

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Monday, 9 November 2009

at 10.00 am

**in Committee Room B,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

Councillors S Akers-Belcher, Barker, R Cook, Coward, Fleming, J Marshall, Rogan, Worthy and Wright

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge and Brenda Loynes

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2009
- 4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.
- 5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY
FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

- 6.1 Neighbourhood Services: Budget and Policy Framework Initial Consultation
Proposals 2010/2011 – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

7. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

No items

8. **ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

9. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting –

Monday, 23 November 2009, commencing at 4.00 p.m in Committee Room B, Civic
Centre, Hartlepool

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

26 October 2009

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Stephen Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Caroline Barker, Rob Cook, John Coward, Tim Fleming and Edna Wright

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 (ii), Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher attended as a substitute for Councillor Gladys Worthy

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge and Brenda Loynes

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Sylvia Tempest, Environmental Standards Manager
Paul Mitchinson, Highway Services Manager
Paul Hurwood, Climate Change Officer
Laura Starrs, Scrutiny Support Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

Also present:

Councillor Hilary Thompson (Observer)
Bob King, Environmental Sustainability Co-ordinator, Middlesbrough Council
Colin MacDonald, Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre
John Lynch, Resident Representative (Observer)

25. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Gladys Worthy.

26. Declarations of interest by Members

None

27. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2009

Approved.

28. Information from a representative of the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre

Colin MacDonald from the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre addressed members. He highlighted the partnership work which had taken place with Hartlepool Borough Council over previous years and thanked members for embarking upon the investigation into climate change and carbon management. The Energy Saving Trust would continue to work closely with HBC on the delivery of an action plan. The Chair thanked Mr MacDonald for his positive comments.

Decision

That Mr MacDonald's comments be noted.

29. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

30. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

31. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None

32. Scrutiny Investigation into Climate Change and Carbon Management – Evidence from a Representative from Middlesbrough Council (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

In March 2008 Middlesbrough Council and Partner Organisations were awarded Beacon Status for tackling Climate Change, one of six council across England to be given this award. The Beacon Award Scheme is run by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDEA) and recognises councils that demonstrate clear leadership, excellent vision and innovation on key themes

Bob King, Middlesbrough Borough Council's Sustainability Co-ordinator, had therefore been invited to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Climate Change and Carbon Management'. Mr King played

a DVD and gave a PowerPoint presentation, both of which had been used by Middlesbrough Council during their successful application for Beacon status. Mr King highlighted a number of aspects, specifically Middlesbrough's signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, their carbon reduction targets and key achievements so far. The One Planet Living programme was also outlined.

A member praised Middlesbrough officers for their efforts however felt that if only 60% of the planet were acting, only so much could be achieved if the other 40% continued polluting. Mr King acknowledged this but said that those countries which polluted the most were those which were making the biggest strides in this area. Comment was often made about China's energy usage but as a country they were far more proactive than most in understanding sustainable technology and energy. African countries tended to use far less resources than the UK and USA and it seemed only fair that those countries polluting the most should contribute the most to putting it right.

A member queried how much Council funding Environment City had been given. Mr King confirmed that £110,000 had been given by Middlesbrough Council with the rest coming from charitable funding which the Council did not have access to.

The Chair asked Mr King for more information in successful areas of engagement. Mr King indicated that integrating climate change priorities with other priorities such as fuel poverty tended to increase public interest. He highlighted in particular an initiative whereby drivers were encouraged to use their cycles around the town centre through the provision of a free central storage facility. The Chair requested that further information on the cycling initiative be circulated to the Forum for information. Mr King felt that partnership working was at the root of their success in this area. Middlesbrough had also employed the first full-time climate change officer in the UK and now had a second officer working on the adaptation strategy on a temporary contract. In terms of planning policy this could be problematic because while planners had to work within government guidelines they were perfectly able to build elsewhere if they felt the requirements imposed by Middlesbrough Council were too steep. Therefore there needed to be some negotiation in these matters. However a number of new builds in Middlesbrough, specifically the Middlehaven development, were being constructed to high sustainability standards and it was hoped that others could be encouraged to build to these high standards. The Chair requested that further information on Middlesbrough Council's planning policies and sustainability standards be circulated to the Forum.

