

# **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA**



**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006**

**at 2.30 pm**

**in Committee Room B**

**MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:**

Councillors Cook, Coward, Fleet, Hargreaves, Iseley, Johnson, Kaiser, London,  
A Marshall, Rayner and Wright

**Resident Representatives:**

James Atkinson, Mary Power and Iris Ryder

**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 26<sup>th</sup> January 2006 (*to follow*)

**4. ISSUES RAISED AT NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS**

No items

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

No items

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

No items

**7. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY  
FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No items

**8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**Scrutiny Inquiry into Partnerships**

8.1 Evidence from Head of Community Strategy and Other Witnesses

a) Hartlepool Partnership – *Head of Community Strategy*

b) Verbal Evidence from Witnesses

**9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

i) **Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, commencing at 4.00 pm in  
Committee Room B**

# **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

## **MINUTES**

**26<sup>th</sup> January 2006**

### **Present:**

Councillor: Pamela Hargreaves (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, John Coward, Mary Fleet, Frances London and Ann Marshall

Resident

Reps: James Atkinson, Mary Power and Iris Ryder

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive  
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services  
Joanne Smithson, Head of Community Strategy  
Sajda Banaras, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Jonathan Wistow, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also

Present: Keith Bailey, Head of the Community Network  
Sarah Robson, Project Director, Tees Valley Regeneration

### **26. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councilor's Bill Iseley, Patricia Rayner and Edna Wright.

### **27. Declarations of Interest by Members**

None.

### **28. Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005**

Confirmed.

## **29. Issues Raised at Neighbourhood Forums**

No Items.

## **30. Responses from the Council, the Executive to Committees of the Council to Reports of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

No Items.

## **31. Consideration of Request for Scrutiny Reviews Referred Via the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

No Items.

## **32. Consideration of Progress Reports/Budget and Policy Framework Documents**

No Items.

## **33. The Role of Tees Valley Regeneration (TVR) *(Project Director TVR)***

The Chairman introduced Ms Sarah Robson, Project Director from the Tees Valley Regeneration Company who went on to give a detailed presentation outlining the Company's:

- Background
- Structure, rational and toolkit
- Approach to projects
- Core projects (North Shore, Stockton/Middlehaven, Middlesbrough/Durham Tees Valley Airport/Central Park, Darlington/Victoria Harbour, Hartlepool)
- Quantum of delivery
- Regeneration outputs
- Working approach

During the course of the presentation particular attention was drawn to the work being undertaken in relation to the Victoria Harbour project and following consideration of the information provided the following issues were discussed:-

**i) The amount of office and retail space included in the Victoria Harbour plan.** In response to concerns regarding the amount of office and retail space proposed as part of the project Members were advised that commercial and retail assessments had shown that a market existed. It was also highlighted that the Victoria Harbour plan was a 20-year project and that the intention was to release only 30,000 sq. ft. of office space per year to ensure that the market was not flooded. Similarly the intention was to release retail space over the duration of the project with convenience, specialty and bulky goods retail to be provided. The majority of retail was to take the form of bulky goods retail.

Continued concern was expressed regarding the affect of additional retail facilities, in particular specialty retail, on existing shops. Members were assured that there would be sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed additional retail units the majority of which were to be for the sale of bulky goods. If the retail assessment had not shown this to be the case planning permission for the proposals would not have been obtained.

**ii) Concern was expressed regarding proposals for the construction of a footbridge as part of the Victoria Harbour plan and implications on boat movement in and out of the harbour.** Members were assured that the footbridge was to be moveable to allow access into and out of the harbour and that cycle access would also be allowed across it.

**iii) How Victoria Harbour rated against other schemes.** Members were advised that funding for the Victoria Harbour scheme was to come from One NorthEast (ONE) and English Partnerships, with the main source being the private sector. In relation to private funding Members were assured that any change of ownership of the harbour would not change the funding arrangements or progression of the scheme.

**iv) How sites and partnerships were chosen.** It was explained that sites were chosen following approaches from Local Authority's to Tees Valley Regeneration. It was confirmed that any contract with a developer would contain a clause requiring the use of local labour and that efforts were being made to see how beyond that long term local resident involvement could be encouraged. Members were please to hear that it would be possible at some point to insist on the employment of Hartlepoons young people.

**v) The jobs created by the Victoria Harbour scheme.** It was confirmed that the figure given for jobs to be created (2000) was a

very cautious figure and that it was anticipated that the final figure would be in excess of this. The majority of these posts were to be created in offices with a smaller number of retail posts.

