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Date: 16 April 2015

Dear Councillor,

Finance and Management Committee

A Meeting of the **Finance and Management Committee** will be held in the **Council Chamber**, on **Thursday, 23 April 2015 at 18:00**. You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

Chief Executive

To:- **Conservative Group**

Councillor Mrs. Watson (Chairman), Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Hewlett, Murray, Smith, Watson and Wheeler.

Labour Group

Councillors Bell, Rhind, Richards, Southerd, Taylor and Wilkins.



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AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

- 1** Apologies and to note any substitutes appointed for the Meeting.

- 2** To receive the Open Minutes of the Meetings held on 19.02.2015 & 19.03.2015 and of the Audit Sub-Committee Meetings held on 18.02.2015 & 01.04.2015.

Open Minutes 19.02.2015	4 - 8
Open Minutes 19.03.2015	9 - 11
Audit Sub-Committee Open Minutes 18.02.2015	12 - 14
Audit Sub-Committee Open Minutes 01.04.2015	15 - 17

- 3** To note any declarations of interest arising from any items on the Agenda

- 4** To receive any questions by members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.10.

- 5** To receive any questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.

- 6** Reports of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 7** NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANT **18 - 20**

Exclusion of the Public and Press:

- 8** The Chairman may therefore move:-
That in accordance with Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in the header to each report on the Agenda.

- 9 To receive any Exempt questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.
- 10 To receive the Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 19.02.2015.
Exempt Minutes
- 11 REORGANISATION OF THE PLANNING SERVICE
- 12 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF SCHEMES
- 13 LAND AND PREMISES IN SWADLINCOTE
- 14 HOUSING BENEFITS PROCESSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES



FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

19th February 2015

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Mrs Watson (Chairman), Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Lemmon (substitute for Councillor Hewlett), Murray, Smith, Watson and Wheeler

Labour Group

Councillors Bell, Mulgrew (substitute for Councillor Taylor), Rhind, Richards, Southerd and Wilkins

In Attendance

Councillors Atkin, Harrison and Mrs Plenderleith (Conservative Group).

FM/98 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Hewlett (Conservative Group) and Councillor Taylor (Labour Group).

FM/99 **MINUTES**

The Open minutes of the Meeting held on 4th December 2014 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

FM/100 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Wilkins declared an interest in the Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 by virtue of his membership of the Credit Union.

FM/101 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

FM/102 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

FM/103 **REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Mrs Plenderleith relayed a brief summary of the work undertaken by this Committee on the Council budget proposals for 2015/16, that it was satisfied with its findings and proffered no recommendations.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEEFM/104 **AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE****RESOLVED:**

That the Open Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee Meeting held on 17th December 2014 be received.

FM/105 **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION WORKING PANEL****RESOLVED:**

That the Open Minutes of the Recruitment and Selection Working Panel Meetings held on 28th January, 2nd February and 3rd February 2015 be received.

FM/106 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/16**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services summarised the report, making particular reference to the issues relating to the Council's attempts to provide the Credit Union with an interest free loan. Due to technical difficulties this had not been possible, but other avenues of providing assistance to the Credit Union had been recommended for approval.

Cllr Wheeler voiced his thanks for the work undertaken in this respect. Cllr Richards queried how Council employees might be made more aware of the assistance the Credit Union could provide. The Chief Executive suggested an item be added to the Intranet.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 be approved.***
- 2) That the Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2015/16 to 2019/20 as set out in the report were approved.***
- 3) That the Investment Strategy for 2015/16 including the associated counterparty (lending) list and policy was approved.***
- 4) That the Council becomes a corporate member of the South Derbyshire Credit Union with an investment of £10,000.***
- 5) That a further sum of £40,000 is made available to the Credit Union as an interest free loan and is subject to an annual review.***

(Note: Councillor Wilkins left the Meeting for this item).

FM/107 **FINAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2015/16 AND FINANCIAL PLAN TO 2020**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services drew on highlights from his report, confirming that no figures had changed since those quoted to

Committee last month. The rent increase had been confirmed at 2.2% and the overall budget proposals had been relayed widely via presentations to the Area Forums and South Derbyshire Partnership. A balanced budget for 2015/16 had been compiled, with some issues of note going forward, although the General Fund and HRA were well placed. A Reserve Balance was in place through to 2020. It was stressed that due to future uncertainties it was advised that the Council remain cautious in the short-term, there being no room for any major expenditure. Council Tax had been frozen, at the £150.25 Band D level.

Councillor Wheeler commented on the forecast uncommitted reserves, which at the projected figure of £2m was still £1m above the recommended prudent level. Given that he felt Council funds are the people's money held in trust for their benefit, consideration should be given to returning excess reserve funds to the Council Tax payers either as one-off projects or by other means. It was noted that commitments resulting in additional ongoing revenue expenditure would be unaffordable and that a Council Tax reduction would be imprudent as this may lead to a referendum in later years if a substantial increase were needed to restore the level of reserves.

