

MAYOR'S DECISION RECORD

21 May 2012

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond)

Also Present: Councillors Marjorie James and Sylvia Tempest
Edwin Jeffries, Chair of Joint Trades Union

Officers:

- Nicola Bailey, Acting Chief Executive
- Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
- Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
- Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning
- Denise Ogden, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services
- Graham Frankland, Assistant Director, Resources
- John Morton, Assistant Chief Finance and Customer Services Officer
- John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community Services
- Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services
- Julian Heward, Public Relations Officer
- Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
- Fiona Stanforth, Community Regeneration Officer
- Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. Domestic Violence Strategy 2012-2015 *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Key (test i) applies - Forward Plan Reference Number RN29/10

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report was to seek approval and support from the Mayor for the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Domestic Violence Strategy 2012-2015.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Mayor was provided with background information to the development of

the Domestic Violence Strategy 2012-15 which built on the success of the first Hartlepool Domestic Violence Strategy published in 2007. The strategy sets out the following key strategic objectives to break the cycle of domestic violence in Hartlepool to ensure improved outcomes for everyone affected by the issue:-

- Prevention and early intervention.
- Provision of services
- Partnership working
- Justice outcomes and risk reduction for victims

A consultation process had been carried out, the outcome of which was provided. An action plan to support implementation of the strategy had been developed taking into account comments and suggestions received as part of the consultation process and, where necessary, the Domestic Violence Strategy had been amended. The full strategy and actions taken to support the suggestions were attached as appendices to the report.

Domestic violence was a key community safety issue in Hartlepool with up to 34 instances reported to the police each night. It was a crime that affected all walks of life with repeat incidents in Hartlepool continuing to be significant. The 2012-15 strategy aimed to break the cycle of domestic violence to improve outcomes for all those affected by the issue.

The Assistant Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership had endorsed the strategy subject to the inclusion in the action plan of measurable outputs. The Mayor welcomed the suggested additions to the action plan and requested that the plan should include particular reference to outcomes for children and young people and an update report be reflect the additions be submitted to a future meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

- (a) That the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Domestic Violence Strategy 2012-2015 be approved and supported subject to:-
 - (i) the approval of the Hartlepool Children's Safeguarding Board Action Plan.
 - (ii) inclusion of the suggested additions to the action plan in relation to children and young people.
- (b) An update report to reflect the suggested additions be submitted to a future meeting of Cabinet.

2. Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy (Community Pool – Grant Allocations 2012/13) *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Key (test i) applies – Forward Plan Reference Number 96/11

Purpose of report

To advise and seek approval for the level of grants allocated to Community and Voluntary Groups under Category 4 of the Community Pool for 2012/2013. The report also outlined the proposed level of grant available for Category 5 of the Community Pool following the allocation of grants through Category 4. Cabinet was asked to consider these and approve a grant level for Category 5.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services, presented the report which provided background information relating to the review of the community pool when it was agreed that the approach to commissioning of the budget this financial year would be significantly different to the approach taken in previous years.

Following Cabinet's approval on 21 November 2011 that the overall value of the Community Pool Grant fund 2012/13 would be £403,000 and that funding would be allocated via a number of categories as set out in the report, a formal procurement process had been undertaken to award Categories, 1, 2 and 3. A breakdown of the level of expenditure for the various categories was provided, as detailed in the report. It was highlighted that the level of budget available for categories 4 and 5 was a total of £151,797. In addition, there was £40,645 remaining from the 2011/2012 allocation which was currently in reserves. Steps had been taken to ensure that this reserve could be carried forward into this financial year. Cabinet agreed on 6 February 2012 that grants given to both categories 4 and 5 would continue to be awarded via the Grants Committee, however, given the short timescales outlined for the delivery of category 4, proposals were being presented to this meeting.

The Community Pool was open to applications from all VCS organisations in Hartlepool with set eligibility criteria for both categories 4 and 5. The deadline for category 4 was 30 April 2012 and 19 applications had been received.

Category 4 was oversubscribed by £250,000 with the total level of funding requested through applications totalling £401,138. Due to the high level of funding requested an assessment process of each of the applications had been undertaken based on the eligibility criteria as well as additional considerations to make the recommendations as outlined in the report. The recommendations for funding through Category 4 together with projects not

recommended for funding were provided as detailed in appendices to the report. The level of funding recommended for approval was £151,529. Whilst this was almost the full allocation of the budget to Category 4, it was suggested that the reserve of £40,645 be allocated to Category 5 along with the remaining £268 from the original budget. The proposals would support 9 out of the 19 applications in whole or part and ensured that a range of VCS organisations offering a variety of services would be supported.

