

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

5 December 2011

The meeting commenced at 9.15 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond - In the Chair

Councillors: Jonathan Brash (Housing and Transition Portfolio Holder)
Robbie Payne (Deputy Mayor) (Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder),
Pam Hargreaves (Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder),
Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder).
Cath Hill (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder),
Peter Jackson (Regeneration and Economic Development and Skills Portfolio Holder),
Chris Simmons (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),
Hilary Thompson (Performance Portfolio Holder),

Also Present: Councillors James, A Marshall, Richardson and Turner.

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Acting Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
Joanne Machers, Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care
Caroline O'Neill, Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services
John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community Services
Paul Robson, Integrated Transport Manager
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
David Cosgrove / Vicky Bosley, Democratic Services Team

162. Apologies for Absence

None.

163. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillor Hargreaves declared a personal interest in Minute 167 Updated Position Statement: Installation of Photo-Voltaic Panels by the Council".

Councillors Brash, Hargreaves, Jackson and Simmons declared personal interests in Minute 168 “2012/13 Savings in Children’s Education Services and Out of School Activities Savings”.

164. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2011

Confirmed.

165. Referral Response – Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive And Scrutiny Functions (*Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To report the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee’s views in relation to the referral from Cabinet on the 7 November 2011 to Overview and Scrutiny.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Chair of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee was present at the meeting and presented the Committee’s response to the referral by Cabinet on 7 November 2011 of a series of recommendations in relation to the ‘Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny Functions’, Minute 148 refers. The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee (SCC) had considered the referral at its meetings on 25 November and 2 December 2011. SCC Members were concerned at the duplication of work with that of the Constitution / General Purposes Committee’s Task and Finish Group and the Council Working Group and also the impossible nature of the deadline.

The Chair of SCC indicated the Committee wished to fulfil its role and respond fully to the referral and recommended that: -

- The activities of the Constitution / General Purposes Committee Task and Finish Group, Council Working Group and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee should be co-ordinated / combined to enable the formulation of a well informed response to the Cabinet referral;
- The issues raised as part of the Cabinet referral should be referred to the Constitution / General Purposes Committee Task and Finish Group and Council Working Group for consideration, with the resulting views / comments to be fed back to Scrutiny for consideration in the formulation of a full response to Cabinet; and
- A more achievable timetable needed to be devised to enable the involvement of the Task and Finish Group and Council Working Group (as detailed above) to consider and feed back its views and

suggestions in relation to the issues / suggestions raised in the referral back to Scrutiny, to enable a full response to be formulated.

In relation to the timetable, Chair of SCC referred to a proposal set out in the report which would lead to a response being returned to Cabinet on 6 February 2011. The Mayor indicated that he acknowledged the workloads that were placing pressures on everyone within the authority and didn't wish to increase them. However, the Mayor was also concerned at not wishing to create a backlog of matters to be resolved in February before the budget could be finalised and requested that scrutiny took that on board.

Decision

1. That the views expressed by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in response to the referral from Cabinet on the 7 November 2011 be noted.
2. That the proposed process and timetable for the referral, to enable effective consideration of the issues raised as suggested by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, be agreed with a final report being submitted to Cabinet on 6 February 2011.

166. Call-In of Decision - Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive And Scrutiny Functions (*Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To report the outcome of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee meeting on the 25 November 2011, at which consideration was given to the Call-In of the following decision taken by Cabinet on the 7 November 2011 in relation to the delivery of support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny Functions. Minute number 148 refers.

To refer decision taken on 7 November 2011 back to Cabinet for further consideration.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Chair of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee was present at the meeting and outlined to Cabinet the Committee's consideration of a call-in notice received in relation to relation to the 'Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny Functions', Minute 148 refers. The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee (SCC) had considered the call-in notice at its meeting on 25 November 2011. A summary of the reasons identified in the call-in notice together with details of the key issues and concerns discussed by SCC were set out in the report.

The Chair of SCC highlighted that one of the main issues highlighted by Members was the changes proposed around the Contract Scrutiny Committee. If Executive Members were involved in the shaping of contracts it seemed to be a conflict that they were also involved in the opening of the tenders; SCC considered that this should be reviewed.

