

# CABINET

## MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

19 March 2012

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

### **Present:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond - In the Chair

Councillors: Cath Hill (Culture, Leisure and Tourism and Children's Services Portfolio Holder),  
Hilary Thompson (Performance and Adults and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder),

Also Present: Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher, Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum  
Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher, Chair of Health Scrutiny Forum  
Councillor Marjorie James, Chair of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee  
Councillor Rob Cook, Chair of Planning Committee  
Councillors Alison Lilley, Geoff Lilley and Ray Wells.

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Acting Chief Executive  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,  
John Morton, Assistant Chief Finance Officer  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor  
Joanne Machers, Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning  
Denise Ogden, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services  
Graham Frankland, Assistant Director, Resources  
Alistair Smith, Assistant Director, Transport and Engineering  
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care  
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services  
John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community Services  
Louise Wallace, Assistant Director, Health Improvement  
Chris Hart, Drug and Alcohol Manager  
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Officer  
Laura Stones, Scrutiny Support Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **251. Apologies for Absence**

None.

## **252. Declarations of interest by Members**

No declarations of interest were made at this point in the meeting. A series of declarations were made during the consideration of the agenda and these are detailed below and at the appropriate point in the minutes.

Minute 261 “Empty Property Purchasing Scheme” – Councillor H Thompson declared a personal interest.

Minute 268 “Mill House Site Masterplan and Potential Disposal of Land at Victoria Park” – The Mayor, Stuart Drummond and Councillor Cath Hill declared personal interests.

Minute 271 “Civic Lottery Fund Grant Applications 2011/2012” - Councillor H Thompson declared a personal interest.

## **253. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2012**

Confirmed.

## **254. Falcon Road Traffic Management Options** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To outline the different options for dealing with the requested closure of Falcon Road.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods outlined the history of the consideration by Cabinet of the request for the closure of Falcon Road. The Assistant Director, Transport and Engineering outlined the results of the traffic surveys carried out in the area and the options that were set out in detail in the report for a resolution to the issue. There were five main options set out in the report, which were –

OPTION 1 - Keep the road open

OPTION 2 – Road closure at Throston Grange Lane

OPTION 3 – Road closures at Falcon Road/ Moorhen Road, and Merlin Way/ Lapwing Road junctions

OPTION 4 – Road closures at junctions of Merlin Way/ Lapwing Rd, Merlin Way/ Moorhen Rd and Merlin Way/ Goshawk Rd

OPTION 5 – As Option 4, but with Goshawk Road remaining open

Appendices to the report detailed the closure points for options 2 – 5.

Among the other options considered as well as one-way systems and a trial closure, was the potential for a new access road from Easington Road into

the Middle Warren development. While this was seen as a potential solution to many of the traffic flow issues in the area, the costs, currently estimated at up to £750,000, precluded against this option at this time, though it was seen as a long term solution subject to finance being available.

The Assistant Director highlighted the results of the consultation carried out in the area and on that basis recommended in the report that the road remains open.

The Mayor stated that while the previous Cabinet decision had been to close the road, he had always supported it remaining open. The Mayor commented that he did not wish to close estates off. Traffic calming measures had been installed. Diverting traffic onto other routes, such as Hart Lane would only create greater problems. A second Cabinet Member supported the Mayor's view and indicated that she did not see the road as a 'rat run' but an access point. However, one Cabinet Member did support the closure of the road. Cabinet Members did feel that the long term option of an additional access road onto Easington Road would be the preferred solution to the traffic issues in the area.

#### **Decision**

That Falcon Road remain open at its junction with Throston Grange Lane.

## **255. Final Report – Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People** (*Children's Services Scrutiny Forum*)

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To present the Final Report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into the 'Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People'.

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

The Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum presented the report of the findings and recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into the 'Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People'. The Chair of the Scrutiny Forum commended the recommendations to Cabinet and commented that the report painted an accurate picture of the hopes and aspirations of the young people in the care of Hartlepool Borough Council.

One of the recommendations that particular attention was drawn to was the proposal to explore the viability of the council running its own 3 to 4 bedroom children's home in Hartlepool. The Scrutiny Forum believed a good business case could be presented to support such a move. Also

highlighted was the potential to seek new 'career' foster carers from those members of staff being made redundant by the authority.

A Cabinet Member questioned some one of the statistics quoted within the report which seemed to give the impression that Darlington had no children placed for adoption within 12 months of entering the care system in 2011. The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services commented that the figure did seem odd and would check the figure as the majority of performance on this measure was in excess of 70%.

Cabinet welcomed the report which highlighted the good levels of service provided within Hartlepool. It was commented that there was a wealth of information within the report in relation to Councillors particular role as Corporate Parents that would be useful for all Members to be aware.

Caution was expressed in relation to the establishment of a new children's home in the town. There would always be those who did not want such a 'home' in their street or area. The monitoring of such a home would also need to be rigorous to ensure the maintenance of high standards. Concern was also expressed at the potential 'direction' of staff being made redundant. A cabinet member commented that foster caring was a vocation not simply a job.

The Mayor considered that one of the most important jobs any councillor had was that of 'corporate parent'. This report would be extremely valuable in reminding all members of this role. Hartlepool benefitted for a high number of excellent foster carers and they should be thanked for the role they had in providing welcoming loving homes for children and young people in the care system.

