

# CABINET

## MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

2 April 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::**

Councillors James, P Thompson, Turner and Wells

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,  
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer  
Alyson Caman, Legal Services Manager  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning  
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services  
John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community Services  
Paul Robson, Integrated Transport Manager  
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **279. Apologies for Absence**

None.

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

Councillors Hill declared a personal interest in relation to Minute 282 and Councillor H Thompson declared a personal interest in relation to Minute 283.

### **281. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2012**

Received.

## **282. Consultation Outcome in relation to Denominational Transport** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision.**

Information/Key Decision CAS 120/12 - test (ii) applies

### **Purpose of report**

To inform Cabinet of the outcome of the consultation exercise relating to the removal of free transport to denominational schools and to confirm that a further report would be presented relating to proposals for savings options.

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

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided background information relating to the proposed removal of existing free transport to denominational schools following the Cabinet decision on 5 December 2011. A summary of the outcome of the consultation relating to the removal of free transport to denominational schools was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report

The Council decision on 23 February 2012 confirmed additional one off funding was to be made available in order to sustain denominational transport for a further year (academic year 2012/13). This opportunity was to allow a further review of the savings options relating to the proposed removal of free transport to denominational schools.

The consultation outcome demonstrated a preference to sustain free transport to denominational schools. However, if the Council agreed to the removal of free transport, a significant number of consultees expressed a clear preference to see the Council arrange transport and introduce a concessionary rate, starting September 2013. Taking the consultation outcome into consideration, Cabinet was asked to consider the following options for consideration from September 2013 onwards.

**Option 1:** Continue as at present, to provide free transport to denominational secondary schools.

**Option 2:** Remove free transport to all denominational secondary schools starting September 2013 (target efficiency would be achieved).

**Option 3:** Starting September 2013, free concessionary transport would cease for all new pupils starting at denominational schools except for those where there was a legal requirement to do so. Existing pupils at denominational schools who already received discretionary school transport would continue to do so until they moved school or changed address.

Members were referred to the financial implications of the proposal together with a summary of the key risks associated with delivery of the savings, as outlined in the report. The additional one off funding provided would support the continuation of the existing denominational provision for

academic year 2012/13. In order for Council to make a final decision in relation to options 2 and 3 above a further report would be provided detailing the issues and implications of each option.

In the lengthy discussion that followed Members debated the various options and, in particular, the financial implications and risks of continuing to provide free transport. Whilst Members were reluctant to support removal of services of this type, it was emphasised that the reasons for the proposed removal of free transport was as a consequence of the significant reduction in Government funding leaving the Cabinet with little choice but to review non-statutory services.

The Mayor referred to the consultation process and concerns that had been expressed by the Head Teacher of English Martyrs regarding the fairness of the proposals highlighting that the two feeder schools for English Martyrs fell outside the 3 mile eligibility criteria. Given the concerns expressed, the Mayor highlighted the importance of ensuring fairness and that feeder schools should not be disadvantaged by the proposals.

The Integrated Transport Manager provided clarification of the current home to school transport policy in response to queries raised by Members.

Following further debate, Cabinet were keen to explore the various issues and implications of each option in further detail at a future meeting of Cabinet with a view to determining recommendations to Council on a way forward.

#### **Decision**

- (i) That the outcomes of the consultation process, as detailed in Appendix 1, be noted.
- (ii) That a further report be received by Cabinet to explore the various issues and implications of each option in further detail to determine recommendations to Council on a way forward.

**Prior to consideration of the following item of business Councillor Hilary Thompson indicated her intention not to take part in consideration of the Elwick Millennium Association application in view of the personal interest declared at the commencement of the meeting as Vice-Chair of the Association.**

### **283. Civic Lottery Fund Grant Applications 2011/12 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Round** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key

#### **Purpose of report**

To advise and seek approval for the third round of Civic Lottery Fund Grant applications for the 2011/12 financial year.

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

The report included background information relating to the Civic Lottery Fund Grant application process, grant application guidelines, the Civic Lottery criteria and information for applicants relating to what could be funded.

Members were advised that there were two requests for party funding towards the Queens Diamond Jubilee for street parties in the current list of applications. As there was an existing structure in place to deal with requests of this nature, the existing criteria had been applied.

In order to assist Cabinet with the allocation of the Civic Lottery funding Officers had considered each application to the fund and had made recommendations in relation to the allocation of funding, details of which were set out at Appendix 2. The total sum sought in Round 3 was £5,810.

The report identified the applications where no previous grants had been awarded as well as applications where grants had previously been awarded.

