

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

25 June 2007

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

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Pam Hargreaves (Deputy Mayor),
Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder),
Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),
Peter Jackson (Neighbourhoods & Communities Portfolio Holder),
Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder),

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor
Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services
John Robinson, Hartlepool Children's Fund Manager
Richard Waldmeyer, Principal Planning Officer (Policy Planning
and Information)
Catherine Frank, Principal Community Strategy Officer
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Officer
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Representing Hartlepool Young Voices:

Elizabeth Hawkrige (Barnardos), Rebecca Wise (West View
Project), Hannah Shaw, Jonathon Simpson, Lee Bradley and
Kieron Robson.

23. Apologies for Absence

Robbie Payne (Finance & Efficiency Portfolio Holder)

24. Declarations of interest by members

None.

25. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2007

Confirmed.

26. Participation Strategy (*Director of Children's Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To present to Cabinet the first stage of a strategy aimed at increasing the effective involvement and participation of children and young people in shaping the town-wide services available to them, across the statutory and non-statutory sectors. The report also informed Cabinet of recent developments to increase the active involvement of children and young people and sought approval to the vision and principles for young people's participation.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children's Services Portfolio Holder presented the report which requested Cabinet endorse the vision statements contained within the report. It was envisaged that all agencies working with children and young people in Hartlepool, across all sectors of provision, would be asked to formally subscribe to making these vision statements reality and the political support of Cabinet was required to enable the future cooperation of key stakeholders. The strategy had wide ranging implications for the engagement of children and young people across all areas of the Council's work and with a wide range of partners. Hartlepool Young Voices had devised the following vision statements that would underpin the overall development of the strategy. The vision was that all agencies working with children and young people in Hartlepool will sign up to the following principles:

- We will ensure our staff and the children and young people that we work with receive training and support on how they can take part to make things better;
- We will ensure that we inform and involve children and young people in the working of the organisation, including volunteering and work opportunities where appropriate;
- We will share evidence, knowledge and skills on how we involve, support and praise children and young people;
- We will identify what money, time and resources there is to support what we do;

- We will make sure there are different ways for our staff, and the children and young people who we work with, to be involved in participation;
- We will take young people's views seriously about what all children and young people think is important;
- We will explain and respect the rights and responsibilities of children and young people.

Representatives from Hartlepool Young Voices were present at the meeting and made their own presentation to the Cabinet of how they had come together to form the group, the training they had undergone and the work that had gone into developing the seven principles detailed above. It was highlighted that Hartlepool was the first authority in the country to co-opt young people representatives onto its children's services scrutiny forum.

The Director of Children's Services indicated that endorsing the seven principles wasn't a passive action; there would be an expectation that the excellent work undertaken by Hartlepool Young Voices would be taken forward by departments and would be an integral part of their assessment of how the services they provided impacted on young people. Training would also form part of the 'Be the Difference' programme. Cabinet Members also considered this should form part of Members' Training.

Cabinet Members also drew attention to the 'Taking Over Day' later in the year where young people would have the opportunity to take over key roles for a day and Local Democracy Week. It was highlighted that a future development of the Hartlepool Young Peoples involvement in Scrutiny and other Council forums would be to bring a democratic process into the selection of the young people who undertook those roles. This was something that Young Voices had identified itself; presently those involved in Scrutiny for example were those who had come forward themselves. This development may take some time to introduce but was seen as a key element by the young people themselves.

The local authority would also need to address in the future how it consulted and related to the other age groups, 0-5 and 5-13 years. While there were groups working with the 5-13 age group in the town, a different approach to the 'formal meeting' set up the older age group had chosen would need to be developed.

The Mayor welcomed the report and on behalf of Cabinet thanked the representatives of Hartlepool Young Voices for their presentation to Cabinet and all the hard work that had gone into the development of the seven principles.

Decision

1. That Cabinet endorses the seven vision statements devised by local children and young people as included in section 4 of the report and detailed above.

2. That cabinet will champion the rights of children and young people in having a voice in service development, a voice in their communities and a voice in a democratic process; and
3. That Cabinet commits to adopting the seven vision statements.

27. Local Government Access to Information

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 28 Eldon Grove Community Sports Centre, Para. 3, namely, Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Minute 29 Temporary Staffing Arrangements, Para's 1 and 2, information relating to any individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Minute 30 Briarfields Disposal Update, Para. 3, namely, Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

28. Eldon Grove Community Sports Centre *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) (Para. 3) namely, Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Type of decision

Non-key Decision.