The Mayor and Cabinet Members expressed some concern in relation to the call-in, particularly the reasons for the call-in and the fact that it appeared to suggest that Cabinet had broken the rules of decision making. The Chair of SCC indicated that this was not the case but Scrutiny Members did consider that the decisions needed to be reconsidered and suggested that in light of the previous decision of Cabinet, all of the recommendations set out in Minute 148 (7 November 2011) should be referred by Cabinet into the process agreed at the previous minute to be reported back to Cabinet on 6 February 2012.

During the debate the issue of recommendation 2 (v) of Minute 148, where cabinet recommended a freeze in relation to Members attendance at conferences was discussed. There was concern expressed by scrutiny that the decision was outside the Budget and Policy Framework and contradicted Council decisions made in respect of appointments to outside bodies. The Chief Financial Officer stated that the decision was not outside the Budget and Policy Framework no amendment to the budget was being made. The Chair of SCC referred to her concerns in relation to the constitutional restrictions in how she approached the Chief Financial Officer with such questions.

After a full discussion, the Mayor supported the proposal to include all the decisions from Minute 148 (7 November 2011) 'Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny Functions' that did not form part of the decision made at Minute 166 above, to Scrutiny to be reported back on in the time table agreed under that decision.

Decision

1. That the report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in response to the 'call-in' of the decision taken by Cabinet on the 7 November 2011 (Minute 148 refers) be received.
2. That in reconsideration of the decision made at Minute 148 (7 November 2011) 'Delivery of Support to Members and to the Council, Executive, Non Executive and Scrutiny Functions', Cabinet agrees that all the remaining recommendations from Minute 148 that did not form part of the decision made at Minute 166 above, be referred to Scrutiny for consideration to be reported back to Cabinet in the timetable agreed under that decision.

Councillors James and A Marshall left the meeting at this point.

167. Updated Position Statement: Installation of Photo-Voltaic Panels by the Council *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Chief Finance Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the project to install photo-voltaic panels with particular reference to a change in the Government's Feed in Tariff incentive scheme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that at the meeting in June, Council gave approval to borrow up to £646,000 in order to install photo-voltaic (PV) panels on buildings owned by the Council as the business case had indicated the potential to generate £36,000 per annum in savings and income. Since then Officers had undertaken structural surveys of buildings and had been trained to design installation schemes and install PV panels and associated equipment.

On the 31st of October the Government announced an early review of its incentive scheme to encourage the installation of renewable electricity generation schemes, commonly referred to as the Feed in Tariff, and launched a consultation process on the review. The proposed changes materially affect the Council's project as it was expected to have an initial annual cost of £6,000 which would increase the 2012-13 budget deficit and a whole life cost of £44,000.

The Council also had plans to generate further income by offering a design and installation service to other property owners, the impact of the Government's review on this aspect of the project was included in the report.

The Mayor indicated that the question for Cabinet was "does the Council continue with the project or not"? The reduction in the feed in tariff did now mean that the panels installed on council buildings would need to be in place for 17 years before they reached break-even point within a predicted 25 year life span. However, energy prices would continue to rise and this could make the business case more attractive than it currently stood following the government's announcement.

Cabinet Members unanimously supported the continuation with the project. Members cited the predicted rise in energy costs as a major reason as well as the green credentials of the scheme. It was also indicated that the government's announcement on the reduction of tariff's had received universal criticism and may yet be amended through the consultation process, though this was felt unlikely and there could be potentially a further reduction in April.

Cabinet referred to the additional costs in this year which were proposed to be met through virement and questioned where the funding would be drawn from. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated the costs would be vired from budget headings that were underspent through the year.

Decision

1. That the Council proceeds with the installation of PV cells at an initial annual cost of £6,000 from 2012/13, which equates to a whole life cost of £44,000, and that the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods will vire funding to meet the annual commitment from existing budgets;
2. That approval be given to the Council offering an installation service at an appropriate commercial rate based on a robust business case;
3. That Officers be delegated authority to respond to the Government's consultation on the review of the Feed in Tariff including the conclusions of the re-calculations and the impact upon the Councils plans.

