

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

7 January 2008

The meeting commenced at 9.00 am in the Avondale Centre,  
Raby Road, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder).

Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),

Robbie Payne (Finance & Efficiency Portfolio Holder),

Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder),

Officers: Paul Walker (Chief Executive)  
Andrew Atkin (Assistant Chief Executive)  
Tony Brown (Chief Solicitor)  
Joanne Machers (Chief Personnel Officer)  
Dave Stubbs (Director of Neighbourhood Services)  
Peter Scott (Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)  
Nicola Bailey (Director of Adult and Community Services)  
Adrienne Simcock (Director of Children's Services)  
Alison Mawson (Head of Community Safety and Prevention)  
Alastair Rae (Public Relations Manager)  
Charlotte Burnham (Scrutiny Manager)  
James Walsh (Scrutiny Support Officer)

Also Present: Councillor Jonathan Brash (Member of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee)

### **172. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Jackson and Pamela Hargreaves.

### **173. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

## **174. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2007.**

Due to the unavailability of the minutes, they were deferred for consideration at the next meeting.

## **175. Review of the Authority's Postal Service – Final Report** (*Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*)

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To present the findings of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee following its review of the Authority's postal service.

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

A Member of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee presented a report which highlighted that as part of the work programme for Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for 2007/08, Members agreed to review the operation of the Authority's postal service and identify potential service improvements. During this review the processes involved in the distribution of the Authority's mail were examined in detail and the findings along with potential efficiencies and service improvements were identified within the report.

In conclusion, the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee had identified that standardised approaches should be adopted throughout the Authority. It was acknowledged that revised procedures had recently been implemented to rectify recent problems encountered by Members. However, there were several areas of potential efficiencies and service improvements noted by Members such as:

- i) the centralisation of postal duties;
- ii) the standardisation of envelope size;
- iii) to discourage the use of envelopes for internal post and Councillors post with the exception of confidential items;
- iv) the scanning of incoming mail at a central point;
- v) the various procurement options such as an alternative provider and the potential procurement of the service on a Tees Valley or North East wide basis;
- vi) the use of standard class post;

- vii) the reduction of the amount of undeliverable post;
- viii) the use of bulk mailings; and
- ix) to explore electronic ways of working such as application forms via the internet.

The Committee had taken evidence from a wide range of sources which assisted in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations which were detailed in the report.

### **Decision**

That the recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, as set out below, be endorsed and that an action plan for the implementation of the recommendations be prepared and reported to Cabinet.

- 1) That a standard approach be adopted throughout the Authority with regard to postal procedures;
- 2) That the Authority explores the feasibility of implementing where appropriate, the potential efficiencies and service improvements as detailed in paras (a)-(i) above within the timetable of the current business process review;
- 3) That during the course of the business process review, consideration also be given to the benefits of utilising an alternative business mail provider together with the procurement of a shared service with neighbouring local authorities; and
- 4) That consideration be given to packaging the contracts for the delivery of Authority's postal services in such a way as to provide for in-town and out-of-town services.

## **176. Scrutiny Investigation into the Review of the Authority's Postal Service – Action Plan** *(Head of Procurement and Property Services/Chief Personnel Officer)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To agree an Action Plan in response to the findings and subsequent recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's investigation into the Review of the Authority's Postal Service.

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

The report provided brief background information on the Review into the

Authority's Postal Service Scrutiny Investigation and provided a proposed Action Plan, attached at Appendix A, in response to the Committee's recommendations.

### **Decision**

That the Action Plan in response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Investigation into the Review of the Authority's Postal Service be approved.

## **177. Safer Hartlepool Partnership's Draft Strategy 2008-11** (*Head of Community Safety and Prevention*)

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

### **Purpose of report**

To initiate the Council's consideration of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's strategy for 2008-2011, as part of the Budget and Policy framework.

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

The Mayor presented the report which explained the legal context for the Council, in respect of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's strategy development and outlined the legal process set for the production of the Partnership Plan, which comprised the 3-year strategy and annual priorities. The report detailed the strategy objectives for 2008-2011 and annual priorities for 2008/09.

The reasons for assessment and findings were detailed in the report and Members were asked to note that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership had set four objectives for its strategy for 2008-11 which linked directly to the four Local Area Agreement outcomes and they were outlined in the report.

The annual local priorities for 2008/09 which had been established from the strategic assessment conducted in November 2007 were listed in the report and it was noted that an action plan for 2008/09 had been established for each priority.

A Member commented that their ward had particular problems with alcohol related issues and sought clarification on how this would be dealt with as part of the SHP objectives. The Mayor commented that the Alcohol Reduction Strategy implemented 18 months ago had already proven beneficial and it was noted that the new District Commander for Hartlepool

Police was keen to deal with alcohol related issues as a priority. Although it was acknowledged that there was no specific funding for dealing with alcohol related issues at this time, Members were keen that the Council continue to lobby Central Government for additional funding. The Head of Community Safety and Prevention informed Members that the Primary Care Trust (PCT) were considering a bid for additional funding to deal with alcohol related issues within the town.