In view of Cabinet's decision on 21 November 2011 that grants in Category 5 would be capped at a maximum of £8,000 with a minimum threshold of £2,000, the proposed use of the reserve for Category 5 would enable the allocation of at least 5 grants.

Details of the payment and monitoring process including support arrangements for unsuccessful applicants was outlined, as set out in the report.

The Mayor raised a number of queries in relation to individual applications to which the Assistant Director of Neighbourhood Services provided clarification. It was highlighted that concern had been expressed by some groups as to how the criteria had been applied, how the recommendations had been made and why the recommendations from the report had been publicised in the Hartlepool Mail prior to today's meeting resulting in assumptions that the decision had already been taken. Following discussion on the implications of this approach, methods of communication as well as how concerns of this type could be alleviated in future, it was suggested that face to face support and advice be provided to groups in future to ensure any communication concerns were addressed.

The Mayor went on to comment on the potential reasons for refusal of some applications which included the level of poor quality applications submitted. In light of this, the Mayor requested that feedback and support be provided to both successful and unsuccessful applicants with a view to ensuring improvements in applications in the future.

With regard to the application from Haven, which was recommended for refusal, on the basis that the Council was to commission services for emotional and wellbeing support for young people, following discussion and clarification in relation to the implications of the assessment process the Mayor requested that this issue be closely monitored to ensure no groups were disadvantaged.

At this point in the meeting the Mayor declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to the Belle Vue application and indicated that this application should be deferred.

In view of the Mayor's declaration, it was agreed that this application be deferred and considered at a future meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

- (i) That the unallocated reserve of £40,645 from 2011/12 be allocated to Category 5 and that the remaining budget of £151,529 be allocated to Category 4.
- (ii) That the process undertaken for consideration of Category 4 applications, be noted.
- (iii) That the recommendations for allocating grants in Category 4, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved.
- (iv) The projects not recommended for approval, as outlined in Appendix 2, be noted.
- (v) That the Belle Vue Centre application be deferred to a future meeting of Cabinet.
- (vi) That the flexibility proposed in the payment and monitoring of Category 4 projects, be noted.
- (vii) That the proposed support arrangements for unsuccessful applicants, be noted.
- (viii) That a detailed response as well as feedback and support be provided to successful and unsuccessful applicants with a view to ensuring improvements in applications in future.

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

Type of decision

Key – (tests i and ii apply) Forward Plan Reference Number RN69/11

Purpose of report

To seek approval from the Mayor for Hartlepool Borough Council to be the accountable body for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Tees Valley Wide Flexible Support Fund (FSF) and to deliver the programme in Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The report provided background information relating to the FSF Grant Offer letter, a financial breakdown of which was attached as a confidential appendix to the report.

It was reported that the partnership would deliver the following minimum requirements;-

- Support 400 pre work programme people from JSA/ESA claimant register into employment between April 1st 2012 and 10th May 2013, of whom, 320 will be 18 – 24 yr old.
- Engage and consult with 500 Small to Medium Employers (SME's) in growth sectors to assist them to employ pre- work programme customers in apprenticeships or up-skilling routeways.
- 320 JSA or ESA claimants, aged 18-24yrs old, to have taken steps towards a sector based qualification or certificate or a first level 2.
- 10 HR employment legislation workshops delivered across the Tees Valley, a minimum of 1 in each area.
- 10 self employment workshops delivered across the Tees Valley, at least 1 in each area, tailored to target employees' needs.

Hartlepool would deliver a fifth of the minimum outcomes required and also support Middlesbrough with contractual management of their preferred provider. Hartlepool would deliver 80 pre work programme people from JSA/ESA claimant register into employment, 64 would be 18-24 year olds.

The Assistant Director outlined the staffing considerations, performance and grant usage, payment terms for the Council as well as the contractual risk implications of delivering the programme, as set out in the report. It was highlighted that the proposal represented minimal risk to the Council.

The Mayor was of the view that the project appeared to be more target focussed as opposed to people focussed.

Decision

The Mayor agreed that Hartlepool Borough Council be the accountable body for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Tees Valley Wide Flexible Support Fund (FSF) and to deliver the programme for Hartlepool.

