

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

**6 AUGUST 2012**

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

**Present:**

Councillors: Cath Hill (Deputy Mayor and Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder) in the chair  
John Lauderdale (Adults and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder)  
Paul Thompson (Finance and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

Also Present: Malcolm Walker and Helen Lamb – Mayor's Advisory Panel.

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Denise Ogden, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services  
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services  
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health  
Gemma Day, Principal Regeneration Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

#### **46. Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond.

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

Councillor Thompson declared a personal interest in Minute no. 50 "Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy (Community Pool – Grant Allocations 2012/2013, Deferred Decision)".  
Mr Malcolm Walker declared a personal interest in Minute no. 50 "Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy (Community Pool – Grant Allocations 2012/2013, Deferred Decision)".

#### **48. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2012**

Confirmed.

#### **49. Furniture Solutions Project** *(Director of Regeneration and*

Neighbourhoods) (Forward Plan ref RN14/12)

**Type of decision**

Key decision (test ii applies). Forward Plan Reference No. RN 14/12

**Purpose of report**

To provide an overview of existing similar service provision in the town, as well as identify links to the Social Fund to ensure both schemes are complementary to one another and duplication is avoided.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported that Cabinet on 7 July 2012, considered the proposal for the delivery of a Furniture Solutions Project. The report also asked for approval to progress with the preferred option in terms of the delivery model. At that time Cabinet requested an additional report with further information on similar services already provided within the town, and by which organisations, to enable Members to give full consideration to the proposal, along with further details of how the project would link with the Social Fund.

The report outlined the commercial retailers and schemes such as the arrangement between the Hartlepool Credit Union and Co-op Electricals. It was also indicated that Housing Hartlepool had agreed in principle to join Tristar's scheme to offer furniture packages to its tenants paid for by a service charge usually covered by Housing Benefit if the tenant was eligible.

The Director also indicated that there were a number of community / voluntary organisations, including charity shops, offering a furniture recycling service through the sale of donated items and goods.

The intention of the proposal was to initiate an innovative project that provided a holistic service offering access to finance for the purpose of purchasing from a range of high quality new or re-used products at an affordable price. The introduction of the Furniture Solutions Project was not intended to duplicate or compete against services being offered by local organisations and agencies. It was designed to add value, strengthen and expand provision, and potentially join up existing providers. Each service area had common goals, and by joining together could achieve impressive and mutually beneficial outcomes.

A number of organisations had been proactive and contacted the Council to express an interest in the delivery of the project. The feedback from existing providers had been positive, viewing the project as an opportunity that would assist in achieving the organisation's aspirations.

The Council was in the process of developing and agreeing its delivery model for the new Social Fund responsibilities in Hartlepool, which would include robust eligibility criteria for applications. While the April 2013 local Social Fund eligibility criteria had not yet been finalised, the arrangements

were likely to follow the current DWP criteria, which would see the fund issued to those in greatest need who were in a crisis situation and had no alternative resources available to them. The introduction of the Furniture Solutions Project would provide an opportunity to re-direct / refer individuals to alternative service provision when they had applied for Social Fund support, but did not meet the qualifying criteria.

**Decision**

1. That the additional information provided be noted.
2. That the proposals for the Furniture Solutions Project be approved with funding for the scheme coming from the approved allocation in the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Departmental Reserve

**50. Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy (Community Pool – Grant Allocations 2012/2013, Deferred Decision)** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

**Type of decision**

Non Key Decision.

**Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to seek a decision on the Category 4, Community Pool Application from Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre Limited, which was deferred from Mayor's Portfolio on 21st May 2012.

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

The report set out the background to the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy Community Pool grant allocations for 2012/13 and their consideration by the Mayor at his portfolio meeting held on 21 May 2012. At that time, due to the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest by the Mayor, the decision in relation to a grant application from the Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre Ltd was deferred to be considered by Cabinet.

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services reported that the application from Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre Ltd was evaluated by a panel of officers with representation from Neighbourhood Management, Community Regeneration and Development Team and Corporate Procurement Team, who assessed all of the applications in line with the agreed process. Following this assessment the application was not recommended for approval.

As requested at Mayors Portfolio on 21st May 2012, further advice and guidance would be available for all organisations that were unsuccessful in securing funding through Category 4. Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre Ltd had received detailed feedback on the rationale for the recommendation and had been offered the opportunity to meet with an

officer to discuss support available.

**Decision**

That in line with the process outlined within the report and approved at Mayor's Portfolio on 21st May 2012, it was noted that the application from Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre Ltd was not recommended for approval and that recommendation was confirmed.

**51. Localism Act 2011 – Latest Position** *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

**Type of decision**

Non Key Decision

**Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to update Cabinet on the measures introduced through the Localism Bill 2011 setting out the latest position and the implications for the Council.

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

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that the Localism Act received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. Although the Act contained a number of important measures, many of these were not yet in force. The Act also contained a number of enabling provisions and these gave the Secretary of State power to introduce regulations and guidance that would make the measures 'live.' Although the Act was 497 pages long, the full implications of some of the key measures would not be clear until the Secretary of State had introduced regulations and guidance.

The report set out the range of measures contained within the Act, the latest position and implications for Hartlepool (where known) and identified a Lead Officer. Not all of the measures included would have a direct impact on the Council and its services but they would have implications for the Borough.

