

CIVIC CENTRE,
SUNDERLAND
18 November 2014

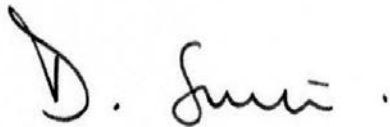
TO THE MEMBERS OF SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING of Sunderland City Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Sunderland, on **WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2014 at 6.00 p.m.**, at which it is proposed to consider and transact the following business:-

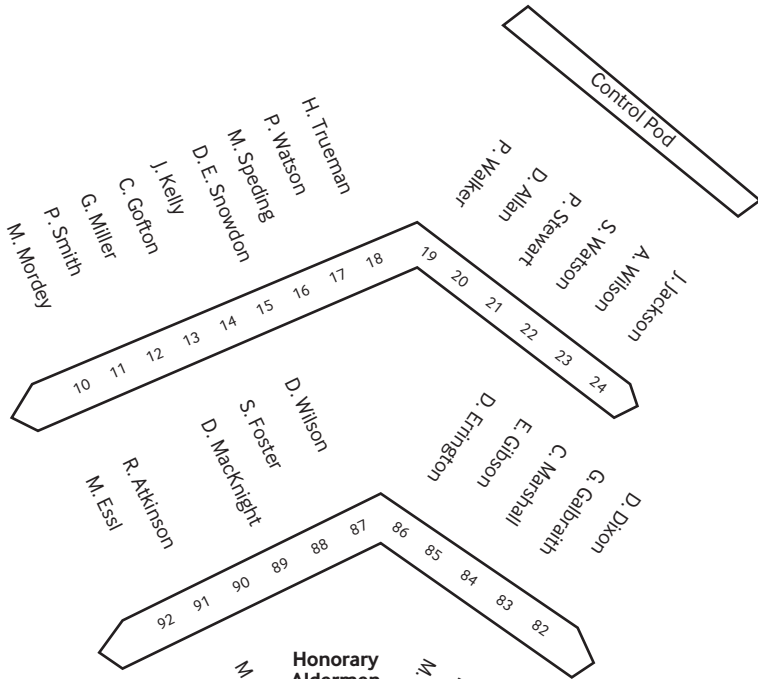
Item	Page
1. To read the Notice convening the meeting.	-
2. To approve the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24 September 2014 (copy herewith).	1
3. Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any).	-
4. Announcements (if any) under Rule 2(iv).	-
5. Reception of Petitions.	-
6. Apologies.	-
7. Report of the Cabinet (copy herewith).	11
9. Written Questions (if any) under Rule 8.2.	
10. To consider the attached motion.	87

11. To consider the undermentioned reports:-

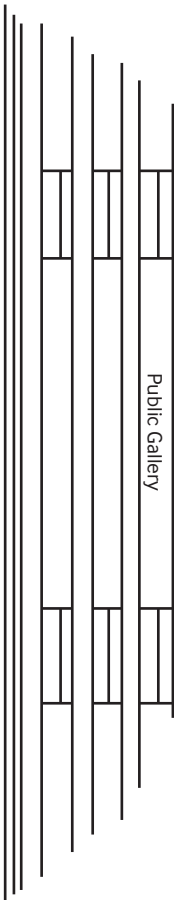
- (i) Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions – Report of the Leader of the Council (copy herewith); 93**
- (ii) Appointments – Association of the Friends of Sunderland Museums and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority – report of the Head of Law and Governance (copy herewith). 95**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Smith', with a large initial 'D' and a stylized 'Smith'.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE



- 29. A. Lawson
- 30. J. Scott
- 31. P. Tye
- 32. P. Gibson
- 33. F. Anderson
- 34. J. Blackburn
- 35. J. Cummings
- 36. G. Taylor
- 37. W. Turton
- 38. B. McClennan
- 39. T. Martin

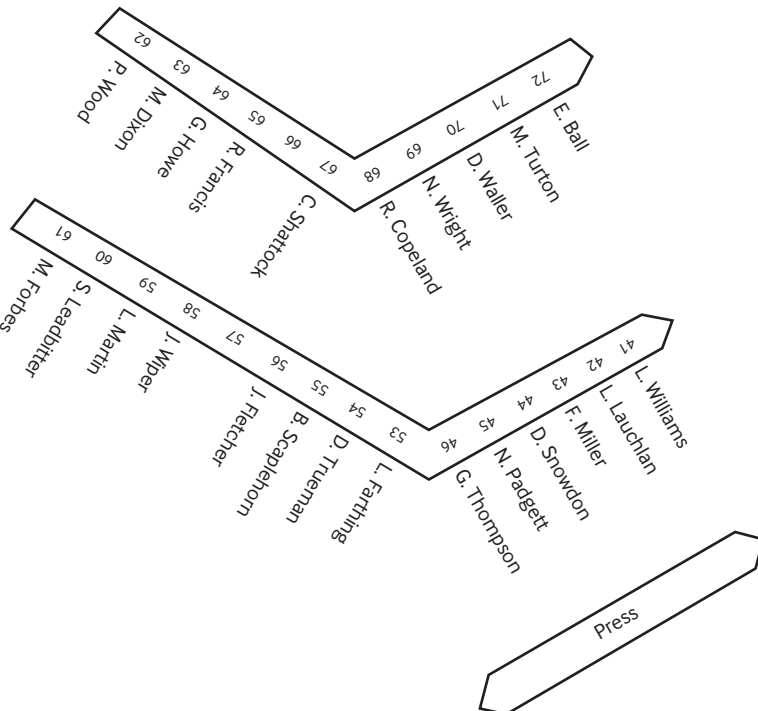
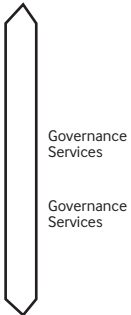


Head of Law
and Governance
E. Waugh

Mayor
S. Porthouse

Chief Executive
D. Smith

Deputy Mayor
B. Curran



Minutes

Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CIVIC CENTRE on
WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2014 at 6.00pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor S Porthouse) in the Chair
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor B Curran)

Councillors	Allen	Farr	Lauchlan	Thompson
	Anderson	Fletcher	Lawson	Trueman, D.
	Atkinson	Forbes	McClennan	Trueman, H.
	Ball	Foster	MacKnight	Turton, M
	Bell	Francis	Martin, L	Turton, W
	Copeland	Galbraith	Martin, T	Tye
	Cummings	Gallagher	Miller, F	Wakefield
	Davison	Gibson, E	Miller, G	Watson, P.
	Dixon, D	Gibson, P.	Mordey	Watson, S.
	Dixon, M	Gofton	Padgett	Williams
	Ellis	Howe	Price	Wilson, A
	Emerson	Jackson	Scanlan	Wilson, D.
	Errington	Kay	Shattock	Wood
	Essl	Kelly	Smith, D	Wright, N.

Also Present:-

Honorary Aldermen Mark Greenfield and Mary Smith.

The notice convening the meeting was read.

Minutes

20. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 2 July 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared interests as follows: -

Item 7 – Report of the Cabinet: NEPO Transformation – Introduction of New Arrangements	Councillor Kay	Involved with organisations that bid for NEPO contracts.
	Councillor McClennan	Member of Riverside Consulting CIC, a NEPO contracted provider

Announcements

(i) Former High Sheriff Marj Barton and Former Councillor Stuart Deacon

The Mayor paid tribute to the former High Sheriff Marj Barton and former Councillor Stuart Deacon who had recently passed away.

Members and Officers stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

(ii) Councillor Bernie Scaplehorn

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Trueman informed Members that Councillor Scaplehorn had recently been taken ill and was in a serious condition in hospital.

The Mayor undertook to send a card on behalf of Council Members to Councillor Scaplehorn wishing him a speedy recovery.

(iii) Ice Bucket Challenge

The Mayor reported that prior to the Council meeting, Councillor Mordey had participated in the 'Ice Bucket Challenge' and had raised £200 for the Mayor's charity.

Reception of Petitions

21. RESOLVED that the petitions listed below, submitted by the following Councillors, be received and referred for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme:-

Councillor Shattock – Petition regarding commercial traffic using Burntwood Avenue, Southwick – Deputy Chief Executive.

Councillor Price – Petition regarding excessive parking in Beechwood Terrace, Thornhill – Deputy Chief Executive.

Councillor Galbraith – Petition regarding parking on green area of land at Oakfield Close – Deputy Chief Executive.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Allan, Blackburn, Farthing, Leadbitter, Marshall, Scaplehorn, Scott, P Smith, D Snowdon, D E Snowdon, Speding, Stewart, Taylor, Waller, Walker, Wiper, T Wright and Honorary Aldermen James Walker and Michael Arnott.

The Cabinet reported and recommended as follows:-

1. Amendments to the Constitution:

- (i) The Localism Act 2011 – Assets of Community Value**
- (ii) North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) Transformation – Introduction of New Arrangements for the Leadership and Governance of the NEPO Service and Regional Collaborative Procurement**

That they had given consideration to reports of the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Executive on arrangements to implement the Community Right to Bid provisions contained in the Localism Act 2011 and the revised arrangements for the leadership and management of the NEPO Service and Regional Collaborative Procurement respectively.

The Cabinet have agreed the arrangements and accordingly recommend the Council to: -

- (a) authorise the Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Leader, to amend the Council's Constitution as necessary to reflect the arrangements for the Community Right to Bid provisions contained in the Localism Act 2011; and
- (b) authorise the Head of Law and Governance to make any consequential changes to the Constitution to give effect to the revised arrangements in respect of the leadership and management of the NEPO Service and Regional Collaborative Procurement.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor P Watson, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor H Trueman, moved the report of the Cabinet.

Accordingly it was:-

22. RESOLVED that the report of the Cabinet be approved and adopted.

**Annual Report of the work of the Audit and Governance Committee
2013/2014**

The Audit and Governance Committee reported that they had given consideration to a report by the Head of Assurance, Procurement and Projects on the work of the Committee during 2013/2014 which had demonstrated how they had fulfilled their delegated responsibilities.

Accordingly the Committee recommended that the Council note the Annual Report on the Work of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor N Wright, duly seconded by Councillor Forbes, moved the report of the Audit and Governance Committee and it was:-

23. RESOLVED that the report of the Audit and Governance Committee be noted.

Written Questions under Rule 8.2

Pursuant to Rule 8.2 of the Council Rules of Procedure, Members of the Council asked questions of the Leader and Members of the Executive.

Councillor L Martin, duly seconded, moved an extension to the time for responding to Written Questions which was agreed.

Action Taken on Petitions

The Council received and noted the report below detailing action taken in relation to the following petition which had been presented to Council.

(i) Petition requesting the Early Days Nursery at Ryhope be saved Presented by Councillor Emerson on 2 July 2014.

The petition was forwarded to the Executive Director of People Services who has advised that following the school's announcement in May 2014, the Council undertook an options appraisal on the alternatives available for continued day care provision in the Ryhope area for children and their parents.

As a result of the options appraisal, a short procurement exercise was undertaken seeking expressions of interest from providers, which concluded on 4 July 2014. Through this exercise the Council was successful in securing one very well developed bid from a provider who already ran a viable and valued day care provision elsewhere in Sunderland. The Council worked with the bidder and Ryhope Infant school on the detail of the bid. Parents have been informed and would be kept informed as this progressed towards 1 September 2014.

Councillor Emerson had been advised of the action taken on the petition.

Notices of Motion

(i) Notice of Motion – Living Wage Employer

Councillor L Martin, seconded by Councillor Forbes, moved the following motion: -

‘This Council aspires to become a Living Wage employer and instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals to achieve this aspiration.’

The Leader of the Council, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader moved the following amendment: -

Delete the word “aspires” and replace with “commits”.

After “commits” insert a comma and the words “in spite of four years of Tory led Government cuts and public sector wage restraints”.

After “proposals” insert “by the end of December 2014”.

Delete the word “aspiration” and replace with “commitment”

After “commitment” insert “by April 2015”.

Upon being put to the meeting the amendment was unanimously carried, with the following Members voting in favour: -

The Mayor (Councillor S Porthouse)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor B Curran)

Councillors	Allen	Farr	Lauchlan	Thompson
	Anderson	Fletcher	Lawson	Trueman, D.
	Atkinson	Forbes	McClennan	Trueman, H.
	Ball	Foster	MacKnight	Turton, M
	Bell	Francis	Martin, L	Turton, W
	Copeland	Galbraith	Martin, T	Tye
	Cummings	Gallagher	Miller, F	Watson, P.
	Davison	Gibson, E	Miller, G	Watson, S.
	Dixon, D	Gibson, P.	Mordey	Williams
	Dixon, M	Gofton	Padgett	Wilson, A
	Ellis	Howe	Price	Wilson, D.
	Emerson	Jackson	Scanlan	Wood
	Errington	Kay	Shattock	Wright, N.
	Essl	Kelly	Smith, D	

The substantive motion was the presented to the meeting as follows: -

‘This Council commits, in spite of four years of Tory led Government cuts and public sector wage restraints, to become a Living Wage employer and instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals by the end of December 2014 to achievement this commitment by April 2015.’

Upon being put to the meeting, the substantive motion was unanimously carried, with the following Members voting in favour: -

The Mayor (Councillor S Porthouse) in the Chair
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor B Curran)

Councillors	Allen	Farr	Lauchlan	Thompson
	Anderson	Fletcher	Lawson	Trueman, D.
	Atkinson	Forbes	McClennan	Trueman, H.
	Ball	Foster	MacKnight	Turton, M
	Bell	Francis	Martin, L	Turton, W
	Copeland	Galbraith	Martin, T	Tye
	Cummings	Gallagher	Miller, F	Wakefield
	Davison	Gibson, E	Miller, G	Watson, P.
	Dixon, D	Gibson, P.	Mordey	Watson, S.
	Dixon, M	Gofton	Padgett	Williams
	Ellis	Howe	Price	Wilson, A
	Emerson	Jackson	Scanlan	Wilson, D.
	Errington	Kay	Shattock	Wood
	Essl	Kelly	Smith, D	Wright, N.

It was therefore: -

24. RESOLVED that this Council commits, in spite of four years of Tory led Government cuts and public sector wage restraints, to become a Living Wage employer and instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals by the end of December 2014 to achievement this commitment by April 2015.

Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report on executive decisions which had been taken as a matter of special urgency.

25. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Appointments – Association of the Friends of Sunderland Museums, Parker Memorial Home and Nominations to Committees Established by the Combined Authority

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report asking the Council to consider appointments to the Association of the Friends of Sunderland Museums (FOSuMs) and to the Parker Memorial Home. The Council were also informed of nominations to Committees established by the Combined Authority.

26. RESOLVED that the Council:-

- (i) confirm that the Public Health, Wellness and Culture Portfolio Holder be appointed to the Friends of Sunderland Museums;
- (ii) appoint Councillors Ball, Gallagher, Speding, H Trueman, S Watson and N Wright as Managing Trustees of the Parker Memorial Home; and

- (iii) note the appointments to the Transport North East Committee and Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub Committee made by the Leader of the Council under his delegation in the Council's Constitution.

Chief Finance Officer – Section 151 Local Government Act 1972

The Chief Executive and the Head of Law and Governance submitted a joint report seeking approval for the Head of Financial Resources to continue to be designated as the section 151 officer on an interim basis.

- 27. RESOLVED that the Head of Financial Resources continue to be designated as section 151 officer on an interim basis and that she be authorised to continue to exercise delegated powers in relation to the financial affairs of the Council, which are currently delegated in the constitution to the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services.

