

REGENERATION AND LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO

DECISION RECORD

21 November 2008

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond)

Officers: Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Jeff Mason, Head of Support Services
Derek Gouldbum, Urban Policy Manager
Richard Starrs, Neighbourhood Renewal and Strategy Officer
Peter Gouldsbro, Community Safety Officer
Kate Ainger, Pride in Hartlepool Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

17. Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) & Neighbourhood Element Programme 2008/09 – 6 Month Progress Update – *Head of Community Strategy*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on the position of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) and Neighbourhood Element Programmes after six months of the 2008/9 financial year and to seek delegated authority for expenditure against the Throston Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) budget.

Issues for consideration by Portfolio Holder

In February 2008 Cabinet had agreed the 2008/9 budgets for the WNF and Neighbourhood Element programmes. £4,532,317 of WNF was made available and of this £1,379,960 had been spent so far, 30.4% of the grant. It was expected that the majority of funding would be spent by year end. Within the WNF programme there was an allocation of £19,098 for the Throston Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP). This was currently being developed in consultation with residents and service providers, however a residents forum which

would make decisions on NAP budgets would not be in place until spring 2009. Therefore the Portfolio Holder was asked to give delegated authority to the Principal Community Strategy Officer in consultation with the North Neighbourhood Manager to authorise quick win schemes, to the value of £10,000, which would respond to issues identified in the consultation process. The Portfolio Holder would be kept fully informed and any schemes above £10,000 would be submitted for approval.

£467,734 of Neighbourhood Element funding had been made available for 2008/9 of which £128,183, or 27.4%, had been spent so far. It was expected that the majority of funding would be spent by year end.

Decision

- I. That the spend position of the WNF and Neighbourhood Element programmes at the end of September 2008 be noted.
- II. That delegated authority be agreed for the Principal Community Strategy Officer, in consultation with the North Neighbourhood Manager and Portfolio Holder, to authorise NAP funding up to £10,000 for quick win schemes identified through the Throston NAP consultation process.

18. Seaton Carew Regeneration Feasibility Framework – Head of Regeneration

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To seek agreement to progress funding bids to Single Programme and Sea Change to carry out feasibility work relating to the regeneration of Seaton Carew sea front.

Issues for consideration by the Portfolio Holder

In May 2008 the Portfolio Holder had authorised officers to investigate a potential bid to the Sea Change programme which provided funding on a competitive basis toward schemes supporting the regeneration of coastal resorts. Officers had subsequently been exploring potential opportunities and had come to the conclusion that a bid focused on Seaton Carew would offer the best chance of success. The regeneration of Seaton Carew had been the focus of significant

attention in recent years including a scrutiny investigation, a review of the Seaton Carew Tourism Strategy and the Coastal Arc Strategy which had identified Seaton Carew as a priority. Over £2 million had been invested in Seaton Carew since 2002 on a variety of projects but further work would be needed if the area was to realise its full potential in providing a focus for visitors, improving the economic prospects of the area and enhancing facilities for local residents. Details of the key issues were highlighted within the report along with current responses being taken to address them.

In relation to the Sea Change programme a number of opportunities had been identified which would help support or enhance the regeneration objectives and aspirations of local residents and wider stakeholders. The timing of any physical development activity, site marketing and associated bids for funding would be dependent on the outcome of the Sea Defence strategy study currently underway and expected to be completed mid to late 2009. It was therefore felt appropriate that a full Sea Change application should not be submitted until December 2009 (Round 3). However the December 2008 bidding round (Round 2) would allow for a limited number of feasibility grants to enable initial ideas to be developed and tested. The maximum grant awarded would be £30,000 which would need to be match funded. It was proposed therefore that a bid be made to Sea Change for a feasibility grant in Round 3 with a concurrent request to One North East to utilise Single Programme resources to support this. Should any of these bids be unsuccessful the possibility of match funding through the Council's capital programme funds could be investigated.

A draft brief was attached to the report as an appendix for the Portfolio Holder's attention, setting out terms of the specific requirements of the feasibility work. In terms of procurement preference had been expressed by ward councillors that this work be carried out "in-house". However given the strict rules imposed by the proposed funding sources regarding procuring work and the need for a competitive process over certain tender thresholds it was felt this would be difficult to achieve. In addition certain aspects of the work particularly technical assessments relating to the sea defence requirements and identifying and appraising potential leisure market investment opportunities, were specialist areas with no detailed 'in house' expertise.

In response to queries from the Portfolio Holder the Urban Policy Manager confirmed that if an award toward a feasibility study was made there was no guarantee that a subsequent substantive scheme would be approved, although this would help improve the chance of a detailed bid succeeding. It was also confirmed that a detailed proposal under Round 3 could be awarded even if a feasibility grant was not approved.