Councillor Wheeler proposed that Officers promptly prepare a paper for Council on 2nd March 2015 outlining the options of achieving the desired outcomes. These could include;

- Increasing investment in the Community Partnership Scheme.
- Relieving the burden of Council Tax (short of a reduction in the Band D rate).
- Allocating funds for Officer bids for projects benefitting the community, either by providing additional leisure or other facilities or by improving Council efficiency to reduce costs.
- Taking no action.

This proposal and the practicalities of including it as an additional item on the Council agenda were debated. The Chief Executive said that Officers would endeavour to deliver the request.

Cllr Rhind queried, in relation to the 2.2% rent increase, whether this would be affected by inflation sinking still further. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services confirmed that the approved 2.2% increase would remain effective for 2015/16, but that such developments could affect future year levels.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) That the current Council Tax Level be frozen for 2015/16 and a Band D equivalent rate of £150.25 be recommended to Full Council on 2nd March 2015**
- 2) That estimated net General Fund Revenue Expenditure totalling £10,892,994 for 2014/15 (revised) and £10,996,355 for 2015/16 be recommended to Full Council on 2nd March 2015 for approval.**
- 3) That the Medium-term Financial Plan to 2020 on the Council's General Fund Revenue Account as detailed in the report was approved.**

- 4) *That the financial projection on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to 2024 as detailed in the report was approved.*
- 5) *That the 5-year capital investment and financing plan to 2020 as detailed in the report was approved.*
- 6) *That the Councils estimated National Non-Domestic Rate Return (NDR 1) for 2015/16 showing retained business rates (before the tariff) of £8.79m was noted.*
- 7) *That the report of the Council's Section 151 (Chief Finance) Officer under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 was noted.*
- 8) *That the Chief Finance Officer submit a report to Council on 2nd March 2015 evaluating the General Fund Reserve and detailing options for utilisation.*

FM/108 **AMENDMENT TO LOCAL COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT SCHEME UNDER SECTION 13A**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that whilst Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) were funded by central government, local Council Tax Discounts awarded under Section 13A were not funded in the same manner, hence the requirement for an amendment. Seven cases are currently subject to this Discount, but there was a possibility that this number could rise.

RESOLVED:

- 1) *Amendment to the delegated scheme for the award of local discounts was approved.*
- 2) *The revised Guidance Framework set out in the report, to include Council Tax Reduction Scheme Discretionary Payments was approved.*

FM/109 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11

The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.

MINUTES

The Exempt minutes of the Meeting held on 4th December 2014 were received.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION WORKING PANEL

The Exempt minutes of the Recruitment and Selection Working Panel meetings held on 28th January, 2nd February and 3rd February 2015 were received.

RISK BASED VERIFICATION FRAMEWORK (Paragraph 7)

The Committee agreed proposals for the implementation and future management of the Risk Based Verification Framework.

PAY AND GRADING REVIEW (Paragraph 4)

The Committee agreed proposals for completion of the Pay and Grading Review.

DEBTS SUBMITTED FOR WRITE OFF (Paragraph 1)

The Committee authorised the write off of sums due to the Council as detailed in the report.

The meeting terminated at 6.50pm

COUNCILLOR MRS. A. WATSON

CHAIRMAN

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

19th March 2015

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Mrs Watson (Chairman), Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Murray, Smith, Watson and Wheeler

Labour Group

Councillors Bell, Rhind, Richards, Southerd, Taylor and Wilkins

In Attendance

Councillors Atkin and Harrison.

FM/115 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Hewlett.

FM/116 **MINUTES**

The Open minutes of the Meeting held on 15th January 2015 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

FM/117 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no Declarations of Interest had been received.

FM/118 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

FM/119 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

FM/120 **REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no reports of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**FM/121 CORPORATE PLAN 2014/15: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2014**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services summarised the report, drawing attention to the fact that plans relating to Customer Services were behind schedule, that although capital targets had not quite been achieved, there was no major impact on financial plans and whilst sickness absence was improving for the third year running, it was still above the local government average.

(Councillor Murray joined the Meeting at 6.05pm)

RESOLVED:

That progress against performance targets be considered and approved.

FM/122 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services referred to his report, highlighting concerns regarding costs at the depot, due to staffing and vehicle maintenance expenditure. The Director of Housing and Environmental Services is preparing a report for Committee, to address the issues at the depot. It was also reported that as a result of the tighter banking situation it was becoming more difficult to place money with the banks. With regard to benefits processing, although the position had improved back to normal performance levels, there was still a concern regarding future processing and the sustainability of additional resources currently in place. The recently approved Risk Based Verification scheme will help in this area, but the Director of Finance and Corporate Services is to present a report on the options relating to the Benefits Service at a future Committee. This report will also refer to the options as to how the DWP Atlas notifications are dealt with.

