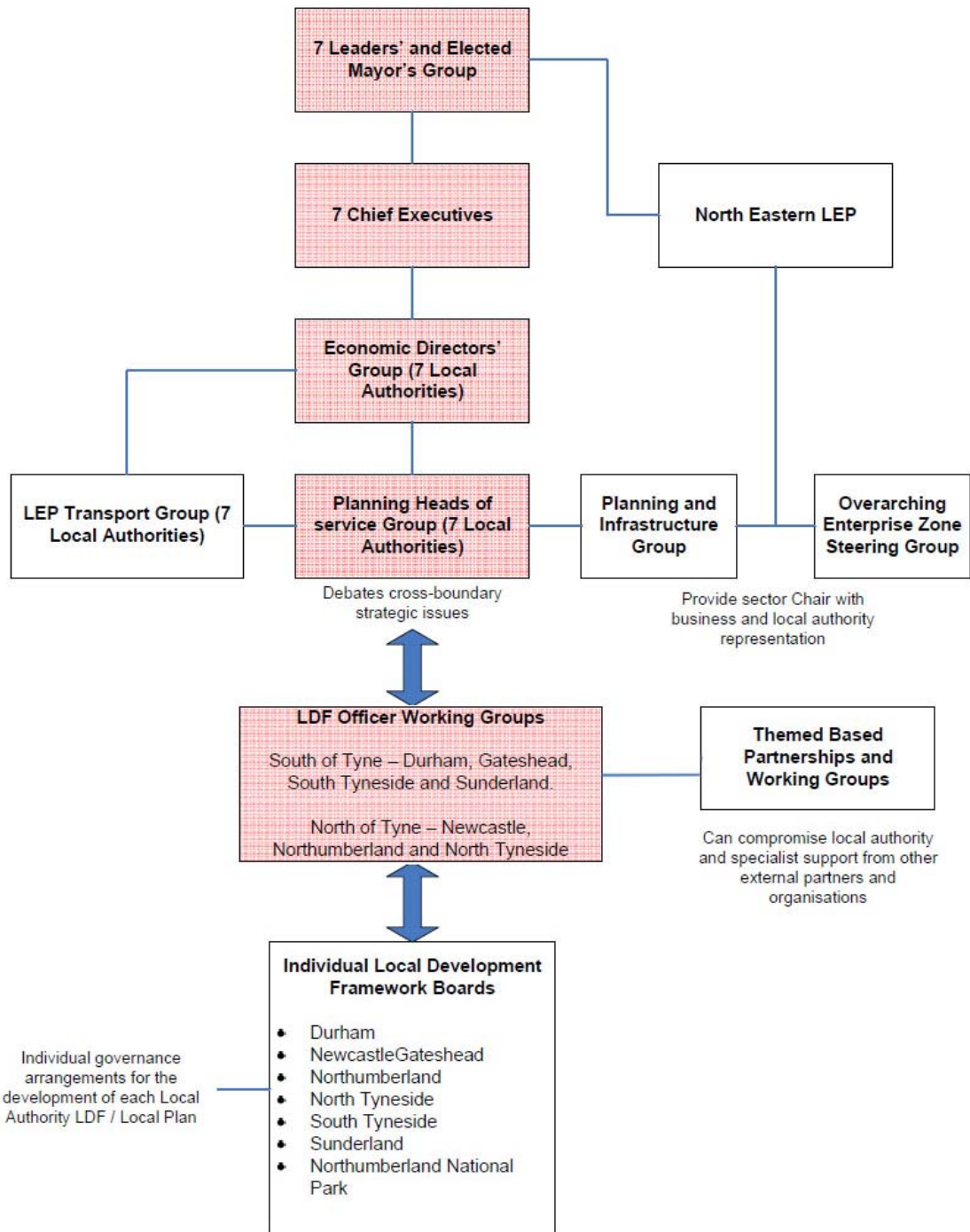
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive: \_\_\_\_\_

## Duty to Co-operate Governance Structure 'Flowchart'



**CABINET MEETING – 12 MARCH 2014**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET- PART I**

**Title of Report:**

Review of the Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy

**Author(s):**

Head of Financial Resources

**Purpose of Report:**

To update the current policy of Discretionary Relief for Non-Domestic Rates awarded to Retail businesses to reflect the Government proposals announced in the Autumn statement on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and subsequent guidance recently received.

**Description of Decision:**

Cabinet is recommended to approve amendment of the current policy on Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, to include

- relief of up to £1,000 per annum to occupied retail businesses with a rateable value of £50,000 or less for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16,
- 50% relief for 18 months between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more.

as detailed in the Governments Autumn statement

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?**

Yes

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

To support occupied retail premises with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in 2014/15 and 2015/16 and to grant 50% relief for 18 months between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more, both in line with Government policy.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

Continue to offer Discretionary Relief in line with our current policy however this would not be reflective of Government policy

**Impacts analysed:**

Equality  Privacy  N/A Sustainability  N/A Crime and Disorder  N/A

**Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?** No

**Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?** No due to late notification by Government of required changes

Scrutiny Committee





## **12<sup>th</sup> March Cabinet 2014**

### **Review of the Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy**

#### **Head of Financial Services**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. This report advises members of the effect of the Autumn statement and subsequent guidance recently received on the Council's Non Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy.

#### **2. Description of Decision**

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve amendment of the current policy on Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief, effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, to include

- relief of up to £1,000 per annum to occupied retail businesses with a rateable value of £50,000 or less for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16,
- 50% relief for 18 months between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more.

as detailed in the Governments Autumn statement

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 As part of the Governments Autumn statement announced in December 2013 the Government stated that it would provide business rate relief on

- all occupied retail businesses with a rateable value of £50,000 or less of up to £1,000 per annum for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16 and
- 50% relief for 18 months between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more.

- 3.2 The Government recently issued guidance in respect of retail relief. In order to award this relief the Government have asked councils to add the relief into their current Discretionary Relief Schemes. The Government will fund any relief granted by this inclusion. The relief will be considered as state aid and therefore will be regulated under the European Commission Rules.

- 3.3 The guidance issued by the Government in respect of retail relief is summarised in Appendix 1. To date there has been no guidance issued in respect of relief to be granted in respect of empty retail properties.

#### **4. Impact on Sunderland Businesses**

- 4.1 There are currently over 2,000 occupied retail businesses in Sunderland that have a rateable value of £50,000 or less, however the Government have issued guidance on which properties should qualify and those that should not. Businesses that will not qualify include betting shops and financial institutions including pay day lenders. Appendix 1 details the type of business that will qualify and those which will not qualify.
- 4.2 New businesses will benefit from the retail relief even if the property becomes occupied after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.
- 4.3 The relief awarded in respect of empty retail property will hopefully encourage businesses to occupy long term empty retail premises.
- 4.4 The additional reliefs will be detailed on the council's web page.

#### **5. Administrative issues**

- 5.1 It is intended to automatically award the retail relief where the business clearly falls within the scheme and Government guidelines. However businesses that are not automatically granted relief will be able to apply and will be assessed within the principles of the scheme. The type of businesses detailed in Appendix 1 is not exhaustive and this has been recognised by the DCLG in its guidance notes.
- 5.2 As a result of the late notification by Government of the policy change required, bills showing the relief will not be issued until late March or early April 2014, in order to allow the changes to be actioned.
- 5.3 There should be no issues in respect of empty retail property relief granted.

#### **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Business Rate Income is now estimated to reduce by more than £1.5m as a consequence of these reliefs. As the Government is to reimburse Councils for the loss of income by way of provision of a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, there is no net loss of income to the Council.

#### **7. Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 The Equality Impact has been considered. There is no equality impact anticipated with this policy change.

## **8. Suggested reason(s) for Decision**

- 8.1 To support occupied retail premises with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in 2014/15 and 2015/16 and to grant 50% relief for 18 months between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more, both in line with Government policy.

## **9. Alternative options**

- 9.1 Continue to offer Discretionary Relief in line with our current policy however this would not be reflective of Government policy.

## **Background Papers**

DCLG Business Rates Retail Relief - Guidance

## Business Rates Retail Relief

### Properties that will benefit from the relief

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less that are wholly or mainly used as shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments.

Shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments to mean

- I. Properties that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public;  
Shops (such as: florist, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, mini supermarkets etc.)  
Charity Shops  
Opticians  
Post offices  
Furnishing shops  
Car and caravan show rooms  
Second hand car lots  
Markets  
Petrol stations  
Garden Centres  
Art galleries – where art is for sale
- II. Properties that are being used for the provision of services to visiting members of the public;  
Hair and beauty services  
Shoe repairs/key cutting  
Travel agents  
Ticket offices  
Launderettes  
Dry cleaners  
PC/TV/domestic appliance repairs  
Funeral directors  
Photo Processing  
DVD rentals  
Tool hire  
Car hire
- III. Properties that are being used for the sale of food or drink to visiting members of the public;  
Restaurants  
Takeaways  
Sandwich shops  
Coffee shops  
Pubs  
Bars

## **Properties that will not benefit from relief**

Financial Services (banks, building societies, cash points, bureau de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers)

Other Services (estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)

Medical services (vets, dentists, osteopaths, chiropractors)

Professional services (solicitors, accountants, insurance agents, financial advisors, tutors)

Post Office sorting office

Properties that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public.



## CABINET MEETING – 12 MARCH 2014

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

**Title of Report:**

Collective Energy Switching Scheme

**Author(s):**

Executive Director of People Services

**Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet approval to enter into a contract with iChoosr to deliver a collective energy switching scheme for the City

**Description of Decision:**

1. To agree to establish a collective energy switching scheme for both domestic and SME businesses in the City.
2. To agree the use of the NEPO procurement framework for Collective Energy Switching Schemes with I-Choosr as the switching agent.
3. To agree on the timescale of the first switching process.
4. To agree for any income received over and above costs be used to support future fuel poverty initiatives.

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?**

**Yes/No**

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

As fuel costs continue to increase putting more of the city's residents in fuel poverty, it is vital that we do whatever we can to try to provide options for reducing fuel poverty. Establishing a Collective Energy Switching Scheme will be another strand in our approach to reducing fuel poverty and making warmth affordable for the city's residents.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

1. Do Nothing – Taking this approach would be nil costs and nil effort for the Council. A reliance on national campaigns to raise awareness to residents. This would mean that energy costs would remain high for tenants, residents, businesses and Voluntary and Community sector organisations in the City.
2. Work collaboratively with other regional local authorities – This approach will build on the existing partnership arrangement with Warm Up North scheme. Although none of the North East local authorities have a scheme currently, Gateshead, Durham and Newcastle have expressed an interest with NEPO. This approach will provide an opportunity for a wider regional participation but will require additional officer time to develop an approach that meets all authorities involved.
3. Join an existing local authority scheme – There are a number of schemes in existence such as Peterborough and Greater Manchester and these make a direct charge for joining a collective with subsequent charges for each auction.

**Impacts analysed:**

Equality  Privacy  Sustainability  Crime and Disorder

**Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?** Yes

**Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?**

Yes

**Scrutiny Committee**



**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PEOPLE SERVICES**

**COLLECTIVE ENERGY SWITCHING SCHEME**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet approval to enter into a contract with iChoosr to deliver a collective energy switching scheme for the City.

**2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)**

- 2.1 To agree to establish a collective energy switching scheme for domestic and SME businesses in the City.
- 2.2 To agree the use of the NEPO procurement framework for Collective Energy Switching Schemes with I-Choosr as the switching agent.
- 2.3 To agree on the timescale of the first switching process.
- 2.4 To agree for any income received over and above costs be used to support future fuel poverty initiatives.

**3 Introduction/Background**

- 3.1 Households are finding it increasingly difficult to pay for fuel. Retail energy prices have more than doubled in the last 7 years. In 2004 the average household fuel bill was £600, this rose to £1300 in 2013.
- 3.2 The government has recently set out the new definition of fuel poverty which it intends to adopt under the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) framework.

Under the new definition, a household is said to be in fuel poverty if:

- they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)
- were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line

The key drivers behind fuel poverty are:

- The energy efficiency of the property (and therefore, the energy required to heat and power the home)
- The cost of energy
- Household income

3.3 In 2007, there were 13,145 (12.3%) of households in the City defined as being in Fuel Poverty. In 2010 this increased to 25,281 (21.3%). The tables below set out the national and regional fuel poverty statistics.