### **Decision**

It was agreed that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's draft strategy be referred to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum for consideration.

## **178. Corporate Plan 2008/09 to 2020/11 – Proposed Outcomes** *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

### **Purpose of report**

To enable Cabinet to discuss the outcomes proposed for inclusion in the Council's Corporate Plan for 2008/09 to 2010/11.

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

The Assistant Chief Executive presented the report which proposed the outcomes for each of the eight community strategy aims and the Council's organisational development priorities. The purpose of the plan was to describe the Council's priorities for 2008/09, including how weaknesses would be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people.

Members were asked to note that Corporate Plan Outcomes were not finalised and would be reviewed and amended over the coming months if appropriate and changing priorities demanded it.

### **Decision**

That the proposed outcomes for inclusion in the Corporate Plan 2008/09 be approved for consideration by Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 18 January 2008.

## **179. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document** *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To advise Cabinet on the responses to the public consultation on the Supplementary Planning Document for Transport Assessments & Travel Plans.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services presented a report which noted that Cabinet had agreed on 28 August 2007 that a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans as part of the Local Development Framework be made available for public consultation for a six week period ending on 12 October 2007.

Responses were received from five organisations and these were attached at Appendix 1. The comments received had been considered and as a result minor amendments to the documents were proposed. The SPD was subject to an initial Habitats Regulations Agreement (HRA) screening process which would enable the planning authority to ascertain that it would not adversely affect the integrity of a European protected nature conservation site. It was therefore proposed that an Appropriate Assessment be undertaken and made available for public consultation prior to adoption of the SPD as amended.

### **Decision**

- (i) The minor changes to the Transport Assessment and Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document arising from the recent public consultation were approved.
- (ii) That an Appropriate Assessment under EU Directive be prepared and be subject to public consultation.

## **180. Tees Valley Bus Network Review and Major Scheme Bid** *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Cabinet of the Major Scheme Business Case for the Tees Valley Bus Network Review that would fund a comprehensive package of bus infrastructure and service improvements across the Tees Valley.

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

The Director of Neighbourhood Services presented a report which summarised the main elements of the proposed Major Scheme Business case bid together with their cost, funding and governance implications. Members were asked to note that the Major Scheme Bid was focussed on the 'Super Core' and 'Core Routes' which offer the most attractive alternative to the car and the greatest potential for modal shift. The steering group which comprised the Tees Valley Joint Strategy unit, Local Authority and bus operator representatives agreed the proposed routes which were detailed in the report. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that comprehensive bus priority measures would be implemented to alter the traffic balance in favour of buses. The scheme would also involve the review of bus stop locations to ensure that they were in the optimum location and maximise the facilities that can be provided.

Members raised several concerns in relation to the possibility of non-profitable routes not being serviced. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that in that situation the local authority would need to decide whether to support that particular route through a subsidy arrangement. Members were informed that the outcome of the finalised bid should be known by the end of April 2008.

### **Decision**

Approval was given to finalise and submit a bid for Local Transport Plan Major Scheme funding to the Department for Transport.

## **181. Cabinet Contingency Fund** (*The Mayor*)

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To propose a series of schemes to utilise the Cabinet Contingency Fund in 2007/08.

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

The Mayor presented the report which set out five schemes that were submitted for Cabinet's consideration for funding from the 'Contingency Fund'. The contingency fund currently had a balance of £120,000 and the total funding requested totalled £115,683 as detailed below.

Hartlepool Platform Schools Pilot Project	£10,000
Hartlepool Marina Recycling and Litter Bin Provision	£20,200
St. Patrick's MUGA (Multi use games area) feasibility	£ 2,450
Skateboard Park Improvements	£70,000
Hospital Transport Service H1	£13,033

A discussion ensued in which Members noted that there were mixed views from young people in relation to the options to be considered for a skateboard park. This highlighted the need to ensure that young people were included as part of the consultation process in relation to three options proposed.

### **Decision**

The schemes as detailed above were approved for funding from the Cabinet Contingency Fund.

## **182. Hartlepool Transport Interchange** (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non key



### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Cabinet of the progress made and outstanding actions needed to deliver the Hartlepool Transport Interchange project.

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

The Director of Neighbourhood Services presented a report which provided information on planning approval, legal agreements, Network Rail Approvals, Government Approvals, land transfer arrangements, car parking arrangements, rail station improvements and procurement of works. An updated delivery programme was also provided.

A discussion ensued in which Members questioned how up to date the scheme was as this project had been on-going for some time. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that the scheme had been continuously updated with traffic impact studies carried out regularly and regular consultation with the bus companies. Concern was expressed about the location of the disabled parking bays at the railway station. The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed Members that the design would ensure that the disabled parking bays were as close to the station as practicable in line with Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

### **Decision**

The progress made and outstanding actions to deliver the Hartlepool Transport Interchange project were noted.

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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