

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

9th January 2006

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Stanley Fortune (Finance Portfolio Holder),
Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),
Peter Jackson (Performance Management Portfolio Holder),
Ray Waller (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder).

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Ian Parker, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor
Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Mark Dutton, Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

164. Apologies for absence

None.

165. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

166. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 19th December 2005

Confirmed.

167. North Central Hartlepool Housing Regeneration – Appointment of Preferred Developer Partner (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Non Key

Purpose of report

To confirm the selection of a preferred partner to take forward housing redevelopment in North Central Hartlepool (Moore/Acclom/Pelham/Harwood Streets, Chester/Chatham/Raby Roads and Marston Gardens, as identified within the plan appended to the report), and outline the proposed way forward for the scheme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that seven companies had submitted formal proposals to provide a range of good quality new housing for the above area which were opened by the Contracts Scrutiny Panel on 21st November 2005. Following an initial evaluation, five developers were shortlisted and interviewed where formal land offers were received from each of the developers. Following the interviews, developer 'A' scored highest in terms of assessment in both price and quality and was therefore recommended as the Council's preferred developer partner for this project. An outline of the proposals from developer 'A' were submitted within the report and included requirements to meet the Eco Homes Standard 'very good' level and plans of the proposals were available at the meeting.

The next key milestones and processes for the project would be:

- Negotiate an appropriate development agreement setting out the formal terms and conditions of the disposal of the site, and
- Agree the final details for the scheme and seek appropriate planning permissions prior to any potential CPO inquiry.

The Mayor indicated that the major funder for the project, English Partnerships had agreed that any income could be recycled to assist in the completion of the site. The Council had bid for additional resources to support housing market renewal activity in central Hartlepool for the period 2006-2008.

A Member indicated that although he fully supported the project he felt Member involvement in the decisions had been limited. In response, the Mayor advised that membership of the Steering Group included ward councillors and another Executive Member as well as himself and that Cabinet Members were being requested to endorse the selection of the developer for the project.

Decision

- i) Cabinet endorsed the selection of Developer 'A' as the Council's preferred partner to take forward the first phase of housing redevelopment in North Central Hartlepool.
- ii) Cabinet authorised the Chief Solicitor to negotiate and execute an

appropriate agreement with Developer 'A' for the disposal of the land to the developer, after grant of the consent of the Secretary of State under s.123 Local Government Act 1972, and for the development of the land in accordance with the developer's proposals.

- iii) Cabinet authorised the Chief Solicitor to transfer the land to the developer on the agreed terms in due course.
- iv) Cabinet invited a further report in due course confirming the outcome of these negotiations and the final terms of the disposal/agreement between the Council and the selected developer.

168. Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – Examination in Public (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

To advise Cabinet of the arrangements proposed by the Panel Secretariat for the forthcoming RSS Examination in Public (EiP) and outline the actions intended to be taken by Officers in the run up to the EiP to ensure the best interests of Hartlepool were secured.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor indicated that Cabinet had previously considered two reports in relation to the RSS and had responded formally and this was attached by way of appendix. The Secretary of State had appointed an independent EiP and its "preliminary programme" had recently been published, a copy of which had been placed in the Members Room.

Comments from a Hartlepool perspective had been submitted to the Panel Secretary in accordance with the 9th December 2005 deadline and this was attached by way of appendix. Joint discussions were taking place with other Tees Valley local authorities and the Joint Strategy Unit (JSU) to plan the work programme of the EiP. This included, in particular, the preparation of written statements for each of the matters to be considered by the EiP, ideally by the end of January. The subject areas as identified by the EiP Panel for these written statements were detailed in the report. Although it was anticipated that the JSU would take the main lead in preparing the majority of the first drafts in consultation with the Tees Valley local authorities, individual local authorities may need to make their own individual representations where differences in opinion occur. Hartlepool had offered to lead in co-ordinating and representing the other Tees Valley local authorities in relation to Energy and Renewable targets.

Although it was anticipated that only one representative from each of the sub-regions be represented at the EiP, representations had been made to the Panel Secretary proposing that all boroughs be invited to participate. The JSU had called a special meeting of the Joint Strategy Committee to take place on 30th January 2006 to consider reports relating to i) the sub-regional housing strategy, ii) housing numbers and iii) employment land allocations.

Concern was expressed by Members on how the Tees Valley representative would be accountable to Hartlepool on issues where a consensus of opinion could not be achieved. The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services indicated that accountability would formally be achieved through the Joint Strategy Committee. Although it was hoped that agreement could be reached across the five authorities, the Mayor indicated that it may be that the EiP Panel need to be approached directly with any further concerns Hartlepool may have and joint representation had been made to try and secure more direct representation.

Decision

- i) Cabinet noted the Provisional Programme for the RSS EiP and the actions proposed and taken by Officers so far in the run up to the EiP.
- ii) Cabinet delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, in consultation with the Mayor in his capacity as Regeneration and Liveability Portfolio Holder, responsibility for agreeing any written representations submitted by the Council and/or the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (JSU) and meeting any other procedural requirements associated with the EiP.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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