Queries relating to labour and fleet costs at the depot, a fleet replacement programme, agency arrangements, the roll out of and funding for Universal Credit (from September 2015 for South Derbyshire District Council), Council Tax arrears targets and the imminent demolition of a building in disrepair in Church Gresley were all responded to and noted.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) That the latest budget and financial monitoring figures for 2014/15 be considered and approved.***
- 2) That the additional costs in Waste and Cleansing, together with Transport Services be reviewed as a matter of urgency to reduce their incidence in 2015/16.***

The meeting terminated at 6.22pm

COUNCILLOR MRS. A. WATSON

CHAIRMAN

AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

18th February 2015

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Harrison (Chairman) Councillor Ford (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Murray

Labour Group

Councillors Dunn and Shepherd

AS/26

MINUTES

The draft, unconfirmed Open minutes of the Meeting held on 17th December 2014 were noted, for information purposes.

AS/27

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

AS/28

TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PRODEDURE RULE NO 10.

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

AS/29

TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PRODEDURE RULE NO 11.

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO SUB-COMMITTEE

AS/30

CERTIFICATION REPORT 2013/14

The Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, referred to the above report and highlighted various points relating to the Housing Benefit Subsidy Grant Claim which, although late for audit, had been submitted on time. As was common in this area, the Subsidy Grant Claim had been subject to qualification. The Chairman queried the steps being taken to improve performance, matters addressed on page 12 of the Report per the Auditor.

Councillor Shepherd referred to the previous good status of the Authority's Benefits Section prior to the Northgate contract and queried whether the authority should consider taking the service back in-house. The Chairman referred to numerous issues that had changed since that event, namely the increase in claimant numbers, staffing resources and changing legislation. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services confirmed, in relation to claimant numbers, that they had peaked at above 11k, but were now in the

region of 10k. Councillor Shepherd requested that proof of checks / improved working practices be subject to future audit.

RESOLVED:-

That the proposed action relating to the Housing Benefit Subsidy Grant Claim be approved.

AS/31

VALUE STATEMENT

The External Auditor referred to the above report and invited any questions. None were received. The Chairman stated that thanks should be recorded for the work undertaken.

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted.

AS/32

INFORMING THE AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT

The External Auditor summarised the report and invited questions. None were received. The Chairman commented that required actions were seen to be being taken.

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted.

AS/33

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Audit Manager relayed the main points of the Audit Plan delivery, stating they were operating near to schedule and that all issues were identified as low to moderate risk.

Councillor Dunn referred to the health & safety (H&S) standards at the depot, querying the moderate risk status despite the previously reported incidents. The Audit Manager stated his opinion as to the robustness of the risk assessment audit process, based on the evidence available at the time of its commission, but Councillor Dunn sought assurances on improved standards.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services opined that the recommendations could be agreed to, suggesting that a monitoring report be undertaken quarterly. The Audit Manager commented on the current stages of implementation of the outstanding issues, to be reported on at future committees. Three of the nine issues were listed for completion by March 2016, namely 1) Managers H&S training, 2) Operatives limited access to H&S information and 3) Procedural guidance for groundworks staff.

Members discussed concerns regarding H&S matters affecting the Council's outdoor staff and suggested that all operatives be provided with H&S information. The introduction of a H&S Committee, H&S Officer and a H&S training matrix was also discussed.

The Audit Manager ran through the remainder of the report. Reference was made to the lack of update in the Improvement Grant area (pg 73), due to no response from the officer concerned, who may have been absent at the relevant time.

RESOLVED:-

The Chair tasked the Director of Finance and Corporate Services with;
a) Reviewing the H&S matters as a result of the concerns expressed.
b) Pursuing the Improvement Grant information matter.

The meeting terminated at 4:45 p.m.

COUNCILLOR J. HARRISON

CHAIRMAN

AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

1st April 2015

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Harrison (Chairman), Councillor Ford (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Murray.

Labour Group

Councillors Dunn and Shepherd.

AS/34 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th December 2014 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

AS/35 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no declarations of interest had been received.

AS/36 **TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO.10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

AS/37 **TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO.11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO SUB-COMMITTEE

AS/38 **HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT: UPDATE ON PROGRESSING RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Director of Housing and Environmental Services made reference to the Health and Safety Audit update report. Queries raised by Councillors relating to health and safety guidance, training, evidence of its implementation, the risk markings and union representation at the depot were responded to and noted.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the report be noted.***
- (2) That Officers review the report and submit service delivery options to a future committee.***

AS/39 **EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE – SELF ASSESSMENT**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the report to the Committee, highlighting the areas identified for improvement.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the self-assessment report be noted.***
- (2) That the weaknesses identified and the associated actions for improvement be approved.***

AS/40 **EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2015**

Representatives of the Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, referred to the above report and highlighted the risks identified, work undertaken and that still to be taken, key dates, fees and the proposed action plan.