Signed) S PORTHOUSE
Mayor

Report of the Cabinet

The CABINET reports and recommends as follows:-

1. Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2014/2015

That they have given consideration to a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy attached) on the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan for 2014/2015 to be used by the Public Protection and Regulatory Services section of the Street Scene service, the comments of the Scrutiny Committee and to seek approval of the Plan.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for advice and consideration. The Committee was satisfied with the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2014/2015 and supported the Cabinet recommendation to submit the Service Plan to Council for approval.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommends the Council to approve the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan for 2014/2015.

2. Capital Programme Second Review 2014/2015 (including Treasury Management)

That they have given consideration to a report of the Head of Financial Resources on the Capital Programme Second Review 2014/2015 including Treasury Management which set out:-

- reprofiling of projects since the First Capital Review for 2014/2015 was approved in June 2014;
- the inclusion of additional schemes and revisions to costs and resourcing for 2014/2015 since the First Capital Review was reported;
- the inclusion of additional schemes and revisions to costs and resourcing beyond 2014/2015 since the First Capital Review was reported;
- the progress in implementing the Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/2015.

In accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, Cabinet may authorise variations to the Capital Programme provided such variations are within available resources and consistent with Council policy.

The attached Appendix A sets out the relevant extracts from the Cabinet Report which outline the additional schemes with an estimated cost in excess of £250,000 in 2014/2015 and future years.

They referred the relevant extracts to the Scrutiny Committee to note the proposed variation to the Capital Programme for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 to include additional schemes with an estimated cost in excess of £250,000. The Scrutiny Committee noted the report, being satisfied with the proposed variation to the Capital Programme.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommends the Council to note the proposed variation to the Capital Programme for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 to include additional schemes with an estimated cost in excess of £250,000.

3. Revenue Budget Second review 2014/2015

That they have given consideration to a report of the Head of Financial Resources on the overall Revenue position following the second review for 2014/2015 including proposed contingency transfers for the second quarter of 2014/2015.

In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework certain transfers require Council approval. The following extract refers to those transfer of funds:

"Savings on capital financing charges as a result of slippage on the capital programme and income from interest on investments are anticipated to result in planned savings of approximately £4.0m at year end. It is proposed that these amounts and any further underspendings arising from unspent contingencies at the end of 2014/2015 are earmarked to support the overall 2014/2015 position and transitional costs arising from the 2015/2016 budget setting process."

They also referred the above extract of the budget transfers to the Scrutiny Committee, for advice and consideration. The Scrutiny Committee supported the transfer of funds to support the overall 2014/2015 position together with the transitional costs arising from the 2014/2015 budget setting process and supported the Cabinet recommendation that the transfer be submitted to Council for approval.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommends the Council to approve the contingency transfers as set in the above extract.

4. Budget Planning Framework 2015/2016 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/2016 – 2017/2018

That they have given consideration to a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Head of Financial Resources (copy attached) outlining the key factors influencing the development of the Council's financial plans into the medium term and sets out the budget planning framework for the Council for 2015/2016 and the headlines and context for the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/2016 to 2017/2018.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for its comments in the context of the approved consultation arrangements for the Council's budget. The Scrutiny Committee was satisfied with the information provided and supported the Cabinet recommendation that the proposed Budget Planning Framework and Medium Term Financial Strategy are submitted to Council for approval.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommends the Council to:-

- (i) approve the proposed Budget Planning Framework summarised at Section 11 of the report which will guide the preparation of the Revenue Budget for 2015/2016;
- (ii) note that the full Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 will be presented to Cabinet in February

5. Annual Audit Letter 2013/2014

That they submit for consideration by Council a report of the Head of Financial Resources (copy attached) on the Annual Audit Letter from the external Auditors Mazars, covering the year 2013/2014 together with a copy of the Audit Letter which summarises findings from the audit of the Council's financial statements and the results of the external auditor's work undertaken as part of the assessment of the Council's arrangements for securing value for money in its use of resources.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommends the Council to note the contents of the report.

6. Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

That they have given consideration to a report of the Chief Executive (copy attached) on the draft proposals for the statutory review of polling districts and polling places.

The Cabinet recommends the Council:-

- (i) to note the submissions made to the Council in respect of the review of polling districts and polling places for Sunderland City Council,
- (ii) to note the final proposals in respect of the review,
- (iii) to adopt parliamentary polling districts and parliamentary polling places as set out in Appendix 3,
- (iv) to adopt the scheme contained in Appendix 3 in relation to local government elections,

- (v) that the Electoral Registration Officer be requested to make the necessary amendments to polling districts for the register of electors published on 1 December 2014,
- (vi) that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to make, where necessary, alterations to the designation of any polling place prior to the next full review in consultation with ward councillors and portfolio member, and
- (vii) that the Electoral Registration Officer create fixed boundaries within local government wards for each polling district.

CABINET

8 OCTOBER 2014

FEED AND FOOD CONTROLS SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Cabinet of the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan to be used by the Public Protection and Regulatory Services section of the Street Scene service.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan for 2014/15.

3. Introduction/Background

- 3.1 The Food Standards Agency ("the Agency") is an independent government department responsible for food safety and hygiene across the United Kingdom. It works with businesses to help them produce safe food, and with local authorities to enforce food safety regulations.
- 3.2 The Agency pursues a programme of auditing local authorities with the aims of helping to protect public health by promoting effective local enforcement of animal feed and food law and maintaining and improving consumer confidence.
- 3.3 The Agency considers that service plans for feed and food controls are an important part of the process in order to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally. Service plans are intended to help local authorities to follow the principles of good regulation and focus on key delivery issues and outcomes. The Agency requires that service plans are approved at a senior level within local authorities.
- 3.4 To assist in the service planning process the Agency has developed a Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities in consultation with the Local Government Association. This document recommends a format for feed and food controls service plans and gives detailed guidance on the content of such plans.
- 3.5 The Council has followed this format in preparing the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2014/15 which is Appendix 1 to this report.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The Feed and Food Controls Service Plan for 2014/15 has been developed by the Council in order to comply with the recommendations of the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement. It would be necessary to produce this plan in the event of an audit by the Agency.

5. Reason for Decision

- 5.1 The reason for the decision is to facilitate the compliance of the Council with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 The option of not producing a Feed and Food Controls Service Plan would place the Council at risk of receiving criticism in the event of an audit by the Food Standards Agency. It would also weaken the reputation of the Council and our ability to influence businesses with regard to matters of food safety. It has been discounted on these grounds.

7. Impact Analysis

- 7.1 **Equalities** There are no equalities implications as a result of this decision. Equalities are embedded within the national framework with which the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan complies.

8. Glossary

- 8.1 None.

9. List of Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Feed and Food Controls Service Plan of Public Protection and Regulatory Services for 2014/15

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities

APPENDIX 1

FEED AND FOOD CONTROLS SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

1. Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and objectives

The aims of Public Protection and Regulatory Services (“the Service”) are to protect the health and wellbeing of all persons within the City in relation to food safety matters and, in relation to animal feed, to protect the health and welfare of livestock and prevent the outbreak of animal disease.

The objectives of the Service are:

- To secure compliance with food safety law having regard to official codes of practice; particularly concerning the frequency of food safety interventions;
- To seek to secure the protection of consumers from the potential dangers of suspect or contaminated food; particularly those which may result in foodborne infections;
- To ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that food is fit for human consumption and free from extraneous matter;
- To increase the knowledge of food handlers, food managers and the general public about the principles and practice of food hygiene and food safety management;
- To increase the knowledge of food business operators of food safety management; thereby assisting the raising of standards and enabling improved food hygiene rating scores under the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme;
- To assist in the control and prevention of the spread of foodborne diseases;
- To carry out food safety interventions (activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment) in accordance with minimum frequencies and to standards determined by the Food Standards Agency (“the FSA”);
- To respond to and investigate Food Standards Agency ‘Food Alerts and Allergy Alerts for Action’ in accordance with published guidance where these impact upon food originating or traded within the City;
- To investigate all notified cases of foodborne disease and take effective action to control the spread of infection;
- To undertake the inspection of ships visiting the Port of Sunderland in accordance with current guidance;
- To carry out inspections at premises presenting the highest potential risk for contamination of the feed chain;
- To conduct on farm visits in order to examine primary production and animal feeding;

- To investigate complaints about feed and, where necessary, take samples;
- To give guidance to people supplying material into the feed chain and also to new livestock keepers.

1.2 Links to corporate objectives and plans

The Sunderland City Council Corporate Plan sets out the vision for the Council and outlines the strategic direction of the Council over a three year period. The Corporate Plan can be found on the Council's website and highlights three strategic priorities:

People – raising aspirations, creating confidence and promoting opportunity.

Place – leading the investment in an attractive and inclusive city and its communities.

Economy – creating the conditions in which businesses can establish and thrive.

The People priority encompasses the protection and improvement of the health and wellbeing of the people of Sunderland. The delivery of the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2014/15 will contribute positively to the achievement of the People priority by ensuring the protection of public health through inspection and education activity and the improvement of wellbeing through initiatives to promote healthier eating.

The Place priority is addressed in that the livestock of our local farms will be protected from contaminants in their feed that could harm their health and welfare.

The Economy priority is addressed by enforcement action and advice given to businesses. Proportionate enforcement provides a fair and equitable trading environment in which businesses can develop and be protected from those who fail to comply with the law. Initiatives to develop best practice in small to medium enterprises will assist them in promoting their businesses.

2. Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Sunderland City Council serves an area of 137 square kilometres and has a population of around 283,500 people resident in some 121,000 households. The City principally comprises urban areas, the City Centre and Washington, as well as the former coalfields communities of Easington Lane, Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring. A small number of farms surround the urban population centres.

2.2 Organisational Structure

The Council is composed of 75 councillors within 25 wards. Governance is through the Leader and Cabinet model.

The Council delivers services through the Office of the Chief Executive, the People Services Directorate and the Commercial and Corporate Services Directorate. This Feed and Food Controls Service Plan is delivered by staff from Public Protection and Regulatory Services within Street Scene, which is part of the Office of the Chief Executive within the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Executive. The service operates within the remit of the City Services Portfolio and works closely with the Portfolio Holder.

The Head of Street Scene reports to the Deputy Chief Executive on a number of matters including feed and food control. Public Protection and Regulatory Services deliver the Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing functions on behalf of the Council. These services are led by the Assistant Head of Street Scene (Public Protection and Regulatory Services) who has overall responsibility for delivery of the Feed and Food Controls Service Plan.

The Environmental Health Manager has specialist responsibility for food hygiene and standards matters and health promotion. The Trading Standards and Licensing Manager has specialist responsibility for feedingstuffs.

The Council uses the services of Public Health (England) Laboratories, a Public Analyst and an Agricultural Analyst as necessary. The Public Analyst and Agricultural Analyst appointed by the authority is Public Analyst Scientific Services Limited.

2.3 Scope of the Feed and Food Service

The activities relating to feed and food in the City are undertaken by the Trading Standards and Environmental Health teams respectively.

The Environmental Health team undertake a programme of food hygiene and food standards interventions as well as responding to requests for service and infectious disease notifications. Sampling of foodstuffs, both microbiological and compositional, is also undertaken. Officers also respond to Port Health requests and food hygiene inspections are undertaken in connection with Ship Sanitation Certificates required under international health regulations.

The Environmental Health team provide Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Level 2 and Level 3 Food Safety in Catering training courses. Officers have developed an award scheme in order to promote the public health agenda, which focusses on the provision of healthy food and is known as the Healthy Home Award. The Healthy Home Award, presented to the City's nursing and residential homes, supports the Council's People service's Care Quality Standards. Homes achieving the award achieve a higher grading. The Healthy Home Award scheme is promoted and managed by the team, with inspections being undertaken at relevant premises.

The City has a small agricultural sector, principally arable with a few livestock holdings. The Trading Standards team carries out the enforcement of primary production and feedingstuffs legislation and provides advice to farmers and retailers.

2.4 Demands on the Feed and Food Service

2.4.1 Food establishments profile

There are 2166 food premises currently operating in the City, including one registered primary producer.

Types of Food Premises in the City	No.	Food Hygiene High Risk (A)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (B)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (C)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (D)	Food Hygiene Low Risk (E)	Not rated
Primary producers/ manufacturers/ processors	120	0	10	29	18	46	16
Packers/ importers/ exporters/ distributors etc.	31	1	0	2	6	21	1
Retailers	559	1	10	95	240	157	39
Restaurants/ other caterers	1456	0	117	498	506	213	122
Contact materials and articles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total food premises	2166	2	137	624	770	438	177
Outside the programme	18						

Most of Sunderland's food premises are classified in the restaurant/catering outlet group (1456) whilst there are 559 food retailers. These categories feature a large number of changes of food business operators. This creates additional demands for the Service in educating new operators.

The unrated premises are those which have recently opened or changed proprietor since the last inspection. These premises are, where notification takes place, visited initially and are assessed according to risk for further inspection and rating within 6 to 24 months in order for the Service to make an informed judgement of on-going standards.

The Stadium of Light can accommodate over 48,000 seated spectators, with significant catering provided from the outlets within the stadium. This summer, two major music events requiring the attention of Environmental Health Officers occurred at the stadium.

There are a significant number of outdoor events held regularly each year (e.g. the International Air Show) which are attended by up to 1.5 million visitors. Various mobile caterers and food businesses from around the region visit the City to cater at the events.

Port health inspections which require inspections of food hygiene and standards on board vessels coming into the port are undertaken. The provision of eight Ship Sanitation Certificates was requested from the Service last year in addition to three visits to take water samples being undertaken.

2.4.2 Feed establishments profile

There are currently 29 premises registered as Feed Business Operators.

Types of Feed Premises	Number
Arable farms	16
Livestock farms	28
Manufacturers and packers	2
Food businesses selling co-products/surplus food	20
Distributors/transporters	2
Stores	9
Total	93

The arable farms principally produce cereal for food production or for incorporation in animal feed. Inspections of these premises are on a low risk basis. Several of the farms are members of farm assurance schemes.

The livestock farmers generally grow arable crops for feeding to their own livestock along with silage. The use of supplementary feed is generally restricted to sheep and pigs. Visits to these premises are generally scheduled when the animals are housed and are undertaken in conjunction with animal health and welfare visits.

The manufacturers and packers make pet foods and have been assisted with advice on legal requirements. The premises may be visited for sampling purposes.

An increasing number of businesses are being found to send waste food into the feed chain. Following potential issues previously identified on inspection all premises registering to supply waste food into the feed chain will be inspected.

The registered transporters remove waste food from shops for use in the manufacture of feed.

Increased vigilance continues to be undertaken with regard to the inland enforcement of imported feed legislation in an effort to prevent the spread of disease in food animals.

2.4.3 Service delivery points

The officers who undertake feed and food controls work are based at Jack Crawford House, Sunderland. The Council's Customer Service Centres are open to the public in normal working hours throughout the week, 8.30am to 5.15pm (4.45pm Friday). There is an evening and weekend service arrangement for contacting managers for out-of-hours emergencies. Visits are conducted at events and as necessary outside normal working hours.

The Council website www.sunderland.gov.uk makes information constantly available. Initial contact for services is through the Council's Customer Services Network.

The Council displays current food hygiene ratings on the www.sunderlandcitycouncil.com website. This website may also be accessed from the sunderland.gov.uk website (Food Hygiene). The Council also regularly updates data on the Food Standards Agency national scheme. Ratings can be found at <http://ratings.food.gov.uk>

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme involves the publication of a food safety star rating for food premises based on standards of structure and hygiene ratings and confidence in management scores assessed during programmed inspections. The rating scheme incorporates six categories, from no stars (meaning urgent improvement required) to five (very good). Following inspections, business owners are advised in writing that the information may be released on the website in the future and in response to third party requests as required by Freedom of Information legislation. Food business operators have the right to appeal against a rating which may result in a revisit for re-inspection after three months.