### **Decision**

That the recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into the 'Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People' as set out below be approved and adopted: -

#### **"Residential Care**

- (a) That the Council explores the viability of buying or building, and running, one or more 3 to 4 bedroom children's home(s) in Hartlepool, whether that be through the utilisation of existing buildings, buildings on the asset transfer list or new builds;
- (b) That the Council extends joint working and liaises with a range of housing providers in order to provide a breadth of accommodation for young people including supported accommodation, floating support, single person accommodation and accommodation whilst home from University;

### Foster Care and Adoption

- (c) That the Council ensures that all looked after young people are equipped with the skills required for adulthood and independent living and extends care provision beyond the age of 18 for anyone not wishing to live independently at 18 and this may include supported accommodation, which should be available to a young person up until the young person feels ready to live independently;
- (d) That the Council, as part of the redeployment process, highlights to staff the option of becoming foster carers and explores the option of offering a 'career foster care' scheme to the staff at risk of redundancy, with the necessary skills;
- (e) That the Council aims to recruit more adopters and foster carers for children and young people with complex needs, giving thorough support and contact throughout the placement and post adoption;
- (f) That the Council keeps sibling groups together, where ever possible, and additional support is offered to foster carers to accommodate sibling groups;
- (g) That the Council improves links and communication with foster carers by:-
  - (i) providing additional support where required;
  - (ii) keeping foster carers up to date with developments;
  - (iii) publicising the 24 hour support service; and
  - (iv) using improved communication methods
- (h) That the Council considers, during the recruitment process, whether foster carers are better suited to long or short term placements, taking into account whether foster carers are willing to take their fostered child or young person with them on their family holiday;
- (i) That the Council ensures that a clear set of criteria is in place so that placements are appropriate to meet the needs of the child or young person including involving the child or young person in the planning processes for all placements;

### Partnerships

- (j) That the Council and partner agencies outline in their service plans what they can and will do for looked after children and young people and continues to develop a multi agency approach;
- (k) That the Council develops and implements a scheme similar to the 'bring a gift' initiative, whereby partner organisations across all Council activities are asked to donate a gift in kind (for example, cinema tickets) for a looked after child or young person;
- (l) That the Council explores the development of innovative ways of providing early intervention services to hard to reach children and young people to avoid children and young people becoming looked after; and
- (m) That the Council ensures that any meetings in relation to the personal circumstances of a looked after child or young person are held out of school hours to maintain confidentiality and ensures that all schools provide a designated person to act as a mentor to the looked after

child and young person.”

**256. Scrutiny Investigation into the Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People Action Plan** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To agree an Action Plan in response to the findings and subsequent recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into the ' Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People'.

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

To assist the Cabinet in its determination of either approving or rejecting the proposed recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum, attached as Appendix A to the report was a proposed Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s).

**Decision**

That the action plan as submitted be approved.

**257. Options Appraisal for the Potential Development of one or more Children's Homes in Hartlepool** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

**Type of decision**

Key Decision (Test 1 and 2 apply). Reference CAS116/11.

**Purpose of report**

To provide an option appraisal for Cabinet to consider whether it is appropriate or otherwise, to develop and operate one or more Children's Homes within Hartlepool.

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

The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services reported that following the closure of the last children's home in the borough, the only other similar facility maintained was the respite care facility at Flint Walk. Since then the care needs of children and young people had been met through the use of In House Foster Care (there were currently over 90 carers); Independent Foster Care Agencies and; a relatively small number of out of Borough Residential Placements for those with more complex needs.

In 2009 there were 22,324 children and young people aged 0 to 18 living in Hartlepool, which represents 24.8% of the total population of approximately 90,000 people. In February 2012 there were 193 children and young people in the care of the local authority and as can be seen, this is a very small proportion of the children and young people that live within the Borough. However, this represents a 34.7% increase on the 2006 figure of 126. In 2011 an exercise was carried out to examine the net increase in the number of children becoming looked after and the reason for the increase. The exercise established that the increase was mainly due to a number of large sibling groups becoming looked after.

The number of looked after children and young people placed in Independent Residential Placements was 14. All fell into the 10 to 15 years category. Some of these children had very complex needs which was behind the reason for their placement out of the borough as these needs could not be met here.

As part of the evidence gathering process for undertaking of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's investigation into the 'Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People', Members of the Forum attended a number of site visits including a Children's Home in Stockton, a 4 bedroom terraced property run by Stockton Borough Council. Members considered the home to be very homely and the impression Members were given was that the children living in the home were being looked after by a 'house mother' who took charge whilst working under the ethos of a foster care family. In addition to this, the home was spotlessly clean. Members considered that the success of such an operation was linked to having the right staff in place who considered this type of employment to be a vocation as opposed to a job.

The Scrutiny Forum felt very strongly that the Council should own and run one or more, three to four bedroom children's home(s) to enable looked after children and young people to remain within their home town.

In addressing the recommendation of the Scrutiny Forum, the report set out options that would require detailed business cases to be developed that would address both the capital and revenue implications. These options were: -

Option 1: One or two homes developed and managed by Hartlepool Borough Council.

Option 2: External partner develops and manages homes through a joint tender with Middlesbrough Borough Council.

Option 3: External partner develops and manages homes tendered solely by Hartlepool Borough Council.

Option 4: Homes developed and managed by another local authority in Hartlepool.

Option 5: Maintain the current position of spot purchasing residential care matched against the needs of individual children and young people outside of the Borough.

Cabinet discussed the options as set out in greater detail within the report. Cabinet Members considered that detailed business cases should be produced on both options 1 and 4. The option to establish our own 'homes' was seen as the preferred option, though it was considered that working in partnership with an authority like Stockton BC that had a proven track record in this provision should be examined in detail. A Children's Home wouldn't be the best option for most children in the care system but would provide another option for the care of children within the town.

Cabinet suggested that if the business case could be linked to bringing an empty property back into use in the town or utilising one of the council's own assets, this should be pursued by officers.

### **Decision**

That a further report be submitted to Cabinet setting out detailed business cases for the potential development of a Children's Home(s) in Hartlepool in line with the Options 1 and 4 as set out in the report.

## **258. Housing Market Renewal Transition Funding Plan**

*(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (test i applies) - Forward Plan reference Number RN4/12.

### **Purpose of report**

To set out the project implementation proposals for the Carr/Hopps Street Regeneration Area and to seek approval from Cabinet to implement the proposals from April 2012.