In considering the applications, queries were raised in relation to the eligibility criteria to which the Assistant Director provided clarification.

### **Decision**

(i) That the following grant applications be approved:-

3498	Seaton Carew Bowling Club (ladies)	£280
3500	Acquaforce Swimming Academy	£280
3504	Throston Hotspur FC	£280
3506	Hartlepool Hospice	£555
3507	The Peppermints Girl Band	£290
3509	Hartlepool Headland Amateur Boxing Club	£500
3511	The Elwick Millennium Association	£100
3512	Burn Valley Ladies Bowling Club	£603

(ii) That the following grant application be refused:-  
3505 – St Francis Under 18's

## **284. Innovation Fund** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To update Cabinet on the current position of the Department for Work Pensions (DWP) Innovation Fund and Tees Valley Unlimited's (TVU) application form for Round Two.

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

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided background information to the DWP Innovation Fund which was targeted at addressing youth unemployment. The innovation fund of up to £30 million over 3 years from 2012 was to support social investment projects. Projects would support disadvantaged young people to improve their educational attainment and prevent those most at risk from becoming long term unemployed. It was envisaged that the DWP were looking for this project to be delivered predominately by third sector/smaller providers.

The innovation fund was being commissioned via two rounds. The first round of the fund which focused on 14-24 year olds was due to commence shortly. Round two had been announced in January 2012 with £13.5 million available to compete for. This round focused on disadvantaged young people aged 14 and 15 years to improve their attendance, attitude and behaviour at school and reduce their prospects of becoming long term NEET. Tackling the number of NEETs was a key priority for the Council and in January 2012, Hartlepool reported NEET at 7.6% for those 16 to 19 year olds and not known at 3.3%. This was against a Tees Valley average of 10.2% NEET and 5.7% not known.

Under round two it was expected that bids would focus on innovative ways of addressing the issues and barriers which led to the priority groups, as detailed in the report, becoming long term NEET.

Details of the objectives of the Innovation Fund were set out in the report. The DWP was seeking proposals from a range of Social Investment Partnerships comprising investors, delivery partners and intermediaries as set out in the report. The report included a definitive list of outcomes and payment model, details of progress made to date in relation to submission of a Tees Valley wide application form including expressions of interest, the proposed delivery structure, timetable for the bidding round as well as the next steps in the process.

Members welcomed the proposals and commented on the benefits of the programme, the risks to investors and emphasised the importance of monitoring working and training arrangements to confirm satisfactory outcomes and evidence were achieved. The Mayor referred to the various approaches to tackling NEET's and, whilst the proposals were welcomed, concerns were raised regarding the potential duplication in provision and that the priority groups identified in the report would not identify other young people who were not in employment education or training. The Assistant Director noted the gaps in provision and acknowledged the need to closely monitor any duplication in provision.

In response to a query as to who would deliver the project, the Assistant

Director advised that whilst it was envisaged third sector organisations would deliver the project it was a matter for social investors to determine the providers.

### **Decision**

That the contents of the report, be noted.

## **285. Flexible Support Fund** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To update Cabinet on the current position of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Flexible Support Fund (FSF).

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

The report provided background information following the announcement in July 2011 of £1.8 million relating to the Flexible Support Fund which would be utilised by Job Centre Plus (JCP) and partners to support unemployed adults to enter into work. Partners were invited to submit bids for the FSF direct to JCP and were advised to consider the key points as detailed in the report in terms of key priority groups and the approval process. Following confirmation of this funding opportunity, the five local authorities within the Tees Valley and TVU worked together to submit a partnership application proposal to cover the sub-region. It was agreed that Hartlepool would lead on writing the bid and that it would be the accountable body for the contract if funding was secured.

An update on the current position relating to the original application submitted to DWP/JCP was provided as set out in the report. Within this application five local authorities agreed to offer match funding to this FSF proposal. Details of the financial breakdown of the original proposal was contained within a confidential appendix to the report. There were delays in a decision being reached by DWP and the programme was unable to commence in January 2012. As a result of the delays, the original job outcome targets were revised and submitted to JCP. On 29 February 2012, JCP confirmed that the application had been approved.

At the time of submission of the report, the Council had not received a copy of the contract and at this stage was unable to confirm a number of key points including the total amount offered, whether it would be payment on results or a grant arrangement, start and end date of the contract and definite number of outcomes to be achieved.

Members were pleased to note the benefits of the project.

**Decision**

- (i) That the contents of the report, be noted.
- (ii) That an update report be submitted to Cabinet in relation to the contract arrangements and to seek approval to manage and deliver elements of the Tees Valley wide FSF project .

The meeting concluded at 9.58 am .

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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