2.4.4 External factors impacting on the Service

The Service's responsibilities under the Licensing Act 2003 impact on workload. Officers consider applications for new and varied licences in respect of food premises in pursuance of duties as responsible authorities.

There is a possibility that any large outbreak of food poisoning or illness, or a serious accident at food premises, would impact significantly on the routine activities of the Service.

There are no other likely major impacts upon the Service expected, e.g. significant food imports, seasonal variations or an increase in the number of food manufacturing businesses. However, where food alerts necessitate a significant response, this would impact upon the Service.

Food alerts are notified to local authorities by the Food Standards Agency. During 2013/14 the Service received 32 alerts of food problems occurring elsewhere in the country and seven updates. Many of these alerts were product recalls where the response required from the Service was limited.

The Food Standards Agency also notifies local authorities of allergy alerts, e.g. instances of food labelling errors or contamination of specific ingredients. There were 46 such alerts received in 2013/14. Whilst not critical to general public health, such incidents can have serious effects on persons who are allergic to specific ingredients.

2.5 Regulation Policy

Public Protection and Regulatory Services has a documented Enforcement Policy covering the Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing functions of the Council. The Service works within the principles of the Regulators' Code.

3. Service Delivery

3.1 Interventions at Food and Feedingstuffs establishments

Food premises in the City have been found to demonstrate relatively static level of compliance over the last five years with between 83 and 89% of all premises achieving a three star rating (generally satisfactory) or above. Within this group there has been a year on year improvement in the numbers of premises achieving five stars; thus demonstrating that the good premises are getting better.

The Service will use the wide range of interventions outlined in FSA guidance in order to monitor and increase business compliance in the most efficient and proportionate way.

Interventions are defined as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment and they include but are not restricted to the following "official controls":

- Inspections and audits (full/partial inspection and audits);
- Monitoring;
- Surveillance;
- Verification; and
- Sampling and analyses where examination is carried out by an Official Laboratory.

When undertaking official controls, officers will take account of any identified risks, the food business operator's past record and current knowledge, an examination of practices and procedures in place, a physical inspection of the premises, the reliability of an operator's own checks, and any information that may indicate non-compliance.

Other interventions that do not constitute official controls can be undertaken in some premises in addition to the official control or at an interval between official controls. These include:

- Education;
- Advice and coaching;
- Information and intelligence gathering; and
- Sampling where examination is not carried out by an Official Laboratory.

Premises will continue to be risk rated A to E depending on the previous level of food safety and structural compliance together with confidence in management. Factors also taken into account are the types of food prepared and the type and number of consumers potentially at risk.

Those food premises which fall into the highest category (A) are considered to be those with the highest risk, whether as a result of the nature of the main activities undertaken on the premises or because of the relatively poor operating conditions which have prevailed previously. These premises will be subject to controls more frequently than lower risk premises.

This year, the Service will concentrate in a more focussed way than previously on providing tailored support and time to food business operators who achieve less than a rating of three stars in the food hygiene rating scheme. The Service will provide a framework of support and education with the aim of improving the hygiene standards of these initially less well run premises.

In addition, officers will visit all new or currently unrated businesses.

The effectiveness of this programme will be measured and reported in the Service Plan for 2015/16.

In summary, the predicted numbers of interventions are as follows:

- All high risk Category A and B premises will receive an inspection (138 visits);
- All unrated premises (new businesses) will receive an inspection (195 visits);
- Category C premises which are not “Generally Satisfactory” and those which supply food to vulnerable groups such as the young or elderly will receive an inspection (132 visits);
- Generally lower risk compliant C, D and E premises will be targeted by other measures. This may include the completion of self-assessment questionnaires, sampling or verification visits with the results informing future intervention decisions (1026 interventions).

The total estimated number of interventions is therefore 1314 in addition to those pertaining to any new businesses established within the year. Alternative strategies for lower risk premises will result in fewer such premises being visited than in previous years but, potentially, more visits being made to less well performing premises in order to promote and confirm improved standards.

In line with the commitment of the Service to carry out revisits to check on compliance, where necessary, it is estimated that the above-mentioned planned inspections will generate a further 180 revisits.

The Service aims generally to undertake the relevant intervention at the premises within one month of the due date for inspection; the only exceptions being those businesses that operate seasonally and those which may be subject to alternative enforcement strategies.

Secondary inspections (including revisits and requests for revisits by operators of food businesses) will be undertaken as necessary on a risk assessed basis in order to ensure that significant hygiene concerns are rectified. Those premises which are not broadly compliant will be visited with a view to enforcing compliance standards.

Individual businesses may be visited more frequently or the planned date for intervention may be brought forward if a problem is identified such as:

- A complaint about the food premises or notification of an issue received from another authority which requires further investigation;
- An unsatisfactory sampling result is received;
- The business is implicated in a food poisoning outbreak;
- There is a change in business operations resulting in a higher risk;
- A request for a re-rating revisit under the FSA Food Hygiene Rating Scheme is received; or
- A notification is received from the FSA regarding a food safety incident or food alert.

All requests for revisits by businesses wishing to amend their risk ratings as part of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme will be dealt with in accordance with FSA procedures. Whilst the published rating of the business may be changed as a result of this revisit, the Service will need to examine all elements of the business and obtain sufficient evidence from this intervention if any change to the intervention frequency for the business is to be considered. Otherwise the business will retain its original risk rating score for frequency of intervention.

The City, being principally urban in nature, has only a small number of feedingstuffs premises registered. None of the premises registered are considered to be high risk. The premises will be visited on a risk assessed basis. Last year there were twelve inspections and one revisit undertaken at feed establishments.

All businesses that register as food businesses will be subject to inspection. With the increase in co-products (i.e. products produced together with another product) entering the food chain a project will be undertaken to identify premises not currently registered that may be supplying products to be used in the manufacture of feed.

The Service has good working relations with neighbouring authorities and the Public Analyst should any specialised process be identified.

3.2 Feed and Food Complaints

The Service is committed to responding to all complaints about feed or food. The extent of the investigation will depend on the merits of the complaint. This can range from reassuring the complainant to a more formal process, including reference to home or originating authorities in accordance with guidance and the relevant Code of Practice. Officers also liaise with any relevant primary authority in pursuance of the relevant scheme administered by the Better Regulation Delivery Office.

In 2013/14, 1026 requests for service requiring a response from officers were made (this being a near 100% increase upon the previous year), including 16 complaints relating to food standards or labelling, and 103 requests relating to unfit or contaminated food.

Due to the relatively few number of feedingstuffs establishments, it is not anticipated that there will a significant number of complaints received by the Service. Any complaints will be investigated in line with Service procedures. The Service received no complaints last year which related to feedingstuffs. Pet foods are anticipated as being the most likely subject of complaints.

3.3 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

The Service undertakes to comply with all the relevant legal requirements of the Primary Authority Scheme and liaises with other relevant local authorities within the context of the Home Authority Principle

3.4 Advice to Business

The Service seeks to assist local businesses in order to encourage the success of our local economy. Last year 192 specific requests for advice were received by the Environmental Health team. Additionally, advice is given by officers informally at every visit to food premises, as appropriate.

The Service is committed to promoting the Food Standards Agency's project: "Safer Food, Better Business" which is intended to support food businesses in complying with the food safety management principles. There will continue to be great efforts to educate businesses in complying with their requirement to implement a suitable food safety management system, which some smaller food businesses seem to find difficult

In correspondence to food businesses, a standard invitation is given to them to seek advice from the Service.

Feed businesses are provided with business advice on inspection and new livestock keepers are provided with guidance when registering their premises.

3.5 Feed and Food Sampling

The Service is committed to sampling foods in order to determine compliance with compositional and bacteriological standards. Sampling of imported and locally produced foods is undertaken proactively and the Service participates in national and regional surveys arranged by the regional food authorities group and Public Health (England) Laboratory Service.

As a consequence of demand, i.e. complaints, food alerts, food poisoning outbreaks, etc., further samples will be taken. Last year 297 samples were taken.

An estimated 150 samples will be taken for bacteriological examination/compositional analysis in the year 2014/15, including 30 water samples.

The Health Protection Agency Laboratory transports samples from the region as necessary by courier to Leeds. The Service liaises with the management of the laboratory and neighbouring authorities in order to facilitate an effective and co-ordinated sampling programme with flexibility for local needs.

Participation with neighbouring authorities with regard to sampling and other food related matters ensures that the Service works in a co-ordinated and compatible way.

Sampling of feed will take place where a complaint justifies a sample be taken, though there is no expectation of any complaints. Samples may be taken to assist in projects instituted by the Food Standards Agency or the North East Trading Standards Association or to maintain competence levels.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The Service has agreed with Public Health (England) a policy for considering the investigation of confirmed food poisoning cases. The unwell people involved in most cases, other than in the case of suspected viral infections or *Campylobacter* infection, are usually visited by officers in order to trace the source of the infection and prevent further spread. People involved in *Campylobacter* cases are contacted by letter.

The local Consultant for Communicable Disease Control, employed by Public Health (England), will provide the Service with advice regarding specific problems relating to infectious disease.

Advice on food poisoning is available on the Council's website.

The Council is notified when medical practitioners confirm that a resident of the City is suffering from food poisoning. The Service liaises closely with relevant laboratories and the Health Protection Agency in order to effectively investigate all such cases.

The Service maintains close links with Public Health (England) in order to respond to incidents of ill health. Matters relating to food poisoning cases and sampling programmes are discussed during regular meetings. The Public Analyst and Health Protection Agency will be contacted in order to assist with expertise where any additional problems arise. Similar networks exist within the region, nationally and with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Food Hygiene Forum.

Relevant policies published by Public Health (England) include:

- Policy for the investigation and control of a *Cryptosporidiosis* outbreak in the community associated with mains water supply;
- An agreed approach to *Campylobacter* investigations in the North East;
- Standard *Salmonella* questionnaires;
- Standard Verocytotoxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (VTEC) questionnaire; and

- Standard NE HPT Cryptosporidium surveillance questionnaire.

Statistics of cases notified over recent years

YEAR TO 31 MARCH	CAMPYLOBACTER	SALMONELLA	CRYPTOSPORIDIA	FOOD POISONING & SUSPECTED FP	SHIGELLA	ESCH. COLI	OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ORGANISMS	TOTALS
2009	306	58	26	24	5	2	2	423
2010	357	52	38	12	4	4	4	471
2011	440	28	27	11	3	2	0	511
2012	286	38	17	6	2	12	2	363
2013	329	40	48	19	2	3	3	444
2014	353	35	29	61	5	4	10	497

YEAR TO 31 MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	TOTALS
2009	19	35	50	48	48	41	50	36	22	20	28	26	423
2010	28	38	66	44	40	56	56	41	24	21	24	33	471
2011	37	28	57	90	58	47	57	46	23	21	23	24	511
2012	26	43	30	39	47	32	33	27	24	24	26	12	363
2013	27	36	56	38	36	65	54	29	20	24	29	30	444
2014	23	46	48	49	45	50	76	47	21	36	38	28	497

3.7 Feed and Food Safety Incidents

The Service is committed to responding appropriately to all Feed and Food Alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency in accordance with the relevant code of practice. The level of response is determined by the category of response required and the individual circumstances of the incident.

3.8 Liaison with other organisations

The Service seeks to co-operate in joint working with other local authorities in the North East. In relation to animal feed, information sharing and joint working is coordinated by the North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA) and via the Local Government Association Knowledge Hub. In respect of food matters, Environmental Health Officers liaise with colleagues via the North East Food Liaison Group and the North East sampling and Public Protection Groups.

Officers of the Service meet with the six neighbouring authorities, i.e. those in Tyne and Wear and Durham and Northumberland, in the North East Food Liaison Group. This group facilitates close cooperation between the representatives. Officers are also involved with sampling sub-groups and South of Tyne meetings involving Public Health (England), Local Authorities and the Primary Care Trust. These meetings involve representatives from the relevant bacteriological laboratories and communicable disease specialists.

Officers liaise frequently with Council colleagues in connection with food matters, including catering and school meals, and with regard to building control and planning applications.

3.9 Feed and Food Safety and Standards promotional work

Officers give advice and information in the course of inspections and other visits. The Environmental Health team also offer training for the CIEH Level 2 and 3 awards in Food Safety in Catering.

The Healthy Home award scheme was first provided by the Service in 1997, and has developed and expanded. A total of thirty Healthy Home awards were presented in 2012/13.

Homes must have a food hygiene rating of three stars or above, have a balanced menu and have good documented health and safety procedures.

During 2013/14:

- Eleven courses in Level 2 Food Safety in Catering were attended by 146 delegates; and
- One course in Level 3 Food Safety in Catering was attended by 13 candidates.

Those feed establishments registered within the City receive information on the importance of feed control during inspections.

Basic food hygiene information for consumers is available on the Council's website. Similarly, advice is also available on food poisoning organisms and what to do in the event of suspicion of illness caused by the consumption of contaminated food.

4. Resources

4.1 Staffing Allocation

Environmental Health personnel specialising in food comprise:

- Principal Environmental Health Officers (1.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE))
- Senior Environmental Health Officers (1.5 FTE)
- Technical Officer (1 FTE – working towards Higher Certificate)
- Senior Environmental Health Officers (Part time on food and working on acquiring advanced competency for complex processes) (1 FTE)
- Health Promotion Specialist Environmental Health Officer (Part time on food matters) (0.3 FTE)

- Health Promotion Assistant (Part time on food matters) (0.5 FTE)

All food specialist Environmental Health Officers have over two years' experience in food matters and are fully competent in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

Additionally, Environmental Health Officers working on other specialist areas of law are building competencies in food safety in order to provide support and assist in periods of high demand.

Total of Environmental Health Officers allocated to Food work: 4.3 FTE

Total of other officers: 1.5 FTE

Trading Standards personnel specialising in feed law comprise:

Trading Standards Officers (Part time on feed matters) (0.3 FTE)

4.2 Staff Development Plan

Staff appraisals are undertaken regularly and the findings are included in staff development and training plans. A competency matrix has been developed in line with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice and training needs have been assessed. An action plan in order to ensure that personnel are fully competent commensurate with the activities assigned will be delivered during the current year. Individuals will receive specific training where appropriate and all food specialist Environmental Health Officers will complete the required ten hours of food specific Continual Professional Development.

The Service cooperates regionally through the Food Liaison Group and with the Food Standards Agency in order to source low cost training.

Training days and training sessions on subjects are programmed as necessary.

Any inexperienced officers assigned to food work are supervised and receive training commensurate with the Code of Practice.

Officers enforcing feed work undertake training provided by the FSA and will utilise online training provided by the Trading Standards Institute.

5. Quality Assessment

An internal monitoring procedure will be adopted this year to be reviewed on a monthly basis by the Principal Environmental Health Officer specialising in Food matters in order to monitor progress with regard to all premises.

Monitored inspections will be recorded on a database during this year in addition to random file checks, case load meetings and specific premises interventions. Consistency checks will be adopted and a peer review training course will be undertaken.

Visits to feed establishments are recorded and feedback on the inspection provided to the business operator. Annual returns on activities are provided to the FSA.

6. Review

6.1 Review against Service Plan

The Service Plan is approved by Cabinet annually and a review against the plan is undertaken mid-year with consideration of achievements against targets. In the periods either side of the mid-year review, managers monitor progress with case loads and regular meetings

The Service carried out 1103 inspections of food premises in 2013/14 with 984 different food premises being visited. A total of 1701 visits were made including inspections, revisits and sampling. 176 inspections were outstanding at the year end. These were completed by the end of May 2014.

