

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

8 February 2010

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

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Pamela Hargreaves (Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder),
Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health 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 in attendance:

Councillor Jane Shaw, Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee
Councillor Trevor Rogan, Chair of Regeneration and Planning Services
Scrutiny Forum
Councillor G Lilley, Greatham Ward Councillor
Brian Walker, Treasurer, Greatham Community Association
Dorothy Clark, Chair, Greatham Community Association
Louise Wallace, HBC/NHS Hartlepool
Sue Vickers, Energy Saving Trust

Officers:

Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Caroline O'Neill, Assistant Director, Child and Adult Services
Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Officer
Chris Little, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Joanne Smithson, Head of Performance and Partnerships
Sue Johnson, Assistant Director, Child and Adult Services
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start Extended Service and Early Years
Manager
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Manager
James Walsh, Scrutiny Support Officer
Danny Dunleavy, Youth Offending Service Manager
David Hart, Strategic Procurement Manager
Geraldine Martin, Head of Adult Services
Peter Davies, Principal Youth Officer
Catherine Frank, Local Strategic Partnership Manager

Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

171. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Robbie Payne (Deputy Mayor) (Finance & Performance Portfolio Holder).

172. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

173. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2010

Confirmed.

174. Youth Work in Greatham – Greatham Community Centre Lease Between Hartlepool Borough Council and the Master and Brethren of the Hospital of God *(Children's Services Portfolio Holder)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet's agreement not to renew the lease between Hartlepool Borough Council and the Master and Brethren of the Hospital of God, and approve a more cost effective option for the provision of youth work in Greatham. This follows the expiry of the present lease of the Community Centre on May 3rd, 2010, by Hartlepool Borough Council, from the Hospital of God.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report provided background information relating to the provision of youth work and lease arrangements at Greatham Community Centre.

At present, the local authority provided two evenings of youth work at Greatham Community Centre. The youth work was provided for via a lease between the Council and the Hospital of God, which was drawn up in 1990 by the then Cleveland County Council. The 20 year lease expired on 3 May 2010 and required the local authority to rent, maintain, staff, clean, etc the building, all of which was funded from the Youth Service budget. Whilst the

Community Centre undoubtedly provided valued broader services to the community, the Council's sole interest was that of youth work. In effect, the broader activities of the Community Centre were receiving a significant subsidy. The expiry of the lease had given the opportunity to review and evaluate provision and come up with a more cost effective option, whilst still protecting the youth work. Business Transformation together with Service Delivery Options for the Youth Service and Connexions, made a value for money imperative even more appropriate. The Council would continue to support the Centre's committee in looking at alternatives for securing services in future.

The financial savings the Local Authority would achieve in ceasing the lease agreement were set out in the report together with details of the circumstances in which variations to such savings may occur. The report included legal, staffing and asset management considerations.

The Chair of Greatham Community Association and Councillor G Lilley, who were in attendance at the meeting, highlighted concerns on behalf of the residents of Greatham regarding the proposal to terminate the lease and sought the Council's support during the transition period. The importance of the centre to the local community and the range of activities provided were outlined.

In response, the Mayor stated that the level of subsidy provided by the Council was excessive, no longer sustainable and there was a need for financial assistance and support from alternative sources. However, the Council would continue to support and advise the Community Centre Management Committee during the transition period and provide the appropriate skills to ensure a smooth and continuous operation of the centre. It was anticipated that future maintenance costs would be minimal as the Council were required to bring the building up to an acceptable standard prior to the transfer of the lease. The Mayor referred to the possible sources of funding available to the Community Centre. A representative from the Community Association indicated the association's desire to take on the lease to enable applications for grant funding to be made.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding recent discussions with the Hospital of God, the financial situation and potential level of subsidy from the Hospital of God. Members acknowledged that this was a valued and well utilised community facility.

