

REGENERATION AND LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

27 March 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
Peter Graves, Townscape Heritage Initiative Manager
Catherine Frank, Principal Community Strategy Officer
Israr Hussain, Economic Development Officer
Kate Ainger, Pride in Hartlepool Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

31. Hartlepool Southern Business Zone *(Director of Regeneration and Planning)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the outcomes of the recently completed Hartlepool Southern Business Zone (SBZ) – Strategy and Action Plan study.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report set out a vision and action plan for the regeneration of the Hartlepool SBZ. This area covers 170 hectares in the South of the borough, consisting of 15 separate Industrial Estates and Business Parks. Over 400 businesses employ approximately 5,000 people in a variety of industries making SBZ a key employment area and a major driver of economic prosperity for the town and the wider sub-region. A number of problems associated with the area, primarily the poor quality of the physical environment and commercial premises in parts, had led to the commissioning of the study carried out by ECOTEC and funded through the Single Programme and internally.

As part of the study statistical data was analysed and a physical audit carried out. Consultation had also taken place with a wide range of strategic stakeholders, land owners, developers, property agents and businesses. Following this an Action Plan was developed in order to realise the stated vision for Hartlepool SBZ – ‘to become a driver of success for the sub-region, ensuring the SBZ captures recognised opportunities for growth for the benefit of local people, business and the environment. The Action Plan was developed around a number of guiding principles, details of which were outlined in the report. These principles were then used to set up the strategic objectives of the Action Plan, also detailed within the report. Each of the strategic objectives were focused under a particular theme – people, business or place. Indicative costs for the delivery of all the identified projects was estimated at £14 million in total.

A copy of the study was provided for the Portfolio Holder’s attention at the meeting. Full copies were available via the Economic Development website or on request. The details of the study had been reported back to the Economic Forum and One NorthEast. The details would be used to bid for money, primarily through Single Programme. Officers noted that given the current economic climate resources for the SBZ might be limited but it was still felt important to commence implementation of the Action Plan as soon as possible. Proposals for project approvals would be brought to the Portfolio Holder for approval.

The Portfolio Holder queried the timescales for the project. The Economic Development Officer advised that in its entirety it was expected to take at least 7-10 years. Physical improvements would be carried out and while business support initiatives could begin immediately their impact would not be felt until later in the process. The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services highlighted the need to plan ahead in the budget process should the Council be called upon to match fund projects. The Economic Development Officer further assured the Portfolio Holder that all those consulted had been advised that the final study was available online.

Decision

That the findings of the study be noted and the Vision and Action Plan for the SBZ be endorsed.

32. Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas – Church Street and Stranton, 2010 to 2013 *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek Portfolio Holder authority to start the process of making an

application to English Heritage for a grant of £300,000 under their Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas to provide resources for building grants and funding for environmental works in Church Street and Stranton Conservation Areas. To note the potential requirement for funding from Council's Capital Programme (funded from prudential borrowing) up to a maximum of £300,000 in the period 2010 to 2013 to provide match funding for the application to English Heritage.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas are designed to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas based on a partnership between English Heritage and a local authority. The Partnership Scheme could include investment from other public sources besides that from the Council. A Scheme can make grants available to building owners to carry out eligible works and also undertake environmental improvements. Application to English Heritage is by means of a three stage process commencing in April 2009 and finishing in March 2010. The proposed application to English Heritage would be for £300,000 of grant to be matched by public investment from the Council and if possible other public sources. If the matching funding is to be solely Council then this could be provided from the Capital Programme. This would make a total Scheme budget of £600,000. Partnership Schemes are aimed at conservation areas where the majority of properties are in retail and commercial use. In Hartlepool only Church Street and Stranton Conservation Areas match this criterion. The application to English Heritage was therefore for a Partnership Scheme to include Church Street and Stranton Conservation Areas with the budget managed flexibly between the two Conservation Areas to support other strategies for the town centre which might emerge from the Central Area Investment Framework. Initial examination had indicated a more or less equal split of £300,000 for each of the Conservation Areas but with slightly more going to Stranton. The majority of the budget would be aimed at building repair and restoration but with approximately 20% (£120,000) of the budget aimed at environmental works.

Decision

- I. That authority be given to begin the application process to English Heritage for a Partnership Scheme, to include Church Street and Stranton Conservation Areas, the application to total £300,000 over 3 years with the scheme commencing in April 2010.
- II. That the potential requirement for funding from Council's Capital Programme up to a maximum of £300,000 in the period 2010 to 2013 to provide match funding for the application to English Heritage be noted.
- III. That officers be authorised to explore additional sources of

public sector matching funding.

33. Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) 2009-11 Programme *(Head of Community Strategy)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek agreement from the Portfolio Holder for amendments to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) programme budget for 2009/10 and 2010/11 and to seek approval for the 'Support for Businesses in the Deprived Areas of Hartlepool' project.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report identified the budget amendments requested by projects within the 2009-11 WNF Programme and how these requests could be accommodated. The Tall Ships Project Manager had asked for a greater proportion of the 'Economic impact evaluation of the Tall Ships' funding to be made available in the 2010/11 financial year. This would see the 2009/10 allocation reduce by £5,000 and the 2010/11 allocation increase by the same. Similarly the Manager of the West View Employment Action Centre had asked for their 'Community Employment Outreach' funding to be greater in 2009/10 than in 2010/11 to enable more time to seek match funding to provide the service for the full 2 year period. The 2009/10 allocation would increase to £56,000 and the 2010/11 reduce to £46,386. Both requests would offset each other apart from a shortfall of £439. Therefore it was proposed to alter the funding allocation for 'Support for existing businesses to expand'. Details of these amendments were detailed within the report and an appendix.

A proposal to utilise the funding allocated in the WNF Programme for support to existing businesses towards the 'Support for Businesses in the Deprived Areas of Hartlepool' project was also outlined. This project would target and directly assist those businesses located in the Neighbourhood Renewal Area, particularly those based in shopping precincts. The project would utilise the full allocation for support to existing businesses in 2009/10 and £60,000 of the £119,993 allocation for 2010/11. The Economic Forum would undertake to identify activities to utilise the remainder of funding available in 2010/11. Any future proposals would come to the Portfolio Holder for approval.

Decision

That the amendments to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) programme for 2009/10 and 2010/11 be agreed and the 'Support for Businesses in the Deprived Areas of Hartlepool' project be approved.

34. 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.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group met on Tuesday 17th February and recommended the following for approval:

Throston Primary School - £4,580.10
Rift House Community Association - £2,425

Decision

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

The meeting concluded at 10.30am

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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