**vi) Emphasis was placed upon the quality of the Victoria Harbour scheme and the need for the future to look at the bigger picture and continue to provide facilities to attract people to Hartlepool who would not have visited in the past.**

**vii) As part of the Forums inquiry related to partnership working clarification was sought regarding the arrangements of the TVR Board.** Members were assured that the Board was correctly constituted, with all the legal, ethical and financial frameworks in place. The Board was chaired by and the majority of its members were from the private sector, in line with guidance on the establishment of Urban Regeneration Companies. The TVR has three shareholders; English Partnerships, ONE Northeast and Stockton Borough Council acting as legal representative on behalf of the five Tees Valley local authorities.

When asked how Hartlepool's representative on the Board felt about their involvement the Chief Executive indicated that his role as a Board Member was to support the regeneration of the Tees Valley as a whole. Attention was, however, also drawn to the work being focused on Hartlepool i.e. through the Victoria Harbour Partnership Board. It was felt that the system worked well.

Following completion of discussions the Chairman thanked Sarah Robson for her informative presentation and indicated that it had been very useful in demonstrating to the Forum how Hartlepool was moving ahead.

### **Decision**

The presentation was noted.

## **34. The Role of Government Officer in Local Area Agreements (LAA's) *(Scrutiny Support Officer)***

The Scrutiny Support Officer outlined the background to the Government Office's (GO) role in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) process. Members were advised that an invitation to attend today's meeting was declined by Members of the regional GO as they were in the process of co-ordinating the next phase of LAA's. A copy of the Deputy Prime Ministers LAA Guidance was, however, provided to assist the Forum. Within this it was clarified that the role of the GO

was to:

- Represent the Government in LAA discussions and that GO's would already have had discussions with those areas selected to take part in the second phase of LAA's.
- Be responsible for performance management and monitoring, including financial monitoring of agreements when signed.
- Feed back as necessary to Central Departments.
- Provide support to local areas during the lifetime of the agreement.

It was also noted that Local Authority's (LA) and GO's had a unique role in LAA's, with the LA acting as the overall accountable body and the GO as the lead for negotiations on behalf of the Government. Consequently the GO was to act as a 'go between' for localities and central government in the LAA process with a role to play in ensuring that performance information was shared in a co-ordinated way.

Following consideration of the report the Chief Executive acknowledged that the GO was being placed in a difficult position situation. There was, however, an issue in that rather than dealing with each partnership in its own right a process was being adopted whereby all partnerships were being dealt with in the same way. Concern was expressed regarding this approach and the GO advised that for LAA's to work there needed to be flexibility in how each Partnership was dealt with.

During the course of discussions the Chairman indicated that she wished her disappointment be recorded in relation to the absence of a GO representative and the lack of commitment this reflected. It was brought to the Forums attention that the attendance of GO representatives was very difficult to obtain and that the Forum should not see this as a slight.

### **Decision**

The report was noted.

## **35. The Role of the Local Authority in Local Area Agreements** *(Director of Regeneration)*

To assist the Forum in its understanding of the Local Authority's role in LAA's the Chief Executive provided a summary of the background, process and timetable for LAA's. Details were also provided of the following key points from the Hartlepool draft LAA:-

- **What an LAA was.**

- A 3-year agreement between Central Government, the Council and its delivery partners.
  - Identifies national and local outcomes to be achieved and performance indicators and targets to measure progress.
  - Identifies freedoms and flexibility's agreed with Government to help the delivery of outcomes.
  - Identifies existing (but no new money) funding to be used to achieve LAA outcomes.
  - Includes a reward element, where if certain LAA targets were reached after 3 years, partners would receive up to £1.05m.
- **The Governments stated aims for LAA's.**
- Improve co-ordination between central government, local authority's and their partners, working through the LSP's.
  - Focus on a range of agreed outcomes which all delivery partners agree to work towards achieving through the LSP.
  - Simplify the number of additional funding streams from central government going into an area.
  - Help devolve decision making, moving away from a 'Whitehall knows best' philosophy and reduce bureaucracy.
  - Allow efficiency gains and a greater proportion of public servants to be directly involved in front line delivery in every region of the country.
- **Hartlepoons vision for LAA's**
- To maximise the devolution of funding, decision making and priority setting to a locality level.
  - Ambition for public funding to be allocated, aligned and governed for Hartlepool through a 'Locality Plus' approach.
  - Resources allocated directly to the locality of Hartlepool with funding levels determined for at least three years.
  - Priorities for the use of this funding should be determined at the locality level within national and regional frameworks.
- **Freedoms and flexibility's** (as outlined in the presentation)
- **Governance proposals** (as outlined in the presentation)
- **Hartlepoons Draft Guidance Model** (as outlined in the presentation)
- **The outcomes framework**
- LAA's were made up of outcomes, indicators and targets aims at the delivery of a better quality of life for people.



