

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

15 October 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in Manor College of Technology,
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)

Robbie Payne (Finance & Efficiency Portfolio Holder)

Peter Jackson (Neighbourhoods & Communities Portfolio Holder)

Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder)

Students: **St Hilds C of E School** – Tom Harrison, Allan Costello, Richard Lions, Chelsea Patterson, David Tester, Jonathan Reynolds and Tom Bisset (staff)

Dyke House School – Joshua Slater, Jessica Hall, James Astill, Danny Evans and Victoria Abbott (staff)

High Tunstall College of Science – Alex Davison, James Hewitson, Rebekah Robinson, Jameala Torbah, Bethany Fleet and Tim Blades.

Brierton School – David Hewitt, Leon Usher, Kyle Spence, Samantha Megson, Alex Anderson and Lisa MacGregor (staff)

Manor College of Technology – Luke Harrison, Callum Horridge, Claire Moore and Natalie Irvine.

English Martyrs School and 6th Form College – Abbie McEvoy, Jack Hunter, Fiona Walker, Ryan Bates, Hannah Greason, Natalie Hutchinson, Matthew McEvoy, Taalay Ahmed, Priuanka Suresh and K Bainton (staff)

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services
Chris Little, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
John Robinson, Participation Officer, Children's Services
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

104. Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everyone and thanked the Head Teacher of Manor College of Technology for allowing the meeting to be held at the school as part of National Local Democracy Week. A very informative question and answer session was held prior to the meeting with students from St Hild's School, Dyke House School, High Tunstall College of Science, Brierton School, Manor College of Technology and English Martyrs School and 6th Form College. The students were invited to remain for the main meeting with all those present invited to participate in discussions during the meeting.

105. Apologies for Absence

None.

106. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

107. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2007

Confirmed.

108. Budget and Policy Framework 2008/09 – to 2010-11 – Initial Consultation Proposals *(Corporate Management Team)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To provide the Executive with a comprehensive report on the issues

surrounding the initial Budget and Policy Framework proposals for 2008/09.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency gave a comprehensive and detailed presentation on the initial Budget and Policy Framework proposals for 2008/09 to 2020/11.

Following recognition by the Government that local authorities needed greater financial certainty to enable them to plan services effectively, from 2006/2007 the Government began to issue multi-year grant settlements. The first multi-year settlement covered two years, 2006/07 and 2007/08. The Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 was announced on 9 October 2007 and the key issues from this were detailed in the presentation. However, details of individual authorities grant allocations would not be available until late November or early December 2007. This position clearly had implications for the development of the Council's own three-year budget strategy.

It was clear from announcements by the Chancellor that the current period of growth in total public sector expenditure would not be maintained beyond 2007/2008. It was anticipated that local authorities would face a difficult financial position over the next few years.

The report gave details in relation to policy drivers and the Outturn Strategy for 2007/08 which included centralised estimates.

The report gave details of the 2008/09 to 2010/11 Capital Programme including allocations and proposed allocations which required Members approval. Members were requested to re-affirm their commitment their commitment to the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan approved by Cabinet on 31st July 2006.

The report included details of corporate budget savings, job evaluation, budget pressures, contingency, terminating grant issues, budget priorities, revised budget position 2008/09 to 2010/11, a review of reserves, budget support fund and equal pay protection.

The previous forecasts had assumed that each year's budget is balanced independently on a sustainable basis. On this basis, the current forecasts indicate that 2008/09 will be particularly challenging. It was envisaged that the actual position for 2008/2009 was likely to be worse than currently forecast as no provision had been made for future pressures/priorities/terminating grants. Members were asked to consider whether they wished to balance the budget over a longer period and the options for this course of action were detailed in the report.

With regard to consultation on the draft Budget and Policy Framework, Members were requested to determine if they wished to adopt similar

arrangements for 2008/09 as in previous years, details of which were outlined in the report.

The report outlined the financial issues affecting the 2008/09 Budget and Policy Framework proposals and Cabinet were requested to determine the specific proposals it wished to refer to Scrutiny in relation to the following:-

- 2007/08 Provisional Outturn Strategy
- 2008/09 Capital Proposals
- 2008/09 General Fund and Council Tax

A discussion ensued in which it was suggested that consideration be given to budget proposal consultation being undertaken with the young people of the town through school councils in the future.

Decision

Cabinet agreed that the following issues be referred for consultation:-

2007/2008 Provisional Outturn Strategy

- (i) Proposal to use the 2007/2008 corporate underspend to support the Children's Services and Neighbourhood Services forecast overspends; and
- (ii) The proposals to earmark any uncommitted corporate underspend for the Tall Ships.

2008/2009 Capital Proposals

- (iii) maintain service based capital expenditure at the level of Government allocations;
- (iv) continue to support locally funded Prudential Borrowing projects at current levels as detailed in paragraph 5.2;
- (v) continue to provide £0.1m within the revenue budget to support additional unsupported Prudential Borrowing of £1.2m per year in 2008/2009 and 2009/10, and to consider proposals for utilising this funding at a future meeting. To be noted that as a minimum £0.362m will be needed in 2008/09 for the second phase of repairs to the multi-storey car park.
- (vi) to defer a decision on the continuation of the above initiative in 2010/11 until the revenue budget position is clearer?

