

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

30 November 2009

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

### **Present:**

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Robbie Payne (Deputy Mayor) (Finance and Performance Portfolio Holder),  
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),

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Sue Johnson, Assistant Director, Planning and Service Integration  
Joanne Smithson, Head of Performance and Partnerships  
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **117. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Pam Hargreaves (Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder).

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

None.

### **119. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2009**

Confirmed.

## **120. Tees Valley Metro** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision – tests (i) and (ii) apply.

### **Purpose of report**

The report updated the Cabinet on the progress of the Tees Valley Metro and to seek Cabinet approval to proceed with phase one of the project for Hartlepool. This includes platform and access improvements to Hartlepool Station.

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

The Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder reported The Tees Valley Authorities and TVR have been working towards an improved Metro style enhanced rail service for a number of years. This initiative will support regeneration of the Tees Valley through the linking of key sites with enhanced facilities for the movement of passengers and goods. Key features of the service would be:

- Four trains an hour on the Darlington to Saltburn and Hartlepool to Nunthorpe line;
- New rolling stock, track and signalling improvements;
- Up to five new stations serving key employment sites and regeneration areas such as James Cook Hospital and Durham Tees Valley airport; and
- Upgrades for all other stations

Cabinet gave approval, in principle, on 17th September 2007 to support the development of the Tees Valley Metro Project, including agreement in principle to the provision of a “local” contribution” of 10% of the overall costs of the project proportional to the benefits of the scheme.

More detailed development work has been completed, and a robust, costed, implementation plan has been prepared which envisages the delivery of the Metro project in three phases. The first phase was included within the North East’s revised Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) submission and has been formally accepted by the Department for Transport (DfT). There is now a need for Cabinet to consider and approve the work required in the next stages of the project (including the submission of a detailed business case for one element of the project), and reaffirm the Council’s commitment in principle to provide a ‘local’ contribution to the total capital cost of the improvements (in conjunction with the other four Tees Valley Authorities).

The Metro project covers the existing Tees Valley rail network from Darlington to Saltburn, and between Hartlepool and Nunthorpe. The business case work carried out for the whole project estimated the capital cost of all of the works required to deliver a four train per hour service in both directions to be around £220 million, although it has become clear that the DfT are unlikely to fund this in a single phase. The Tees Valley

Authorities and the Joint Strategy Unit had, therefore, developed a phased implementation plan for the Metro network that takes account of the current and expected funding envelopes for major rail projects, the recent review of the North East Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) and the renewal of the existing Northern Rail franchise in 2013. This plan looks at the early delivery of discreet elements of the Metro project, primarily to maximise the advantage of a likely under-spend in the early years of the RFA programme.

Phase 1 of the Metro (costing £33.9 million) including new James Cook University Hospital station; new Platforms at Darlington and Middlesbrough stations; relocation of stations at Durham Tees Valley Airport and Wilton; station improvements at Eaglescliffe, Thornaby and Hartlepool; and Refurbished trains.

Phase 2 of the Metro, (estimated cost £55 – £60 million) concentrating on the Darlington to Saltburn Line including new stations at Morton Palms, Teesside Park (both with park and ride) and Middlehaven; refurbishment to other stations; and new trains.

Phase 3 of the Metro, concentrating on the Hartlepool to Nunthorpe Line, including track and signalling work; new stations at Queens Meadow, Nunthorpe Parkway (both with park and ride) and The Ings; refurbishment to other stations; and new trains. The cost of the Phase 3 element is estimated at £130 million, but this includes a signal renewal scheme that is programmed by Network Rail for 2017/18, the cost of which needs to be netted off this figure to give the 'additional' cost of the Metro scheme.

Network Rail's "Guide to Railway Investment Projects" (GRIP) process has eight stages, with GRIP Stage 6 representing the implementation of a project. Many of the elements of the first phase of Metro have reached GRIP Stage 3, and so the next step within the project's development will be to move all elements within the first phase through GRIP Stage 4. This should take a maximum of 12 months from the signing of the GRIP Stage 4 agreement with Network Rail.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted that the Darlington Station component of the first phase, which is crucial to unlock frequency and timetable improvements across the whole network, would need to be supported by a major scheme business case, given that the cost of this element was in excess of the £5 million threshold. Cabinet was therefore asked to agree that a business case be submitted in order to gain Programme Entry for the Darlington Station element of the project in Spring 2010.

The report went on to highlight the project governance, risks and financial considerations. While there were significant financial considerations within the scheme and in consideration of the 10% contribution, Cabinet was advised that there would be detailed consideration of this council's contribution to the proposals at each stage of the implementation. The first phase did include significant benefits for Hartlepool, particularly in relation to works being undertaken at Hartlepool Station where about £3.2m is

notionally allocated to improvements at Hartlepool Station. Substantial improvements are proposed to the station infrastructure and adjoining interchange site.

Cabinet was advised that provision needed to be made in the Council's Capital Budget Plan for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13 for the Tees Valley Metro project. It was anticipated that the funding requirement would be met through the allocation of funds through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process, the next round of which starts in 2011. Savings within elements of phase one and management of the programme to keep the costs of these below £5m would help to minimise the overall "local contribution" required. The Hartlepool LTP3 should nevertheless include an allocation for rail improvements recognising the contribution necessary to the Darlington improvements and also looking ahead to phase two and three of the Metro scheme. This commitment would have an impact on the amount of other schemes that may be funded through the third LTP. This would need to be confirmed at a later date.