- Based on existing Community Strategy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.
- Developed by themed partnerships.
- Mixture of mandatory national and locally determined outcomes (35 outcomes identified)
- Must include LPSA II targets.
- Outcomes must be relevant to Council and were to be included in the Corporate Plan, subject to the approval of full Council.

During the course of the presentation, elements of which were given by the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Director of Regeneration and Planning and Head of Community Strategy, the following issues were discussed in detail:-

**i) The Regional Assembly referendum.** Attention was drawn to the 'No' vote received at the recent referendum. It was noted that despite this vote the Government appeared to be achieving its goal for regional decision making with 17 departments soon to be represented at a regional level. Concern was expressed that the only real difference appeared to be that with this model there was no democratic overview at a regional level with decisions being made by Civil Servants. Concerns were reiterated regarding a lack of accountability.

**ii) The creation of a City Region.** It was noted that the question being asked by government appeared to be whether there should be a City Region and whether one town should be given primacy over the others. Concern was expressed at the implications of Middlesbrough becoming the administrative centre of the Tees Valley and the affect on Hartlepool of being placed on the periphery. Attention was drawn to an up and coming Government Road Show on this matter as part of which the views of towns and cities 125,000 in population were to be sought. Confusion was, however, expressed that some of the areas on the proposed list for involvement in the Road Show had populations under 125,000.

Members were advised that during the last two or three years Hartlepool and other Tees Valley Councils had fought hard to ensure that formal Government documents such as the Northern Way, Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy identify the Tees valley as consisting of five towns/local authorities. Each of which worked in partnership on an equal basis and it was recognised that a collective agreement between the Tees Valley Authorities was needed to continue this approach. It was recognised that an agreement of this kind would be difficult to obtain and that should this not be possible the likely outcome would be that a City Region, 'governed' by

Stockton/Middlesbrough would be imposed.

**iii) The implications of working through the LAA.** Members were advised that with a move to an LAA the LSP would take responsibility for a lot of co-ordination and commissioning work in relation to the activities of Council, the PCT, Police, Hartlepool College of Further Education and the LSC. The LSP seemed to be the main way through which the Government wished to operate at this level and that the real issue was to be how this could be done and how it would work. Members were advised that during discussions with the Minister concerns were expressed that the LSP was not set up to provide governance for the area and that this could not be left to each area to sort out, something needed to be done on a national level.

**iv) How would Councils work further down the road?** It was confirmed that the proposal was for the majority of the Council's commissioning and front office services to continue to be provided internally. On the other hand the Government believed that Council's should pursue their majority of the provision of services, including back office services, on an external/partnership basis. In relation to the provision of back office services attention was, however, drawn to problems experienced by other Local Authorities with their partners and it was felt that these arrangements did not work.

**v) The content of Hartlepool's LAA.** It was noted that there was nothing new in Hartlepool's LAA and that it was based upon the outcomes and performance measures agreed through the Hartlepool Partnership and Council over the last 3 years, with outcomes and measures shuffled to fit in with the LAA criteria.

**vi) Hartlepool's vision of its LAA.** Emphasis was placed upon the direction given to officers during the formulation of the LAA and the suggestion that Hartlepool needed to be bold and challenging. Officers felt that this had been achieved and indicated that very little response had been received to their suggestion and questions as to what was needed and which areas could be dealt with differently. It was felt that openness was a real issue.

**vii) Freedom and flexibility's.** Although LAA promised to provide freedom and flexibilities concern was expressed that they had never materialised when promised in the past. It was felt that even as an excellent authority Hartlepool was subject to the same performance management and bureaucracy issues as other poorer performing authorities. This was unfair and Hartlepool should be given greater flexibility. This was to be pursued.

**viii) Draft LAA Outcomes.** To further assist the Forum the Head of Community Strategy provided details of Hartlepool's draft LAA outcomes, which were grouped into seven themes based on the Community and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies. It was noted that the inclusion of a number of outcomes was compulsory in light of the NRF funding received to meet them and details provided of outcomes from both national and local work. Attention was also drawn to the need for each outcome to have a performance indicator placed against it and the inclusion of LPSA II targets the achievement of which would result in receipt of a reward grant. It was noted that extra effort was to be made to achieve these indicators and that to enable flexibility in the future there was no intention to set outcomes in stone at this time.

