

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

19th June 2006

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Pam Hargreaves (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),
Robbie Payne (Finance Portfolio Holder),
Peter Jackson (Performance Management Portfolio Holder),
Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder),
Ray Waller (Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder).

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)
Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Graham Frankland, Acting Director of Neighbourhood Services
Sue Johnson, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Danielle Swainston, Early Years Manager
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

8. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cath Hill (Deputy Mayor),

9. Declarations of interest by Members / Officers

Those officers affected by the Second and Third Tier Officer salary review left the meeting during consideration of the item by Cabinet.

10. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2006

Confirmed.

15. Second and Third Tier Chief Officer Salary Review (Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to recommend new salary levels for 2nd and 3rd tier chief officers working for the Council.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report set out in detail the process of the review, the results and recommendations of the Employers Organisation review, and the financial and risk implications for the authority. The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee had been asked to comment on the review and their response was set out in the following item.

The Chief Executive highlighted that second and third tier officer salaries had not been reviewed since 1998/99. The Council's remuneration strategy requires that a review of these posts be undertaken every three years and cabinet was recommended to review these posts again in three years time.

The Chief Executive indicated that, as set out in the report, departments would be required to fund the increases in salaries from within their own resources. There would be two areas, however, where this would may not be possible firstly, in the Regeneration and Planning Services where the cost implications are disproportionately high, and secondly in certain areas of Neighbourhood Services. It was, therefore, proposed to set aside £40,000 from central estimated underspends in 2006/07.

Decision

1. That the new salaries, as recommended by the Employers Organisation, be approved.
2. That any future significant changes to the role of a second or third tier Chief Officers be referred to the Employers Organisation for evaluation using the same methodology as has been used for this review.
3. That, in accordance with the approved remuneration strategy, these salaries be reviewed in full in three years time. If an earlier review is thought to be advisable then approval of Cabinet should be sought.

4. That £40,000 be set aside from central estimate underspends in 2006/07 to assist areas where the additional costs associated with this review cannot be accommodated within existing budgets.
5. That future year costs be treated in the same manner as those for the job evaluation process for the rest of the organisation, due to be completed this financial year, to be funded from the same provision.

18. Final Report – Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review Scrutiny Referral (*Scrutiny Coordinating Committee*)

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

To present the findings of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee following its consideration of the Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review, referred by the Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Holder on 11 November 2006 to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

Councillor Jane Shaw, Vice-chair of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, presented the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee's report on its investigation into the Second and Third Tier Officer Salary and Grading Review. The report set out the details of the investigation, the evidence considered and the Committee's conclusions. The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee recommended that the Cabinet be asked to note its endorsement of the proposed Salary and Grading Structure for the Authority, as recommended by the Employers' Organisation.

Decision

That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee be thanked for its report and that its recommendation be noted.

11. Children's Centres and Extended Schools Strategy (Director of Children's Services)

Type of decision

Key Decision – Test (ii) applies.

Purpose of report

To report on the outcomes of consultation on the first and second draft Children's Centres and Extended Schools strategy and to seek approval on the final Children's Centres and Extended School strategy and to authorise officers to begin implementing the consequent staffing changes.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The draft strategy has been prepared in partnership with a small steering group with representatives from the; Hartlepool Primary Care Trust, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust and the Children's Services Department. Public consultation has taken place consulting on both the first and second draft strategies and details of this were set out in detail in the report.

A change in Government policy has meant that Sure Start local programmes are expected to change to Children's Centres in partnership with other providers and organisations. Sure Start local programmes were initially set up in disadvantaged areas to develop integrated services for children aged 0-4 years old and their families. The programmes were set up as a time limited initiative and programmes were expected to mainstream activities that were shown to be effective. The introduction of Children's Centres has offered an opportunity for some of these services to be continued.

