

# REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD 28 September 2012

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

## **Present:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond (Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning  
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Transport and Engineering  
Antony Steinberg, Economic Regeneration Manager  
Rob Smith, Senior Regeneration Officer  
Joanne Burnley, Principal Environmental Health Officer  
Amy Waller, Principal Housing Regeneration Officer  
Lisa Oldroyd, Community Safety Research and Development  
Coordinator  
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **23. Declaration of Interest**

The Mayor declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in Minute No. 27.

## **24. High Street Innovation Fund and Town Centre Renovation** (*Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision test (i) and (ii) Forward Plan Reference No 17 /12.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval from the Portfolio Holder to allocate £20,000 from the High Street Innovation Fund towards the Indoor Market Project and £5000 to improve the directional signage for town centre car parks. The report also seeks approval in principle to develop a project that will provide specialist markets and events in the town centre.

The report provides details of Government guidance aimed at improving town centres called “Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our High Streets” and highlights a new website that has been launched called “100 Ways to Help the High Street”. The report also outlines details of the “Town Team Partners” initiative and the “Future High Street X-Fund”.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Senior Regeneration Officer reported that the High Street Innovation Fund was launched in response to the Portas Review which was commissioned by the Government to identify what the Government, Local Authorities, businesses and communities can do to develop prosperous high streets that are relevant to the modern consumer and will allow businesses and independent retailers to thrive.

The Government's response to the Portas Review sets out a challenge for partners to "re-imagine their town centres and high streets, ensuring they offer something new and different that neither out-of-town shopping centres nor the internet can match-an experience that goes beyond retail, with creative use of public spaces and a vibrant evening economy". Communities are encouraged to develop innovative ideas that address local issues.

The Economic Regeneration Forum Working Group agree that it is important for Hartlepool Town Centre to offer something different such as being known as a destination that develops independent trade. The working group is currently developing a number of projects for the High Street Innovation Fund.

The report set out details of the Indoor Market Project, Town Centre Signage issues, and the work being undertaken around potential markets and events and details of the governments' recently announced Future High Street X-Fund.

### **Decision**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the allocation of £20,000 be approved from the High Street Innovation Fund for the Indoor Market project.
3. That the allocation of £5,000 be approved from the High Street Innovation Fund for the town centre signage project.
4. That approval in principle be given the development of a Marketing and Events project for the Town Centre.
5. That approval be given to the development of a Town Team Partner Programme.
6. That the grant of £100,000 from Central Government for the High Street Innovation Fund be formally accepted.

## **25. Catcote Road/ Elwick Road Junction Improvement Scheme** *(Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering))*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for the junction improvement scheme at Catcote Road/ Elwick Road.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering) outlined the details of the scheme which involved the widening of Catcote Road on its northbound approach to create a right turn lane. This would prevent traffic travelling straight ahead from being held up by vehicles waiting to turn right, giving much improved traffic flows through the junction. The junction would also be widened on the Elwick Road approach, which would again reduce delays experienced as a result of right turning traffic. A pedestrian island would be installed on the north side of the junction, to improve road safety and make crossing easier.

The Mayor commented that with other major road schemes due to commence shortly could this scheme be timed to ensure that disruption was minimised. The Assistant Director indicated that this scheme would not commence until January 2013 to ensure that disruption was kept to a minimum as other works were already programmed for Elwick Road.

### **Decision**

That the junction improvement scheme, as reported, be approved.

## **26. Linden Grove – Resident Only Parking Scheme** (*Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering)*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To report the outcome of a consultation with residents of Linden Grove regarding the possible removal of this location from the existing resident only permit parking controls.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Assistant Director (Transportation and Engineering) reported that Linden Grove was currently within Zone A of the Hartlepool Borough Council Resident Permit Parking Scheme. Restrictive permit parking controls apply to part of Linden Grove (the section being between Grange Road and Wilton Avenue) as the remaining properties opted out of the scheme following an earlier consultation in 2008.

The annual permits in Zone A expire in October 2012 and several residents had indicated that once permit restrictions were removed in Grange Road, the need to protect Linden Grove residents from the parking issues had diminished. As a result there was a perception that the views of the residents may have significantly changed and there was now no longer residential support to continue in the permit zone. Consequently residents had been consulted for their views on this proposal.

A consultation letter was sent to all properties in Linden Grove (between

Grange Road and Wilton Avenue) to gauge the level of support of retaining the permit controlled parking restrictions. The results showed that the vast majority of residents who responded to the consultation indicated that they would prefer to remain within the permit-controlled zone.

The mayor supported the proposal as detailed in the report but requested that officers investigate the potential of including some kind of moratorium on revisiting schemes within a certain time period. The Assistant Director indicated that officers would look to the potential of such a moratorium and would investigate the approach in other areas and report back to the Portfolio Holder.

### **Decision**

That the responses from residents be noted and that properties 1-23 (odd) Linden Grove and 2-32 (even) Linden Grove continue to be included within the current resident permit controlled restrictions.

## **27. Quarterly Housing Report** (*Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To update the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder about progress across key areas of the Housing Service relating to empty homes, enforcement activity, Selective Licensing, Disabled Facilities Grants, housing allocations and housing advice and homelessness prevention during the first quarter of 2012/13.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Principal Environmental Health Officer and the Principal Housing Regeneration Officer presented the detailed quarterly housing update report. The report highlighted the progress on the Empty Homes Strategy, an update on enforcement actions, Selective Licensing activity, updates on Travellers and Migrants and the Disabled Facilities Grant benchmarking data. Details on Choice Based Lettings, housing advice and homelessness prevention activity were also included and it was highlighted that there were a series of reports to be submitted in the near future to the Portfolio Holder and Cabinet.

The Mayor welcomed the report questioned why some of the properties listed in the appendix to the report seemed to be at different stages of the process under the empty homes strategy. The Officers indicated that as homes had been refurbished and let to tenants, new properties were brought forward and included on the list.

In relation to the processing of disabled facilities grant applications, the Mayor welcomed the news that Hartlepool was the best performing authority in the Tees valley on these schemes but was concerned that there was sufficient

budget to fulfil all the requests. Officers indicated that at this time the budget was on target.

It was reported at the meeting that the Council had recently received from the Department of Local Government and Communities new guidance on rogue landlords and what was often referred to as 'beds in sheds'; unauthorised back garden developments. It was indicated that there were no such problems in Hartlepool, though there had been some issues in houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) of poorly undertaken loft conversions. While there were few problems in Hartlepool at present, officers did comment that the situation may change following the introduction of the new universal benefits system.

**Decision**

That the report and the progress made across key areas of the Housing Service be noted.

**28. Safer Hartlepool Partnership – Team Around the Household Review** (*Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the intention to review the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Team Around the Household (TAH) initiative. The outcomes of which will feed into the Troubled Families Programme.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Community Safety Research and Development Coordinator highlighted the main issues in the report and indicated that a further report would be submitted once the evaluation report had been completed.

**Decision**

That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 a.m.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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