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

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning reported on the history and current position in relation to the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration area and set out the proposals in relation to the implementation of the regeneration scheme. The report provided a detailed implementation plan for this scheme including roles and responsibilities, phasing, timescales, financial considerations and risk analysis.

The Assistant Director focussed on the options available on the Phasing Arrangements for how the Council would purchase properties from owners by agreement in a phased approach as identified within the transition fund bid. Flexibility to acquire within other phases may be required if sales could be agreed with an owner and this would allow for a tenant to be relocated. There were two options for Cabinet to consider in terms of phasing and these were (Option 1) 'Targeted Acquisition' of properties which were occupied. This would allow for existing tenants to be re-housed more quickly if the owner was willing to sell their property by agreement to the Council. This would result in a pepper potting of ownership and make selective demolition more difficult. The second (Option 2) 'Block



Acquisition' was based on acquiring blocks with the fewest occupants first. This phasing plan would allow for selective demolition of blocks if required and would prioritise the acquisition of more vulnerable tenanted properties, it would however result in some existing tenants waiting longer for the opportunity to leave the area.

The Mayor commented that this area had been difficult to address as it had not been included as a Housing Market Renewal (HMR) area and the push for redevelopment had come from the residents themselves. The loss of government funding and the consequent delays had been very frustrating for all concerned. The Mayor was however critical of some who were slowing the purchasing process down by making unsubstantiated promises to property owners that they could gain substantially higher values for their properties than was reality. The Mayor stressed that should any property owner in the area have any questions or concerns, they should contact the Council first. The Council had established through land tribunals and the courts a robust valuation process. The Council had to maintain a process of continuing contact with the residents and help them keep their properties safe and secure during this transition. The Assistant Director commented that he supported the Mayor's comments and that officers had learned valuable lessons through the experiences in the Perth and Hurworth Street acquisitions.

The Mayor understood that the previous HMR processes involved compulsory purchase orders (CPO) which automatically placed displaced tenants as a priority on the housing list. The process in this case was not CPO and the Mayor questioned if the displaced tenants had the same new housing priority. The Assistant Director confirmed that displaced residents would have similar priority as they would be technically homeless.

It was suggested that the Council should seek to maximise any potential income through recycling as much of the properties to be demolished as possible. The age of the housing did mean that many features, even bricks, had a demand. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods commented that the Council's sustainable property policy included recycling policies and the authority would be 'stripping out' property prior to any demolition.

### **Decision**

1. That the consultation proposals set out in paragraph 4.12 of the report be endorsed and that consultation with residents and owners commence from April 1st 2012.
2. That the position in respect of Housing Market Renewal transition funding be noted together with the match funding requirement set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy report of February 2012.
3. That the report be endorsed and the scheme be progressed in line with the implementation plan in partnership with Endeavour Homes and Housing Hartlepool.
4. That in relation to the phasing plan options as set out in the report (Option 1 - Targeted Acquisition and Option 2 - Block Acquisition) the

Council should retain the maximum flexibility in purchasing properties in the most advantageous manner.

5. That the proposal to begin acquisition by agreement of properties within the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration area over a 3 year period be agreed.
6. That the proposed compensation packages for tenants set out in section 4.14 of the report and for owners as set out in paragraph 4.8 of the report be approved.

## **259. Provision of Supported Housing for Care Leavers and Homeless 16 – 25 Year Olds** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key decision (Tests 1 and 2 apply) Forward Plan Reference CAS 118/12.

### **Purpose of report**

To set out a proposal for the development of a Supported Housing Project at Blakelock Gardens, Hartlepool.

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

The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services reported on a proposal which linked to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forums' investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason' and its final report and action plan produced in July 2009 with the recommendation; "Discussion to take place as part of the Business Transformation Programme to explore the viability of converting existing Council owned property into appropriate supported accommodation for young people".

Hartlepool's Children Looked After Strategy sets out the authority's ambitions in relation to children and young people in and leaving care. The vision is to ensure every looked after child or young person in Hartlepool experiences high quality and stable relationships, achieve their aspirations and grow up with a sense of belonging.

The Business Transformation Programme has resulted in a range of Council buildings becoming available and they have been considered for the feasibility for conversion. A property in Blakelock Gardens had recently been identified as suitable. The building was Council owned but had been leased to Endeavour Housing up until July 2011. Endeavour had used the property to provide supported housing to homeless adults and families, however, following a reduction in Supporting People funding and a subsequent service review the decision was made by Endeavour Housing to close the service and surrender the lease.

Officers from Child and Adults Services had viewed the accommodation and consider that the building is well situated and developed to be suitable for delivering supported accommodation for young people. The property

was an established and long standing supported housing project which means work required to convert the building was not necessary although some refurbishment would be necessary and its reopening should not prove to be a major barrier as the property would be occupied and returning to its former use. The property would provide seven self contained flats and an additional 'crash pad'.

Child and Adult Services department currently commission a supported housing project from Tees Valley Housing Group at St Paul's Road Hostel which has provided supported accommodation for young people since 1984. In March 2011, a Research and Development Officer undertook a review of Supported Accommodation with young people. A key finding from this review was that the vast majority of young people wanted their own front door with en-suite facilities, a communal area and a good standard of decoration. A further consultation meeting was held with six care leavers to ascertain their views on the appropriateness of developing Blakelock Gardens as a supported housing project for Care Leavers received positive feedback.

The financial considerations set out in the report indicated that around £22,000 would be required to bring the property in Blakelock Gardens up to the minimum required standard. The Mayor questioned the additional expenditure on providing the facility at Blakelock Gardens over that at St Paul's Road and whether there was sufficient demand to fill the places. The Assistant Director commented that it was understood that Tees Valley Housing may continue a service provision through St Paul's Road though this was likely to be for less vulnerable young people. The demand for this type of accommodation was likely to outstrip demand.

In consideration of the options available to provide the accommodation provision at Blakelock Gardens, Cabinet requested that tenders should be sought on both options; leasing the property to an operator or selling the property to and commissioning the service from an appropriate operator. Cabinet could then consider the response to the options before choosing which route was most appropriate.