6.2 Identification of any variance from the Service Plan

Any variance from the Service Plan will be reported at the Service's senior management team meetings. Any proposed changes and redeployment of resources will be entered into the meeting minutes.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

- a) Development of the Service in order to response to changes brought about by the Food Standards Agency's 'Food Law Code of Practice 2014';
- b) Undertaking of a review of Service operating procedures, including the production of a new premises inspection record document;
- c) Undertaking of a review of the Service's procedure relating to complaints about food being not of the nature or substance demanded; and
- d) Undertaking of a review of the Service's enforcement policy in line with the Regulators' Code.

Appendix A

**Capital Programme Second Capital Review 2014/2015
(Including Treasury Management)**

Cabinet Meeting 8 October 2014

Extract of Report

	£000
2014/2015 Additional Schemes and Variation to Existing Schemes in excess of £250,0000 - Fully Funded	
Leader	
Strategic Land and Property Acquisitions As part of the Joint Venture agreement with the HCA to redevelop Central Sunnyside, the HCA have contributed £1.6m to allow the Council to acquire land interests to facilitate the regeneration of this area	1,600
Bridges Extension Costs associated with the extension of the Bridges Shopping Centre to accommodate Primark and a number of related units have recently been finalised and agreed. As the freeholder of the land and equity shareholder of the centre, the Council is required to contribute a capital sum toward specific costs of the development, in proportion to the land ownership held. The Capital sum has been confirmed at £1.362m, funded by £1.2m held in capital contingencies and £0.162m earmarked capital reserves. Henceforth, the Council will benefit from increased ground rent following this extension, and this has been taken into account within the revenue budget.	1,362
Responsive Services and Customer Care	
Intelligence Hub Cabinet approved on 18th June 2014 the development and delivery of the Intelligence Hub Framework to integrate data, streamline decision making and reduce processing costs as part of the Council's Community Leadership Programme, to be funded on an invest to save basis (also £1.315m in 2015/2016)	1,384
Future Years Additional Schemes and Variation to Existing Schemes in excess of £250,0000 - Fully Funded	
City Services	
Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor Phase 3 (SSTC3) Cabinet approved on 18th June 2014, as part of the First Capital Review 2014/2015, the inclusion of £0.6m for initial design and development works in 2014/2015 for the SSTC3 project. Following this, the Local Growth Fund announcement on 7th July 2014 confirmed provisional funding of £40.5m for this project. This is to be match funded by £4.5m local contributions against the full estimated total cost of £45.0m. Cabinet subsequently approved on 3rd September 2014 to include this full project in the Council's Capital Programme.	44,400

Health Housing and Adult Services	
<p>Hetton Downs Regeneration</p> <p>Cabinet approved on 3rd September 2014 the variation to the Council's Capital Programme in relation to the Hetton Downs Renewal Area for Fairy Street, Edward Street and Caroline Street. In addition to the use of £0.555m of uncommitted funding from the empty property projects, this has been supplemented by £0.384m S106 funding. It is expected that outcomes will be delivered into 2015/2016, therefore the £0.384m additional investment has been profiled into that year.</p>	384

Cabinet 8th October 2014

**Budget Planning Framework 2015/2016 and Medium Term Financial Strategy
2015/2016 – 2017/2018**

Report of the Chief Executive and Head of Financial Resources

1 Purpose of Report

This report identifies the key factors influencing the development of the Councils financial plans into the medium term and sets out the Budget Planning Framework for the Council for 2015/2016. The report sets out the headlines and context for Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 which will be formally considered in due course.

2 Description of Decision

Cabinet is recommended:

- to agree the proposed Budget Planning Framework summarised at Section 11 of the report which will guide the preparation of the Revenue Budget for 2015/2016;
- to note that the full Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 will be presented to Cabinet in February

3 National Economic Context

3.1 Impact of the Deficit Reduction Plan

The Government has indicated its intention to continue to address the deficit by strictly following its deficit reduction plan. The latest position shows the overall reduction in national funding is expected to remain at 13.16% in 2015/2016. The Chancellor has also indicated public sector funding will continue to be reduced up until 2019/2020 to bring about a small budget surplus if they are successful at the next general election.

3.2 Inflation

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) moved below the Government's target level of 2% in January 2014 for the first time since December 2009. Whilst this reduction is welcomed, the impact of price increases on local government costs is not funded by central Government and must be contained within the Council budget planning.

CPI inflation reduced from 1.9% in June to 1.6% in July and the Bank of England predict that inflation will remain below 2% for the next 3 years.

3.3 Base Rate

The Bank Base Rate has remained at an all-time low of 0.5% since March 2009. The Bank of England announced forward guidance on their future plans in their August 2013 Quarterly Inflation report, stating that any increase in the current Base Rate would only be considered once the jobless rate has fallen to 7% or below. The forward guidance is subject to various provisos surrounding inflation and Mark Carney, the Governor of the Bank of England has emphasised that any base rate decisions will be driven by data.

Most forecasters think that increased growth and employment creation will lead to Base Rates increasing before 2016. Many expect that the first increase in base rates will be Q1 2015 with rates increasing gradually for the following 2 years and reaching 2.0% in Q1 2017. This position will continue to be monitored and reviewed and the impact taken into account in budget planning.

4 Government Funding

4.1 Revenue Spending Power 2015/2016

- 4.1.1 In January 2014 the Government provided indicative settlement figures for 2015/2016 alongside the final funding settlement for 2014/2015.
- 4.1.2 On the 22 July 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a technical consultation paper on the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2015/2016 (response deadline 25th September 2014).
- 4.1.3 The consultation documents include indicative exemplifications of the impact of the technical changes for each authority. The changes are, however, primarily presentational and the overall impact at this stage sees no change to the net Revenue Spending Power position of the Council, as included in the indicative settlement for 2015/2016, and which was previously reported to Cabinet in January 2014.
- 4.1.4 The Council's response to the consultation documents, submitted in accordance with Government deadlines, is set out at Appendix 1 for information.
- 4.1.5 While the technical changes result in no change to the reduction in Revenue Spending Power for the council previously reported to Cabinet in January 2014, work is on-going in respect of additional resources included by the Government in the Revenue Spending Power calculation in respect of the Better Care Fund pooled budget arrangements and Social Care Act New Burdens (further detail at section 4.3.2). The outcome of these could impact on the council funding position.

4.1.6 In responding to the Government's technical consultation questions, the Council has taken the opportunity to re-iterate the essential need for the Government to seek to ensure a fairer settlement for the council in 2015/2016 and future years.

- It is now widely acknowledged that the more deprived areas of the country, who are most reliant on government support, have seen the biggest and most disproportionate cuts to their funding. This has had the consequence of significant impact variations to protected groups across the country but particularly in the most deprived areas of the country such as Sunderland.
- It is disappointing that the Government Equality Impact Assessment referred to in the consultation does not address the key issue of lack of fairness in the way funding reductions have been allocated to individual local authorities. The government's overview of the equality impact assessment states that: *"The changes in funding could, without mitigating action and depending on spending decisions made by authorities, have an adverse impact on protected groups. It is not possible at this stage to make an assessment of whether any such impacts will be "substantial" – the policy decisions are high-level ones about distribution between authorities and the equalities impacts will depend on the decisions made by authorities."*

This stated position fails to acknowledge the inherent unfairness in the distribution of the reductions allocated by Government or that subsequent council actions are driven based on the level of funding reductions received from Government.

4.2 2016/2017 and Beyond

4.2.1 The Government have yet to provide any detailed funding allocations for 2016/2017 and beyond. It would be usual for the government to include an indicative funding position for each authority for 2016/2017 when the next Local Government Finance settlement for 2015/2016 is released in December.

4.2.2 At this stage it is uncertain if that will be the case this year as the government may not want to provide this detail ahead of the general election or before a spending review that would likely follow the general election. While none of the political parties have yet set out specific medium term spending plans should they win the May 2015 election, there is unlikely to be a relaxation of the overall spending position:

- The Conservatives have indicated that they will continue with austerity measures into the medium term, in particular through reducing the welfare budget up to 2017/2018,
- The Labour party have said they will balance the books and deliver a surplus on the current budget and reduce national debt over the next Parliament. They have also indicated that they would retain the public sector spending plans for 2015/2016 of the current government.

The incoming government would, regardless of party, be expected to quickly carry out a review of its available resources and to assess its spending plan options and decisions in light of its key policies. However the long term prognosis is for public sector cuts to continue on a similar trajectory to 2015/2016.

4.3 Other Funding Streams Issues

4.3.1 Integrated Health and Social Care Pooled Budget

The Better Care Fund (BCF) was announced at the 2013 Spending Round. It mandates that CCGs and local authorities (LAs) will pool £3.8bn in 2015/2016, with the aim of improving care for frail and elderly people. Within this £1.9bn is an additional contribution from the NHS which would otherwise have been used for routine health spending.

The indicative settlement figures for Sunderland for 2015/2016 referred to at section 4.1 above include £22.4m of pooled NHS and LA Better Care funding. Plans are currently being developed with the CCG which will enable savings to be delivered in line with council wide savings requirements.

The Fund is intended to support schemes which promote better integration between social care and health services with the aim of improving patients' health and experience of the service while also delivering financial savings by reducing non-elective admissions to hospital and permanent admissions to residential care.

4.3.2 Implementation of the Care Act

The Care Act received Royal Assent on 14th May 2014 and will be implemented in 2 phases. Phase 1 will be implemented April 2015 and Phase 2 April 2016.

The Act includes provision for:

- a minimum eligibility threshold across the country – a set of criteria that makes it clear when local authorities will have to provide support to people.
- local authority duty to consider the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of the individual needing care. They will also have a new duty to provide preventative services to maintain people's health.
- the care system to be built around each person – through Personal Budgets.
- a cap on personal 'care costs' (not including accommodation costs) of £72,000.
- carers to be entitled to an assessment in their own right.

Each of the above brings with it additional costs for Local Authorities. The indicative settlement for 2015/2016 referred at section 4.1 above included for £1.8m of new burdens money to cover these costs. However:

- the LGA have recently issued guidance showing 2 exemplifications of current considerations as to how the national funding could be allocated. Based on the two exemplifications the indicative funding allocation for Sunderland could be reduced by between £0.466m and £0.566m.

- on-going modelling of the financial impact of the Act and work carried out to date indicate that the indicative funding being suggested by Government of £1.8m may be sufficient to meet the likely additional costs, however any reduction as set out above would result in shortfall.

The impact will be kept under review and incorporated into the budget planning once the position becomes clearer following the current consultation.

4.3.3 Public Health Funding

The final tranche of the Public Health transfer is the commissioning responsibilities for 0-5 year olds from NHS England to LAs on 1st October 2015. The baseline expenditure on 0-5 services will provide the basis for each local authority's individual allocations for 2015/2016. It is anticipated this funding will be announced alongside the local government finance settlement in December 2014. Funding will sit within the overall 'ring-fenced' public health budget.

Over time it is expected that funding allocations will move towards a needs-based funding formula, in the same way as anticipated for the wider public health grant. Consultation on the basis of a future funding formula undertaken in 2012 enabled indicative allocations to be calculated from proposed formula recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation. The analysis indicated a potential substantial reduction in funding for Sunderland of £5.9m per annum if the formula was introduced. Sunderland have formally opposed the proposed funding allocation which is viewed as unfair and in particular does not take into account existing prioritised spend on Public Health within the city or reflect need appropriately. Latest indications are that a new formula will not be introduced until after 2015/2016.

On 10th September the Department of Health announced funding for 2015/2016 would be frozen at 2014/2015 levels.

4.3.4 Schools Funding

New funding arrangements were introduced from April 2013 for all schools and academies. This was the first stage of introducing a national funding formula in the next spending review period. The Government is seeking to develop a clear and transparent funding formula that supports the needs of pupils and enables Schools and Academies to be funded on a broadly comparable basis.

From April 2015 the DSG, Schools Block funding level, will increase by an additional £390m. The basis for distributing this funding is through calculation of a Minimum Funding Level (MFL) for each local authority area based on national averages. Indicative allocations show that Sunderland will not benefit from the additional funding as current funding levels exceed national averages. The government intends to introduce a national funding formula when their spending plans have been set for a longer period.

Long term the government is committed to reforming High Needs and Early Years Block funding as soon as possible and will begin research this autumn on the High Needs Block which is to be concluded by spring 2015 followed by consultation.

4.3.5 Independent Living Fund

The Independent Living Fund is a non-departmental public body funded by the Department of Work and Pensions. It currently makes direct cash payments to around 18,000 disabled people enabling them to purchase support and care services. In March 2014 the Government announced that the Fund will close on 30 June 2015, to ensure all social care support is delivered through the mainstream system, rather than two separate systems. The funding and responsibility for meeting the on-going care and support needs of these individuals will be transferred to Local Authorities from 1 July 2015.

In the quarter ending March 2014 there were 63 Sunderland residents in receipt of ILF funding totalling £1.03m per annum. The un-ringfenced funding transfer is to be based on the actual expenditure incurred per claimant, meaning in theory no budget shortfall should arise. However individual reviews of claimants needs will be undertaken against the council's eligibility criteria and this will ultimately inform the costs incurred and whether funding is sufficient.

4.3.6 Education Services Grant (ESG)

The ESG is allocated on a simple per-pupil basis to local authorities and academies according to the number of pupils for whom they are responsible. In January 2013 the Chancellor announced a £200m reduction in ESG in 2015/2016. The ESG funding rate will be £87 per pupil representing a reduction of 23%. The amount of funding to be received by the Council reduces with each school that transfers to an academy. Provision has been included within the Budget Planning Framework for the impact of a reduction in funding and academy transfers.

4.3.7 Local Welfare Provision Grant

Grant of £1.2m has been received as a separate funding allocation in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 following the transfer of responsibilities from the DWP. However the funding allocations are not identifiable within the 2015/2016 indicative allocations as Government have indicated they have rolled this in to the Settlement Funding Assessment. It is therefore concluded that the reductions in revenue spending power previously reported and referred to at 4.1 include for a reduction in local welfare provision grant.

5 Other considerations which could impact on longer term planning

5.1 LGA / CIPFA Independent Commission on Local Government Finance

The Commission, established in June 2014, is exploring how reforms to the local government finance system could help address some of the current challenges for local authorities in promoting economic growth, reforming the welfare system and integrating health and social care. The commission intends to produce advice for both the government and the opposition on how best to ensure that the funding system for local government can move towards a settlement that is fair, locally accountable and sustainable in the long-term. The commission is currently gathering evidence on the issues and potential solutions, to which Sunderland council is contributing in association with ANEC. It is hoped that the outcome of the Commissions work will influence government policy with a view towards a fairer and more equitable funding system.

5.2 Localism / Devolution

The Government announced a localism drive in the Autumn Statement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said would include 'new money, new infrastructure, new transport and new science, and real new civic power too'. It is not yet known how the localism drive will operate and whether funding will be redirected from local authorities towards local enterprise partnerships and other regeneration agencies.

In addition the debate surrounding Scotland's independence referendum has been accompanied by increasing debate over

- the impact of the outcome of the referendum on the fiscal position of England and how that might impact on funding available to English councils
- devolution of powers within England, including control over tax raising powers such as business rates, stamp duty, council tax and other taxes in order to help boost growth in the cities. The debate includes the level of government to which powers should be devolved e.g. city, regional (combined authorities) etc. It is not possible at this stage to assess the impact, of what would be a major shift in the government's fiscal policy / controls, if approved or how it would affect the resources of individual authorities, or the regions until more details emerge. This may not be until after the next general election.

6 Summary Outlook

6.1 At this stage, the outlook for local government funding remains very bleak with continued unprecedented reductions and change up until 2019/2020 at least regardless of political party in power.

