

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

30th June 2008

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. at the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Peter Jackson (Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Denise Ogden, Head of Neighbourhood Management
Mike Blair, Transportation and Traffic Manager
Jeff Mason, Head of Support Services
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

1. Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To agree the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan for 2008/09.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 detailed the actions, performance indicators and associated risk in achieving objectives planned to be carried out by the department. National and local performance indicators were identified within the Plan along with details of associated risks that could prevent the department from achieving its objectives and the management controls put in place to mitigate these risks. The plan would be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis. A copy of the Plan was attached as an appendix.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the amount of work which had clearly gone into the production of the report and thanked all those responsible. He was particularly impressed with the improvements in sickness absence, commenting that the target for 2008/9 was very ambitious.

Decision

That the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 be agreed.

2. Progress on Kerbside Recycling *(Head of Neighbourhood Management)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of actions taken to address concerns recently expressed by Elected Members at Council.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

At previous Portfolio meetings reports had been presented advising on actions to be undertaken following concerns expressed at the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on the performance of the kerbside recycling contractor. Various issues had been identified as areas for improvement, some to be carried out with immediate effect and others to be investigated and actioned during the financial year.

The Head of Neighbourhood Management advised that two meetings had recently been held with the contractor, Abitibi Bowater, to discuss the specific issues brought forward. Immediate disciplinary action had been taken against one employee following an incident of abusive language and details were given of further actions which had been taken. A comprehensive scoping paper had been prepared by officers in which consideration was given to the following:

- Kerbside
- Containers
- Recyclates collected
- Assisted collection
- Civic Buildings
- Schools
- On street recycling
- Bring centres
- Bulky waste
- Sheltered accommodation
- Bed sits and flats

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Head of Neighbourhood Management for an impressive investigation and report but advised he would still like the issue to be considered via the scrutiny process. He requested that officers draft an

appropriate letter to the Chair of Scrutiny-Co-ordinating Committee requesting that the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum undertake the investigation and that a copy of the scoping report be included. The Director of Neighbourhood Services estimated that a reasonable time scale for completion of such an investigation would be December 2008. The Head of Neighbourhood Management also referred to the recent restructure of the recycling rounds.

Decision

- i. That the report be noted
- ii. That the issue of recycling be referred to scrutiny.

3. Supported Bus Tenders 2008-2009 *(Head of Technical Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To advise on the extension of the current Supported Bus Contract for a period of one year and seek approval for minor alterations to two of the services contained therein.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Council provide financial support to a number of bus services including 'socially necessary' services which would not otherwise be provided on a commercial basis. The bulk of the supported bus contracts consisted of one large block tender, a group of contracts provided at a discounted price. The current block was due to end on 23rd August 2008. In July 2007 the Portfolio Holder approved the tendering results relating to supported bus service contracts for a period of one year with an option to extend for between one and three years. The contract was currently split between three operators with the largest element being held by Stagecoach. They had requested that alterations be made to services 822 and 980 as follows:

- 822 – departure time from Manor College of Technology adjusted to 5-8 minutes later its current time of 15:37
- 980 – Friday afternoon service 5:35 run to be removed from contract

Financial increases could be met through existing budgets for supported buses for the 2008-09 financial year as the budget falls between two financial years. However the Traffic and Transportation Manager advised that while increases had already been agreed between two of the operators the third, Veolia, were still taking part in the negotiation process. The increase they had

requested would take the process over the budget for supported buses by an approximate of £5,000. However this would not be a significant budget pressure and it was felt more important to ensure schoolchildren had transportation to school. The Portfolio Holder commented that the increase Veolia had requested might be justified as they may have originally quoted a low amount to be given the round. With reference to the removal of the service 980 run the Portfolio Holder asked that aside from the usual publicity on bus shelters and vehicles drivers be asked to advise patrons of the forthcoming removal.

Decision

- i. That the extension of the current contract for the Supported Bus Services for a period of one year be noted
- ii. That the alterations to services 822 and 980 be approved

4. Dolomite Beach – Dog Exclusion Order *(Head of Neighbourhood Management)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

- i. To inform the Portfolio Holder of the outcome of further public consultations carried out in relation to the 'Dogs Exclusion Order' which applies to the Dolomite Beach on the Headland.
- ii. To make a minor amendment to the Dog Control Orders approved at a meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder on 22nd April 2008.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

In April 2008 the Portfolio Holder approved the proposed Dog Control Orders but requested that officers arrange a meeting between residents and members of the Headland Town Council regarding the issue of banning dogs from the Dolomite Beach.