A number of options were suggested as a way forward including the costs to the Council if Members were minded to fund the annual lease payment. Whilst some Members were of the view that there was a responsibility of the local authority to provide financial support for such services, others commented on the disadvantages of continuing this arrangement. Following further debate, it was suggested that this item be deferred pending clarification and further consideration of the financial arrangements.

Decision

That this item be deferred pending clarification and further consideration of the financial arrangements.

175. Final Report – The Hartlepool Transport Interchange *(Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To outline the findings and conclusions of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into the Hartlepool Interchange.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Chair of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum presented the final report of the forum's investigation into 'The Hartlepool Transport Interchange' which outlined the overall aim of the scrutiny investigation, terms of reference, methods of investigation, findings, conclusions, and subsequent recommendations. The final report was approved by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 11 December 2009.

Queries were raised in relation to the future plans for the unused platform to which Members were advised that it was not envisaged that the unused platform would be utilised for a number of years. However, agreement had been finalised regarding access to the unused platform for improvement works.

Decision

That the recommendations of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'The Hartlepool Transport Interchange' as set out below, be approved and adopted;

- (a) That signage in and around the Transport Interchange is clear and ensures users are fully aware of where amenities are located;
- (b) That the Council sets in place an agreed procedure with Network Rail to ensure that the unused platform is cosmetically enhanced and made aesthetically pleasing;
- (c) That a review is carried out with all transport operators as potential users of the Hartlepool Transport Interchange into the plans for layover areas and loading / unloading bays, with the aim of

maximising out of hours usage; and

- (d) That a process is put in place to regularly review and keep Members informed of the development of the Hartlepool Transport Interchange with particular reference to usage and transport operator linkage.

176. Action Plan – The Hartlepool Transport Interchange
(*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To agree an Action Plan in response to the findings and subsequent recommendations of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'The Hartlepool Transport Interchange.'

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report provided brief background information into the scrutiny investigation into the Hartlepool Transport Interchange. To assist Cabinet in its determination of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's recommendations, attached as Appendix A was a proposed Action Plan for the implementation of those recommendations which had been prepared in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Decision

That the Action Plan prepared in response to the recommendations of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into 'The Hartlepool Transport Interchange', be approved.

177. Formal Response to the Executive's Budget and Policy Framework Proposals 2010/11 (*Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To provide the formal response of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to the Executive's Budget and Policy Framework Proposals for 2010/11.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee presented the formal response of the Committee in relation to the Executive's finalised proposals 2010/11, prior to the consideration of the finalised proposals at the meeting of full Council on 11 February 2010. The Vice-Chair indicated that Scrutiny were largely supportive of the departmental pressures, priorities and income generation proposals. However, there were a number of areas where Members expressed specific views against and in support of the proposals as outlined in Sections 3.3 to 3.11 of the report.

With regard to Section 3.3 of the report relating to the recommendation that the protection of support for the Credit Union as a priority for 2010 and the recommendation that this funding be ring fenced, clarification was sought as to what suggestions had been made in relation to how this may be funded. The Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee advised that no specific funding had been identified.

In relation to the additional funding required to support the extension of the 'out of hours' service, the Mayor indicated the possibility of utilising funding originally allocated for street cleansing of Navigation Point. Whilst it was acknowledged that maintenance arrangements were no longer the responsibility of the Council, the importance of ensuring the landlord maintained this area was emphasised.

Decision

That the formal response of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and the four Scrutiny Forums be received and the recommendations be considered as part of the budget under minute number 178 below.