The Mayor indicated that the initial scepticism of the Metro scheme had been due to the lack of service to Hartlepool. Hartlepool was now an intrinsic part of the scheme and the works to Hartlepool Station were to be welcomed. There was some concern at the timetable of the proposals considering the time that the delivery of the Transport Interchange had taken. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that while there were issues to be finalised and agreed between the five authorities, the timetable was deliverable. Cost issues were being well managed with a substantial contingency, all of which may not be required. Costs during the recession should also be lower. The Chief Executive commented that while some of the works would have to be linked to rail franchising timetables which could extend the delivery dates of later elements, there was commitment both regionally and nationally to the scheme.

Cabinet Members questioned the total contribution to the scheme that would be required through its delivery. The Director stated that the initial contribution was 10% from the Tees Valley but he did expect that Hartlepool's contribution within that would be one fifth. Cabinet also questioned why the costs were so high at Darlington Station. The Director commented that the estimate had been given by Network Rail. Currently local trains crossed the main Northeast line and the plans rectified this allowing the major increase in regularity of services which was key to the Metro scheme.

### **Decision**

1. That officers be authorised to work with Joint Strategy Unit and Network Rail to deliver the accelerated parts of phase 1 in Hartlepool and further develop the first phase of the project through the GRIP Stage 4 process, including consultation with stakeholders and the public;
2. That the Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder and the Assistant Director (Transport and Engineering Services) be authorised to

agree amendments or new aspects to the Phase 1 works in Hartlepool to enable these to be expedited;

3. That officers be authorised to seek any necessary planning permissions or other consents necessary to deliver the first phase of the project;
4. That officers be authorised to work with the Joint Strategy Unit, Network Rail and Northern Rail in the project board and to confirm the anticipated operational benefits and costs for the contents of the first phase;
5. That Cabinet reaffirms the Council's 'in principle' commitment to provide an appropriate amount of a combined local funding contribution of 10% of the relevant capital cost towards the Tees Valley Metro Project proportionate to the benefits to Hartlepool; and
6. That Cabinet agrees, in principle, to support a submission of a business case in order to gain Programme Entry for the Darlington Station element of the project in Spring 2010.

## **121. Local Area Agreement Quarter 2 (2009/10) Summary of Performance** *(Head of Performance and Partnerships)*

### **Type of decision**

None. The report was for Cabinet's information only.

### **Purpose of report**

To update Cabinet on performance against the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Targets 2009/10.

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

The Mayor reported that Hartlepool's Local Area Agreement contained 33 outcomes, structured around the eight themes of the Community Strategy. To measure progress towards achieving these outcomes, 142 targets had been agreed. There were three different types of performance indicators with associated targets in the Local Area Agreement:

- Designated Improvement Targets (35)
- Department for Children, Schools and Families Targets (10)
- Local Priority Targets (97)

Performance is reported on a thematic basis and individual performance reports are produced for each outcome. Outcome reports contain a narrative on performance for indicators, actions for improvement and risks.

Cabinet's discussions focussed on the Local Priority indicator, the percentage of people who think litter and rubbish is a problem in their area. It was noted that while the town was cleaner than ever (the designated target on improved street and environmental cleanliness is on track to achieve), resident's satisfaction has reduced. The Head of Performance and Partnerships responded that further analysis had been carried out and areas of higher dissatisfaction have been targeted for additional cleansing.. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods commented in response to Members comments that a lot of work was undertaken with fast food

outlets throughout the town and most did work with the council to reduce litter.

The Assistant Chief Executive highlighted the high levels of attainment in many of the targets included in the report. The work undertaken towards the Department of Culture, Schools and Families admittedly high targets had received great credit from DCSF officials due to the improvements made for example.

Cabinet Members also referred to some of the excellent work being undertaken in reaching the health targets. The work on smoking cessation for instance was a 'good news story' that should be highlighted. The work on tackling child poverty was, however, an area where all partners focussed still needed to be maintained.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **122. Seaton Carew Cricket Club – Request for Funding** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek allocation of funding as a 'guarantee against loss' to ensure the capital improvement project could commence and to avoid loss of secured financial grants.

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

The Mayor reported that the project, as detailed in the appendix to the report, aimed to develop the new and improved facilities at Seaton Carew Cricket Sports and Social Club. A complete breakdown of the current funding position was also set out in the appendix, though it contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Mayor indicated that Cabinet had supported the project from its inception. The scheme had received some disappointing news in that the level of expected support from Sport England had been reduced. This would not compromise the scheme, though an indication that the Council would underwrite the scheme was required. It was unlikely that this funding would be called upon, but the Mayor considered that supporting this important development and ensuring that none of the approved funding was lost was important.

**Decision**

1. That Cabinet supports the allocation of up to £30,000 in support as a “guarantee against loss” to enable the new development to proceed to schedule.
2. Cabinet are requested to agree to any unspent balance in regard to this request to be carried forward if necessary.

**123. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 124 ‘Senior Management Review’ paragraph 2; ‘Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual’.

**124. Senior Management Review** (*Chief Personnel Officer and Chief Solicitor*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

The report sets out the background to the Senior Management Review in 2008 and an appeal that has been received.

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

The report provided further information and options for Cabinet to consider in concluding the appeal. Further details are set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

**Decision**

The decision of Cabinet is set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 10.15 a.m.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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