

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Wednesday 19 September 2007

at 4.00 pm

**at Owton Manor Community Centre,
Wynyard Road, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors Akers-Belcher, R W Cook, Coward, Cranney, Flintoff, Gibbon, Henery, Richardson, Simmons, Turner and Wistow

Resident Representatives:

Ann Butterfield, Linda Shields and Vacancy

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2007 (to follow).

4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

No items.

5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items.

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items.

7. FORWARD PLAN

No items.

8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Scrutiny Investigation into School Meals

8.1 Healthy Eating Agenda

a) School Meals – Healthy Eating in Schools - Covering Report -
Scrutiny Support Officer

b) Presentation – *Healthy Schools Co-ordinator*

8.2 Evidence from Head Teachers – Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*

8.3 Consultation Results – *Scrutiny Support Officer/Young People and Play Co-ordinator*

Scrutiny Investigation into Transportation Links to Hospital Services and Neighbourhood Services Transport Provision

8.4 Scoping Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- i) **Date of next meeting Wednesday 24 October 2007 at 4.00 pm at Owton Manor Community Centre, Wynyard Road, Hartlepool**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

8 August 2007

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Avondale Centre,
Dyke House School, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Stephen Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob W Cook, Bob Flintoff, Steve Gibbon, Gordon Henery, Carl Richardson, Christopher Simmons and Mike Turner

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Peter Jackson, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods
and Communities

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Ralph Harrison, Head of Public Protection
Doreen Wilkinson, Catering Manager
Jonathan Wistow, Scrutiny Support Officer
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

17. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kevin Cranney, Mike Turner and Gerald Wistow.

18. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

19. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2007

Confirmed.

20. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

21. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

22. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2007/08 *(Head of Public Protection)*

The Head of Public Protection presented a report which asked Members to consider the Food Law Enforcement Plan for 2007/08. The service planning guidance ensured that key areas of enforcement were covered in local service plans, whilst allowing for inclusion of locally defined objectives. Members were reminded that on 1 April 2007 the Council launched the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme where businesses were awarded a star rating which was made available to the public via the Council's website. The introduction of this scheme had been well received and to date there had been over 90,000 hits on the website.

There was concern raised by Members that although the inspections for the above scheme were carried out last year, this information was not publicly available until April this year and in this time, many business may have changed ownership. The Head of Public Protection indicated that it had always been the intention to launch the scheme on 1 April 2007 and that businesses could request an inspection be brought forward although there would be a cost associated to this. Clarification was sought on why some of the businesses included on the list. The Head of Public Protection advised Members that although some businesses were perceived as low-risk, the Authority had a legal obligation to inspect them.

It was noted that the changes in legislation had resulted in increased inspections and re-visits and was impacting on the resources of the Team. The Head of Public Protection responded that the team were now up to full strength and managing the inspections and re-visits very effectively.

Decision

Members noted the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2007/08.

23. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Six Month Progress Report – Public Conveniences *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

The Director of Neighbourhood Services presented a report which provided Members with an update on the progress made in relation to the Public Convenience Provision in Hartlepool Scrutiny Referral investigation six

months after the Forum made its recommendations. It was confirmed that in line with the Forum's recommendations the facilities at Thorpe Street, Pilot Pier and Rocket House had been closed and secured with aesthetic materials. It also noted that the facilities at Albert Street had to be closed earlier than planned due to the high levels of anti-social behaviour and drug abuse in the area.

Members were advised that despite negotiations with the Ward Jackson Park café contractor the costs to keep this facility open when the café closes were not available and it was proposed to use the funding identified for the provision of this service be redirected to improving the existing facilities within the Park. Investigations and surveys had been carried out regarding the demolition of the facilities at the Hartlepool Maritime Experience and due to the building housing the gas main connection, demolition was no longer an option. However, the Hartlepool Maritime Experience had shown an interest in using the building as a store once the existing toilet facilities were removed.

Members were concerned about the level of provision of public conveniences when the Tall Ships Race comes to Hartlepool. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that this was being examined including the possibility of using mobile toilets in vast numbers. It was noted that some facilities previously subjected to vandalism had been operating shorter opening hours over the summer and this appeared to have been successful. Members sought an update on the facility at the Clock Tower, Seaton Carew. The Director of Neighbourhood Services responded that this facility would remain open until the new facility at the Rocket House was built.

Decision

Members noted the report.