6.1.1 Final funding allocations for 2015/2016 will not be made available until the government releases its detailed information as part of the local government finance settlement for 2015/2016 in December. At this stage therefore it is proposed to progress with 2015/2016 planning based on the indicative reductions in funding of £25m previously reported to Cabinet in January 2014.

- 6.1.2 It has been recent practise for government to provide indicative allocations for the one further year ahead e.g. 2016/2017 at the same time as the final settlement for 2015/2016. However given the government elections in May 2015 it is unlikely that this will be the case this year. However as the long term prognosis is for cuts to continue on a similar trajectory to 2015/2016, at this stage it seems prudent to assume a similar level of reduction to be experienced in 2015/2016 for 2016/2017.

7 Local Income Position

7.1 Council Tax

- 7.1.1 The Localism Act provides for the provision of referendums to veto excessive council tax increases. This effectively places a limit on council tax increases and if councils exceed the government limits then the public will be able to vote to agree or veto any considered 'excessive' increase.

For 2014/15 a referendum requirement applied for proposed increases in Council Tax above 2%.

- 7.1.2 Government have confirmed Council Tax Freeze Grant funding at a rate of 1% to compensate those Authorities who decide not to increase their Council Tax in 2015/2016 and they have built this into the indicative allocations and base funding position. There is no government guidance beyond this financial year.

Consideration as to the affordability of this approach will be taken once firmer information on funding levels for 2015/2016 is available.

- 7.1.3 The Local Council Tax Support Scheme was introduced from April 2013 and is currently in its second year of operation. A review of the scheme is currently being undertaken to inform whether any changes should be introduced for the 2015/2016 financial year. Proposals arising from the review will be subject to consultation and the financial impacts included in the budget planning as necessary.

- 7.1.4 Growth in the council tax base as a result of new homes built will be kept under review and additional income reflected in the budget planning as appropriate.

7.2 Business Rates

- 7.2.1 Under the Retained Business Rates funding arrangement for local Government implemented from April 2013, the Council retains locally 49% of increased income arising from growth in Local Business Rates base (equally it shares the risk of any under achievement of income targets).

- 7.2.2 Inherent within the scheme is growth arising from annual inflationary increases to Business Rates. However, there is continuing uncertainty specifically around appeals and avoidance tactics which can significantly impact on the level of income achieved.

- 7.2.3 The most significant opportunity for Business Rates growth arises through new developments. Sunderland has benefited from such growth, mainly through the provision of two new supermarkets during 2013/2014. The position will be kept under review and additional income reflected in the Budget Planning Framework as appropriate.

7.3 Reserves and Balances

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.

In accordance with the approach adopted to date all earmarked reserves will be revisited as part of the budget process to ensure they still accord with the Council's priorities and overall funding position.

8 Spending Pressures and Commitments

It is proposed to take into account the following spending commitments in the Budget Planning Framework for 2015/2016, noting that at this stage in a number of cases specific cost detail require finalisation and will be subject to review and refinement throughout the budget setting process:

8.1 Replacement of One-off Resources and Budget Pressures in 2015/2016

In meeting the funding gap for 2014/2015 the Council utilised £0.5m of one off resources. This therefore represents an on- going pressure into 2015/2016.

8.2 Pay and Pensions

8.2.1 Pay

The Government has indicated a limit on public sector pay of a 1.0% pay increase. For planning purposes a prudent provision has been built into the MTFS from 2015/2016.

8.2.2 Pensions

The Triennial Actuarial review of the Local Government Pension Scheme was undertaken in 2013 covering 2014/2015 to 2016/2017. The outcome of the review has been reflected in the planning for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.

The Pensions Act 2008 introduced the requirement to automatically enrol certain workers into a pension scheme. The Council opted to defer auto-enrolment for current workers until 2017. A cost pressure of £2.6m will be factored into the medium term planning.

8.2.3 National Insurance

The Pensions Act 2014, provided for reform of the state pension system, introducing a single tier pension. As part of the reforms, the contracting out for occupational pension schemes from April 2016 will be abolished. For employers, the abolition of contracting out will result in an increased cost of 3.4% on national insurance contributions. The Act provides no method to alleviate the additional financial burden. The impact for 2016/2017 is reflected within the planning.

8.2.4 Workforce Transformation

Financial implications associated with workforce transformation will be kept under review and accommodated from transitional resources set aside for this purpose.

8.3 Energy Prices

Energy and vehicle fuel prices continue to be volatile. It is therefore proposed that prudent provision be included for continued annual increases in charges for gas, electricity and vehicle fuel for the medium term.

8.4 Adult Services Demand Issues

The increasing longevity of the national and specifically, the city's, population continues to place pressure on Adult Social Services budgets. In addition, client expectations and increasing demand to support clients with complex cases to enable clients to maintain independent living, is requiring reconfigured services and additional investment. The position will be kept under review and prudent provision included as appropriate.

8.5 Children's Services Demand Pressures

There continues to be increasing demand pressures in relation to safeguarding and specifically external placements and prudent provision will be made as appropriate to the strategy.

8.6 Economic Recovery

Significant resources have previously been earmarked to support service pressures and actions in response to the economic position as part of the previous years' budgets. Given the continuing uncertainties, this will need to be kept under review and appropriate provision made throughout the budget process.

8.7 Welfare Reform

The Council continues to monitor and plan for the significant number of Welfare Reform changes and the potential adverse impacts anticipated across the city. The Council is working with a range of agencies to mitigate the impact and support those affected by the Welfare Reform changes. This will need to be kept under review and appropriate provision made throughout the budget process.

8.8 Capital Financing

Prudential borrowing has been provided for within the medium term financial position in relation to known investments over that period, together with a provision to provide future flexibility at this stage to enable strategic priorities of the Council to proceed, in the future.

9 Spending Priorities

9.1 Priorities from Consultation

9.1.1 The Budget Consultation for 2014/2015 was undertaken within the context of the need to significantly reduce spending for a third year in light of the Government funding reductions. The findings demonstrated general support amongst respondents for the direction of travel of services and for the councils overall approach to making savings.

9.1.2 The proposals for the 2015/2016 Budget Consultation process are set out elsewhere on today's Cabinet agenda. The approach adopted will continue to explore views of residents about the direction of travel for services in response to the changing financial landscape.

10 Summary Resource, Pressures and Commitments Position

10.1 The total reduction in resources and spending pressures represents the estimated gross funding gap. However at this stage there is significant uncertainty in relation to:

- The general economic recovery and public sector finances (direct connectivity between the economy and public finances)
- Settlement confirmation for 2015/2016, probably not available until early December
- The level of government funding reductions in 2016/2017 and beyond, and how this could be further impacted upon by the outcome of the elections, LGA Commission and government policy reviews such as localism and devolution.
- The outcome of the development revised funding approaches e.g. Better Care Integrated Funding, the Care Act implications,
- Significant other changes within the system (Welfare Reform, Schools etc.)

10.2 The level of funding reduction as currently presented represents an unprecedented challenge given the already compound impact of significant reductions and increased cost pressures since 2010. The prospect of significant reductions being required year on year continues over the medium term with further reduction in Council resources and capacity over the 2015-2018 period.

- 10.3 As outlined the savings requirement for 2015/2016 and particularly beyond remains uncertain. However high level estimated reductions over the next three years are set out below:

MTFS 2015/2016 to 2017/2018	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	Total £m
Updated Three Year Planning	36.3	38.2	33.4	107.9

- 10.4 As part of the 2014/2015 budget process initial high level plans were approved for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 to part address the initial funding gap for those years. After taking these plans into account the remaining funding gap is as set out below.

MTFS 2015/2016 to 2017/2018	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	Total £m
Estimated Funding Gap	36.3	38.2	33.4	107.9
Previously approved high level plans	(19.3)	(0.5)		(19.8)
Remaining Estimated Funding Gap	17.0	37.7	33.4	88.1

11 Budget Planning Framework

11.1 Community Leadership Programme

- 11.1.1 The improvement programme framework focuses on all services understanding and fulfilling their Community Leadership role which seeks to understand and meet most important community needs. The approach seeks to enable the Council to evolve into one which is focussed on facilitating those services which make a real difference to the lives of residents and which focusses available resources on the Council's strategic priorities - the Economy, Health, and Education and Skills. The key components of the approach include:

- Development of improved service and customer insight and intelligence - with the aim of ensuring a clear understanding of the contribution each service makes to the strategic priorities and the difference made to the lives of residents. This will provide the Council with the information necessary to understand and prioritise what it needs to do and ensure it is doing the right things to achieve the required outcomes.
- Community Development including:
 - recognising the council role in enabling partners, business and residents to come together and put in place foundations for a successful city whether this be for future service delivery models (e.g. Health and Social Care) or for regeneration activity;
 - working within communities and the voluntary sector to help build resilient and sustainable communities that can also support the delivery of services in the future by harnessing untapped assets to strengthen them and make them more independent.
- Demand Management - Developing the strategies and policies that enable the Council to manage demand and facilitate those services which make a difference in the most effective way within communities;

- Cost of Supply and Customer Services Network (CSN) development - Continued focus on the CSN as the gateway and connector of demand and supply for services with the aim of targeting resources to areas of greatest need, encouraging and supporting self-help, alongside continued delivery of efficiencies within Council services;
- Development of alternative models for service delivery – continuing to look at the most effective and efficient models of provision for services that make a difference over the short to medium term to ensure the residents of Sunderland are offered the best possible public services within the resources available;
- Strategic Services and Fixed Assets – further and continual review to meet the future needs of the Council and its communities and maximise use of Council assets;
- Integrated Commissioning – to enable a cross cutting approach to future commissioning of services to ensure the council commission services in the most effective way that meets changing needs whilst reducing the overall cost of the function

11.1.2 The framework aims to :

- Ensure services are responsive to local needs;
- Protect core services particularly those most vulnerable;
- Target resources rather than provide universal services.

11.2 Addressing the Savings Requirement

It is proposed the budget planning framework as set out below is adopted:

- General Issues
 - Budget planning to be based on high level position outlined at paragraph 10 and updated in light of the Local Government Settlement in December;
 - Provision for spending commitments be included at this stage on the basis set out at paragraph 8 and kept under review;
 - Spending priorities be considered in line with the finding of the budget consultation and emerging service improvement plans as set out in paragraph 9;
 - Budgets be prepared on the basis that all spending pressures not specifically identified above as commitments be accommodated within Directorate cash limits;
 - All commitments against Delegated surpluses / reserves to be reviewed;
 - The position regarding Council Tax to be considered as part of the budget process
 - Commitments against general balances as set out in Appendix 2 be noted and updated throughout the budget process.

- **Current Budget Savings Programme:**

In accordance with the budget planning framework agreed for 2014/2015

- Original permanent planned savings for 2014/2015 will be achieved or an alternative must be delivered on an on-going basis in 2015/2016;
- Savings originally identified for 2015/2016 will be achieved. Alternative savings will need to be identified by Directorates where a proposal has become unviable;

- **Additional Savings Proposals**

Reflecting the Improvement Framework key principles as outlined at 11.1:

- A programme of activity be developed to address the gap;
 - Continue to press forward with consideration of plans for new models of service delivery and improving services while reducing cost;
 - Directorates be requested to bring forward additional savings plans to enable a programme of additional key service reviews to be proposed and agreed;
 - Continued focus on progressing Regeneration, Funding Leverage & Commercial Opportunities.
- In parallel with the above an in depth review to inform a budget plan which supports the strategic vision of the Council for a successful City is to be undertaken. The aim of the proposed approach is to review all Council services to inform budget planning proposals over the medium term and enable Members to prioritise savings proposals as funding becomes clearer for each financial year by:
 - Giving full transparency in respect of all services provided and their associated costs;
 - Enabling a full understanding of the statutory / legal context underpinning service provision;
 - Providing clarity in deciding what services should be enabled / facilitated / delivered in the future and if so in what form;
 - Informing the size, shape and scope of future core services of the council.

The framework will be robustly managed to ensure financial resilience is maintained.

12 Reasons for Decision

- 12.1 The Budget Planning Framework forms an essential part of the process of the preparation and compilation of the Revenue Budget for 2015/2016.

13 Alternative Options

- 13.1 There are no alternative options recommended.

14 Impact Analysis

- 14.1 Impact assessments of Directorate actions to ensure the achievement of savings targets and a balanced budget position will be undertaken within Directorates as each action is developed.

Response to the Local Government Finance Settlement 2015/2016 Technical Consultation

Sunderland City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the specific technical questions set out in the Government's Technical Consultation document released in July on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2015/2016.

In addition we would take this opportunity to re-iterate a number of key issues that we would ask ministers to consider regarding the current Business Rates Retention funding system, which the council views as unfair and which is putting essential services in Sunderland at risk.

Fairness and Equity

Government have asserted that councils such as Sunderland who receive more money than councils elsewhere have to take their fair share of cuts. However, this ignores why more grant was allocated to deprived areas at the outset i.e. to meet extra need and to recognise that deprived areas generally have relatively low council tax bases from which they can raise council tax income. Reducing grant funding for these areas has a more significant impact on services delivered because these Councils continue to have the same level of high needs but are limited in being able to increase their tax base to raise additional income.

The ability for Sunderland City Council to continue to provide the same level of service as other areas of the country is effectively being eroded and this will only worsen with successive funding cuts making it harder to meet even statutory responsibilities in respect of children and adult social care.

Allocating reductions in proportion to Revenue Support Grant results in those authorities who historically received most grant because of need, bearing the largest reductions. This is a major concern for this council and is one of the main reasons the reduction in Sunderland's Spending Power has been consistently higher than the national average over the last three years.

Revenue 'Spending Power'

In the Settlement announcement the government gave prominence to the "change in revenue spending power" as a measure of an Authority's resources. The Spending Power national average reductions stated by government are 2.9% for 2014/2015 and 1.8% for 2015/2016, however Sunderland Council does not feel this gives a true reflection of the sustained level of reductions faced.

- Sunderland's reductions in spending power of 4.7% in 2014/2015 and 3.9% in 2015/2016 are much higher than the national average,
- Sunderland will see its funding reduced by £72.1m (-22%) over the period 2011/2012 to 2015/2016 equating to an average cut of £576 per dwelling, significantly higher than the national average cuts of 14% and £300 per dwelling.
- A more stark comparison is evidenced if Sunderland is compared to Wokingham. Wokingham will see a £1.3m (+1%) increase in its funding between 2011/2012 and 2015/2016, equivalent to a £7 increase per dwelling.

This last example helps to demonstrate the disparity and unfairness of the funding cuts and the disproportionate distributional implications of the Business Rate Retention system given the differing socio economic position each council faces. Councils from the poorest and most deprived areas of the country face large spending power reductions whereas councils in the wealthiest areas will see increases in their spending power over the next two years.

Within Revenue Spending Power, Sunderland's Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) has been cut by 9.7% in 2014/2015 and by a further 14% in 2015/2016. The position becomes much worse when grants rolled into this measure and growth in business rates and council tax are excluded to show that the real reduction in the Council's Revenue Support Grant is showing a significant reduction of 17.4% in 2014/2015 and a 27.7% reduction in 2015/2016.

This illustrates that the former formula grant element that recognised low income resources and high needs is being significantly cut, and is disproportionately affecting the deprived areas of the country which are more reliant on this element of grant funding.

In calculating the Revenue Spending Power, the government includes Council Tax Freeze Grant, estimated New Homes Bonus, Council Tax base growth, Public Health Funding growth and particularly for 2015/2016, the new pooled NHS & Local Authority Better Care Fund. These funding elements essentially mask the real level of reduction being felt by Councils in their needs based funding. If Health monies are excluded from the calculation of spending power, the cut for Sunderland is much higher at 5.4% in 2014/2015 and 9.0% in 2015/2016. The Council requests that this funding should be made more transparent and where it is to meet additional demand that this is excluded from the Revenue Spending Power Calculation to enable a more open and more accurate disclosure of the level of cuts faced by the Council.

