

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

**17 AUGUST 2009**

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

### **Present:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond - In the Chair

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

Also Present: Councillor Jonathan Brash, Chair of the Health Scrutiny Forum

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive,  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor,  
John Morton, Assistant Chief Financial Officer,  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood  
John Mennear, Assistant Director, Cultural Services  
Stuart Green, Assistant Director, Planning and Economic Development  
Joanne Smithson, Head of Community Strategy  
John Lovatt, Acting Assistant Director, Operations  
John Robinson, Children's Fund Manager  
James Walsh, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **37. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Pam Hargreaves (Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder) and Peter Jackson (Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder).

### **38. Declarations of interest by members**

None.

### **39. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2009**

Confirmed.

## **40. Final Report – Reaching Families in Need** *(Health Scrutiny Forum)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

The report outlined the findings and recommendations of the Health Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Reaching Families in Need'.

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

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Forum, Councillor Jonathan Brash, presented the final report of the forum's investigation into 'Reaching Families in Need'. Cabinet Members welcomed the report and commented that one of the areas that Hartlepool had made great strides in improving over recent years was the quality of housing available as poor housing was linked to poor health and social exclusion. It was suggested that business reports should also consider the potential for social exclusion in any proposals in the same way as financial issues and risk were assessed.

### **Decision**

That the recommendations of the Health Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Reaching Families in Need', as set out below, be approved and adopted;

- “(a) That the local authority take the lead in providing a co-ordinated leadership approach across the different providers in order to facilitate a systematic approach to tackling health inequalities in the town, culminating in the creation of a Family In Need Strategy and specifically designated Executive Portfolio with responsibility for Social Inclusion;
- (b) That subject to the implementation of recommendation (a) above, the local authority, acting as strategic leader, enter into formal arrangements with partner organisations (i.e. Police, PCT, FT, Housing Hartlepool and the Voluntary Sector);
- (c) That the FIP Project be expanded in light of its effectiveness thus far in targeting hard to reach families;
- (d) That the Connected Care Programme be rolled out across the town as a positive way of helping reach families that would not normally interact with either the council or engage with health services;
- (e) That the use of the model of intervention implemented through the FIP Project and Connected Care Project be explored as a basis for a more far reaching Families in Need Strategy, bringing together the activities of all partners / stakeholders with a dedicated Portfolio Holder taking the co-ordinating role;
- (f) That other agencies / bodies be consulted and involved in the further development of the various forms of CAF (Pre CAF, Full CAF or E.CAF) in order to ensure the creation of an assessment framework that can be used by across the board;

- (g) That in order to strengthen links and communication routes between agencies, the establishment of a co-ordinated, single point of contact for the referral of information and referrals from any source be explored (i.e. a 'one stop shop' telephone number or point of contact);
- (h) That the feasibility of introducing a similar way of gathering and sharing data in Hartlepool, as has been implemented by Westminster Council (i.e. a Multi-Agency Information Desk) be explored;
- (i) That ways of providing and promoting programmes that are not badged as being run by official bodies, including those run by the Voluntary Sector, should be explored as a way of reaching families that are reluctant to engage the Council, PCT, FT or other partner bodies; and
- (j) That a system be put in place to ensure that where new public buildings / facilities are constructed (i.e. the new health centre) the inclusion of a place where advice / assistance and other integrated services can be provided is explored."

**41. Action Plan - Final Report – Reaching Families in Need** *(Director of Children's Services, Director of Adult and Community Services and 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 Health Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Reaching Families in Need'.

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

Submitted as an appendix to the report was the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations which had been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s). The Mayor commented that he had had discussions with the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Forum in relation to the recommendation that a dedicated Cabinet Portfolio for Social Exclusion be established. The Mayor commented that social inclusion cut across all the portfolios and he considered that it would be more appropriate for Cabinet to discuss how social inclusion could be tackled through each of the current portfolios rather than establish a new Cabinet role. With this exception, the Mayor commented that he welcomed the recommendations and the proposed action plan.

