

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting, Wednesday, 11th November, 2009
at 2.00 p.m. (Committee Room No. 4)

NOTE: Group Meetings at 1.15 p.m.

A G E N D A

PART ONE

1. To note any items which the Chairman considers to be of an urgent nature.
2. To receive notice from Members who may wish to move any delegated matter non-delegated and which will be decided by a majority of Members present and voting at the meeting.

3. **Admission of Public and Press**

To consider whether the public and press should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

4. Disclosure of Interests.

A Member with a personal interest in a matter to be considered at this meeting must either before the matter is discussed or when the interest becomes apparent disclose

1. ***The existence of that interest to the meeting.***
2. ***The nature of the interest.***
3. ***Decide whether they have a prejudicial interest.***

A note on declaring interests at meetings, which incorporates certain other aspects of the Code of Conduct and a pro-forma for completion where interests are disclosed accompanies the agenda and reports for this meeting.

5. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th October, 2009 (copy attached).
6. Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members.

FOR DECISION

- (D) 7. Council Finances Report – Quarter 2 2009-2010.

- (R) 8. Members' Allowances Scheme – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- (D) 9. Housing Market Renewal Programme – North Central Renewal Area – Sutherland Street.
- (R) 10. Barrow Dial-a-Ride.
- (R) 11. Amendment to Delegate Agreement with regard to Building Control Matters.
- (D) 12. Guidelines for the Installation of Memorial Seats in Borough Cemeteries.
- (D) 13. Newton Community Association – Ground Lease.
- (D) 14. Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust (Sure Start).
- (D) 15. Land to the Rear of Teal Close, Parklands, Askam-in-Furness.
- (R) 16. Barrow and Dalton Town Centre Shop Front Grants.

PART TWO

- (R) 17. Treasurer's Department – Additional Post.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH 1 OF PART ONE OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

- (R) 18. Admin. Services Staffing.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH 1 OF PART ONE OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

- (R) 19. Proposed Staffing Changes – Commercial Services Environmental Health Department.

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

- (D) 20. Barrow Borough Council and South Lakeland District Council Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract 2010-2017 (24).

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART ONE OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

(R) 21. Establishment Changes.

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

**NOTE (D) - Delegated
(R) - For Referral to Council**

Membership of Committee

Councillors Guselli (Chairman)
Williams (Vice-Chairman)
Barlow
J. Hamezeian
Marcus
Millar
Pemberton
Pidduck
Richardson
Stephenson
Waiting.

For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:

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Published: 3rd November, 2009.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting: 14th October, 2009
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Guselli (Chairman), Williams (Vice-Chairman), Barlow, J. Hamezeian, Millar, Pemberton, Pidduck, Richardson and Waiting.

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

Discussion arising hereon it was

RESOLVED:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 (Minute Nos. 69, 70 and 71) of Part One of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

60 – Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Barlow declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 13 – Phase I – Ramsden Business Park, Proposed Development Plot 1 (Minute No. 69). The West Lakes Project Manager was a personal friend.

Councillor Guselli declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 – Rural Joint Committee (Minute No. 66), Agenda Item 11 – Consultation on the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Development Framework Draft Site Allocations Policies and Proposals Map (Minute No. 67) and Agenda Item 15 – Barrow Town Centre Public Realm Phase II (Minute No. 71). He was a Member of Cumbria County Council. He left the meeting during consideration of the items.

Councillor J. Hamezeian declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10 – Rural Joint Committee (Minute No. 66), Agenda Item 11 – Consultation on the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Development Framework Draft Site Allocations Policies and Proposals Map (Minute No. 67) and Agenda Item 15 – Barrow Town Centre Public Realm Phase II (Minute No. 71). He was a Member of Cumbria County Council.

Councillor Waiting declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 7 – Grants Sub-Committee (Minute No. 63) as she is the Chairman of the Abbotsvale Community Association.

61 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th September, 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

62 – Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marcus and Stephenson. An apology was also received from Councillor Stephenson's substitute Councillor Solloway.

63 – Grants Sub-Committee

RESOLVED:- To note the Minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee held on 27th July, 2009.

64 – Capital Programme 2009-2010 to 2011-2012 Monitoring Report to 30th September, 2009

The Committee considered the half year position of the Capital Programme for 2009/2010 which was summarised as follows:-

Capital Programme	2009/2010 Budget	2009/2010 Half Year Expenditure
As at 31/03/2009	£14,895,748	
As at 30/09/2009	£15,450,772	£4,013,150
Alterations	£555,024	

The Committee also considered the three year Capital Programme 2009/2010 to 2011/2012 as follows:-

Capital Programme	2009/2010 Budget	2010/2011 Budget	2011/2012 Budget
As at 31/03/2009	£14,895,748	£11,648,267	£7,001,275
As at 30/09/2009	£15,450,772	£13,614,886	£6,751,302
Difference	£555,024	£1,966,619	(£249,973)

	2009/2010 Budget	2010/2011 Budget	2011/2012 Budget
Total Programme	£15,450,772	£13,614,886	£6,751,302
Funded by:			
Prudential Borrowing	£2,000,000	£2,000,000	£2,000,000
Grants	£9,497,039	£8,909,897	£2,303,073
HRA Major Repairs Reserve	£1,902,701	£1,955,489	£1,995,729
Opportunities Fund	£142,860	£0	£0
Usable Capital Receipts	£1,908,172	£749,500	£452,500

The Borough Treasurer informed the Committee of major (over £10,000) alterations to the programme compared to the previously reported programme on 10th June, 2009.

RESOLVED:- To note the information and approve the variations to the current programme.

65 – Final Accounts for the Year ended 31st March, 2009

The Borough Treasurer informed the Committee that the Audit Commission had finalised the audit of the Council's accounts for the financial year 2008-2009.

The Annual Governance Report for the year issued by the Audit Commission had been presented to the Audit Committee on 23rd September, 2009.

On 30th September 2009, the District Auditor had signed off the accounts and had awarded the Council an unqualified Audit Opinion for the year ended 31st March, 2009.

RESOLVED:- To note the report.

(COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS IN THE CHAIR)

66 – Rural Joint Committee

The Director of Regeneration and Community Services informed the Committee that at the Liaison Meeting with Dalton and Newton Town Council, held on 20th July, 2009 it had been agreed to proceed with the establishment of a formal Joint Committee for Dalton.

Since that meeting discussions had been held with Officers of Cumbria County Council and they had suggested, in light of the interest expressed by Askam and Ireleth Parish Council in a similar arrangement, that the idea of a Joint Committee should be expanded to cover both areas in the form of a Rural Joint Committee. Management of the joint Project Worker had, significantly improved the level of co-operation and joint working between the Parish and Town Councils and he had no objection to the suggestion.

If Members were minded to support the proposal, he suggested a joint meeting between the three tiers was held to prepare a draft constitution.

RESOLVED:- To agree in principle to establish a Rural Parish Joint Committee.

67 – Consultation on the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Development Framework Draft Site Allocations Policies and Proposals Map

The Director of Regeneration and Community Services reported that the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Development Framework had been received from Cumbria County Council. Cumbria County Council's Core Strategy for Waste, Generic Development Control policies and their associated appendices had been adopted in April, 2009. These documents set out their planning policies for minerals and waste management developments over the period to 2020.

The current consultation was about which sites and areas should be identified under the general policies for extending quarries, developing new waste management facilities and safeguarding mineral resources.

The following sites had been identified in the Borough:-

Household Waste Recycling Centres – extension of Ormsgill Yards (Ref BA2)

Waste Treatment facilities – Sowerby Woods Business Park and Hawes View Industrial Estates (Ref BA24 and BA25)

Landfill – Goldmire Quarry (subject to technical feasibility and access improvements) (*Ref BA10*)

For minerals – a Preferred Area for Roose Sand Quarry (*Ref M27*) and an Area of Search for extending High Greenscoe Quarry (*Ref M5*), together with Minerals Safeguarding Areas for Limestone Sand and Gravel.

He informed the Committee that the proposals for sites *BA2*, *BA24*, *BA25* and *BA10* were self-explanatory.

Site M27 had identified an area around Roose Sand Quarry as a Preferred Area. That had been defined as 'areas of known resources where planning permission might reasonably be anticipated. That would be subject to the usual tests of environmental acceptability. Planning applications for proposed developments may still require Environmental Impact Assessment.'

Site M5 had identified an Area of Search for extending High Greenscoe Quarry, that was defined as 'broader areas, where knowledge about mineral resources may be less certain, but within which planning permissions for particular sites could be granted to meet any shortfalls in supply, if suitable planning applications were made. Again, these may require Environmental Impact Assessment.'

Large areas of the Borough, particularly South of Dalton had been identified as Minerals Safeguarding areas for limestone and areas around Roosecote and much of Walney Island had the same designation, but to protect sand and gravel

resources. Minerals Safeguarding Areas had been defined as 'intended to safeguard proven deposits of minerals which were, or may become, of economic importance within the foreseeable future, from unnecessary sterilisation by surface development.

Minerals Safeguarding Areas would primarily be used for development control purposes.

Proposals for the extension of Ormsgill Yards, Sowerby Woods, Hawes View Industrial Estate, Roose Sand Quarry and High Greenscoe Quarry were either an extension of existing operations or well related to industrial developments. The proposed site of the Mechanical and Biological Treatment plant at Sowerby Woods incorporated a proportion of Greenfield land, but met other criteria on accessibility and scale.

The proposal to use Goldmire Quarry as a landfill site was linked to the shortage of landfill in South Cumbria. Currently, the outcome of an appeal to extend Bennett Bank landfill site was awaited. If the appeal was upheld that would extend the operational life of Bennett Bank, but additional landfill capacity would still be required. The current policy did not identify a particular waste stream for Goldmire and the conclusion must be that all forms of waste would be received should the proposal go forward. The proposal at Goldmire was subject to technical feasibility and access improvements.

He recognised the requirement and priority given to finding additional landfill capacity in the South of the County set out in the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, however, he was concerned that without the technical evidence to back the allocation, which the document recognised was required, it was premature. The Quarry was in a highly prominent hillside and a landfill would be very visible from surrounding principal routes and consideration would need to be given to maintaining water quality in nearby water bodies.

