

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

31st March 2009

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
John Smalley, Principal Environmental Health Officer
Adele Wilson, Senior Regeneration Officer
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

51. Housing Capital Programme 2009/10 (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Key – tests i and ii apply

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Housing Capital Programme for 2009/10

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Proposals were made for the allocation of funding for 2009/10. The overall funding for 'Private Sector Decent Homes' had been increased by £3,000 to £518,062 and it was proposed that the allocations follow the 2008/09 programme with the additional funding allocated to Renewal Assistance Grants/Loans. The total budget for Disabled Facilities Grants was £554,272. Details of the new allocations were appended to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention. The Principal Environmental Health Officer advised that Single Housing Investment Pot funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government for 2009/10 had been confirmed by e-mail to the Tees Valley sub-region.

Decision

That the Housing Capital Programme for 2009/10 be approved.

52. Falcon Road Weight Restriction (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To report an objection to the proposed weight restriction order for Falcon Road.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report gave details of a proposed weight restriction on Falcon Road which it was hoped would reduce traffic by preventing vehicle over 7.5 tonnes from cutting through the estate via Falcon Road and preventing construction traffic accessing the northern part of the estate. One objection had been submitted, a copy of which was appended to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention. Officers had considered the points raised by the objector and details of their responses were included within the report. The Portfolio Holder acknowledged the objections but did not consider the associated costs would be a problem as the advice was that the costs were only for signage.

Decision

That the proposed weight restriction for Falcon Road be approved.

53. Headland Walls Model Study – Tendering and Performance/Price Tender Evaluation (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To request approval to seek tenders for a cost protection model study by using a recently compiled restricted list of tenderers and to evaluate and award the contract on a performance/price basis.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Following a previous report to the Portfolio Holder in September 2007 approval had been given to advertise and compile a restricted list of tenderers to go to tender for consultancy services for coast protection in order to progress the Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy Study and Town Wall Model Study. A restricted list of tenderers had subsequently been developed and both studies evaluated using a price/performance ratio of 80/20. The Headland Walls Model Study had subsequently been commissioned and given the similarity of the studies it had been decided that the tender list compiled for the Town Wall Model Study could be used for the Headland Walls Model Study. The estimated cost was in the region of £75,000 but grant funding would not be available from DEFRA for these works. It was therefore proposed that the revenue budget be used to fund the study and provision had been made in the 2009/10 budget, subject to their being no requirement for emergency work.

Decision

That officers be authorised to seek tenders by using the list recently compiled for the Town Wall Model Study, evaluate the tenders on a performance/price ratio of 80% performance to 20% price and award the contract, subject to budget provision.

54. North Sands Coastal Strategy Study – Tendering and Performance/Price Tender Evaluation (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To request approval to seek tenders for a coast protection strategy study by using a recently compiled restricted list of tenderers, evaluate the tenders on a performance/price basis of 80%/20%, submit a grant application to the Environment Agency (EA) and award the contract if funding provision is confirmed by the EA.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Following a previous report to the Portfolio Holder in September 2007 approval had been given to advertise and compile a restricted list of tenderers to go to tender for consultancy services for coast protection in order to progress the Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy Study and Town Wall Model

Study. A restricted list of tenderers had subsequently been developed and both studies evaluated using a price/performance ratio of 80/20. The North Sands Coastal Strategy Study had subsequently been commissioned and given the similarity of the studies it had been decided that the tender list compiled for the Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy Study could be used for the Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy Study. The estimated cost was in the region of £85,000 and given the approval of 100% grant funding for the Seaton Strategy Study by the Environment Agency (EA) it was considered this would also be available for the North Sands Study. Initial discussions with EA had revealed that although the North Sands Study was not included on the Council's Medium Term Plan submission predicted slippage in this programme could mean that budget was available for 100% grant funding for the North Sands Study in 2009/2010. There were no guarantees however funding was considered very likely.

