

# REGENERATION AND LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

29 January 2009

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  
Mick Emerson, Principal Economic Development Officer  
(Business Services)  
Kate Ainger, Pride in Hartlepool Officer  
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

## **23. Pride in Hartlepool Proposals - *Pride in Hartlepool Officer***

**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.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Eldon Grove – Primary School. The school were requesting £3,371.60 to convert part of the school playing field to an allotment garden for pupils to develop as an “enterprise initiative” and as the central focus of a community engagement plan the school were putting together. Additional funding was being sought from Morrison’s “Let it Grow” scheme and the B&Q Community Grant Scheme. The Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group had recommended that the full amount requested be approved.

**Decision**

That the recommendation of the Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group be approved.

## **24. Hartlepool Borough Council Financial Assistance Schemes for Businesses and Residents Entering Employment - *Principal Economic Development Officer – Business Services***

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for changes to the approval mechanism in respect of the Financial Assistance Schemes operated by the Council's Economic Development Unit.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Hartlepool Borough Council has offered financial assistance to businesses and individuals for a number of years utilising 7 different grant funds offering between £500 and £20,000. A description of the current schemes had been appended to the report giving details of the existing approval mechanism and the proposed changes. Current practices meant that robust local businesses with an excellent track record could have a far more onerous route to approval than a brand new business depending on the basis for the application, even if both applications were for the same amount. The current use of panels for smaller awards had also proved to be difficult administratively given the reliance on representatives from external organisations. Issues around decisions being made in a timely fashion and value for money aspects had also raised concerns.

In future it was proposed that all decisions on awards up to £5,000 would be made by two officers, one of whom would be the Economic Development Manager (or Principal Economic Development Officer (Business Services) or Principal Economic Development Officer (Employment)) in their absence. All requests for support would be made by completion of an application form together with the provision of further background papers as necessary. Upon making a decision in respect of each award, the decision would be annotated on the application form and would include the signature and date of both awarding officers. Awards in excess of £5,000 would continue to be considered in the current manner with officers assisting businesses to prepare a case for consideration by a panel. Their recommendations would be referred to the Assistant Director, Planning and Economic Development, who would make the ultimate decision. These proposals would ensure consistency of approach and that all decisions were made in a timely fashion. Six monthly update reports of the awards made would be provided to the Portfolio Holder.

**Decision**

The Portfolio Holder agreed the recommended changes to the approval mechanisms as suggested in the report.

The meeting concluded at 10:10am

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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