### **Decision**

1. That approval be given to the redevelopment of Blakelock Gardens to provide self contained supported accommodation for care leavers and homeless young people up to 25 years of age. (It would be envisaged that priority will be given to homeless 16/17 year olds.)
2. That the procurement of the service be based on the following options:-
  - Option One: The Council lease the property to a Housing Provider, who will be responsible for the tenancy management and the Council commissions the direct support services to young people.
  - Option Two: The provider purchases the property from the Council and the Council commissions the support services direct to the young people.

Both options to be offered within the procurement process to providers with a view to assessing the level of interest and best value option for

the Council prior to making a final decision.

**260. Housing Care and Support Strategy** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods / Director of Child and Adult Services*)

**Type of decision**

Key Decision (Test 2). Forward Plan Reference Number: CAS 117/11

**Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet for the Housing, Care, and Support Strategy 2012-15.

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

The Assistant Director, Adult Social Care reported the background information to the strategy and information about the consultation process which had resulted in the final version of the Housing, Care, and Support Strategy. The full strategy was submitted as Appendix 1 to the report. The strategy outlined the strategic direction and vision that the Council was working towards in terms of housing, care, and support for vulnerable adults. The strategy detailed information about the current and future needs of various vulnerable populations, as well as including information on the needs and views of service users and gaps in service provision. As a result, the strategy would be used to inform any commissioning decisions that include housing, care, and support.

**Decision**

That the Housing, Care, and Support Strategy 2012-15 as submitted be approved.

**261. Empty Property Purchasing Scheme** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Chief Finance Officer and Chief Solicitor*)

**Councillor H Thompson declared a personal interest in the report at the commencement of its consideration.**

**Type of decision**

Key Decision test i and ii applies. Forward Plan Reference RN98/11

**Purpose of report**

To enable Cabinet to consider the business case for the proposed Empty Property Purchasing Scheme to be referred to Council on the 22nd March 2012 for consideration and approval.

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

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning reported on the project implementation proposals for the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme approved in principle within the budgetary decision and proposals set out in

the Council report of the 9th February 2012 and 23rd February 2012. The scheme proposed the acquisition and refurbishment of empty private sector properties by agreement across Hartlepool. It was proposed that the scheme would begin with the implementation of the first phase by acquiring 24 empty properties followed by an interim project review to assess the financial and operational position before moving on to the next phase of the scheme.

The report provided a detailed implementation plan for this scheme including roles and responsibilities, selection criteria, financial considerations and risk analysis. The report suggested that the strategy was implemented using two projects (known as Projects 1 and 2) to reflect the different funding streams available for the projects.

The Mayor welcomed the strategy as of great importance to the council and the town. There were a significant number of properties that could be brought back into use through the strategy and a ready market for them once they had been improved. A Cabinet Member sought assurance that the training aspirations of Members through apprenticeships was embedded within the strategy. The Assistant Director indicated that training was part of the package of delivery.

### **Decision**

1. That the implementation of the first phase ('Project 1') of the proposed empty property purchase scheme be approved in line with the business case and project implementation plan to provide 48 affordable rented homes.
2. That Council approval be sought to implement the first phase of 'Project 1' to provide 24 affordable homes up to a capital cost of £1,315,000.
3. That delegated authority be sought from Council to implement phase 2 of 'Project 1' to provide a further 24 affordable homes up to a capital costs of £1,315,000, subject to a further report to Cabinet at the interim project review stage to confirm the financial viability of the project prior to implementation.
4. That it is noted that separate Cabinet and Council approval would be sort for 'Project 2' when the funding for this scheme was more certain and a business case had been developed.
5. That the extension of the existing management agreement with Housing Hartlepool to provide housing management services be approved.
6. That a bid to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for Empty Homes funding in adjacent areas, which is likely to be launched in March 2012, be approved.

## **262. Sub Regional Strategic Tenancy Policy** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision. Test (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference Number RN101/11

### **Purpose of report**

Cabinet was asked to approve the framework document that would form the Council's consultation proposals on the future letting of affordable housing in the borough to comply with the Localism Act 2011. Cabinet was also asked to note that this report provided the first step in the process towards implementation of the Sub Regional Strategic Tenancy Policy and that further report(s) would be presented for final approval.

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

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning indicated that the report provided the context within which the Sub Regional Strategic Tenancy Policy framework had been developed. The report contained the background information and addressed the consultation arrangements for the Strategic Tenancy Policy. The report also included the draft framework and the outcome of consultation with partner Registered Providers. Cabinet suggested that the consultation focus should be through questionnaires and written consultation rather than through consultation meetings.

### **Decision**

1. That the work towards the implementation of the Sub Regional Strategic Tenancy Policy be endorsed.
2. That the framework document that would form the Council's consultation proposals on the Sub Regional Strategic Tenancy Policy be approved.
3. That the proposed consultation process highlighted in the report be approved subject to Cabinet's comments.
4. That further report(s) be submitted to Cabinet prior to January 2013 to approve implementation of the Sub Regional Strategic Tenancy Policy
5. That the current Department for Communities and Local Government Allocation of Accommodation Consultation be noted.

## **263. Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision. Test (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference Number RN 2/12

### **Purpose of report**

Cabinet was asked to note the Government's new Housing Strategy for England published on 21 November 2011 and its significance to the Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2011-2015.

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

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning submitted an overview of the Government's housing strategy and a preliminary assessment of its implications for the recently agreed Housing Strategy for Hartlepool. The report set out the background information and addressed how the Council might deliver its Housing Strategy in conjunction with Government priorities.

### **Decision**

1. That the Government's new Housing Strategy for England published on 21 November 2011 be noted.
2. That further reports be submitted to Cabinet on the impacts of the strategy as they become clearer.