Decision

That officers be authorised to seek and evaluate tenders on a performance/price basis of 80/20, make a grant application to the Environment Agency and award the contract if funding provision is confirmed.

55. Resident's only Parking Controls – Alston Street (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To consider a petition and results of a consultation with residents to withdraw Alston Street from any residential permit controlled parking restrictions.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Alston Street and neighbouring Leyburn and Penrhyn Streets had long been established within the permit controlled zone. Cabinet had recently approved a decision to increase the costs of all permits but had included Alston Street within a subsidised zone, restricting the cost to £5 per permit. Subsequently a petition had been received signed by 29 residents requesting the removal of the resident permit controls. As a result a full consultation was undertaken over a 5 week period giving further details of the cost and likely impact on parking provision if restrictions were withdrawn. Of 35 households consulted 51% had replied with a clear split for and against. As the consultation had failed to demonstrate full support for the removal of the parking controls officers were recommending that the petition be refused. The low response was acknowledged however there was still evidence that a number of residents wished to retain the controls.

The Portfolio Holder advised that he had received a request for further consultation from a Ward Councillor. Given the 50/50 split the Portfolio Holder was happy to comply with this request with the proviso that only those households that had not replied to the original consultation be contacted and that only a week be given for responses.

Decision

That those households that had not responded to the original consultation be contacted for their views and that an additional consultation week be given for receipt of their responses then brought back to Portfolio for a decision.

56. Resident's Only Parking Controls – Whitby Grove / Whitby Walk *(Head of Technical Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To consider introducing permit parking controls in Whitby Grove / Whitby Walk.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Whitby Grove and Whitby Walk are located on the fringe of the current residential permit controlled parking zone to the South of Huckelhoven Way. The area is bordered by controlled parking restrictions, most recently introduced as part of the commuter parking areas on Whitby Street, Surtees Street and Lynn Street. While these restrictions had helped control and manage parking in the area many vehicles had been displaced into the residential areas of Whitby Grove and Whitby Walk. Enforcement against parking on grass verges around Huckelhoven Way and Charles Street had also contributed. Following requests from a number of residents a 5 week consultation had been carried out with residents. There had been a 40% response with 89% of residents in favour of the proposals.

The parking scheme would be an extension of the existing Zone G operating under the same enforcement period of Monday-Saturday between the hours of 8am-6pm. The cost would be £5 per permit, commencing on 1st June 2009 in line with the renewal date for existing Zone G permits. In order to enforce and create a legal order it would be necessary to enter into agreement with the land owners Housing Hartlepool. However they had been very supportive of the introduction of parking controls and had indicated that they would be prepared to allow Hartlepool Borough Council to enforce the restrictions whilst retaining all other responsibilities for maintenance etc. Additionally, given the

status of the site as a cul-de-sac conventional signage and road markings could not be used so permission would need to be sought from the Department of Transport to approve the use of non standards controlled gateway signs.

Decision

That the creation of a resident permit parking area be approved and that a formal agreement be established between Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool.

57. Stagecoach Fares Increase (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval to apply increased fare scales on bus services operated by Stagecoach on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Details were given of proposed fare increases on bus services contracted to Stagecoach. Fares on Stagecoach's commercial services had been increased from 1st March 2009 and standard practice was to implement the same fare scales on supported contracts to avoid confusion for passengers. These increases were as a result of increasing costs of bus operation, including fuel prices and wage costs.

Decision

That the revised fare scales on supported bus services operated by Stagecoach be approved.