Council Tax Resource Equalisation

The Council requests that Government reinstates Council Tax Resource Equalisation to its 2013/2014 level.

- It will be recalled that this was introduced in 1993/1994 to recognise the differing abilities of Councils to raise income from their council tax bases. Councils with very high tax bases (e.g. Windsor & Maidenhead) received a large negative grant adjustment, and Council's with lower tax bases (such as Sunderland) received proportionally lower negative grant adjustments. In Sunderland the lowest (Band A) properties account for almost 63% of the Council Tax base. The comparative figure in Windsor and Maidenhead is 3%. This means that Windsor and Maidenhead can raise more money from the same percentage rise in Council Tax than Sunderland.
- From 2011/2012 this adjustment was cut significantly, benefiting wealthier high tax base authorities to the detriment of poorer, lower tax base authorities such as Sunderland. Recognising this was incorrect the Secretary of State restored the value of the Resource Equalisation adjustment to the 2010/2011 level in 2013/2014. It is therefore extremely disappointing that this adjustment has now been embedded within the Upper and Lower tier elements of the Settlement Funding Assessment, where it is no longer separately visible. As the Upper and Lower Tier elements receive no protection this means the Resource Equalisation component is being cut by around 11% in 2014/2015 and up to 25% over the next two years and will subsequently be eroded year on year. This issue is the single biggest cause of the disproportionate cuts in funding and spending power between poor and wealthy areas of the country.

Protection of some components of the funding system e.g. Council Tax Freeze Grant is at odds with the scale of cuts to the general grant funding within the SFA which are historically based on needs and available resources. (For Sunderland this element of funding is being cut by 11.2% in 2014/2015 and 13.9% in 2015/2016). The Council considers it should be those resources allocated based on need and available resources which should be protected. The continued reductions to general funding will inevitably affect those authorities most reliant on that funding. This will inevitably impact on services delivered to those most in need such as Adult and Children's social care.

- The Council asks Government to ensure the assumed unintended negative impact on the needs based element of the funding are fully considered especially in their revised equalities impact assessment
- The Council request that consistent cuts across all funding elements are applied to make the settlement fairer.

Holdbacks and Topslices

The council is opposed to the general principle of government holding back funds or top slicing of funds (e.g. Safety Net, New Homes Bonus, Capitalisation) as this takes away revenue funding from all authorities, but are being targeted for a specific use by only a limited number of authorities, or cannot be accessed in a fair and equitable way. The council would request that the government removes this feature from all future Settlements as they are seen as unnecessary and derisive.

Business Rates Appeals

The uncertainty caused by the impact of business rates appeals that can be back dated prior to 31st March 2013 (as far as 2010) is a major concern to the Council. The council must meet half the cost of any successful appeals, even though the government received the full benefit of business rates collected during the period 2010 to 2013. In addition the level of safety net has been set by government at too low a level to be of assistance to most Councils based on the experience of 2013/2014. It is requested that the government reconsiders this position and fully funds all appeals relating to those pre dating 31st March 2013.

Grant Formulae Data Review

The Council continues to challenge a funding system that takes no account of changing needs due to local economic circumstances. The decision not to update data used in grant formulae until 2020/2021 means local authorities must meet the costs of increasing demand for services without the appropriate level of resources that adequately reflect local needs and circumstances. This perpetuates the unfair impact of previous funding settlements evidenced since 2011/2012 whereby higher need areas such as Sunderland lose a greater proportion of funds than those from the more affluent authorities.

The council request government identifies a mechanism to reflect significant changes in need in the funding system similar to that which it developed for sparsity in the last local government finance settlement.

I trust that the Council's response to the specific technical questions as set out below will be given full consideration by ministers in due course.

Response to the Technical Questions

Question 1:

Do you agree that compensation for the cap should be paid on the basis of the reduction to retained business rates income adjusted to account for lower tariffs and top-ups, as in 2014-15?

Council Response:

No - local authorities should not lose out financially from this adjustment, which should be inflated by the relevant RPI index applied to business rates each year so that the amount retains its real terms value in future years, starting from 2015/16.

Question 2:

Do you agree that the 2014-15 Council Tax Freeze Grant should be rolled into Revenue Support Grant, and combined with the 2013-14 Council Tax Freeze funding element as a single element?

Council Response:

No – we would prefer the elements to be kept separate for transparency but acknowledge that it is more important that this funding element is clearly protected in future years.

Question 3:

Do you agree that, subject to satisfactory progress by individual authorities, the 2014-15 Efficiency Support Grant should be rolled in as a separate element for the qualifying authorities?

Council Response:

The Council is not affected by this grant but would agree that it would be more transparent if this was rolled in as a separate element in the current funding mechanism.

Question 4:

Do you agree that the 2014-15 Rural Services Delivery Grant should be rolled in and combined with the rural funding element?

Council Response:

Again the Council is not affected by this additional grant and actually opposed this grant award from being introduced in the previous grant consultation process on the grounds that Resource Equalisation was a much bigger and more fundamental issue that needed to be addressed to ensure the current funding system remained fair.

Question 5:

Do you agree with the proposed methodology for reducing funding to authorities which have fallen below the threshold for participation in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme, to take account of the loss in tax revenue to the Exchequer?

Council Response:

The Council is not affected by this issue but agrees with the rationale put forward.

Question 6:

Do you have any comments on the impact of the 2015-16 settlement on protected groups, and on the draft Equality Statement?

Council Response:

The Council has serious concerns over the draft Equality Statement which is seen as misrepresenting the actual position by linking council spending decisions as one of the main causes affecting the impact on special groups across the country but without acknowledging the significant and varied cuts to funding that they have endured. Importantly the government also fails to mention what mitigating actions they are taking to address the impact on special groups.

Local Authorities are adapting their service plans to accommodate the significant and continued government funding cuts but would argue that the past and current funding proposals have already had a huge impact and varied impact upon special groups across the country.

As set out earlier in the response, Sunderland has consistently seen significantly higher cuts to its Revenue Spending Power, since 2011/12, as compared to the national average position for all English authorities. Sunderland is one of the most deprived areas of the country and yet this council (and its residents) have endured some of the largest and most disproportionate cuts to funding whilst the Council has taken actions to help protect front line services wherever possible. The continued scale of the cuts, up until at least 2017/18, means that our policy of protecting the most vulnerable people, with the greatest needs, will not be possible to maintain.

The Council would therefore take exception to the government's Equality Statement and overall conclusions.

We would also take this opportunity to confirm previous Council responses to government funding consultations by requesting that the government reviews and rebalances the funding cuts it has implemented as a matter of urgency in order to make them fairer and more equitable across the country.

It could do this by taking the following actions:

- Reviewing the current Business Rate Retention (BRR) funding mechanism with a move towards a more needs based approach rather than the incentivisation approach being adopted;
- Protecting Resource Equalisation within the current Business Rates Retention funding mechanism;
- Setting the Safety Net mechanism at realistic levels to help properly protect the most vulnerable councils from fluctuations in business rates income;
- Fully funding past business rates appeals;
- Reducing set asides / top slicing and allocating more funds directly to local government;
- Reviewing the New Homes Bonus Scheme by making it fairer in both how it is funded and how it is distributed;
- Reviewing Council Tax Freeze Grant to reflect a needs based approach to funding rather than the current unfair council tax base methodology which sees more affluent councils gain the most funding;
- Ensuring that all health / social care monies are transparent and allocated on need.

APPENDIX 2

Statement of General Balances

	£m
Balances as at 31st March 2013	7.570
Use of Balances 2013/2014	
- Contribution to Revenue Budget	(2.572)
Additions to Balances 2013/2014	
- Transfer from Strategic Investment Reserve to support transitional costs	2.572
Balances 31st March 2014	7.570
Use of / Addition to Balances 2014/2015	0
Estimated Balances 31st March 2015	7.570

Cabinet Meeting – 5th November 2014

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2013/2014

Report of the Head of Financial Resources

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report details the external auditors (Mazars) Annual Audit Letter (AAL) covering the year 2013/2014. A copy is attached.

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note and comment on the contents of this very positive report, and
- Refer the report to Council for their consideration.

3.0 Introduction

- 3.1 The Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to prepare an AAL and issue it to each audited body. The purpose of preparing and issuing an AAL is to communicate to the audited body and key external stakeholders, including members of the public, the key issues arising from the auditors' work, which auditors consider should be brought to the attention of the audited body.
- 3.2 The AAL summarises the findings of the 2013/14 audit, which comprises of two elements:
- An audit of the Council's financial statements
 - An assessment of the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources

4.0 Summary Position

- 4.1 The AAL is extremely positive overall, providing a strong endorsement of the financial management and governance arrangements in place across the Council.
- 4.2 The Auditor issued an unqualified audit opinion on the Council's financial statements and an unqualified Value for Money conclusion. The report confirms that the Council:
- Produced accounts for 2013/14 that gave a true and fair view of the council's financial position and that no objections to the accounts were received
 - Accurately reported its financial performance to government via the Whole of Government Accounts process
 - Had proper arrangements in place to secure value for money.

- Was financially resilient and had managed its financial position very well as both budget setting and close budget monitoring were considered robust which had culminated in an underspend of £5m despite having to successfully deliver continued significant financial savings of over £35m in respect of cuts in government funding and other cost pressures without the need for redundancies.
- It was recognised that the council had already delivered £135m of savings for the period 2011/2012 up to the end of 2013/2014 and had made significant changes to secure its future viability as a community leadership council in 2013/14, through implementing alternative models of service delivery, working with partners (most notably establishing the North East Combined Authority and entering into a local asset backed vehicle (LABV) to accelerate economic regeneration in the city) and has also made other significant transformational changes to deliver challenging savings targets whilst improving service delivery.
- Is aware of the continued and significant further grant reductions it is facing and is continuing to identify ways of improving service efficiencies and ways of working to further improve service delivery and outcomes with fewer resources.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 Not applicable as the report is for information only.

6. List of Appendices

Appendix A - Sunderland City Council Annual Audit Letter 2013/2014

Annual Audit Letter 2013/14

Sunderland City Council



October 2014

Mazars LLP
Rivergreen Centre
Aykley Heads
Durham
DH1 5TS

Members
Sunderland City Council
Civic Centre
Burdon Road
Sunderland
SR2 7DN

October 2014

Dear Members

Annual Audit Letter 2014

We are delighted to present to you the Council's Annual Audit Letter.

We carried out the audit in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice for Local Government bodies as issued by the Audit Commission and delivered all expected outputs in line with the timetable established by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 and the National Audit Office.

2013/14 has been another challenging year for the Council and like most other authorities in the North East and across the country Sunderland City Council has faced difficult decisions on its spending priorities and plans for the future. We reflect on these matters in the value for money part of this letter. However, we were pleased to issue an unqualified opinion on the statement of accounts and value for money conclusion.

I would like to express my thanks for the assistance of the Council's finance team, as well as senior officers and the Audit and Governance Committee, during the audit.

If you would like to discuss any matters in more detail then please do not hesitate to contact me on 0191 383 6300 or mark.kirkham@mazars.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

Mark Kirkham
Mazars LLP

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Our reports are prepared in the context of the Audit Commission's 'Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies'. Reports and letters prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to members or officers are prepared for the sole use of the authority and we take no responsibility to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party.

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01 Overall messages

Purpose of this letter

Our Annual Audit Letter provides a summary of our work and findings for the 2013/14 audit period for Member and other interested parties.

In addition to the summary outlined in this letter, our Audit Completion Report that we presented to the Council's Audit Committee on 26 September 2014 provides a more detailed analysis of the work we have undertaken in 2013/14.

Our audit of the statement of accounts

We issued an audit report including an unqualified opinion on the Council's statement of accounts on 30 September 2014.

The production of the statement of accounts is a significant technical challenge involving a great deal of work by the Council's officers. We appreciate the cooperation of management and the patience, courtesy and assistance shown to us in the completion of our work. The working papers supporting the statement of accounts were of good quality and officers were responsive in following up the queries we raised.

Our main findings from the audit were:

- a number of agreed amendments to the financial statements;
- a small number of unadjusted misstatements where errors were not material; and
- the overall quality of the final statement of accounts was good.

Our value for money conclusion

We performed our work in line with the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice for Local Government bodies and the Commission's guidance for 2013/14. Our audit report included a conclusion that the Council had proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Our work in this area focussed on the two criteria specified by the Audit Commission, and considered whether the Council had proper arrangements for:

- securing financial resilience; and
- challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Financial Resilience

The Council has managed its financial position well. Forecasting arrangements and close monitoring ensured the delivery of spending within budget. The outturn report for 2013/14 shows that the Council underspent by £5m against the revenue budget. The capital outturn was £51m, with net slippage of £16.7m being carried forward to 2014/15.

Overall, the Council has delivered £135m of savings in the period 2010/2011 to 2013/2014.

The annual revenue budget for 2014/15 includes a further £35.6m in savings requirements. The Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out how the Council proposes to deal with the difficult economic climate and the further funding cuts that are required. In the three year period 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17, the Council expects to have to deliver a total of £113m in savings.

The earmarked reserves set aside for specific plans and projects will help the Council to deliver its priorities in the coming years. These reserves provide some flexibility if the Council needs to invest to save, for example, but there is a recognition that reserves can not be used to sustain services and the underlying budget reductions identified will need to be delivered.

Securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness

In recent years, the Council has made significant transformational changes to deliver challenging savings targets, but it has also sought to maintain and improve service delivery.

The Council continues to deliver an ambitious programme which has included:

- securing a City Deal to help deliver the new Wear Crossing and pursue the plans to develop a new advanced manufacturing site near Nissan;
- progressing the physical and economic regeneration of the City , for example, with infrastructure work on the old Vaux site and in the City Centre, and by entering into a local asset backed vehicle (LABV) with private sector partners to accelerate economic regeneration more widely;
- implementing alternative models of service delivery, including establishing two new local authority trading companies, Sunderland Live Ltd and Sunderland Care and Support Ltd;
- exploring and delivering transformation in a range of services including leisure and libraries; and
- working with its partners to establish a Combined Authority so that economic growth, skills and transformation improvement can be delivered on a regional basis.

The challenge for the future is ensuring that the well established track record of delivering results can be continued.

Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

We provide assurance to the National Audit Office (NAO), as the auditor of central government departments, in relation to the consistency of the Council's WGA consolidation pack with the audited statement of accounts. We reported that your consolidation pack was consistent with the audited statement of accounts on 30 September 2014.

Our other responsibilities

As the Council's appointed external auditor, we have other powers and responsibilities as set out in the Audit Commission Act 1998. These include responding to questions on the accounts raised by local electors as well as a number of reporting powers such as reporting in the public interest. We did not receive any questions or objections in relation to your 2013/14 accounts from local electors, nor did we exercise our wider reporting powers.

02 Fees

As outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 28 March 2014, the Audit Commission sets a scale fee for our audit and certification work. The fees applicable to our work in 2013/14 are summarised below.

Element of work	As previously reported	Final Fee
Code audit work ¹	£179,562	£183,802
Certification work ²	£12,412	£12,412
Non-audit work ³	£35,500	£35,500
Total	£227,474	£231,714

All fees exclude VAT

¹ There has been an increase in fees for Code audit work since we reported to you in our Audit Strategy Memorandum in March 2014. The increase in fee of £4,240 is explained as follows:

- £3,000 – an additional fee in relation to the Port of Sunderland accounts; this additional fee has been agreed by officers and is awaiting approval by the Audit Commission;
- £740 - this increase in fee has arisen because the Audit Commission no longer makes certification arrangements for the NNDR 3 return and, as a result we have had to undertake additional audit testing to obtain suitable assurance over relevant entries in the Council's accounts. This assurance would have previously been obtained from work to certify the NNDR 3 return. The Audit Commission advised all audit suppliers of the expected additional fees arising from this additional work and we can confirm that the additional fee we have charged is in line with that prescribed by the Audit Commission; and
- £500 – an additional fee in relation to risk assessment work in respect of Private Finance Initiative schemes; this additional fee was agreed by officers and was approved by the Audit Commission.