Following consideration of the presentation, and conclusion of discussions, attention was drawn to a fundamental question raised with the Minister by the Leader of Wigan Council. Why when there is a statutory requirement for Councils to be community leaders are LPS's needed. No response was received from the Minister!

### **Decision**

- i) The content of the presentations was noted and officers thanked for their participation.
- ii) Attention was drawn to concern regarding the absence of a democratic overview at a regional level as part of the LAA process.

## **36. The Role of Voluntary/Community Sector (VCS) in Hartlepool's Local Area Agreements** *(Community Network)*

The Head of the Community Network presented a report outlining the role and views of the VCS in relation to Hartlepool's LAA process. Contained within the report was a summary of the ACS's role in Hartlepool and a number of recommendations for the process in relation to:

- Community Cohesion
- Engagement
- The Compact
- Engaging with difficult to reach groups
- The voluntary/community sector infrastructure
- The Comprehensive performance assessment
- Local Public Service Agreements
- Contracting

- Involvement in LAA decision making
- Key challenges facing the Hartlepool voluntary/community sectors

With reference to the previous presentation the Head of the Community Network found it interesting to hear of the Local Authority's frustration with the Government Officer and highlighted that the same frustrations were experienced by the voluntary sector in relation to Local Government. Following consideration of the report Members referred back to the information provided by the Head of Community Strategy in relation to Hartlepool's draft outcomes. Particular attention was drawn to:-

i) **Homelessness issues.** Officers indicated that one of the reasons for the inclusion of this issue, as one of the chosen outcomes, was recognition of it as a real problem that had not always been given the priority it deserves. In relation to exactly what was to be done to achieve the proposed target it was confirmed that it was not known in detail at this time, however, the aim was to break the homelessness cycle.

ii) **Strengthening Communities.** Member queries how with all of the financial cuts being made could the strengthening communities performance indicators be reached. Attention was drawn to one of the performance indicators relating to the monitoring of the Community Network and likely comments as to why it was only being maintained rather than progressed. Issues around the affect of government cuts on the achievement of this and other indicators were to be raised with the relevant government department and emphasis was placed upon the benefits of LAA's in providing the opportunity to raise funding and other issues with government.

In relation to the importance of strengthening communities a view was expressed that it should be included as part of every theme. Officers indicated that the decision to include strengthening communities as a theme in its own right had been taken in recognition of its value to all. As a compromise Members suggested that strengthening communities should continue to be identified, as a theme in its own right and in addition to this also be included as an element of each of the other themes.

iii) **As a follow on from concerns expressed during the previous presentation regarding the absence of a democratic overview at a regional level concern was also expressed that the LSP/LAA's were one step further removed from public accountability.** It was felt that even though the LSP would have no decision making powers it would be involved in the setting of a strategic direction for the future

and Members were concerned regarding the absence of Councilor and resident involvement in this process.

In light of Members concerns officers indicated that efforts were being made to ensure that there was Executive and Neighbourhood Consultative Forum (Forum Chairs) involvement in the LSP Boards. It was also noted that whilst the situation was not perfect this process would provide the opportunity for continued local democratic involvement, other routes might not even provide this.

Following consideration of Members views the Chairman sought the views of the Head of the Community Network who went on to comment on the following:

- Whilst the Head of the Community Network acknowledged that there was great pressure on local authority's to provide the same with less resources it was felt that there were organisations out there that could help with the provision of services and were not being given the opportunity to.
- Concern was expressed that funding was often allocated to organisations that already had core funding. A request was made that when the allocation of funding was considered in the future consideration be given to the allocation of resources to organisations without core funding. It was suggested that this needed to be monitored.
- It was hoped that the system could be streamlined.

Prior to closing the meeting the Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance and hoped that today's meeting had provided Members with the opportunity to understand how LAA's and LSP's were to work.

### **Decision**

- i) The content of the presentations was noted and officers thanked for their participation.
- ii) Concerns were reiterated regarding the absence of a democratic overview at a regional level and further concern expressed that the LSP/LAA's were one step further removed from public accountability.

