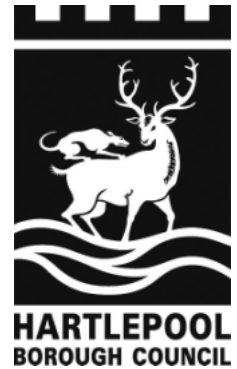


REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Thursday, 12 August 2010

at 3.00 pm

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

Councillors Barclay, Cranney, Cook, Gibbon, Griffin, A Lilley, London, Rogan and Wells

Resident Representatives:

Ted Jackson and Angie Wilcox

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 8th July 2010.
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

No items

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 7.1 Scrutiny Investigation into Working Neighbourhoods Fund – Scoping Report –
Scrutiny Support Officer

8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

**Date of Next Meeting – Thursday, 9 September 2010, at 3.00 pm in
Committee Room B, Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

8 July 2010

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Allan Barclay, Rob W Cook, Steve Gibbon, Frances London, Trevor Rogan and Ray Wells.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 (ii), Councillor Marjorie James was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Sheila Griffin.

Resident Representatives:

John Maxwell and Angie Wilcox

Officers: Sally Robinson, Assistant Director (Safeguarding and Specialist Services)
Danny Dunleavy, Youth Offending Service Manager
Antony Steinberg, Economic Development Manager
Mick Emerson, Principal Economic Development Officer (Business)
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
Elaine Hind, Scrutiny Support Officer
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sheila Griffin and Alison Lilley.

2. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2010

Confirmed.

4. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum – Portfolio Holders Response – Hartlepool's Business Incubation System *(Joint report of Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development)*

The Economic Development Manager presented a report which provided Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum with feedback on the recommendations from the investigation into 'Hartlepool's Business Incubation System' which was reported to Cabinet on 7 June 2010. Cabinet had accepted the recommendations in their entirety with the following additional recommendation:

"That the provision of short term loan finance from the local authority to further support local businesses be explored".

Details of the recommendations and proposed actions to be taken following approval by Cabinet were provided in the Action Plan attached at Appendix A.

Members were informed of the recent Government announcement for the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships, possibly operating on a sub-regional basis. Further information would be available following the publication of a Government White Paper later in the year. A Member referred to the possible duplication across some organisations and it was thought that the creation of a local economic partnership would avoid any duplication in services. The Economic Development Manager added that operating on a sub-regional basis would also be beneficial as this should allow local authorities to have more influence on decisions.

In relation to the additional recommendation suggested by Cabinet, its addition was approved by the Forum and clarification sought as to whether any progress had been made. The Economic Development Manager confirmed that a number of different models were currently being examined with sustainability being the key issue. With the inclusion of this as a formal Forum recommendation Members were to receive further progress updates as part of the six monthly monitoring report.

Recommended

The report was noted.

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

None.

6. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2010-11 *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

The Youth Offending Service Manager presented a report which set out the proposals for the development of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2010-11. It was noted that the Plan would be considered by Cabinet on 19 July 2010 and Council on 5 August 2010.

It was highlighted that the number of young people coming into the system had decreased by 25% in 2008-9 and a further 35% in 2009-10 due to the effective prevention work being undertaken.

There was some concern expressed by Members at the risk to the youth offending service in view of the current budgetary pressures being faced by the Council. The Youth Offending Service Manager confirmed that there was funding available for 2010-11 but longer term there was significant risk to the grant funding that the service relied upon. The Assistant Director added that the Service Delivery Option review for the Youth Offending Service would commence in 2011 and would look at the cost envelope and best services that could be delivered within that envelope.

A discussion ensued on the number of people still offending and it was commented that some of the key issues around people offending revolved around the educational standards achieved by those young people. It was noted that the Working Neighbourhoods Fund provided for engagement with young people in a meaningful way to help them gain employment.

A Member sought clarification on the numbers of people offending noted within the report. The Youth Offending Service Manager confirmed that the figures reflected a large number of persistent offenders which accounted for a lot of offences. Generally, Members were pleased to note that the effectiveness of the preventative measures in place was evidenced by the reduced number of young people being involved with the youth offending service.

It was suggested that a priority should be to continue to work very closely with community and voluntary sector to maintain the excellent preventative work currently being undertaken.

Recommended

That Members' comments above be noted and used to inform the report to be submitted to Cabinet and Council respectively.

7. The Role of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Manager submitted a report for Members' information which set out the role and remit of Scrutiny in general and specifically the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum. Details of the scheduled meetings for 2010/11 were also set out.

Recommended

The report was noted.

8. Determining the Scrutiny Forum's Work Programme for 2010/11 (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Manager reported that the Scrutiny Forum needed to develop a Work Programme for the 2010/11 Municipal Year, together with a timeframe for each review, for consideration by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 23 July 2010. As such, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Cabinet Members for Community Safety and Housing, Regeneration and Economic Development and Corporate Plan had been the foundation sources for the report.

The following issues had been put forward for consideration as part of the forum's work programme for 2010/11:-

- Business Transformation – Service Delivery Options
- Conservation Grant Scheme
- Voluntary Sector Premises Pool
- One Stop Shop
- New Deal for Communities
- Community Engagement/Empowerment in Hartlepool
- Domestic Violence
- Working Neighbourhoods Fund
- Tall Ships' Races Legacy
- Broadband Provision in Rural Areas

It was noted that consideration would also need to be given to the Budget 2011/12 and Departmental Plans along with the potential to consider any referrals received. In considering this year's work programme, Members were reminded that consideration of Business Transformation Service Delivery Options could be required during the course of the year (subject to further discussion and approval by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee). On this basis, it was suggested to the forum that a maximum of two investigations should be undertaken in 2010/11.