The Portfolio Holder was advised at the meeting of the receipt of recent advice relating to potential changes to the above bidding deadlines, with the Round 2 deadline being put back to January 2009 and Round 3 possibly coming forward to June 2009, which could create some timing difficulties in preparing the substantive bid. To ensure that the earlier deadline was met, it might be necessary to progress some aspects of the work earlier using the Council's own Regeneration Match Funding resources, particularly bearing in mind that the outcome of the Sea Change feasibility bid might not be known until March 2009.

The Portfolio Holder expressed reservations that if the external bids were unsuccessful and the feasibility scheme eventually carried out using Council funding, should the detailed project bid not be approved, the feasibility scheme would be an unused document sitting on a shelf. This would build expectations of local residents without a guarantee that an end scheme could be delivered.

The Urban Policy Manager acknowledged that this was a risk but advised that this needed to be balanced against the time restraints referred to above and also pointed out that having a clear way forward would assist in subsequent bids including Single Programme support. The Portfolio Holder indicated he would be prepared to approve the use of Council funding provided the majority of the work was done "in-house". The Urban Policy Manager advised that depending on the outcome of the Single Programme bid, the leisure related market assessment could potentially be delayed to a later date. The Portfolio Holder asked that officers seek to minimise any risk as much as possible and that the results of any funding bids and associated costs be reported back to him.

Decision

- I. That the draft tender bid be approved
- II. That the preparation of bids to Sea Change and Single Programme to fund the development and feasibility work outlined in the brief be authorised
- III. That the use of Regeneration Match Funding resources be approved to cover any shortfall in the cost of this work resulting from external funding bids being unsuccessful.
- IV. That should Council funding be required the majority of the feasibility study should be carried out using 'in-house' resources

19. Pride in Hartlepool Proposals – Head of Procurement, Property and Public Protection

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To consider recommendations of the Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group in respect of proposals for community projects.

Issues for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Approval for Hartlepool Young Carers. The group were requesting £3,057.37 to improve their new allotment on Thornhill Gardens, making it more accessible to the carers and their families. Help had been arranged from the Probation Service including construction of an access ramp to the site and the clearance of overgrowth. The Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group had recommended that £2,807.37 be approved,

Approval for Clavering Primary School. They wanted to enclose an unused part of the school grounds and turn it into a safe planting area and vegetable garden for the nursery and Key Stage 1 children. A request had been made for £2,735 for fencing and equipment for the site and planting and construction of three raised vegetable beds from the Horticulture Department. The school would contribute 10% of the total cost and the Steering Group recommended that the total requested amount be approved.

Decision

That the recommendations of the Pride in Hartlepool Steering group in respect of community environmental projects be agreed.

20. Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 – Quarter 2 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 2008/09 in the second quarter of the year.

Issues for consideration by the Portfolio Holder

The report gave details of the actions contained in the Regeneration and Planning Departmental Plan 2008/09 and the outturns to the end of the second quarter of key performance indicators. Of 143 actions and 29 indicators four actions and two indicators were not expected to be achieved on target. A revision to the due dates for the four actions had been forwarded for the Portfolio Holder's approval. Details were also given of the reasons for the failure to achieve the two performance indicators, one of which was related to the worldwide economic slowdown.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the action to undertake an advanced feasibility study and explore procurement and funding arrangements for the H2O Centre which had been flagged for amendment. He asked that this action be removed altogether given the recent decision by Cabinet to concentrate on the refurbishment of Mill House Leisure Centre. The Head of Support Services advised that this action was scheduled for removal for the 2009/10 Departmental Plan.

Decision

That the progress against actions and indicators be noted and the four proposed amendments to the original departmental plan be agreed.

21. HBC Community CCTV Provision – Head of Community Safety and Prevention

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the proposed CCTV camera commissioning, decommissioning or relocation process identified within Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum Action Plan.

Issues for consideration by the Portfolio Holder

In September 2008 Cabinet received the findings of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum investigation into CCTV provision. Included in the approved Action Plan was the

recommendation “that before Community CCTV cameras are commissioned, decommissioned or relocated an assessment is made of the merits and appropriateness of the installation by consulting local residents, Police, Ward Councillors, community groups and utilising deployable cameras to monitor crime levels”.

Details were given within the report of the proposed commissioning and decommissioning or relocation processes including compliance with the CCTV Code of Practice, evidence and statistical information relating to crime and anti-social behaviour, consultation and cost implications. With regard to decommissioning consideration would also need to be given to replacement by a temporary deployable camera and the retention of the column and transmission link for a set period.

The Portfolio Holder commented that he would have liked to have seen a town-wide consultation on overall CCTV use as part of the recent scrutiny investigation and this was something he would be pursuing through Cabinet. The Community Safety Officer advised that a summary of consultation undertaken to date would be recommended to the Head of Community Safety and Prevention.

Decision

That the processes to be undertaken for commissioning, decommissioning or relocation of any cameras within Hartlepool Borough Council Community CCTV system be approved.

The meeting concluded at 10:40am.

P DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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