2008/2009 General Fund and Council Tax

- (vii) Budget Pressures identified in Appendix A;

- (viii) Contingency items identified in Appendix B;
- (ix) Terminating Grant Regimes identified in Appendix C;
- (x) Budget Priorities identified in Appendix D and to note that Cabinet expressed support for Sportability Club priority of £7,500 and wish to fund this item;
- (xi) The proposed 2008/09 Council Tax increase of 4.9% and to note that Cabinet will review this proposals once details of the 2008/09 grant allocation are know;
- (xii) The overall value of reserves to be used to support the 2008/09 budget as identified in paragraphs 7.1 to 7.9;
- (xiii) The proposal to earmark the £1.2m the Council has received form the final distribution of LABGI monies to meet potential one-off costs detailed in paragraph 6.20.

109. Hartlepool Core Strategy Issues and Options for Consultation *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

To seek approval of, for consultation purposes, the Issues and Options paper, comprising the first public stage in the preparation of the Hartlepool Core Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will set out key elements of the planning framework for the area and will comprise a spatial vision, strategic objectives, a spacial strategy and core policies. It will set out broadly but clearly, what kind of place Hartlepool will be in the future; what kind of changes will be needed to make this happen and how this will be brought about. The Strategy will provide the delivery mechanism for the Community Strategy and other plans and strategies of the Council and of other bodies in so far as they relate to the use and development of land.

An Issues and Options paper which formed the basis of the first stage of consultation was attached Appendix 1. The first stage of consultation will be for a period of three months until the end of January 2008 and will be

undertaken in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. At the end of May 2008, representations will be made on the preferred options agreed by the Cabinet for a statutory period of six weeks.

In response to questions the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services indicated that feedback would be submitted to Cabinet in Spring 2008 with the Core Strategy Development Plan being published in 2010.

Decision

- (i) That the Issues and Options paper for the Core Strategy be approved for public consultation purposes.
- (ii) That the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder agree any amendments made to the Issues and Options paper prior to its publication.

110. Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Executive

(Director of Adult and Community Services)

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet approval to create a Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Executive as a theme partnership of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The Health and Wellbeing Partnership will replace the existing Health and Care Strategy Group.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Health and Care Partnership is one of the most complex partnerships within the LSP and it was noted that some delegation, rationalisation and reconfiguration was necessary to ensure it operated more strategically and efficiently and recognised new agendas. It was therefore felt important to review the membership, terms of reference and way of working to reflect a number of significant developments including:

- (a) The creation of a Children's Trust;
- (b) The changing management structures at the Primary Care Trust
- (c) The move towards new commissioning arrangements including the creation of Practice Based Commissioning.

The Health and Wellbeing Partnership would comprise two main bodies, a large representative partnership and a smaller decision making executive.

The proposed terms of reference outlined the function and roles of the Partnership and Executive. The outcomes for the Partnership and Executive were detailed in the report.

The Director of Adult and Community Services provided clarification of the membership and indicated that this would be cross-working partnership with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) as well as other themed groups from the Hartlepool Partnership. Further information was sought on the proposed funding and administration of this Partnership. The Director of Adult and Community Services responded that the Partnership element would be funded through Neighbourhood Renewal Fund with other resources being sought from the PCT and the Council for commissioning.

Decision

The creation of a new Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Executive and terms of reference were agreed.

111. Analysis of Best Value Performance Indicators 2006/07 *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the Council's performance against the set of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for 2006/07, highlight areas of strong performance, identify areas of concern and those indicators that could possibly be targeted for improvement.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Portfolio Holder for Performance gave a detailed and comprehensive presentation of the report submitted which examined:

- (i) Overall performance summary
- (ii) How we compare – CIPFA Nearest Neighbours, 20 most deprived authorities and “Improving Strongly” authorities
- (iii) Possible areas for improvement/concern

The report complimented the information included in the report to Cabinet on 6 August 2007 which looked at the 2006/07 outturns and should be considered alongside the findings of the previous report. A summary of the key findings were included within the report.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted that of the 16 authorities, Hartlepool was ranked 1st in terms of proportion of top quartile indicators and the proportion of indicators in either of the top 2 quartiles for 2006/07. This was the first time that Hartlepool had been ranked first in terms of both top quartile indicators and indicators above the median and was the result of continued improvement over a number of years. In relation to the most deprived authorities, Members were asked to note that the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004 rank Hartlepool as the 14th most deprived local authority area in the country.

In 2006, Hartlepool was adjudged to be “Improving Well”, the 2nd highest judgement available. A small number of authorities were adjudged to be “Improving Strongly” and this could be useful to compare how Hartlepool was performing in relation to these authorities so that any improvements can be placed into context alongside those authorities most recently acknowledged as improving strongly. In terms of performance in this area Hartlepool was ranked 2nd, only narrowly behind the City of London who are ranked 226th on the IMD.

The Portfolio Holder concluded that for the third year in succession, Hartlepool has improved the proportion of indicators in the top quartile of performers across the country and the proportion of indicators above the median. In 2006/07 over 75% of BVPIs either improved or remained the same as in 2005/06 and Hartlepool outperforms all comparable authorities both in terms of independently assessed ‘Nearest Neighbours’ and other authorities deemed to have a similar level of deprivation as Hartlepool.

However it was acknowledged that whilst performance was generally good, and can be seen to be improving consistently, there were still areas that could be targeted for further improvements.

Decision

The report was noted.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 19th October 2007