After a lengthy discussion on all the suggested topics, Members were of the view that issues surrounding the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, including assessing the impact of the withdrawal of the Fund and its impact on the worklessness agenda was a priority. As an additional topic, Members considered the topic of domestic violence and suggested that the effectiveness of the support provided to male victims be explored along with the mechanisms in place to encourage men to come forward and report incidents of domestic violence against them.

Recommended

That the Forum undertake the following investigations as part of its work programme for 2010-11:

- 1) Working Neighbourhoods Fund (Priority 1 investigation)
- 2) Domestic Violence (focusing on availability and effectiveness of services provided to male victims) (Priority 2 investigation)

9. Issues Identified from Forward Plan

None.

10. Any Other Business – Scrutiny Support Officer

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the new Scrutiny Support Officer, Elaine Hind who would be supporting the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum during its investigations in 2010-11.

The meeting concluded at 4.20pm.

CHAIR

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

12 August 2010



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO WORKING
NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND – SCOPING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum for their forthcoming investigation into the Working Neighbourhood Fund.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of this Forum on 8 July 2010, Members determined their work programme for the 2010/11 Municipal Year. The issue of 'Working Neighbourhood Fund' was selected as the first Scrutiny topic for consideration during the current Municipal Year.
- 2.2 The Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) was introduced in April 2008 to support local authorities' efforts to promote enterprise, tackle worklessness and reduce levels of deprivation in the most deprived areas of the country. The fund replaced the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and incorporated the Deprived Areas Fund (DAF) to create a single discretionary fund for local authorities to work with their partners at a local level. There is the potential that the WNF may soon be withdrawn, should this be the case there will be a major impact on the worklessness agenda in Hartlepool.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

- 3.1 To assess the reduction and potential withdrawal of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, its impact on the worklessness agenda and the options available for the continuation of service provision.

4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation/review are proposed:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of the overall aim of the services the WNF provides and what positive outcomes look like;
- (b) To examine how WNF services are currently provided in Hartlepool (including the input of partner organisations) and explore their effectiveness, particularly with regard to the worklessness agenda;
- (c) To determine the impact of the reduction and potential withdrawal of the Working Neighbourhood Fund;
- (d) To consider the options for the continuation of WNF service provision giving due regard to:
 - (i) How services could continue to be provided (within the resources available in the current economic climate);
 - (ii) How services can be delivered more efficiently and effectively, particularly in relation to the worklessness agenda.

5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY / SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

5.1 Members of the Forum can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the Scrutiny review.

5.2 The Forum can invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations as follows:-

- (a) Member of Parliament for Hartlepool;
- (b) Elected Mayor;
- (c) Cabinet Member with Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development;
- (d) Director and / or appropriate officers of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department;
- (e) Appropriate national/regional organisations and partner agencies;
- (f) Local residents and people who use services;
- (g) Representatives of minority communities of interest or heritage; and
- (h) Ward Councillors.

- 5.3 The Forum may also wish to refer to a variety of documentary / internet sources, key suggestions are as highlighted below:-

(a) Hartlepool WNF Evaluation 2008 – 2009.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

- 6.1 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the Scrutiny process and diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. Based upon the research undertaken, paragraph 5.2 includes suggestions as to potential groups which the Forum may wish involve throughout the inquiry (where it is felt appropriate and time allows).

7. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE DEDICATED OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUDGET

- 7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report, to the need to request funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry. At this stage no additional funding has been identified as being necessary to support Members in their investigation. Members, however, may wish to seek additional funding over the course of the investigation and the pro forma attached at **Appendix A** outlines the criteria on which a request to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will be judged.

8. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 8.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the review to be undertaken, which may be changed at any stage:-

9 September 2010

Setting the Scene - Presentation covering *Terms of Reference (a) & (b)*. To gain an understanding of the overall aim of the services the WNF provides, to examine how these services are provided in Hartlepool and to explore their effectiveness (paying particular regard to the worklessness agenda).

Evidence from the portfolio holder (subject to availability).

14 October 2010

Evidence gathering – Reports / presentations from Voluntary Sector Organisations that use the WNF to provide services.

Evidence from the local M.P. (subject to availability).

November / December Additional Meeting – Date to be determined

Evidence gathering – Reports / presentations to cover *Terms of Reference (c) & (d)*. To determine the impact Government announcements will have on the WNF and options for the continuation of service provision (within the resources available in the current economic climate).

20 January 2011 - Consideration of Draft Final Report.

25 February 2011 – Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

21 March 2011 – Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet/Council (tentative date).

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Members are recommended to agree the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum's remit of the Scrutiny investigation as outlined in paragraph 4.1.

Contact Officer: - Elaine Hind – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executives Department – Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Northumberland County Council WNF 2009 - 2011 Guidance for Applicants.

APPENDIX A

**PRO-FORMA TO REQUEST FUNDING TO SUPPORT
CURRENT SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

Title of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM
Title of the current scrutiny investigation for which funding is requested: WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND
To clearly identify the purpose for which additional support is required:
To outline indicative costs to be incurred as a result of the additional support:
To outline any associated timescale implications:
To outline the 'added value' that may be achieved by utilising the additional support as part of the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any requirements / processes to be adhered to in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules / Standing Orders:

To outline the possible disadvantages of not utilising the additional support during the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any possible alternative means of additional support outside of this proposal: