

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

29 May 2007

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. in the Avondale Centre, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder)  
Pam Hargreaves (Performance Portfolio Holder)  
Robbie Payne (Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder)  
Peter Jackson (Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder)  
Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Paul Walker (Chief Executive)  
Andrew Atkin (Assistant Chief Executive)  
Adrienne Simcock (Director of Children's Services)  
Peter Scott (Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)  
Dave Stubbs (Director of Neighbourhood Services)  
Alan Dobby (Assistant Director (Support Services))  
Mike Ward (Chief Financial Officer)  
Joanne Machers (Chief Personnel Officer)  
John Potts, Principal Policy Officer, Community Strategy Team  
Julian Heward (Assistant Public Relations Officer)  
David Cosgrove (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder).

### **2. Declarations of interest by members**

None.

### **3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2007**

Confirmed.

#### **4. Final Outturn Strategy 2006/07** *(Chief Financial Officer)*

##### **Type of decision**

Key Decision – test (i) applies.

##### **Purpose of report**

To enable Cabinet to finalise details of the 2006/2007 Outturn Strategy.

##### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder reported that Cabinet had previously considered a number of strategic issues in relation to the provisional 2006/2007 outturn position as part of the 2007/2008 Budget and Policy Framework. Those proposals were approved by Council on 15th February, 2007 and covered:

- the use of corporate underspends to meet one-off unbudgeted commitments and support for the 2009/2010 budget;
- a strategy for funding Neighbourhood Services 2006/2007 overspend; and
- the earmarking of resources for the Tall Ships Visit.

Work is now progressing to finalise the 2006/2007 accounts. Whilst this work would not be complete for a number of weeks there were a number of additional strategic financial issues which Members needed to address.

The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder highlighted proposals set out in the report relating to the use of the corporate underspends to meet additional commitments, the allocation of net uncommitted resources of £70,000, the proposals for finalising of the capital outturn, and proposals for reallocating reserves.

Cabinet discussed the issues in detail, particularly the potential costs relating to the Able UK Ships dismantling Planning Inquiry. Cabinet was aware that the Planning Committee was to discuss the Inquiry at a meeting later in the week. Cabinet considered that any decisions on the issues raised in the report be deferred until the Planning Committee had had its discussion on the Planning Inquiry. The Chief Financial Officer indicated that an amended report would be submitted to the next Cabinet meeting.

##### **Decision**

That further consideration be given to the Final Outturn Strategy 2006/07 at the next meeting of Cabinet.

## **5. Corporate (Best Value Performance) Plan 2007/08** *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

### **Purpose of report**

To enable Cabinet to consider and comment on the proposed Corporate Plan (Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP)) for 2007/08.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that, as in previous years, the Corporate Plan was presented in two parts. Part 1, attached at Appendix A to the report, was the main plan, and described the Council's priorities for 2007/8, including how weaknesses would be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people. Part 2 of the plan, attached at Appendix B to the report, contained the detailed supporting information relating to performance statistics that the Council was required to publish. This included the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for 2006/07 and targets for 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

As in previous years at this stage, there were still a small number of Performance Indicators (PIs) to be finalised. The corporate PI collection process is continuing to address this, and all PI information would be available and included in the final report to Council on 21 June.

### **Decision**

1. that the Performance Portfolio Holder and Assistant Chief Executive be authorised to agree the final Performance Indicator information for inclusion in the plan.
2. that the Corporate (Best Value Performance) Plan 2007/08 be approved (subject to 1 above) for consideration by Council on 21 June 2007.

## **6. Local Area Agreement (LAA) Draft Delivery and Improvement Plan (DIP) 2007/08** *(Head of Community Strategy)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

This report presents and seeks agreement of the second draft of 2007/08 LAA Delivery and Improvement Plan (DIP).

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Mayor reported that Hartlepool's LAA submission had been agreed by Cabinet on the 10 February 2006 and was signed off by Government in March 2006. The LAA is structured around the aims and themes of the Community Strategy and forms the strategic framework for monitoring progress and is aimed at delivering a better quality of life for people through improving performance on a range of national and local priorities. The LAA is the delivery plan of the Community Strategy.

A draft delivery and improvement plan had been presented to cabinet on 2 April 2007, further work has enabled a second draft to be produced and this was set out in Appendix 1 and 2 to the report.