<b>National</b>	<b>All Households</b>	<b>Fuel Poor Households</b>	<b>Percent Fuel Poor</b>
London	3,049,047	330,783	10.8%
South East	3,473,397	401,054	11.5%
South West	2,247,536	342,497	15.2%
West Midlands	2,245,848	484,870	21.6%
East of England	2,387,114	380,969	16.0%
East Midlands	1,879,629	341,390	18.2%
Yorkshire and the Humber	2,230,755	415,324	18.6%
North West	2,966,585	601,052	20.3%
North East	1,120,015	237,993	21.2%
<b>Regional</b>			
Gateshead	88,326	19,980	22.6%
Newcastle upon Tyne	113,957	24,153	21.2%
North Tyneside	89,508	16,996	19.0%
South Tyneside	68,105	14,526	21.3%
Sunderland	118,680	25,281	21.3%

3.4 Households can make a difference to their energy bills by switching suppliers, however a study by Ofgem in 2008 found that “confident consumers” who were proficient at sourcing better deals, were in the minority and that most customers lacked confidence and knowledge to switch.

3.5 In July 2012 the Government wrote to Local Authorities to encourage the development of community switching schemes.

3.6 Local Authorities are well positioned to reach a wide audience, for greater sign up and where necessary are able to work in partnership and collaboration with other authorities., The Council is able to facilitate such a project and strong links with the community means that it is uniquely positioned to enable this interaction. A strong benefit of the collective purchasing model is that it is available to and supports everyone.

- 3.7 In July 2013 the LGA approached NEPO to put in place a national contract to appoint a switching agent. The contract was awarded to IChoosr, a specialist with over 5 years of experience in collective switching. There is no monies payable by the Council to IChoosr but the contract sets out to pay the Council a commission for every online successful switch. This equates to £5.50 per fuel (normally £11.00 in total if the property has gas and electricity supplies). The contract runs from Dec 2013 for 24 months with the option to extend for a further 24 months.
- 3.8 A financial profile based on the projected take up of the scheme is shown in Appendix 1. In other authorities any surplus after costs has been used to support schemes such as energy efficiency and debt management. It is proposed that the council use any surplus for similar such schemes to support reduction in fuel poverty.
- 3.9 IChoosr have developed the consumer registration process to collate the energy demand details, publicity material and auction method to provide a lot of support to Local Authorities taking this route. They also have support from official regulating bodies such as Ofgem and DECC.
- 3.10 A typical switching process takes 3 months:-
- 1-2 month registration period – interested households provide contact details and current energy use details online or offline.
  - 1 day auction – to seek the lowest price from energy suppliers.
  - 3 weeks for registrants to consider the winning offer – e mails / letters go out to all registrants with auction results and a personalised offer with the option to sign up and switch or opt out.
- 3.11 If the registrant decides to make the switch, the outcome is a minimum of one year fixed price tariff. The registrants' new contract is with the energy supplier they have switched to rather than with IChoosr. The offer doesn't change if only a small number of people decide to switch. At the end of the year it is up to the householder to decide whether they want to stay with the new tariff or switch again. They will be informed by the supplier that their existing deal is coming to an end.
- 3.12 IChoosr receive no payment from the Council for their service but receive a commission per successful switch paid by the winning energy supplier.
- 3.13 The registration and auction process is repeated at 4-6 monthly intervals depending on timetabled auction dates. Whilst promotion is local, the auction process to energy suppliers is national, with several different area/organisation collective energy switching registrants bundled together to ensure the largest number of people participating, and therefore the greatest buying power and potential for greater savings for the consumer.

The scheme is primarily focussed on domestic energy switching and there is an option for consumers on pre-payment meters to switch (provided that they are not more than £500 in arrears with their current suppliers). These customers generally pay higher energy costs. It is important that we try to benefit those on pre-payment meters as they are the most likely ones to be fuel poor and also have wider financial issues. In identifying those who are on pre-payment it is important that we make every effort to support and advise them on how they might manage their finances better so that they can take advantage on the better fuel tariff deals that are available.

- 3.14 There is an option within the NEPO Framework to support these SMEs through the switching process. Research by Ofgem indicates some 40% of small and medium enterprises (SME) have not switched their energy supplier in the past 5 years. 25% of businesses say they haven't switched their supplier because they believe the process is too complex. There are currently a number of energy brokers in the local area who specialise in supporting SME's to change energy suppliers. This scheme will complement their work and provide local businesses with a wider range of switching options.
- 3.15 The Council's role is to promote and communicate the scheme to local residents, encouraging registration, using its trusted brand, networks and local approach. The scheme should be marketed to everyone not just the fuel poor to ensure greater buying power.
- 3.16 Feedback from other authorities has emphasised the need to be all inclusive in terms of the marketing of the scheme and the use of housing providers and other voluntary sector organisations is highly recommended. With this in mind, initial discussions have been held with Gentoo, who are considering a similar initiative and there has also been contact made with Sustainable Sunderland who are also considering a community switching scheme as part of their work programme. For there to be maximum impact of collective switching there needs to be one approach for the city and therefore working in tandem with other organisations is crucial.
- 3.17 The scheme is web-based; however, for those residents who are offline, a paper registration process can be made available. Support for this is through our existing Customer Service Network and training for frontline staff is provided by iChoosr.
- 3.18 Sunderland City Council continues to work closely with Warm Up North to make homes in the City more energy efficient. This collaborative approach by Local Authorities and British Gas will result in around 5,000 homes in the city benefitting from energy efficiency works over the next 4 years. Collective energy switching needs to be seen as one part of our approach to reduce fuel poverty and improve family resilience on the city. It also needs to be set against the context of our broader Affordance Warmth Strategy which is in need of a refresh.

## **4 Current Position**

- 4.1 Currently some 160 Local Authorities are taking part in the scheme either individually such as York or collaboratively as in the case of Peterborough and Greater Manchester authorities.
- 4.2 A total of 325,000 households nationally have registered with the scheme since it started.
- 4.3 A marketing campaign “Making Your Money Go Further” is being launched in the City and Collective Energy Switching should be seen as part of the overall approach.
- 4.4 A project group has been established to gain knowledge of the scheme, identify resource and liaise with IChoosr.
- 4.5 The timeline for the next switching event is:

Launch/registration	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014
End of registration	Midnight 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Auction	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
End of Acceptance period	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2014

There will also be a round in August 2014 for an October auction.

## **5 Reasons for the Decision**

- 5.1 As fuel costs continue to increase putting more of the city’s residents in fuel poverty, it is vital that we do whatever we can to try to provide options for reducing fuel poverty. Establishing a Collective Energy Switching Scheme will be another strand in our approach to reducing fuel poverty and making warmth affordable for the city’s residents.

## **6 Alternative Options**

- 6.1 Do Nothing – Taking this approach would be nil costs and nil effort for the Council. A reliance on national campaigns to raise awareness to residents. This would mean that energy costs would remain high for tenants, residents, businesses and Voluntary and Community sector organisations in the City.
- 6.2 Work collaboratively with other regional local authorities – This approach will build on the existing partnership arrangement with Warm Up North scheme. Although none of the North East local authorities have a scheme currently, Gateshead, Durham and Newcastle have expressed an interest with NEPO. This approach will provide an opportunity for a wider regional participation but will require additional officer time to develop an approach that meets all authorities involved.

- 6.3 Join an existing local authority scheme – There are a number of schemes in existence such as Peterborough and Greater Manchester and these make a direct charge for joining a collective with subsequent charges for each auction.

## **7 Impact Analysis**

### **7(a) Equalities**

The scheme has potential to positively impact those affected by Fuel Poverty in the City including:-

- Older people
- People with children under 16
- Those on benefits
- People with disabilities
- People suffering with long-term illness.

These groups will be supported to access the scheme by the customer services staff should they need to.

An Equalities Assessment has been completed for the scheme.

### **7(b) Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)**

A PIA is being developed for this scheme.

### **7(c) Sustainability**

A sustainability impact assessment is not required for this scheme.

### **7(d) Reduction of Crime and Disorder – Community Cohesion/Social Inclusion**

## **8. Other Relevant Considerations/Consultations**

- 8.1 No formal consultation was carried out in the preparation of this report however discussions have taken place with the Council's customer services, communications, finance, energy conservation and strategic housing.

- 8.2 Further consultation will take place with voluntary and community sectors through local area arrangements to both promote the scheme and also to seek their support with the more vulnerable in our society.

### **(a) Financial Implications/Sunderland Way of Working –**

The Council do not pay IChoosr for their role as switching agents their costs are covered by a fee successful switch from the winning energy supplier.

There are however indirect costs associated with the scheme. Particularly for communication with offline residents:-

#### Communication Costs

- Nil – minimal costs for planning and delivery of marketing campaign using existing communication routes.
- Nil – minimal costs for promotion through partner agencies e.g. Gentoo.
- £20,000 for materials required for the running of the marketing campaign.
- £15,000 for communication / agency staff resource for first year.
- £5,000 for inclusion of information on Council website.
- £5 - £10,000 for general Direct Marketing costs.

These costs will be covered by the budget for the Welfare Reform programme.

#### Other costs

- Nil – minimal costs for advice and support in registering to the scheme on line through existing customer service networks.
- Manager and Officer time in the establishment and on-going management of the scheme.
- £2 plus VAT per registrant to IChoosr as a contribution to postal costs for offline registrants.

A financial profile has been established based on switching figures provided by IChoosr and this can be found in Appendix 1.

#### **(b) Risk Analysis**

- Collective switching may not necessarily offer the cheapest market offer to all consumers and it is possible that certain residents could get a better deal elsewhere.
- There is a reputational risk to the Council from any potential negative publicity associated with the scheme. However, IChoosr can provide details of what can and cannot be promised. We will also need to be clear about the role of the Council and its partners and why the Council and partners are supporting and delivering a Collective Switching Scheme.
- As we are delivering the scheme in a very tight timescale, and this is the first time we are attempting to deliver such a scheme in the City there may be risks that registrations, especially within the first round, may be lower than expected due to short publicity lead in time.

- Pressure on Council front line staff. The scheme is open to all, and staff will need to support those residents without internet access with offline registrations. Liaison with CSN is underway to ensure timescales of registrations is not in conflict with high dem and timescales e.g. council tax billing.
- Data protection. All data submitted as part of this initiative belongs to IChoosr. There is an option for the registrant to agree to share their data. IChoosr provide anonymised reports to the council on registrants which will allow identification on areas of the City but not individuals. The names and addresses are only released to suppliers once the registrant has agreed to the offer.

Further risks will be identified and managed throughout the scheme through the risk register as part of the council's project management framework.

- (c) Employee Implications – no additional staff are required for this scheme. It can be met from existing staffing structures.
- (d) Legal Implications – the council will be calling off a regional established framework that has followed a full EU tendering process. There will be no agreement between the Council and the registrants as the contract would be between them and their new energy supplier.
- (e) Policy Implications –
- (f) Health & Safety Considerations –
- (g) Property Implications – there are no property implications.
- (h) Implications for Other Services

Resource will be required from Customer Service to support those less able complete the online registration.

Resource will be required from administration should any offline registrations take place.

Resource will be required from Communications and media to support the marketing and promotion of the scheme.

- (i) The Public –
- (j) Compatibility with European Convention on Human Rights

Human Rights implications have been taken fully into account in the preparation of this report. It is considered that the recommendations of the report are compatible with the convention rights.



(k) Project Management Methodology

A project manager has been appointed from the Project Office to oversee the establishment of this scheme.

(m) Procurement

A full EU tender process was completed by NEPO in the formation of this framework.