A meeting was subsequently arranged by the Headland Parish Council on 27th May 2008 which was poorly attended by representatives of both parties, due it was felt to a lack of publicity. However a long debate ensued and while little progress was made it was shown that attendees were marginally in favour of the ban. Since this meeting the Neighbourhood Action Manager had received strong representation from members of the public against any exclusion of dogs on the Dolomite Beach. Given the low turn-out at the meeting it was felt this could not be used as a strong consensus of local feeling and it was therefore proposed that the Dolomite Beach be removed from the Dogs

Exclusion Order for one year. During that time an enforcement campaign would be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Action Team. A review and assessment would then be carried out and a report prepared for the Portfolio Holder.

The Portfolio Holder commented that he was disappointed with the meeting publicity carried out by the Headland Parish Council and resultant low turn-out.

Decision

That the Dolomite Beach be removed from the Dog Exclusion Order schedule and that the situation be reviewed in one year when a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate for dogs to exercised on the Dolomite Beach

5. Local Safety Schemes *(Head of Technical Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To report the list of potential safety schemes following a review of updated road casualty data.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Council is required to demonstrate to the Department for Transport that road safety schemes are focused primarily on casualty reduction, in order to give the best possible opportunity of meeting the 2010 casualty targets. Schemes are prioritised primarily on the basis of the number of accidents and level of speeding recorded during surveys using a point scoring system based on the number of reported accidents and their severity... Additional sites are assessed regularly and any problem sites are reported to the Portfolio Holder seeking approval to be added to the list.

An updated safety scheme list was presented to the Portfolio Holder. The top two schemes were A689 West of Sapper's Corner and Catcote Road (Elwick Road-Brierton Lane). Work on Catcote Road was already in progress while consideration was being given to the installation of signage on the A689. Due to the fatal accident involving a cyclist in the area officers would prefer to be able to install a lengthy cycleway but did not have the budget to do so. Any schemes would be funded through the Local Transport Plan and detailed proposals would be submitted to the Portfolio Holder for approval.

Decision

- i. That the updated safety scheme list be approved
- ii. That schemes be developed for the top two locations on the list with detailed proposals to be reported to a future meeting.

6. Westbourne Road – Traffic Regulation Order (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To report two objections to the introduction of two small sections of double yellow lines around a junction in Westbourne Road.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The proposal was devised because the residents of 42-48 Westbourne Road were having great difficulty getting in and out of the road leading to their properties. Vehicles park very close to the junction and sometimes on the radii, causing visibility problems for motorists leaving the side road. The proposed lines had been kept to a minimum to prevent loss of parking in Westbourne Road while improving visibility and road safety at the junction. It was anticipated that no parking spaces would be lost. Funding would come from the Traffic Management budget.

Following several objections it had been determined that some of the residents were unsure of the exact extent of the lines. Therefore a letter and plan were sent to the objectors indicating the proposed lines and asking if they still wished to object. As a result two people had requested that their objections still be considered.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that he understood residents were unhappy at the prospect of losing two parking spaces but as they should not be parking in that area anyway this was immaterial. The Director of Neighbourhood Services felt there was plenty of parking provision elsewhere on Westbourne Road.

Decision

That the Traffic Regulation Order outlined in the report be noted.

7. Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 – Quarter 4 Monitoring Report *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 in the final quarter of the year.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the progress against the actions contained in the Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 and the progress for key performance indicators for the period up to 31 March 2008. Key departmental achievements during 2007/8 were also highlighted.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the department's failure to achieve performance indicator targets in relation to the Landlord Registration Scheme. He felt that these targets should be reassessed in light of the knowledge officers now had to make them achievable. He requested that his thanks be passed on to all in the Department for their hard work.

Decision

That the progress against actions and indicators be noted.

8. Election of Resident Representatives *(Head of Neighbourhood Management)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of the recent resident representative elections.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Details were given of the results of the recent elections for resident representative for the North, Central and South Neighbourhood areas. The Head of Neighbourhood Management advised the Portfolio Holder on the appointment of Vice-Chairs for the three Forums and delegation of Resident

Representatives onto scrutiny forums, in particular Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum. Due to current electoral rules any Resident Representative vacancies needed to be advertised at each forum. In addition the need for nominees to have 10 signatures from members of the public on the electoral roll had led to an increase in officer workload which could not be lessened. The Portfolio Holder commented that he was disappointed at the number of vacancies and general apathy of the residents. The Head of Neighbourhood Management advised that a review of the Neighbourhood Forums was currently ongoing and a meeting with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs would take place the following week.

Decision

That the report be noted.

P DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 2nd July 2008