**Decision**

That with the exception of recommendation (a), the Action Plan in response to the recommendations of the Health Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'Reaching Families in Need' be approved.

**42. Food Law Enforcement Plan 2009-2010** (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

**Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

**Purpose of report**

To consider the Food Law Enforcement Plan 2009/10.

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

The Adult and Public Health services Portfolio Holder reported that Hartlepool's Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2009/10 is a requirement of the Food Standards Agency and forms the basis on which the Authority may be monitored and audited to verify whether the service provided is effective in protecting the public. The plan sets out the Council's aims in respect of its food law service. Whilst focussing on 2009/10, it also identified longer-term objectives as well as a review of performance for 2008/09.

A Cabinet member commented that more should be done to highlight to the public those food establishments that were rated with no 'stars' under the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme. Officers commented that all premises and their star ratings were listed on the website, and while not everyone had access to the internet, Members could be assured that where action was needed with operators, it was taken under through the food hygiene inspections. It was noted that there were only six food businesses in the town that had no stars under the scheme.

**Decision**

That the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2009/10 be approved for submission to scrutiny.

**43. Corporate Plan 2009/10** (*Assistant Chief Executive*)

**Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

**Purpose of report**

To enable Cabinet to consider and comment on the proposed Corporate Plan for 2009/10.

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

The Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder reported that unlike in previous years, the Corporate Plan was now presented as a single document. The Corporate Plan describes the Council's priorities for 2009/10 including how weaknesses would be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people, along with detailed supporting information relating to the Key Performance Indicators which

would be used to monitor progress throughout 2009/10. In previous years the detailed supporting information relating to the Key Performance Indicators had been presented as a separate document.

#### **Decision**

That the Corporate Plan 2009/10 is approved for submission to Council on 17 September 2009.

#### **44. Collocation Fund Grant, Rossmere Centre** *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

##### **Type of decision**

Key Decision – Test (ii) applies.

##### **Purpose of report**

To agree the capital project to collocate improved services consisting of a Multi Use games Area and a Skateboard Park at the Rossmere Youth Centre / Rossmere Primary School site following a successful bid to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

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

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism reported that Cabinet agreed on 24th March, 2009 that bids be submitted to the DCSF for Burbank Healthy Living Centre and Rossmere Youth Centre. The bid was submitted in April 2009. Guidance indicated that projects to be supported should involve two or more partners from education and wider children's services, early years' provision, sport, health, youth support services, local housing, police, justice, play, recreation and leisure services.

Preliminary communication indicated that the Burbank Healthy Living Centre had been rejected, whilst the Rossmere project was shortlisted. The Rossmere project has been approved with a capital grant of £396,000. The outcome of the grant decision was delayed until the 11th June and this report was submitted to seek Cabinet's formal acceptance of the grant and to accept the project as an integral part of the Schools Transformation (Primary capital) improvements for the Rossmere area. Full details of the scheme together with some initial design proposals were submitted for Cabinet's information.

The Mayor commented that he was disappointed that the Burbank scheme had been rejected but was very pleased that the Rossmere scheme had been approved. There had been some initial meetings with local councillors, residents and young people which had proved very useful. There appeared to be local acceptance of the scheme and great enthusiasm from the local young people, particularly the skateboarders, which the Mayor stated should be utilised to ensure the design of the scheme met the needs of the young people it was aimed at.

Attention was drawn to the preferred plan at option 2 where the Multi Use

Games Area (MUGA) was located away from housing but would utilise part of the open space. The Mayor emphasised his desire to see the skateboarders involved in the design of the skate park and other Cabinet Members also considered that consideration may need to be given in the future to the transport arrangements in the area so that young people could access the skate park in particular. There was still concern that further public consultation was required with nearby residents and ward councillors to ensure that any concerns were addressed and to ensure that the proposals didn't fall at the planning stage.

#### **Decision**

That the funding for the Rossmere Collocation project be welcomed and accepted.