**9. Glossary**

**10. List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Financial profile.

**11. Background Papers**

None



**Collective Energy Switching - Sunderland**

Number of Households		120,000		120,000		120000
No of Households to register	3%	3,600	3%	3,600	3%	3600
No registered who switch (range between 5-13%)	5%	180	13%	468		
On-Line Applications	90%	162	90%	421		
Off-Line Applications	10%	18	10%	47	10%	360
		<u>180</u>		<u>468</u>		
<u>Single Fuel</u>						
On-Line Applications	£5.50	£891	£5.50	£2,317		
Off-Line Applications	£4.00	£72	£4.00	£187		
		<u>£963</u>		<u>£2,504</u>		
<u>Dual Fuel</u>						
On-Line Applications	£11.00	£1,782	£11.00	£4,633		
Off-Line Applications	£8.00	£144	£8.00	£374		
		<u>£1,926</u>		<u>£5,008</u>		
Costs		£50,000		£50,000		
Cost to the council based on dual fuel take up		<u>£48,074</u>		<u>£44,992</u>		

Potential Additional Costs

Marketing - Estimated costs of between £45k to £50k (as advised by Sam Meredith)

CSN - Would look to absorb within existing infrastructure (confirmed with Liz St Louis)

ICT/Communications - Need to install link from SCC to ichossr (assumed no additional cost - staff time)

Expected Annual Saving per household	£120	£21,600	£120	£56,160
--------------------------------------	------	---------	------	---------

**CABINET MEETING – 12 MARCH 2014**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**

People Services – Adult Social Care Grant Assistance Process

**Author(s):**

Executive Director of People Services

**Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to:

- To inform Cabinet of the proposals for the adult social care grant assistance process from 2015/16, seeking approval for the proposals and;
- To seek approval of the award of grant assistance funding to Third Sector organisations for 2014/15 for services that support adult social care priorities

**Description of Decision:**

To seek approval to the proposals for the adult social care grant assistance process for 2015 onwards and the funding proposed for 2014/15.

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?      Yes**

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

The Directorate recognises the importance of supporting voluntary sector organisations to provide preventative community based support to people, with the ambition of preventing the need for statutory care support and services, whilst enabling people to be active citizens locally.

In order to support the continued transformation within adult social care, there is a requirement to continue working with voluntary organizations' as they play a vital role in our health and care system. They offer support to people at the most vulnerable points in their lives and help to build stronger relationships between services and the local community.

Voluntary organizations' bring expertise, which allows them to design and develop innovative solutions to the big challenges we face in health, public health and social care; creating community resilience.

The current grant assistance process has been set up to support the sustainability of voluntary sector organizations' or for the delivery of specific projects/services based on meeting broad adult social care outcomes. Whilst this process has been successfully operated for a number of years; there is a requirement to review how the voluntary sector are supported as the Directorate continues to implement the transformation required within adult social care.

To ensure the timeliness of the review, in line with the changes to the directorate and the implications of the Care Bill, there is a requirement to agree funding for the existing funded voluntary sector organizations' for 2014/15.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

Do not provide grant assistance funding to Third Sector organisations in 2014/15 – this option has been considered and rejected as many of the organisations and projects/services that are currently funded may not be sustainable, at a time when the Council is looking to transform the provision of adult social care through better use of community services.

**Impacts analysed:**

Equality  NA Privacy  NA Sustainability  X Crime and Disorder  NA

**Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?** Yes

**Is it included in the 28 Notice of Decisions?** Yes

**Scrutiny Committee**

**BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES**

**PEOPLE SERVICES – ADULT SOCIAL CARE GRANT ASSISTANCE  
PROCESS**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is:

- To inform Cabinet of the proposals for the adult social care grant assistance process from 2015/16, seeking approval for the proposals and;
- To seek approval of the award of grant assistance funding to Third Sector organisations for 2014/15 for services that support adult social care priorities

**2. DESCRIPTION OF DECISION (RECOMMENDATIONS)**

2.1 To seek approval to the proposals for the adult social care grant assistance process for 2015 onwards and the funding proposed for 2014/15.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Directorate has provided annual grant assistance funding to the Third Sector to support adult social care priorities through an annual open competitive application, evaluation and award process. The process, in the main, has been used to fund the infrastructure costs of a number of larger Third Sector organisations in the City, along with a number of important services which are also funded through the process.

3.2 Whilst there has been a shift in commissioning via contractual arrangements to ensure public monies are accounted for through an open and transparent process, the Council recognises the benefits of commissioning voluntary sector organisations through the use of grants.

3.3 Grants provide the opportunity for voluntary organisations to test out innovative solutions to meet the outcomes required, without the parameters that are set through a contracted arrangement. When outcomes are commissioned via contracts, there are expectations that the monies provided will 'buy' the delivery of the outcome. Within grants, the organisation has the ability to be flexible with the use of the monies, meeting outcomes expected.

- 3.4 Grants are forms of financial assistance, which encourage organisations to undertake social care activities that would not normally be undertaken by the Council or arranged through the care management process.
- 3.5 Over the last 3 years, the overall budget for grant assistance has reduced in line with the efficiencies required and also a shift towards the use of contracts when deemed more appropriate. Over time this has resulted in fewer organisations receiving funding and fewer new smaller organisations being successful.
- 3.6 Whilst the annual process has been widely advertised amongst voluntary sector within Sunderland, the number of organisations applying has not risen significantly over the years and smaller community based organisations often do not have the infrastructure in place to meet the requirements of receiving a grant.
- 3.4 In 2013/14, 21 organisations received funding for either infrastructure costs which contribute to the running of the organisation or a range of different projects that are delivered on a citywide basis, these were:
- Action for Blind People
  - Action on Dementia
  - Age UK Sunderland
  - Alzheimer's Society
  - Bangladeshi Community Centre
  - Blue Sky Trust
  - Headway Wearside
  - Huntingdon's Disease Society
  - No Limits Theatre
  - Shopmobility
  - Soundwaves
  - Sunderland and North Durham Royal Society for the Blind
  - Sunderland Carers Centre
  - Sunderland Community Furniture Service
  - Sunderland Counselling Service
  - Sunderland Headlight
  - Sunderland Mind
  - Washington Mind
  - The Art Studio
  - WRVS Stroke Club
  - Vitalise (who received 3 year funding in 2012/13 up until the end of 2014/15 for the total value of £810)
- 3.5 In 2013/14, the total amount allocated to organisations through the grants process totalled £746,535 (excluding Vitalise).
- 3.6 8 organisations received joint funding through the process from the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group, which is an

arrangement which has been developed to support the meeting of joint outcomes across health and social care

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION AND WAY FORWARD**

- 4.1 The Directorate recognises the importance of supporting voluntary sector organisations to provide preventative community based support to people, with the ambition of preventing the need for statutory care support and services, whilst enabling people to be active citizens locally.
- 4.2 In order to support the continued transformation within adult social care, there is a requirement to continue working with voluntary organizations' as they play a vital role in our health and care system. They offer support to people at the most vulnerable points in their lives and help to build stronger relationships between services and the local community.
- 4.3 Voluntary organizations' bring expertise, which allows them to design and develop innovative solutions to the big challenges we face in health, public health and social care; creating community resilience.
- 4.4 The annual grant assistance process in its current format needs to be reviewed, in order that it is fit for purpose in relation to supporting the voluntary organizations' and preventative community based support to ensure the ambition of the transformed adult social care journey becomes a reality.
- 4.5 Over the next 6 months, the review will look at how funding can be streamlined to ensure that it represents value for money and to avoid any unnecessary duplication of services. The Directorate will also identify the key support requirements for community based preventative services, in order that clarity is achieved on what is actually needed within Sunderland to meet the needs of communities to prevent requirements for ongoing social care services.
- 4.6 In order to implement the changes of the review of grant assistance in 2015/16, there is a requirement to fund existing organisations for 2014/15, as this will see the end of the annual grant assistance process in its current format. Without funding, a number of projects and organisations would not be sustainable, which would destabilise the voluntary sector market at a time when we are looking to utilise the organisations in a more targeted and coordinated manner. It is also worth noting that grant funding is often successfully used as a lever to bring in additional funds to the sector
- 4.7 Therefore, it is recommended that the organisations outlined in Appendix 1 are funded within 2014/15. It is proposed that the organisations are funded on a quarterly basis, with a grant monitoring meeting held at the end of each quarter, which would allow for changes



to be made throughout the review. This is particularly applicable to the Direct Payment Support Service, which will only be grant funded for 3 months as a competitive procurement exercise commenced in February 2014. Each grant award also involves clear targets and contributions expected towards achieving the desired outcomes for adult social care.

## **5. REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

- 5.1 The current grant assistance process has been set up to support the sustainability of voluntary sector organizations' or for the delivery of specific projects/services based on meeting broad adult social care outcomes. Whilst this process has been successfully operated for a number of years; there is a requirement to review how the voluntary sector are supported as the Directorate continues to implement the transformation required within adult social care.
- 5.2 To ensure the timeliness of the review, in line with the changes to the directorate and the implications of the Care Bill, there is a requirement to agree funding for the existing funded voluntary sector organizations' for 2014/15.

## **6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1 Do not provide grant assistance funding to Third Sector organisations in 2014/15 and do not change the grant assistance process – this option has been considered and rejected as many of the organisations and projects/services that are currently funded may not be sustainable, at a time when the Council is looking to transform the provision of adult social care through better use of community services.

## **7. IMPACT ANALYSIS**

### **Financial Implications/Sunderland Way of Working**

The Principle Accountant for People's Service Directorate has been consulted on the decision to award grant assistance in 2014/15 and has confirmed that the funding is available within the Directorate's baseline budget.

### **Sustainability**

A Sustainability Impact Analysis has been undertaken and no issues were identified.

## **8. OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS / CONSULTATIONS**

None

**9. LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Proposed Funding to Voluntary Sector Organisations

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## Appendix 1

Organisation	Project	Proposed Annual Allocation
Action for Blind	Eye Clinic Liaison Service	£ 5,844.00
Action on Dementia	Memory Café	£ 15,552.00
Age UK	Preventative Services - Lunch Clubs, Telephone Companionship Service, Core Costs, Friendly Faces	£ 131,485.00
Age UK	50+ Forums	£ 9,175.00
Age UK	Hospital Discharge	£ 50,895.00
Alzheimer's Society	Befriending Service	£ 25,394.00
Alzheimer's Society	Dementia Support	£ 25,394.00
Bangladeshi Centre	For all your needs	£ 15,660.00
Blue Sky Trust	Peer Support Service	£ 3,535.20
Headway Wearside	Core Costs	£ 21,142.00
Huntington's Disease Association	Regional Care Advisory Service	£ 3,535.20
No Limits	Core Costs	£ 45,000.00
Shopmobility	Core Costs	£ 19,396.00
Soundwaves	Core Costs	£ 4,698.00
Sunderland and North Royal Society for the Blind	Core Costs	£ 5,233.00
Sunderland Carers Centre	Core Costs	£ 103,000.00
Sunderland Community Furniture Service	Day Care Service	£ 6,300.00
Sunderland Counselling Service	Core Costs	£ 32,625.00
Sunderland Headlight	Core Costs	£ 15,660.00
Sunderland Mind	Core Costs	£ 27,400.00
The Art Studio	Core Costs	£ 29,685.00
Washington Mind	Core Costs	£ 33,670.00
WRVS	Stroke Club	£ 4,500.00
Age UK	Go Direct, Direct Payments Support Service	£ 30,312.51 3 months only
		<b>£ 665,090.91</b>

Organisation	Project	Annual Allocation
Action for Blind	Eye Clinic Liaison Service	£ 5,844.00
Action on Dementia	Memory Café	£ 15,552.00
Age UK	Lunch Clubs, Telephone Companionship Service, Core Costs, Friendly Faces	£ 131,485.00
Age UK	50+ Forums	£ 9,175.00
Age UK	Go Direct Direct Payments Support Service	£ 30,312.51
Age UK	Hospital Discharge	£ 50,895.00
Alzheimer's Society	Befriending Service	£ 25,394.00
Alzheimer's Society	Dementia Support	£ 25,394.00
Bangladeshi Centre	For all your needs	£ 15,660.00
Blue Sky Trust	Peer Support Service	£ 3,535.20
Headway Wearside	Core Costs	£ 21,142.00
Huntington's Disease Association	Regional Care Advisory Service	£ 3,535.20
No Limits	Core Costs	£ 45,000.00
Shopmobility	Core Costs	£ 19,396.00
Soundwaves	Core Costs	£ 4,698.00
Sunderland and North Royal Society for the Blind	Core Costs	£ 5,233.00
Sunderland Carers Centre	Core Costs	£ 103,000.00
Sunderland Community Furniture Service	Day Care Service	£ 6,300.00
Sunderland Counselling Service	Core Costs	£ 32,625.00
Sunderland Headlight	Core Costs	£ 15,660.00
Sunderland Mind	Core Costs	£ 27,400.00
The Art Studio	Core Costs	£ 29,685.00
Washington Mind	Core Costs	£ 33,670.00
WRVS	Stroke Club	£ 4,500.00
		<b>£ 665,090.91</b>