A Resident commented that the presentations had concentrated on future initiatives at the expense of the here and now, with little information on composting and recycling. Mr King reported that there was a town wide green waste collection service and home composting was encouraged. Work was underway to increase recycling rates and minimise residual waste to landfill sites outside Middlesbrough, something which would be strengthened under the One Planet Living approach. A member referred to the One Planet Living

approach, querying how many of the 10 principles were achievable in reality. Mr King acknowledged some of the targets (zero carbon, zero waste) would take a long time and could not be done without commitment from governments however challenging targets were necessary to encourage progress.

Mr King was thanked for attending the meeting and answering questions.

Decision

That the content of the presentation be noted and used to inform members during this investigation.

That further information on Middlesbrough Council's cycling initiative, planning policies and sustainability standards be circulated to the Forum.

33. Scrutiny Investigation into Climate Change and Carbon Management – Evidence from the Council's Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Environmental Standards Manager and Highway Services Manager were in attendance to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Climate Change and Carbon Management'. The Environmental Standards Manager outlined examples of the work that had been completed, or was underway, to reduce the carbon footprint of Hartlepool Borough Council. A number of potential projects were also introduced to contribute to the Carbon Management Programme and associated strategies. The ultimate aim was to reduce the Council's carbon emissions by 35% within five years. Details were given of current initiatives and a list of future projects was appended to the report.

The Highway Services Manager detailed the environmental impact of street lighting and the benefits of the new energy efficient technology. Examples were given of recent initiatives in this area.

A resident referred to plans to switch street lighting on later and off earlier, querying if a safety analysis had been carried out. The Highway Services Manager advised that the lighting worked on the basis of natural light levels. A trial had been carried out on Headland Square where there were very few light sources and this had so far been successful. Further monitoring would be carried out but nothing permanent would be done unless it was safe. A member queried whether there was a legal requirement for roads to be lit to a certain standard. The Highway Services Manager indicated there was and that plans to roll out white light technology were on hold until these standards could be met. Reference was made to the A179, the Chair asked that lighting on this road be checked outside of the meeting. Reference was also made to disposal of fluorescent tube lights.

The Chair thanked the Environmental Standards Manager and Highway Services Manager for attending the meeting and answering questions.

Decision

That the content of the presentations be noted and used to inform members during this investigation.

34. Scrutiny Investigation into Climate Change and Carbon Management – Evidence from the Mayor as Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Housing and the Chair of Hartlepool's Environmental Partnership *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Mayor as Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Housing and the Chair of Hartlepool's Environment Partnership, Councillor Peter Jackson, had submitted written evidence in relation to the Forum's ongoing investigation into 'Climate Change and Carbon Management'. The Mayor gave information on HBC's management of its carbon emissions, their plans to meet the challenges of Climate Change and Carbon Management and specific initiatives aimed at reducing energy used by the Council. Councillor Jackson detailed the roles and responsibilities of the Environment Partnership in tackling the issues of climate change and carbon emissions and suggested ways to help raise awareness of climate change in the community. Terms of reference for the Climate Change Working Group were currently being redrafted and would be circulated to the Forum when complete.

Decision

That the written evidence be noted and used to inform members during this investigation.

35. Scrutiny Investigation into Climate Change and Carbon Management – Forum Participation in a Climate Change Activity Session in conjunction with 11 Million Day *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

Members were advised that the yearly Environment Roundabout was an event that over 200 school children in Hartlepool participate in which aims to teach children about different aspects of the environment. Although the Roundabout was due to be held in January 2010, (which Members of the Forum would also be invited to attend) provisional arrangements had been put in place for schoolchildren and young people to come into the civic centre on 11 Million Day (6th November 2009) to take part in a range of activities. Therefore, by holding the Climate Change Activity Session on 11 Million Day would enable school children to be involved in the scrutiny process. A number of proposals

for this activity session were outlined within the report and Members expressed their support for the following proposals:-

- (a) That the session be held on the afternoon of 11 Million Day which is the 6th November 2009 in the Civic Suite;
- (b) That two activities be organised similar to the scenarios used for the Environment Roundabout;
- (c) That Members of the Forum along with a class of year 5 pupils participate in the activities, with 15 children taking part in each activity;
- (d) That each activity runs for a maximum of 20 minutes and that both groups of children and the Members in attendance come together after the activities to discuss / debate the issues covered;
- (e) In order for the children to further engage in the Scrutiny process, it is suggested that the option of the children coming along to a future meeting of the Forum to feed back their comments be explored; and
- (f) That lunch be provided before the event and the cost of this be divided between Scrutiny, the Children and Families section and the Environmental Standards section; and that a request for funding from the Dedicated Scrutiny Budget for this lunch be submitted to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for approval.

