

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

17 March 2008

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

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Pam Hargreaves (Deputy Mayor),

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

Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),

Robbie Payne (Finance & Efficiency Portfolio Holder),

Peter Jackson (Neighbourhoods & Communities Portfolio Holder),

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

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Officer
Mike Blair, Transport and Traffic Manager
Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Alaistair Rae, Head of Public Relations
John Robinson, Children's Services
Alexia Gillen, Children's Services
Fiona Riley, Regeneration Officer
Amy Waters, Planning Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:

Councillor Jane Shaw (Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee) and Councillor Jonathan Brash (Single Status Working Group representative)

Trade Union Representatives: Edwin Jeffries, Malcolm Sullivan

243. Apologies for Absence

None

244. Declarations of interest by members

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond and Councillors Pamela Hargreaves, Robbie Payne and Victor Tumilty declared personal and non-prejudicial interests in minute numbers 252 and 254.

245. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2008

Confirmed. The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder reported that information that had been requested approximately four weeks ago regarding the Landlord Licensing Scheme had not been provided. The Mayor agreed to follow-up this outstanding information.

246. Formal Response to the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme *(Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response in relation to the consultation process for the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee presented the Committee's formal response which took into account the views shared at the public meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 6 March 2008 together with additional information in support of maintaining the following three branches, details of which were outlined in a supplementary report, a copy of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting:-

Raby Estate Post Office
Elwick Road Post Office
Hart Village Post Office

Should the proposed closures go ahead, Cabinet was advised that many people would experience real genuine hardship as a result of the closures.

Members considered the content of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's response and were of the view that the Council should be exploring ways to retain local post offices. Concerns were expressed regarding the impact the closures would have on the community. In addition, it was pointed out that arrangements should be made to identify how the Council could assist

the community in the event of closure.

Decision

That a formal response on behalf of the Council be submitted to Post Office Limited by 26 March 2008 in consultation with the Mayor.

247. Highway Policy and Procedures *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision Test (ii) applies

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Highway Maintenance Policy and procedural documents which are required by national guidance to demonstrate that policies, priorities and programmes are explicit, transparent and inclusive.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder presented the report which provided background information on the national policies necessitating the development of the documents. Details of how the documents had been developed to date was outlined in the report. In order that the local highway standards remained in harmony with user expectations throughout the Tees Valley region, it was decided that the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and other supporting documents would be produced in collaboration with the other Tees Valley authorities.

Acceptance of the recommendation in this report would allow officers to carry out the Highway Authority duties within the minimum requirements of the national guidelines and hence protect the Authority's statutory defence in law against 3rd party claims for injury or loss. The financial implications together with the reasons for recommendation were provided as detailed in the report.

Concerns were expressed with regard to the deteriorating road conditions within the town and the lack of available funding to address this. Discussion ensued in relation to the cost of street lighting during the hours of darkness. It was suggested that the feasibility of introducing motion sensitive sensors be explored as part of the investigation.

Decision

- (i) That the principles contained within the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and the suite of supporting documents including Appendix B, be endorsed.
- (ii) That the continued development of these documents in collaboration with other Tees Valley authorities, be agreed.
- (iii) That a further report outlining options on Service Standards, be provided.
- (iv) That the feasibility of introducing motion sensitive sensors, be explored.

248. Affordable Housing DPD Issues and Options Discussion Paper – For Consultation *(Director of Regeneration and Planning)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To seek approval of, for consultation purposes, the issues and options paper, comprising of the first public stage in the preparation of the Hartlepool Affordable Housing Development Plan Document.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that the purpose of the Hartlepool Affordable Housing Development Plan Document (DPD) was to provide clarity and detail about the amount and type of affordable housing provision that would be required on new housing developments in Hartlepool. The recent scrutiny investigation into the provision of good quality rented affordable accommodation provided a series of recommendations that had been taken into account in the formulation of key policy options. Attached at Appendix 1 was an issues and options paper that had been prepared to form the basis of this consultation, to stimulate debate and seek the views of the community and other stakeholders on how and where affordable housing should be provided and what type of affordable housing was required. An initial sustainability appraisal report was being prepared to evaluate the effects of the objectives and options suggested in the issues and options paper, details of which were included in the report.

The issues and options paper and associated initial sustainability appraisal report would be made available for consultation purposes for a period of three months until the end of May 2008. Comments received would then be considered. At the end of July 2008, representation would be invited on the preferred options agreed by Cabinet for a statutory period of 6 weeks.

The Mayor highlighted the need for the consultation documents to be produced in an understandable and public friendly format.

Decision

That the Issues and Options Paper for Affordable Housing DPD for consultation purposes, be approved subject to minor editing and updating being agreed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

249. The Parenting Challenge Parent Support Strategy (Director of Children's Services)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet the Strategy for Parenting Support, attached at Appendix 1.