178. Medium Term Financial Strategy – Budget and Policy Framework 2010/2011 to 2013/2014 (*Corporate Management Team*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to enable Cabinet to finalise the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and determine the detailed 2010/2011 Budget and Council Tax proposals to be referred to Council on 11 February 2010.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Chief Financial Officer presented the report which provided a detailed overview of the financial issues affecting the Council in relation to:

The 2009/2010 Outturn Strategy;
Capital programme 2010/2011 to 2013/2014;
General Fund and Council Tax 2010/2011 to 2013/2014

The financial position for 2010/2011 and beyond was significantly more challenging than previously anticipated. The budget proposals for 2010/11 delivered a balanced budget largely through the work undertaken to achieve the first stage of the Business Transformation Programme. This reflected the sound planning and implementation work done to date. In the proposals some £4.2 million of efficiencies were set out which more than achieved the increased efficiency target set by Central Government of 4%. Cuts in services were therefore not considered for 2010/11. The report proposed a Council Tax increase of 2.5%.

The report considered the financial impact of risks facing the council and sets out proposals to mitigate these. The essence of the 2009/10 closure strategy was to maximise risk mitigation to ensure that in 2010/11 these risks did not undermine the delivery of services.

The position for 2012 and beyond was bleak and deficits after all planned measures were undertaken of £4-5 million per annum were forecast. This was on the basis of an assumed 5% cut in Government grant which may turn out to be optimistic.

With regard to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's recommendations, referred to in minute number 177 above, Members were advised that the support of the credit union was identified as a priority, as set out in Appendix E to the report which had not been previously supported by Cabinet. As a result, funding in this regard had not been agreed in the current or future budgets. Members were requested to determine if they wished to provide £60,000 on a one-off basis to support the Credit Union from reserves. Following discussion, Cabinet were of the view that funding to support this issue should be debated at Council.

With regard to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's recommendation relating

to the extension of the out of hours noise service, it was suggested that the possibility of utilising funding originally allocated for street cleansing of the Marina/Navigation Point, as suggested in minute 177 above, be explored and the use of reserves be considered in the event that this proposal was not feasible.

Members views were sought regarding the income generated from tuck shop sales. Following discussion, Members supported the recommendation from Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee that the income should continue to be returned to young people and utilised for the funding and provision of additional projects and activities agreed in consultation with young people.

In response to a request for clarification regarding the floor damping position, the Chief Financial Officer advised that the Council would continue to be disadvantaged by floor damping mechanisms and outlined the reasons behind this problem.

Decision

That Council at its meeting on 11 February 2010 be requested to: -

CAPITAL

- (i) Approve the proposal to passport Government capital allocations.
- (ii) Approve the proposal to continue capital investment of £1.2m in SCRAPT priorities which is funded from prudential borrowing. Detailed proposals are set out in **Appendix A, table 1.**
- (iii) Approve the proposal to use unsupported borrowing to support the following capital investment in 2010/2011

	<u>£'000</u>
Community Safety Initiatives	150
Disabled Adaptations	50
Neighbourhood Forum Minor Works	156
Vehicle Replacement Programme	1905

- (iv) Endorse the additions to the Schools Capital Programme which have been supported by the Schools Forum Capital Sub-group.
- (v) Approve the proposal to use unsupported prudential borrowing as detailed in Appendix A Table 2 to support the Council's vehicle replacement programme where the business case demonstrates this is more cost effective than leasing and these costs can be either funded from existing budgets or increased income.
- (vi) From 2011/12 the SCRAPT priorities monies be used to address major strategic issues

2009/2010 OUTTURN STRATEGY

- (i) That a specific reserve ring fenced for Looked After Children be created from the net underspend from the Children's services budget 2009/10.
- (ii) That any other net departmental underspend be transferred to the new strategic risk reserve.
- (iii) That the underspend on centralised estimates be also transferred to the strategic risk reserve.
- (iv) That underspend on Area Based Grant schemes be clawed back centrally and used where possible to underpin the flexibility used to support the general fund.

