

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

27 July 2009

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

### **Present:**

Councillor Robbie Payne (Deputy Mayor) In the Chair

Councillors: Gerard Hall (Adult Services Portfolio Holder)  
Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)  
Peter Jackson (Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder)  
Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder)

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher, Chair of Neighbourhood  
Services Scrutiny Forum  
Councillor Jane Shaw, Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny  
Forum

Officers: Paul Walker (Chief Executive)  
Peter Devlin (Chief Solicitor)  
Mike Ward (Chief Financial Officer)  
Dave Stubbs (Director of Neighbourhood Services)  
Peter Scott (Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)  
Sue Johnson (Assistant Director, Children's Services)  
Matthew King (Principal Planning Officer)  
John Lovatt (Acting Assistant Director – Operations, Adult and  
Community Services)  
Lynda Igoe (Principal Housing Advice Officer)  
James Walsh (Scrutiny Support Officer)  
Julian Heward (Public Relations Officer)  
Denise Wimpenny (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

## **27. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Mayor, Stuart Drummond.

## **28. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

## **29. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2009**

Received.

**30. Final Report – Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool** *(Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum)*

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To outline the findings and conclusions of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool. .

**Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum presented the final report of the forum's investigation into 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool' which outlined the overall aim of the scrutiny investigation, its terms of reference, methods of investigation, findings, conclusions, and subsequent recommendations. The final report was approved by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 April 2009.

Cabinet Members welcomed this report and its findings. A Member commented on the reliance of Central Government funding and the importance of lobbying the Government to increase the funding available for coastal protection works, a suggested recommendation of the Forum. A query was raised as to whether any costings had been calculated for these works to which the Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that consultants had been commissioned to undertake this work, details of which would be provided in due course.

**Decision**

That the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool', as set out below, be approved and adopted;

- (a) That the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities lobby the Government to increase the funding available for coastal protection works;

- (b) That the Council undertakes a further assessment of the potential funding streams available for coastal protection works and considers whether further funding can be obtained from other sources;
- (c) That the Council continues to promote climate change and involves local residents in raising awareness of the effects it has on Hartlepool's coastline;
- (d) That the Council establishes the potential risks and implications associated with the loss of the Heugh Breakwater infrastructure and communicates this to members of the public to alleviate concerns;
- (e) That the Council continues to evaluate the risks of developing on sites which could potentially be at risk of coastal erosion in order to ensure the sustainability of future building developments and establishes the potential loss of funding in areas where erosion is occurring; and
- (f) That the Council continues to consult extensively with local residents on current / future coastal studies and where appropriate holds such consultation events in the locations covered by the relevant study.

### **31. Action Plan – Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management In Hartlepool** *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To agree an action plan in response to the findings and subsequent recommendations of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool'.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's report was welcomed along with the proposed Action Plan (set out at Appendix A to the report) in response to the forum's recommendations following the investigation into 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool'.

### **Decision**

That the Action Plan in response to the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into the 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool' be approved.

## **32. Final Report – Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason** *(Children's Services Scrutiny Forum)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To outline the findings and conclusions of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason'.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum presented the final report of the forum's investigation into the 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason' which outlined the overall aim of the scrutiny investigation, its terms of reference, the methods of investigation, findings, conclusions, and subsequent recommendations. Attached at Appendix A to the report was a written transcript of the presentation made by Members of Hartlepool Young Voices to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 21 July 2008. The final report was approved by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 24 April 2009.

Cabinet welcomed the report and its findings and supported the recommendations. The Deputy Mayor referred to a number of occasions when vacant properties had been highlighted to the Housing Advice Team as potentially suitable for homeless accommodation. In response, it was reported that in order to provide successful homeless accommodation there was a reliance on capital funding and revenue funding and funding for projects of this type was difficult to secure. The Council, did however, encourage organisations to bid for such funding sources.

In response to a Member's request for clarification regarding what arrangements were in place to ensure that young people were aware of how to access the advisory service on housing and homelessness, Members were advised that a Housing Options Centre would be opening shortly and would provide this information. Details of how referrals to the service were received were also provided. In view of this, it was suggested

that an additional recommendation be added to the final report to ensure that adequate information was available to young people on how to access advice on the housing and homelessness services.

## **Decision**

That the recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason', as set out below, to include an additional recommendation (e), be approved and adopted.