24. The Executive's Forward Plan *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which provided the opportunity for Members to consider whether any item within the attached version of the Executive's Forward Plan should be considered by this Forum.

Decision

Members noted the content of the Forward Plan and did not wish to consider any item in further detail.

25. Scrutiny Investigation into School Meals *(Head of Neighbourhood Management)*

The Director of Neighbourhood Services presented the report which provided Members with an overview of the Neighbourhood Services Department's responsibilities in relation to school meals. It was noted that all but one of the

38 schools in Hartlepool use the Council's School Meals Catering Service. Dyke House School have managed their catering service since July 2006. Primary school and secondary school provision were slightly different and the reasons for this were detailed within the report.

It was noted that since achieving unitary status in 1996, the Council's catering service has sought to strengthen and develop the service standards and performance through an effective training programme. The food costs associated with producing school meals were detailed in the report along with the percentage of take-up for the same six month period across the last three years. Members were advised that although the school food trust had reported a drop in take-up across primary and secondary schools, Hartlepool had a very high take-up level of those entitled to free school meals.

In addition to the provision of schools meals, Members were informed that from April this year, the catering service also provided catering for Council and Cleveland Fire Authority functions or meetings and had received very good feedback.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised.

- Members were very supportive of the catering service and the fact that a two-course meal could be provided at a cost of £1.70, which it was noted was well below the national average. In addition, Members were pleased with the healthy diets provided locally and the wide range of choices available to young people. They also applauded the initiative taken in providing catering for Council meetings and functions.
- Clarification was sought on the time period allowed for lunch across schools. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that all schools were different and that schools needed to manage their lunch periods very effectively, to ensure lunch could be provided for all the pupils requiring it within the timescale allowed. This had been achieved in some schools by staggering lunch periods or operating a lock-in policy across the lunch period.
- Members were supportive of the introduction of cashless tills within schools.

Decision

Members noted the content of the report and discussions that followed and would use them to inform their on-going investigation into the School Meals Service.

26. School Meals – Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities – Covering Report *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities had been invited to the meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into School Meals. The Portfolio Holder advised Members that it gave him great pleasure to be responsible for this service for the Executive and was very supportive of the very effective training programme in place. He added that the Authority had a duty to ensure that the best service was provided both nutritionally and cost effectively and by friendly staff. Although it was recognised that the standards currently operated by the catering service were very high it was acknowledged that this should be continuously reviewed in order to identify any improvements that could be made. In conclusion the Portfolio Holder reiterated the importance of working in partnership with the schools and noted that Building Schools for the Future would be an excellent opportunity to rationalise everything the Authority does in relation to the town's schools.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised.

- Could the operation of breakfast clubs be developed across all schools? The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that breakfast clubs did operate in some primary and secondary schools but that they were mainly in the more deprived areas of the town. The success of the breakfast clubs often was dependent on support from the parents.
- It was noted that the Authority should aim to increase take-up of school meals with good practice being shared across all schools. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that some of the issues faced were the layout of the school and the age of the school and facilities provided within the school. An example of good practice and partnership working was how the Authority's Catering Manager had been involved in the development of the new St Hild's School and it was hoped this would continue throughout the Building Schools for the Future project.

Decision

That the report and ensuing discussion would be used to inform the Forum's investigation.

27. School Meals – Site Visit Verbal Update – Covering Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which facilitated a discussion among Members of this Forum in relation to the School Meals Site Visit on 13 July 2007.

The Chair of the Forum indicated that the visit had been very worthwhile and that the facilities in the school and organisational aspect had been very impressive. One area worthy of particular note was the operation of a cashless till system using a top-up card. This system worked extremely effectively and removed the stigma associated with children receiving free school meals as their cards were automatically credited with the appropriate amount every day. The choice of food available to pupils was fantastic and included a salad bar.

Decision

Members' comments would be used to inform their on-going investigation into the school meals service.

STEPHEN AKERS-BELCHER

CHAIRMAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

19 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCHOOL MEALS – HEALTHY EATING IN SCHOOLS
– COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members that a presentation on the Healthy Eating in Schools Agenda will be made to the Forum at today's meeting.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's ongoing investigation into school meals it was requested at the meeting of this Forum on 4 July 2007 that Members should be provided with information in relation to the Healthy Eating in Schools Agenda.
- 2.2 Consequently, the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator and the Community Nutritionist Project Manager will be in attendance at today's meeting to provide information in relation to the following issues:-
- 1) The Healthy Schools Agenda;
 - 2) The Healthy Eating in Schools Agenda; and
 - 3) General overview of the local approach to Healthy Eating in Schools.
- 2.3 Members will be provided with more detailed information in the form of a presentation on these issues at today's meeting.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the content of the report and question the attending officers where appropriate.