### **45. Support for Businesses During the Recession** *(Chief Financial Officer / Assistant Director Regeneration and Planning)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

#### **Purpose of report**

This report was the product of a joint review by the Council's Economic Development and Business Rates Units, which examined the existing mechanisms of support available to local businesses during the current economic recession. The report identified gaps in support and detailed how improved linkages between both Units would play a significant role in 'plugging' those gaps and assisting local businesses with practical solutions during this difficult period.

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

The Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder indicated that the report compared the existing arrangements currently in place to support individuals and households, and justified the replication of those arrangements to support local businesses. The report then went on to detail new joint working initiatives between the Economic Development and Business Rates Units, aimed at offering targeted levels of support to local businesses. The report concluded with a brief progress report on these support initiatives.

The Mayor in welcoming the report stated that a recent initiative in the USA where small businesses were on a short term basis exempt from paying business rates had had a significant effect on keeping quite a number of small businesses afloat. It was suggested by Cabinet that the mayor write to the government suggesting such a similar scheme for small businesses in the UK. The Mayor commented that he was concerned that businesses did not understand that the Council was only a collection agent for the government on business rates.

The Mayor also referred to the empty property rate that had been

introduced by the government to tackle particular problems in the south-east but was now penalising businesses all over the country. Officers did indicate that the government had made recent changes that exempted businesses with a rateable value of less than £15,000 from the empty property rate. Officers also indicated that a small business rate relief scheme had been in operation for a number of years and although many businesses had signed up there were a number that had not and specific initiatives including targeted mail-shots and visits to business premises were being actioned in 2009/10 to maximise take up of this financial help.

The Council's target of paying all invoices within ten days was also discussed by Cabinet and officers were asked if any positive feedback had been received. It was indicated that there had been some informal positive feedback, particularly from the local Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

#### **Decision**

That the measures and initiatives outlined in the report to provide sustained levels of support to local businesses within the Borough be approved.

### **46. Local Area Agreement – Delivery and Improvement Plan 2009/10** *(Head of Community Strategy)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To agree the annual Delivery and Improvement Plan (DIP) for the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

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

The Mayor reported that local authorities had a statutory duty to prepare a LAA in partnership with the Local Strategic Partnership. The report presented the annual Delivery and Improvement Plan that would help to deliver the Community Strategy and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. It would also provide a strong platform to achieve the targets set out in the LAA and ensure action is taken to tackle the key challenges. The Mayor commented that this plan complemented and linked into all the other plans produced by the Council.

A Cabinet Member indicated his concern at the potential failure in meeting targets related to youth employment during the recession. Officers indicated that it had been highlighted that some economic targets would not be met due to the economic down-turn. However, there were proposals through some funding recently announced to create through partner organisation up to 700 additional jobs aimed at young people. The Chief Executive also referred to the problems of graduates finding employment. Three graduate training posts had recently received in excess of 350 applications.

### **Decision**

That the Delivery and Improvement Plan for the Local Area Agreement be approved and the monitoring arrangements noted.

## **47. Briefing on the Government Green Paper – Shaping the Future of Care Together** *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide a briefing on the main issues identified in the government green paper – Shaping the Future of Care Together published on 14 July 2009.

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

The Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder reported that the green paper sets out the government vision for a new care and support system that is fit for the 21st Century and responsive to the changes in expectations and demographics of society. It attempts to address how the new way forward should be funded, by the state and individuals and identifies three main options on which the government wishes to consult. It also introduces the new concept of a National Care Service. The green paper also identifies how this links to demographic changes and their potential impact locally.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that the government had considered a number of different models for the future provision of care and had narrowed the consultation process to three specific models – Partnership, Insurance and Comprehensive. These were explained in greater detail within the report which also set out some initial views on each option and detailed the consultation questions the government was seeking responses on. The consultation process was to run until 13 November 2009 giving sufficient time for responses to be submitted from a wide range of bodies. It was proposed that a series of presentations, consultation events and briefing papers would be utilised in Hartlepool by the Council and partners in developing a formal response to be submitted later in the year.

