

# **COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD**

16 October 2009

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond (Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Sylvia Pinkney, Consumer Services Manager  
Alison Mawson, Head of Community Safety and Prevention  
Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager  
Andy Golightly, Senior Regeneration Officer  
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **16. Church Street Grants – Amendment to Grant Area** *(Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development))*

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To seek endorsement to widen the boundary of the current Church Street grant scheme to include commercial properties in Church Square, Scarborough Street, Tower Street and Whitby Street that are also in the Conservation area.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The report outlined the current take up of the grant scheme in Church Street. It was noted that as a result of the consultation work undertaken in the area a number of businesses had confirmed an interest in the scheme.

**Decision**

The widening of the Church Street Grant Scheme to incorporate commercial properties in Church Square; Scarborough Street, Tower Street and Whitby Street that were also in the conservation area was endorsed.

## **17. Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Cohesion Fund Proposals** *(Head of Community Safety and Prevention)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To consider the recommendations of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) Community Cohesion Grants Panel in respect of applications for community cohesion funding.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

An application for community cohesion funding had been received from St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church. The funding was requested to hold a BME Cultural Celebratory Event which would include presentations from Hartlepool Borough Council and others, a 'Different National Food Exhibition' and a cultural costume parade with a prize being offered for the best national attire.

The total cost of the project was £1,990 and the grant funding recommended was £1,000.

### **Decision**

The application from St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Cohesion Grants Panel for funding to support the community cohesion related projects totalling £1,000 was approved.

## **18. Trading Standards Service Plan 2009/10** *(Head of Procurement, Property and Public Protection)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To consider and seek Portfolio Holder's approval to the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2009/10, which is a requirement under the national performance framework for trading standards

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Trading Standards Service Plan for 2009/10 was attached at Appendix 1. The Consumer Services Manager reported that the programmed trading standards inspections carried out was on target with 100% of high risk premises inspected and 78% of all other premises that were due for inspection. In total 399 inspections had been undertaken.

During 2009/10 the focus of the available resources would be to deal with the following three high priority areas:

- Age related products
- Product Safety
- Rogue Traders

The Consumer Services Manager detailed a number of exercises undertaken by the Trading Standards Team including testing businesses on the sale of age-restricted products to young people and observation to ascertain if adults were purchasing age-restricted products for young people but no illegal sales were reported. The Portfolio Holder was informed that additional funding had been provided by the Department of Health for an additional full-time post to undertake checks at retailers, gather intelligence and any necessary enforcement in relation to illicit tobacco sales.

It was noted that the Trading Standards Team had again experienced significant staffing difficulties throughout 2008/09. Whilst all programmed and reactive work had been carried out, the loss of qualified staff had a significant effect on service improvements.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the exercise undertaken on the sale of age-restricted products and questioned whether there was less of this happening or were retailers just not being caught. The Consumer Services Manager commented that this issue was a difficult one to pursue as retailers knew the children from their area and were often cautious when a young person came into the shop whom they did not know. There were alternative ideas being examined for undertaking these kind of exercises. Additionally the Head of Community Safety and Prevention indicated that she was meeting with the Police to look at the issue of contraband alcohol in the town being sold from residences and how this can be tackled.

In relation to the staffing difficulties highlighted in the report, the Portfolio Holder questioned if this was a national issue. The Consumer Services Manager confirmed that there was a national shortage of Trading Standards and Environmental Health Officers. However, it was hoped that the extended career grade scheme offered would enable the authority to be competitive in the market of employing appropriate officers.

## **Decision**

That the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2009/10 be approved.

## **19. Response to DCLG Consultation on Planning Policy Statement 15 – Planning for the Historic Environment** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To outline the response to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) regarding their consultation on Planning Policy Statement 15 – Planning for the Historic Environment.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The report outlined the response by the Council to the consultation by DCLG regarding the policy statement 'Planning for the Historic Environment'. Generally the document was welcome however it was felt that some of the detail may be difficult to implement and could result in an increased work load for local authorities when implementing the policy.

Detailed comments from officers along with those of Tees Archaeology were attached by way of Appendix.

## **Decision**

That the Portfolio Holder noted the report and agreed that a response to the consultation document be forwarded incorporating Officers' comments.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 am.

**PETER DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 22 October 2009**