Contact Officer:- Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523647
Email: jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- 1) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled, "School Meals – Scoping Report," from 4 July 2007.
- 2) Minute and Decision Record of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on 4 July 2007.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

19 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCHOOL MEALS – EVIDENCE FROM HEAD
TEACHERS – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Head Teacher of St Hilds Secondary School will be in attendance to provide verbal evidence at today's meeting in relation to this Forum's ongoing investigation into School Meals. In addition, the views of Fens Primary School Head Teacher have been included as an appendix to this report.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's ongoing investigation into school meals it was requested at the meeting of this Forum on 4 July 2007 that Members should receive evidence from Head Teachers in relation to this issue. Subsequently, Head Teachers (from Fens Primary School and St Hilds Secondary School) that sit on the local 'Healthy Food in Schools Strategy Group' were identified as key contributors to the Forum's investigations.
- 2.2 Consequently, the Head Teachers from both of these schools were invited to attend this meeting to provide verbal evidence. The Head Teacher from Fens Primary School asked that their apologies be submitted. However, to ensure Members are provided with views from both primary and secondary schools **Appendix A** contains a response from the Head Teacher of Fens Primary School to a number of the key issues being examined by this Forum over the course of this investigation.
- 2.3 In addition, Members may wish to use the following questions (derived from the Terms of Reference for this investigation) as a prompt for discussions with St Hilds Secondary School Head Teacher:-

- 1) What are your views on the provision of school meals?

- 2) What are your views on the standard of school meals - in particular in relation to choice, variety, price and nutritional content?
- 3) How do you view the level of take-up of school meals?
- 4) What are your views on the 'school meals experience' (i.e. length of break, size / quality of dining facilities, helpfulness of staff)? How, if at all, can this be improved?
- 5) Do you have any further comments you would like to make?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the content of the report, and its appendix, and question the Head Teacher appropriately.

Contact Officer:- Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523647
Email: jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- 1) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled, "School Meals – Scoping Report," from 4 July 2007.
- 2) Minute and Decision Record of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on 4 July 2007.

APPENDIX A – HEAD OF FENS PRIMARY SCHOOL VIEWS ON SCHOOL MEALS

The Head Teacher of Fens Primary School asked that her apologies were submitted to the Forum for today's meeting and that the comments below were fed back to the Forum for consideration as part of its investigation into School Meals.

1) What are your views on the provision of school meals?

I think that the level of service provided is very high and that the Catering Service works really hard to improve their standards.

2) What are your views on the standard of school meals - in particular in relation to choice, variety, price and nutritional content?

The new nutritional standards are being fully met. The new £1.55 price of school meals represents good value for money. However, it can seem expensive to some people. The choice of food is good and the standard of the food itself is also good.

3) How do you view the level of take-up of school meals?

In terms of take-up of school meals we have witnessed a slight drop-off in numbers recently in Fens Primary School. This can be attributed to the new nutritional standards – not all young people like eating healthily. Consequently, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of packed lunches being eaten at the school. The Head of Fens Primary School suggested that the Government should allow schools to charge young people to bring packed lunches into schools. Firstly, because there are cost and resource implications for allowing young people to eat packed lunches in schools (they have to be supervised, use the facilities and need cleaning up after) and secondly, because introducing a cost may enhance the take-up of what are very healthy school meals.

4) What are your views on the 'school meals experience' (i.e. length of break, size / quality of dining facilities, helpfulness of staff)? How, if at all, can this be improved?

The 'experience' is the schools responsibility and, therefore, is dependent on the existing facilities that the school has. The length of the break is often dependent on the facilities that schools have e.g. if the dining hall is used for other purposes (which is the case for all but two of the Primary Schools in the town) it needs to be available for use at a set time, this can prescribe the length of the break period. The catering staff is very helpful. In addition, it is beneficial for schools to involve these staff in the 'life' of the schools they work in.

5) Do you have any further comments you would like to feed back to the Forum?