Queries raised by the Chairman relating to remuneration and monthly reconciliations were noted and responded to by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

RESOLVED:-

That the proposed Audit Plan for the year ending 31st March 2015 was considered and the proposed approach to undertaking audit work for the year approved.

AS/41 **INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2015/16**

The Internal Auditor presented his report to the Committee, confirming that the plans had been discussed with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to help ensure all areas were sufficiently covered.

Queries raised by Councillors relating to the risk rating, the frequency of audits, safeguarding and waste management / recycling were responded to and noted.

RESOLVED:-

That the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16 be approved for implementation.

The Meeting terminated at 4.45pm

COUNCILLOR J HARRISON

CHAIRMAN

REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING:	23 APRIL 2015	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	IAN HEY Ext 8741, ian.hey@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANT	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: E&DS07

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 That Members note the grant support available for the development of neighbourhood development plans from the Department for Communities and Local Government and agree to pass on the element of grant support that relates to the designation of a neighbourhood area.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 This report identifies the level of grant support from Central Government to support neighbourhood planning and the stages of the process at which elements of support become available. It identifies that additional costs to the Council will be met through the grant available and recommends that Members agree to pass on the element of grant support received in respect of neighbourhood area designation to Parish Councils / Neighbourhood Forum to help them defray costs accrued during the development of the plan.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced as a result of the Localism Act 2011 to encourage local areas to engage with planning and development within their own neighbourhood. A neighbourhood development plan establishes general planning policies for the development and use of land in a designated area, it can be detailed or general, depending what local people want.

Neighbourhood development plans allow local people to get the right type of development for their community, but the plans must still meet the needs of the wider area. A neighbourhood development plan has to be in general conformity with the strategic policies identified within the District's Local Plan, but add additional depth and understanding from grass roots knowledge from within the designated area.

- 3.2 The local planning authority has a duty to support communities making their neighbourhood plan. It will organise the independent examination of the neighbourhood development plan to check that the plan meets certain basic conditions. The local planning authority is also responsible for organising the neighbourhood planning referendum. The referendum ensures that the local community has the final say on whether a neighbourhood development plan comes into force in their area.
- 3.3 To support their role, local planning authorities can claim funding of at least £30,000 per completed plan.

Payments will be staged as follows:

- The first payment of £5,000 will be made following designation of a neighbourhood area. For authorities designating several neighbourhood areas, each local planning authority can claim up to a maximum of £100,000 for area designations within the year.
 - The second payment of £5,000 will be made when the local planning authority publicises the neighbourhood plan prior to examination. This will contribute towards the costs of the examination as well as other staff costs incurred at this stage. There is no cap in 2014/15.
 - The third payment of £20,000 will be made on successful completion of the neighbourhood planning examination. This is to cover costs for that examination and any other further steps that may be needed for the neighbourhood plan to come into legal force, including referendum. There is no cap in 2014/15.
- 3.4 Staff costs associated with the designation of neighbourhood areas have been absorbed within the duties of the posts involved. It is therefore recommended that the first grant payment of £5,000 be passed on to the body within the neighbourhood area leading the process (Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum) to help them defray costs incurred during the development of their neighbourhood development plan. Based on plans completed nationally it is anticipated that the cost to the Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum of developing the plan to completion will be £15-25,000 dependent upon the level of complexity.
- 3.5 Second and third grant payments totalling £25,000 will be used to cover costs associated with examination and referendum.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Expenditure towards the development of neighbourhood development plans is revenue expenditure. Each plan is anticipated to take 18-24 months to complete from outset.
- 4.2 Staff costs associated with area designation are to be absorbed within existing roles.

Additional costs associated with publicity, examination and referendum will be covered, quarterly in arrears, by grants from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 The completion of neighbourhood development plans contribute towards the corporate theme of Sustainable Growth & Opportunity, specifically GO3 Sustainable Planning and GP 08 Supporting our communities in neighbourhood planning (GO3).

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 The completion of neighbourhood development plans also contributes towards the South Derbyshire Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Sustainable Development theme identifies that we want to see communities that address local needs. Neighbourhood plans give communities the opportunity to influence development within their own locale to address local development needs.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 There is a duty placed upon the local planning authority to support the development of neighbourhood plans. Passing on an element of the grant funding available will provide local communities additional capacity to engage with the process to address the needs of their own community.