## **264. Corporate Plan and Departmental Plan 2012-13**

*(Assistant Chief Executive, Director of Child and Adult Services and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Corporate Plan – Budget and Policy Framework  
Departmental Plans - Non-Key Decision

### **Purpose of report**

To enable Cabinet to consider and comment on the proposed Corporate Plan for 2012/13 and agree the three Departmental Plans for 2012/13.

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

The Performance Portfolio Holder indicated that the report contained the Council's suite of Service Planning documents for 2012/13. The Corporate Plan was submitted as Appendix A, the Chief Executive's Departmental Plan was submitted as Appendix B, the Child and Adult Services Departmental Plan was submitted as Appendix C and the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Departmental Plan was submitted as Appendix D to the report.

The Performance Portfolio Holder reported that all the plans contained a detailed action plan setting out how the Council, or individual departments, proposed to deliver the priority outcomes. Key Performance Indicators were also included which would be used to monitor progress throughout 2012/13. Departmental Plans also contained a section listing the Risks that could prevent the Department from delivering the priority outcomes.

The documents would be used as the basis for the regular monitoring reports that will be presented throughout the year to Elected Members.

### **Decision**

1. That the Corporate Plan 2012/13 be approved for consideration by Council on 12 April 2012.
2. That the Chief Executive's Departmental Plan 2012/13 be approved for distribution.

3. That the Child and Adult Services Departmental Plan 2012/13 be approved for distribution.
4. That the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Departmental Plan 2012/13 be approved for distribution.

## **265. Commissioning the Local Healthwatch Service**

*(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision. Test (i) applies. Forward Plan reference CAS121/12.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide Cabinet with information about HealthWatch and the available options for commissioning the new HealthWatch service.

To request that Cabinet endorse the preferred option to achieve this within the required timescales.

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

The Assistant Director, Adult Social Care provided Cabinet with an overview of the new HealthWatch service which must be in place from 1 April 2013. Local HealthWatch would retain all the involvement and scrutiny functions of the Local Involvement Network (LINK), including:

- Obtaining and promoting views;
- Monitoring health and social care services;
- Making reports and recommendations;
- Carrying out Enter and View visits.

In addition, local HealthWatch would:

- provide information to support people with choices about services;
- either provide or signpost to a complaints advocacy service – currently provided by Independent Complaints Advisory Service (ICAS);
- have statutory representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Department of Health HealthWatch Transition Plan suggested that HealthWatch could be procured using grant-in-aid funding. Other views hold that commissioning should be by way of a competitive procurement process in line with European Union (EU) Directives. The Department of Health has stated that “it is not the role of the Department to be prescriptive about which option might be best... it is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that they are acting in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations about procurement”. The report, therefore, recommended that HealthWatch was commissioned using a procurement route that was in line with the EU Directive and the Public Contract Regulations 2006. This would avert the risk of any subsequent legal challenge.

Cabinet commented that the main risk was that a large/national organisation came forward and under bid the local provider. There was confidence in the local LINK organisation and it was hoped that it would



come forward as the eventual provider of HealthWatch. The Mayor commented that he was sure that LINKs would be a strong bidder in the process but the Council was required to obtain best value.

#### **Decision**

1. That the options for commissioning the HealthWatch service from 1 April 2013 be noted.
2. That the recommended method for commissioning the HealthWatch service be endorsed, as follows: -  
A competitive procurement process is used to commission the local HealthWatch service from 1 April 2013;  
The contract will be awarded from 1 December 2012 to enable the start-up costs of £21,000 to be used to develop the service prior to full implementation in April 2013.

### **266. Concessionary Local Bus Travel** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

#### **Type of decision**

Key decision test (ii) applies. Forward Plan ref: RND 94/11.

#### **Purpose of report**

To report the proposed re-imbusement arrangements with local bus operators for concessionary fares to be implemented from 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported that negotiations were still proceeding and had been very difficult this year. No authority in the region had reached a final agreement with Arriva. There were currently concerns about the impact of changes on payments estimated using the DfT calculator for 2012/13

The indicative overall figures for the major operators had been arrived at subject to further consultation. Several factors had had a significant impact on the level of settlement in 2012/13 for the Tees Valley Authorities, and these were set out in detail in the report. The Director indicated that it was hoped that the level of budgetary pressure set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2012/13 may be reduced.

#### **Decision**

1. That approval be given to continue participating in the Tees Valley wide enhancement to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) offering travel within and between the areas covered by Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Councils.
2. That the Council continues to operate an enhanced scheme whereby all journeys prior to 9:30 a.m. on weekdays attract a nominal fare of 30p

3. That the charge for replacement passes remains at £5.00.

## **267. Adult Substance Misuse Plans 2012-13** (*Acting Chief Executive*)

### **Type of decision**

Key decision (Test 2). Forward Plan Ref: CAS 112/11.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek Cabinet's approval and support to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, Adult Drug Treatment Plan and Alcohol Harm Reduction Plan for 2012-13 as the performance management framework between the local substance misuse system and the National Treatment Agency (NTA).

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

The Assistant Director, Health Improvement reported that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) was responsible for the implementation of the national drug and alcohol strategies, with key tasks of preventing misuse through education, offering support to individuals and families and providing specialist treatment.

The Government provided an annual funding allocation from the Department of Health and Home Office to tackle drugs with a requirement to produce an Annual Drug Treatment Plan and regular performance reports to the National Treatment Agency (NTA). Although there is no additional funding allocated for alcohol the performance framework and reporting now has to include the local response for alcohol misuse.

The Assistant Director outlined the background information to the Needs Assessment including statistics relating to offending and treatment programmes with comparisons for local and national rates. Progress against the 2011/12 plans was outlined together with the priorities identified for the 2012/13 plans. The detailed multiagency action plans were submitted as appendices to the report for both drug and alcohol misuse.