2010/2011 REVENUE BUDGET

- (i) Approve the pressures of £1.159m included at Appendix C (5.2.3)
- (ii) Approve the contingency of £0.450m as detailed in **Appendix D**.
- (iii) Approve the Business Transformation efficiency of £2.514m (5.2.7).
- (iv) Approve the temporary funding of £1.960m being the use of reserves from the Budget Support Fund (5.2.10) and Area Based Grant flexibility (5.2.11)
- (v) Confirm the detailed allocations for individual Area Based Grant Schemes as set out in **Appendix F** (5.2.11)
- (vi) Confirm the Corporate efficiencies and savings of £1.75m as detailed in 5.2.12.
- (vii) Approve the proposed increase in Council Tax of 2.5% for Council's approval, with guideline increase of 2.5% for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 3.9% for 2013/14.
- (viii) Approve the additional items reflected in your 22nd December report and detailed in 5.2.18 together with the proposed funding of these changes as detailed in 5.2.19.
- (ix) Approve the detailed proposals for the achievement of the income target as detailed in **Appendix G** (5.2.18).
- (x) Note the achievement of the 4% efficiency target (5.2.20)
- (xi) Note the Budget risks and approve the mitigation strategy (5.2.22).
- (xii) Note the key financial assumption underpinning the budget as detailed in **Appendix I** (5.5.3).
- (xiii) Approve the transfer of £0.5m from the Supporting People reserve, previously set aside from grant repayment to the Strategic Risk Reserve (5.2.23 and 5.6.5)
- (xiv) Note the opportunity to re-badge the additional WNF (5.2.23) and that this be investigated with any resources freed up being transferred to the strategic risk reserve.
- (xv) Members note the lack of insurance cover for the Tall Ships event and note the continued need for the specific reserve.
- (xvi) Approve the allocation of £38,000 to extend the out of hours

noise service to include Friday and Saturday nights, 52 weeks of the year and to fund this commitment from the saving in cleansing costs on the Marina, which would now be funded by the owners of the Marina.

- (xvii) Approve that the £4,000 Youth Service tuck shop income be retained for investment in projects agreed in consultation with young people.
- (xviii) Determine if they wish to provide £60,000 on a one-off basis to support the Credit Union and to fund this from General Fund Balances.

179. Hartlepool Breastfeeding Strategy 2009-2012 (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To present the draft Hartlepool Breastfeeding Strategy, attached at Appendix A to the report.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Acting Director of Health Improvement was in attendance at the meeting and presented the report which highlighted the challenges in relation to improving breastfeeding initiation and maintenance rates. The strategy illustrated how even across the North East of England where breastfeeding rates were low in comparison to the rest of England, that Hartlepool was one of the poorer performing areas.

The Strategy highlighted the well researched and proven benefits to both mother and baby from breastfeeding and identified key objectives to address the issues to deliver a vision of Hartlepool being a 'Breastfeeding Town'

The Strategy sets out a series of actions that must be taken and lead personnel identified to drive forward implementation.

Members welcomed the strategy and highlighted the need to educate young mothers on the benefits of breastfeeding. The importance of publicising the availability of breast feeding premises and the Council leading by example in terms of breastfeeding provision was highlighted.

Decision

That the Breastfeeding strategy, be endorsed.

180. Fuel Poverty – Presentation (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To provide a presentation on Fuel Poverty.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Acting Director of Health Improvement together with a representative from the Energy Saving Trust were in attendance at the meeting and delivered a presentation on fuel poverty which included the following areas:-

- Definition of Fuel Poverty
- Importance of this issue
- Impact on People
- Size of Problem
- Actions being taken across the borough
- Further actions to be taken

Details of the type of support available and the need to develop partnership arrangements in this regard was highlighted.

Decision

That the contents of the presentation, be noted and the proposed next steps be supported.

181. Local Area Agreement Refresh (*Head of Performance and Partnerships*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) refresh proposals for 2010/11.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that Hartlepool's new LAA was agreed by Council in May 2008 and was a three year agreement (2008-11) based on the Community Strategy which sets out the priorities for Hartlepool. The LAA formed an agreement between Central Government and a local area represented by Hartlepool Borough Council and other key partners through the Hartlepool Partnership. The refresh process provided the opportunity to revise local priority targets and also consider any emerging priorities and potentially new targets for inclusion within the LAA. As this would be the final year of the current 3 year agreement targets within the LAA, they were not being revised unless there were exceptional circumstances that had rendered the original targets unrealistic.