We need to be mindful that Hartlepool is now a Fair Trade town. I think that this should be at the forefront of thinking about school meals.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

19 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer and Young People and Play Co-ordinator

Subject: SCHOOL MEALS INVESTIGATION –
CONSULTATION RESULTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the findings of a consultation exercise with young people about School Meals.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of this Forum's investigation into School Meals Members will recall that the Scrutiny Support Officer indicated he was approaching a number of groups over the summer holiday period about consulting with them in relation to their views about school meals.
- 2.2 A number of groups were approached about the possibility of feeding young peoples views about school meals into the Forum's findings. However, it should be noted that the consultation results relate to 5 to 11 year olds only. Unfortunately due to the short timescales prescribed within the terms of reference of this investigation, coupled with the congested work programme of the Youth Service, it was not possible to access further consultation within the available period of time.

3. CONSULTATION RESULTS

- 3.1 The evidence gathered was in the form of a questionnaire which was distributed across a number of playschemes operating in the town over the school summer break. In total 250 questionnaires were distributed, with 77

completed and returned. A copy of the questionnaire has been attached at **Appendix A**.

3.2 Children completing the questionnaire attend the following schools:

School	Number of Children
St Helen's	14
St Bega's	8
Sacred Heart	1
St Joseph's	1
St Hild's	1
West View	3
Barnard Grove	1
Lynnfield	3
Brougham	19
St Aiden's	1
Jesmond Road	2
Springwell	1
Greatham	6
Fens	6
Golden Flatts	2
West Park	1
Kingsley	3
Holy trinity	1
No Response	3

3.3 The ages of the children completing the questionnaires are as follows:

Age	Number of Children
5	11
6	16
7	15
8	13
9	7
10	13
11	2

3.4 From the 77 responses, 48 young people stay for school meals. Of the 48 children that stay for school meals, the following answers were given:

Question	Yes	No	No Response
Do you like school meals?	38 (79.2%)	7 (14.5%)	3 (6.3%)
Do you think school meals are healthy?	32 (66.6%)	15 (31.3%)	1 (2.1%)
Do you think there a choice of food to eat?	29 (60.4%)	19 (39.6%)	0 (0%)

Question	Yes	No	No Response
Do you tend to eat the same as your friends?	18 (37.5%)	30 (62.5%)	0 (0%)
Are the lunchtime staff friendly & helpful?	36 (75%)	12 (25%)	0 (0%)
Do the lunchtime staff help you choose healthy food?	30 (62.5%)	17 (35.4%)	1 (2.1%)
Do you tell your parents what you have had to eat at school each day?	27 (56.3%)	21 (43.7%)	0 (0%)
Is the school dinner break long enough?	38 (79.2%)	7 (14.5%)	3 (6.3%)
Is the dining hall big enough for everyone to eat in?	37 (77.1%)	11 (22.9%)	0 (0%)
Would you rather not stay for school meals?	17 (35.4%)	28 (58.3%)	3 (6.3%)
Do you think school meals are worth the money you pay?	25 (52.1%)	21 (43.7%)	2 (4.2%)

Table One: Young people eating School Meals

3.5 In total 26 children do not receive school meals. All of the 26 children bring a packed lunch into school and 3 of those children also go home for lunch for part of the school week. In addition, 3 young people did not complete either 'eating school meals' or 'not eating school meals' part of the questionnaire.

3.6 A series of questions were asked of those children who did not have school meals. The findings are detailed below:

Questions	Yes	No	No Response
Do you go home for lunch?	3 (11.5%)	23 (88.5%)	0 (0%)
Would you prefer to stop for school dinners?	8 (30.8%)	17 (65.4%)	1 (3.8%)
Do you bring a packed lunch for your dinner?	26 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Do you eat with everyone else for your dinner?	23 (88.5%)	3 (11.5%)	0 (0%)
Would you prefer to eat a school dinner rather than a packed lunch?	9 (34.6%)	17 (65.4%)	0 (0%)

Table Two: Young people not eating for School Meals

- 3.7 We also asked the children if they had any suggestions that might make school meals more interesting to eat. Some of the suggestions are detailed below:

“I would have to like the food”

“More time to eat my lunch”

“Better place to eat in”

More fruit & vegetables”

“Dinners should be cheaper”

“Too slow to queue and not enough choice if you are last as things run out”

“Pizza, nicer dining area”

“Try different foods”

“To eat outside when the weather is nice”

“I would like to have chocolate milk, fish & chips”

“Everything is okay and I won’t want to change anything”