168. 2012/13 Savings in Children's Education Services and Out of School Activities Savings *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision, Test (i) applies. Forward Plan Ref: - CAS111/11

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to outline the proposed 2012/2013 savings in the Performance and Achievement Division of Child and Adult Services.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children's Services Portfolio Holder reported that the savings target for education services and out of school activities of £128,000 to be delivered from 1 April 2012 is within a total Children's Services saving of £1m - £1.1m. This saving was within the context of a Child and Adult Services total departmental saving of £2.743m.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the following projects had been identified to deliver the required savings –

Project	Anticipated Savings	Description
Reduction of Youth Service Commissioning Budget Review	£30,000	Savings will be achieved by reducing the IYSS Commissioning budget from April 2012.

Review of support for social and educational inclusion	£30,000	Savings will be achieved by reviewing delivery of school attendance officer support to primary and secondary schools across Hartlepool.
Review of educational psychology support to schools and children.	£32,000	Savings will be achieved by reducing number of trainee educational psychologists employed to provide psychology support to primary and secondary schools in Hartlepool.
Review commissioning of play activities	£18,000	Savings to be achieved by reducing budget for commissioning of play activities.
Review IYSS support	£9,000	Savings will be achieved by reducing the monies allocated to support developmental activities in Youth Centres.
Review IYSS Outreach Support	£9,000	Savings will be made by reducing the detached, mobile and outreach IYSS provision.

A number of alternatives for meeting the savings within in each project area had been considered and the Portfolio Holder outlined to Cabinet the specific measures that had been agreed for each of the areas. In relation to the Play Opportunities Pool Award, the Portfolio Holder indicated that he had requested that officers review the proposed savings in this area in light of the amount of leverage for additional funding the local authority funding provided. The proposed savings had been brought forward on the basis that they had minimal impact on frontline services.

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

Cabinet supported the review of the savings proposed in the Play Opportunities Pool and hoped that they could be minimised in light of the benefits these small grants had in providing play opportunities for children. Cabinet also clarification in relation to the Headland Futures organisation. The Portfolio Holder indicated that the group was not being abandoned on 1 April 2012 due to these savings. The group would be supported until new commissioning proposals were put in place. Cabinet did question the use of the Early Intervention Grant as there was concern that a number of groups were starting to treat EIG money as a primary source of income. The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services indicated that a report on the Early Intervention Strategy was to be

submitted to the next meeting of Cabinet which would include a proposal to put in place some transitional monies to fund the gap until commissioned services were put in place. Members commented that not all current groups would, however, be commissioned to provide services in the future and those that did would be under much closer scrutiny.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £128,000 from the children’s education services and out of school activities be agreed.

169. Business Transformation Programme – 2012/13 Savings in Adult Social Care *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision – Test 1 applies. Forward Plan Ref: CAS107/11

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet’s approval for proposals to achieve savings of £1.6m in adult social care from April 2012.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder reported that the savings target for adult social care, to be delivered from 1 April 2012, was £1.6m. The Portfolio Holder reported that the following projects had been identified to deliver the required savings –

Project	Savings	Description
Review of Housing Related Support (Supporting People)	£275,000	Over delivery of savings targets from the Supporting People budget in 2011/12 and 2012/13 through efficient commissioning of high priority services and decommissioning of lower priority / lower risk services.
Review of Adult Social Care Contracts	£265,000	Savings will be achieved through re-tendering and achieving better value for money and through decommissioning of some lower priority services.
Social Care Funding via PCT	£500,000	£500k from £1.2m social care funding that will transfer to HBC in 2012/13 will be used to support existing investment in services. There is a significant risk associated with this saving as funding is

		currently only guaranteed for two years. If funding does not continue, services will cease and steps are being taken to mitigate this risk.
Review of Social Care Management Structures	£85,000	Review current management structures and deliver savings through reducing management costs in day services and MH/LD employment services.
Joint Packages	£250,000	Establish recurrent impact of additional PCT funding for complex packages of care. This is a high risk area as funding is subject to change and may not be guaranteed in the longer term.
Working Together for Change	£175,000	Review of all day services using the Working Together for Change methodology and consideration of new models of service that deliver savings.
Direct Care & Support Services	£50,000	Reduction in staffing budget for the Direct Care & Support Team, which currently has vacant posts / un-worked hours. There is an element of risk associated with this as the service area is volatile and demand is influenced by external factors.
TOTAL	£1,600,000	

A number of alternatives for meeting the savings within in each project area had been considered and the Portfolio Holder outlined to Cabinet the specific measures that had been agreed for each of the areas. The Portfolio Holder particularly thanked officers for proposing savings that minimised compulsory redundancies in the service area.