The Drug and Alcohol Manager commented that government's emphasis had moved from treatment to recovery and reintegration. This was, however, a deep change to the overall priorities of these plans which would take sometime to embed. It was also highlighted that there was no direct funding for alcohol abuse treatment or support programmes. Where possible programmes and support for both drugs and alcohol had been merged to increase the available support. There was the potential for greater spending and influence on alcohol abuse issues through the change in local health spending to be managed through the Health and Wellbeing Board and associated legislation.

Cabinet supported the programmes outlined in the submitted plans. There was concern that in the current economic situation, alcohol abuse could become a more prevalent problem. The Drug and Alcohol Manager

indicated that there was growing concern that alcohol was being used as a crutch by an increasing number of people in growing difficulty.

The Mayor considered that the national policy in getting drug users into treatment programmes and then just leaving them there was wrong and the change in policy towards recovery was the right move. National policies on alcohol problems were simply wrong or non-existent. More had to be done to tackle the problems caused by alcohol abuse and one method, through the re-tightening of licensing regulations would be welcomed. The 24 hour drinking licence regulations had been a flop and the reinstatement of late night closing to 2.00 a.m. at the latest would be welcomed by all, including the licensees. It wouldn't take too much to change the culture of late night drinking which was hamming both individuals and wider society. Proposals for minimum alcohol pricing would have little effect other than to push smaller retailers out of business. The plans submitted were a step in the right direction and were supported.

### **Decision**

That the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Adult Drug Treatment Plan and Alcohol Harm Reduction Plan for 2012-13 be approved and supported as the performance management framework between the local substance misuse system and the National Treatment Agency (NTA).

## **268. Mill House Site Masterplan and Potential Disposal of Land at Victoria Park** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

**At the commencement of the agenda item, The Mayor, Stuart Drummond and Councillor Cath Hill declared personal interests.**

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (Test i and ii applies) Forward Plan Reference No: RN90 / 11

### **Purpose of report**

To Inform Cabinet of the progress in the development of a Masterplan for the Mill House area, including appointment of a preferred bidder and to seek Cabinet's approval to make recommendations to Council for a decision on the disposal of the freehold of Victoria Park to Hartlepool United Football Club (the Club) as the first step in the process to implement the Masterplan.

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

The Assistant Director, Resources reported on the work undertaken by Council officers working with a potential developer and the Club to develop a masterplan proposal for the Mill House area. The report highlighted some of the key findings contained within the Economic Impact Assessment report on the value of the football club to the town and a proposal for the disposal of the land currently leased to the Club by the Council.

The report outlined the background history and the current situation in relation to the club and the land. The Council was now reconsidering plans to develop the wider Mill House area with a Masterplan that would cover not only the original area but also the key sites of the Odeon and land at the corner Young Street. The potential for addressing these problem sites adds a significant factor to the regeneration of the area. As a result of the Masterplanning considerations negotiations were reopened with the Club.

The Assistant Director reported that positive discussions had been ongoing with the club who wished to be involved in the redevelopment of the area but the club wanted the ground transferring at no costs to ensure their involvement.

In relation to the Masterplan, the Assistant Director indicated that only one submission from a potential developer had been returned and authorisation was sought to pursue discussions with the developer. A copy of the proposal from Gus Robinson Developments was attached to the report.

The Mayor considered that the masterplan for this area, including the Odeon site could have the potential to one of the most significant and exciting developments in the town centre for a long time. The development could have great benefits for all concerned and partners such as Cameron's Brewery, the Football Club and others were all positive about the potential for this area. The Mayor considered that the Economic Impact Assessment report on the value the football club contributed to the town was a key consideration. The club were, in these negotiations, not including the land to the north of the ground that had been the source of some dispute over recent years. In relation to the ground itself, as long as there were appropriate legal covenants protecting the land for football use, the Mayor was confident that would secure the land against many peoples concerns. Cabinet Members expressed their support for the wider masterplan proposals.

The Mayor did question the potential of a decision being made during the purdah period leading up to the election. The Chief Solicitor advised that he had issued guidance to all Members and officers on the purdah period which will commence on 27 March. Much would depend on when the decision would be made.

Cabinet briefly discussed the timing of the decisions. The Mayor believed that it would be better if the decision was taken sooner rather than later but acknowledged the view that making the decision within the purdah period may not be appropriate. The Mayor did believe that it may be prudent for Members, possibly through the political groups to be briefed on the proposals. Consideration could then be given to making a decision at an early date after the elections.

The Mayor questioned the decision making route and whether the matter was an executive or council decision. The Chief Solicitor advised that because of the wider significance of the decision the matter had been

referred to Council for final approval.

### **Decision**

1. That the development of a Masterplan for the Mill House area be noted and endorsed.
2. That Gus Robinson Developments be approved as the preferred bidder for the development of the Masterplan.
3. That Council be recommended to consider and reach a decision on the potential sale of land at Victoria Park to Hartlepool United Football Club as the first step in the process to implement the Masterplan.

## **269. The Allocation of Community Pool Grant 2012/2013**

*(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report was to inform Cabinet of the outcome of recent procurement projects undertaken by Hartlepool Borough Council. These projects pertained to the proposed allocation of funding from the 2012 / 2013 Community Pool Grant.

Cabinet were asked to note the outcome of the evaluations and authorise the funding of the projects in line with the recommendations of the report.

The report also sought Cabinet approval for the outlined proposal for the eligibility and criteria process for Categories 4 and 5 of the Community Pool, and agree the proposed funding allocation against each of these criteria for 2012 / 13.

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

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services reported that on 21 November 2011 Cabinet had authorised the formation of five categories within the 2012 / 13 Community Pool Grant. Cabinet also mandated that a competitive procurement process be undertaken in allocating the aforementioned grant. The Assistant Director outlined the recent procurement processes undertaken to allocate the Community Pool Grant 2012/13 and outlined the eligibility and criteria for Categories 4 and 5, together with the proposed funding allocations for each criteria.