“Healthier food options”

- 3.8 Children were also asked what they liked about school dinners. Some of their suggestions are detailed below:

- Toast
- Fruit
- Pizza and eating with friends
- Vegetables
- They are very healthy and nice
- I like cheese pasties
- Plenty to choose from
- Sausages and cakes
- The puddings
- There are things that you like
- There is fruit salad

Summary of Findings

- 3.9 Overall the children who stay for school meals are generally positive about their experiences, but don’t always have the opportunity to sit with friends whilst eating their lunch. Over 50% of children indicated that they felt school

meals were value for money and that there is a good choice of food. The experience of most children is that they find lunchtime staff to be friendly and helpful and help them to choose healthy options.

- 3.10 Just over 50% of children tell their parents what they have eaten at school each day. With regards to those children that bring a packed lunch to school, the majority of children don't wish to stay for school lunch and the majority of children are able to sit with everyone else whilst they are eating their lunches.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of the report as part of their ongoing investigation into School Meals.

Contact Officer: - Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executives Department – Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: - 01429 523647
Email:- jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

APPENDIX A SCHOOL MEALS – SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

We have been asked by Hartlepool Borough Council's Neighbourhood Services Department what kids think about school meals.

A Scrutiny Forum is made up of Local Councillor's, who look at lots of different issues in the town. The information is then put into a report giving ideas from the results. These ideas are then made to the Mayor and his cabinet, who then decide whether or not to accept them and make changes to the service.

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum are very keen to hear what you have to say and would be grateful if you could take some time by ticking the yes/no boxes to the questions below.

1. Do you eat school dinners? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, answer questions 2 – 12, if no answer questions 13-19

2. Do you like school dinners? Yes ☐ No ☐

3. Do you think school dinners are healthy? Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Do you think there is lots of choice of food to eat? Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Do you tend to eat the same food as your friends? Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Are the lunchtime staff friendly and helpful? Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Do the lunchtime staff help you to choose healthy food? Yes ☐ No ☐

8. Do you tell your parents what you have had to eat at school each day? Yes ☐ No ☐

9. Is the school dinner time break long enough? Yes ☐ No ☐

10. Is the dining hall big enough for everyone to eat in? Yes ☐ No ☐

11. Would you rather not stay for school dinners? Yes ☐ No ☐

12. Do you think school meals are worth the money you pay? Yes ☐ No ☐

No, I don't eat school dinners

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 13. | Do you go home for your dinner? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. | Would you prefer to stop for school dinners? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. | Do you bring a packed lunch for your dinner? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. | Do you eat with everyone else for your dinner? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. | Would you prefer to eat a school dinner rather than a packed lunch? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Do you have any suggestions that might make it more interesting to eat school dinners?

.....

.....

.....

What do you like about school dinners?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for completing the form

Age:

School you attend:

Playscheme:

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

19 September 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO
TRANSPORTATION LINKS TO HOSPITAL
SERVICES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
DEPARTMENT TRANSPORT PROVISION –
SCOPING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for their forthcoming investigation into 'Transportation Links to Hospital Services and Neighbourhood Services Department Transport Provision'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The issue of 'Transportation Links to a New Hospital Site' is a mandatory referral from Full Council. On 13 March 2007 Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee considered this issue and referred it to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for consideration during the 2007/08 Municipal Year.
- 2.2 In addition, during a meeting between the Chair of this Forum, the Mayor (as Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability), the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities, and the Director of Neighbourhood Services, the issue of 'Neighbourhood Services Department Transport Provision' was suggested as a topic for this Forum's work programme. In addition, it was suggested that this topic could complement the Transportation Links to a New Hospital Site Scrutiny referral if these investigations were conducted together.
- 2.3 Subsequently, at the meeting of this Forum on 13 June 2007 Members determined their Work Programme for the 2007/08 Municipal Year. The topic

8.4 NSSF - 07.09.19 - Transportation Links to Hospital Services and Neighbourhood Services Transportation Provision

of 'Transportation Links to a New Hospital Site and Neighbourhood Services Transport Provision' was selected as the second Scrutiny topic for consideration during the current Municipal Year. Furthermore, Members suggested that this investigation should form the major in-depth Scrutiny Inquiry for the Forum's 2007/08 work programme. Members also suggested that the Scrutiny topic should consider issues around transportation links to existing hospital sites outside of the town. Consequently, the title for the investigation reflects the broader issue of transportation to hospital services.