PAMELA HARGREAVES

CHAIRMAN

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES**  
**SCRUTINY FORUM**  
**3rd February 2006**



**Report of:** Head of Community Strategy

**Subject:** HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To provide background information on the work of the Hartlepool Partnership. In line with the investigation's project plan, the report provides information on:

- the purpose of the Hartlepool Partnership;
- the Governance arrangement in terms of Council involvement;
- the roles and responsibilities of elected members and officers involved in the partnership;
- how the Hartlepool Partnership's standing compares to those elsewhere in the country.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Hartlepool Partnership is the town's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and brings together all of the town's partnerships delivering local services. It has agreed a "grand plan" which is called the Hartlepool Community Strategy. Through the Community Strategy process the Partnership looks at what local services and developments are needed, the best way of providing them and involving people further in the way services are delivered.

2.2 The Community Strategy sets out the vision that:

*Hartlepool will be a prosperous, caring, confident and outward looking community, in an attractive environment, realising its potential.*

*To achieve this we need to continue the regeneration of Hartlepool.*

*We will therefore promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the town, taking into account the needs of future generations.*

- 2.3 The Partnership operates through a Board and a series of Theme Partnerships. Both elected members and officers from Hartlepool Borough Council are members of the Partnership Board.
- 2.4 The Partnership is subject to regular audit and assessment from Government Office and the Audit Commission. In its most recent assessment, the Partnership was one of only 3 Partnerships in the North East given the top rating, Green, by the Government Office in the Summer 2005 assessment.

### **3. THE PURPOSE OF THE HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP**

- 3.1 The Hartlepool Partnership has agreed terms of reference that cover its structure, remit, membership and operation. The purpose of the Hartlepool Partnership as a whole is to realise the Community Strategy Vision and:
- Promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Hartlepool and sustainable development through overseeing the Community Strategy process. setting strategic aims and helping to discharging the well-being duty.
  - Provide multi sector strategic leadership and operate as the “local strategic partnership” for Hartlepool developing consensus and commitment and where possible joint decision making.
  - Strengthen joint partnership working to continuously improve services
  - Focus service delivery on the needs and aspirations of local people by develop new ways of involving local people in how services are provided.
  - Encourage people to be constructively involved in their communities.
  - Oversee neighbourhood renewal and seek to renew deprived areas and develop and deliver a local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy as part of the Community Strategy.
  - Ensure local sustainable development and contribute to the regional sustainable development agenda.
  - Bring together and rationalise plans, partnerships and initiatives
  - Collaborate with regional and sub regional partners and lobby in Hartlepool’s interest.
  - Align performance management systems, criteria and processes.
  - Inclusive and representative with effective community engagement and consultation – promotion.
  - Develop strategies to improve the skills and knowledge of partners including relating to regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.

#### **4 THE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- 4.1 In Hartlepool it is recognised that the future role of LSPs is central to the Government's vision for the future of local decision-making, in particular to developing a strong leadership role for local authorities. The LSP will continue to effectively identify and deliver against the priorities for joint action in an increasingly accountable way.
- 4.2 Hartlepool Partnership will become increasingly a commissioning LSP, making decisions, commissioning action and actively co-ordinating the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and targets including the Neighbourhood Renewal floor targets. The shift from focusing on process to the delivery of outcomes through the embedding of the LSP performance management framework is reinforced by the developing Local Area Agreement (LAA) with its focus on outcomes.
- 4.3 It is recognised that there needs to be increasingly effective, transparent and accountable governance and scrutiny arrangements for the LSP to enable partners to hold each other to account and local people to hold the partnership to account.

