

PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

14th November 2008

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Pamela Hargreaves (Performance Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Officer
Liz Crookston, Principal Strategy and Research Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

36. Viewpoint – Citizen's Panel Results *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of the 25th phase of Viewpoint, Hartlepool Borough Council's Citizen's Panel, that was distributed in April 2008.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Viewpoint is one of the ways that the Authority consults with and involves local people in the governance of Hartlepool. It is a statistically balanced panel of local people who receive questionnaires at regular intervals throughout the year, asking for their views on a variety of local issues facing the Council and Hartlepool as a whole.

Viewpoint's aim is to ensure that the Council listens to the community and involves local people in the Council's decision making. There are often important issues on which the Council needs to consult the local population and discover what the community's priorities are for the future.

Each phase of Viewpoint covers various topics and within this phase there were questions on:-

- Night time in Hartlepool town centre
- Crime and community safety – closed circuit television
- Crime and community safety – anti-social behaviour

The results had been reported back to the relevant departments within the council and back to Viewpoint members via the regular Viewpoint newsletter. A copy of the overall report had also been placed in the members' library, in all public libraries across the Borough for public access as well as the Council's website.

The key findings were as follows:

- Night time in Hartlepool town centre – rubbish or litter lying around and people using or dealing drugs were problems in the town centre due to night time activities
- Crime and community safety – closed circuit television – Cleveland Police and local businesses should contribute financially to CCTV cameras
- Crime and community safety – anti-social behaviour – overall anti-social behaviour is not a big problem in local areas and people from different backgrounds get on well together. Most people are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

The Principal Strategy and Research Officer confirmed that the findings had been forward to the police and Community Safety Division. The Portfolio Holder thanked officers for taking her previous comments on board regarding making the layout of the Viewpoint Newsletter more user friendly and commended them on the improved version.

Decision

That the results of the survey be noted.

37. Corporate Complaints – July to September 2008 (Assistant Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To report to the Portfolio Holder on corporate complaints performance for the second quarter of 2008/9.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report covered performance information on numbers of complaints,

timescales for investigation and outcomes of investigations for formal complaints dealt with in the second quarter of 2008/09. 38 formal complaints had been received in the quarter, with 84% of them responded to within authority deadlines. More than half of the complaints were upheld fully or in part.

The Principal Strategy and Research Officer advised that issues surrounding Falcon Road had led to an increase in complaints to Neighbourhood Services but this was expected to be temporary. Attention was also drawn to improvements in deadline responses.

Decision

That the report be noted.

38. Workforce Development and Workforce Planning – Half-Year Report 2008/09 *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To advise the Portfolio Holder of the progress made during the first six months of 2008/9 and planned future actions in 2008/9 in respect of the Workforce Development and Workforce Planning corporate activities.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

In April 2007 Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) launched its updated Workforce Development Strategy covering 2007-2012. This had four key objectives:

Develop and Promote Active, Visible and Effective Leadership
Continually Improve what we do
Develop the Skills of the Workforce
Effectively Use Resources and Invest in the Future

In November 2007 the Local Government Association (LGA), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and Local Government Employers (LGE) produced the Local Government Workforce Strategy 2007 “Local Government, the place to be, the place to work”. This set out five strategic priorities and information was given within the report as to which pre-existing local plans/strategies address these national objectives

Detailed information was given as to the progress made in the first six months of 2007/08 on the four HBC Workforce Development Strategy objectives.

Details were also given of employee monitoring statistics with reference to corporate training.

Decision

That the report be noted.

39. Half Yearly Diversity Report (*Chief Personnel Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To report progress made in respect of planned actions for achieving Level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by March 2011, other achievements in the first six months of 2008/9 and planned diversity actions in the next six months.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

On 16th May 2008 the Portfolio Holder endorsed the 2007/8 Annual Race and Diversity Report. It was also reported that the Council had achieved Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and had set itself a target of achieving Level 4 by 31st March 2011. Details were given of the Council's progress in respect of the actions planned to achieve Level 4 along with departmental achievements and planned diversity actions in the next six months. Reference was also made to the Council winning the North East Compact of the Year award.

