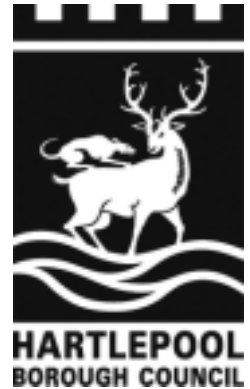


**JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY &
HOUSING AND CULTURE, LEISURE
AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO
DECISION SCHEDULE**



Friday, 11 June 2010

at 9.45 am

in Committee Room A, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond responsible for Community Safety and Housing and Councillor Hillary Thompson, Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Culture, Leisure and Tourism will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

No items

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

2.1 Limestone Landscape Partnership – Application for Grant – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items

4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

**JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY & HOUSING AND
CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM
PORTFOLIOS
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: LIMESTONE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP –
APPLICATION FOR GRANT

SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Portfolio Holders' authority to submit an application to the Limestone Landscapes Partnership for grant towards projects in the north part of rural Hartlepool centred on the villages of Hart and Elwick and also to become a partner member of the Partnership. The application is to provide resources for a group of interlinked projects based around ecology, landscape, history and geology including increased public access and interpretation. The application will be framed to consist of "in kind" contributions from the Council to match grant funding from the Limestone Landscape Partnership. The application if successful will commence in April 2011 for 3 years.

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The Limestone Landscape Partnership is a funding initiative based on the underlying limestone geology of the region. The limestone geology has produced a distinct landscape from the plant and wildlife within it, a distinct built history from the villages within the area and way of life arising from the agriculture and industries that have occurred because of the geology. The purpose of the Limestone Partnership is to develop a variety of projects with partners from local authorities, other publically funded bodies like Tees Archaeology, voluntary groups, private individuals and trusts that respect and enhance this unique area and character. On the basis of the aims of the Partnership, a series of multi-element interlinked projects are proposed as the basis of an application to the Partnership on the themes of ecology, landscape, history and geology including increased public access and interpretation. The Limestone Landscape Partnership area extends to the northern part of Hartlepool only (the extent of the underlying geology) and therefore a

project area is proposed around the historic villages of Hart and Elwick (the latter a Conservation Area), extending north to Hesleden Dene. The area around Hesleden Dene is outside the administrative boundary of Hartlepool and extends into Durham County. However the Limestone Landscape Partnership is intended to work across administrative boundaries. A plan is attached of the proposed project area.

- 2.2 The Partnership will be administered by Steering Group made up of representatives of the various organisation involved in the Partnership. The Steering Group will determine which individual projects go forward into the Limestone Landscapes programme. Hartlepool Council has been invited to become a member of the Partnership and allocated two representatives on the Steering Group, consisting of a member and an officer, each having a voting right to support individual projects throughout the Partnership area. To join the Partnership the Council needs to complete an agreement setting out the terms of the Partnership.

3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

- 3.1 The report concerns a grant application to support environmental projects in the rural north of Hartlepool and joining an external Partnership. There should be no budget implications for the Council other than the cost of Officer time.

4.0 TYPE OF DECISION

- 4.1 Non-key decision

5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Portfolio holders Regeneration, Liveability and Housing and Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio .

6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 That the Portfolio Holders give authority to begin the application process to the Limestone Landscape Partnership, including the completion of any necessary Partnership agreements, for a project area covering the rural area of north Hartlepool including the villages of Hart and Elwick, the application at a total cost of £300,000 over 3 years with an application for grant to the Partnership of up to £240,000 with the scheme commencing in April 2011. The Portfolio Holders also agree the Councils representatives on the Partnership Steering Committee.

Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods**Subject: LIMESTONE LANDSCAPES INITIATIVE –
APPLICATION FOR GRANT.**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Portfolio Holders' authority to submit an application to the Limestone Landscapes Partnership for grant towards projects in the north part of rural Hartlepool and to seek authority to join the Limestone Landscapes Partnership. The application is to provide funding towards a series of mixed interlinked projects based on the ecology, landscape, history and geology of the project area including increased public access. The Limestone Landscape Partnership is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is administered by Durham County Council via a Steering Committee made up of Partnership members. The grant application has been framed to consist of an "in kind" contribution from Hartlepool Council, consisting of Council Officer's time and that of expert voluntary groups and individuals to match grant funding from the Partnership, which will resource the purchase of materials and consultants time. There should therefore be no budgetary contribution from the Council, other than the funding of Officer time. The total project cost will be approximately £300,000 with a request for funding from the Limestone Landscape Partnership of approximately £240,000 with the balance being made up of the "in kind" contributions. The Partnership and projects within it will have a 3 year life span.

2. LIMESTONE LANDSCAPES PARTNERSHIP

- 2.1 The Limestone Landscapes Partnership is a funding initiative based on the underlying limestone geology of the region which stretches from South Shields in the north to Hartlepool in the south and partly out to Bishop Auckland in the west. The underlying limestone geology has produced a distinct and in some ways unique fauna and flora, a distinct built history in the form of the villages and settlements within it, using the limestone as a building material and the agricultural and industrial activities which have taken place as a result of the geology moulding the lives of those that live and have lived in the area. The underlying geology has produced a unique area with strong links between the natural and cultural heritage.

- 2.2 The purpose of the Limestone Landscapes Partnership is to develop a variety of projects with partners from local authorities, organisations like Tees Archaeology, voluntary groups, private individuals and trusts that respect and enhance this unique area and its character. The Partnership is interested in specific projects which have links to the

biodiversity, geology, cultural heritage, archaeology and historic landscape within the limestone landscape. The Partnership will be controlled by a Steering Group made up of Partnership members which Hartlepool Council has been invited to join. There are two places on the Steering Group for representatives from Hartlepool, made up of a member and an officer. Both will have individual voting rights to determine which projects are funded by the Partnership throughout its area.