RESOLVED:- To agree that no representations on Proposals BA2, BA24, BA25, M5, M27 and the Minerals Safeguarding Areas, but make representations that in advance of technical studies, proving it accords with policies in the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies that allocation BA10, Goldmire Quarry was premature and should be considered when the Site Allocations Policy was reviewed.

(COUNCILLOR GUSELLI IN THE CHAIR)

68 – Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

The Director of Regeneration and Community Services informed the Committee that Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 required every local authority to establish a Crime and Disorder Committee with the power to review or scrutinise

decisions made or actions taken by local authorities responsible for the crime and disorder function, insofar as they relate to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

The Act and Regulations did not require Council's to alter existing committee structures, but rather establish a formal place where community safety matters could be discussed and scrutinised. The most appropriate committee to undertake that work was the Regeneration and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

RESOLVED:- To agree that the Regeneration and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to fulfill the Council's responsibility to review and scrutinise actions of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

69 – Phase I – Ramsden Business Park. Proposed Development Plot 1

The Director of Regeneration and Community Services informed the Committee that the Professional Design Service Contract for Phase I - Ramsden Business Park, Proposed Development Plot 1 would provide the design (including BREEAM and environmental assessment), procurement, CDM-C requirements, and supervision of the first phase of building development. The Council would be the Employer and would perform all the associated administrative functions.

Tenders for the Professional Design Services had been received on 8th September 2009 and opened in two parts: On 11th September 2009 the Quality Statements for each tender were opened by the Chairman of this Committee while the financial documents remained sealed in a separate envelope. The Quality Statements were subsequently assessed and scored. On 18th September 2009 the financial documents were opened by the Chairman of this Committee.

Twelve companies had been selected from the North West Development Agency's Framework Panel Lot 2 (Architects/Design) to submit a competitive tender, however only six were received.

Officers had recommended that the Contract be awarded to Capita Symonds Ltd.

Authority was sought to enable the Council to enter into a Contract with Capita Symonds Ltd including signing and sealing the Contract.

The Contract would commence in October 2009 and complete after the one year post completion phase (July 2012). Appointment of the Main Contractor was anticipated in June 2010 with the provisional start date on site in July 2010 with construction completing approximately one year later in July 2011.

RESOLVED:- To appoint Capita Symonds Ltd to act as Consultant for Phase I of Ramsden Business Park.

70 – 104 Abbey Road Phase I – Additional Programme of External Repairs to include re-roofing

Further to Minute No. 42 on 28th July 2009, Askins and Little had commenced work on Monday 17th August 2009 to 104 Abbey Road.

Officers had subsequently identified additional source(s) of funding that would allow for the full re-roofing of 104 Abbey Road to be undertaken.

A Conservation Architect who was advising the Council on the Townscape Heritage Initiative had commented there were major defects which, if left unattended, would result in continuing damage to the building fabric and a continuing high maintenance commitment.

A new roof was needed to safeguard the long term future of the building. Members were reminded that the building had suffered extensive damage and decay because of past water ingress and the building was presently 'drying out'.

It was essential that measures were taken to prevent water getting into the building, especially considering the future internal works and fitting out. While localised repairs would probably ensure the short term protection of the building it was only a comprehensive re-roofing project that could guarantee the buildings protection from the elements. The external works presently being undertaken offered the perfect opportunity to re-roof the premises.

RESOLVED:- To appoint Askins and Little Ltd to carry out the additional programme of external repairs to 104 Abbey Road.

REFERRED ITEMS

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS ARE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

(COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS IN THE CHAIR)

71 – Barrow Town Centre Public Realm Phase II

The Director of Regeneration and Community Services informed the Committee that the proposed environmental improvements for Barrow Town Centre Public Realm Phase II would enhance the town centre streetscape further and complement the other ongoing town centre works.

A North West Development Agency potential offer of European funding would require the Council to commence the additional works early in the New Year. Agreeing to appoint Askam Construction Ltd as the Framework Contractor for the above works, would ensure the funding conditions for expenditure were met within the allowed timescales. The Council was leading on the delivery of the additional Town Centre enhancements. That did not commit the Council to expenditure but

provided flexibility up to a value of £3 million, over the next two years (where additional funding becomes available);

RECOMMENDED:- To recommend the Council:-

- (i) To agree to appoint two artists and one lighting designer for the Ginnel enhancements and for the proposals in The Mall and at Schneider Square/Furness House as part of Town Centre Public Realm Phase II works;
- (ii) To agree that the Council entered into a legal agreement to act on behalf of the Highway Authority and carry out the works within the Highway;
- (iii) To appoint Askam Construction Ltd under the Engineering and Construction Contract using a Framework Contract; and
- (iv) To agree that a special meeting of the Council be arranged as the value for the construction works was in excess of £1m.

The meeting closed at 3.25 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 7
Date of Meeting: 11th November , 2009	
Reporting Officer Borough Treasurer	
Title: Council Finances Report – Quarter 2 2009-2010	
Summary and Conclusions:	
This report presents financial information for the second quarter of the financial year. It contains summary information and key data for the:	
A. General Fund B. Treasury Management C. Capital Expenditure and Financing D. Housing Revenue Account E. Collection Fund F. Bad Debt Provisions and Write Offs G. Reserves, Balances and Provisions H. Benefits Performance	
Recommendations:	
To note the information contained in the report of the Borough Treasurer.	

Report

Council Finances
For the period to 30th September 2009

Introduction

This report contains all of the key data relating to the Councils finances for the quarter ended 30th September 2009 (Q2). Where key data is not available at the end of the reporting period date, the latest available key data has been used and this is noted where applicable.

A. **General Fund**

The General Fund brings together all of the functions of the Council except the Housing Revenue Account which is ring-fenced. The General Fund summarises all of the resources that have been generated, consumed or set aside in providing services during the year. There are certain statutory items that are taken into account in determining the Council's budget requirement and in turn its Council Tax demand.

The budget for 2009-10 was agreed by Council on the 23rd February 2009 at £13,742,000. The budget was balanced using £189,000 from balances.

There are certain items of income and expenditure that are incurred throughout the year and other items that are entered into the General Fund at the end of the financial year. The monitored items and their position at 30th September 2009 are set out below, the actual spend compared to the budget is shown as Q2%:

Item	Total budget	Q2 budget	Q2 actual	Q2%
Staff costs	£6,934,990	£3,467,495	£3,281,137	94.6
Transport costs	£212,360	£106,180	£61,235	57.7
Property costs	£2,200,670	£1,100,335	£1,113,711	101.2
Supplies and services	£5,215,880	£2,607,940	£2,026,881	77.7
Contract services	£6,960,720	£3,480,360	£3,001,702	86.2
Transfer payments	£23,511,410	£11,755,705	£11,477,413	97.6
External income	(£31,266,210)	(£15,633,105)	(£15,636,932)	100.0
Direct costs	£13,769,820	£6,884,910	£5,325,147	77.3

A forecast of the outcome for the full year at this early stage indicates no additional call on balances.

Key data:

- o Salaries and on-costs

Salaries and on-costs are one of the main items of General Fund expenditure; these are the main part of the staff cost figures.

The salaries and on-costs budget at 30th September 2009 was £3,399,585 and the difference between this and the actual spend of £3,231,397 is an under spend or saving of £168,188. The difference between the budget against actual spend is broken down below:

Item	Savings
Purchase holidays –additional leave bought by staff	£16,161
Savings from vacancy gaps and establishment changes	£84,327
Pay awards not yet paid	£67,700
Total	£168,188

- o The main income streams in the General Fund are those realising at least £250,000 in the year. This is income that is earned for services provided and does not include grant income, the actual spend compared to the budget is shown as Q2%:

Income stream	2009-10 budget	Q2 expected income based on previous year trend	Q2 actual income	Q2%

Car parking-pay & display	£727,000	£365,536	£332,983	91.1
Estates property rents	£1,476,020	£786,016	£857,335	109.1
Leisure Centre fees	£732,580	£323,654	£326,377	100.8
Crematorium services	£336,000	£108,696	£160,328	147.5

- Sundry debtors outstanding at 30th September 2009 compared to the sundry debtors outstanding at the start of the year:

Outstanding 1 st April 2009	Days overdue	Outstanding 30 th September 2009
£72,195	1 to 30	£287,003
£97,632	31 to 60	£63,787
£91,913	61 to 90	£40,047
£43,605	91 to 180	£119,263
£74,176	181 to 360	£128,002
£141,598	Over 361	£185,881
£521,119	Total	£823,983

B. Treasury Activities

Treasury activities are all the borrowing and investment transactions for the Council. All transactions take place in accordance with the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy for the year, which also sets the Prudential Indicators. Prudential indicators are measures and limits that control the affordability, risk and proper practice in all treasury transactions.

The interest paid on borrowings is attributed to the General Fund after a statutory amount is calculated for the Housing Revenue Account. The interest earned on investments belongs to the General Fund. Should the interest paid on borrowings or the interest earned from investments is different from the budget estimate, this will impact on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account as applicable.

Key data:

- Interest paid on borrowings compared to budget estimate:

The Council currently has no short-term temporary borrowing. The Council's long-term debts are all with the Public Works Loan Board and interest is payable every six months, the first payment for the period 1st April 2009 to 30th September 2009 will be paid on the 1st October 2009:

Annual budget estimate for interest paid	Actual interest paid
£1,266,570	£0

- Interest earned on invested short-term temporary surplus cash compared to the budget estimate:

Annual budget estimate for interest earned	Actual interest earned at 30 th September 2009

£150,000	£9,310
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At the time of writing this report the Council had £7,500,000 invested with the HSBC.

After the 2009-10 budget was prepared, a loan of £6,610,266 was repaid as reported to this Committee on the 10th June 2009. The saving from the reduced external interest payable should compensate for the expected shortfall on the interest earned element of the budget.

- o Change in the Council's borrowings:

There has been no new long-term borrowing undertaken, however, as mentioned above a repayment has been made and there has been no restructuring of the existing long-term debt. The Council's borrowings at 30th September 2009 were £22,389,734.

The Authorised Limit that the Council's debt cannot exceed in 2009-2010 is £36,000,000.

C. Capital Programme

The Council's capital expenditure plans are one of the key prudential indicators. This expenditure can be paid for immediately by resources such as capital receipts and capital grants, and any remaining expenditure forms the Council's borrowing requirement for the year.

The borrowing requirement for the capital programme impacts on the General Fund as the Council is statutorily required to set aside a prescribed amount to repay the Council's total borrowing requirement. The current borrowing requirement in the capital programme is reflected in the General Fund budget. Any changes in the requirement will impact on the General Fund.

Key data:

- Spend to 30th September 2009 compared to the programme projected:

As at:	Capital programme	Actual spend
23 rd February 2009 – approved by Council	£12,598,261	£4,013,150
30 th September 2009 – as reported to this Committee on the 14 th October 2009	£15,450,772	

D. Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account reflects the statutory obligation to account separately for Council housing provision. The Housing Revenue Account is a ring-fenced account and legislation sets out the items that can be paid and received.

The budget for 2009-10 was agreed by Council on the 23rd February 2009 as a net surplus on the account of £52,670. The budget did not include the use of the Housing Revenue Account balance.

There are certain items of income and expenditure that are monitored throughout the year and other items that are transacted at the end of the financial year. The monitored items and the position at 30th September 2009 are set out below, the actual spend compared to the budget is shown as Q2%:

Item	Total budget	Q2 budget	Q2 actual	Q2%
INCOME				
Dwelling rents	(£8,499,850)	(£4,249,925)	(£4,170,239)	98.1
Other rents	(£304,470)	(£156,885)	(£152,328)	97.1
Other items of income	(£432,640)	(£227,295)	(£203,019)	89.3
Gross income	(£9,236,960)	(£4,634,105)	(£4,525,586)	97.7
EXPENDITURE				
Management of Council Housing	£2,245,290	£1,122,645	£947,171	84.4
Dwelling repairs	£2,986,290	£1,493,145	£708,751	47.5
Housing subsidy payable	£399,940	£199,970	£187,356	93.7
Gross expenditure	£5,631,520	£2,815,760	£1,843,278	65.5

Overall the Housing Revenue Account is expected to be on target to achieve the budgeted income and expenditure items above, set by Council on the 23rd February 2009.

E. Collection Fund

The Collection Fund reflects the statutory requirement to maintain a separate record of transactions in relation to council tax and business rates and to distribute these to precepting authorities, the national non-domestic rates pool and the General Fund.

When the council tax is set, there is a certain amount set aside for uncollectible council tax. Where the uncollectible council tax for the year is different to the estimate, for illustration there is more uncollected council tax than estimated, this deficit is shared between the Council, the County and the Police. Due to the timing of setting the council tax, the deficit would impact on the 2011-12 General Fund.

Key data:

- Percentage of council tax collected at 30th September 2009 compared to the previous year:

Year	Amount due for the year	Amount collected	Collected
2009	£27,569,514	£15,598,686	56.6%
2008	£26,940,514	£15,203,166	56.4%

- Percentage of business rates collected at 30th September 2009 compared to the previous year:

Year	Amount due for the year	Amount collected	Collected
2009	£21,637,832	£12,967,910	59.9%
2008	£20,437,979	£12,282,751	60.1%

F. Bad debt provisions and write offs

Each fund has a provision set aside to cover the writing off of bad debts. The provisions are specific to each fund that they are created from. For the General Fund, the bad debt provision has been built up from contributions from the General Fund over time. If the provision falls below prudent levels, General Fund revenue resources would be used to replenish the provision.

Key data:

- The bad debt provisions at 1st April 2009 and at the amounts written off to the 30th September 2009 are shown below:

Fund	1st April 2009	Written off during 2009-10
General Fund	£485,747	0
Benefits overpayments	£511,050	£6,822
Housing Revenue Account	£315,205	£83,112
Collection Fund		
- council tax	£3,032,932	£303,809
- business rates	£1,074,151	£149,788

At this point in the year the bad debt provisions are satisfactory to cover the outstanding debts.

G. Reserves, balances and provisions

Reserves, balances and provisions are specific to each fund.

Reserves are created by earmarking specific amounts from a fund and setting it aside, this may be for a specific purpose at the time, or for a specific purpose to be identified later.

Fund balances are maintained at prudent levels determined in accordance with the approved Reserves and Balances Policy. Fund balances are held for potential emergency or extraordinary expenditure.

Provisions are created to meet potential liabilities or losses that have been incurred, but the timing or amounts are uncertain.

Key data:

- The General Fund reserves held at 1st April 2009 and at 30th September 2009 are shown below:

Item	1st April 2009	Allocated for use	30th September 2009
Opportunity reserve	£1,195,552	£335,985	£859,567
Budget setting support	£500,000	£189,000	£311,000
General reserve	£461,623	0	£461,623
Leisure centre loss of income	£270,321	TBC	£270,321
Other reserves	£578,477	£357,098	£221,379
Total	£3,005,973	£882,083	£2,123,890

- o The balances at 1st April 2009 and at 30th September 2009 are shown below:

Fund	1 st April 2009	Used during 2009-10	30 th September 2009
General Fund	£1,971,258	0	£1,971,258
Housing Revenue Account	£845,980	0	£845,980
Collection Fund	£52,185	£17,077	£35,108

- o The reserves and balances are sufficient and remain at satisfactory prudent levels.
- o The provisions at 1st April 2009 and at 30th September 2009 are shown below:

Item	1 st April 2009	Used during 2009-10	30 th September 2009
Insurance settlements	£449,206	£0	£449,206
Early retirement	£59,889	£0	£59,889
Total	£509,095	£0	£509,095

H. Benefits Performance

One of the main performance targets agreed with Liberata for 2009-2010 is the time taken to process new claims and change events. For new claims the target is 21 days and for change of circumstances 12.5 days. The DWP will monitor the combination of these two targets which they refer to as NI 181. The combined agreed target for this year is **16 days**.

For the month of September 2009 Liberata's performance was:

Council	NI181	New Claims – Days	Change of Circumstances - Days
Allerdale	9.00	17.00	7.00
Copeland	9.82	18.53	7.84
Barrow	11.57	25.49	8.14
Carlisle	13.68	24.79	10.17
Eden	14.96	22.98	13.29
South Lakeland	NA	NA	NA
Barrow	18.86	25.42	15.28

From September 2009, a new version of the benefits system software was introduced. This provides a more accurate measure of performance. The figures in *italics* are produced by the previous system and are included for completeness.

(i) Legal Implications

Not Applicable.

(ii) Financial Implications

At this stage, the finances of the Council are within budgetary expectation.

(iii) Health and Safety Implications

Not Applicable.

(iv) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Not Applicable.

(v) Risk Assessment

Not Applicable.

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not Applicable.

Background Papers

Not Applicable.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		Part One (R) Agenda Item 8
Date of Meeting:	11th November , 2009	
Reporting Officer	Chief Executive	
<p>Title: Members’ Allowances Scheme – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>Government regulations require that any amendment to the Scheme of Allowances for a local authority should be made following the consideration of a report by its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>To agree that the recommendations be submitted to the Council to either accept or vary the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for inclusion in the scheme.</p>		

Report

A Council can amend its scheme of allowances as long as any proposals are in accordance with the regulations governing Members’ Allowances and the Council has considered the views of its IRP on the proposals.

The adopting of an allowances scheme for members is a function of the Council (Article 4.02 of the Constitution).

The Council’s Members’ Allowances Scheme was last reviewed in 2006. The current scheme expires on 31st March 2010.

The Scheme of Allowances sets out the rates payable to Members for Basic, Special Responsibility, Travel and Subsistence, Co-optees and Dependents’ Carers’ Allowances. Where reference is made to reasonable expenses the Chief Executive will use the County Council’s guide to reasonableness.

A copy of report by the IRP is attached at **Appendix 1**.

(i) Legal Implications

Not applicable.

(ii) Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

(iii) Financial Implications

Not applicable

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

Not applicable.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Not applicable

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not applicable

Background Papers

Not applicable

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – BARROW-IN-FURNESS BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

Introduction

This report deals with the work undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel and deals with the matters which have been considered and presents the recommendations of the Panel.

Before an authority makes or amends a scheme it shall have regard to the recommendations made in relation to it by its Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Panel comprises –

Mrs M. Burrow M.B.E., Barrow and District Disability Association
Mr J. Slater
Mr J. L. Winder – J. L. Winder and Co. Chartered Accountants

Remit

The regulations provide for an Independent Remuneration Panel to have the following functions and to make recommendations to an authority.

- As to the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected Members.
- About the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance.
- About the duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance.
- As to the amount of co-optees' allowance.
- As to whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined.
- On whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended.
- As to whether the annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index and, if so, for how long such a measure should run.

- As to which members of an authority are to be entitled to pensions in accordance with a scheme made under Section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972 and as to the treating of basic allowance and special responsibility allowance as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable.

In summary, the allowances which are or may be payable to Members are as follows:

- Basic Allowance (mandatory)
- Special Responsibility Allowance (discretionary)
- Dependants' Carers' Allowance (discretionary)
- Travelling and subsistence allowance (discretionary)

A scheme may also provide:

- For the payment of a co-optees' allowance to a person who is not a member of the authority but is a member of a Committee or Sub-Committee.
- Make provision for the payment of pensions to members under the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Recommendations

The Panel had regard to the decision making arrangements provided for in the Council's Constitution and to the roles undertaken by office-holders.

Basic Allowance

A scheme of allowances must include a basic flat rate allowance payable to all members of the authority. The allowance must be the same for each member.

Basic allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all Councillors including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents and attendance at political group meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of their homes.

Published guidance advises that regard should be had as to what Councillors do and the hours which are devoted to these tasks and that a view be taken on the rate at which and the number of hours for which Councillors ought to be remunerated. However guidance also advises that it is important that some elements of the work of members continues to be voluntary – that some hours are not remunerated.