Vitalise

£810 (3yr funding which was awarded in 2012/13)

## CABINET MEETING – 12 March 2014

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

<p><b>CABINET MEETING – 12 March 2014</b></p> <p><b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I</b></p>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	Low Carbon Social Housing Pilot – Biomass District Heating System and Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) Supply Chain Training
<b>Author(s):</b>	Joint Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of People Services
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To seek Cabinet approval to progress the delivery of the project, approve the funding package and agree project management, partnership and procurement arrangements.
<b>Description of Decision:</b>	<p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree that the Council is applicant and accountable body for the project and acts as project manager;</li> <li>2. Agree that the Council enters into partnership and contract delivery arrangements with the project partner (Gentoo) and sub-contractors where appropriate;</li> <li>3. Agree that the Council procures a supplier or consortium of specialist training services for the targeted Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs);</li> <li>4. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of People Services in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary to take all necessary steps to procure and deliver the planned activities subject, where appropriate, to relevant grant funding conditions; and</li> <li>5. Acknowledge the terms of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Final Grant Offer and the requirement to enter into a funding agreement on this basis.</li> </ol>
<b>Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?</b>	<b>*Yes</b>
<b>If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework</b>	
<b>Suggested reason(s) for Decision:</b>	Cabinet approval is being sought as the project involves managing external grant support of more than £250,000. Approval is also required to progress delivery of the project, approve the funding package and agree the revised project management, partnership and procurement arrangements.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

Four alternative options have been considered as follows:

- Do nothing - This option has been rejected as it does not contribute to local carbon reduction targets, business development opportunities or the deployment of renewable energy innovations to achieve savings in energy bills for local householders.
- Reduce the scale of the project - This option has been rejected because of its more limited contribution to reducing carbon emission levels and its inability to adequately develop the capacity and skills of local SMEs.
- Increase the scale of the project - This option is rejected due to the unavailability of additional ERDF and match funding.
- An alternative delivery model - This option is rejected as this delivery method would not be able to deliver the combination of outputs, innovation, research, training and deployment activities that the project proposes.

**Impacts analysed;**

**Equality**  **Privacy**  N/A **Sustainability**  N/A **Crime and Disorder**

**Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?** Yes

**Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?** Yes

**Scrutiny Committee**

## **LOW CARBON SOCIAL HOUSING PILOT – BIOMASS DISTRICT HEATING SYSTEM AND SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISE (SME) SUPPLY CHAIN TRAINING**

### **JOINT REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PEOPLE DIRECTORATE**

#### **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to progress the delivery of the project, approve the funding package and agree project management, partnership and procurement arrangements.

#### **2.0 Description of Decision (Recommendations)**

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree that the Council is applicant and accountable body for the project and acts as project manager;
2. Agree that the Council enters into partnership and contract delivery arrangements with the project partner (Gentoo Group Limited) and sub-contractors where appropriate;
3. Agree that the Council procures a supplier or consortium of specialist training services for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs);
4. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of People Services in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary to take all necessary steps to procure and deliver the planned activities subject, where appropriate, to relevant grant funding conditions; and
5. Acknowledge the terms of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Final Grant Offer and the requirement to enter into a funding agreement with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on this basis.

#### **3.0 Introduction**

- 3.1 The project has been developed in response to a ERDF call for projects that supports the application and testing of innovative energy efficiency and renewable energy measures in existing social housing'. This is the only call within the 2007-2013 ERDF programme that directs resources at social housing properties, while also ensuring that the wider economic benefits are focused on developing the skills and knowledge of local SMEs in the energy industry supply chain.
- 3.2 The project has involved considerable development work, including consultation with residents, to ensure that it meets the programme's criteria and secures the required amount of match funding. The original scheme, which was reported to Cabinet in November 2012, could not be progressed due to a number of factors, including lack of appropriate properties, regulatory changes and commercial reasons. As a result, Home Group decided to withdraw from the project in July 2013 and alternative delivery options were explored with immediate effect.

- 3.3 This revised proposal, working in partnership with Gentoo, will deliver a low-carbon social housing exemplar in Sunderland. It will be the first residential biomass scheme in Sunderland, targeting 97 properties that are currently off-gas and hard-to-treat. The properties are located in Roche and Wenlock Court in the Glebe area of Washington. The site consists of 97 bungalows which are flat roofed 1 and 2 bed properties currently off the main gas network heated by electric night storage heaters with the provision of hot water via an electric immersion tank(see Appendix 1 – Map of Property Locations). The project demonstrates a closer fit with the innovation objective of the original call.
- 3.4 The project proposes to design and install a communal energy centre and district heating network, favourable to biomass for the provision of heat and hot water to the properties. In addition, Gentoo propose to improve the thermal performance of the properties by installing cavity wall insulation and double glazed windows. Consultation with Gentoo customers living within the properties is paramount throughout the design and installation of the works being undertaken, to ensure buy in and successful behavioural changes given the older demographic of the community.
- 3.5 The project will also develop the capacity and expertise of SMEs in the renewable energy and technology sector and its supply-chain, through a package of training and support. This will enable local businesses to respond to the increased demand in the take-up of innovative domestic energy measures and create new jobs.
- 3.6 Sunderland's project is only one of two in the region that has been given ERDF approval. The value of the project is therefore significant not only in its contribution to the low carbon economy, but in terms of raising the profile of the Council and its partners in developing and delivering low carbon projects.
- 3.7 Following the changes to the overall scheme location and partnership arrangements, and the focus on biomass rather than more traditional low carbon measures, the project is now structured around 3 work packages:
- **Work Package 1: Project management, survey and feasibility work, monitoring, evaluation and dissemination**  
This will involve a range of activities including community engagement, energy surveys, feasibility and evaluation work. In addition, it will involve ongoing engagement with residents to record their energy use, experiences and behaviours. Resident engagement will be led by Gentoo, with support where required from the Council's People Directorate. The Council's People Directorate will be responsible for implementing robust project management arrangements in order to deliver the outputs and milestones within the agreed timeframe. Financial support will be provided by Commercial and Corporate Services.



- **Work Package 2: SME engagement, demand stimulation and diversification**  
This work package will target SMEs, primarily in the construction, installation and energy sectors, with the aim of training employees to achieve the Micro-generation Certification Standard (or equivalent) and thereby improving their workforce skills and business competitiveness in the growing micro-renewable energy sector. This work package will be procured by the City Council based on an agreed specification to be drawn up by a project steering group, involving the Business and Investment Team, Strategic Policy and Performance Management, People Directorate, Financial Resources, Corporate Procurement and Gentoo.
- **Work Package 3: Deployment, purchase and installation of technologies**  
This work package will concentrate on designing, procuring, testing and deploying the technologies in the targeted hard to treat properties. The management of the capital works will be coordinated by Gentoo who will be responsible for securing planning permission for the scheme, procuring the equipment, and overseeing installation of the biomass district heating system and associated works. The measures to be installed include:
  - Communal boiler house and district heating infrastructure works
  - Thermal efficiency improvements to windows and doors
  - Pitched roof works

#### **4.0 Current Position**

- 4.1 Following a series of revisions to the project's design and funding package over the last 12 months, the project's Business Case has been re-appraised and approved by DCLG. The Funding agreement has been issued by DCLG and detailed plans for the works were submitted by Gentoo in December 2013. Planning approval is being taken to Planning Committee on 25 February 2014. In addition, two Stopping Up Orders have also been submitted for the location of the boiler house.
- 4.2 The project will commence delivery following Cabinet approval, however, funding can be claimed retrospectively for eligible expenditure, including development and design works, incurred since 1 April 2011. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by 30 June 2015.
- 4.3 The design of the scheme is nearing completion. Gentoo will be responsible for all maintenance requirements for the system once operational. The biomass boiler has the capability to use wood chips or pellets, giving flexibility on how Gentoo sources the fuel for the system. Where feasible the most sustainable fuel source will be secured.
- 4.4. Plans for the procurement of the equipment and associated works are underway, with the first appointments likely to be made in March / April 2014. It should be noted that all works and services must comply with EU Procurement Regulations.
- 4.5 Consultation with each resident was undertaken by Gentoo in November 2013 to discuss the improvement works and possible disturbance issues, and gather energy usage data. This was followed up with a newsletter to each customer. Customer engagement will continue as the scheme progresses, actively involving a number of customers to act as Customer Champions who will help with communication before, during and after the works are complete. Plans for monitoring and evaluating energy usage once the system is operational are also being explored.

4.6 Local Elected Members have been made aware of the scheme and are supportive of it.

## 5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 A full options analysis has been undertaken as part of the detailed Business Case for ERDF funding and is summarised below.

5.2 The first option would be to do nothing. This option has been rejected as it will result in £1.13m ERDF and a total investment of £2.38m being lost to the City. It would also halt the development of a low carbon demonstration project, which would otherwise deliver significant carbon reductions and enable local businesses to benefit from this investment and improve their position in this market.

5.3 A second option would be to reduce the scale of activity by targeting fewer social housing properties. The main disadvantages of this option would be its more limited contribution to carbon reduction targets, fewer more expensive outputs, limited ability to install a biomass heating system of this scale, and a reduced capacity to deliver. In addition, if scale of delivery was reduced, outcomes and outputs would suffer disproportionately (because of the higher average unit cost per output achieved), fewer SMEs would be supported, and fewer properties could be targeted. This option is therefore rejected because of its more limited impact on carbon emission reductions and the difficulty in delivering a viable scheme.

5.4 A third option would be to increase the scale of activity allowing the project to extend its reach to a larger and wider range of properties. This would allow the project to engage with a larger number of SMEs thereby delivering greater economies of scale. It would offer improved value for money as a result, although doubling the number of target properties would require additional match funding to complete the funding package. This option therefore is rejected due to additional match funding not being available.

## 6.0 Relevant Considerations / Consultations

- (a) **Financial Implications:** The estimated total cost of the project is £2,382,002. The funding package comprises:
- ERDF £1,131,116 (approved)
  - Gentoo £1,140,000 (approved)
  - Northern Powergrid (officer time) £37,800
  - Sunderland City Council (officer time) £73,086

ERDF grant will provide 47.5% of the project's eligible costs. There is no additional cost to the Council.

The following table provides a summary of indicative costs:

<b>Work Package 1</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Design and project management	£222,002
Consultation and monitoring	£60,000
Project evaluation	£10,000
<b>Work Package 2</b>	
Specialist SME training	£190,000
<b>Work Package 3</b>	
Biomass District Heating system	£850,000
Heating and hot water replacements to properties	£900,000
Thermal efficiency works to properties (windows, cavity wall insulation)	£150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,382,002</b>

- (b) **Risk Analysis:** A full risk analysis has been completed as part of the ERDF Business Case including considering risks such as slow progress towards the achievement of outputs, duplication, failure to secure funding and lack of cohesion between partners. The risk register will be reviewed on a monthly basis by the project steering group. Within Work Package 1, regular checks will be undertaken to ensure that management of the project complies with ERDF regulations as part of the funding agreement with Gentoo.
- (c) **Employee Implications:** The project will be managed by the Executive Director of the People Directorate, with support from the Head of Housing Support and Community Living. Additional support will be required from Financial Resources, Corporate Procurement, Business Investment and Strategic Policy and Performance Management. It is estimated that the City Council will provide a contribution of £73,086 in officer time from April 2011 to June 2015. The level of project management support is less than one full-time equivalent post and is appropriate to the size of grant. The cost of legal, procurement and finance advice have been included in the project's budget.
- (d) **Legal Implications:** the proposal reflects detailed consideration of the planning, partnership, governance and procurement options to agree the most appropriate approach. All procurement undertaken will comply with EU and Council procedures. The Council's Corporate Procurement and Legal Teams have been consulted on the proposed procurement arrangements and funding agreements. Suitable legal arrangements will be entered into with Gentoo to ensure each partner delivers their outputs and milestones within the agreed timeframe. Planning approval for the scheme is scheduled to be secured on 26 February 2014.