Where appropriate the council was working (and would continue to do so where it would benefit HBC) with other authorities to formulate a consistent approach – for example under the requirement for more pay accountability a common policy statement had been jointly prepared by the Tees Valley Heads of Human Resources (HR).

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that over the next few months Cabinet would be asked to consider a number of reports and make a range of decisions relating to the implementation of various elements of the Localism Act.

**Decision**

That the current position with regards to the implementation of the Localism Act 2011 be noted.

## **52. Collaboration Programme Update** *(Acting Chief Executive)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide Cabinet with an update of the work being undertaken in respect of the proposed programme of collaboration.

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

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that Cabinet at its meeting on 7 November 2011 considered and approved a proposed programme of collaboration with Darlington Borough Council and this report sought to update Members on the progress made against that programme. Following the decision in November the collaboration work had been extended to include Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. Redcar and Cleveland Council have undertaken the work previously completed by Hartlepool and Darlington with external support to ensure there was a robust baseline shared across the three organisations for Child and Adult Services and were involved in the work being undertaken for Corporate Services as part of their organisational change programme.

The report went on to set out in detail the progress made against each of the decisions made by Cabinet at its meeting on 7 November 2011. The Assistant Chief executive highlighted that there would be a Members Seminar on 14 August at 5.30 p.m. setting out the progress made to all councillors.

### **Decision**

That the update report and progress made to date be noted.

## **53. Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Update on Public Health Funding** *(Director of Public Health)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key – for information.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to inform Cabinet of proposals regarding future public health funding. Proposals for funding were set out in 'Healthy Lives, Healthy people: Update on Public Health Funding – Department of Health (DH) June 2012. Comments on these proposals were being invited by the Department of Health until mid August 2012.

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

The Director of Public Health reported that the publication of 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for Public Health in England published in November 2010 outlined the Government's vision for the future of public

health. The Government's Strategy had been developed in the light of 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review: Strategic Review of Health Inequalities post 2010.

In order to enable local government to discharge the new responsibilities for public health 2013, the Government made proposals for funding this as set out in 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Engagement on the funding and commissioning routes for public health – DH 2011'. It was proposed that public health services would be funded by a new public health budget, separate from NHS resources for public health. Commitment was given to ensure local authorities were adequately funded for their new public health responsibilities and any additional net burdens would be funded in line with the Government's New Burdens Doctrine.

It was estimated that nationally £5.2 billion would be spent on delivering the new public health system of which £2.2 billion of this would be allocated to local authorities to fund their new public health responsibilities. A commitment had been given to support planning that in 2013-14 investment would not fall below these estimates in real terms other than in exceptional circumstances.

The document also highlights the interim recommendations of the Advisory Committee on resource Allocation (ACRA) that has informed the engagement document. ACRA was commissioned to develop a formula for the allocation of the public health budget relative to population need and health outcomes. The recommendations made by ACRA were based on the standardized mortality ratio (SMR) for those aged under 75 years (SMR<75). This measured how many more or fewer deaths there were in a local area compared to the national average on a standardized population basis. The higher the SMR the higher the number of deaths. It was important to acknowledge that this was just one measure and that this did not infer that the allocation should not reflect the needs of those people over 75 years. ACRA proposed that in areas with highest SMR<75 years should have a weighting that was three times greater per head than those with lower SMR<75 years. ACRA also recommended that the funding formula should include an adjustment for differences in unavoidable costs.

The Director reported that while it was expected that the grants to local government would be ring-fenced, when the grants were made there would not be a distinction made between the mandated and non-mandated elements. However, for drug services in the interim, it was expected that allocations in this area would follow the approach used currently.

The interim recommendations from ACRA were based on relative shares of the national resource for local government not absolute monetary values. However, if the national resource available was £2.2 billion, the implications for Hartlepool as implied by ACRA's interim recommendations for the preferred relative distribution of resources was circa 0.24%. The baseline estimate in 2012/13 of public health actual spend is circa 0.35%. In monetary terms, this would mean a loss of £2.288 million from the baseline

budget of £7.685 million to £5,297 million. The Director did stress that these figures were only speculation as no specific budgets had been proposed by government. Should this approach, however, be followed, there were very concerning potential reductions in health spending for Hartlepool. A table within the report set out the potential changes to the funds made available to Northeast councils. It was expected that actual allocations would be published before the end of 2012.

The potential reduction in health spending concerned Cabinet Members particularly if the funding was based on the standardized mortality ratio (SMR) for those aged under 75 years (SMR<75). Members questioned if as part of the proposed response to government strong representations were being made that an alternative calculation method that more closely reflected need was utilised. It was considered that as life expectancy was increasing, the quality of life of older people should not be penalised through draconian cuts to the early intervention projects that sought to enhance both life expectancy and quality of life.

The Director of Public Health reported that the report had been submitted to both the Shadow Health and wellbeing Board and the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee in advance of this meeting and those strong comments had been made and would be included in the proposed response. It had to be noted that the figures stated were speculative and any changes would not take affect until after the government's next comprehensive spending review.

The Director also indicated that Dr Eugene Milne Deputy Regional Director of Public Health for the North East had been requested to develop an alternative methodology for determining the proposed health expenditure by the northeast councils. It was expected that this would be available later in the week and the Director indicated that she forward this to Cabinet Members for their information.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted and that Cabinet's comments be included in the proposed response the Department of Health before the end of the engagement period of 14th August 2014.

The meeting concluded at 10.05 a.m.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 8 AUGUST 2012**