Setting the Scene

- 2.4 The motion agreed at the Extraordinary meeting of Full Council on 8 February 2007, which includes the basis of the referral to Scrutiny, is included below as a background to this issue:-

"That the Council joins the Labour Group in deploring the decision of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel in respect of University Hospital Hartlepool and to totally condemn the broken promises of the Blair Government. We demand that this decision be urgently reconsidered so that those promises, made by both the Prime Minister and the former Health Secretary John Reid, can be delivered in full.

Furthermore the Council reaffirm its commitment to health services that are accessible, accountable and of the highest quality in Hartlepool, for Hartlepool. It is vital that we resist any further migration of both jobs and services out of the town to Stockton and fight any downgrading of services at University Hospital Hartlepool.

Health services in Hartlepool must be both maintained and indeed improved. We need increased funding, better transport links, improved primary care in our communities, an immediate development of new and equipped health centres and improved terms and conditions for all health sector workers in the town. We must seek a full and comprehensive understanding of the NHS proposals for Hartlepool and a timetable for its investment programs.

The Council therefore resolve that the full powers of this Council's scrutiny process be employed to deal with these issues and that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee urgently set out a timetable for investigation, reporting back to Council at the earliest opportunity."

- 2.5 Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum may wish to be mindful that in light of a recent presentation from the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust's Director of Strategic Service Development on *Pathways to Healthcare*, Members of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum agreed to defer their investigation into Acute Primary and Community Health Services in Hartlepool. The Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum made this decision on the basis that work being carried out in relation to this issue was in its early formation and agreed to be provided with updates on key milestones/projects in relation to the developments on *Pathways to Healthcare*.

- 2.6 The issue of Transportation Links to a New Hospital Site has arisen largely from the Secretary of State for Health's decision to support the findings of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) in its report on 'Advice on Proposals for Changes to Maternity and Paediatric Services in North Tees and Hartlepool'. The IRP report was submitted to the Secretary of State for Health on 18 December 2006 and Recommendation Three, in particular, has relevance to this investigation:-

"A modern hospital to replace the existing out of date hospital buildings should be provided on a new site in a well-situated location accessible to the people of Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees, Easington and Sedgefield."

- 2.7 The IRP report moves on to give direct consideration to the issue of 'transport' specifically and the paragraphs below are a complete extract from the transport section of the IRP's report:-

"Widespread concern was expressed to us about transport difficulties between hospital sites - for patients, carers, families and friends. With the changes due to take place in December 2006, concerning emergency surgery and critical care, it is clear that good transport links between the two hospital sites are about to become even more important. The road network throughout the area is generally good but, as has been stated previously, there is a high dependency on public transport."

A large amount of work on developing public transport links has already been undertaken by the combined Trust and local authority transport group and two initiatives to provide additional bus services are in place. However, if consultant led maternity and paediatric services are to be centralised at University Hospital of North Tees (UHNT), it is vital that all communities are able to access them. Initiatives to improve access to UHNT from Hartlepool, Easington and Sedgefield are urgent and essential. This requirement will, in due course, also apply for gaining access to the new hospital."

The co-operation of the local ambulance service will be equally essential. The Panel was reassured to hear in discussions with representatives of the North East Ambulance Service that, with their early involvement in planning discussions, all reasonable requirements could be met."

IRP Recommendation Seven

New initiatives supported by the NHS and local authorities are required to meet the transport needs of patients, carers and staff between University Hospital of Hartlepool (UHH) and UHNT and the communities they serve. The North East Ambulance Service should be involved at an early stage in discussions about all changes to patient services."

- 2.8 According to information received from the Department of Health a programme team from the North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Trust, under the title

of *Momentum – pathways to healthcare*, is working closely with local Primary Care Trusts to move work forward on the new hospital. This work aims to engage with a range of local stakeholders to agree on a shared vision of how services will be and to begin the process of service development and design. It is recognised that good transport links are vital, and the team will be working with the lead agency for transport planning to ensure that services are in place when the new hospital is built. It is expected that the new hospital could be complete by 2014. Initial meetings to begin the development and design phase of the programme are planned for early September 2007. It is worth noting that transport links to any new hospital site cannot be put in place until formal public consultation has taken place.