² The previously reported fee is the fee reported in the Certification of Claims and Returns Work Plan in June 2014. This reduced from the original estimate of £15,600 reported in the Audit Strategy Memorandum, due to the removal of council tax benefits and teachers pensions from the scope of this work. The final fee of £12,412 outlined above in relation to certification work is an estimate as we are yet to complete our work on certifying the Council's Housing Benefit claim. We will confirm the final fee charged for certification work when we issue our Annual Certification Report.

³ An analysis of the total fee for non-audit work, which was reported in the Audit Strategy Memorandum in March 2014, is included on the next page of this report.

There are two additional areas of work, which are not yet reflected in the fee table:

- The certification of the Teachers Pensions Return – the arrangements for this have changed and these are still being clarified with officers and with the Teachers Pensions Agency; and
- s256 agreements with the CCG and / or NHS England – we have been asked to estimate the cost of work on these returns, but we have not yet completed our estimate.

Non-audit services	2013/14 Actual Fee
Review of Fees and Charges	£15,650
Review of Advertising	£14,850
Review of Internal Audit	£3,500
Tax advisory services	£1,500
Total fee	£35,500

All fees exclude VAT

Any additional fees arising from work in relation to the Teachers Pensions Return and / or s256 agreements will be reported in future Audit Progress Reports to the Audit and Governance Committee.

03 Future challenges

We see the main challenge facing the Council, along with other local authorities and the wider public sector, is the continued pressure on the public finances and the need to plan for further reductions in spending power, coupled with increased demand for services.

In our comments earlier in this report, we summarised how the Council has dealt with these challenges so far, its arrangements for ongoing financial resilience and its plans for the future, including an ambitious programme for transformational change.

There are still risks with these and the other initiatives the Council is engaged in and it is important that the Council continues to monitor closely the progress of its key projects and initiatives to ensure that the benefits envisaged are delivered for residents.

We will focus our 2014/15 audit on the risks that these challenges present to the financial statements and the ability to maintain proper arrangements for securing value for money.

We will also share with the Council relevant insights that we have as a national and international accounting and advisory firm with experience of working with other public sector and commercial service providers.

In terms of the technical challenges that officers face around the production of the statement of accounts, we will continue to work with them to share our knowledge of new accounting developments, and we will be on hand to discuss any issues as and when they arise.

Should you require any further information on this letter or on any other aspects of our work, please contact:

Name of Engagement Lead **Mark Kirkham**

Position **Director**

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CABINET – 5 NOVEMBER 2014

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of the Report

To consider the Council's draft final proposals for the statutory review of polling districts and polling places.

2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)

- 2.1 To note the submissions made to the council in respect of the review of polling districts and polling places for Sunderland City Council.
- 2.2 To note the final proposals in respect of the review.
- 2.3 To recommend to the Council the adoption of parliamentary polling districts and parliamentary polling places as set out in Appendix 3.
- 2.4 To recommend to the Council that the scheme contained in Appendix 3 be adopted in relation to local government elections.
- 2.5 To recommend that the Council request that the Electoral Registration Officer make the necessary amendments to polling districts for the register of electors published on 1 December 2014.
- 2.6 To recommend to the Council that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to make, where necessary, alterations to the designation of any polling place prior to the next full review in consultation with ward councillors and portfolio member.
- 2.7 To recommend to Council that the Electoral Registration Officer create fixed boundaries within local government wards for each polling district.

3. Introduction/Background

- 3.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty for all polling districts and polling places to be reviewed by the end of 2007, and then at least once every four years thereafter. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places. This change required that the next compulsory review should be started and completed between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015. Subsequent compulsory reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013.
- 3.2 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council may divide the city wards into polling districts and designate at least one polling place for each district. It also has to keep these arrangements under review. The boundaries of local government wards are not covered by this review as they are determined by the Boundary Commission for England.

- 3.3 For the purpose of this review, a polling district is a geographical area created by the sub division of a UK Parliamentary Constituency for the purposes of a UK Parliamentary Election. A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the Acting Returning Officer. A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting will take place.
- 3.4 Polling districts and polling places for other elections are not automatically part of the compulsory review. However, as polling districts and polling places for other elections are based on UK Parliamentary polling arrangements, the requirements of any other elections held within the local authority should be taken into consideration as part of the review.
- 3.5 The council has carried out informal reviews of polling districts and polling places each year since the ward boundaries were last reviewed and changed in 2004.
- 3.6 As part of the informal reviews, extensive consultation was held with council members, candidates, election agents and local Members of Parliament. Arising from that, amendments have been made to some polling districts and polling stations to improve access and comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 3.7 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a number of changes to the RPA 1983 in respect of the way reviews must be undertaken. The most important change is that the Council has to conduct a full review by 31 January 2015 and every five years thereafter. This does not, however, prevent changes being made at any time before the next full review.
- 3.8 Members may recall that Council agreed the current polling districts within the city in November 2011.
- 3.9 It should be noted that the Electoral Commission has no role in the review process itself. However, it can consider comments if people do not think the review has met the reasonable requirements of electors or taken sufficient account of the needs of disabled electors. The following can appeal to the commission:
- 30 or more registered electors
 - any person who made comments during the review
 - any non elector who has expertise in access to premises or facilities for disabled people
- As a result, the Electoral Commission can direct the Council to alter arrangements arising from the review and make these alterations itself if the Council does not do so within two months.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 In carrying out the consultation process, the Council has followed the advice of the Electoral Commission on how the review should be conducted. In general terms, the Council was required to announce the review would take place. This involved consulting with the Acting Returning Officer, who made representations on existing and proposed polling arrangements. The Council has since published the Acting Returning Officers proposals and invited comments which will be considered before a final decision is made. On 18 August 2014, the Council announced that a review was to take place and invited comments to be submitted by no later than 30 September. The review was advertised on the Council website, in the Customer

Services Centre Fawcett Street, council buildings and libraries throughout the City. A note of review was also sent to all ward councillors, 2014 local government election agents, Members of Parliament for the three Parliamentary constituencies in Sunderland, and various diversity groups.

5. Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 All comments have been considered, and site visits carried out where appropriate and the Acting Returning Officers final recommendations are contained in Appendix 3.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 The Council does not comply with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

7. Impact Analysis

7(a) Equalities – The proposals have taken into account as far as possible, the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

8. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

There are no other considerations.

9. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – a list of polling stations used at the 2014 Local Government and European Parliamentary Elections setting out the allocation of polling districts and polling places.

Appendix 2 – summary of the representations received and the comments from the Acting Returning Officer

Appendix 3 – proposed changes to polling districts and polling places.

10. Background Papers

Consultee's comments on the Acting Returning Officers recommendations

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/22/contents>

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/6/pdfs/ukpga_20130006_en.pdf

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/2/contents/enacted>

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/polling-place-reviews>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/2965/contents/made>

Polling Stations

Houghton and Sunderland South

Copt Hill	C1	C01	Eppleton Academy Primary School, Church Road, Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton-Le-Spring
	C2	C02	Bethany Christian Centre, Hetton Road, Houghton-Le-Spring
	C3	C03	Communal Hall, Burdon Avenue, Houghton-Le-Spring
	C4	C04	Houghton Nursery School, Nesham Place, Houghton-Le-Spring
	C5	C05	St Matthews Youth & Community Centre, Church Hall, Front Street, Newbottle, Houghton le Spring
	C6	C06	Philadelphia Cricket Club, Bunker Hill Ground, Back Shop Row, Philadelphia, Houghton-le-Spring

Doxford	D1	D01	Benedict Biscop C E Academy, Marcross Drive, Moorside, Sunderland
	D2	D02	The Box Youth Project, Hall Farm Road, Sunderland
	D3	D03	Doxford Park Community Association, Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park, Sunderland
	D4	D04	Mill Hill Primary School, Saint Court, Doxford Park, Sunderland
	D5	D05	Venerable Bede C E Secondary School, Entrance to the school, Tunstall Bank, Sunderland

Hetton	G1	G01	Hetton Lyons Primary School, Four Lane Ends, Hetton, Houghton-Le-Spring
	G2	G02 G04	Hetton Centre, Welfare Road, Hetton-Le-Hole, Houghton-Le-Spring
	G3	G03	East Rainton Primary School, School Road, East Rainton, Houghton-Le-Spring
	G4	G05	Easington Lane Community Access Point, Brickgarth, Houghton le Spring

Houghton	H1	H01	Dubmire Primary School *, Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses, Houghton-Le-Spring
	H2	H02	Dubmire Primary School *, Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses, Houghton-Le-Spring
	H3	H03	Houghton Centre for the Blind, Thornhill Street, Houghton-Le-Spring
	H4	H04 H06	Sunniside Methodist Church, School Room, Blind Lane, Houghton le Spring
	H5	H05	Newbottle Nursery School, Houghton Road, Newbottle, Houghton-Le-Spring

Polling Stations

Houghton and Sunderland South

Sandhill	R1	R01	St Mary's & St Peter's Community Project, Springwell Road, Sunderland
	R2	R02	Thorney Close Primary School, Torquay Road, Thorney Close, Sunderland
	R3	R03	Hasting Hill Academy, Tilbury Road, Thorney Close, Sunderland
	R4	R04	Grindon U R Church, Galway Road, Grindon, Sunderland
	R5	R05	Grindon Infant School, Gleneagles Road, Grindon, Sunderland

Shiney Row	S1	S01	Boundary Houses C A, Golf Course Road, Houghton le Spring
	S2	S02	Communal Hall, Claremont Drive, Houghton le Spring
	S3	S03	Customer Service Centre & Shiney Row Library, Chester Road, Shiney Row, Sunderland
	S4	S04	St Aidan's Parish Centre, St Aidan's Terrace, Houghton le Spring
	S5	S05	Penshaw Parish Centre, Station Road, Penshaw, Houghton-le-Spring
	S6	S06	Valley View Residential Home, 3 Back Lane, Penshaw, Houghton Le Spring

Silksworth	T1	T01	Humbledon and Plains Farm Workmens Club, Premier Road, Sunderland
	T2	T02	XL Youth Bus, Foot of Barras Drive, Sunderland
	T3	T03	Beckwith Mews Activity Room, Beckwith Mews, Silksworth, Sunderland
	T4	T04	New Silksworth Methodist Church, North Street, Sunderland
	T5	T05	Tom Urwin House, Silksworth Terrace, Sunderland

St Chad's	O1	O01	Amalfi Tower, Main Entrance - Ground Floor, Lakeside, Sunderland
	O2	O02	Farringdon Academy, Archer Road, Farringdon, Sunderland
	O3	O03	St Chad's Church Hall, Charter Drive, East Herrington, Sunderland
	O4	O04	Farringdon Jubilee Centre, Allendale Road, Farringdon, Sunderland
	O5	O05	East Herrington Primary Academy, Balmoral Terrace, Sunderland

Polling Stations

Sunderland Central

Barnes	A1	A01	The Wavendon Public House, 30A Wavendon Crescent, Sunderland
	A2	A02	Barnes Junior School, Entrance from Wycliffe Road, High Barnes, Sunderland
	A3	A03	Humbledon Methodist Church, Ettrick Grove, High Barnes, Sunderland
	A4	A04	Richard Avenue Primary School, Hurstwood Road, Sunderland
	A5	A05	West Community Association, Chester Road, Sunderland

Fulwell	E1	E01	Seaburn Centre, Whitburn Road, Sunderland
	E2	E02	Fulwell Methodist Church, Dovedale Road, Sunderland
	E3	E03	Fulwell Branch Library, Dene Lane, Sunderland
	E4	E04	The Grange Public House, Newcastle Road, Sunderland
	E5	E05	Seaburn Dene Primary School, Torver Crescent, Sunderland

Hendon	F1	F01	Hendon Young Peoples Project, Church Street East, East End, Sunderland
	F2	F02	Hudson Road Primary School, Villiers Street South, Sunderland
	F3	F03	Valley Road Community Primary School, Corporation Road, Sunderland
	F4	F04	Hendon Library Building, Toward Road, Sunderland
	F5	F05	Grangetown Primary School, Spelterworks Road, Sunderland

Millfield	J1	J01	Diamond Hall Junior School, Community Room, Well Street, Sunderland
	J2	J02	St Bedes U R Church, School Room, Sorley Street, Sunderland
	J3	J03	Burn Park Methodist School Room, Burn Park Road, Sunderland
	J4	J05 J04	St Marks Community Association, St Marks Church, St Marks Terrace, Sunderland

Pallion	K1	K01	Highfield Community Primary School, Fordfield Road, Sunderland
	K2	K02	Bethesda Free Church Mission Hall, Flodden Road, Sunderland
	K3	K03	St Luke's Neighbourhood Centre, Corner of Merle Terrace, St Lukes Road, Pallion, Sunderland
	K4	K04	Lambton Street Youth Centre, Falkland Road, Sunderland
	K5	K05	St Gabriel's Mens Institute Building, St Gabriel's Avenue, Sunderland

Polling Stations

Sunderland Central

Ryhope	M1	M01	St Aidan`s Church Hall, Ryhope Road, Sunderland
	M2	M02	Olympian Boxing Club, Leechmere Way, Sunderland
	M3	M03	Ryhope Pentecostal Church, Ryhope Street South, Sunderland
	M4	M04	Ryhope Library and Customer Service Centre, Black Road, Ryhope
	M5	M05	Derwenthurst Club, Entrance at Rear from Station Road, The Village, Ryhope, Sunderland

Southwick	U1	U01	St Andrews Methodist Church, Old Mill Road, Sunderland
	U2	U02	Southwick Community Centre, Junction of Thompson Road and Southwick Road, Sunderland
	U3	U03	Southwick Community Primary School, Shakespeare Street
	U4	U04	Grange Park Primary School, Swan Street, Sunderland
	U5	U05	The Grange Public House, Newcastle Road, Sunderland

St Michael`s	P1	P01	St Nicholas Church, Haver Hall, Silksworth Lane, Sunderland
	P2	P02	St John's Church, Entrance from The Grove, Ashbrooke, Sunderland
	P3	P03	St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Queen Alexandra Road, Sunderland
	P4	P04	Grangetown Community Centre, Stannington Grove, Sunderland
	P5	P05	The Alexandra Public House, Queen Alexandra Road, Sunderland

St Peter`s	Q1	Q01	Residents Lounge, Zetland Square, Multistorey Block, Sunderland
	Q2	Q02	Hallgarth Bethesda Mission Hall, Bright Street, Sunderland
	Q3	Q03	Roker Methodist Church, Roker Park Road, Entrance from Lonsdale Road, Roker, Sunderland
	Q4	Q04	Redby Community Centre, Fulwell Road, Sunderland
	Q5	Q05	Priestman Hall, St. Andrews Church, Talbot Road, Roker, Sunderland

Polling Stations

Washington and Sunderland West

Castle	B1	B01	Bexhill Primary School, Conservatory, Bexhill Road, Town End Farm, Sunderland
	B2	B02	Hylton Castle Primary School, Cramlington Road, Sunderland
	B3	B03	Sunderland North Family Zone, Former Hylton Castle Library, Cranleigh Road, Hylton Castle, Sunderland
	B4	B04	Castletown Community Association, Grange Road, Castletown, Sunderland

