

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

1 May 09

The meeting commenced at 9.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

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

Officers: Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Specialist Services
Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services
Alan Dobby, Assistant Director, Support Services, Adult and Community Services
Chris Little, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Alistair Rae, Head of Public Relations
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

271. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Peter Jackson, Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio Holder and Pamela Hargreaves, Deputy Mayor.

272. Declarations of interest by members

None.

273. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2009

Confirmed.

274. Nomination of Site at Hartlepool for a Potential New Nuclear Power Station *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

- (i) To advise Cabinet that the Government had published for public consultation a list of eleven sites in England & Wales which had been nominated for potential new nuclear power stations. The list included a site adjacent to Hartlepool Nuclear Power Station which had been nominated by EDF.
- (ii) To advise Cabinet that the Government was undertaking public consultation on the nominated sites and the criteria for site selection. The consultation runs for one month from 15 April to 14 May 2009.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that the Department of Energy and Climate Change had published a list of eleven sites which have been nominated by the nuclear energy industry as locations for new potential nuclear power stations as set out in the report.

The site adjacent to the existing Hartlepool Power Station had been nominated by EDF Energy as a site for a potential new nuclear power station. The Hartlepool site was shown on Appendix 1 attached to the report.

Comments were sought on the information provided by the nominators for each of the Government's criteria for site selection.

The period of this consultation stage was 15 April to 14 May 2009. The relevant documents were available for public inspection and comment at the Civic Centre, Bryan Hanson House and libraries in Hartlepool.

This current consultation period was short. However, over the coming months the Government would be assessing each of the nominated sites to decide if they met a number of criteria. Sites assessed as suitable would be listed in the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement. The Government would be consulting the public again on this draft Policy Statement and the draft list of sites in autumn 2009. This would be the main opportunity to comment on these issues.

A Cabinet Member highlighted concerns regarding the proposals to develop any new nuclear power stations and did not support the recommendations.

Decision

- (i) Cabinet noted that the Government was undertaking a consultation process for one month until 14 May 2009 on the nomination of a site at Hartlepool, together with ten others elsewhere in England and Wales, for potential new nuclear power stations.
- (ii) Subject to any further comments arising from officers' current assessment of the document, Cabinet agreed that the nomination of a site for a new nuclear power station at Hartlepool merited further investigation by the Government in its preparation of a draft Nuclear National Planning Policy.
- (iii) It was noted that studies were, in the meantime, being undertaken locally to assess the economic and environmental impacts of a new nuclear power station at Hartlepool and the findings of the studies would help inform public debate in the lead up to, and during, the longer and wider stage of public consultation in Autumn 2009.

275. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2009/2010 to 2012/2013 (*Chief Financial Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To enable Members to approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) document.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Finance and Efficiencies Portfolio Holder advised that following approval at Cabinet and Council of detailed proposals for the 2009/10 budget, the report concentrated on the specific issues which Members needed to address in order to set the 2009/10 budget and Council Tax.

The previous report also provided an overview of the forecast budget positions for 2010/2011 and 2011/2012. These forecasts indicated that the Council faced a structural budget deficit which would only be partly bridged from the Business Transformation Programme efficiencies. A strategy for addressing the remaining shortfall would need to be developed later in the year. This would include reviewing key planning assumptions in relation to inflation, Government grant increases in 2011/2012 and future years and Council Tax increases from 2010/2011 onwards to reflect changes in the wider economy. The development of this strategy would commence after the Mayoral Election in June 2009.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), attached at Appendix A, complimented the reports approved in February 2009 and provided a bridge between the approved 2009/2010 budget and the development of future

years budgets. The MTFS document did not include any new issues for Members consideration and brought together information previously reported separately into a single document which included the following key areas:-

- Council Objectives;
- Resource Availability;
- Financial Planning;
- Setting the Budget and Council Tax;
- Budget Management;
- Service Budgets;
- Capital Strategy;
- Treasury Management

Members commented on the importance of the contents of the strategy document, the increase in Council Tax of 67p per week for a Band A Property and how the Council Tax for a Band A property was spent. It was highlighted that an increase of 67p per week was low bearing in mind the substantial reduction in Central Government settlements and the higher than anticipated increases in the resources for Adult and Children's Care Services to protect vulnerable adults and children. Concerns were expressed on the floor damping process and loss of grant funding of approximately £30 per head as a result of these arrangements.

Decision

- (i) That the MTFS document be approved.
- (ii) Cabinet noted that the MTFS document formed the basis for developing future detailed budget strategies.

276. Request for Grant Towards the Entertainment at Dockfest Event *(The Mayor)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To request Cabinet to authorise the amount of £15,000 from contingency funds to help with the costs of procuring artists for the Dockfest event being held on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 July 09.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor sought agreement from Cabinet to release the sum of £15,000 from the contingency fund to assist with the procuring of various artists for the event. It had been a number of years since this type of music festival had been held in Hartlepool.

Decision

That a donation of £15,000 be approved from contingency funds towards

the costs of procuring artists for the Dockfest event on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 July 09.

Following Cabinet's approval, the Mayor announced that the Lightening Seeds were the key band performing at the event and were currently working on a new album and making a number of radio appearances.

The meeting concluded at 9.25 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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