Purpose of report

To consider the recommendations of the Finance and Efficiency and Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holders on the various bids and options received in relation to the future of Eldon Grove Community Sports Centre.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder and the Head of Procurement and Property Services reported that Cabinet had decided on

5th March 2007 to market the leasehold interest of Eldon Grove Community Sports Centre and the adjacent Tennis Courts on a local basis, appealing to local companies and/or community/sports groups to express an interest. At this time it was decided that the Council would seek to retain the freehold interest in the property.

The site was marketed for 6 weeks with effect from 28th March 2007, with interested parties being invited to submit their bids by noon on Friday 4th May 2007. Parties who had previously expressed an interest were automatically forwarded an offer pack, and the property was also advertised within the Hartlepool Mail Property Section weekly for the first 4 weeks of the marketing. In total, 13 offer packs were distributed and 5 bids were received from interested parties.

A joint meeting of the Finance and Efficiency and Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holders held on 13 June 2007 considered the bids and the relevant details were set out in a confidential Appendix to the report.

Further details of Cabinet's consideration of the issue are set out in the Exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

That the proposal submitted as Bid No.2 be explored further and that a meeting with the bidders and Cabinet members be held at the earliest opportunity.

29. Temporary Staffing Arrangements *(Chief executive)*

This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information (Variation) Order 2006) (Para's 1 and 2) namely, information relating to any individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Type of decision

Non-key Decision

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet approval for temporary staffing arrangements and associated budget provision within the Chief Executive's Department.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Assistant Chief Executive reported on workload and capacity issues within the Chief Executive's Department and proposals for temporary staffing arrangements.

Decision

The decision of Cabinet is set out in the Exempt section of the minutes.

30. Briarfields Disposal Update (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information (Variation) Order 2006) (Para. 3) namely, Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

The report advised Cabinet of the progress on the proposed sale of three Lots at Briarfields and sought approval to amend one of the preferred bidders.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Head of Procurement and Property Services reported on the progress made to date with the preferred developers on the three lots at Briarfields, highlighting issues that had materialised as the applications to purchase had progressed and recommending an amendment to one of the preferred bidders.

Decision

1. That Cabinet note the position in relation to Lots 1 and 2.
2. That Cabinet authorise the Head of Procurement and Property Services to conclude discussions with the second highest bidder in respect of Lot 3.
3. That Cabinet delegate authority for the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder to approve the budget prior to the works being undertaken to improve access to the site, as detailed in the report.

31. Local Government Access to Information

The meeting returned to open public session.

32. Community Strategy and Local Development Documents Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
(*Head of Community Strategy*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

To seek agreement to the issue of the attached Community Strategy and Local Development Documents Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

(Appendix 1 to the report) as a public consultation document for the period 25 June to 10 August, 2007.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that the Sustainability Appraisal of key strategies is mandatory under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The report set out progress to date in undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal for the Community Strategy and the Core Strategy. Appendix 1 to the report contained a draft scoping report for the Sustainability Appraisal. The purpose of the scoping report was to establish the level of detail and the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal.

At the meeting the Principal Community Strategy Officer reported that this was the first Scoping Report prepared by Hartlepool Borough Council, ENTEC, who are currently developing the Waste and Minerals Strategy for the Tees Valley, had been asked to consider the draft. Following their feedback Cabinet were asked to approve the Head of Community Strategy to make the following modifications to the draft Scoping Report before going out to consultation:

- To review a few more plans to cover international plans and more environmental protection ones.
- To set out the baseline information that informed the preparation of sustainability issues.
- To be clearer about how any environmentally sensitive sites in the Tees Valley and the North East could be positively or negatively affected by development within Hartlepool.
- To set out the difficulties that had been encountered in the scoping exercise and any limitations with the data collection.
- To re-order the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives into a clearer and more logical order.

Decision

That the Community Strategy and Local Development Documents Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, as amended, be issued as a public consultation document.

33. Local Area Agreement (LAA) Outturn 2006/7 *(Head of Community Strategy)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

The report set out for Cabinet the 2006/7 financial outturn for the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Grant and to sought agreement to the amended budget for 2007/08.

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. For the 2006/7 financial year the LAA grant was £1,127,229 and in addition there was £4,830,926 of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (to be included within the LAA grant from April 2007) and £252,583 of the 3-year LPSA II Pump Priming Grant allocated to be spent on outcomes within the LAA with associated stretch targets. In total there has been £6,210,738 of funding available for delivery of the LAA in 2006/7.

Government had set the carry forward limit at 5% for both the LAA grant and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF). As the LPSA II Pump Priming Grant is for three years, there is no carry forward limit set. Appendix 1 to the report set out the outturn position for the 2006/7 financial year by LAA outcome. The carry forward would be 3.5% for the LAA grant and 2.6% for the NRF. This was within the limits set by Government.

Cabinet had previously agreed the LAA budget for 2007/8 at meetings in February, April and May 2007. Now that the year-end position had been confirmed and the carry forward had been identified, Cabinet was requested to agree the amended budget for 2007/8, which set out as appendix 2 to the report.