The funding was expected to continue for ten years with an expectation from central Government that successful services would be mainstreamed within mainstream funding. Funding for the Sure Start local programmes was expected to continue until 2007 and then taper to approximately half of the current grant. This reduced grant now needs to support the delivery of Children's Centres services for the extended age range of children 0 – 5 years old and cover the whole of the town. Current funding (2006/2007) for the Sure Start local programmes (for Children's Centres services) is £2,217,862 with a reduction in 2007/2008 of £405,698 to 1,812,164.

Two options for addressing the funding problem were set out in the report. The only realistic option for the Council was option 2 - restructuring the Sure Start local programmes to make significant savings which could be spent on extending Children's Centres services across the whole town - and this

option had been discussed with stakeholders as part of the consultation process. This option had therefore been built into the strategy.

Cabinet was concerned at mainstreaming of the service combined with the overall reduction in funding. Cabinet Members asked why the review of the service was only being undertaken now, after the event? The Early Years Manager stated that when established the Sure Start programme had been run by its own completely autonomous management board.

Decision

- i) That the final draft strategy for Children's Centres and Extended Schools be approved.
- ii) Officers be authorised to begin implementing the consequent staffing changes.

12. Highway Asset Management Plan (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision – Test (ii) applies.

Purpose of report

To advise on the introduction of new national codes of practice for highway management and the implications that these will have for the highway maintenance service.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

Recent Government guidance directs that all authorities should produce a Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP), which will set out what they want to achieve with their highway network, clearly quantifying the value of the asset, identifying investment needs and priorities, based on whole life cost, and establishing co-ordinated programmes of work. Hartlepool was working with other authorities across the Tees Valley to produce coordinated HAMP's. The local HAMP would be completed in March 2007.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted and approval be given to the UK Roads Liaison Group's three codes of practice being adopted as the basis for the development of Hartlepool Borough Councils Highway Asset Management Plan.

13. Highway Maintenance Strategy *(Joint report of Head of Procurement and Property Services and Chief Financial Officer)*

Type of decision

Key Decision Test (i) and (ii) applies

Purpose of report

To identify highway maintenance requirements and to consider additional funding for a short term strategy for highway maintenance works.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Council is considering holistic highway management issues by the production of a Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP). This will be completed in March 2007 and a significant part of it will inform the long term highway maintenance strategy. While there was a significant backlog of highways maintenance, Hartlepool was the same position as other authorities. It was intended that Council's approval be sought to use £135,000 of the LPSA capital reward grant for an emergency surface dressing programme to be undertaken this summer to resolve some of the most immediate problems and to add this scheme to the 2006/7 capital programme. It was highlighted that the proposed schedule of additional priority works appended to the report would be submitted to the Portfolio Holder for review and approval.

Cabinet supported the detailed strategy set out in the report. There was some concern raised by Councillor R Waller at those areas of highway that had still not been formally adopted around the Marina and where no maintenance was undertaken by the Council. Councillor Hargreaves also suggested that where housing development was proposed, the Council should examine what potential there was for developers to provide commuted sums for highways maintenance once the development was completed. The Mayor also asked that, where possible, consideration should be given to transferring funding from traffic calming schemes to highways maintenance during this year as this was the more immediate problem. The Mayor did, however, acknowledge that Hartlepool's roads were in the top 5% of the country in terms of quality.

The potential future use of prudential borrowing was questioned by Cabinet. Members requested that a report be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting on the use of prudential borrowing and the amounts already committed.

Decision

1. That Council's approval be sought to use £135,000 of the LPSA capital reward grant for an emergency surface dressing programme and to add this scheme to the 2006/7 capital programme.
2. That further reports be submitted on the development of a HAMP and the resulting financial implications

14. Annual Review of Strategic Risk Register and Risk Management Strategy *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

This is a report of the annual review of the Risk Management Strategy and the Council's Strategic Risk Register. A copy of the proposed Strategic Risk Register and the review Risk Management Strategy was attached for Members consideration by way of an Appendix.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Risk Management Strategy identifies specific accountabilities and responsibilities for the management of risk at Hartlepool Borough Council. With regards to members "CMT will also be responsible for ensuring that elected Members are made aware and advised of significant risks (red/red) which may threaten the Council's overall aims and objectives." This report informed members of how the annual review of both the Risk Strategy and Strategic Risk Register was conducted and the outcome of this review.