Decision

That the report be endorsed and the achievements and progress made be noted.

40. Get On (GO) Local Government Award (*Chief Personnel Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the successful re-assessment by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) that has resulted in the Council maintaining the Get On (GO) Local Government Award.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The National GO Local Government Award, led and managed by the IDeA was developed in response to the Local Government's Skills for Life Strategy in England. In March 2006 Hartlepool became the second North-East Council to achieve the full award and reassessment takes place every two years. For Hartlepool this took place on 2nd October 2008. The external assessor spent a day on site assessing the authority against the relevant criteria. Following this visit confirmation was received that the authority continued to meet the criteria and maintain the GO Award with an 'excellent' grading. A small number of areas had been identified for development including exploring the access to training for casual workers and employees in harder to reach work areas and the return on investment of addressing Skills for Life in the workplace. These actions would be incorporated into the Corporate IIP action plan and monitored regularly by the Strategic Workforce Development Group.

A copy of the assessment report was attached to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention. The Chief Personnel Officer advised that she had been invited to speak at a regional event on GO in December and that the Council would be included in a booklet on the Award. The Portfolio Holder congratulated all those involved in the successful re-assessment.

Decision

That the report be noted.

41. Workforce Improvement Challenge *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To advise the Portfolio Holder of Hartlepool Borough Council's intention to participate in the national pilot for the Workforce Improvement Challenge Project which is a peer review of processes, policies, procedures etc. which impact on the workforce, managed by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Workforce Improvement Challenge is a newly developed peer review that supports an authority to review, evaluate and assess how it recruits, develops and deploys its workforce to meet its business and service priorities. It helps an authority to take stock of what has been achieved and what would need to be in place to deliver future objectives. This

approach had been delivered successfully by the IDeA in over 300 local authorities. Details were given within the report of the anticipated benefits to the authority and the financial costs. The assessment process would involve a review team, provision by the Council of key documentation and an on-site visit.

Decision

That the report be noted

42. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

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

Minute 43 – Single Status Agreement (Para 4) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely 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.

43. Single Status Agreement *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To advise the Portfolio Holder of further proposed changes to the Single Status Agreement agreed/still to be agreed with the trade unions and to obtain formal ratification of the final Agreement.

Issues for consideration by Portfolio Holder

In December 2007 Cabinet had agreed that the Performance Portfolio Holder consider and approve all supporting annexes to the main body of the draft local Single Status Agreement. Since Cabinet agreed the draft Single Status Agreement in May 2008 a number of issues had arisen which required changes to be made to it. Some changes had been agreed at the Bridging the Gap meeting on 23 October 2008 details of which were given within the report. Information was also provided on further proposed changes and supporting documents to it with information on further proposed changes agreed at a Bridging the Gap meeting on 14th November 2008 related

verbally.

The Chief Personnel Officer requested that given the process was drawing to a conclusion and the remaining changes were relatively minor it might be more efficient for the Portfolio Holder to delegate authority to agree these changes to herself. The regional Trade Union representatives had been delegated similar authority by their national counterparts. The Portfolio Holder indicated that she would be happy to devolve responsibility in this way with the caveat that previous processes continue to be followed and should consensus not be reached it would be brought back to her Portfolio for decision. The Portfolio Holder asked that the Trade Union representatives be informed of this.

The Chief Personnel Officer advised that formal signing of the Single Status Agreement was expected to take place in January. Members of the executive would be invited to witness.

Decision

- I. That the proposed changes be endorsed
- II. That the Chief Personnel Officer be delegated responsibility to agree the remaining changes with the caveat that existing procedures be followed and any lack of consensus be reported to the Portfolio Holder for decision.

The meeting concluded at 3:40 pm.

PETER DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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