#### **5. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELECTED MEMBERS AND OFFICERS INVOLVED IN THE PARTNERSHIP**

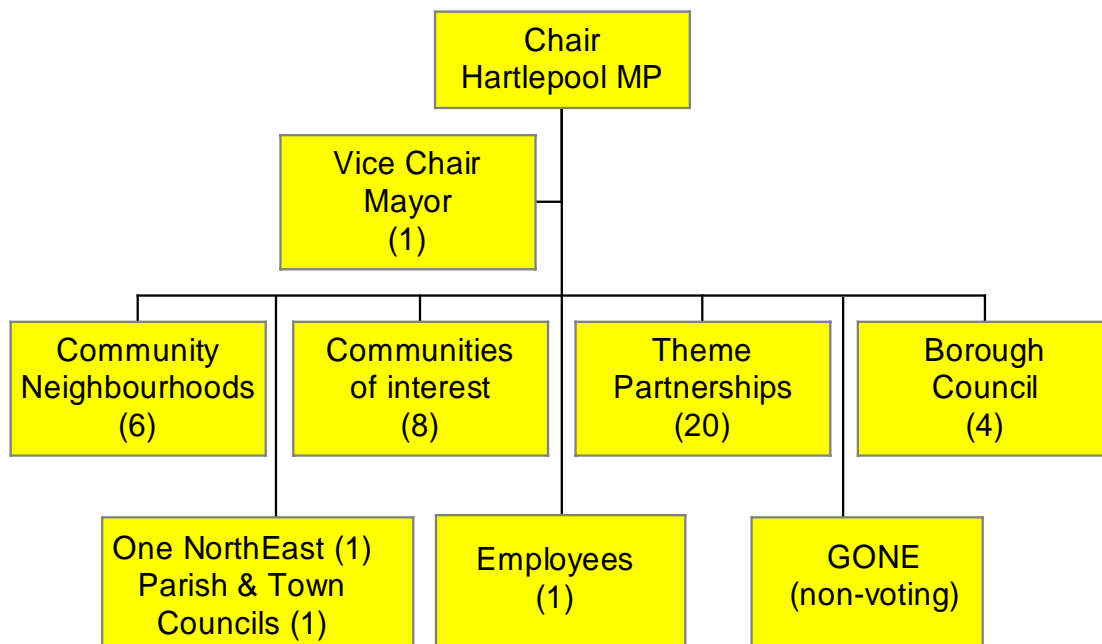
- 5.1 All members of the Partnership should be committed to applying the principles established in the Hartlepool Community Strategy:

Principles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Community Involvement</li> <li>• Co-ordination</li> <li>• Equality &amp; Social Inclusion</li> <li>• Integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise Opportunity</li> <li>• Maximise Resources</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Quality Services &amp; Continuous Improvement</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>

- 5.2 The general role of all members of the Partnership will be to take a town-wide perspective and to develop consensus in the best interests of the town as a whole. Members will bring their own perspectives and also represent their own organisation, interest group or area, and will be recognised for their valuable contribution bringing ideas, knowledge and expertise to the process.
- 5.3 The Hartlepool Partnership Board is made up of 42 people. It is chaired by the town's MP Iain Wright. Government Office for the North East attend in a non-voting capacity. The current structure is shown below:



### The Hartlepool Partnership Board 42+Chair+Government Office for the North East



5.4 Current Elected Member involvement in the Partnership Board can be summarised:

- Mayor
- Chair of North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum
- Chair of Central Neighbourhood Consultative Forum
- Chair of South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum
- 2 elected members identified by the Mayor from any Executive or from the Council
- the Leader of the largest political group not holding the mayoralty

5.5 Current Officer involvement in the Partnership Board can be summarised:

- Chief Executive
- The Director of Children's Services
- The Head of Community Safety and Prevention

5.6 In addition to Officer membership of the Hartlepool Partnership Board, Officers are involved with the Partnership as members of the Hartlepool Partnership Support Team. A Chief Officer level manager and a small team are responsible for the review, monitoring and co-ordination of implementation of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and support the LSP board. Their role involves planning, co-ordinating action, performance management, programme and project appraisal and co-ordination, analytical capacity and communication. The capacity of this team will be reviewed.

## 6. PERFORMANCE OF THE HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP

- 6.1 The Hartlepool Partnership is one of only 3 Partnerships in the North East with the top, Green, rating. In its recent assessment (July 2005) Government Office for the North East highlighted a number of strengths:

*Key players in the LSP are aware of and do understand how the Performance Management Framework is used as part of day-to-day action to drive improved delivery. Quarterly performance meeting held with Chair of LSP and the chairs of each theme partnership ensure local strategies are monitored & evaluated.*

*The Partnership is well run in terms of financial management, support services, admin, people and asset management. Well balanced area/thematic programme together with specific block funds. Each theme partnership identifies the use of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund within the Performance Management Framework.*

*The NRF budgets are rigorously reviewed. Within 2% of NRF spend 2004-2005.*

*The LSP has clearly built on their Improvement Plan from last year all issues have been addressed and if required further action is outlined. The partnership, as a whole, has demonstrated that it has provided clear plausibility between outcomes and actions being implemented. Partner organisations have been identified and are accountable for delivery of agreed actions.*

- 6.2 Issues to be addressed focused on forward strategies:

*Given that the LSP is entering into the Local Area Agreement (LAA) as a Single Pot, the LSP should work in partnership with Government Office for the North East and Central Government to bring together Performance Management arrangements.*

*The challenge ahead is to maintain and mainstream successful work, whilst continuing to drive forward with innovative approaches to new opportunities most obviously the LAA.*

## 7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That members consider the report