- 2.9 In addition, the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (TVJSU) has been developing long-term proposals for our sub-regional transport network. These mainly focus on the economic and regenerative case for improving the sub-regional bus network. However, this could have benefits for access to hospital sites across the sub-region.
- 2.10 With anticipated future changes to the provision of health services in the region and increasing demands for travel between health care sites, the Strategic Health Authority, NHS Trusts, Primary Care Trusts and local authorities recognised the need to work together to develop a strategy to improve access to health care and develop sustainable transport services. This resulted in the formation of the Tees Health and Transport Partnership in 2003 that brings together all organisations interested, and having a role in, improving access to health care. The partnership is chaired by the Chief Engineer of Middlesbrough Borough Council and meets on a quarterly basis with annual workshops to identify problems, prioritise and deliver improvements and discuss progress. It includes representatives from the Strategic Health Authority, NHS Trusts, Primary Care Trusts, ambulance service, bus operators, Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) Forums, Sustrans, community transport providers, Tees Valley Rural Community Council and local authorities.
- 2.11 The partnership contributed to the 'Review of Acute Health on Teesside and Hartlepool' undertaken in 2005. This review identified access to health care facilities as one of the main concerns amongst patients and the wider public. Surveys indicated that people find it difficult to travel to hospital or their local clinic, miss appointments or do not seek medical care because of transport difficulties. The review recommended that the provision of services between the two hospitals at Hartlepool and North Tees should be reconfigured. The Partnership has assessed the transport implications of the proposed changes and fed these back into the review. The partnership has developed an action plan to deliver health improvements for the following themes:
 - 1) Improving accessibility to health care facilities; and
 - 2) Encouraging more healthy and active lifestyles.

2.12 Alongside the referral of transportation links to a new hospital site Members of this Forum decided to take the issue of Neighbourhood Services transport provision as a complementary strand to the investigation. Currently the Neighbourhood Services Department exercises its responsibility across two strands of its work. These are:-

- 1) **Transportation and Traffic Section** – this is responsible for the management of the highway network and the co-ordination of all activities that take place on it. This includes delivery of the local transport plan, public transport, travel planning as well as highway maintenance, co-ordination of works on the highway, traffic management and parking.
- 2) **Transport Services** – this is made up of three elements: Community Transport, Vehicle Workshop and Vehicle Procurement. The main responsibilities of the section is for the maintenance and procurement of the Council vehicle fleet and the provision of special needs passenger transport. The main aims of the section are to ensure the Council's operational transport is appropriately managed and maintained, is operated safely in accordance with all legal obligations and that road risk is proactively managed.

2.13 Wherever possible, the section aims to create an integrated approach to vehicle usage, encompassing all departmental needs and trends, maximising resources and ensuring procurement efficiencies. In addition, the Authority has recently started the development of an Integrated Transport Unit (ITU). The purpose of the ITU is to integrate the three main areas of transport provision on an authority wide basis:

- 1) Vehicle Workshop – maintenance;
- 2) Procurement Unit; and
- 3) Community Transport.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

3.1 To gain an understanding of the issues around transportation links to hospital services and Neighbourhood Services Department transport provision and to seek to make recommendations for improvement in relation to this issue.

4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation/review are proposed:-

- (a) To identify who are the key stakeholders / service providers of transport links to hospital sites;

- (b) To gain an understanding of the statutory and regulatory framework for transport links to hospital sites;
- (c) To identify provision in local strategies / planning documents of relevance to transportation links to hospital sites and Neighbourhood Services transport provision;
- (d) To explore the various planning exercises and work streams conducted under recent reviews of hospital services in the Tees Valley in relation to transportation links to hospital sites, in particular, the role and successes of the Tees Valley Health and Transport Partnership;
- (e) To seek the views of local bus operators, NHS organisations and neighbouring local authorities in relation to transportation links to current and future hospital sites;
- (f) To explore the issue of access to existing hospital sites outside of the town;
- (g) To establish what work, if any at this stage, has been undertaken to identify potential locations of the proposed new hospital site accessible to the people of Hartlepool, Stockton, Easington and Sedgefield;
- (h) To investigate what accessibility planning will be carried out in relation to potential hospital sites;
- (i) To explore what information is available to patients and relatives seeking to access hospital services about existing transportation links to these;
- (j) To examine the Neighbourhood Service Department's current, and future plans in relation to, transportation provision;
- (k) To consider how the Authority and partner organisations can maximise the effectiveness of transportation links to existing, and new, hospital sites; and
- (l) To explore how the Forum can help and assist in the planning for the new hospital by identifying the transport issues that the future planning for the new hospital could, and should, consider.