- (e) **Policy Implications:** The project will contribute to the delivery of Aim 2 of the City's Economic Masterplan - 'a national hub of the low-carbon economy' - as well as addressing fuel poverty and contributing to national and local carbon reduction targets. In addition, the project will provide a test-case for developing the energy supply and use model for low carbon communities, as well as preparing the Council and its partners for future external funding opportunities. The results, evaluation activities and lessons learned will be used to present holistic solutions that are readily transferable to other communities in Sunderland and to demonstrate the city's progress to wider audiences. The project will directly contribute to the City's Climate Change Action Plan and Covenant of Mayors 2020 targets.
- (f) **Implications for Other Services:** The project has been developed jointly by two of the council's service areas. Other services will be involved as appropriate.
- (g) **The Public:** The project will work with Gentoo, the main Registered Social Landlord in Sunderland, and the residents directly benefiting from the scheme. Led by Gentoo, the plans for community engagement are already well underway. This work will continue during the project's implementation and beyond to ensure that residents fully benefit from the improved heating system and thermal efficiency measures. A project evaluation will be undertaken to assess feedback on the scheme and ensure that early lessons are captured and disseminated. Energy usage and behaviour will continue to be monitored by Gentoo for an agreed period of time.
- (h) **Reduction of Crime and Disorder – Community Cohesion / Social Inclusion:** As above, the community will be consulted on the impact of the low carbon energy measures as and when appropriate. One of the underlying goals of the project will be to reduce fuel bills and contribute to a reduction in fuel poverty in the city.
- (i) **Project Management Methodology:** The project will be managed and monitored using the council's project management methodology.
- (j) **Equalities:** All residents will be provided with training and support through the community engagement plan to ensure that the measures installed in their houses are appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

## 7.0 List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Map of Property Locations

## 8.0 Background Papers

None



- KEY**
- HOUSE TYPE GL 15 - 1B 2P
  - HOUSE TYPE GL 16 - 2B 2P
  - HOUSE TYPE GL 17 - 2B 2P



FOR BETTER DESIGN AND COST EFFECTIVE PROJECTS WE OFFER A RANGE OF SERVICES INCLUDING ARCHITECTURAL, STRUCTURAL, MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING. WE ARE A REGISTERED COMPANY WITH THE ARCHITECTS' REGISTRATION BOARD AND THE ENGINEERS' COUNCIL OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b> Roche Court			
<b>DRAWN BY</b> T ELYNN		<b>APPROVED BY</b>	
<b>PROJECT LEADER</b> S CHATTO		<b>SCALE</b> 1:50	
<b>DATE</b>		<b>SHEET SIZE</b> A3	
<b>PROJECT JUN</b>		<b>DRAWING NO.</b>	
<b>gentoo</b> <small>gentoo.co.uk</small> ENTERPRISE HOUSE 2 ELLERBURN WAY SUDBURY AND INTERNATIONAL SR9 3XR TEL: 0191 525 0000 FAX: 0191 525 0881			



**CABINET MEETING – 12 MARCH 2014**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**  
School Admissions Arrangements from September 2015

**Author(s):**  
Executive Director of People Services

**Purpose of Report:**  
To seek approval for the proposed school admission arrangements for the academic year September 2015/16 and to describe proposed amendments to published admission numbers (PANs) for the academic year 2014/15 where it is necessary to provide additional places.

**Description of Decision:**  
Cabinet is recommended to approve the following in relation to the 2015/16 academic year:

1. The admissions policy and procedures associated with the coordinated scheme of admissions. This includes a proposed change to the scheme as described in 5.5 – 5.7 of this report;
2. The criteria that will be applied where oversubscription occurs;
3. The published admission numbers (PANS)

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?** \*Yes/

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

Cabinet approval of the city's admission arrangements is required prior to submission to the Department for Education (DFE) and publication for parents making applications for primary and secondary school admissions for the September 2015 academic year..

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

Given the requirements described above there are no alternative recommendations to consider.

**Impacts analysed:**

Equality  Privacy  Sustainability  Crime and Disorder

**Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?** Yes

**Scrutiny Committee:**

**Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?** Yes





**SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2015/16 ACADEMIC YEAR****REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES****1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the proposed school admission arrangements for the academic year September 2015/16 and to describe proposed amendments to published admission numbers (PANs) for the academic year 2014/15 where it is necessary to provide additional places.

**2. Description of the Decision**

Cabinet is recommended to approve the following in relation to the 2015/16 academic year:

1. the admission policy and procedures associated with the co-ordinated scheme of admissions. This includes a proposed change to the scheme as described in 5.5 -5.7 of this report ;
2. details of the oversubscription criteria;
3. published admission numbers (PANs)

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The School Standards and Framework Act (1998), implementing Regulations and the associated statutory Schools Admissions Code) has established a framework for consultation on admission arrangements.
- 3.2 The Act requires the local authority (for Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools) to determine, before the commencement of a school year, the admission arrangements that will apply in that year.
- 3.3 The local authority is responsible for co-ordinating admissions across its area (known as the co-ordinated scheme) and is required to consult all schools (Including VA schools and Academies), Church of England (CE) and Roman Catholic (RC) Dioceses and neighbouring local authorities by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 in order to establish the admission arrangements for September 2015. 'Own admission authorities' i.e. free schools, academies and voluntary aided schools, must also consult on their proposed admission arrangements through the co-ordinated scheme.
- 3.4 While applications for primary and secondary school places continue to be made both through paper and online methods, the 2013/14 admissions was the first to employ a new local authority developed On-Line Application system. The online application system has been made available across the local authority's customer service centres, as well as other public locations. The benefits of online application have been promoted to parents with the outcome being an increase to 80% in online applications for local secondary school places with a similar preference for online applications projected at primary level.

#### **4. Current Position (2014/15)**

- 4.1 The Published Admission Numbers (PANs) consulted upon (when appropriate) and published by the local authority and academies are set based on projected demand for primary and secondary places in the city. In line with regional and national trends, Sunderland is observing an increase in its birth rate after a sustained period of decline. This is consistent with the trend of recent years which has led to the local authority increasing capacity in Washington, West Sunderland and the Coalfields.
- 4.2 Despite a capacity increase in the Washington area in 2013/14 to meet increased demand for primary school places, projections for the 2014/15 academic year continue to identify a shortfall in local reception places. The local authority, working with Washington's primary schools and academies, has identified a further capacity increase to mitigate projected over demand for primary places in the area. In the first instance it is proposed that this is achieved through a temporary increase in the PAN at Lambton Primary School from 30 reception places to 60 reception places for the 2014/15 academic year, with further discussions to take place with the school to secure a further permanent increase in the local area capacity from 2015/16 onwards if required.
- 4.3 Following oversubscription in the Roman Catholic (RC) primary school sector in Washington and the Coalfields in 2013/14, the RC diocese increased the number of catholic primary places in the local area. In the first instance this was achieved through a temporary increase in the PAN of Our Lady Queen of Peace RC VA Primary School's reception class from 30 to 45. This has been subsequently been confirmed as a permanent increase from 2014/15, creating an additional 105 places in the school. The Local Authority and RC Diocese are in the process of finalising a capital proposal to support the school's increased capacity.
- 4.4 While no further capacity increases are proposed at this time the local authority continues to monitor demand for primary places across the city for 2014/15, with focus on demand in the Washington area and the Pallion/ Millfield area. Any further changes to local PANs for maintained schools will be reported to Cabinet as appropriate once the outcome of the primary admissions round for September 2014 is fully known.
- 4.6 At this time no primary PAN increases have been proposed for the 2015/16 academic year. Proposed PANs are attached at Appendix 1 of the report.
- 4.5 In the secondary sector there are only a small number of schools which are oversubscribed for September 2014 with significant falling rolls and surplus places in a number of schools, The local authority is working with schools to understand the financial and organisational impact of surplus places on individual schools and to bring forward proposals to address this issue. However, it is anticipated that 2014/15's Year 7 cohort will be greater than that of 2013/14 with secondary recruitment anticipated to continue to increase in coming years.

#### **5. The Co-ordinated Scheme 2015/16**

- 5.1 As in previous years, the local authority proposes to offer a co-ordinated scheme with VA schools, Academies and neighboring local authorities. Academies in Sunderland operate within the same admissions policy as other community schools. The consultation period for the 2015 Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme ended 1 March, 2014.
- 5.2 Appendix 2 sets out the admission arrangements for 2015. Appendix 3 sets the oversubscription criteria.
- 5.3 On February 2012 a new School Admissions Code came into effect. The changes in this code applied from the start of the 2013/14 academic year. The key changes include:
- giving adopted children who were previously in care the same, highest priority for places as looked-after children;
  - introducing a 'national offer day' for primary places, mirroring that for secondary offers;
  - allowing schools to prioritise the children of staff employed there for two or more years, or those staff who will meet a skills shortage within the school;
  - allowing infant classes to exceed the statutory limit where the 31st child is a twin or from multiple births, or of armed forces personnel;
  - allowing academies to prioritise disadvantaged children who are eligible for the Pupil Premium; and
  - allowing schools to take direct applications from parents to help reduce delays in finding a school place once term starts.
- 5.4 In addition to this the 2012 School Admissions Code identifies the following:
- Own Admissions Authorities such as free schools, academies and voluntary aided schools are not required to consult when they propose to either increase or keep the same PAN (consultation is required if it proposed that a PAN should be decreased). However they must notify the local authority of their intention to increase the school's PAN and this information must be published on the Admission Authority's website or in a suitable alternative location.
  - Own Admissions Authorities may admit above their PAN in year. Any admissions above the PAN will not constitute an increase to the PAN
  - Local authorities must as a minimum consult with a maintained school's Governing Body where an increase in PAN is proposed.
  - There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year applications in the offer year 2013/14 and all subsequent years, but they must provide in the composite prospectus how in-year applications can be made and will be dealt with. However, Sunderland Council will continue for the foreseeable future to co-ordinate in year applications given that this is in the best interests of children and young people securing places in schools.
  - Local authorities must, on request, provide information to a parent about the places still available in schools (and own admission authority schools must, on receipt of an in-year application notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome in order to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area).

- Local authorities must, upon request, provide a suitable application form for parents to complete when applying for a place for their child at any school for which they are not the admission authority.

5.5 One local change to the 2014/15 coordinated scheme has been consulted on for the 2015/16 academic year. The proposed change allows parents applying for a place in an infant school to apply the sibling link criteria if they have another child in the junior school for which their chosen infant school is the named feeder.

5.6 The local authority would only apply this measure to schools for which it is the admissions authority. However, Fulwell Infants Academy has already chosen to implement this measure.

5.7 To date the local authority has received 127 letters from parents of children attending Hill View Infant and Junior supporting this change. Local maintained infant and junior schools have also been supportive of the proposed change.

## **6. Reason for the Decision**

6.1 Cabinet approval of the admissions arrangements across the city is required prior to submission to the DfE and publication for parents making choices on preferred primary and secondary school places for their children for the September 2015/16 school year.

## **7. Alternative Options**

7.1 Given the requirements described above there are no alternative recommendations to consider.

## **8. Sustainability**

8.1 The recommendations outlined above will ensure that there is sufficient educational provision across in areas of the city where excess demand is projected and will contribute to the sustainability of provision in areas where there are surplus places.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1 In line with the School Admissions Code 2012, Local Authorities must determine, consult on and publish its admission arrangements.

## **10. Relevant Consultation**

- 10.1 Consultation has taken place with Headteachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies of Community, Voluntary Controlled, Voluntary Aided and Free Schools and Academies; Church of England and Roman Catholic Dioceses and neighbouring Local Authorities.



