

# CABINET

## MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

2 AUGUST 2010

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

### **Present:**

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Jonathan Brash (Portfolio Holder for Performance Portfolio Holder)  
Robbie Payne (Deputy Mayor) (Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder),  
Pam Hargreaves (Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder),  
Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder).  
Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),  
Hilary Thompson (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder).

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive  
Chris Little, Chief Financial Officer  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor  
Joanne Machers, Customer and Workforce Services Officer  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Alan Dobby, Assistant Director (Support Services)  
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **29. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Peter Jackson (Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder)

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

None.

### **31. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2010**

Confirmed.

## **32. Strategy for Managing Reductions in 2010/11 Government Grants** *(Corporate Management Team)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

### **Purpose of report**

To revisit the report of 19th July 2010 and enable Cabinet to determine a strategy for managing reductions in respect of in year 2010/11 Government grants.

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

The Mayor reported that a report had been considered at Cabinet's previous meeting on 19th July 2010 which provided details of 2010/11 grant cuts announced by the Government on 10th June 2010 and the impact on the Council.

The reductions in 2010/11 grants are a precursor to more significant cuts in Government expenditure. This position was confirmed by the Chancellor in his Emergency Budget on 22 June 2010 which indicated non-protected Government departments face average cuts of 25% over four years commencing 2011/12. This implies some Government departments will face higher funding cuts. Details of the phasing and impact of these cuts on individual government departments will not be known until the Spending Review is published on 20 October 2010 and possibly much nearer Christmas for the Local Government Settlement.

As requested by Members the initial strategy for managing the Area Based Revenue grant cut has been reviewed to reflect comments made by Members and to also reflect comments from partner organisations on the level of cuts they can achieve in the current year in the Working Neighbourhood Fund element of the Area Based grant.

The Mayor reported on the main issues discussed at the most recent meeting of the Council Working Group held on 27 July 2010. The Mayor indicated that the Working Group had raised three main concerns.

1. Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs); the Working Group was concerned that not only those schemes that had been commenced should remain but also those where NAP Management Committees' had considered new schemes in detail and had, or were on the verge of, approving them for implementation. This would reduce the in-year saving by £30,000, to £51,000, which the Mayor considered could be supported.

2. Connected Care; a £5,000 in-year saving and an ongoing £25,000 saving had been proposed. There was concern expressed at the Working Group at not wishing to lose the excellent work that this scheme had put in place. The Mayor supported those comments but highlighted that the funding for the Connected Care Scheme was due to end this year. Cabinet Members

agreed that the excellent work that had been started should not be lost and requested that the joint approaches engendered by the scheme be maintained within departments. Cabinet also supported the rollout of Connected Care across the town when funding was available.

3. Maintaining the Community Chest. The Mayor commented that there were some varied views at the Working Group meeting as to the continuation of the grants programme through the Community Chest and other funds such as the Civic Lottery Fund. The Mayor indicated that the in-year reduction of £30,000 should be taken forward and the 2011/12 reduction revised downwards to £60,000. The Mayor also indicated that the Council should look to having, as far as was possible, a 'Community Chest' in the future. This would, however, have to be considered in view of the 'bigger picture' and other grant funding. The Mayor indicated that he had asked that an event be held in September with the Voluntary Sector to look at the future of Council grant funding and what could be done. The Mayor considered that there needed to be a facility to distribute some grant money to small organisations, although this was strictly dependent on the autumn spending review. Cabinet Members supported this view and commented that for some small organisations, a grant of a few hundred pounds could make a significant difference and the Council should fight to maintain its ability to give such grants. However, this funding did need to be measured against maintaining jobs which would always be the priority.

The Mayor indicated that the recommendations set out in the report would go forward to Council as a departure from the Budget and Policy Framework and would, therefore, need full Council approval. The Mayor hoped that based on the comments from the Working Party to date, Cabinet's recommendations would gain that approval.

### **Decision**

That the following proposals be approved and referred to Council for approval as a departure from the 2010/11 Budget and Policy Framework: -

- (i) That the revised strategy for managing the Area Based Grant reduction as detailed in the report, including amendments proposed by the Mayor and the revised budget allocations for individual projects for 2010/11 and 2011/12, as set out in Appendices A and B to the report be approved.
- (ii) That further reviews be carried out in order to identify additional reductions from April 2011 with the outcome being reported to Cabinet at a later date;
- (iii) That the reduction in the Local Public Service Agreement Reward Grant and the resulting reduction in resources allocated to fund one off expenditure commitments be noted;
- (iv) That the reduction in the Local Authority Business Incentive Scheme Grant and the resulting reduction in resources available to support

the 2011/12 budget be noted;

- (v) That the reduction in the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant which had already been recognised in the budget forecasts for future years be noted;
- (vi) That the reduction in the Integrated Transport Capital Grant which will reduce the size of investment in transport schemes during 2010/11 be noted;
- (vii) That the estimated reduction in the Housing Market Renewal Grant which will reduce the scale of capital investment which can be undertaken during 2010/11 be noted.

### **33. Job Evaluation Appeals** (*Customer and Workforce Services Officer*)

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

#### **Purpose of report**

The report set out a proposed approach for the recovery of overpayments that may be made as a result of appeals being lodged following job evaluation and associated matters to avoid overpayments occurring in the future.

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

The Mayor indicated that this item would be deferred until the next meeting of Cabinet.

#### **Decision**

That consideration of the report be deferred to the next meeting of Cabinet.

The meeting concluded at 9.15 a.m.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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