Conclusions along these lines were drawn in the Panel's 2007 report. These were that the basic allowance should be based on an average of five hours per week over a 50 week period and that for the purpose of determining the basic allowance a rate of £8.832 per hour be applied. Any hours in excess of the foregoing would reflect the voluntary element of a members duties in relation to

service to the community recognising that monetary considerations were not a pre-requisite to seeking election as a Councillor and that service to the community was in itself part of the reward derived.

The effect of the 2007 recommendations, subsequently accepted by the Council was to increase the basic allowance to £2,208 per annum subject to uprating the allowances in accordance with the increases applying to employees from annual national salary awards.

The Panel are of the opinion that the conclusions reached in 2007 remain valid. No increase is therefore recommended.

Recommendation 1

That the present amount of basic allowance (£2,348.07) remain unchanged but continue to be subject to annual adjustment in accordance with the increases applying to employees from annual national salary awards.

Special Responsibility Allowances

A special responsibility allowance (SRA) may be paid to those members who have significant responsibilities over and above the generally accepted duties of a Councillor.

The regulations do not limit the number of special responsibility allowances which may be paid nor do the regulations prohibit the payment of more than one special responsibility allowance to any one member.

Authorities are advised to consider very carefully the additional roles of members and the significance of these roles both in terms of responsibility and real time commitment before deciding which will warrant a payment of special responsibility allowance.

Authorities are also advised that it does not necessarily follow that a particular responsibility borne by a particular member is a significant additional responsibility for which an SRA should be paid. Such duties may not lead to a significant extra work load for any one particular member above another. Authorities are advised that these responsibilities should be recognised as a time commitment to council work which is acknowledged within the basic allowance and not responsibilities for which an SRA should be recommended.

Authorities are advised to look carefully at the nature of their constitutions when determining a scheme.

Guidance also suggests that one way of calculating SRAs may be to take the agreed level of basic allowance and recommend a multiple of this allowance as an appropriate SRA for others. This approach was used in the 2007 review.

The Panel have had regard to the responsibilities borne by the holders of posts to which SRAs are presently attached. The Panel are of the opinion that the

conclusions reached in 2007 remain valid. No increase is therefore recommended.

Recommendation 2

(i) That the following special responsibility allowances be paid by applying the multipliers shown to the basic allowance.

Special Responsibility	Multiplier	£
The Leader of the Council	x 6	14,088.42
Deputy Leader of the Controlling Group	x 2.5	5,870.18
Leader of the Opposition	x 2.5	5,870.18
Chairmen Executive, Planning and Licensing Committees	x 2	4,696.14
Chairmen Overview and Scrutiny Committees	x 1.6	3,756.91
Chairman Housing Management Forum	x 1.6	3,756.91
Vice Chairmen of Committees	x 1.2	2,817.68

(The above amounts are inclusive of the basic allowance but should be subject to annual adjustment in accordance with the increases applying to employees from annual national salary awards).

Travelling and Subsistence Allowance

Provision may be made for the payment of travelling and subsistence allowances to members including co-opted members. This may include the provision for the payment of allowances to those members who travel by bicycle or other non motorised transport. The Panel may recommend which duties shall attract travel and subsistence allowances and the levels of any such allowance.

Public Transport

Normally lowest available standard fare on the day of booking. Members are asked to notify Democratic Services of their travel requirements as early as possible so that the Council can benefit from discounts for advance booking where available. Exceptionally, members may purchase their own tickets at short notice, but reimbursement will only be made on production of the rail tickets used or a receipt for payment. Tickets purchased by members themselves must also be the lowest available standard fare.

First class fare is payable only where the cost is no greater than the lowest available standard fare or where the agreement of the Leader of the Council has been obtained in advance of the duty being undertaken. Such agreement will normally be given where first class travel is necessary or desirable because of the need to undertake Council business on the train or the length of the journey.

Owing to the vagaries of ticket pricing it can sometimes be the case that the cost of a first class ticket is less than the standard fare. Where this is the case Democratic Services will note the two prices at the time of booking and obtain the cheaper fare. If a first class ticket is the cheaper this will be noted by Democratic Services for audit purposes so that it can be demonstrated that members travelled in the most economical way at the time.

Rail Supplements

In addition to the rail fare, Members may claim the following supplementary allowances not exceeding expenditure actually incurred on:

- (a) reservation of seats and deposit or portorage of luggage;
- (b) sleeping accommodation engaged by a member for an overnight journey, subject however to reduction by one-third of any subsistence allowance payable for that night;
- (c) tube fares where not included in the main ticket for the journey;
- (d) a senior citizen's railcard (upon request, and only if primarily for use in connection with travel on Council business). There is a potential financial saving to the Council because the use of a railcard normally enables the cost of all train journeys to be reduced by one third of the original price;
- (e) the cost of meals or refreshments taken on **out of County** train journeys, except where included in the price of a rail ticket.

Private Car etc.

The rate for travel by a member's own private motor car (or one belonging to a member of their family or otherwise provided for their use) in circumstances which involve a substantial saving in time or where it is in the interests of the Council, or is otherwise reasonable that the member should so travel rather than by public transport, shall not exceed:

For a motor cycle

(i)	Not over 120cc	7.3p per mile
(ii)	121 – 150cc	7.3p per mile
(iii)	151 – 500cc	10.7p per mile
(iv)	Over 500cc	14.5p per mile

For a car

(i)	for cars not exceeding 999cc	38.1p per mile
(ii)	for cars 1000cc and above	42.4p per mile

Members are encouraged to car share wherever possible. The mileage rates above may be increased by a further sum of 5.0p per mile for each passenger,

not exceeding four, to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be payable, and by the amount of any expenditure incurred in tolls, ferries or parking fees, including overnight garaging.

Members are responsible for ensuring that their insurance covers use of the vehicle on Council business.

In deciding whether to travel by car or by public transport for long journeys, members should have regard to the relative costs of travel and the business needs of the Council.

Taxis

Where no public transport is reasonably available, or in cases of urgency, members may claim the actual cost of a taxi journey and a modest gratuity. In other cases, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport can be claimed. Receipts will be required.

A taxi shall not be used for journeys extending outside the Borough, except with the Leader of the Council's approval.

Pedal Cycles

That no allowance be made for pedal cycles.

Subsistence

That the actual and reasonable costs of meals and/or accommodation be paid.

Recommendation 3

(1) Public Transport – Reimbursement of actual costs;

(2) That travelling allowance be paid in respect of relevant duties approved by the Council under regulation 8 (2003 Regulations) as follows:

- (i) for cars not exceeding 999cc 38.1p per mile**
- (ii) for cars 1000cc and above 42.4p per mile**

(3) The rates in (1) above may be increased by a sum of 5.0p per mile for each passenger up to a maximum of four passengers, to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be payable;

(4) Councillors shall be entitled to claim the following allowances for use of their own motor cycle for any duty approved by the Council under section 8 of the Regulations:-

- (i) Not over 120cc 7.3p per mile**
- (ii) 121 – 150cc 7.3p per mile**
- (iii) 151 – 500cc 10.7p per mile**
- (iv) Over 500cc 14.5p per mile**

(5) That no allowance be paid in respect of the use of pedal cycles; and

(6) That the actual and reasonable costs of meals and/or accommodation be paid.

Co-optees' Allowance

Provision may be made for the payment of co-optees' allowances, for attendance at conferences and meetings, to any co-opted and appointed members of a council's committees or sub-committees. Such an allowance will in general be an annual allowance and may vary from one co-opted member to another. Consideration may be given to the degree of time and effort put in by the co-optees. Some element of the contribution made should be voluntary.

Recommendation 4

That the co-optees' allowances continue to be paid to the Independent Members appointed to the Standards Committee and that the allowances be subject to annual adjustment in accordance with the increases applying to employees from annual national salary awards. The revised figures to come into force with effect from 1st April, 2010.

Independent Chairman £415.08

Independent Members £114.12

Dependants' Carers' Allowance

A scheme may include the payment of a dependants' carers' allowance to those Councillors who incur expenditure for the care of children or other dependants whilst undertaking particular duties. The Panel may recommend that such allowances be made available and recommend the amount of this allowance.

Recommendation 5

A Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowance shall be payable based upon reimbursement of actual receipted costs up to a maximum of £10 per hour for up to 10 hours per week, subject to prior agreement by the Borough Treasurer, in respect of Child Care for children up to the age of 14 or in the case of severely disabled dependents, the dependent is to be certified by a medical or social services practitioner as requiring attendant care. The allowance is payable to any Member who incurs expenditure whilst undertaking the qualifying duties specified in Schedule 1. The allowance will not be payable where the care is provided by a member of the claimant's own household.

Annual Adjustments of Allowance Levels

Provision may be made for an annual adjustment to allowances to be ascertained by reference to an index as specified and contained in the scheme.

Where a Panel makes a recommendation that allowance levels should be determined according to an index it has to make a recommendation as to how long the index should run before reconsideration. In any case an index may not run for more than four years before a further recommendation on it is sought from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Recommendation 6

- (i) That annual adjustments be made to the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances so as to increase such allowances from 1st April, 2010 and annually thereafter in accordance with the increases applying to employees from annual national salary awards;**
- (ii) That annual adjustments be made to travelling allowance from 1st April, 2010 and annually thereafter to reflect the rates of reimbursement set by Cumbria County Council for Members of that Authority; and**
- (iii) That the provision for adjustments referred to in (i) and (ii) should apply for a period of three years.**

Pensions

The Local Government Pension Scheme and Discretionary Compensation (Local Authority Members in England) Regulations 2003 allow councils to decide whether their Councillors should have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme. The Independent Remuneration Panel can make binding recommendations on which Councillors may be eligible for access to the scheme.

Recommendation 7

No recommendation is made on allowing any Councillor admission to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Withholding Allowances

Certain allowances may be withheld as a result of the full or partial suspension of a member of an authority and schemes may make appropriate provision together with provision for the repayment of any allowances which have been paid in respect of a period for which a member has been suspended.

Whilst this is not a matter upon which the Panel is required to make a recommendation the Panel nevertheless wishes to comment that it is considered appropriate to include such provisions in the members' allowances scheme.