## Primary PANs for September 2014

School	Agreed PAN 2014	Proposed PAN 2015
Academy 360	60	60
Albany Village Primary	30	30
Barmston Village Primary	30	30
Barnes Junior	90	90
Barnes Infant	90	90
Barnwell Primary	30	30
Benedict Biscop CE Primary	35	35
Bernard Gilpin Primary	50	50
Bexhill Primary	60	60
Biddick Primary	45	45
Bishop Harland/ Hylton Red House	School Closed	School Closed
Blackfell Primary	30	30
Broadway Junior	60	60
Burnside Primary	30	30
Castletown Primary	50	50
Dame Dorothy Primary	30	30
Diamond Hall Junior	90	90
Diamond Hall Infant	90	90
Dubmire Primary	60	60
Easington Lane Primary	45	45
East Herrington Primary	60	60
East Rainton Primary	20	20
English Martyrs RC Primary	30	30
Eppleton Primary	30	30
Farringdon Primary	60	60
Fatfield Primary	30	30
Fulwell Junior	90	90
Fulwell Infant	90	90
George Washington Primary	70	70
Gillas Lane Primary	30	30
Grange Park Primary	30	30
Grangetown Primary	45	45
Grindon Infant	60	60
Grindon Hall Christian School	40	40
Hasting Hill Primary	50	50
Hetton Primary	20	20
Hetton Lyons Primary	60	60
Highfield Primary	60	60
Hill View Junior	120	120
Hill View Infant	106	106
Holley Park Primary	35	35
Hudson Road Primary	45	45
Hylton Castle Primary	30	30
Northern Saints CE VA School	75	75
John F Kennedy Primary	60	60
Lambton Primary	60	30
Mill Hill Primary	60	60
Newbottle Primary	60	60
New Penshaw Primary	30	30
New Silksworth Junior	70	70
New Silksworth Infant	70	70
Our Lady Queen of Peace RC Primary	45	45
Oxclose Village Primary	30	30
Plains Farm Primary	30	30

Redby Primary	60	60
Richard Avenue Primary	75	75
Rickleton Primary	60	60
Ryhope Junior	60	60
Ryhope Infant	60	60
Seaburn Dene Primary	30	30
Shiney Row Primary	45	45
South Hylton Primary	45	45
Southwick Primary	45	45
Springwell Village Primary	30	30
St Anne's RC Primary	30	30
St Bede's RC Primary	30	30
St Benet's RC Primary	45	45
St Cuthbert's RC Primary	30	30
St John Bosco RC Primary	26	26
St John Boste RC Primary	25	25
St Joseph's RC Pry Sunderland	30	30
St Joseph's RC Pry Washington	30	30
St Leonard's RC Pry	30	30
St Mary's RC Primary	60	60
St Michael's RC Primary	30	30
St Patrick's RC Primary	25	25
St Paul's CE Controlled Primary	30	30
Thorney Close Primary	40	40
Town End Primary	30	30
Usworth Colliery Primary	60	60
Usworth Grange Primary	30	30
Valley Road Primary	60	60
Wessington Primary	30	30
Willow Fields Community Primary	20	20

### Secondary PANs for September 2014

School	Agreed PAN 2013	Proposed PAN 2014
Academy 360	165	165
Biddick	210	210
Castle View Enterprise Academy	180	180
Farringdon	180	180
Hetton	180	180
Houghton Kepier	210	210
Monkwearmouth	180	180
Oxclose	210	210
Red House Academy	120	120
Sandhill View	180	180
Southmoor	210	210
St Aidan's RC	180	180
St Anthony's RC	210	210
St Robert's RC	210	210
Thornhill	210	210
Venerable Bede CE	180	180
Washington	210	210



# **Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for infant, junior & primary schools in the area of Sunderland Local Authority**

## **Introduction**

1. This scheme is made by Sunderland City Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Primary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Infant, Junior & Primary Schools in Sunderland.

The proposed Co-ordinated Admission scheme for Sunderland LA is set out below and complies with the changes introduced in the new School Admissions Code, which reflects new legislation laid out in the Education and Inspections Bill 2006.

A separate scheme exists in relation to secondary schools.

## **Interpretation**

### **2. In this Scheme -**

"the LA" means Sunderland City Council acting in their capacity as local authority;

"the LA area" means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority;

"primary education" has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

"infant, junior & primary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

"secondary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

"school" means a community or voluntary school (but not a special school), which is maintained by the LA;

"voluntary controlled schools" means such of the schools as are voluntary controlled schools, where the LA sets the admissions criteria and offers places;

"VA schools" means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools;

"Academy" means such of the schools as have academy status;

"admission authority" in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA or free school or academy means the governing body of that school;

"the specified year" means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2015;

"admission arrangements" means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school;

"parent/carer" means any person who holds parental responsibility as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides;

"casual admission" means any application for a place in the first year of primary education that is received after 16 May 2015, including those received during the academic year commencing in September 2015, and applications for a place in any other year group received at any time from the commencement of the Scheme; and

"eligible for a place" means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such a point which falls within the school's published admission number.

### **Commencement and extent**

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for the schools for admission year 2015-2016 (the specified year).

The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 to this scheme, or provisions having the same effect.

The governing body of each of the VA schools and Academy will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

### **The Scheme**

1. The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.
2. The Scheme shall apply to every infant, junior & primary school in the LA area as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools) and shall take effect from 16 April 2014.
3. The Scheme will also include applications from parents seeking admission to Sunderland schools who live within other LAs.

## SCHEDULE 1

### PART I - THE SCHEME

1. There will be a standard form known as the Application form (AF).
2. The AF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of primary education and for those transferring from infant to junior or primary schools in the specified year. The AF will also be used for any applications made for a "casual admission" into any year group in the admissions round leading up to, and during, the academic year 2015/2016.
3. The AF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents wishing to express a preference for their child to be admitted to a school within the LA area (including VA & free schools and Academies).

#### **4. The AF will -**

- a. allow the parent to express up to 3 preferences by completing the form, in rank order of preference,
- b. invite parents to give their reasons for each preference,
- c. specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.

#### **5. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure:**

- a. that the AF is available on request from the LA and on-line at **[www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk)** and
- b. that the AF is accompanied by a written explanation of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

#### **6. The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**

- a. every parent resident in the LA area who has a child eligible to commence primary education and those transferring from infant to junior or primary schools receives a written explanation of how to apply; and
- b. every parent whose application falls within the category of a casual admission receives a copy of the AF (and written explanation), on request, and understands the process.

Parents will be advised that they will receive no more than one offer of a school place and that:

- (i) a place will be offered at the highest ranking nominated school for which they are eligible for a place under the admission criteria; and

- (ii) explain that, if more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, or a wish expressed that they be ranked equally, the parent will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest); and
- (iii) if a place cannot be offered at a nominated school, a place will be offered at an alternative school.

7. All preferences expressed on the AF are valid applications. The governing body of a VA & free school or the Trust Board/Governing Body of an Academy can require parents who wish to nominate, or have nominated, their school on the AF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required it must be returned to the LA, along with the AF, so that the relevant forms can be passed to the VA & free schools and Academy.

8. Where a school receives a supplementary form it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed an AF and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by VA & free schools and Academies the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether a AF has been received from the parent and, if not, the LA will contact the parent and ask them to complete a AF. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the VA governing body or Academy Trust Board to apply their oversubscription criteria.

9. Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform with the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2. (NB no School or Academy in Sunderland operates criteria for selection-based ability or aptitude).

### **Processing of AFs**

10. Completed AFs are to be returned to the LA by **Thursday 15 January 2015**. It will be the responsibility of parents to ensure that AFs are returned directly or via nursery, infant or primary schools to the LA, in a paper format or on-line by the closing date.

### **Determining offers in response to the AF**

11. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the AFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the AF where-

- (a) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
- (b) an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school and is allocated a place at the highest ranked school, or
- (c) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 17 of this Schedule.

12. Completed applications are to be returned to the LA by the due date.
13. Completed applications that are received after the closing date will be considered on an individual basis, but the procedure must not prevent the proper processing, under the Scheme, of applications received on time.
14. The LA will process all applications. Any completed applications must be treated as a confidential communication between the parent and the LA. All applications received by the closing date will be considered before any applications received after this closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.
15. **By 9 February 2015** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information received by this date which schools require in order to apply their oversubscription criteria.
16. **By 9 March 2015** the admission authority for each school and academy will consider all applications for their school and apply the school's oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential applicants sorted (if appropriate) according to the school's oversubscription criteria.
17. **By 20 March 2015** the LA will match these lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:
- Where the child is eligible for a place at the parents' first nominated school, that school will be allocated to the child.
  - Where the child is not eligible for a place at the parental first nominated school, they will be allocated a place at the school, which is the next highest ranked nominated school where the child is eligible for a place.
  - The LA will allocate a school place to those pupils who have not submitted an AF, after all other pupils who submitted an AF have been considered. The LA will allocate a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy, as measured by the shortest safest walking route from the parental home residence to the main entrance(s) of the school.

Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy, as measured by the shortest safest walking route from parental home residence to the main entrance(s) of the school.

18. **20 March 2015** -The LA informs its infant, junior & primary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.
19. **On 16 April 2015** parents will be notified that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. This letter will give the following information:
- The name of the school at which a place is offered;
  - The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other higher ranked schools nominated on the AF;
  - Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools;

- Explain that the child will be considered for any places that might become available in schools they ranked higher than the school they are offered, in the re- allocation process after 15 May 2015.
- Contact details for the schools (in the case of nominated VA & Free schools and academies where they were not offered a place), so that they can lodge an appeal.

The letter will not inform parents of places still available at other schools.

**20. 5 May 2015:** the deadline for parents to accept the place offered. If they do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place, however the LA will continue to pursue parents for written confirmation of acceptance for oversubscribed schools.

### **Re-allocation Lists (Waiting lists) 15 May 2015**

**21.** Children will be considered under the re-allocation process for any places if they become available after **16 April 2015** at any school they have ranked higher on their AF than the school they were offered. Where a parent has been allocated a place at their second preference school, they may be placed on the re-allocation list of their first preference but not their third and so on. Where a parent has been offered a place at a school, which they did not nominate on their AF, they may be placed on the list of all the schools they did nominate on their AF.

Where a parent receives a place at their highest ranked school, they will not normally be considered for re-allocation, nor will they be offered a place at any other school simply because it has places available.

Where there are more applicants than places available, then the priorities used within the school's admission criteria will be applied to all applicants according to ranking.

**22. 15 May 2015:** The LA re-allocates any places that may have become vacant since 16 April and in accordance with the school admission criteria which will include following:

- those who have not been offered any school place, for example, late applications from parents who have just moved into the area and have not been offered a school place; and
- those who have subsequently expressed a preference for a new school not originally expressed on the AF which will be ranked lower than any other previous preferences ranked on the AF.

## **PART II - LATE APPLICATIONS**

**23.** The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2015**. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late 'for a good reason' will be accepted provided they are received **before 7 March 2015**, the date the allocation procedures begin. Examples of what will be considered as good reason include: when a lone parent has been ill for some time, or has been dealing with the death of a close relative; a family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a Sunderland property will be required in these cases). Other circumstances will be considered and each case decided on its own merits.

### **LATE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 7 MARCH 2015**

**24.** Applications received after **7 March 2015**, which are not deemed as exceptional will be considered as late and will not be processed until after **16 April 2015**. Parents will, nevertheless, receive an offer of a school place on **16 April 2015** in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

### **NO AF RECEIVED BY 16 APRIL 2015**

**25.** Where no AF is submitted the child will, on **16 April 2015**, be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy as measured by the shortest safest walking route from the parental home residence to the main entrance(s) of the school. The LA will be aware of which parents this applies to as a result of liaison with nursery, infant & primary schools.

### **APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 16 APRIL 2015 BUT BEFORE 15 MAY 2015**

**26.** Applications made direct to any school on the AF must be forwarded to the LA immediately. Where only the supplementary form is received the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether an AF has been received from the parent and, if not, contact the parent and ask them to complete an AF. The LA will enter the details onto its central database and, after consultation with the relevant admission authority, offer a place at the school highest in the parent's order of preference that has a vacancy or if this is not possible, at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy (as defined in paragraph 17).

### **APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 15 MAY 2015**

**27.** Applications received after 15 May 2015, and for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry to infant, junior & primary schools will be treated as casual admissions. These applications should be made on the AF and sent to the LA, which will

- determine any application for a community or controlled school for which it is the admission authority; and
- if the application is for a voluntary aided school or academy refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will make a determination and notify the LA in advance of their notification to the parent. Parents who are refused admission must be offered a right of appeal.

**28.** If any parents approach voluntary aided schools or academies directly about a casual admission, the governing body must ensure that the parent completes an AF (if they have not already done so). The AF should be sent to the maintaining LA as soon as

practically possible, along with the governing body's decision on the application. The governing body will notify the LA of its decision in advance of notifying the parent and, if the parent is refused a place, the right of appeal must be offered.