3. OUTLINE OF GRANT APPLICATION

- 3.1 On the basis of the aims of the Limestone Landscape Partnership it is proposed to make an application based on multi-element, interlinked projects on the separate themes of ecology, landscape, history, archaeology and geology utilising increased public access and interpretation, as a method of linking the projects together. The individual projects are described below in detail in the report. The Limestone Landscape area extends to the northern part of Hartlepool only, which is the extent of the limestone geology. Therefore for the project area it is proposed to base the project around the historic villages of Hart and Elwick (the latter a Conservation Area since 1975) and extending north to Hesleden Dene. A plan of the project area is attached. The area around Hesleden Dene is outside the administrative boundary of Hartlepool and extends into Durham County. However the Limestone Landscape Partnership is intended to work across administrative boundaries.

Ecology Project – The ecology project is to investigate more closely wildlife areas which have either not been surveyed at all or where there have been few surveys undertaken in any detail. Species of plants and animals, thought to be extinct in the immediate area, may still be present. Surveys will establish whether this is the case. The areas to be surveyed will include the Hesleden Dene / Crimdon Dene woodland complex and areas around Elwick. The survey work is to be undertaken by the Councils Ecologist, expert volunteers and individuals. The results of the survey will inform management options for identified species of conservation concern and form the basis of interpretative material for the public visiting the area. Part of the project will also be positive management to restore and enhance a number of Local Wildlife sites.

Built History Project- The built history project is to be based on Hart and Elwick villages. For Hart village, a heritage project has already been undertaken in autumn 2009 by Tees Archaeology. The additional project under the Limestone Landscape Partnership is proposed to extend the work already completed at Hart by engaging consultants to work with village residents to produce a village historic atlas and environmental design study. Elwick village has been subject to a conservation area appraisal which identified that improvements could be achieved to the environment of the village green. The proposed

project under the Limestone Landscape Partnership is to employ a landscape design consultant to produce a village design statement involving the community in the design process and undertake a heritage project similar to that undertaken at Hart, with Council officers providing guidance and advice.

Public Access Project – This project looks to improve the accessibility of existing public rights of way and create links by providing new rights of way and access. The project has three elements with the first part centred on Heselden, Nesbit, Crimdon and Thorpe Bulmer Denes to the north of the project area. This part of the project looks to improve existing access, utilising any results from the ecology surveys to improve public appreciation. It is also likely to include a survey of the lost churchyard at St Mary's Church at Monk Hesleden. The second part of the project is based around Hart village and its aim is to improve existing rights of way network, creating new linkages including those to Elwick. The third part of the project will be around Elwick and like Hart will create new foot path linkages and access paths, with in both cases using any results from the ecology and heritage studies to improve public appreciation.

Tree Survey Project – This project is to survey and interpret significant trees in the landscape (as part of further public appreciation) in the project area next to existing rights of way or extensions to right of way and within the villages of Hart and Elwick. Part of the project will be the planting of future landmark trees and management of trees within specific locations like the villages of Hart and Elwick.

Geology Project – This project is to utilise working and disused quarries in the project area to allow public appreciation of the underlying limestone geology. It is thought that this project will have to be developed over the 3 years of the Limestone Landscape Project with implementation subsequent to it, as there are access and health and safety issues to be considered first.

4. PROJECT BENEFITS

- 4.1 The project area is proposed to be based on the rural area in the north of Hartlepool around Hart and Elwick villages. This area has only received small amounts of public investment previously, relative to areas like the Headland or the centre of Hartlepool for example. The proposed project would redress this. The ecology and tree survey projects will be beneficial in their own right in increasing the understanding of the area but also increasing public appreciation of the area for those that live there or for those visiting possibly for the first time. The public footpath project will further increase resident and visitor appreciation of this part of Hartlepool and will have benefits for physical and mental health by encouraging walking. The history element of the project will again increase resident and visitor understanding of the area, but also by undertaking environmental

village design studies, can lead to further investment in the village environments of Hart and Elwick after the Limestone Landscape project is completed, by defining issues together with costings to be addressed subsequently.

5. FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 As indicated in the introduction to the report the application to the Limestone Landscape Partnership has been framed to consist of contributions “in kind” of Council Officer and volunteer time (some of this expert) as a matching contribution to the grant request to the Partnership of around £240,000. Apart from the funding of Officer time (which has been budgeted) there should be no funding implications in making an application to the Limestone Landscapes Partnership.
- 5.2 As also indicated in the report Hartlepool has been invited to join the Partnership with two seats available on the Steering Group. It is proposed that the Portfolio Holder for Culture Leisure and Tourism be the member representative (who is also the Ward Member covering much of the application area) and the Council’s Conservation Officer be the Officer representative on the Partnership Steering Committee. A formal agreement also needs to be completed to allow membership of the Partnership to proceed.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That the Portfolio Holders give authority to begin the application process to the Limestone Landscape Partnership for a project area covering the rural area of north Hartlepool including the villages of Hart and Elwick. The application would be at a total cost of £300,000 over 3 years with an application for grant to the Partnership of up to £240,000 with the balance to be provided by in kind contributions. The scheme would commence in April 2011.
- 6.2 That the Portfolio Holders agrees that a formal Partnership agreement be completed by the Councils Chief Solicitor.
- 6.3 That the Portfolio Holders agrees that the Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder be the Member representative and the Council’s Conservation Officer be the Officer representative on the Partnership Steering Group.

Limestone Landscape Project Area