Recommendation 8

That where a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct results in the full or partial suspension of a member of the authority or of a co-optee then provision be made for the withdrawal of allowances provided for in the members' allowances scheme and for the repayment of any allowances which have been paid in respect of a period during which a member or co-optee has been suspended.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

That the present amount of basic allowance (£2,348.07) remain unchanged but continue to be subject to annual adjustment as referred to in recommendation 6.

Recommendation 2

That the following special responsibility allowances be paid by applying the multipliers shown to the basic allowance.

Special Responsibility	Multiplier	£
The Leader of the Council	x 6	13,088.42
Deputy Leader of the Controlling Group	x 2.5	5,870.18
Leader of the Opposition	x 2.5	5,870.18
Chairmen Executive, Planning and Licensing Committees	x 2	4,696.14
Chairmen Overview and Scrutiny Committees	x 1.6	3,756.91
Chairman Housing Management Forum	x 1.6	3,756.91
Vice Chairmen of Committees	x 1.2	2,817.68

(The above amounts are inclusive of the basic allowance but should be subject to annual adjustment as referred to in recommendation 6 below).

Recommendation 3

- (1) Public Transport – Reimbursement of actual costs;
- (2) That travelling allowance be paid in respect of relevant duties approved by the Council under regulation 8 (2003 Regulations) as follows:
 - (i) for cars not exceeding 999cc 38.1p per mile
 - (ii) for cars 1000cc and above 42.4p per mile
- (3) The rates in (1) above may be increased by a sum of 5.0p per mile for each passenger up to a maximum of four passengers, to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be payable;
- (4) Councillors shall be entitled to claim the following allowances for use of their own motor cycle for any duty approved by the Council under Section 8 of the Regulations.
 - (i) Not over 120cc 7.3p per mile
 - (ii) 121 – 150cc 7.3p per mile
 - (iii) 151 – 500cc 10.7p per mile
 - (iv) Over 500cc 14.5p per mile
- (5) That no allowance be paid in respect of the use of pedal cycles; and

(6) That the actual and reasonable costs of meals and/or accommodation be paid.

Recommendation 4

That the co-optees' allowances be continued to be paid to the independent members appointed to the Standards Committee and that the allowances be subject to annual adjustment as referred to in recommendation 6 below).

Independent Chairman	£415.08
Independent Members	£114.12

Recommendation 5

A Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowance shall be payable based upon reimbursement of actual receipted costs up to a maximum of £10 per hour for up to 10 hours per week, subject to prior agreement by the Borough Treasurer, in respect of Child Care for children up to the age of 14 or in the case of severely disabled dependents, the dependent is to be certified by a medical or social services practitioner as requiring attendant care. The allowance is payable to any Member who incurs expenditure whilst undertaking the qualifying duties specified in Schedule 1. The allowance will not be payable where the care is provided by a member of the claimant's own household.

Recommendation 6

- (i) That annual adjustments be made to the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances so as to increase such allowances from 1st April, 2010 and annually thereafter in accordance with the increases applying to employees from annual national salary awards;
- (ii) That annual adjustments be made to travelling allowance from 1st April, 2010 and annually thereafter to reflect the rates of reimbursement set by Cumbria County Council for Members of that Authority; and
- (iii) That the provision for adjustments referred to in (i) and (ii) should apply for a period of three years.

Recommendation 7

No recommendation is made on allowing any Councillor admission to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Recommendation 8

That where a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct results in the full or partial suspension of a member of the authority or of a co-optee then provision be made for the withdrawal of allowances provided for in the members' allowances scheme and for the repayment of any allowances which have been paid in respect of a period during which a member or co-optee has been suspended.

SCHEDULE 1

LIST OF DUTIES WHERE TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE IS PAID

- (a) attendance at a meeting of the authority or of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or of any other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body.
- (b) attendance at any other meeting the holding of which is authorised by the authority, or a committee or sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee, provided that:-
 - (i) where the authority is divided into two or more political groups, it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited, or
 - (ii) if the authority is not so divided it is a meeting to which at least two members of the authority have been invited.
- (c) attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member.
- (d) the attendance at a meeting of the Executive or a meeting of any of its Committees, where the authority is operating executive arrangements.
- (e) duties undertaken in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened.
- (f) duties undertaken in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises; or
- (g) any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority, or of any of its committees or sub-committees.

Signed
Mrs M. Burrow M.B.E. Mr J. L. Winder Mr J. Slater
Barrow and District J. L. Winder and Co.
Disability Association Chartered Accountants

October 2009

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 9
Date of Meeting: 11th November , 2009	
Reporting Officer Chief Executive	
<p>Title: Housing Market Renewal Programme – North Central Renewal Area - Sutherland Street</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>Planned improvement work on Sutherland Street is progressing, and specific scheme details are presented for approval. Acquisitions in the North Central Renewal Area are continuing, and work on the Compulsory Purchase Order has commenced. It is proposed to carry out partial demolition work on properties already owned by the Council.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the report; 2. To note the progress made within the Renewal Area; 3. To approve the Group Repair scheme details for Sutherland Street (even numbers) including the demolition of 82 and 84 Sutherland Street; 4. To authorise Officers to make the necessary arrangements to demolish properties on Sutherland Street (odd numbers), where these properties are owned by the Council and where the Chief Executive deems that the work is practical; 5. To appoint Arcus Consulting as project managers for the work; and 6. To agree to make the necessary adjustments to the Capital Programme. 	

1. Background

- 1.1. This Committee and Council have previously received reports on the development of proposals in North Central Barrow. Council has declared North Central to be a 'Renewal Area' within the meaning of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (Minutes 73 Executive Committee 17/09/08 and 44 Council 07/10/08 refer). As part of the Renewal Area declaration, a number of properties on Arthur Street and Sutherland Street were identified for demolition and redevelopment.
- 1.2. At the time of the declaration of the Renewal Area, it was agreed to carry out Group Repair schemes in programmed areas. The block comprising 96 Crellin Street and 2-84 (even) Sutherland Street is the first scheme in the programme. An earlier report provided a report on progress and a tender list for the works was approved (Minutes 29 Executive Committee 08/07/09 and 26 Council 21/07/09 refer).

2. Group Repair progress

- 2.1. The report to Executive Committee on 08/07/09 noted the appointment of Arcus Consulting to carry out project design and management services for the Group Repair scheme. Arcus were appointed through an openly advertised competitive tendering exercise, at a rate based on a percentage of works value.
- 2.2. Arcus Consulting have developed a scheme including the following elements:
 - Re-roofing
 - Rebuilding chimney stacks
 - New doors and windows (where required)
 - New insulated render to front elevation
 - Replacement rear boundary walls
 - New canopies over front doors
 - New rainwater goods
- 2.3. The tenders for this work have been sent out, and I intend to bring a report to the next meeting of Executive Committee on the outcome of the tender process.
- 2.4. This block of properties includes 84 Sutherland Street, which is a former shop with a flat above. This property has been empty for a number of years and has suffered fire damage.
- 2.5. It is considered to be uneconomic to retain this property, which would require substantial work to bring it back into use. It is therefore proposed to demolish both this and the adjoining property, 82 Sutherland Street, which is also owned by the Council, to create a small area of amenity land. This will contribute to the creation of a less dense built environment in the Renewal Area. The properties at 82 and 84 Sutherland Street are highlighted on the plan attached as **Appendix 2** Members are asked to approve the demolition of these two properties and landscaping of the site.
- 2.6. Members should note that during the development of the Renewal Area, the Council has acquired 16 properties in this block by agreement with the owners. To date, 6 have been refurbished for exchange with owner occupiers whose properties are to be demolished under the Renewal Area programme. The demolition of 82 and 84 Sutherland Street would leave 8 remaining in the Council's ownership. I propose to bring these properties back into use in due course, potentially through an open sale or shared equity model. A further report will be brought to a future meeting with more detailed proposals.

3. Other Renewal Area progress

- 3.1. At the time of declaring the Renewal Area, Council also resolved to authorise officers to commence with preparations for a compulsory purchase order (CPO) for these properties. Executive Committee subsequently authorised officers to take all the necessary procedural steps prior to and following the confirmation of a CPO (Minute 166 08/04/09 refers).
- 3.2. DLA Piper UK LLP have been appointed to act as legal representatives for the Council in this matter.
- 3.3. Work has commenced on preparing the CPO, and acquisitions by negotiation have continued. At the time of writing, 100 out of the 126 properties earmarked for demolition are owned by the Council. Terms have been agreed on a further seven. Appendix 2, shows the broader context of this part of the Renewal Area, and identifies the properties currently owned by the Council, as well as those where a sale has been agreed, and those that have been refurbished for a property exchange.
- 3.4. The empty properties owned by the Council present an ongoing security problem, and are increasingly becoming a focus for anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Some work has been done to demolish a number of back yard walls in an attempt to reduce fly tipping and vandalism. Whilst this has had a degree of success, anti-social behaviour has continued. The enclosed nature of the back streets in particular, which are poorly overlooked, make the empty properties vulnerable to ongoing break ins and vandalism. There is some evidence that activities such as anti-social drinking are attracted to the area. I therefore consider that it would be prudent to demolish empty properties where it is practical to do so.
- 3.5. I anticipate that within a few weeks, the Council will own all but three of the properties in the block 1-81 Sutherland Street (odds). I recommend that, as far as reasonably practicable, all of the Council owned properties in this terrace be demolished as soon as possible.

4. Costs of demolition

- 4.1. A unit cost of £2,000 - 3,000 per property is anticipated, and provision for these costs has been made in the Capital Programme 2009-12. Carrying out partial demolition will require a transfer of funds from 2010/11 to 2009/10.
- 4.2. Carrying out demolition incrementally is not the most cost effective way to do work of this nature. A Structural Engineer will need to be engaged to ensure that properties that remain are left in a stable condition. The demolition contractor will also be unable to maximise economies of scale. The level of additional costs is difficult to quantify without tendering partial and full demolition contracts, but this factor needs to be borne in mind.
- 4.3. Conversely, however, it also needs to be borne in mind that there will be savings, both in cash and in staff resources that will arise. The security

doors that are installed on the properties have been procured on a rental of £4 per door per week. Carrying out the suggested demolition on Sutherland Street will therefore save around £500 per month. I also anticipate a reduction in the costs that arise from the removal of fly tipping, resecuring of property and a freeing up of staff time spent dealing with these issues.

