

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

DECISION RECORD

22 MAY 2013

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

Present:

Councillor Robbie Payne (In the Chair)

Councillors: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Stephen Akers-Belcher, Kevin Cranney, Keith Dawkins, Keith Fisher and George Morris.

Also Present: Councillors Paul Beck and Rob Cook.

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration
Karen Kelly, Principal Housing Strategy Officer
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes

No items.

4. Hartlepool Housing Strategy End of Year (2012-2013) Report and Action Plan Refresh *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Key Decision (test (ii)). Forward Plan Reference No. RN 02/13.

Purpose of report

The report set out how the Housing Strategy and Action Plan had contributed towards the key housing priorities for Hartlepool for the period 2012-2013. The report further considered new actions that were proposed to be included from April 2013 which either built upon completed actions or

had been developed to address new issues and priorities that had emerged.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Assistant Director Regeneration outlined the key aspects of the report and highlighted for Members the following key points: -

- During 2012-2013 good progress has been made against the original actions incorporated within the strategies supporting action plan.
- 71 actions have been completed overall within the action plan (79%);
- Of the 16 performance indicators that are monitored, only one requires intervention. This indicator has been regularly discussed by the Housing Partnership and will continue to be monitored throughout 2013-2014;
- Outcomes and achievements under Priority 1 - Delivering New Homes, Contributing to Sustainable Communities;
- Outcomes and achievements under Priority 2 – Improving Existing Homes, Supporting Sustainable Communities;
- Outcomes and achievements under Priority 3 – Meeting Specific Housing Needs;
- Communication and Governance and Financial and Funding Issues;
- Emerging Policy and Strategy Issues including new actions;
- The refresh of the Action Plan including new actions and performance indicators.

The Chair thanked the officer for a very comprehensive report. Members raised concerns in relation to the potential resettlement of current/former armed forces personnel to the area following changes to base locations and as a result of redundancies. The Assistant Director indicated that officers were aware of the potential impacts but simply had to wait to see what the number of returning individuals/families turned out to be.

It was suggested that the action plan needed to include an action related to the potential re-designation of significant numbers of properties as was permitted under the Under Occupancy regulations. Members were concerned that in low demand areas, three bedroom houses could find even less demand due to families wishing to avoid the 'bedroom tax'. The Committee agreed that such an action should be included in the action plan.

Members also referred to the number of homes specifically designed for people with adaptations and the numbers of adaptations undertaken to assist people remain in their current homes. The Assistant Director commented that the number of days that the implementation of adaptations to properties now took from assessment to completion was down to 130 days from a previous statistic of over 400 days. While 130 days may still seem quite high, it was as quick as could be managed at present and compared very favourably with other northeast authorities.

Members discussed the issues surrounding an ageing population and the

numbers of disabled people living independently or in family situations and the numbers of properties adapted or specifically designed for their needs. Members considered that the Council should through its role as planning authority look to see the construction of more bungalows in new developments. Members indicated that the housing development portion of the Brierton site masterplan should potentially include a number of homes for the disabled and elderly in light of the location of other services on the site. Members also expressed a wish to see Sitwell Walk improved through the addition of parking for residents through the development.

The Assistant Director commented that government advice was that homes designed for the disabled or elderly should be integrated within other developments rather than concentrated in one area. However, being the landowner there could be scope for outlining the type of development we would wish to see on the site. In terms of the number of properties required, officers considered that they had sufficient information to predict future needs.

Members questioned when the Housing Options Centre would be returning to the Civic Centre. The Assistant Director indicated that at present the move was programmed for 2014. The move was dependent on other team/divisional moves and the detailed lease arrangement for the current premises. Discussions were already ongoing with Housing Hartlepool for the potential collocation of staff within the Civic Centre as part of the move.

Decision

1. That the progress that had been made in delivering the Housing Strategy through partnership working in 2012-2013 be noted
2. That the new actions proposed for the Action Plan contained at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
3. That an additional action be included to examine “the potential re-designation of properties in conjunction with social landlords to reduce the number of designated bedrooms in accordance with government regulations relating to Under Occupancy.”

5. Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to seek Regeneration Services Committee endorsement of the Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported that the Trees

and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document had been approved by Cabinet for submission to Council for adoption on 2 April 2013. However, since the changes to the constitution and roles and responsibilities of committees subsequent to the move to the new governance arrangements, the Committee's approval to the document being forwarded to Council for adoption was sought.

The Director also referred to two other similar documents that had been subject to full consultation that would also need to be referred to Council for adoption. These were the 'Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document' and the 'New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits Supplementary Planning Document'. The Committee's approval to these two documents being submitted to Council was sought. Members approved the request subject to the finalised documents being submitted to the Chair.

Decision

1. That the Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document be endorsed and referred to Council for adoption.
2. That the 'Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document' and the 'New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits Supplementary Planning Document' be authorised for submission to Council once completed, subject to Chair's approval of the documents.

The meeting concluded at 10.05 am

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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