The Theme Partnership Officers have taken the lead, working with staff from the Partnership Support Team, to prepare the Delivery and Improvement Plan. Part 1 (Appendix 1) included a plan prepared for each of the 36 outcomes containing the following:

- background and context
- key contacts and partners involved
- funding
- current activity
- barriers and solutions
- areas and groups targeted
- key actions for improvement

Part 2 of the plan (Appendix 2) contained updated information on Partnership Working including self-assessments and associated action plans and risk assessment.

### **Decision**

That the 2007/08 Local Area Agreement Delivery and Improvement Plan, as submitted, be approved.

## **7. Single Status Agreement** *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

The report described the plans for drafting and agreeing a Single Status Agreement for Hartlepool Borough Council. Such an agreement was required as part of the 1997 national agreement for staff employed under the national terms and conditions for 'Local Government Services', commonly referred to as the Green Book.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that an outline of the main phases of reaching an agreement was set out in Appendix A to the report. The programme was dependent upon each stage being concluded on time and that the necessary approvals were obtained. In July Cabinet would be presented with a draft Single Status Agreement, including a new pay and grading structure for consideration. An assessment of the financial implications, legal robustness and the general impact on employees would also be provided. Once Cabinet approved a draft Agreement, local and regional trade union officers will refer the document to their national officers for comment. Council approval may be required should the cost of the Agreement exceed budget provision.

A ballot of local trade union members would be undertaken by the local trade union branches once the draft agreement has been 'endorsed' by national trade union officers. Cabinet will then receive a further report setting out the results of the trade union ballot and recommendations for future actions. Council approval may once again be required if the financial implications are outside the agreed budget.

It was proposed that through a series of meetings and briefings Members would have better access to relevant information to make informed decisions. The following were proposed, with suitable dates to be determined.

- Continuation of Single Status Working Group meetings
- Establish joint Cabinet / Single Status Working Group meetings
- A Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting with an invitation extended to all members
- Member seminars

The Portfolio Holder also highlighted that there would be political group briefings.

It was highlighted in the meeting that around six to eight weeks had been allowed in the process for consideration of the proposed agreement by the national trade union officers. If this process took longer, there could be slippage in the timetable.

### **Decision**

That the planned arrangements for drafting and agreeing a Single Status Agreement and processes for increasing the awareness and understanding of all Members of the Council be noted.

## **8. Quarter 4 – Corporate Plan 2006/07 Monitoring Report** *(Corporate Management Team)*

### **Type of decision**

None – the report was for Cabinet's information only.

### **Purpose of report**

The report set out the progress made towards achieving the Corporate Plan Actions.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Performance Portfolio Holder indicated that the report described progress towards achieving the actions within the Corporate Plan using the traffic light system of Green, Amber and Red. The report provided an overview of Council performance, with separate sections providing more detailed information for each Portfolio Holder to consider.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **9. Hartlepool PPO/Drug Intervention Programme Allocation 2007/08** *(The Mayor)*

### **Type of decision**

None – the report was for Cabinet's information only.

### **Purpose of report**

The Mayor submitted for Cabinet's information a letter he had received in response to a letter he had sent to the Home Office as indicated in Minute No. 213 of Cabinet on 29 May 2007 when Cabinet had discussed the reduction in government grant relating to the PPO / Drug Intervention Programme 2007/08.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Mayor indicated his disappointment at the letter from Minister of State, Tony McNulty MP, a view shared by his Cabinet colleagues. The Mayor stated that the response had not come as any particular surprise as he was aware that funding for drug intervention programmes was being cut across the board. The Mayor found this to be very disappointing as every £1 spent on drug treatment schemes saved £9 of Criminal Justices costs. The Minister for State had failed to explain why the funding for these successful schemes was being cut. Cabinet Members were concerned that yet again when Hartlepool had proved to be successful in a new programme promoted by the government, its funding was cut leaving the Council and other local bodies to pick up the shortfall if they wanted to continue the scheme.

Concern was expressed at the apparent lack of any dedicated support schemes for alcoholism in the town. The Mayor and the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services indicated that many of the schemes run through the Safer Hartlepool Partnership while not being directly targeted at alcoholism, did include programmes targeted at the problems associated with drinking, such as violence and binge drinking.

Cabinet Members suggested it might be prudent to tackle the issue of the reduction in the allocation in 2007/08 for the Drug Intervention Programme once the new government cabinet had been appointed.

**Decision**

That the response from the Secretary of State, Tony McNulty MP, be noted.

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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