Following the competitive procurement processes undertaken in February 2012 it was now proposed that the funding of the Community Pool Grant 2012 / 2013 was allocated as detailed in the table detailed in confidential Appendix 1. The appendix contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

In relation to the proposals for emergency payments to groups / organisations Cabinet questioned if there were any proposals to require the payback of emergency loans. The Assistant Director commented that it had not been considered at this stage but could be a future option. The groups that tended to need such help were small and frequently wouldn't be in a position to payback. The Mayor commented that such a facility could provide additional flexibility. The Mayor also commented that moving from grants to commissioning was a challenge for all concerned but would tighten the control over council expenditure and allow proper monitoring of the services provided. The work undertaken had been difficult but officers had worked extremely hard to reach this stage.

### **Decision**

1. That the outcome of the recent procurement projects be noted and the funding of these projects be approved in line with the recommendations of this report.
2. That the eligibility and criteria process for Categories 4 and 5 of the Community Pool be approved.
3. That Cabinet consider the applications submitted within Categories 4 and 5 before determining any funding split.
4. That the minimum and maximum grant rates available for Categories 4 and 5 as set out in the report.
5. That Category 5 be sub divided within the application process as set out in the report.
6. That Category 4 funding be made available to more than one provider.
7. That Category 5 funding be available throughout the financial year or until it is fully allocated.
8. That the level of funding to the winning bidders for Categories One, Two and Three as specified in confidential Appendix 1 be authorised; This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
9. That that the remaining balance from the 2012/13 Community Pool Grant be used to fund Categories Four and Five.

## **270. Heugh Gun Battery Museum** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to seek consideration for crisis funding for the Heugh Gun Battery Museum for the current financial year.

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

The Chief Finance Officer reported that the Heugh Gun Battery Museum has applied to the Community Pool for crisis funding of up to £5,600. The funding would contribute to the core costs of the project including the salary costs of a Manager, an Outreach Worker and a Kitchen Assistant and utility and other running costs.

The application has been made by the Heugh Gun Battery Museum because the Museum had a shortfall in income for the current financial year despite increased visitor numbers due to a reduction in income from fundraising and increasing expenditure. The museum had produced a business plan for the future to accommodate the changing circumstances. An award to the Heugh Gun Battery Museum would leave a balance of £40,645 which will be available should any other groups find themselves in a financial crisis before the end of the financial year.

Cabinet supported the application as the museum provided a valuable resource, particularly to schools. Members hoped that the new business plan would provide a sound business basis for the future.

### **Decision**

1. That approval be given to the request from the Heugh Gun Battery Museum for crisis funding of up to £5,600 as a contribution towards the core costs of the project including salary and utility and other running costs.
2. That any allocation of grant aid to groups known to be experiencing financial difficulties to be released in monthly/quarterly instalments, as appropriate, in order to safeguard the Council's investment and minimise risk.

## **271. Civic Lottery Fund Grant Applications 2011/2012**

*(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

**At the commencement of the agenda item, Councillor H Thompson declared a personal interest.**

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to advise and seek approval for the third round of Civic Lottery Fund Grant applications in the 2011/2012 financial year.

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

The report asks Cabinet to consider ten applications from local organisations, six of which have not previously been supported with funding from the Civic Lottery. The Mayor commented that the criteria for the grants

was required to assess the applications and requested that the report be deferred to the next meeting.

**Decision**

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

**272. Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2012-2013** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for the strategic planning of Youth Justice priorities and actions for 2012-2013.

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

The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services provided an overview of the broader national context within which the planning of local Youth Justice priorities and actions were taking place. The report summarised the activities that would inform the development of the local Youth Justice Plan by highlighting priorities and actions for 2012/13 before laying out proposals for the scrutiny and approval of the draft Plan within the Council's scrutiny and decision making processes.

**Decision**

That the proposed planning framework for the development of the Youth Justice Plan for 2012/13 be approved.

**273. Quarter 3 - Revenue Financial Management Report 2011-12** (*Corporate Management Team*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**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 report set out the relevant background; the Revenue Budget Outturn (including General Fund Budget, Trading Account Forecast Outturn, Early Intervention Grant Outturn); Industrial Action Pay Saving and Special Responsibility Allowance Savings; and Key Balance Sheet Information.

The Assistant Chief Finance Officer highlighted that potential financial risks



associated with gas and electricity budgets and social care costs if the PCT had changed its arrangements for assessing health needs had now diminished. Departments have continued to manage expenditure robustly and there is now anticipated to be a favourable variance on energy costs. However a number of additional expenditure commitments and trading account operational risks have been identified which it would be prudent to fund.

An initial assessment of the saving in pay costs as a result of the national day of industrial action anticipated a one off saving of £50,000. Council resolved to allocate these resources to establish a ring-fenced budget for retraining staff on the redeployment register. The actual budget saving had now been calculated at £47,000 and the shortfall could be covered from a saving in member special responsibility allowances. In addition, the Council received an unannounced increase in the EIG grant allocation for 2011/12 of £0.022m on 24th February 2012. The Department for Education has not provided an explanation for this increase. It is recommended that these resources and resources from robust management of EIG expenditure which together total £0.142m are transferred to the General Fund Reserve.

### **Decision**

1. That the report be noted and the advice from the Corporate Management Team in respect of the following issues to be referred to Council for approval;
2. That Council approval be sought to allocate part of the additional General Fund outturn to meet the commitments identified in Appendix A to the report (£0.255m) and to transfer the remaining additional General Fund Outturn of £0.177m to the General Fund Reserve;
3. That Council approval be sought to allocate the £0.325m from the Trading Account outturn to manage the risks and commitments identified in Appendix B to the report;
4. That it be noted that no additional Early Intervention Grant commitment or risks had been identified and the increased outturn of £142,000 will transfer to the General Fund Reserve;
5. That Council be advised that it would be prudent to delay developing a strategy for using the resources transferred into the General Fund Reserve until the 2013/14 budget process commences. This would enable any usage to be considered in the context of the Council's overall financial position for 2013/14 and the financial issues and risks which will need to be addressed, as detailed in paragraph 6.4 of the report.
6. That it be recommended to Council that the saving in the current year from a reduction in the number of Special Responsibility Allowances paid to Cabinet Members of approximately £3,000 be allocated towards the ring-fenced budget for retraining staff on the redeployment register.