Redhill	L1	L01	Sunderland Customer Service Centre, Bunny Hill Centre, Hylton Lane, Sunderland
	L2	L02	St Cuthbert's Church, Rotherham Road, Red House, Sunderland
	L3	L03	St Cuthbert's Church, Rotherham Road, Red House, Sunderland
	L4	L04	Red House Methodist Church, Redcar Road, Red House, Sunderland
	L5	L05	Willow Fields Community Primary School, Winslow Close, Witherwack, Sunderland

St Annes	N1	N01	South Hylton Primary School, Union Street, South Hylton, Sunderland
	N2	N04 N02	Pennywell Youth Project, Petersfield Road, Pennywell, Sunderland
	N3	N03	St Anne's R C Primary School, Hylton Road, Pennywell, Sunderland
	N4	N05	Broadway Junior School, Springwell Road, Sunderland

Washington Central	V1	V01	Residents Hall, Hambleton Road, Washington
	V2	V02	Biddick Primary and Nursery School, Kirkham, Biddick Village, Washington
	V3	V03	John F Kennedy Primary School (Nursery), Station Road, Columbia, Washington
	V4	V04	Wessington Primary School, Lanercost, Washington
	V5	V05	Our Lady's Parish Room, Saint Joseph's R C Primary School, Village Lane, Washington

Washington East	W1	W01	XL Youth Bus, Beatrice Terrace, (The James Steel Park), Washington
	W2	W02	Harraton Skills Centre, Community Room, Firtree Avenue, Harraton, Washington
	W3	W03	Washington Arts Centre, Biddick Lane, Fatfield, Washington
	W4	W04	SAFC Bus, Junction of Thornbridge and Lydcott, Washington
	W5	W05	Barmston Village Primary School, Barmston Centre, Washington

Polling Stations

Washington and Sunderland West

Washington North	X1	X01	St Bede's Parish Hall, Coach Road Estate, Washington
	X2	X02	Millennium Centre, The Oval, Concord, Washington
	X3	X03	Sure Start Childrens Centre, 34 Elliott Terrace, Washington
	X4	X04	Usworth Colliery Nursery School, Manor Road, Sulgrave, Washington

Washington South	Y1	Y01	Rickleton Primary School, Vigo Lane, Washington
	Y2	Y02	Oxclose and District Young Peoples Project, Dunlin Drive, Ayton, Washington
	Y3	Y03	Holley Park Academy, Ayton Road South, Oxclose, Washington
	Y4	Y04	Oxclose Church, Oxclose Village Centre, Brancepeth Road, Washington
	Y5	Y05	Lambton Community Association, Lambton Primary School, Caradoc Close, Lambton Village, Washington

Washington West	Z1	Z01	Blackfell Primary School, Knoulberry, Blackfell, Washington
	Z2	Z02	Albany Village Primary School, Crossgill, Albany, Washington
	Z3	Z03	Springwell Village Community Venue, Fell Road, Gateshead
	Z4	Z04	George Washington Primary School, Well Bank Road, Washington

Appendix 2							
Date Received		Ward(s) Affected		Constituency		Brief Details	ARO Comments
18-Aug		Silksworth		Houghton and Sunderland South		Object to use of Humbledon and Plains Farm Club, Premier Road	Work with ward councillors to identify a permanent replacement building, leave status quo as last resort.
18-Aug		Millfield		Sunderland Central		Object to polling district J05 moved to J04 St Marks Road. Create polling place at Central Library in Fawcett Street	After consultation with ward councillors consideration be given to locating a polling station in Sunderland Minster.
18-Aug		Barnes		Sunderland Central		Move majority of A04 back to polling place of St Nicholas Church from Richard Avenue Primary School/ Move Cleveland Road (part), Queens Crescent, Hawarden Crescent and Ewing Road (part) from A04 to A05	Check availability of St Nicholas Church /RO to determine after consultation
18-Aug		Doxford		Houghton and Sunderland South		Happy with polling stations in Doxford Ward. Check address for D04 and access for D05.	Noted
19-Aug		Washington South		Washington and Sunderland West		Correction of address for Y05	Noted
28-Aug		Houghton		Houghton and Sunderland South		Move Elba Park from Houghton ward to Shiney Row ward	This change is not within the scope of this review
31-Aug		St Chads		Houghton and Sunderland South		Review access arrangements to O01	Consult with building owner Gentoo, improve access description on poll card and monitor on polling day
03-Sep		Washington North		Washington and Sunderland West		Content with polling stations	Noted

29-Sep		St Chads		Houghton and Sunderland South	1) Move polling district O04 from Jubilee Centre to Farrington Residents Association		Check accessibility issues
					2) Move O01 Amalfi Tower to temporary polling station near to Lakeside Post Office		Not supported because of cost implications

Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Places Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposed Changes

District(s)	Polling Place	Returning Officer Comments
A01	The Wavendon Public House, 30A Wavendon Crescent	No Change
A02	Barnes Junior School, Entrance from Wycliffe Road	No Change
A03	Humbledon Methodist Church, Ettrick Grove	No Change
A04	Richard Avenue Primary School, Hurstwood Road	Potential move to St Nicholas Church - Not supported
A05	West Community Association, Chester Road	Potential of 4 streets moved from A04
B01	Bexhill Primary School, Conservatory, Bexhill Road	No Change
B02	Hylton Castle Primary School, Cramlington Road	No Change
B03	Sunderland North Family Zone, Former Hylton Castle Library, Cranleigh Road	No Change
B04	Castletown Community Association, Grange Road, Castletown	No Change
C01	Eppleton Academy Primary School, Church Road	No Change
C02	Bethany Christian Centre, Hetton Road	No Change
C03	Communal Hall, Burdon Avenue	No Change
C04	Houghton Nursery School, Nesham Place	No Change
C05	St Matthews Youth & Community Centre, Church Hall, Front Street	No Change
C06	Philadelphia Cricket Club, Bunker Hill Ground, Back Shop Row	No Change
D01	Benedict Biscop C E Academy, Marcross Drive	No Change
D02	The Box Youth Project, Hall Farm Road	No Change
D03	Doxford Park Community Association, Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park	No Change
D04	Mill Hill Primary School, Torphin Hill Drive, Doxford Park	Change to Address
D05	Venerable Bede C E Secondary School, Entrance to the school, Tunstall Bank	No Change
E01	Seaburn Centre, Whitburn Road	No Change
E02	Fulwell Methodist Church, Dovedale Road	No Change
E03	Fulwell Branch Library, Dene Lane	No Change
E04	The Grange Public House, Newcastle Road	No Change
E05	Seaburn Dene Primary School, Torver Crescent	No Change
F01	Hendon Young Peoples Project, Church Street East, East End	No Change
F02	Hudson Road Primary School, Villiers Street South	No Change
F03	Valley Road Community Primary School, Corporation Road	No Change
F04	Hendon Library Building, Toward Road	No Change
F05	Grangetown Primary School, Spelterworks Road	No Change
G01	Hetton Lyons Primary School, Four Lane Ends	No Change
G02, G04	Hetton Centre, Welfare Road, Hetton-Le-Hole	No Change
G03	East Rainton Primary School, School Road	No Change
G05	Easington Lane Community Access Point, Brickgarth	No Change
H01	Dubmire Primary School *, Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses	No Change
H02	Dubmire Primary School *, Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses	No Change
H03	Houghton Centre for the Blind, Thornhill Street	No Change
H04, H06	Sunnyside Methodist Church, School Room, Blind Lane	Merge polling district H04 and H06

H05	Newbottle Nursery School, Houghton Road, Newbottle	No Change
J01	Diamond Hall Junior School, Community Room, Well Street	No Change
J02	St Bedes U R Church, School Room, Sorley Street	No Change
J03	Burn Park Methodist School Room, Burn Park Road	No Change
J04	St Marks Community Association, St Marks Church, St Marks Terrace	No Change
J05	Sunderland Minster	Identify as a polling station to replace suggestion of Central Library
K01	Highfield Community Primary School, Fordfield Road	No Change
K02	Bethesda Free Church Mission Hall, Flodden Road	No Change
K03	St Luke's Neighbourhood Centre, Corner of Merle Terrace , St Lukes Road	No Change
K04	Lambton Street Youth Centre, Falkland Road	No Change
K05	St Gabriel's Mens Institute Building, St Gabriel's Avenue	No Change
L01	Sunderland Customer Service Centre, Bunny Hill Centre	No Change
L02	St Cuthbert's Church, Rotherham Road, Red House	Merge polling district L02 and L03 together
L03	St Cuthbert's Church, Rotherham Road, Red House	See above
L04	Red House Methodist Church, Redcar Road, Red House	Change polling district L04 to L03
L05	Willow Fields Community Primary School, Winslow Close, Witherwack	Change polling district L05 to L04
M01	St Aidan's Church Hall, Ryhope Road	No Change
M02	Olympian Boxing Club, Leechmere Way	No Change
M03	Ryhope Pentecostal Church, Ryhope Street South	No Change
M04	Ryhope Library and Customer Service Centre, Black Road	No Change
M05	Derwenthurst Club, Entrance at Rear from Station Road, The Village	No Change
N01	South Hylton Primary School, Union Street, South Hylton	No Change
N02, N04	Pennywell Youth Project, Petersfield Road, Pennywell	Merge polling district N02 and N04 together
N03	St Anne's R C Primary School, Hylton Road	No Change
N05	Broadway Junior School, Springwell Road	Change polling district N05 to N04
O01	Amalfi Tower, Main Entrance - Ground Floor, Lakeside	No Change
O02	Farringdon Academy, Archer Road, Farringdon	No Change
O03	St Chad's Church Hall, Charter Drive, East Herrington	No Change
O04	Farringdon Jubilee Centre, Allendale Road, Farringdon	No Change
O05	East Herrington Primary Academy, Balmoral Terrace	No Change
P01	St Nicholas Church, Haver Hall, Silksworth Lane	No Change
P02	St John's Church, Entrance from The Grove, Ashbrooke	No Change
P03	St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Queen Alexandra Road	No Change
P04	Grangetown Community Centre, Stannington Grove	No Change
P05	The Alexandra Public House, Queen Alexandra Road	No Change
Q01	Residents Lounge, Zetland Square, Multistorey Block	No Change
Q02	Hallgarth Bethesda Mission Hall, Bright Street	No Change
Q03	Roker Methodist Church, Roker Park Road, Entrance from Lonsdale Road	No Change
Q04	Redby Community Centre, Fulwell Road	No Change
Q05	Priestman Hall, St. Andrews Church, Talbot Road	No Change
R01	St Mary's & St Peter's Community Project, Springwell Road	No Change
R02	Thorney Close Primary School, Torquay Road	No Change

R03	Hasting Hill Academy, Tilbury Road, Thorney Close	No Change
R04	Grindon U R Church, Galway Road, Grindon	No Change
R05	Grindon Infant School, Gleneagles Road, Grindon	No Change
S01	Boundary Houses C A, Golf Course Road	No Change
S02	Communal Hall, Claremont Drive	No Change
S03	Customer Service Centre & Shiney Row Library, Chester Road, Shiney Row	No Change
S04	St Aidan's Parish Centre, St Aidan's Terrace	No Change
S05	Penshaw Parish Centre, Station Road, Penshaw	No Change
S06	Valley View Residential Home, 3 Back Lane, Penshaw	No Change
T01	Humbledon and Plains Farm Workmens Club, Premier Road	Consider alternative premises
T02	XL Youth Bus, Foot of Barras Drive	No Change
T03	Beckwith Mews Activity Room, Beckwith Mews	No Change
T04	New Silksworth Methodist Church, North Street	No Change
T05	Tom Urwin House, Silksworth Terrace	No Change
U01	St Andrews Methodist Church, Old Mill Road	No Change
U02	Southwick Community Centre, Junction of Thompson Road and Southwick Road	No Change
U03	Southwick Community Primary School, Shakespeare Street	No Change
U04	Grange Park Primary School, Swan Street	No Change
U05	The Grange Public House, Newcastle Road	No Change
V01	Residents Hall, Hambleton Road	No Change
V02	Biddick Primary and Nursery School, Kirkham	No Change
V03	John F Kennedy Primary School (Nursery), Station Road	No Change
V04	Wessington Primary School, Lanercost	No Change
V05	Our Lady's Parish Room, Saint Joseph's R C Primary School, Village Lane	No Change
W01	XL Youth Bus, Beatrice Terrace, (The James Steel Park)	No Change
W02	Harraton Skills Centre, Community Room, Firtree Avenue	No Change
W03	Washington Arts Centre, Biddick Lane, Fatfield	No Change
W04	SAFC Bus, Junction of Thornbridge and Lydcott	No Change
W05	Barmston Village Primary School, Barmston Centre	No Change
X01	St Bede's Parish Hall, Coach Road Estate	No Change
X02	Millennium Centre, The Oval, Concord	No Change
X03	Sure Start Childrens Centre, 34 Elliott Terrace	No Change
X04	Usworth Colliery Nursery School, Manor Road, Sulgrave	No Change
Y01	Rickleton Primary School, Vigo Lane	No Change
Y02	Oxclose and District Young Peoples Project, Dunlin Drive	No Change
Y03	Holley Park Academy, Ayton Road South	No Change
Y04	Oxclose Church, Oxclose Village Centre, Brancepeth Road	No Change
Y05	Lambton Primary School, Caradoc Close	Change to Address
Z01	Blackfell Primary School, Knoulberry	No Change
Z02	Albany Village Primary School, Crossgill	No Change
Z03	Springwell Village Community Venue, Fell Road	No Change
Z04	George Washington Primary School, Well Bank Road	No Change

Notice of Motion

NOTICE OF MOTION

Council Members are asked to consider the under mentioned Motion:-

(i) Notice of Motion – Firefighters Strike

This Council recognises that firefighters across Tyne and Wear do a brave and heroic job and should be rewarded for this service to the public, and that this Council condemns the Tory led Coalition Government for refusing to negotiate a fair, proper and reflective Pension Scheme.

Councillor P. Watson
Councillor T. Wright
Councillor M. Speding
Councillor G. Miller

Reports

Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions**Report of the Leader**

The Council's Constitution requires that a quarterly report be submitted to Council on executive decisions which have been taken as a matter of special urgency. The relevant provisions are now contained in Regulations 11 and 19 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

These are the special urgency provisions under which key decisions may be taken by the executive, although not contained in the 28 day Notice of Key decisions (whether proposed to be taken in public or private), where compliance with Regulation 10 (the general exception) was also impracticable.

There have been no such instances since the last report.

Recommendation

That the Council notes the content of this report.

COUNCIL

26 NOVEMBER 2014

APPOINTMENTS – ASSOCIATION OF THE FRIENDS OF SUNDERLAND MUSEUMS AND TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Report of the Head of Law and Governance

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider appointments to the Association of the Friends of Sunderland Museums (FOSuMs) and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority.

2.0 Sunderland Museums

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the last Council meeting the Public Health, Wellness and Culture Portfolio Holder was appointed to the Friends of Sunderland Museums, an association made up of a range of volunteers whose role for a number of years has been to support the Museums in its service delivery.
- 2.2 The Council is also invited to appoint a second Member as his alternate to the Association.

3.0 Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

- 3.1 Following the resignation of Councillor N. Padgett as a Councillor a further vacancy arises on the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 3.2 The Council is therefore requested to consider an appointment of a Majority Party Member to the Fire Authority to serve until the next Annual Council meeting.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is accordingly recommended to:-
- (i) appoint a Member to serve as an alternate to the Public Health, Wellness and Culture Portfolio Holder on the Friends of Sunderland Museums,
 - (ii) appoint a Majority Party Member to the Fire Authority to serve until the next Annual Council meeting.