### **Decision**

That the content of the briefing be noted and that a broad local consultation will be supported by the Council, to include;

- Presentations to a range of Partnership Boards, Local Implementation Teams and Carers Groups.
- A presentation to Adult & Community Services Scrutiny Forum.
- A briefing paper for elected members and key stakeholders.
- Members briefing sessions if required.
- Local workshops to establish a consensus view on consultation questions.



- A report to Cabinet outlining the Council's proposed response.
- A detailed response to the government consultation by the 13 November, 2009 deadline.

**48. Place Survey 2008 – Interim Report** (*Assistant Chief Executive*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To report to Cabinet the interim results from the borough wide Place Survey, with national comparisons where they are available. In October 2008, a total of 1426 responses to a postal survey were received from Hartlepool residents. All local authorities in England carried out a similar survey.

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

The Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder reported that the survey collected information on views of Hartlepool as a place to live and on a range of local services, both council and non-council run. For the majority of the national indicators (NI's) covered by the survey, Hartlepool performance is close to national average performance levels. However, on a range of other services, mostly council, performance appears to have deteriorated since 2006. Additional consultation work may be necessary to fully explore the issues raised by the survey as the data collected lacks detail and some of the results are not consistent with other available data.

**Decision**

That the report be noted and the plans for further action approved.

**49. Energy Management – Invest to Save Programme** (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

The report considers the current position on energy performance and cost and provided information on work currently being undertaken on improving energy efficiency within the Local Authority. A proposal for the delivery of improved energy efficiency through the implementation of an 'Invest-to-Save' programme was also set out.

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

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that the Business Transformation Programme includes an element in relation to Energy Management and the establishment of an "invest-to-save" scheme which

would identify opportunities within the Council to improve its energy efficiency and produce a rolling programme of projects.

Reducing energy consumption not only saved money but improved working conditions which could increase staff productivity. Furthermore, the environmental benefits from reductions in carbon emissions and energy use could enhance organisational image and improve public relations. The Council was developing a Carbon Management and Sustainable Energy Strategy which would incorporate energy in buildings policy and modern energy efficiency and minimising energy use methodologies. Invest-to-save projects to improve heating and hot water controls and to install lighting controls offer real potential to achieve improved energy efficiency with pay back periods of less than five years.

As part of the Business Transformation update report to Cabinet on 29th January 2009 it was agreed that proposals for an invest-to-save programme for energy efficiency be developed and submitted for consideration and approval. These were set out in the report, though the Director stressed that changing people's habits and work lifestyle had the biggest impact in the longer term. It was highlighted that the potential savings set out within the report did not include street lighting and Members needed also to acknowledge that around half of the energy costs reflected in the report related to schools. Some very good work had been undertaken on energy and carbon reduction with a number of schools and this was to be rolled to all schools but it was a quite time intensive job. It did though have significant pay-back and was also a useful curriculum issue for pupils.

Members were concerned that while the authority may make great efforts to reduce its energy consumption, these could be lost at a stroke by rises in energy costs. Officers acknowledged this but indicated that if prices did rise, anything that had been done to reduce energy consumption would still have pay-back for the council.

#### **Decision**

1. That the current position on energy performance and cost be noted.
2. That an 'Invest-To-Save' programme for energy efficiency projects funded by an initial contribution of £40,000 for 2009/10 be approved.
3. That paragraph 5.4 of the report and that the need for flexibility within the programme be noted, and that a six monthly review of projects in line with the BT benefits realisation model be agreed.

## **50. Local Area Agreement Reward Element (Local Public Service Agreement Round 2) - 36 Month Monitoring Report** *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

**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 March 2009.

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

The Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder that the majority of targets ended on 31 March 2009, although there are still two indicators that are being assessed and the results will not be known until October. These related to school targets which were linked to the school year and not the financial year. Of the eighteen indicators that could be assessed, fourteen (77.8%) achieved their target and the remaining four (22.2%) did not. The two remaining indicators had both been assessed as being on target, and were set out in an appendix to the report, which provided more details on all twenty indicators.

**Decision**

That the position of the LAA Reward Element targets as at 31 March 2009 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 a.m.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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