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

In relation to the review of housing based support, Cabinet questioned if this was a further reduction over those made in the previous financial year. The Assistant Director, Adult Social Care indicated that the savings had been negotiated last year to be introduced over two years.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £1.6m from adult social care be agreed.

Councillor Hargreaves left the meeting at this point.

170. 2012/13 Service Review and Savings in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision, Test 1 applies Forward Plan Reference CAS101/11.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to outline proposed savings for 2012/13 from the Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services division of Child and Adult Services. The savings were identified as a result of a series of service reviews across the division which could be achieved in the financial year 2012/13.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children’s Services Portfolio Holder reported that the savings target for prevention, safeguarding and specialist services of £408,000 to be delivered from 1 April 2012.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the following projects had been identified to deliver the required savings –

Project	Anticipated Savings	Description
Children's social care commissioning Year 3 SDO	£348,000	Review and renegotiate placements for looked after children within the independent fostering and residential sector. Review and renegotiate contracts in children's social care to ensure that only essential services are commissioned which are either statutory or demonstrate improved outcomes for children.
Reduce number of looked after children	As part of above target	Develop early intervention services and services for children on the cusp of care to reduce the numbers of children looked after by the Council by providing timely support to prevent family breakdown.
Review Allowances	As part of above target	Develop policy and revised funding formula for payment of allowances for children living in family and friend care.

Training	£10,000	Develop joint arrangements with other local authorities to deliver training and development
Review of CAMHS funding and services	£15,000	Review services commissioned from CAMHS for looked after children
Phase 2 Review of Youth Offending Service	£15,000	Phase 2 review of Youth Offending Service focussing on non statutory work, admin and grant funded arrangements
Review of division management structure	£20,000	Reduce number of heads of service and review requirements

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted some of the issues relating to looked after children and particularly highlighted the success of the department in relation to the number of foster carers and children placed with Hartlepool foster carers. One concern was the increase in the number of children in care over the past year. The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services indicated that there had been a 'spike' in the numbers of children in care over recent months. Cabinet discussed issues around foster caring and the utilisation of Hartlepool based foster carers wherever possible. The Assistant Director commented that Hartlepool had had a steady number of children in care – 160-170 – for a number of years. This figure had increased by 30 in the last year. This was placing increased demands on the system and budgets.

Cabinet also raised the issue of the funding of a dedicated nurse for looked after children, which had initially been funded jointly by the local authority and subsequently, following a change on legislation, wholly funded by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). There appeared to have been an anomalous situation in relation to the funding of the post that had been uncovered during the budget exercise which the Assistant Director indicated had been corrected.

The situation for older children in the care system and those leaving care was also discussed. The Assistant Director indicated that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of Cabinet proposing a potential development of Blakelock Lodge, in partnership, a facility to assist young people leaving the care system move on to independent living.

The Mayor commented that this was one area of service delivery that he

always had concerns with reducing resources due to the particularly high risks. There was some concern at the potential for children remaining in families when potentially they should have been removed due to the change in strategy on intervention and family support. The Assistant Director indicated that where a child, particularly small children, were considered to be at risk, they would be removed by social workers. Removing children was often the easiest course of action for a social worker in family break down situations. However, the reintegration of the children into the family could be a lengthy and social worker intensive process. In many instances, intervention through family support and not removing children may have better long term benefits for the whole family. It did however, require social worker input 'up front' with the family to help them through whatever crisis they were having.

Cabinet Members supported the proposals set out in the report, particularly those related to early intervention with families as they believed that this could have many more positive outcomes for families.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £408,000 for prevention, safeguarding and specialist services be approved.

Councillor Richardson left the meeting at this point.