In the refresh process last year, the Government identified 9 indicators for which designated targets would not be 'locked down' as it was expected that their achievement would be adversely affected by the economic downturn. Those indicators were:

- NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty
- NI 151 Overall employment rate
- NI 152 Working age people on out of work benefits
- NI 153 Working age population claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods
- NI 154 Net new homes provided
- NI 155 Number of affordable homes constructed (gross)
- NI 166 Median earnings of employees in the area
- NI 171 New business registration rate (VAT)
- NI 172 Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth

7 of the 9 indicators above were designated improvement targets in Hartlepool's LAA and were therefore able to be renegotiated with GONE in this refresh process.

When the LAA was first developed it was felt appropriate that activity aimed at reducing child poverty was included within the outcome 'Achieve economic wellbeing for all children and young people ensuring that they were prepared for working life'. However, as child poverty was increasingly a concern both nationally and within Hartlepool it was proposed to introduce a new outcome within the Jobs & Economy theme which would be 'Fewer children in Hartlepool experience the effects of poverty'. This outcome would include the designated target for NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty and the delivery and improvement plan for 2010/11 would reflect key elements of the Child Poverty Action Plan.

A summary of the outcomes within the LAA reflecting this addition was set out in appendix 1. The updated Story of Place for 2010/11 including the new child poverty outcome was available on request.

Hartlepool had sought to renegotiate six of the seven designated targets that were not 'locked down' in the refresh last year. Central Government had requested that in the refresh, these targets were set out as relative to the regional or national average rather than as actual percentages. It was proposed that the targets were set as relative to the regional average and the proposed targets were set out within Appendix 2.

The Mayor commented that Hartlepool had achieved the designated target for NI 155 relating to the number of affordable homes constructed. It was proposed that a new designated target be included within the LAA for NI 39 (Alcohol related hospital admissions, as set out in appendix 2) in place of the achieved designated target for NI 155. The recent Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) identified a red flag around tackling the harm caused by alcohol for Hartlepool and it was felt appropriate to include this indicator within the LAA.

The report included the proposed changes to local priority targets together with Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's comments on the LAA refresh. As the target for the number of schools achieving National Health Schools Status had been achieved in 2009/10 it was proposed to replace this local priority indicator with two indicators, and also to include a new local priority target for civic participation, as set out in Appendix 3.

A Member commented that whilst it was accepted that the current economic downturn and budget constraints had an impact on targets, it was considered that targets should continue to be challenging. A reduction in the proportion of children in poverty would be welcomed.

Decision

That the LAA refresh proposals for 2010/11 be approved for submission to Council on 25 February 2010

182. Machinery of Government Changes *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Key – tests (i) and (ii) apply

Purpose of report

(i) To update Cabinet on progress to date in preparing for the transfer

of funding and commissioning responsibility for the delivery of high quality education and training for young people aged 16-19 (16-25 for learners with an identified learning disability), from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to individual Local Authorities (LAs) from April 2010.

- (ii) The ASCL Act requires LAs to put in place the arrangements described in this report and as such they represent statutory requirements. Approval is sought to progress the necessary HR, legal and financial arrangements required statutorily to facilitate the transfer of the commissioning responsibilities.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children's Services Portfolio Holder reported that the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 placed a duty on local authorities to secure enough suitable education and training to meet the reasonable needs of young people aged 16-19 and up to aged 25 who had a learning difficulty assessment in their area.

Additional responsibilities included securing sufficient suitable provision to meet the reasonable needs of children and young people up to age 19 in youth detention and working with National Apprenticeship Service to ensure that young people had access to apprenticeships, including information about frameworks and standards.