- 4.4. My view is that taking into account the balance of costs and benefits, the best value to the Council is gained by carrying out the proposed partial demolition.
- 4.5. Arcus Consulting have agreed to offer the same rate to manage the proposed demolition work. I recommend that we appoint Arcus on this basis as an extension to their existing contract.

5. Strategic fit

- 5.1. It is important to consider carefully the strategic implications of carrying out the proposed partial demolition. This demolition work will reinforce the Council's commitment to the approved Renewal Area scheme, and in that sense add weight to its case in seeking confirmation of a CPO. However, it should not, and indeed cannot, prejudge the outcome of the CPO process. The corporate risks involved in recommending this work therefore need to be considered.
- 5.2. Whilst I remain confident that the Council has a strong case in seeking the confirmation of a CPO, this can never be guaranteed. Bearing this in mind, I am nevertheless of the view that carrying out this demolition is the best option even in the event that the CPO is not confirmed. Previous options appraisal work carried out in the preparation of the Renewal Area Declaration Report showed that wholesale refurbishment of existing properties in this part of North Central represented poor value for money. This remains the case, and indeed the position will have worsened as many of the properties have now been vacant for a considerable period of time. It follows that there is no sensible reason to retain the properties that the Council currently owns.
- 5.3. The proposed demolition should however proceed based on an agreed interim plan, with a long term fall back position in the event that the CPO is not confirmed.
- 5.4. In the interim, I would recommend that the stability of the remaining properties is ensured, and that a simple landscaping scheme is carried out, either by leaving a surface of topsoil, or a bound hard surface to provide a more even surface than the crushed rubble that will remain from the demolition work.
- 5.5. As a long term fall back position, it would be possible to carry out a mixed scheme including a mixture of landscaping and a limited amount of new housing. This could be developed in more detail at a future date if

necessary. It is important to recognise that this would not be the optimum scheme, either from the point of view of value for money, or of achieving the strategic objectives of regenerating the housing market in North Central. Clearly the better scheme is that agreed as part of the declaration of the Renewal Area, and which would follow in the case of a CPO being confirmed.

5.6. Members should also note that this course of action is similar to that taken in the Hindpool Renewal Area, where partial demolition was carried out in advance of the CPO being confirmed.

(i) Legal Implications

The proposed work would take place within the context of the ongoing CPO process. I am confident that the proposed action will not prejudice the CPO process. DLA Piper UK LLP have reviewed this report and do not consider that the proposed partial demolition will prejudice the CPO process as it is considered to be the best course of action even in the event that the CPO is not confirmed.

(ii) Risk Assessment

Consideration is given to the question of strategic risk in section 5 of the report. This outlines how the strategic risk has been assessed and how it is minimised.

(iii) Financial Implications

Adequate funding for the proposed capital expenditure is included in the Capital Programme. The broad considerations of value for money are considered in section 4 of the report.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The management of empty properties has been carried out in such a way as to minimise as far as reasonably practicable the risk to public health and safety. Carrying out the proposed demolition work will further reduce this risk.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

This supports:

KP 2: Meet the housing needs of the Borough and make decent housing more accessible

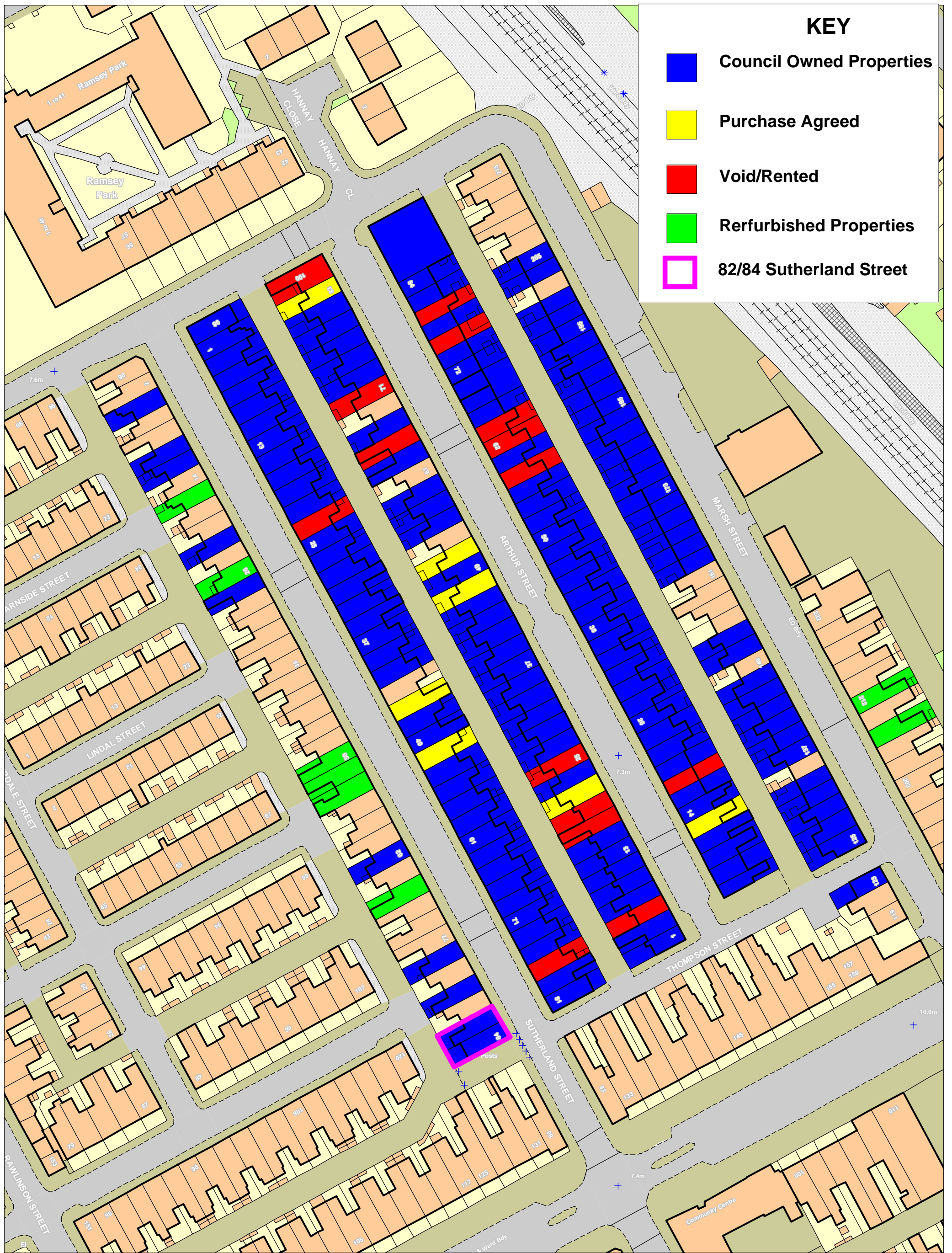
Annual Objective 3: Deliver year 3 Housing Market Renewal programme

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not Applicable.

Background Papers

Not Applicable.



KEY

- Council Owned Properties
- Purchase Agreed
- Void/Rented
- Refurbished Properties
- 82/84 Sutherland Street

BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL - NCRA PROGRESS 28/10/2009

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		Part One (R) Agenda Item 10
Date of Meeting:	11th November , 2009	
Reporting Officer	Chief Executive	
<p>Title: Barrow Dial-a-Ride</p> <p>Summary and Conclusion:</p> <p>This report asks Members to consider a recommendation for a supplementary estimate of £3,500 to meet the additional costs of operating the Barrow dial-a-ride service pending tender of the operation by Cumbria County Council.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>To recommend the Council to agree a supplementary estimate of £3,500 to increase the dial-a-ride subsidy in the current year and assume an overall grant of £28,500 for 2010/11.</p>		

Report

Background

This service is provided under contract to Cumbria County Council and provides bespoke transportation to the disabled community. An overview of the current situation is attached at **Appendix 3**. The Council and Cumbria County Council currently share the costs of subsidising the Barrow dial-a-ride service. The Council contributes £25,000 and the County Council £29,308. In Carlisle the County Council contribute £29,408.

Demand for the service is broadly flat with around 250 members. Additional fuel costs have driven up the costs of the service and the current year requires additional subsidy of £3,500. The County Council is asking the Borough to meet this cost because of the differential in grants paid by each authority at this time.

This service is now unique in Cumbria and the Council is unique among Cumbrian Districts in funding such a scheme.

A similar scheme operates in Carlisle, but following tender is now provided through a mixed fleet taxi operation rather than a dedicated driver and vehicle. This change of service has produced savings in the cost of the service and the County Council have indicated their intention of tendering the Barrow service for a new contract commencing in September, 2010.

The costs to the County Council are similar in Barrow and Carlisle because the Barrow service operates with two dedicated drivers and vehicles, whereas the Carlisle service was historically provided by a single driver and vehicle.

The Carlisle service caters for around 2,000 trips each year, whereas Barrow dial-a-ride caters for approximately 4,000 trips each year.

(i) Legal Implications

This is a non statutory service and any grants paid are at the Council's discretion

(ii) Risk Assessment

Loss of the service would have a significant impact on mobility for our most disabled residents

(iii) Financial Implications

As per report

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

Not Applicable.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

KP3 provide easier access to our services
KP1 Safer, cleaner, greener

(vi) Equal Opportunities

The services is aimed exclusively at mobility impaired residents

Background Papers

Correspondence with Cumbria County Council

Overview of Barrow Dial-a-Ride

Background

The County Council, in partnership with Barrow Borough Council have been providing demand responsive transport in Barrow, "Barrow Dial-a-Ride" for many years. The contract was re-tendered in 2005, and awarded to Barrow Dial-a-Ride for 5 years until 31st August 2010.

"Dial-a-Ride" provides wheelchair accessible demand responsive transport to those people in the Barrow area who are unable to use public transport due to a mobility difficulty, and are not in receipt of a concessionary bus pass. The door-to-door transport is available for any purpose eg. Attending appointments, shopping etc. Transport is booked in advance with the operator and is available Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm. Users provide 24 hours notice when booking a journey and pay £2.50 per single journey with carers travelling free of charge.