5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY / SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

- 5.1 Members of the Forum can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the Scrutiny review.
- 5.2 The Forum can invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations as follows:-

- (a) Member of Parliament for Hartlepool;
- (b) Elected Mayor;
- (c) Cabinet Member with Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities;
- (d) Neighbourhood Services Department Officers;
- (e) Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit;
- (f) North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust;
- (g) Hartlepool Primary Care Trust;
- (h) North Tees and Hartlepool Patient and Public Involvement Forum
- (i) Local Bus Service Operators;
- (j) Neighbouring Local Authorities;
- (k) LSP involvement;
- (l) Local residents;
- (m) Neighbourhood Consultative Forums;
- (n) Representatives of minority communities of interest or heritage; and
- (o) Ward Councillors.

5.3 The Forum may also wish to refer to a variety of documentary / internet sources, key suggestions are as highlighted below:-

- (a) 'Advice on Proposals for Changes to Maternity and Paediatric Services in North Tees and Hartlepool' – Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP), December 2006.
- (b) www.dh.gov.uk
- (c) 'Improving Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services' – Audit Commission 2001

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the Scrutiny process and paragraph 5.2, details who the Forum could involve. However, thought will

need to be given to the structure in the way that the Forum wishes to encourage those views.

6.2 In addition, diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. As such the views of local diversity groups will be sought throughout the inquiry where felt appropriate and time allows. Consequently, consideration has been given as to how the views of people from minority communities of interest or heritage (for example, people with disabilities, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, black and minority ethnic people, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people), which may not be gathered through the usual community engagement routes, can be included over the course of the inquiry.

6.3 Consequently, it is proposed that the following local diversity groups are approached over the course of the investigation with the intention of seeking their views in relation to the Scrutiny topic:

- 1) Talking with Communities;
- 2) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender; and
- 3) All Ability Forum

7. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE DEDICATED OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUDGET

Option 1

7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report, to the need to request funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry. At this stage no additional funding has been identified as being necessary to support Members in their investigation. Members, however, may wish to seek additional funding over the course of the investigation and the pro forma attached at **Appendix A** outlines the criteria on which a request to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will be judged.

7.2 In addition, it is possible that over the course of this investigation some specialist research / advice may strengthen the Forum's findings and recommendations. The Scrutiny Support Officer will explore this in greater depth once the Forum has defined its terms of reference for the investigation and would bring a report to the Forum should a request for funding be deemed advantageous. Members' comments would be welcomed at this stage in relation to requests for additional funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Budget.

8. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 8.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the review to be undertaken, which may be changed at any stage:-

19 September 2007 – Scoping and ‘Setting the Scene’

24 October 2007 – Evidence from Neighbourhood Services Department.

28 November 2007 – Evidence to be determined.

9 January 2008 – Evidence to be determined.

13 February 2008 – Evidence to be determined.

19 March 2008 – Consideration of Draft Final Report

18 April 2008 – Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

28 April 2008 – Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet/Council (tentative date)

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Members are recommended to agree the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Forum’s remit of the Scrutiny investigation as outlined in paragraph 4.1.

Contact Officer:- Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executives Department – Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel:- 01429 523647
Email:- jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper(s) was/were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) ‘Local Hospital Transport Issues’ – Report of the Health and Social Care Select Committee, Stockton Borough Council, April 2004.
- (ii) ‘Advice on Proposals for Changes to Maternity and Paediatric Services in North Tees and Hartlepool’ – Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP), December 2006.
- (iii) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled *Determining the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum’s Work Programme for 2007/08* 13.06.07

(iv) Minutes from the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum 13.06.07

(v) Minute of the Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council 8.02.07

(vi) www.dh.gov.uk

(vii) www.teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk

**APPENDIX A
PRO-FORMA TO REQUEST FUNDING TO SUPPORT
CURRENT SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

Title of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
Title of the current scrutiny investigation for which funding is requested:
To clearly identify the purpose for which additional support is required:
To outline indicative costs to be incurred as a result of the additional support:
To outline any associated timescale implications:
To outline the 'added value' that may be achieved by utilising the additional support as part of the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any requirements / processes to be adhered to in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules / Standing Orders:

To outline the possible disadvantages of not utilising the additional support during the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any possible alternative means of additional support outside of this proposal: