

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD 28 JANUARY 2011

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

Present:

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

Also Present: Councillor Ray Wells

Officers: Denise Ogden, Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)
Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager
Brian Neale, Community Safety Manager
Andrew Carter, Senior Planning Officer

28. Core Strategy Housing Evidence Base *(Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning))*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

The report sought endorsement of three housing papers and approval to their use as part of the evidence base for the Hartlepool Core Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Senior Planning Officer reported that Hartlepool's Core Strategy was currently in the process of preparation. Reports on the development of the Core Strategy had been previously presented to Cabinet, the most recent one securing approval to consult on the revised Preferred Options Document.

The Core Strategy, as with all planning policy documents, needed to be supported by a sound evidence base which could be used to help justify the policies included therein. Studies such as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the 2010 Retail Study had been prepared and approved for this purpose.

In relation to housing policies, the SHLAA and the Hartlepool and Tees Valley Housing Market Assessments had helped in the formulation of policies included in the first and second Preferred Options Documents. More recently,

two further reports have been prepared which update some of this data and looks in greater depth at specific areas of executive housing need (Executive Housing Need 2010) and future housing provision in the borough (Future Housing Provision 2010). Copies of these documents were submitted with the report.

In addition to these evidence documents, Councils were required to prepare an Implementation Strategy to demonstrate that the policies were deliverable and could be implemented. In response to comments made by Government Office on the earlier Preferred Options Document and following questions raised by consultees questioning the deliverability of some of the housing sites, a Housing Implementation Strategy had been prepared ahead of requirement (Housing Implementation Strategy November 2010) to demonstrate robustly how housing could be delivered over the plan period. This document was also submitted with the report.

The Mayor questioned the changes in housing need estimates and how it was intended to meet the demand for particular types of properties. Officers responded by indicating that by the time the Core Strategy was adopted, it was expected that the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) would have gone. Much of the problem that the market in general, and Hartlepool, was facing was the changes in demographics with people living longer. Many were, however, staying in their 'family' homes and an increasing number of family homes were occupied by couples whose children had left home. There was a demand for smaller family homes due to the increasing numbers of small families from the changes to the way family life had developed and also a very large demand for bungalows. Officers highlighted that the authority could only control new developments.

The Mayor was concerned that with the state of the economy and the slow down in building on new developments. If the evidence was based on 320 new homes being built each year, Hartlepool could be 1000 homes behind target by the time the market picked up again. Officers commented that the numbers were based on a five-year delivery plan with numbers weighted towards a predicted recovery in the housing market. Much of the information was based on best estimates and what was known now. Should the market change there would be the ability to revise the document in terms of numbers or even by removing certain sites.

The Mayor also referred to the governments' new homes bonus. Should the number of empty homes increase the penalties for those could eradicate the bonus earned for any new homes built. It was noted that this was only a short-term bonus scheme. The mayor was also concerned at the number of currently approved homes on sites in the borough. Officers indicated that there were 2500 homes identified in planning approvals around the town, though nearly half were flats in the Marina area. Only if planning permissions expired and were then resubmitted could any amendments be made, though that was in the gift of the Planning Committee only.

In relation to the demand for executive homes, officers indicated that much of

the demand was driven by sub regional demand, which was currently being siphoned towards the south rather than into Hartlepool. Much of this development north of the Tees has focussed on the Wynyard site. It was important for the economic aspirations of Hartlepool that there was more of this type of development.

The Mayor questioned the evidence in the housing needs documents and whether it would be robust enough to withstand a public inquiry. Officers indicated that in the Localism Bill, the role of the Planning Inspectorate would change to the provision of comments on the Core Strategy rather than determining how robust and deliverable it was.

Decision

That the Executive Housing Need 2010, Future Housing Provision 2010 and the Housing Implementation Strategy November 2010 be endorsed and approved for use as part of the evidence base for the Hartlepool Core Strategy.

29. North Tees Natural Network (*Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To seek Portfolio Holder approval for the Council to participate in the North Tees Natural Network partnership.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager reported that the organisations that would be involved in the partnership, subject to approval from within their organisation, are: Natural England; RSPB; Environment Agency; Tees Valley Unlimited; Teesside Environmental Trust; Tees Valley Wildlife Trust; Industry and Nature Conservation Association; Stockton Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council. It is envisaged that relevant industrial companies may be drawn in to the partnership at the appropriate time.

The North Tees Natural Network is not meant as a partnership for the purposes of carrying on business as defined in section 1(1) of the Partnership Act 1980, but instead a means of working together to coordinate skills and resources with a view to achieving the same goal.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted for circulation within the organisations involved. The Memorandum has so far been signed by Natural England, Tees Valley Unlimited and INCA. Approval was now sought for Hartlepool Borough Council to sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

There were no cost implications for the authority, other than officer time. The

council's Ecologist would represent Hartlepool on the Network. The Mayor requested that update reports from the Network be submitted through the Environmental Partnership.

Decision

That the Council's participation in the North Tees Natural Network partnership be approved.

30. Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Cohesion Fund Proposals *(Assistant Director (Community Safety and Protection))*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

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

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Community Safety Manager reported that an application from the Hartlepool Chinese Association was deferred at the Community Safety and Housing Portfolio meeting on 19 November 2010, pending further enquiry into the detail and need surrounding this proposal. Those enquiries had been undertaken and details were set out in the report. The Community Safety Manager indicated that he was now happy to support the application put forward for a grant of £2,100 from the Cohesion Fund.

Decision

That approval be given to the SHP Community Cohesion Grants Panel recommendation in respect of the Hartlepool Chinese Association application for a community cohesion related project totalling £2,100.

31. Business Transformation – Waste Management Recommendations – Bulky Waste Collection Charges *(Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services))*

Type of decision

None – the report was for the Portfolio Holders information only.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder about the introduction of charges for the bulky waste collection service.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) reported that the Business Transformation/Service Delivery Options contained in the Cabinet Report of

24th May 2010 included the introduction of a charge for the bulky waste collection service. The report provided the Portfolio Holder with information on the charge to residents which would be in place from the 1st February 2011.

The Assistant Director commented that there had been a fall in the number of bulky waste collections over recent months possible due to the recession and also the service provided by many stores when delivering new 'white' goods in removing householder's old products.

Decision

That the report be noted.

32. Development Of The Ecology Service (*Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*)

Type of decision

None – the report was for the Portfolio Holders information only.

Purpose of report

The report updated the Portfolio Holder on the proposal for the Council's Ecologist to carry out external work.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager reported that there had recently been consideration given across the Regeneration and Planning Division as to how additional income could be generated by the department. As part of these discussions the potential for specialist services being provided to other local authorities and private companies and individuals was investigated. From this it would appear that there was the opportunity for the Ecology post to extend the service that it provides to a wider audience.

One of the main opportunities that had been identified is to provide services for applicants who required ecological information as part of a planning application to other local authorities. This would involve discrete pieces of work usually in the form of a survey and a report.

Decision

That the proposal that the Ecology Service look to take on external work as an additional source of income be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.30 a.m.

PETER DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 2 FEBRUARY 2011