## **274. Quarter 3 - Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2011/2012** *(Corporate Management Team)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide details of progress against the Council's 2011/12 Capital budget for the period to 31st December 2011.

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

The report provided detailed monitoring information for each departmental area up to 31st December 2011. In total there were 330 schemes within the Council's capital programme. The report advises Cabinet that the majority of schemes were progressing as planned and provided a detailed commentary on individual departmental capital programmes. Cabinet's attention was also drawn to the decision of the Adult and Community Services Portfolio Holder in February 2012 when a new capital scheme for Brierton Sports Centre Upgrade with costs totalling £0.038m was approved to address a number of issues at the Sports Centre. This would be funded from an underspend against retention costs for the construction of the Headland Sports Hall.

### **Decision**

That the report and the Portfolio Holder approval reported be noted.

## **275. Digital City** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek Cabinet approval to provide funding to the Digital City Business (DCB) initiative to develop a more sustainable sub regional project supporting digital and creative businesses.

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

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning reported on the background and current position of the DCB support programme. In addition information is provided on funding requests for Digital City which were set out in Appendix 1 to the report (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, para 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Assistant Director reported that the initiative worked on a 'hub and spoke' basis and every £1 invested by the public sector had brought in £7

from the private sector. The funding requirement was likely to be defrayed to the 2014-15 financial year at the back end of the financial profile. Funding would depend on the achievement of relevant outcomes for Hartlepool. The Mayor commented that there was always the potential that benefits could come to the town, though at this time the town's priorities lay in other sectors.

**Decision**

That the funding request of £30,000 be approved to cover a three year period of operation be provided to Digital City Business initiative to assist in the development of a sub regional sustainable specialist business support programme as reported.

**276. Growing Places Fund** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To inform Cabinet of the outcome of the Growing Places Fund (GPF) application process and the recommended projects to be put forward to Government for consideration. The projects would be subject to due diligence and endorsement by the TVU Leadership and Management Board prior to submission to Government.

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

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning indicated that the report provided cabinet with information relating to the GPF and the outcome of the application process and recommended projects to be put forward Government for consideration. In addition Appendix 1 to the report (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, para 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) provided a summary of the recommended projects and included the financial summary, outputs and outcome information.

The Mayor commented that while Hartlepool hadn't benefitted directly the investment did need to be seen in the wider Tees Valley context. The Assistant Director commented that the Hartlepool projects had not been prioritised as other projects had faster payback and higher initial job creation numbers. Further reports would be submitted to Cabinet as the projects progressed.

**Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **277. Who Cares (NE) – Update** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on services commissioned from Who Cares (NE).

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

The Assistant Director, Adult Social Care reported on the governance arrangements, funding, service delivery and activity levels and partnership working within Who Cares (NE). The services commissioned from Who Cares (NE) formed part of the low-level support and reablement model that was being delivered across health and social care, affecting all wards within the town. When the contract award to Who Cares (NE) was approved by Cabinet in August 2011, Members indicated that they wished to receive an update report on the contract and the report submitted fulfilled that request.

Cabinet noted that there was lost of client contacts included in the statistical information and requested that geographical information on these be included in future updates. The Mayor also requested that as well as being able to see the communities where the funding had been delivered, some case studies would also be useful. The Assistant Director commented that there quite a number of case studies available that could be supplied to Cabinet members.

### **Decision**

That the progress report be noted that a further update report be submitted later in the year.

## **278. Chief Executive Replacement** (*Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To advise that the temporary arrangements put in place to cover the Chief Executive vacancy are due to expire on 31 March 2012 and to recommend an extension of the current arrangements until full consideration of the options available can be given after Council elections in May.

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

The Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer reported that the post of Chief Executive became vacant in August 2011 and Members subsequently agreed to make a temporary appointment so that full consideration could be given to the options available to the Council.

The Director of Child and Adult Services had been appointed as the Acting Chief Executive. The temporary appointment was offered on the basis of it lasting until a permanent appointment of Chief Executive was made or an alternative implemented and was expected to last until 31 March 2012.

Backfill arrangements were also agreed within the Child and Adult Services Department to provide necessary cover for statutory responsibilities in the absence of the Director and provide sufficient capacity to ensure service delivery.

The Chief Executive post would remain vacant beyond 31 March 2012 and it was proposed that the temporary arrangement previously agreed by Council on 27 October 2011 continue until full consideration of the options available can be given after Council elections in May and a permanent appointment or alternative implemented.

As reported to Council in October these arrangements delivered a saving in 2011/12 of £76,848. It was anticipated that the temporary arrangements may extend into 2012/13 and it was reported that if that should occur a monthly saving of £10,978 will accrue to the Council from April 2012. This monthly saving figure will be adjusted to £10,483 to reflect a change in one Assistant Director providing cover who is on a lower substantive salary. Council had decided that they would determine how the saving will be spent. This monthly saving figure will be adjusted to £10,483 to reflect a change in one Assistant Director providing cover who is on a lower substantive salary.

The Mayor commented that it made sense to delay the appointment process until after the election in May. In order to ensure that Cabinet and Council reconsidered the issue at the earliest opportunity, the Mayor suggested that the current temporary arrangements be extended until the end of June.

#### **Decision**

1. That the current temporary arrangements to cover the Chief Executive vacancy be extended until the end of June so that full consideration of the options available can be given after Council elections in May 2012.
2. That the Mayor instigates discussions with other Elected Members to determine an appropriate way forward in the new municipal year.

The meeting concluded at 12.25 p.m.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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