- 29.** The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for casual admissions, and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay, particularly in respect of looked after children.

### **Waiting lists for normal year of entry**

- 30.** Waiting lists for schools should be kept until **18 December 2014** for Community schools. Academies and Aided schools may hold their waiting lists for up to one academic year but this will be confirmed within their admission criteria.

## **SCHEDULE 2**

### **Timetable of co-ordinated scheme**

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>15 January 2015:</b> | Application forms, together with any supplementary forms (as required) to be returned to the LA.                                |
| <b>9 February 2015:</b> | Details of applications to be sent to VA & Free schools and Academies.  |
| <b>9 March 2015:</b>    | VA & free schools and Academies provide the LA with lists of potential applicants.  |
| <b>20 March 2015:</b>   | The LA will match the ranked lists of all the schools and allocate places in accordance with paragraph 17 of Schedule 1.        |
| <b>20 March 2015:</b>   | By this date the LA will notify schools which parents have been offered places at their schools.                                |
| <b>16 April 2015:</b>   | Notifications sent to parents.  |
| <b>5 May 2015:</b>      | Last date for offers to be accepted by parents.   |
| <b>15 May 2015:</b>     | Any places that have become available are allocated to parents in priority order in accordance with paragraph 22 of Schedule 1. |



**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME – INFANT, JUNIOR & PRIMARY SCHOOLS****Admission Authorities in the Area of Sunderland to which the Scheme applies****The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admissions Authority for the following Academies:**

Academy 360	Portsmouth Road Sunderland SR4 9BA
Benedict Biscop CE Academy	Marcross Drive Sunderland SR3 2RE
Bexhill Academy	Bexhill Road Sunderland SR5 4PJ
East Herrington Primary Academy	Balmoral Terrace Sunderland SR3 3PR
Eppleton Academy Primary	Church Road Hetton-le-Hole DH5 9AJ
Farringdon Primary School	Archer Road Sunderland SR3 3DJ
Fulwell Infant School Academy	Ebdon Lane Sunderland SR6 8ED
Hasting Hill Academy	Tilbury Road Sunderland SR3 4LY
Holley Park Academy	Ayton Road South Washington NE38 0LR
New Penshaw Primary	Langdale Road Houghton-le-Spring DH4 7HY
Plains Farm Primary	Tudor Grove Sunderland SR3 1SU
Redby Primary Academy	Fulwell Road Sunderland SR6 9QP
Town End Academy	Borodin Avenue Sunderland SR5 4NX

**The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admissions Authority for the following Voluntary Aided Schools:**

English Martyrs RC Primary School	Redcar Road Sunderland SR5 5AU
Northern Saints CE VA Primary School	Rotherham Road Sunderland SR5 5QL
Our Lady Queen of Peace RC Primary School	Station Road, Penshaw Houghton-le-Spring DH4 7JZ
St Anne's RC Primary School	Hylton Road Sunderland SR4 9AA
St Bede's RC Primary School	Hampshire Place Washington NE37 2NP
St Benet's RC Primary School	Fulwell Road Sunderland SR6 9QU
St Cuthbert's RC Primary School	Grindon Lane Sunderland SR4 8HP
St John Bosco RC Primary School	Bradford Avenue Sunderland SR5 4JW
St John Boste RC Primary School	Castle Road Washington NE38 0HL
St Joseph's RC Primary School	Rutland Street Sunderland SR4 6HY
St Joseph's RC Primary School Washington	Village Lane Washington NE38 7HU
St Leonard's RC Primary School	Tunstall Village Road Sunderland SR3 2BB
St Mary's RC Primary School	Meadowside Sunderland SR2 7QN
St Michael's RC Primary School	Durham Road Houghton-le-Spring DH5 8NF
St Patrick's RC Primary School	Smith Street Sunderland SR2 0RQ

**Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools where the LA is the Admission Authority:**

Albany Village Primary School	Albany Village Washington NE37 1UA
-------------------------------	---------------------------------------

Barmston Village Primary School	Barmston Centre Washington NE38 8JA
Barnes Infant School	Mount Road Sunderland SR4 7QF
Barnes Junior School	Mount Road Sunderland SR4 7QF
Barnwell Primary School	Whitefield Estate Houghton-le-Spring DH4 7RT
Bernard Gilpin Primary School	Hall Lane Houghton-le-Spring DH5 8DA
Biddick Primary School	Kirkham Washington NE38 7HQ
Blackfell Primary School	Knoulberry Washington NE37 1HA
Broadway Junior School	Springwell Road Sunderland SR4 8NW
Burnside Primary School	Burnside Estate Houghton-le-Spring DH4 5HB
Castletown Primary School	Grange Road Sunderland SR5 2QB
Dame Dorothy Primary School	Dock Street Sunderland SR6 0EA
Diamond Hall Infant School	Well Street Sunderland SR4 6JF
Diamond Hall Junior School	Well Street Sunderland SR4 6JF
Dubmire Primary School	Brittannia Terrace Houghton-le-Spring DH4 6HL
Easington Lane Primary School	South Hetton Road Houghton-le-Spring DH5 0LH
East Rainton Primary School	School Road Houghton-le-Spring DH5 9RA
Fatfield Primary School	Southcroft Washington NE38 8RB
Fulwell Junior School	Sea Road Sunderland SR6 9EE

George Washington Primary School	Wellbank Road Washington NE37 1NL
Gillas Lane Primary School	Seaton Avenue Houghton-le-Spring DH5 8EH
Grange Park Primary School	Swan Street Sunderland SR5 1EA
Grangetown Primary School	Spelterworks Road Sunderland SR2 8PX
Grindon Infant School	Gleneagles Road Sunderland SR4 9QN
Hetton Lyons Primary School	Four Lane Ends Hetton-le-Hole DH5 0AH
Hetton Primary School	Moorsley Road Hetton-le-Hole DH5 9ND
Highfield Primary School	Fordfield Road Sunderland SR4 0DA
Hill View Infant School	Helvellyn Road Sunderland SR2 9JJ
Hill View Junior School	Queen Alexandra Road Sunderland SR2 9HE
Hudson Road Primary School	Villiers Street South Sunderland SR1 2AH
Hylton Castle Primary School	Cramlington Road Sunderland SR5 3QL
John F Kennedy Primary School	Station Road Washington NE38 7AR
Lambton Primary School	Lambton Village Washington NE38 0PL
Mill Hill Primary School	Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2LE
New Silksworth Infant School	Blind Lane Sunderland SR3 1AS
New Silksworth Junior School	Blind Lane Sunderland SR3 1AS
Newbottle Primary School	Houghton Road Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4EE

Oxclose Village Primary School	Brancepeth Road Washington NE38 0LA
Richard Avenue Primary School	Richard Avenue Sunderland SR4 7LQ
Rickleton Primary School	Vigo Lane Washington NE38 9EZ
Ryhope Infant School	Shaftesbury Avenue Sunderland SR2 0RT
Ryhope Junior School	Shaftesbury Avenue Sunderland SR2 0RT
Seaburn Dene Primary School	Torver Crescent Sunderland SR6 8LG
Shiney Row Primary School	Rear South View Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4QP
South Hylton Primary School	Union Street Sunderland SR4 0LS
Southwick Primary School	Shakespeare Street Sunderland SR5 2JX
Springwell Village Primary School	Westfield Crescent Gateshead NE9 7RX
St Paul's CE Controlled Primary School	Waterworks Road Sunderland SR2 0LW
Thorney Close Primary School	Torquay Road Sunderland SR3 4BB
Usworth Colliery Primary School	Manor Close Washington NE37 3BL
Usworth Grange Primary School	Marlborough Road Washington NE37 3BG
Valley Road Primary School	Corporation Road Sunderland SR2 8PL
Wessington Primary School	Lanercost Washington NE38 7PY
Willow Fields Community Primary School	Winslow Close Sunderland SR5 5RZ

## **Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for secondary schools in the area of Sunderland Local Authority**

### **Introduction**

1. This scheme is made by Sunderland City Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Secondary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Secondary Schools in Sunderland.

The proposed Co-ordinated Admission scheme for Sunderland LA is set out below and complies with the changes introduced in the new School Admissions Code, which reflects new legislation laid out in the Education and Inspections Bill 2006.

A separate scheme exists in relation to primary schools

### **Interpretation**

#### **2. In this Scheme -**

"the LA" means Sunderland City Council acting in their capacity as local authority;

"the LA area" means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority;

"primary education" has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

"secondary education" has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996;

"primary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

"secondary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

"school" means a community or voluntary school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the LA;

"voluntary controlled schools" means such of the schools as are voluntary controlled schools, where the LA sets the admissions criteria and offers places;

"VA schools" means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools;

"academy" means such of the schools as have academy status;

"admission authority" in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA or Free school or academy means the governing body of that school;

"the specified year" means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2015;

"admission arrangements" means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school;

"parent/carer" means any person who holds parental responsibility as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides;

"casual admission" means any application for a place in the first year of secondary education that is received after 7 April 2015 including those received during the academic year commencing in September 2015 and applications for a place in any other year group received at any time from the commencement of the Scheme; and

"eligible for a place" means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such a point, which falls within the school's published admission number.

### **Commencement and extent**

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for the schools for admission year 2015/2016 (the specified year).

The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 to this scheme, or provisions having the same effect.

The governing body of each of the VA schools and academies will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

### **The Scheme**

1. The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.
2. The Scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LA area as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools) and shall take effect from 16 April 2014.
3. The Scheme will also include applications from parents seeking admission to Sunderland schools who live within other LAs.
4. We will also co-ordinate our admission process with any other Admission Authorities where relevant.

## SCHEDULE 1

### PART 1 - THE SCHEME

1. There will be a standard form known as the Application form (AF).
2. The AF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of secondary education in the specified year, and for any applications made for a "casual admission" into any year group in the admissions round leading up to, and during, the academic year 2015/2016.
3. The AF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child-
  - a. to be admitted to a school within the LA area (including VA and free schools and academies);
  - b. to be admitted to a school located in another LA's area (including VA and free schools and academies).

#### **4. The AF will •**

- a. allow the parent to express up to 3 preferences by completing the form, including, where relevant, any schools outside the LA's area, in rank order of preference,
- b. invite parents to give their reasons for each preference,
- c. specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.

#### **5. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure:**

- a. that the AF is available on request from the LA and on-line at **[www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk)** and
- b. that the AF is accompanied by a written explanation of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

#### **6. The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**

- a. every parent resident in the LA area who has a child in their last year of primary education receives a written explanation of how to apply; and
- b. every parent whose application falls within the category of a casual admission receives a copy of the AF (and written explanation), on request, and understands the process.



Parents will be advised that they will receive no more than one offer of a school place and that:

- (i) a place will be offered at the highest ranking nominated school for which they are eligible for a place under the admission criteria; and
- (ii) explain that, if more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, the parent will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest); and
- (iii) if a place cannot be offered at a nominated school, a place will be offered at an alternative school.

7. All preferences expressed on the AF are valid applications. The governing body of a VA or Free school or Trust Board/Governing Body of an Academy can require parents who wish to nominate, or have nominated, their school on the AF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required, it will be sent to parents by the governing body for completion and returned to the school.

8. Where a school receives a supplementary form from a Sunderland resident it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed an AF and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by VA schools or academy, the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether a AF has been received from the parent and, if not, the LA will contact the parent and ask them to complete a AF. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the VA or Free school or Academy governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.

9. Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform with the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2. (NB no School or Academy in Sunderland operates criteria for selection-based ability or aptitude).

### **Processing of AFs**

10. Completed AFs are to be returned to the LA by **Friday 31 October 2014**. It will be the responsibility of parents to ensure that AFs are returned directly or via primary schools to the LA, in a paper format or on-line by the closing date.

### **Determining offers in response to the AF**

11. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the AFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the AF where-

- (a) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
- (b) an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or

(c) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 18 of this Schedule.

**12.** Completed applications are to be returned to the LA by the due date.

**13.** Completed applications that are received after the closing date will be considered on an individual basis, but the procedure must not prevent the proper processing, under the Scheme, of applications received on time.

**14.** The LA will process all applications. Any completed applications must be treated as a confidential communication between the parent and the LA. All applications received by the closing date will be considered before any applications received after this closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.