171. Community Services Review 2012/13 (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision, Test 1 applies. Forward Plan Ref: - CAS97/11

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the proposed savings for 2012/13 in Community Services and seek approval to the range of service delivery changes required. The savings target for Community Services to be delivered from 1st April 2012 was £298,000; £134,000 of which relates to the existing Year 3 Business Transformation Review within Cultural Services with the balance being the additional corporate savings targets required.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Assistant Director, Community Services reported on the proposed savings for the Community Services division for 2012/13 and outlined the principle areas that would be affected. The service areas and savings were highlighted in detail in the report and outlined by the Assistant Director at the meeting. In summary the savings included –

Service	Proposed Savings
Cultural Services	£194,000*
Libraries and Community resources	£53,000*
Sport and Recreation	£51,000
(* 50:50 split of 1 senior management post saving allocated)	
Total Proposed Savings	£298,000

The Assistant Director highlighted that 47% of the costs of the services within this area came through income generated. The wider potential for Trusts was being examined through the Members Working Group, though it had to be acknowledged that there were costs involved in the establishment of such vehicles for service delivery. Even if they were developed as an opportunity for service delivery, and efficiencies would not be realised until the 2013/14 financial year at the earliest.

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

Cabinet questioned the usage of the sports fields operated by the council. The Assistant Director indicated that demand was broadly in balance with supply. There was no perceived shortage but there were some fields that were showing signs of over use. The existing Sports Pitches Strategy had been a basis for much of the consultation undertaken with Sport England over recent years, though the strategy was currently being reviewed as an update was due.

The issue of the return to the local authority and community use of the Brierton Sports Centre was also discussed by Cabinet. This was a significant asset and all potential options needed to be considered.

The potential withdrawal of partner authorities from the Tees Archaeology was also of concern to Cabinet in light of the potential job losses this would create through the reduction in income. It was indicated that as a joint service, any authority withdrawing would be required to meet its proportion of the costs of any changes within the service.

Members also raised the potential of the Adult Education Service being provided by another provider, such as the colleges. The Assistant Director indicate that this service was cost neutral due to income and the grant of around £1m received from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). Future contract arrangements with the SFA may require minimum contract values and discussions had been held with other adult education service providers.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £298,000 for community services be approved.

172. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillor Hill declared a personal interest in Minute 173 “Business Transformation Programme 2012/13 – Review of Denominational Transport Provision and Post-16 Provision”.

173. Business Transformation Programme 2012/13 – Review of Denominational Transport Provision and Post-16 Provision *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision. Test 1 applies. Forward Plan Reference CAS110/11.

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the savings required for the Children’s Services Planning and Development area. The report dealt with measures to be taken to achieve a savings target of £160,000 mainly by removing existing free transport provision to students attending a secondary denominational school. Other savings would be delivered through routing efficiencies to support this overall target together with the reduction of some post-16 transport funding.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children’s Services Portfolio Holder reported that a number routing efficiencies would be introduced following a review by the Integrated Transport Unit. Bringing a range of routes ‘in-house’ would deliver £20,000 of savings and a further £14,000 could be removed from the budget in respect of provision for casual workers which was no longer required.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that the denominational review looked at removing free transport to faith schools except where there was a legal requirement which must be met. At present, under the current Home to School Transport Policy, the Council provided free transport to pupils who attend their nearest suitable school that is further than the statutory walking distance:

- Pupils under the age of 11 who live more than 2 miles from school;
- Pupils over the age of 11 who live more than 3 miles from school.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that of the 382 pupils at English Martyrs School that received free denominational transport 44 of those being from low income families would continue to receive free travel under this proposal. The costs were in excess of £148,000, equating to an average daily cost of £2.05 per pupil. If the proposal were to be implemented, the estimated annual savings are in the region of £125,000.

The Portfolio Holder indicated his concern for the children of families just above the free school meal/travel criteria who could be faced with now

meeting these costs.

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

A Cabinet Member reported that at a recent meeting with students at English Martyrs School they had commented that any consultation should involve them and not just their parents. Cabinet discussed the proposal and the consultation process on the potential removal of denominational transport and indicated that while the Diocese was aware of the issue, they should be formally consulted with and also asked if they would be prepared to contribute to a solution. A Cabinet Member also highlighted that should this service be withdrawn there were some areas where there were no public transport alternatives.

The Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement indicated that she was aware that a number of authorities locally and around the country were considering a similar proposal to remove denominational transport. It was questioned as to whether parents were clearly informed that the transport currently provided was discretionary and officers indicated that it was clearly shown in the admissions brochure. It was clarified in the meeting that the consultation period would be two months.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £160,000 be approved including the consultation exercise on the proposal to cease denominational transport..

174. Business Transformation Programme 2012/13 – Savings in Support Services, Child and Adult Services *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Key decision test (i) applies, forward plan reference number CAS109/11.

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the savings required for the Children's Services Planning and Development area. This report dealt with measures to be taken to achieve a savings target of £115,000. The measures concentrated on efficiencies around performance management licensing arrangements, alternative school survey frequencies and the removal of a Senior Manager's post in the Development Team.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Children's Services Portfolio Holder reported on the proposals to bring forward £115,000 savings in the support services area. The details of the proposals were outlined by the Portfolio Holder and also set out within the report and are summarised as follows; -

Service	Proposed Savings
Performance Management (Licences)	£39,000
Senior Manager (Development)	£60,000
School Surveys (Condition)	£25,000
Total Proposed Savings	£124,000

Cabinet questioned if schools contributed to, or had been asked to contribute, the costs of the school building surveys. The Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement indicated that schools did not contribute to the costs of the surveys. Hartlepool did undertake annual surveys of school buildings and it was proposed to reduce this two every two years in line with most other authorities. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that the reduction in this work did affect staff in his department who now had to increase income from other sources to meet this shortfall.

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £115,000 for child and adult support services be approved.

175. Chief Executive’s Department – Corporate Strategy Division Savings Proposals *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Key Decision Test 1 applies Forward Plan Reference CE48/11.

Purpose of report

The report outlined the savings proposals for the division to achieve the target set of £220,000. The proposals in the report identify the savings to be made, the risks associated with these and the considerations which have been taken into account in developing them. The proposals provide a balance, within certain constraints, of reductions in non-staffing costs, generating income and staffing reductions. Where possible the opportunity had been taken from posts that have become vacant over the course of the year to minimise the impact on staff.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that the overall budget of the Division was now £1.5m; it had been reduced by £253,000 for the 2011/12 budget through a combination of reductions and limited increases in

income. As part of the overall programme of savings the Division was tasked with reducing the budget by £220,000 for the 2012/13 budget round. Essentially this equated to approximately a 25% reduction over the last two years. The Portfolio Holder also highlighted that the budget of the department was approximately 91% staffing costs with the balance made up of running costs and income (which is the smallest proportion of the budget).

The Portfolio Holder outlined the principle savings and income generation that had been identified to meet the savings target of £220,000. These were summarised as follows: -

	£'000	
Non staffing	38.5	Non staff related running costs
Income	17	Income generated
Scrutiny and Democratic Services	33.8	Reduction of one post
Corporate ICT	57.5	Reduction of 2 posts (1 vacant)
Performance and Partnerships	73.5	Reduction of 2 posts (1 vacant)
Total	220.3	

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

The Mayor commented that while these savings were not insignificant, there had been some very significant savings made on front line services to vulnerable sections of the community. Some of those cuts had elicited little or no response from Scrutiny while this report had seemed to occupy a significant amount of scrutiny time. Cabinet Members supported this view and considered that this area could not be exempt from savings and they could all be achieved.

There was concern expressed by a Cabinet Member that the division still retained an unnecessarily high number of managers which should be reduced dramatically. The Assistant Chief Executive indicated that the posts referred to had been graded at the level they had through the job evaluation process and reflected the level of advice and support delivered to the departments of the council, not just their role within the division. The Mayor commented that significant cuts had been made to the management structure of the authority which was now one of the leanest local authority management structures in the country.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report to meet the target of £220,000 for the corporate strategy division be approved.

176. Extended Customer and Support Services Review

(Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer)

Type of decision

Key Decision, Test 1 applies Forward Plan Reference CE47/11

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to outline proposed savings for 2012/13 from the Customer and Support Services Section of Chief Executive's Department.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that the Customer Service SDO (Service Delivery Options) review was originally scheduled to be undertaken during 2012-13 but had been brought forward to this year following the Comprehensive Spending Review. The scope of the review covered all areas within the Customer and Support Services section and had a target saving of £146,000.