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 together with Education and Skills Act 2008, also required local authorities responsible for raising the age of participation in education, training or work with training up to age 17 in 2013 and 18 by 2015.

In response to a Member query regarding the risks involved in the transfer of funding and commissioning responsibilities, the Assistant Director advised that the level of risk for the borough was yet to be determined. However, it was anticipated there was a risk to the College of Further Education relating to learning numbers. A Member requested that an update report be provided in relation to risks when available.

Decision

- (i) That the statutory duties placed upon the local authority in respect of commissioning education and training from 1 April 2010, be implemented.
- (ii) That the proposed Regional Planning arrangements (**Appendix 1**), be noted and the Director of Child and Adult Services be authorised in consultation with the Lead member for Children's Services to keep these arrangements under review to ensure they are effective in supporting the Authority in discharging its responsibilities.

- (iii) The outcomes of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) staff matching process i.e., 5 posts would transfer formally to the Local Authority from the LSC on 1st April 2010, be noted and the creation of 5 identified posts on the LA establishment, be approved.
- (iv) Cabinet noted the financial implications outlined in the report to support the staff transfer.
- (v) The intention to support shared services as appropriate at SRG level, be confirmed.
- (vi) The Director of Child and Adult Services, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Personnel Officer and the Chief Solicitor, be authorised to put in place all necessary arrangements for receiving the transferring LSC staff in line with best practice in Transfer of Undertakings – Protection of Employment (TUPE) legislation.
- (vii) The Director of Child and Adult Services, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the Head of Legal Services and appropriate senior LSC officers, be authorised to put in place all necessary arrangements for the transfer and management of funding contracts, agreed by the LSC with learning providers in the borough, from 1st April 2010 - 31st July 2010 and from 1st August 2010 – 31st July 2011.
- (viii) The Director of Child and Adult Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services, be authorised to confirm appropriate arrangements for stakeholder consultation and engagement at the local and sub-regional level.
- (ix) The Director of Child and Adult Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services and other appropriate members provide an annual report to Cabinet on 16-19 issues via the arrangements to report on the Children and Young People's Plan.

183. Grading Appeals Process for Senior Managers *(Chief Personnel Officer and Chief Solicitor)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To request Cabinet's decision regarding an interim process for the consideration of grading appeals from officers covered by the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report set out background information to the Council's Remuneration Strategy and Cabinet's recent decision that this issue required further

discussion.

Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee were currently undertaking a review into a related matter. It would therefore not be appropriate to determine a permanent process until that review had been completed and any recommendations reported and considered by Cabinet.

Cabinet were requested to agree an interim process, attached at Appendix A, to enable an outstanding appeal to be considered in a timely manner.

In response to a Member's concerns regarding the proposal to deal with this appeal in advance of a number of outstanding job evaluation appeals, the Chief Personnel Officer advised that the chief officer appeal process was a less technical assessment than that of green book employees and did not rely on job evaluation analysts and trade union representatives.

Decision

That the interim appeals process for officers covered by the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, as set out in Appendix A, be agreed.

184. Youth Offending Service – Outcome of Thematic Youth Crime Prevention Inspection *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To brief Cabinet on the outcome of the Thematic Youth Crime Prevention Inspection.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor advised that a feedback letter on the Youth Crime Prevention Inspection in Hartlepool had been received from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. The Thematic Inspection was part of the Inspection of Youth Offending Programme which was led by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. The Inspectors examined a representative sample of cases and observed work being undertaken with children and young people aged between 8 and 13. A feedback letter, attached at Appendix 1, provided information on the strengths of areas for improvement. These would be incorporated into the Youth Offending planning process for 2010/11.

A seminar for all Elected Members had been arranged for 2 February 2010 to hear more about the multi-agency approach being taken with children and young people to prevent them becoming involved in crime, anti-social

behaviour or social exclusion.