**15.** **By 28 November 2014** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information received by this date which schools require in order to apply their oversubscription criteria. Where parents have nominated a school outside the LA area, the LA will also similarly notify the relevant authority/authorities by **21 November 2014**.

**16.** **By 16 January 2015** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school and apply the school's oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential applicants sorted (if appropriate) according to the school's oversubscription criteria.

**17.** **By 23 January 2015** the admission authority for neighbouring LAs schools will provide a list of potential applicants and waiting lists (if appropriate).

**18.** **By 13 February 2015** the LA will match these lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at the parents' first nominated school, that school will be allocated to the child.
- Where the child is not eligible for a place at the parental first nominated school, they will be allocated a place at the school, which is the next highest ranked nominated school where the child is eligible for a place.
- The LA will allocate a school place to those pupils who have not submitted an AF, after all other pupils who submitted an AF have been considered. The LA will allocate a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy, as measured by the shortest safest walking route from the parental home residence to the main entrance(s) of the school.

Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy, as measured by the shortest safest walking route from parental home residence to the main entrance(s) of the school.

**19.** **13 February 2015** -The LA informs its secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools, and informs other LAs of places in Sunderland schools to be offered to their residents.

**20. On 2 March 2015** parents will be notified that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. This letter will give the following information:

- The name of the school at which a place is offered;
- The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other higher ranked schools nominated on the AF;
- Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools;
- Explain that the child will be considered for any places that might become available in schools they ranked higher than the school they are offered, in the re- allocation process after 7 April 2015.
- Contact details for the schools (in the case of nominated VA & free schools and academies where they were not offered a place) and all relevant LAs, so that they can lodge an appeal.

The letter will not inform parents of places still available at other schools.

**21. 20 March 2015:** the deadline for parents to accept the place offered. If they do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place, however the LA will continue to pursue parents for written confirmation of acceptance for oversubscribed schools.

#### **Re-allocation Lists (Waiting lists)**

**22.** Children will be considered under the reallocation process for any places if they become available, after 2 March 2015 but before 7 April 2015, at any school they have ranked higher on their AF than the school they were offered. For example where a parent has originally been allocated a place at their second preference school, they may be considered for their first preference but not their third and so on. Where a parent has been offered a place at a school, which they did not nominate on their AF, they may be considered for all the schools they did nominate on their AF.

Where a parent receives a place at their highest ranked school, they will not normally be considered for re-allocation, nor will they be offered a place at any other school simply because it has places available.

Where there are more applicants than places available, than the priorities used within the school's admission criteria will be applied to all applicants according to ranking.

**23. 7 April 2015:** The LA re-allocates any places that may have become vacant since 2 March and in accordance with the school admission criteria, which will include the following:

- those who have not been offered any school place, for example, late applications from parents who have just moved into the area and have not been offered a school place;
- those who have subsequently expressed a preference for a new school not originally expressed on the AF, which will be ranked lower than any other previous preferences ranked on the AF.

## PART 2 - LATE APPLICATIONS

24. The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **31 October 2014**. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late *for a good reason* will be accepted provided they are received **before 15 January 2015**, the date the allocation procedures begin. Examples of what will be considered as good reason include: when a lone parent has been ill for some time, or has been dealing with the death of a close relative; a family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a Sunderland property will be required in these cases). Other circumstances will be considered and each case decided on its own merits.

### LATE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 15 JANUARY 2015

25. Applications received after 15 January 2015 (which are not deemed as exceptional) will be considered as late and will not be processed until after 2 March 2015. Parents will, nevertheless, receive an offer of a school place on 2 March 2015 in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

### NO AF RECEIVED BY 2 MARCH 2015

26. Where no AF is submitted the child will, on 2 March 2015, be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy as measured by the shortest safest walking route from the parental home residence to the main entrance(s) of the school. The LA will be aware which parents this applies to as a result of liaison with junior and primary schools.

### APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 2 MARCH 2015 BUT BEFORE 7 APRIL 2015

27. Applications made direct to any school on the AF must be forwarded to the LA immediately. Where only the supplementary form is received the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether an AF has been received from the parent and, if not, contact the parent and ask them to complete an AF. The LA will enter the details onto its central database and, after consultation with the relevant admission authority, offer a place at the school highest in the parent's order of preference that has a vacancy or if this is not possible, at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

### APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 7 APRIL 2015

28. Applications received after 7 April 2015, and for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry to secondary school, will be treated as casual admissions. These applications should be made on the AF and sent to the LA, which maintains the school, which will

- determine any application for a community or controlled school for which it is the admission authority; and
- if the application is for a voluntary aided or free school or academy refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will make a determination and notify both the parent and the LA. Parents who are refused admission must be offered a right of appeal.

29. If any parents approach voluntary aided or free schools or academies directly about a casual admission, the governing body must ensure that the parent completes an AF (if they have not already done so). The AF should be sent to the maintaining LA as soon as practically possible, along with the governing body's decision on the application. The

governing body will notify the LA of its decision in advance of notifying the parents and, if the parent is refused a place, the right of appeal must be offered.

30. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for casual admissions, and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay, particularly in respect of looked after children.

#### **WAITING LISTS FOR NORMAL YEAR OF ENTRY**

31. Waiting lists will be kept until **18 December 2015** for Community Schools. Academies and Aided schools may hold their waiting list for up to one academic year but this will be confirmed within their admission criteria.

## **SCHEDULE 2**

### **Timetable of co-ordinated scheme**

<b>31 October 2014:</b>	Applications, together with any supplementary forms (as required) to be returned to the LA.
<b>21 November 2014:</b>	Details of applications to be sent to other LAs.
<b>28 November 2014:</b>	Details of applications to be sent to VA & free schools and academies.
<b>16 January 2015:</b>	VA & free schools and academies provide the LA with lists of potential applicants.
<b>13 February 2015:</b>	The LA will match the ranked lists of all the schools and allocate places in accordance with paragraph 18 of Schedule 1.
<b>13 February 2015:</b>	By this date the LA will notify schools, which parents have been offered places at their schools, and other LAs will be notified of places in Sunderland schools that will be offered to their residents.
<b>2 March 2015:</b>	Notifications sent to parents.
<b>20 March 2015:</b>	Last date for offers to be accepted by parents.
<b>7 April 2015:</b>	Any places that have become available are allocated to parents in priority order in accordance with paragraph 23 of Schedule 1.

**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME -SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Admission Authorities in the Area of Sunderland to which the Scheme applies

**The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admission Authority for the following Academies:**

Academy 360	Portsmouth Road Sunderland SR4 9BA
Biddick Sports College	Biddick Lane Washington NE38 8AL
Castle View Enterprise Academy	Cartwright Road Sunderland SR5 3DX
Farrington Sports College	Allendale Road Sunderland SR3 3EL
Kepier Academy	Dairy Lane Houghton-le-Spring DH4 5BH
Oxclose Academy	Dilston Close Washington NE38 OLN
Red House Academy	Rutherglen Road Sunderland SR5 5LN
Southmoor Academy	Ryhope Road Sunderland SR2 7TF
St Aidan's RC School	Willow Bank Road Sunderland SR2 7HJ
St Anthony's Catholic Girls' Academy	Thornhill Terrace Sunderland SR2 7JN
The Venerable Bede CE Academy	Tunstall Bank Sunderland SR2 0SX

**The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admissions Authority for the following Voluntary Aided Schools:**

St Robert of Newminster RC School	Biddick Lane Washington NE38 8AF
-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------

**The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admission Authority for the following Free School:**

Grindon Hall Christian School

Nookside  
Sunderland SR4 8PG

**Community Schools where the LA is the Admission Authority:**

Hetton School

North Road  
Hetton-le-Hole DH5 9JZ

Monkwearmouth School

Torver Crescent  
Sunderland SR6 8LQ

Sandhill View School

Grindon Lane  
Sunderland SR3 4EN

Thornhill School

Thornholme Road  
Sunderland SR2 7NA

Washington School

Spout Lane  
Washington NE37 2AA



## ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY AND CONTROLLED INFANT/JUNIOR/PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2015/16

1. **'Looked-after' child** – a child that is looked-after' by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22(1) of the Children's Act 1989 and a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so, because of adoption (or become subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
2. **Attendance in Key Stage 1 (age 5 - 7) at the named feeder infant school** (This applies to Infant – Junior transfers only)
3. **A sibling link** - an older brother/sister or older child (including adoptive, foster or step-children) that shares the same parent/carer and lives at the same address, who will still be attending the preferred school or the junior school for which the preferred school is the feeder infant school, at the time of admission.
4. **Exceptional medical or psychological reasons** (you must include a medical or psychological report, prepared by a professional, to confirm information that you include in this section. This report should explain why only this school can meet your child's medical or psychological needs. Common childhood medical conditions such as asthma or giving a child's or giving a child's nervousness at starting new school as a psychological reason for choosing a particular school are unlikely to be accepted as exceptional). If you intend to use this criterion when expressing a preference, please contact the School Admissions Team before completing the application form. (Eligibility under this category will be considered by a meeting of Senior LA Officers).
5. **Pupils for whom preferences are expressed on grounds other than those outlined above.**

## **NOTES**

**Within each of the above, places will be offered on the basis of distance from the centre of the home address to the main entrance of the school with priority being given to those living closest to the school. Distance is measured by the shortest safest walking distance, using a geographical information system (GIS).**

**At the first stage of allocations there will be no distinction between 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> etc. preference applications. Therefore all applications will be considered equally against the admission criteria. If a pupil then qualifies for a place at more than school, the parent's highest ranked preference will be offered and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded.**

**In determining allocations, priority will be given to those applications where the parental preference is received by the published deadline date.**

**Where a pupil has a statement of special education need naming a school, a place will be offered at that school (subject to confirmation by the SEN Unit).**

**It will be possible for Infant classes to exceed the statutory limit where the 31<sup>st</sup> child is a twin or from multiple births, or of armed forces personnel.**

**Parents who are awarded a place for their child may request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the year or subsequent year, for example, until the start of the term when the child reaches compulsory school age. Parents can also request that their child takes up the place part time, if it is in the interest of the child, until the child is of compulsory school age. In this instance, parents must discuss this with the Head teacher. Compulsory school age is determined as the term after the child's fifth birthday.**

**Where it is not possible to offer at a school, the child will be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list is sorted using the admission criteria and will be held until the end of the Autumn term, after the children start school in September.**

**Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process will be included with the notification letter but are also available from the School Admissions Team.**

## **ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS – 2015/16**

1. **'Looked-after' child** – a child that is looked-after' by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22(1) of the Children's Act 1989 and a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so, because of adoption (or become subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
2. **Attendance in Key Stage 2 (age 7-10+) at a designated cluster junior or primary school**
3. **A sibling link** - an older brother/sister or older child (including adoptive, foster or step-children) that shares the same parent/carer and lives at the same address, who will still be attending the preferred school at the time of admission.
4. **Exceptional medical or psychological reasons** (you must include a medical or psychological report, prepared by a professional, to confirm information that you include in this section. This report should explain why only this school can meet your child's medical or psychological needs. Common childhood medical conditions such as asthma or giving a child's or giving a child's nervousness at starting new school as a psychological reason for choosing a particular school are unlikely to be accepted as exceptional). If you intend to use this criterion when expressing a preference, please contact the School Admissions Team before completing the application form. (Eligibility under this category will be considered by a meeting of Senior LA Officers).
5. **Pupils for whom preferences are expressed on grounds other than those outlined above.**

## **NOTES**

**Within each of the above, places will be offered on the basis of distance from the centre of the home address to the main entrance of the school with priority being given to those living closest to the school. Distance is measured by the shortest safest walking distance, using a geographical information system (GIS).**

**At the first stage of allocations there will be no distinction between 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> etc. preference applications. Therefore all applications will be considered equally against the admission criteria. If a pupil then qualifies for a place at more than one school, the parent's highest ranked preference will be offered and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded.**

**In determining allocations, priority will be given to those applications where the parental preference is received by the published deadline date.**

**Where a pupil has a statement of special education need naming a school, a place will be offered at that school (subject to confirmation by the SEN Unit).**

**Where it is not possible to offer a place at a school, the child will be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list is sorted using the admission criteria and will be held until the end of the Autumn term, after the children start Y7 in September.**

**Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process will be included with the notification letter but are also available from the School Admissions Team.**