58. Household Waste Recycling Centre Permit Scheme
(*Head of Neighbourhood Management*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To consider an expansion of the Household Waste Recycling Centre permit scheme in order to provide greater control of prohibited waste entering the site, and increase the maximum number of visits allowed under the permit scheme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Local Authority had a duty to provide a Civic Amenity Site for residents to dispose of their waste. The Household Waste Recycling Centre located on Burn Road is licensed to accept domestic waste only. Due to the increase in landfill tax over the years an increase in the number of businesses and drivers of larger vans wishing to dispose of their waste had been seen. In 2005 a 'ban the van' policy had been introduced restricting commercial vehicles and those over 2 metres in height from using the Recycling Centre and a permit system for large vans restricting the number of visits to the site to 6 per annum. However a number of large vans continued to misuse the site, through manual adjustment of the "T" bars on their pick ups and usage of pick ups and trailers which fall outside the current system. To prevent this continued misuse and improve the control of prohibited waste from entering the site it was proposed that permits be issued to all vans and pick ups less than 2 metres in height and trailers less than 2.4 x 1.2 metres. Any vehicles larger than this would be excluded from the site. Permits would limit access to 12 trips per annum.

Decision

That the change to the existing Household Waste Recycling Policy as detailed within the report be approved

59. Throston Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP), Draft for Consultation *(Head of Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To seek agreement to consult on the first draft of the NAP for Throston and to note the proposed 6 week consultation period from w/c 13 April 2009.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report described the background to Neighbourhood Action Plans with a

specific focus on the Throston NAP. It outlined the current position with regard to the consultation process, from the initial community launch during a Family Fun Day in September 2008 to the formulation of the NAP along with some of the residents' key problems and issues as identified in the plan. The Portfolio Holder was asked to note the changes in the usual NAP format. The report described the format of the NAP which was attached to the report in draft form along with a supplementary document outlining key resources and programmes available to residents of the Throston area. Details of implementation and financial implications were also given.

The Portfolio Holder thanked officers for their work on the document which would be great for Throston but requested that efforts be made to reach even more community groups in the area. The Senior Regeneration Officer advised that a newsletter was due to be despatched to all residents at the weekend.

Decision

That the first draft of the Throston NAP as a consultation document be agreed and the proposed consultation arrangements noted.

60. Longhill Industrial Estate – Illegal Burning (*Head of Neighbourhood Management*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on the multi-agency initiative aimed at reducing the number of illegal fires on the Longhill Industrial Estate.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

In February 2008 the Portfolio Holder had been informed of an increase in the number of fires on the Longhill Industrial Estate, many of which may have been started deliberately. The Neighbourhood Action Team had subsequently introduced a multi-agency approach, involving Council departments working closely with external organisations including the Police, Fire Brigade, Environment Agency and New Deal for Communities. The strategy was designed to increase surveillance and provide a decisive response to incidents of deliberate fire setting. Letters were sent to businesses on the Longhill Industrial Estate, local residents and Ward members informing them of the initiative, copies of which were appended to the report.

Resultant strong action by the multi-agency team had yielded positive outcomes with one persistent offender in particular being prosecuted and

fined £25,000 and a further prosecution pending. Statistics showed a reduction of 52.3% in fires over the last year and further reductions were anticipated. The initiative would now be rolled out to other areas of the town known to have similar problems and the Environment Agency had expressed interest in using this model to tackle similar problems in neighbouring local authority areas.

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Council teams and their partners for the outstanding success of this initiative. He looked forward to seeing it replicated on the Usworth Estate.

Decision

That the success of the initiative and the benefits to the local community and the environment be noted.

61. Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2008/09 – Quarter 3 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 third quarter of the year.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report showed details of progress against Housing Service actions contained in the Departmental Plan and the third quarter outturn of key performance indicators.

There were a total of 18 actions and 14 performance indicators assigned to this portfolio holder. Of these, all 14 performance indicators had achieved or were expected to achieve targets. 17 of the 18 actions had achieved or were expected to achieve targets. The action not on target was the implementation of Choice Based Lettings which was now expected to 'go live' in June 2009, slightly later than originally anticipated.

A number of achievements were also reported for information including the provision of 78 units of affordable housing during 2008/09 and the satisfactory resolution of 100% of cases referred to the Tenancy Relations Officer without the need for legal action.

Decision

That the progress against key actions and indicators in the third quarter of the year be noted.

P DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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