4. Action Plan – The Provision of Face to Face Financial Advice and Information Services in Hartlepool *(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 Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's investigation into the provision of face to face financial advice and information services in Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Mayor was advised that a report had been provided to Cabinet on 4th July 2011 which provided background information into the Scrutiny investigation into the provision of face to face financial advice and information services in Hartlepool. The proposed action plan presented at the meeting was deferred for further exploration. A revised action plan and the progress made to date on the principle recommendations was attached as Appendix 1.

The Mayor requested that any financial implications arising from the proposed actions should be reported to Cabinet for consideration.

Decision

The Action Plan, attached as Appendix 1 in response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's investigation into the provision of face to face financial advice and information services in Hartlepool, be approved.

5. Civic Lottery Fund Grant Applications 2012/13 *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To advise and seek approval for the first round of Civic Lottery Fund Grant applications in the 2012/2013 financial year

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Assistant Director, Community Services presented the report which 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.

The Mayor was requested to consider the following:-

- The general approach to the allocation of the funding available from the Civic Lottery in 2012/2013.
- The approach to the award of grants for Senior Citizens' summer outings and Christmas parties and approval of the delegation of

authority to officers to approve these grants.

- 28 applications from local groups that were being recommended for funding for the Queens Diamond Jubilee celebration events.
- 6 applications from local organisations, all of which had been previously supported with funding from the Civic Lottery.

In order to assist the Mayor with the allocation of the Civic Lottery funding officers had considered each application and had made recommendations in relation to the allocation of funding, details of which were set out in appendices to the report.

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, the Mayor raised queries in relation to the eligibility criteria to which the Assistant Director provided clarification.

Decision

- (i) That the general approach to the allocation of the funding available for distribution in 2012/2013 which amounts to £18,425, be approved.
- (ii) The approach to the award of grants for Senior Citizens' summer outings and Christmas parties, including setting aside of £1,500 for these applications as detailed in Section 4 of the report and delegating authority to approve these grants, in accordance with Civic Lottery Criteria, to the Director of Child and Adult Services, be approved.
- (iii) That the 28 applications from local groups who were planning celebration events for the Queens Diamond Jubilee, as detailed in Appendix 2, be approved.
- (iv) That grant aid to those organisations in Round 1 as detailed in Appendix 3, be approved.
- (v) The balance of Round 1 allocation be rolled forward to Round 2.

6. Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform members of the completion of the Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), to present an overview of the key findings and to seek endorsement of the SHMA as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning provided an overview of the Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) undertaken by Arc4 on behalf of the Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council, Stockton Borough Council and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council.

The report provided a summary of the key findings of the SHMA, the differences between the new SHMA and previous 2007 SHMA and the implications for the Borough of Hartlepool.

It was reported that with a lower assumed household formation rate, improved affordability and additional affordable housing provided since 2007, the overall affordable housing need in the Tees Valley and in the Borough of Hartlepool had significantly reduced.

The Mayor was surprised to note the findings of the assessment that the overall housing need in Hartlepool had significantly reduced given that the housing list had not changed. The Assistant Director outlined the possible reasons for the findings which included a reduction in house prices and the inaccuracy of household formation rates sub-regional figures previously provided. Recent data had been calculated based on local findings whereas the previous assessment had been based on a sub-regional assumption.

The Mayor was keen to ensure that the findings did not disadvantage the Council in any way in terms of affordable provision.

Decision

- (i) The Mayor noted the evidence contained in the Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- (ii) That the Strategic Housing Market Assessment be endorsed.

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

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To present to Portfolio the final draft of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2012-2013 (Appendix 1) and seek ratification from the Mayor prior to the Plan being considered by Council in June 2012.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services presented the report which provided a brief overview of the broader national context within which the planning of local Youth Justice priorities and actions were taking place and summarised the planning framework within which the final draft of the plan had been developed. The Plan outlined performance against the four key areas for the provision of Youth Offending Services and detailed the proposed priorities and actions for 2012. The Youth Justice Strategic Plan was statutory in nature and therefore formed part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Following approval at Portfolio, it would require ratification from full Council.

Decision

That the final draft of the local Youth Justice Plan for 2012-13 be ratified, and that the formal approval of Council be sought .

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

Under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) order 2006.

Minute 9 – Land at Tanfield Road South (para 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information))

9. Land at Tanfield Road South *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Key – (test i applies) Forward Plan Reference Number RN67/11

Purpose of report

To report on tenders received for the sale of land at Tanfield Road South.

Issue(s) for consideration by Mayor

The Assistant Director of Resources reported on the results of a recent tender evaluation relating to the sale of land at Tanfield Road South, details of which were set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

The decision was set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 10.25 am.

PETER DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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