Usage

To date, 225 users live in Barrow-in-Furness; 24 live in Dalton-in-Furness; 3 live in Askam-in-Furness.

Usage has declined by 10% during 2008-09 when compared with 2007-08. The reasons for this are not fully understood. The introduction of free concessionary travel combined with the availability of low-floor accessible vehicles operating on the Barrow town network may have had an effect on patronage or some of the more regular users may have stopped travelling due to a change in their personal circumstances. There has, however, been a recent increase in applications (20 new ones in January 2009) and Barrow Dial-a-ride has indicated that these users are starting to use the service more frequently.

There are between 30-35 regular users who use the service 2 – 3 times per week. Around 85% of journeys are for shopping, 10% for health (doctors, dentist and hospital appointments) and around 5% for social activity

Although the scheme covers the whole of Barrow Borough, there are only a couple of "regular" users from Dalton or Barrow, the vast majority of users are from the urban Barrow area.

Scheme Costs:

Estimated cost of providing transport during 2008-09 financial year is:

Gross Cost (includes additional fuel payments; 4.8% above- inflationary increase)	£65,627
Less Revenue	£9,444
Net Cost	£56,183
Contribution from Barrow Borough Council	£27,000
Contribution from Cumbria County Council	£29,183

User satisfaction survey results 2008/09

In December 2008, the annual user satisfaction survey was undertaken across all aspects of Community Transport. Findings related to demand responsive transport which includes Barrow Dial-A-Ride is as detailed:

95 questionnaires were sent out, 61 of which were completed and returned, of which 10 were from users of Barrow Dial-a-Ride.

94% of users were satisfied with the service overall. This reflects the general response to individual questions regarding the service.

- 97% said it was always easy to get in touch with the Booking Service
- 95% said the booking service staff were always approachable and helpful
- 90% said vehicles were always available for the date and time requested
- 91% said the hire charge is about right.

When asked what they liked about the service, the drivers were mentioned most often, as pleasant, helpful and friendly. The good, efficient service was also a popular answer.

When asked what would improve their satisfaction, evening/weekend availability was the most popular answer followed by shorter notice.

Promotion

Word-of-mouth is an extremely effective way of promoting the scheme, and users are able to raise awareness amongst their own friends and neighbours. Printed publicity is currently in the form of a flier, produced by Barrow Dial-a-Ride.

Promotion of Dial-A-Ride will be discussed in more detail with Barrow Borough Council as a joint activity. A new, more distinctive leaflet has been drafted and is attached as Appendix 2. It is proposed that this leaflet is widely distributed across the area to raise awareness of the scheme and generate additional usage. The distribution of this leaflet will be targeted to doctor's surgeries, health centres, appropriate support groups, lunch clubs sheltered housing, care homes etc. It may also be possible to target this publicity at those residents who have not applied for their concessionary NowCard again, by working with the Borough Council.

Barrow Dial-a-Ride have suggested that all registered users on the database are contacted through a written survey to more clearly establish reasons for travel which may assist with marketing. They also suggest establishing with those users registered with the scheme but not using the service why they are not using the service. This will be progressed in partnership with Barrow-Dial-A-Ride, Barrow Borough Council and Cumbria County Council.

Future Provision

Estimated cost of providing transport during 2009-10 financial year is:

Gross Cost (assumes 3.6% inflationary increase in Sept 09) £68,308
Less Revenue (increased on 08-09 after promotional push) £10,500

Net Cost £57,808

Proposed contribution from Barrow Borough Council £28,500
Contribution from Cumbria County Council £29,308

Contribution from Barrow Borough Council to be confirmed however, discussions in January 2008 confirmed that the Borough Council wished to increase funding incrementally so that the scheme would be funded 50/50 with the County Council.

The current contract expires on 31st August 2010. Work will commence in late Summer in preparation for the tenders which will be issued in early 2010. A survey of all users will take place to establish more precisely what is working well and what could improve the service within the available financial resources. It may also be appropriate to meet with some of the users as part of a focus group. This can be discussed nearer to time.

Conclusion

Dial-a-ride is fulfilling an essential role in providing access to services for the most vulnerable residents of Barrow District.

Costs are slowly rising and revenue is slightly decreasing. Targeted publicity will raise awareness and hopefully increase the revenue which will, in turn, reduce the costs to both Barrow Borough Council and Cumbria County Council.

The contract retender process which starts in Autumn 2009 will provide the opportunity of checking with users that the service is meeting their needs and ensure that a value for money service is being provided by testing the market through open tender.

Caroline Watson
Passenger Transport Officer (Community Transport)
March 2009

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(R) Agenda Item 11
Date of Meeting: 11th November, 2009	
Reporting Officer: Chief Environmental Health Officer	
Title: Amendment to Delegation Agreement with regard to Building Control Matters	
Summary and Conclusions:	
<p>This report seeks to amend the current authority delegated to the Principal Building Surveyor in the Council's Constitution in respect of Building Control matters.</p>	
Recommendations:	
<p>To recommend the Council that paragraph E be inserted into the Delegation Agreement with regard Building Control Matters detailed in the Council's Constitution.</p>	
<p>(E) In consultation with the Director of Corporate Services to negotiate individual charges for Building Control fees commensurate with the principles of cost recovery in cases where work might otherwise be lost to an Approved Inspector.</p>	

Report

The Council is required to make charges to cover costs in carrying out statutory Building Control functions. Charges are reviewed and publicised annually as a Scheme of Fees and Charges which represents reasonable cost recovery for most projects.

Since 1997 local authorities have had to compete for Building Control regulation work with private sector Approval Inspectors. During this period it has become relatively common for the Principal Building Surveyor to assess fee structures not on the Scheme of Fees and Charges by calculating the actual cost of the plan approval and inspection regime required by the specific project. This is particularly the case with very high value projects.

Having reviewed the Delegation Agreement with regards Building Control matters which gives the Principal Building Surveyor in the Building Control team authority to act on behalf of the Borough Council it has been suggested by the Director of Corporate Services that the Delegation Agreement should be amended to reflect a specific delegation to negotiate charges for services in consulting with him to ensure compliance with competition and procurement legislation.

I would ask you therefore to approve the insertion of a new paragraph E in the Delegation Agreement as detailed in the recommendation to this report and amend the Council's Constitution as required at the earliest opportunity.

(i) Legal Implications

Building Control Authorities have the legal authority to compete for Building Control regulation work with Approved Inspectors.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The Principal Building Surveyor risks acting outside his authority if this amendment to the Constitution is not made.

(iii) Financial Implications

The Building Control Authority of the Council is expected to be self financing.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

Not Applicable.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

KP5 - improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your Council.

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not Applicable.

Background Papers

Nil

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		Part One (D) Agenda Item 12
Date of Meeting:	11th November , 2009	
Reporting Officer	Community Services Manager	
<p>Title: Guidelines for the Installation of Memorial Seats in Borough Cemeteries</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>This report identifies the issues that have arisen with the Borough's Cemeteries related to the increase in installations of memorial seats. At present, the variability in quality and design produces operational difficulties and this report proposes a set of guidelines which the Cemetery Department would wish to introduce to address these issues in future.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>To approve the introduction of the guidelines for the installation of Memorial Seats in Borough Cemeteries from 1st December 2009.</p>		

Report

There has been a significant increase in the number of requests from the families and friends of those buried within the Borough's Cemeteries to install memorial seats. (This is particularly applicable to Barrow cemetery.)

The Cemetery Department have always tried to accommodate the wishes of the bereaved in this regard, but the variability of the types of memorial being ordered and the availability of space is becoming a cause for concern.

The quality of the seats being purchased and installed varies to the point where some pose issues related to safety from the date of installation, and many do not stand up to the rigours of being placed in the outdoor environment for too long.

On a more sensitive note, just as the quality varies so does the design, and whilst what may seem comforting to some bereaved people is often seen as inappropriate by many other visitors to the Cemeteries

This report asks members to approve the introduction of a short set of guidelines aimed at regulating the introduction of memorial seats within the Borough's Cemeteries. These guidelines are as follows:

1. In order to regulate size and type, memorial seats with a standard size plaque may only be purchased through the Cemetery Department office.

(These seats will be hardwood in construction and four feet in width) The approximate cost will be £400 per seat.

2. Seats will be allowed in any areas of the cemeteries but must not infringe on other graves or memorials. The location of the seat must be approved by the cemetery office
3. Seats will be permitted for a five year lease. This is to ensure that seats do not fall into disrepair. After this period families have the option of purchasing a new seat should it be required. (The cemetery office reserves the right to repair / remove seats as necessary should they fall into disrepair during this period.)
4. The applicant must sign an application form agreeing to the policy

(i) Legal Implications

Not Applicable.

(ii) Risk Assessment

Not Applicable.

(iii) Financial Implications

Not Applicable. The Cemetery Office will establish a standard bench and plaque from an approved supplier and will refer applicants on.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The introduction of this policy will improve the safety of memorial seats contained within the Borough's cemeteries.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Not Applicable.

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not Applicable.

Background Papers

Nil

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 13
Date of Meeting: 11th November, 2009	
Reporting Officer: Projects and Property Officer	
<p>Title: Newton Community Association – Ground Lease</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>The report details the current position with regard to a lease of land at Newton-in-Furness to the Newton Community Association.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>To note the current position and agree to the granting of a new lease to Newton Community Association on the terms reported.</p>	

Report

Background

Newton Community Association occupies land in Newton-in-Furness as shown hatched on the attached plan at **Appendix 4**. It is the site of Newton Village Hall.

The land was held under the terms of a 40 year lease granted in 1963. This lease terminated in March 2003.

Newton Community Association has requested the granting of a new lease on the following main terms:

Term	25 years
Rent	£1pa
Other Terms	As existing lease

(i) Legal Implications

A formal lease contract for the land over 25 years.

(ii) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

(iii) Health and Safety Implications

There are no Health and Safety implications.

(iv) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Not applicable.

(v) Risk Assessment

There are no risks associated with this transaction.