- (a) That supported accommodation providers be encouraged to set up more facilities in the Town, although before this occurs:-
  - (i) Residents in an area where a scheme is planned be properly consulted and reassured that supported accommodation is not only beneficial, but is to be encouraged;
  - (ii) Any scheme should include the provision of at least one if not two emergency beds or 'crash pads'.
- (b) That support is given to assist young people in the transition into independent living;
- (c) That the Children's Services and the Regeneration and Planning Services Departments examine Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's 'Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011' and:-
  - (i) Adopt those examples of good practice which can assist the tackling of youth homelessness in Hartlepool; and
  - (ii) Where partnership funding is insufficient for the creation of supported accommodation in Hartlepool, that the Council allocates additional resources.
- (d) That during the planning stages for new housing developments in Hartlepool:-
  - (i) Consideration be given to appropriate accommodation for young people; and
  - (ii) Young people are consulted about accommodation that would be appropriate for their needs.
- (e) That adequate information is available to young people on how to access advice on the housing and homelessness services.

**33. Action Plan – Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason** *(Director of Children's Services and Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To agree an Action Plan in response to the findings and subsequent recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason'.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's report was welcomed along with the proposed Action Plan (set out at Appendix A to the report) in response to the forum's recommendations following the investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason'.

**Decision**

That the Action Plan in response to the recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason', be approved.

**34. Amendments to the Membership of the Tall Ships Project Board** *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

**Type of decision**

Non-key

**Purpose of report**

To outline minor changes to the membership of the Tall Ships Project Board in 209/2010 for Cabinet approval.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder reported that due to the change in Portfolio titles and scoping it had been suggested that the new Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development be added to the Executive Member list of the Tall Ships Project Board. In practice, this would simply maintain the same number of Councillors at the meeting and be inclusive of all directly relevant Portfolio Holders.

### **Decision**

That the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development be added to the membership of the Tall Ships Project Board.

## **35. Revisions to the Local Development Scheme** *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval to a revision of the current Hartlepool Local Development Scheme to take account of changes arising from new Planning Regulations and to reflect the need for additional requirements to secure a robust evidence base in the preparation of planning documents.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The report provided details of the Local Development Scheme, a rolling programme for the Council's proposals for producing planning policy documents over the next three years, which was being revised to reflect new requirements under Planning Regulations and the need, on Government Office for the North East advice, to prepare a robust evidence base.

Following the preparation of the 2008 Local Development Scheme there were discussions with Government Office for the North East (GONE) regarding the need for a robust evidence base so that any planning documents could proceed smoothly through to the adoption process and so satisfy the ultimate test of the Planning Inspector in finding the document 'sound'.

Since the last revision to the Local Development Scheme the Town &

Country Planning Regulations had changed the various stages required in the preparation of planning documents and how these should be reflected in the Local Development Scheme.

As a result there was a need to update the Local Development Scheme. A revised Local Development Scheme 2009 was attached as Appendix 1. The timetable for the following documents had been amended as shown in Tables 1-8.

The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services described further amendments arising from consultation with Government Office North East which would be incorporated in the Local Development Scheme.

The document would need to be formally agreed with the Planning Inspectorate prior to being formally submitted to the Secretary of State.

Discussion ensued in relation to the proposals for the current hospital site, the requirement for affordable housing and whether the hospital authorities were required to make land available for affordable housing at £5,000 per plot. Such expectations appeared not to be in place but any proposal for residential use would require consideration to be given to the need for a proportion of affordable housing as part of the consideration of the planning application. The Chief Executive stated that in the event that the land was sold by the hospital authorities, it was envisaged that the monies would be utilised to meet the requirements of the new hospital.

### **Decision**

Cabinet approved the revised Local Development Scheme 2009 and the further amendments, and, subject to endorsement by Council, and following consultation with the Planning Inspectorate, the revised Local Development Scheme be submitted to the Secretary of State.

## **36. Prudential Borrowing to 2004/05 to 2009/10** *(Chief Financial Officer)*

### **Type of decision**

None - for information only

### **Purpose of report**

To provide information requested at the last meeting in relation to Prudential Borrowing undertaken by the Council.



### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Chief Financial Officer advised that local authorities had used borrowing to finance capital investment for many years. Prior to the introduction of the prudential borrowing regime all borrowing by local authorities was covered by specific Government borrowing approval. Following the introduction of the prudential borrowing regime individual authorities now determined their own borrowing limits.

The report provided details of the schemes funded from prudential borrowing and how the resulting revenue costs had been funded, supported and unsupported prudential borrowing, the process for approval to use prudential borrowing, the revenue impact, prudential borrowing headroom and the Government's powers to limit prudential borrowing.

Members raised a number of queries, to which the Chief Financial Officer provided clarification. A Member requested that prudential borrowing headroom information be included in future prudential borrowing reports submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

### **Decision**

That the contents of the report, be noted and prudential borrowing headroom information be included in future prudential borrowing reports submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

The meeting concluded at 10.10 am

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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