

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

9 MARCH 2009

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

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Pam Hargreaves (Deputy Mayor),
Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder),
Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),
Robbie Payne (Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder),
Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder),

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,
Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration
Ian Merritt, Head of Commissioning and Children's Partnership
Chris Hart, Planning and Commissioning Manager
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

231. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Peter Jackson (Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder),

232. Declarations of interest by members

None.

233. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2009

Confirmed.

234. Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2020 (*Director of Children's Services*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

Councillor Cath Hill, the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services indicated that Children's Services Scrutiny Forum at its meeting on the 24th January 2009, had made no recommendations for Cabinet to consider. Cabinet was requested to give its approval for the Final Draft version of the Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2020 and refer the plan to the Council for approval and adoption.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The existing Children and Young People's Plan 2006 – 2009 has been reviewed and following consultation with stakeholders a new plan has been prepared to reflect the present and future needs of children and young people within Hartlepool. The current plan expires on 31st March 2009. The plan had been developed following a review of the previous plan and wide ranging consultation with children, young people and their families and carers. There has also been extensive consultation with members of staff from within the Council and Primary Care Trust as well as other partners and stakeholders including the Hartlepool Partnership and representatives from the voluntary and community sector.

Cabinet members questioned what monitoring of the plan was to be undertaken. Officers stated that the implementation of the Plan would be through partners and the department's operational plans. These would be monitored through quarterly monitoring reports to the portfolio holder.

There was concern expressed at what action was being taken to address the 8% of young people who were not in full-time education and/or training. It was stated that this figure for Hartlepool did compare favourably with other authorities, though it was recognised that this was still a sizeable number. There was significant follow up action undertaken with these young people but some simply did not want to be either found or involved in what was offered to them. This number was, however, reducing year on year.

Decision

1. That it be noted that Children's Services Scrutiny Forum, at its meeting on the 24th January 2009, made no recommendations for Cabinet to consider.
2. That the Final Draft version of the Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2020 be approved and submitted to Council for approval and adoption as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.

235. Draft Review of the Statement of Community Involvement *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

The Mayor sought Cabinet approval to publicise and seek comments on the draft Review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which will ultimately replace the first SCI adopted in 2006.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

A revised Statement of Community Involvement, submitted as appendix 1 to the report, was deemed necessary to review and update the statement following new government guidance PPS12 (Creating Strong and Prosperous Communities Through Local Spatial Planning). A proposed leaflet to help support the consultation process was included at Appendix 2.

The Mayor indicated that the public consultation period would last two months. Cabinet would then consider the document again taking into account responses to the consultation.

Decision

That the draft review of the Statement of Community Involvement be approved for public consultation.

236. Adult Drug Treatment Plan 2009/2010 *(Head of Community Safety and Prevention)*

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

The Mayor presented the report which provided information and detail on the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Adult Drug Treatment Plan 2009/10 and seeks the support of the Cabinet to the activity and performance management framework in the Plan.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor outlined the plan to Cabinet, for which in 2008/09 Hartlepool had received £1,007,473. In 2009/10 the allocation would be increased to £1,172,110. The Mayor commented that one of the major issues that affected the service provided was the lack of General Practitioner (GP) involvement. Hartlepool was for example in the bottom quartile for users leaving treatment in a planned manner due to this lack of GP involvement.

Cabinet members expressed their concern at the issue of the lack of involvement in the plan by local GP's and asked if there were any ways of

improving this situation. Officers commented that much work was being done with the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) but independent GP's could not be directed to undertake this work, though some did. The PCT through new contracted GP's was attempting to address this situation.

Cabinet Members did wish to record their appreciation of the excellent work undertaken by those responsible for the front line provision of these services to drug users. The Mayor echoed these comments and highlighted that there were significant 'spin-off' benefits from treating and rehabilitating users through this programme. One was a reduction in crime figures as much crime was as a response to feeding drug addiction.

Decision

That Cabinet notes the report and confirms its support to the activity and performance management framework of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Adult Drug Treatment Plan 2009/10.