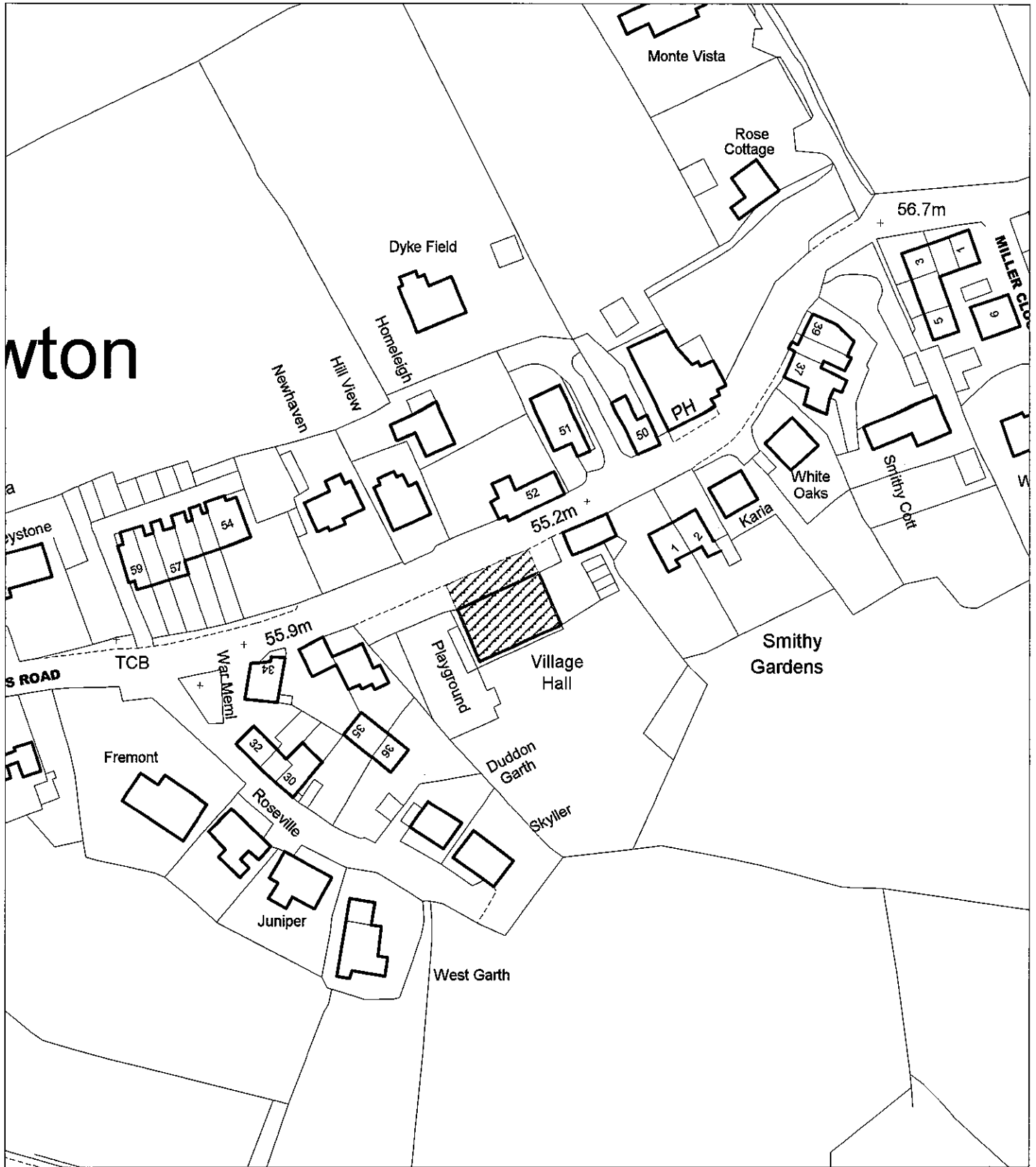
(vi) Equal Opportunities:

Not applicable.

Background Papers

Nil

Newton Community Association - Ground Lease



ESTATES DEPARTMENT

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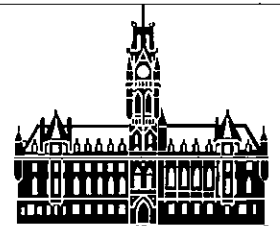
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**BOROUGH OF
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 14
Date of Meeting: 11th November, 2009	
Reporting Officer: Projects and Property Officer	
Title: Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust (Sure Start)	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The report details the current position with regard to Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trusts occupation of council-owned property in Mill Lane and Milestone Avenue, Barrow-in-Furness.	
Recommendation:	
To note the current position and agree to the granting of two new leases to Cumbria County Council on the terms reported.	

Report

Background

Sure Start Barrow, under the direction of Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust, occupy Ormsgill Community Centre and 108-122 Mill Lane on the following terms:

Ormsgill Community Centre:

Nine year lease from 11th May 2005 to 10th May 2014 – Rent of £1pa

108-122 Mill Lane:

15 year lease from 11th May 2005 to 10th May 2020 – Rent of £100pa

Sure Start Barrow, known as Furness Children Centres, now come under the direction of Cumbria County Council.

Cumbria County Council and Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust have approached Barrow Borough Council with a request to update the lease documentation on Ormsgill Community Centre and 108-122 Mill Lane.

The proposed new terms are:

1. the existing leases to Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust be surrendered;
2. two new leases of twenty years duration be entered into between Barrow Borough Council and Cumbria County Council
3. all other terms are per previous agreements.

(i) Legal Implications

A formal lease contract for the property over 20 years

(ii) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications

(iii) Health and Safety Implications

There are no Health and Safety implications.

(iv) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Not applicable

(v) Risk Assessment

There are no risks associated with this transaction

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not applicable

Background Papers

Nil

		<u>Part One</u>
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		(D) Agenda Item 15
Date of Meeting:	11th November, 2009	
Reporting Officer:	Projects and Property Officer	
<p>Title: Land to the rear of Teal Close, Parklands, Askam-in-Furness</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>The report details the current position with regard to a proposed ground lease of land to the rear of Teal Close, Parklands, Askam-in-Furness</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>That Members note the current position and agree to the terms of the ground lease as reported</p>		

Report

Background

On the completion of the residential development at Parklands, Askam-in-Furness it was agreed that Barrow Borough Council would take, under lease, a small area of land from Neil Price Limited to maintain as Public Open Space.

The land amounting to 0.6 acres is as shown hatched at **Appendix 5**.

The main terms of the lease are:

Term	99 years
Rent	£1pa (if demanded)
Use	Open Space/Amenity land
Repair	There is no requirement for the Council to maintain the land other than as open space

(i) Legal Implications

A formal lease contract for the land over 99 years

(ii) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications

(iii) Health and Safety Implications

There are no Health and Safety implications.

(iv) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Not Applicable

(v) Risk Assessment

There are no risks associated with this transaction.

(vi) Equal Opportunities

Not Applicable

Background Papers

Nil

Land at the rear of Teal Close, Parklands, Askam in Furness



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**BOROUGH OF
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		Part One (R) Agenda Item 16
Date of Meeting:	11th November, 2009	
Reporting Officer:	Chief Executive	
<p>Title: Barrow and Dalton Town Centre Shop Front Grants</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>This report proposes the allocation of £200,000 of capital reserves to support a grant scheme to improve independent retailers shop fronts in Barrow and Dalton Town Centres.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>To recommend the Council that £200,000 from capital reserves be allocated to provide non-contributory grants of up to £2,000 and 50% grants up to a maximum contribution of £20,000 to encourage upgrading and refurbishment of independent retailers shop fronts in Barrow and Dalton Town Centres.</p>		

Report

Background

The current recession is having a detrimental effect on retailing outlets in Barrow and Dalton Town Centres.

In Barrow the Council is using earmarked funding such as the Working Neighbourhoods Fund to support retailers and there is limited funding to support refurbishment of listed buildings. The Council continues to intervene in vacant properties such as 104 Abbey Road and a scheme for temporary improvement of empty retail window displays is in the process.

Independent retailers are finding it increasingly difficult to find funding to meet the costs of maintaining attractive and contemporary shop fronts and there is a danger that investment in public realm such as Dalton Road will be compromised by deteriorating retail units.

In order to encourage independent retailers to upgrade their shop fronts and present a well styled street scene, the Council needs to consider direct intervention to stimulate investment and implement low cost improvements without placing an added burden on small businesses at this difficult time.

The Council currently enjoys a strong capital position and the existing three year programme includes £3m of general contingencies. It would not be imprudent therefore to allocate £200,000 to support a Shop Front Grants Scheme for Barrow and Dalton Town Centres.

The scheme should be principally targeted at small retailers where modest investment can yield maximum benefit. To this end it is proposed to introduce a non-contributory grant of up to £2,000 for shop front improvements. This will allow the Town Centre Manager to target small shops with poor frontages using expert advice to provide an enhanced trading environment.

Larger units, and there are some very large units currently empty, will require much more investment and to encourage this it is proposed to offer an additional grant of 50% up to a maximum of £20,000 contribution by the Council.

Assuming 50% of funding is taken up through small grants, this investment will allow for the improvement of a minimum of 50 small retail units and 4 larger refurbishments.

The scheme will be open to small independent businesses only. All work must be designed to the Council's satisfaction and competitively procured. High quality design is essential and all applications will be supported through the Barrow by Design initiative. Grants will only be available to improve the principle trading elevation or elevations of the property.

Summary and Recommendation

Whilst the current economic environment presents a challenging environment for business and retailers, substantial investment is taking place to ensure our Town Centres emerge from the current recession in a stronger trading position.

The Council can support this investment by the introduction of a Shop Front Grants Scheme for Barrow and Dalton town centres as detailed in this report.

(i) Legal Implications

The Council has powers to award grants to local businesses

(ii) Risk Assessment

An appropriate system for monitoring applications and expenditure is required.

(iii) Financial Implications

Capital reserves of £200,000 will need to be allocated to support this scheme. Capital contingency funds for the next 3 years currently stand at £3M.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The Council may act as agent to deliver some minor works and appropriate risk assessments will be required.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

This policy supports - KP4 Support Economic Regeneration

(vi) Equal Opportunities

All applications for grant will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities policy

Background Papers

Nil