The Principal Community Strategy Officer reported that following confirmation of the breakdown of funding within the Local Area Agreement Grant the following amendments to the proposed 2007/08 budget were required:

- Outcome 7 - Primary Strategy Central Coordination allocation increased by £12,125 to £109,878.
- Outcomes 15 & 16 - Home Office Safer Stronger Communities Fund cut by 14% this includes Building Safer Communities Fund (revenue), Drug Partnership Support Grant and ASB Coordinator Grant. Final details of specific allocations for three funds were still awaited from GONE.
- Outcome 22 - LAA Grant to include local allocation for School Travel Advisor of £15,000 but not the contribution towards the regional post which we host for £20,000 which will come through the main Standards Fund Grant.

The Mayor reported that these issues had been discussed in detail at his recent Portfolio meeting. The Mayor indicated that he was disappointed at the reduction in the Community Safety funding and in response to Cabinet Members comments, indicated that he would feedback on the effects of the cuts by central government in the drug partnership support grant as they affected the service during the year.

Decision

Cabinet noted the financial outturn position for 2006/7 and approved the amended budget for 2007/8.

34. Local Public Service Agreement 2 End of Year 1 Report *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet on progress made towards achieving the Local Public Service Agreement 2 (LPSA2) targets.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Assistant Chief Executive reported the Council completed negotiating the second round of Local Public Service Agreement with Government Office North East (GONE) in February 2006. A total of ten priority areas were agreed, with stretching targets, that if achieved would be eligible for a Performance Reward Grant (PRG) of around £300,000 per priority area. The total amount actually payable is dependent on how well the Council, and partners, perform towards the agreed stretch targets. The grant will be split 50/05 between Capital Grant and Revenue Grant, and will be payable in two instalments following completion of the LPSA2 period in 2008/09.

LPSA2 targets now formed the Reward Element of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). To assist in achieving the targets the Government had made a Pump Priming Grant (PPG) of £840,100 to the Council as a contribution towards expenditure of an “invest to save” or “invest to improve” nature. Progress had been monitored within Corporate Strategy on a quarterly basis, wherever possible, throughout 2006/07. As a number of targets had indicators that could not be collected on a quarterly basis it was felt that the first monitoring report would be produced at the end of the year. Future reports will be presented to Cabinet on a six monthly basis in 2007/08 and 2008/09.

There were a total of twenty Performance Indicators across the ten priority areas, and these were set out in Appendix A to the report, with the 2006/07 year end outturn figures, where known. Generally performance was good with nine indicators (45%) being adjudged to be on target to meet the stretch target. For a further ten indicators (50%) it was too early to make a judgement on whether the final stretch target would be met.

The targets included in the LPSA2 were for a three year period, generally ending in 2008/09, although a small number of indicators would be measured in 2009/10. It was too early at this stage to make a more detailed assessment of progress towards the ultimate target. Progress would continue to be monitored closely, and Cabinet will receive six monthly progress reports highlighting progress and any areas of concern.

The Mayor commented that the statistics in relation to domestic crime had proved difficult to collate, potentially affecting the Council’s ability to meet

the target, as the Police Information System had broken down. The Mayor reported that he had written to the Chair of the Police Authority on this matter

Decision

That the report be noted.

35. CPA Action Plans *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To provide Cabinet with the specific objectives and actions identified in the Council's Service Planning documents in 2007/08 and that address the recommendations included in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Corporate Assessment Report that the Audit Commission published in March 2007.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that the Council has a detailed hierarchy of service plans, with the Corporate Plan being the main strategic document that provides the Council's overall direction of travel. The Corporate Plan objectives and actions are then cascaded to the various Departmental Plans and Service plans which contain the more operational detail on how the overall priorities will be achieved.

Appendix A to the report detailed those objectives and actions that had been included in the Council's Service Planning documents to specifically address the 'areas for improvement' that were included in the Corporate Assessment report, as reported to Cabinet in March. These objectives and actions were included in the Corporate Plan and the suite of Departmental Plans that would be monitored as part of the corporate performance management framework, and reported quarterly to Cabinet and Portfolio Holders as appropriate.

The Mayor questioned the actions in place to deal with the comments raised by the CPA in relation to the Admin. Group and the Vacancy Monitoring Panel. The Chief Solicitor indicated that the issue in relation to political groups was included in the work programme of the Constitution Working Group and Committee for this municipal year. This would involve the formalisation of a protocol that all political groups of the Council could sign up to. The Assistant Chief Executive reported that the operation of the Vacancy Monitoring Panel was not part of this monitoring regime.

Decision

That the report be noted.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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