This report will inform Cabinet of recent developments to increase the active support for parents across the Borough. The strategy presents a vision statement and a set of principles that have been developed by parents in Hartlepool. Cabinet is being asked to approve this vision and encourage all agencies working with parents to adopt the principles to ensure parents are central to the development of support services for families.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children's Services Portfolio Holder presented the report which contained background information on the creation and development of a town-wide parent support strategy. The report included details of ongoing work to date and highlighted the consultation processes undertaken with key stakeholders and the subsequent development of the vision and key principles. The report also included an audit of support for parenting support in Hartlepool. Two parents in support of the strategy were in attendance at the meeting.

Cabinet were requested to consider the vision statements contained within the report and endorse them. It was envisaged that all agencies working with parents in Hartlepool, across all sectors of provision, would be asked to formally subscribe to making these vision statements a reality and the political support of Cabinet was required to enable the future cooperation of key stakeholders.

The vision contained within the strategy had been created by parents who had received services in Hartlepool; this in itself was very powerful, however it was important that Cabinet endorsed these vision statements as this would provide a local mandate to encourage agencies working with parents to adopt and embed these vision statements in their day to day involvement with parents and their families. Members were referred to Appendix 2 of the report in relation to the gaps in provision identified in visioning day with parents in 2007 in which on-call parent support 24 hours per day was identified.

Members discussed the strategy and the need to identify where schools fitted in to developing the strategy, particularly primary schools was highlighted. It was considered that Parenting Champions in schools should be introduced and publicised.

Decision

- (i) That the vision statements and principles in this strategy be endorsed and that political support and backing required to implement them be provided.
- (ii) That this political endorsement be shared with all agencies who work with parents in Hartlepool and they be asked to adopt the vision and principles in the delivery of their services.

250. Cabinet Contingency Fund *(The Mayor)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To propose a further scheme to utilise the Cabinet Contingency Fund in 2007/2008.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

Attached as an appendix to the report was a proposal for expenditure from the Cabinet Contingency Fund. There was sufficient remaining in the Contingency Fund to cover the proposal. The scheme proposed was for the Jutland Road Playground scheme and that £5,000 be made available as part of the package of funding being drawn together to fund the scheme. £28,000 had already been allocated to the project from planning gain and Section 106 funding and £10,000 from the South Neighbourhood Forum Minor Works Budget, £10,000 from Housing Hartlepool and £5,000 from the South Joint Action Group. Full details of the proposal were set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

Decision

That the sum of £5,000 be allocated from the Cabinet Contingency Fund towards the above scheme.

251. The Hartlepool Compact Review (Progress Report) *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To update on progress on revising the Hartlepool compact and to outline the next steps proposed in taking this work forward.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor provided a summary of the consultation to date, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report. An amended version of the first draft of the Compact which incorporated a number of straightforward improvements proposed was also attached at Appendix 2 to the report. Details of the proposals for the next stages in the development of a final document were outlined.

Decision

That the report, be noted.

252. Pay and Grading Structure and Single Status Agreement *(Corporate Management Team)*

Type of decision

Key

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the preferred pay and grading structure agreed by Cabinet late last year, the draft Single Status Agreement and associated matters. To note the consultation arrangements, decision making process and future timetable.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that the introduction of the pay and grading structure and single status agreement had been a lengthy process and thanked all those involved in the process, particularly the Single Status Working Group, trade unions and officers from Human Resources for their valued input and work undertaken in reaching this stage of the process.

The Chief Personnel Officer provided a brief background and an introduction to Single Status and the proposed arrangements for Cabinet to consider as set out in the report.

The report provided detailed background information for Cabinet's consideration in conjunction with the exempt report later on the agenda. The report included the preferred pay and grading structure, further details of which were outlined in the confidential report, key issues relating to the draft single status agreement, consultation that that been undertaken, the role of ACAS and the decision making process and future timetable.

It was envisaged that employees would be provided with a briefing and supplementary information about the preferred pay and grading structure and the draft local single status agreement. Following the briefings it was envisaged that employees would receive personal letters with details of pay and grading week commencing 7 April 2008, as highlighted in the proposed timetable, attached at Appendix 1, with the exception of school employees which would be despatched week commencing 14 April due to the Easter half term break. Once employees had the personal impact information, the unions would be conducting a ballot of their members over a two week period.

Decision

That the report be noted.

253. Local Government Access to Information

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

Minute 254. – Para 4 (information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority).

254. Single Status Agreement *(Corporate Management Team)*

Type of decision

Key

Purpose of report

To purpose of the report is to endorse the preferred pay and grading structure option and the draft local Single Status Agreement so that information could be provided to employees.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The issues considered by Cabinet are set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

The decision is set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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