237. Future Housing Initiatives *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to enable Cabinet to consider the outcome of the debate on Housing at the Extraordinary Council Meeting on the 29th January, 2009.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported on the debate that took place at the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 29th January, 2009 on Housing matters in the town and potential future initiatives. The debate took place in the light of a contextual paper provided in the Chief Executive's Report and a paper entitled the "Way Forward Community Housing – Building For the Future" prepared by the Labour Group. The debate was very positive, recognising considerable progress in housing matters and significant investment, and identifying a number of potential areas for investigation and action. It was proposed that a Task Force should be established including initially the Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Liveability, Neighbourhood and Communities and Finance and Efficiency, and that a wider group be developed as appropriate.

The Mayor reported that investigation was underway particularly into Tyneside models of direct local government involvement in affordable housing development and also into the financing of development with a contribution from prudential borrowing. The Homes and Communities Agency has also now requested advice as to whether the Council would be interested in "direct development of social housing". In response it has been indicated that the Council would warmly welcome the opportunity in

principle to discuss this opportunity if it is agreed by Government. The importance of housing and particularly affordable housing was emphasised as a high priority of the Council. It was suggested that the Council's involvement would be subject to discussion of a number of caveats as set out in the report.

The Mayor also reported that the Local Strategic Partnership had established a group to look at housing provision in the town. The Mayor considered that it was essential not to duplicate work between the two groups. The Mayor also highlighted, as had been indicated at the extraordinary Council meeting, the significant work that was already being undertaken by the authority in relation to housing matters in Hartlepool. The Mayor acknowledged that there was a need for greater communication of the work and schemes underway to a wider audience.

Cabinet Members were also keen to ensure that work was not duplicated by the task force now proposed and the LSP group. It was suggested that if one group could undertake all the work necessary, then that should be the case. The Mayor did, however, wish to maintain Cabinet's strategic overview. The LSP group would be looking at a wider remit involving all the various partners in this area.

Decision

That Cabinet receives the approved motion of Council, endorses the initial actions summarised in paragraph 2.3 of the report and the suggested task group and notes the reported ongoing discussions and investigations.

238. Local Area Agreement Reward Element (Local Public Services Agreement Round 2 – 33 Month Monitoring Report *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

To report progress to Cabinet on the targets included in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Reward Element, formerly known as the Local Public Service Agreement Round 2 (LPSA2) for the period up to and including 31 December 2009.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that of the twenty targets, five (25%) have already been achieved. Three of these (CEDFI P009 – Council Tax disabled reliefs, CEDFI P010 – Council Tax Carer Reductions & CEDFI P011 – Council Tax Severely Mentally Impaired reductions) were measured as at the 31 March 2009, so a downturn in performance could see the target being missed. However, this was considered unlikely to happen.

A further eight (40%) of targets had been assessed as being on target and

for two (RPD P037 and RPD P038 – Place Survey Indicators) a judgement could not be made at this point, due to the outcome being directly linked to the Place Survey, which was currently being conducted. The results of the Place Survey would be known early in 2009.

There were five targets (25%) that have been assessed as being not on target at this stage, and extremely unlikely to be achieved. All of these targets had involved close working with Partner Organisations and whilst being unlikely to achieve the target work would continue to support their achievement.

The Performance Portfolio reported that of the potential grant of £3,065,775 available, and based on the judgements that had been made, the projected amount of Performance Related Grant that the Council would receive was £2,043,850 (up from £2,023,411 when assessed at the 30 month stage), which may rise to £2,350,427.50 should the two 'unsure' indicators be achieved.

Cabinet Members commented on the measure of the number of rehabilitated drug users getting employment and what the Council could do to remedy the situation. The Director of Regeneration and Planning indicated that there were a number of initiatives were being pursued. For example, the Building Schools for the Future construction contracts. Would include targets in terms of the number of local trainees employed.

Decision

That the position of the LAA Reward Element targets as at 31 December 2008 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 9.50 a.m.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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