

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

17th November 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
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Denise Ogden, Head of Neighbourhood Management
Alastair Smith, Head of Technical Services
Paul Robson, School Transport Consultant
Lynda Igoe, Principal Housing Advice Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

30. Choice Based Lettings Implementation and Development of Housing Options Centre *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

- I. To consider the proposals for a revised Service Level Agreement for Waiting List Management and to determine the future service delivery arrangements for Choice Based Lettings.
- II. To determine the preferred location for the establishment of the proposed Housing Options Centre.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Principal Housing Advice Officer reported that the management of the Housing Register was currently carried out on behalf of the Council by Housing Hartlepool on a Service Level Agreement contained within the Housing Agency Agreement that was developed at stock transfer. This agreement was due for renewal and would need to be reviewed to ensure

that it adequately reflects the service needed and the associated costs.

Details were given of the associated arrangements necessary to deliver Choice Based Lettings and the potential apportionment of staffing costs between the Council and Housing Hartlepool, which would be incorporated into a new service level agreement. An option appraisal was also provided (as a confidential appendix to the report) on the available locations proposed to establish a Housing Options Centre which will be the primary point of contact for the delivery of Choice Based Lettings and for all housing related advice and support. Costs associated with this and funding options were also outlined.

The Portfolio Holder agreed the recommended location but asked that every attempt be made to reduce refurbishment costs. The Director of Neighbourhood Services indicated that Council staff had been instructed to do this or the contract would be delivered externally.

Decision

- I. That the proposals for a revised SLA with Housing Hartlepool for the management of the Housing Register based upon a 50/50 split of associated costs be agreed subject to the outcome of the Budget Review consideration of identified essential contingencies;
- II. That the implementation arrangements for Choice Based Lettings be approved;
- III. That the proposals to develop the Housing Options Centre be agreed including the preferred location and service delivery arrangements and
- IV. That consideration and approval of the proposed lease by the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder be requested.

31. Minor Works Proposals, Neighbourhood Consultative Forums *(Head of Neighbourhood Management)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To consider recommendations of the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums in respect of Minor Works funding.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report set out the Minor Works proposals considered by the

Neighbourhood Consultative Forums. The following schemes were proposed:

North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum

- i. Hart Ward – Gleneagles Road – tree scheme - £4,500

South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum

- ii. Rossmere Ward – Loyalty Road – street light improvements - £9,800
- iii. Fens Ward – Ingham Grove – street light improvements - £2,500
- iv. Fens Ward – Lincoln Road – street light improvements - £5,000
- v. Fens Ward – Wainfleet Road and Fenton Road – street light improvements - £20,400
- vi. Fens Ward – Newark Road – shrub bed replacement - £1,687

Decision

That the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums in respect of Minor Works Proposals be agreed.

32. Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 – Second Quarter Monitoring Report (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 to the end of the second quarter of the year.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report gave details of the actions contained in the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 and the outturns to the end of the second quarter of key performance indicators. Of 65 actions and 45 performance indicators only 2 actions and 2 indicators were not expected to be achieved on target. A revision to the due dates for these two actions had been forwarded for the Portfolio Holder's approval. It was also noted that the two indicators related to road accident figures for the previous year and it was expected that the serious accident outside English Martyrs School would

have an adverse impact/

Decision

That the change to the action milestones be approved and the achievement of key actions and outturns of performance indicators noted.

33. Proposed Integrated Transport Unit (Update) *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To seek approval to the proposed restructure of Transport Services within the Council as outlined in the Project Initiation document which will enable services to meet the Council's priority areas and objectives.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The aim of the staffing review was to align the staffing structure to the priorities and objectives of the Council and produce a structure to implement the Integrated Transport Unit which will facilitate the modernisation of the services, enabling them to become a centre of excellence. This is a key corporate project in the Council's Efficiency Strategy.

A significant amount of work had already been carried out in order to address the issues raised following several independent reports. Consultation had been carried out on operational and strategic issues and the outcomes were detailed within the report including areas where further clarification was needed. Following the work carried out to date the project was on target to achieve an efficiency of £200,000 within 2008/09

The initial phase of the structure would be completed by November 2008 with a further evaluation of the Integrated Transport Unit expected to take place in September 2009 in order to take account of the broader developments relating to the Council's structure as a whole and more specifically Neighbourhood Services. The restructure was expected to bring significant savings estimated at £700,000 over a three year period. Its implementation would be carefully managed to minimise any risk to service delivery. Failure to restructure would have significant impact on the ability to generate substantial efficiencies and meet future demands.

The Portfolio Holder stressed the importance of the establishment of an Integrated Transport Unit as quickly as possible and asked that competition be encouraged between providers. An update was also sought on the current status of the Transport Interchange. The Head of Technical Services advised that the delays were due to legal issues.

Decision

That the recommended structure of the Integrated Transport Unit be approved.

The meeting finished at 9.15 am.

P DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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