The Portfolio Holder outlined the principle savings that had been identified to meet the savings target of £146,000. These were summarised as follows: -

Proposal	Saving £
CEX Support Services	83,000
Hartlepool Connect	13,000
Registration and Nationality Service	12,000
Diversity	3,000
Customer Services (Management)	36,000
Customer and Support Services Total	£148,000

Details of the comments made by Scrutiny and the Tripartite meeting were also set out in the report, together with an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

Cabinet Members questioned the numbers of staff and managers within the division and the Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer indicated that the proposal was to reduce the number of managers from four posts to three. There were around 60 staff within the section, as a result of a significant number of part-time posts. Cabinet members did feel that there were still agency and short-term contract staff that could be released to allow capacity for redeployment. The Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer commented that there were a number of temporary short term contracts being utilised within the division to cover issues such as maternity leave and some to cover vacant posts until the redeployment process was undertaken in February next year.

A Cabinet Member did feel that any temporary and agency staff should be cut forthwith to reduce costs and release permanent posts for redeployment.

A Cabinet Member also referred to the Registrars Service and commented that its current location was inappropriate and suggested that moving the service to Tanfield or another more appropriate location should be investigated. The Mayor commented that this could be reviewed as part of the wider proposals for Tanfield.

Decision

That the savings proposed within the report of £148,000 for the extended customer and support services be approved.

177. Public Health in Hartlepool: Future Options (*Acting Chief Executive*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to inform Cabinet of the potential role and function of public health across Hartlepool. The report proposed a future direction of public health in the light of the Public Health White Paper 'Healthy People Healthy Lives' November 2010. This would include a transition plan for the transferring of responsibility for public health from Hartlepool Primary Care Trust (PCT) to Hartlepool Council.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

The report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

178. Hartlepool Partnership and Council Proposed Outcome Framework 2012/13 (*Assistant Chief Executive*)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To provide the opportunity for Cabinet to consider the proposed outcome framework for 2012-13 which would be used as the framework for developing Departmental Plans, the Corporate Plan and the Hartlepool Partnership Plan for 2012/13.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

The report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

179. Quarter 2 – Revenue Financial Management Report 2011/12 (*Chief Finance Officer*)

Type of decision

None – the report was for information only.

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of details of progress against the Council's overall revenue budget for 2011/2012 and to provide an update on the forecast outturn.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Chief Finance Officer indicated that as part of the overall Treasury Management strategy for the Council the borrowing for the scheme involving the construction of 82 houses at Gladys Worthy Court, Golden Meadows and Charles Street which were funded from a combination of Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) grant and Prudential Borrowing had been delayed and in the current year this provided a one-off saving of £200,000.

The Chief Finance Officer sought Cabinet's view as to the strategy for using the one-off saving of £200,000 and the ongoing saving of £60,000. Two options were set out within the report and Cabinet suggested that both the one-off resources of £200,000 and the ongoing saving of £60,000 be utilised to create a capital investment fund. The revenue funding would support Prudential Borrowing, the value of which would depend on the nature of the capital expenditure fund as this determined the repayment period for prudential borrowing. An initial assessment indicated a total capital investment fund of between £0.8m and £1.0m (including the existing £0.2m one-off resources). Capital investment which could be funded from such an investment fund could include:

- Introducing a mortgage scheme;
- A scheme to develop additional new affordable houses;
- A scheme to buy and refurbish existing properties to provide affordable houses.

The Chief Finance Officer indicated that the proposal would need to be referred to Council as a departure from the budget and policy framework.

The remainder of the report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

1. That the proposal to develop a capital investment fund as detailed above be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy report to the meeting of cabinet on 19 December 2011.
2. The remainder of the report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

180. Quarter 2 – Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2011/2012 (*Chief Finance Officer*)

Type of decision

None – the report was for information only.

Purpose of report

To provide details of progress against the Council's 2011/12 Capital budget for the period to 30th September, 2011.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

The report was deferred for consideration at the next meeting of Cabinet.

The meeting concluded at 12.40 p.m.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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