Decision

That feedback on the outcome of the Thematic Youth Crime Prevention Inspection, be noted.

185. Building a Safe Confident Future – The Social Work Taskforce Final Report (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

The report outlined the key recommendations of the Social Workforce Taskforce “Building a Safe, Confident Future” which had been accepted by Government. The report also considered the implications for the local authority.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report outlined the key recommendations of the final report of the Social Work Taskforce, which was set up to review the profession and advise on the reform programme. The report was published on 1 December 2009 and had been given strong government support. The recommendations included proposals regarding training, supervision, regulation of social workers and management to ensure a high calibre social workforce. These would be delivered by a national reform programme.

Decision

That the recommendations of the Social Work Taskforce and implications, be noted.

186. Progress Report – Connected Care (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Non key – for information only

Purpose of report

- (i) Connected Care was developed by the national charity, Turning Point, in 2004 following research which highlighted the fragmented

nature of health and social care and the problems this caused for people trying to access services.

- (ii) Following an audit conducted by the residents of Owton Ward the Connected Care service was established in 2008. The service is funded by the Department of Health (DoH) National 'Pathfinder' Pilot, Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC), The Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Working Neighbourhood fund (WNF).
- (iii) This report examines the progress made over the last 18 months in establishing Connected Care within the Owton Ward of Hartlepool. Reference will be made to the recently published Durham University evaluation of Connected Care in Hartlepool as well as proposed developments over the next 2 years.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder presented the report which included the background to the development of Connected Care in Owton Ward.

The report included details of progress made over the last 18 months in establishing the service, sources of income to develop services, types of services available together with the results of independent evaluations of the service.

Details of the challenges ahead and future direction of Connected Care were provided, as set out in the report. There were increasing calls for Connected Care to be made available to residents across Hartlepool. Connected Care was currently considering a proposal to extend the existing service across the borough, aligned to the three integrated locality teams between 2010-2012 as detailed in Appendix 1.

Connected Care worked with people who had a wide ranging set of difficulties, all of which were mirrored in the Hartlepool Community Strategy's target areas for improvement. The most significant barrier to the development of business activity was the absence of access to working capital. Connected Care were working with the Council and other agencies to identify sources of finance to support the development of the social enterprise businesses. There was scope for the funding of core costs to be shared by a wider range of agencies in the future.

Decision

That the report, be noted.

187. Regional Procurement (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of developments in Regional Procurement and to seek comments on a consultation exercise being undertaken by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP)

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder presented the report which highlighted developments in the collaborative procurement landscape across the region and how the Council needed to respond in order to maximise efficiencies while considering the sub-regional and local economy. It outlined the latest details of the review of the RIEP/North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO), and sought Cabinet's comments, both to feed into the consultation exercise and to develop a collaborative procurement policy for the Council.

The report included details of the Council's financial situation, the implications of regional procurement for the Council, the government's views, the Council's response, current options being explored which had been considered by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Performance who had commented as follows:-

- There is a need for flexibility in any collaborative approach to procurement
- Local Authorities need to be able to opt in and out of collaborative procurements
- It is important that local businesses are not disadvantaged by any future procurement strategy
- Three Members from each authority should continue on any Joint Committee to allow for inclusivity to the authority
- Costs needs to be considered carefully in the option appraisal

Officers across the Tees Valley had been considering a sub-regional approach, the benefits and risks of which were included in the report.

Discussion ensued on the benefits and risks of a sub-regional approach and the comments of the Portfolio Holder which were supported. The importance of supporting local businesses to work together to secure regional and sub regional contracts and providing advice and support on the contract process was emphasised.

Following a question and answer session, Members were of the view that authority be granted to the Chief Executive to feed into the consultation on behalf of Cabinet.

Decision

That authority be granted to the Chief Executive to feed into the RIEP/NEPO consultation review on behalf of Cabinet.

The meeting concluded at 11.50 am

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 17 FEBRUARY 2010