

FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

21 July 2011

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Robbie Payne (Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Graham Frankland, Assistant Direct, Resources
David Hart, Strategic Procurement Manager
Amy Waller, Principal Housing Regeneration Officer
James Cuthbert, Estates and Valuation Surveyor
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

9. Sustainable Procurement Strategy 2011-14 *(Assistant Director, Resources)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To provide an update and seek endorsement of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy for 2011-2014.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report highlighted the background and significance of the strategy and its key objectives. The Sustainable Procurement Strategy for 2011-2014 was attached at Appendix 1. The Portfolio Holder was informed that training and development was being undertaken through Member and staff training on the Contract Procedure Rules and associated matters. In addition to this, procurement awareness and training sessions for voluntary sector and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were also being provided.

It was highlighted that the Strategy would aim to improve processes and governance and achieve an annual savings target through ensuring that procurement regulations were adhered to as well as reviewing local, sub regional, regional and national opportunities for collaboration. The Assistant Director, Resources confirmed that a key aim of the Strategy was to provide a more effective co-ordinated approach to procurement across

the Council through the Contract Procedure Rules. It was noted that work was ongoing to examine the governance of the Contract Procedure Rules through a 'gate-keeping' approach, primarily involving the Portfolio Holder, the Assistant Director, Resources and the Strategic Procurement Manager.

In relation to the collaborative arrangements, the Portfolio Holder was informed that a questionnaire had been received from the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) and the Assistant Director, Resources would discuss this further with the Portfolio Holder. The importance of pursuing electronic procurement was discussed.

The Strategic Procurement Manager indicated that officers were already active in pursuing income generation and had registered as suppliers on the NEPO register which facilitated notification of services required and enabled the Procurement Team to contact service departments and support them to submit bids to undertake the work as a commercial service. The Portfolio Holder questioned whether the facility to register an interest in bidding for contracts could be undertaken on a national basis. The Strategic Procurement Manager responded that he was aware of a general public sector government provided portal and would look into this viability of accessing this portal with a view to submitting bids for work on a national as well as regional basis.

The Portfolio Holder wished to pass on his thanks and congratulations to the whole of the Procurement Team for their continued hard work and commitment in providing such an efficient and effective service.

Detail of the current portfolio of procurement expenditure was included within the Strategy. The Portfolio Holder questioned a number of areas within this and drew particular attention to the use of purchase cards. A discussion ensued on the type of purchases that were made using purchase cards. The Portfolio Holder requested that a detailed programme of further analysis of the individual elements contained within the procurement expenditure be drafted with the use of purchase cards be undertaken in the first instance.

Decision

- (i) The Sustainable Procurement Strategy for 2011-2014 was endorsed.
- (ii) That a programme be drafted to review the individual elements of the procurement expenditure.
- (iii) That the first detailed review of procurement expenditure be undertaken on the use of Purchase Cards followed by an analysis of ICT expenditure.

10. Proposed Transfer of Land at Belle Vue, Hartlepool (Assistant Director, Resources)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To seek the Portfolio Holder's approval in respect of the proposed transfer of 26 houses at Belle Vue to facilitate the delivery of the phase 2 Housing Regeneration Programme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report highlighted the current progress of the housing regeneration scheme at Belle Vue and provided details of the ongoing redevelopment of the site. It was noted that within phase 2 of the Belle Vue scheme there were 36 properties of which 26 were in the Council's ownership. The proposal was to transfer ownership of the 26 properties and also other land such as highways, footpaths and grass verges (shown at Appendix 1) to Housing Hartlepool at nil value to facilitate scheme delivery.

The Portfolio Holder questioned whether the Council would receive any income should a charge be levied for this transfer. The Principal Housing Regeneration Officer confirmed that there were restrictions on the funding provided to acquire the site which would result in any income received from the sale of land being transferred to the Homes and Community Agency (HCA). The Portfolio Holder sought clarification on the 'Right to Acquire' provision and whether there was an opportunity for any claw back of funding from the future sale of these properties. The Principal Housing Regeneration Officer indicated that there may well be time related restrictions placed on any funding received through 'Right to Acquire' but that clarification on this issue would be sought.

Decision

- (i) The transfer of the Council's land holding at Belle Vue (highlighted in Appendix 1) to Housing Hartlepool at nil value to facilitate the delivery of the Housing Market Renewal scheme was approved.
- (ii) That clarification be provided on the opportunity for the local authority to claw back monies gained from future sales of the properties, as part of Right to Buy/Acquire schemes, which were to be transferred to Housing Hartlepool as part of this agreement.

11. Illegal Grazing of Horses (Assistant Director, Resources)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the current issues associated with illegal horse grazing on Council owned land, and options to resolve current and future trespasses.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report outlined the background and options available to deal with illegal horse grazing. The Assistant Director, Resources confirmed that an extensive publicity campaign had been undertaken to promote the Council's intention to use enforcement action to remove animals. The cost of facilitating this enforcement through a specialist external horse impounding contractor was attached by way of confidential appendix. **This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para 3).** It was noted that there may be an opportunity to recoup some of the expenditure required for enforcement activity and this would be examined further.

The Portfolio Holder questioned whether the Council was able to create a restriction that covered all Council owned land to enable enforcement activity to be undertaken with immediate effect should any horses be found to be illegally tethered and grazing on such land. The Assistant Director indicated that he would discuss the viability of this further with the Legal Services Division.

Decision

- (i) The actions taken to date were endorsed.
- (ii) The appointment of a specialist external horse impounding contractor, to work in conjunction with the Council's Environmental Enforcement team to implement the enforcement process that was set out in the report was approved.
- (iii) The Assistant Director, Resources to examine further the viability of placing a restriction on all Council owned land to prohibit horses from being tethered and grazing resulting in the option to take enforcement

action with immediate effect when this restriction was infringed.

12. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 13 - Proposed Sale of Land at the Headland Gate, Hartlepool -

This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para 3).

13. Proposed Sale of Land at the Headland Gate, Hartlepool *(Assistant Director, Resources)* This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para 3).

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

The Portfolio Holder's approval was sought for the disposal of land at the Headland Gate.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report contained the background to the proposal and the proposed terms upon which the sale should proceed. Further detail can be found the exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

Details can be found in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 10.36 am

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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