There had been a number of minor changes, though there was only one major change to the strategy, it now says that risk within committee reports will not be a separate section but should be identified clearly within the main body of the report.

Decision

That the Strategic Risk Register and the Risk Management Strategy, as submitted, be approved.

16. HMS Trincomalee Trust (*Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development)* and Assistant Director (Community Services))

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet approval of a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and HMS Trincomalee Trust, as a pre-requisite for the establishment of new financial arrangements between the Council and the Trust; also to seek approval of proposals for a Joint Development Group of Trust and Council members.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The report includes a draft Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Trust and the Council relating to the management, operation and development of Hartlepool's Maritime Experience. Following advice from the Chief Solicitor, however, the document would be a Memorandum of Understanding rather than a Service Level Agreement. The Memorandum was identified within the recommendations of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee adopted by Council on 13th April, as a pre-requisite to the establishment of revised financial arrangements between the Trust and the Council. The draft Memorandum sets out the respective responsibilities of the Trust and the Council and issues for joint action. Finalisation of the Memorandum would allow the move to a 50/50 split of admissions income and the ending of the revenue grant allocation from the Council to the Trust as has applied in recent years. The report also includes proposals for a Joint Development Group of Council and Trust representatives to review future development proposals and revenue opportunities for the attractions, again as recommended by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee and adopted by Council.

In relation to the Joint Development Group, The mayor commented that the wording of the composition of the Group be amended to say that two Cabinet members with the appropriate portfolio responsibilities be included rather than identifying specific portfolios, as they may change. Councillor Hargreaves also requested that a Community Sector representative from the Culture and Leisure forum of Hartlepool Partnership should also be included.

Decision

1. That the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the HMS Trincomalee Trust be approved.
2. That officers be authorised to make the necessary revisions to the financial arrangements as referred to in recommendation (c) of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.
3. That the proposed arrangements for the Joint Development Group, including the amendments outlined above, be approved.

17. **Local Public Service Agreement 2 – Monitoring / Allocation of Pump Priming Grant and Performance Reward Grant** *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

To enable Cabinet to discuss the principles for monitoring the spending of the Pump Priming Grant (PPG) and proposed allocation of any Performance Reward Grant (PRG) that may be achieved by the Council, and its partners, as part of the second round of the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) scheme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

This report proposes a system for the monitoring of the Pump Priming Grant (PPG) that the Council will receive to assist in the achievement of the targets agreed in the second round of the LPSA scheme. The report also proposes principles for the allocation of any Performance Reward Grant that is achieved by the Council, and its partners. Appendix 1 to the report detailed how the PPG will be split between the ten targets agreed with Government Office North East (GONE). A monitoring system has been created that will enable spending on the projects to be monitored and, if required by the Government, audited upon completion of the project. All of the LPSA targets have been integrated into the Council's Corporate Plan 2006/07 and progress towards the targets will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis through the standard quarterly Performance and Financial

monitoring reports.

Cabinet briefly discussed issues surrounding many of the performance measures that relied on other agencies to meet the targets set. Cabinet also discussed the issues surrounding the target relating to “Improving the Quality of Life of homeless people through secure tenancies and sustainable employment”.

Decision

1. That Corporate Strategy monitors the Pump Priming Expenditure and if necessary highlights any areas of concern to future Cabinet meetings.
2. That the principles behind the allocation of the potential PRG be approved

19. Local Government Access to Information

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

Minute 19 Phoenix Centre, Central Estate (Para 3 – namely, Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

20. Phoenix Centre, Central Estate *(Head of Procurement and Property Services, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the Council's position with regard to the Phoenix Centre.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

Details are set out in the Exempt section of the decision record and minutes.

Decision

Details of Cabinet's decisions are set out in the Exempt section of the decision record and minutes.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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