The Chair encouraged member participation in the activity session.

Decision

That the climate change activity session be held in conjunction with 11 Million Day and that a letter of invitation be sent to Members.

36. Any other items which the Chairman considers are urgent

The Chairman ruled that the following exempt item should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay:

Minute 37– Evidence from the North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

37 Evidence from the North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

Written evidence was submitted from Bill Kirkup, Sustainability Project Manager for the North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership for members' consideration.

Decision

That the written evidence be noted and used to inform members during this investigation.

The meeting concluded at 5:30pm.

CHAIRMAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

9th November 2009



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES: BUDGET AND
POLICY FRAMEWORK INITIAL CONSULTATION
PROPOSALS 2010/2011

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity, as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2010/2011, for the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum to consider the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department's pressures and priorities relating to the provision of neighbourhood services.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 16th October, 2009, consideration was given to the Executive's Initial Budget and Policy Framework consultation proposals for 2010/2011 to 2012/2013.
- 2.2 At this meeting it was agreed that, as in previous years, each of the Standing Scrutiny Forums will consider the budget proposals covering the service areas within their remit. Given the recent restructure of departments within the Council, and creation of the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department and Child and Adult Department, presentations will also be given by Directors to provide an overarching view of the general risks facing their departmental budgets and key policy issues for this year. Any comments / observations will then be fed back to the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 27th November, 2009 to enable a formal response to be presented to Cabinet on 14th December, 2009.
- 2.3 Appended to this report, for consideration as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2010/2011, are details of the pressures and priorities relating to the neighbourhood services areas of service provision within the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services Department:-

Appendix A - Schedule of Budget Pressures 2010/2011;

Appendix B - Schedule of Budget Priorities 2010/2011.

- 2.4 Cabinet is proposing that the pressures identified are funded. In relation to the priorities Cabinet is not proposing that these items are funded.
- 2.5 At this stage of the budget process Cabinet have not identified specific efficiency proposals for individual departments as it is envisaged the savings necessary to balance the 2010/2011 budget will be achieved from the Business Transformation Programme. This position assumes pressures will not exceed the available budget head room and the Government confirm the grant increase for 2010/2011.
- 2.6 To assist Members of this Scrutiny Forum in the consideration of the initial proposals, arrangements have been made for the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services to be in attendance and an invitation to this meeting has also been extended to the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) (attendance subject to availability).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Scrutiny Forum: -
- a) as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2010/2011, consider the pressures and priorities relating to the neighbourhood services areas of service provision within the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services Department; and
 - b) formulates any comments and observations to be presented by the Chair of this Scrutiny Forum to the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 27th November, 2009 to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 14th December, 2009.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

INITIAL PRESSURES 2010/11**6.1 Appendix A****NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

	£'000	Description
Support Bus Service and Concessionary Fares	154	This pressure arises due to the reinstatement of the hospital service H1 to North Tees and an anticipated above inflationary increase in concessionary fare payments.
Total	154	

INITIAL PRIORITIES 2010/11**6.1 Appendix B****NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

	£'000	Description
Extension of out of hours service	183	Depending on Members' decision on options for extending the service the costs could be funded from existing budgets or incur additional costs of up to £183,000.
Neighbourhood Management/Community Safety	50	With the demise of NDC the contribution towards the Neighbourhood Management/Policing and Community Safety programme at 173 York Road will cease. Cleveland police are committed to funding half of the costs and are pursuing the increase through their own budget pressure rounds. The costs cover premises/ half a FTE anti social behaviour officer and administrative support.
Total	233	