

# NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

2 September 2013

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

**Present:**

Councillor: Peter Jackson (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jim Ainslie, Keith Dawkins, Steve Gibbon, Brenda Loynes and Sylvia Tempest

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods  
Philip Hepburn, Parking Services Manager  
Peter Frost, Traffic Team Leader  
Laura Stones, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Alyson Carr, Head of Finance, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **27. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Cook.

## **28. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Ainslie and Tempest declared prejudicial interests in Minute 30 and left the meeting during consideration of that item of business only.

## **29. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 August 2013**

Received.

In relation to a prejudicial interest declared by Councillor Ainslie at the last meeting relating to Minute 20 - Northgate Bus Stop, Councillor Ainslie highlighted that the minutes did not highlight his return to the meeting following the conclusion of that item of business. Given that the minutes had previously been published, it was agreed that this be noted in the minutes of today's meeting.

**30. Proposed Residential Controlled Permit Parking Scheme – South Crescent, Headland** (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key

**Purpose of report**

To report the outcome of consultation with residents of South Crescent over a proposal to introduce a resident only permit controlled parking scheme and extend some of the existing prohibition of parking restrictions in the area.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Chair sought the Committee's views in relation to the proposal to introduce a resident only permit controlled parking scheme and extend some of the existing prohibition of parking restrictions in the area, details of which were set out in the report. The Chair referred to the outcome of consultation with residents of South Crescent, as detailed in the report, the three objections that had been received by the Chair direct and an additional eight objections that had been received by the Highways Department.

Members raised some concerns regarding the wider implications of the proposal on other areas of the town and were of the view that before a decision was taken a wider review should be undertaken in consultation with the Parish Council and, in undertaking a review, consideration be given to the emerging Headland Neighbourhood Plan.

**Decision**

That the proposed residential controlled permit parking scheme at South Crescent be deferred pending the outcome of a wider review to be undertaken in consultation with the Parish Council.

## **31. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2014/15 Savings Proposal** *(Chief Executive)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework

### **Purpose of report**

To enable Members to consider the initial 2014/15 savings proposals relating to the Committee's remit and to feedback comments to the Finance and Policy Committee.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods referred to previous reports to the Finance and Policy Committee which provided background and an overview of the Council's financial position including details of the significant financial challenges and risks facing the Council arising from continued reductions in Government funding.

In relation to the 2014/15 budget, it was reported that the Council faced a gross budget deficit of £8.524m. The gross budget deficit could be reduced to £4.594m without impacting on services through a combination of permanent budget savings and one-off factors as summarised in the report. The report also detailed departmental savings proposals with a total value of £4.376m. Assuming the proposed departmental savings were implemented there was a net unfunded deficit for 2014/15 of £0.218m. It was anticipated at this stage, that this amount could be bridged from the 2014/15 New Homes Bonus. However, this income was not yet guaranteed.

Members were advised that if the proposals, as set out in the report, were approved for addressing the 2014/15 budget deficit the Council would still face significant budget deficits in 2014/16 and 2016/17. Over the period of the current MTFS it was forecast that the Council would have to make permanent budget cuts of around £16.2m, details of which were included in the report.

Members were referred to the proposed departmental budget savings and budget pressures for consideration by the Committee, attached as appendices to the report that would be incorporated with those received from each of the Policy Committees in relation to their remits for consideration by the Finance and Policy Committee on 19 September 2013.

Members questioned whether the proposed savings from the School

Crossing Patrol services would result in a reduction of jobs. It was confirmed that there would be no reduction of jobs and the proposed saving would be achieved through a reconfiguration of the services.

The Committee requested clarification on the reduction of horticultural features and what it entailed. It was explained that this proposed saving would be achieved by reducing labour intensive areas / plots and replacing with lower maintenance alternatives, for example, an annual flower bed may be replaced with shrubs or trees. Members were supportive of people / communities adopting areas / plots, where possible, to help with the maintenance.

### **Decision**

The Committee supported the proposed savings and budget pressures for consideration by the Finance and Policy Committee on 19 September 2013.

## **32. Six Monthly Monitoring of Agreed Scrutiny Recommendations** (*Scrutiny Manager*)

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To provide Members with six monthly progress made on the delivery of Scrutiny recommendations that fall within the remit of this Committee.

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

The report provided details of progress made against the investigations undertaken by the previous Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum. The report included a chart which provided the overall progress made against each scrutiny recommendation since the last six monthly monitoring report was presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum in February 2013.

It was noted that 89% of the Scrutiny Forum's recommendations had been completed with 6% in progress, 4% cancelled and 1% overdue. Approval was sought to a revision of the completion dates for the actions detailed in Table 1 of the report, the reasons of which were outlined.

## **Decision**

- (i) That progress against the agreed recommendations be noted.
- (ii) That the proposed date change to the actions included in the report be agreed.

### **33. Introduction of Prohibition of Waiting Restriction in Flaxton Street and Resident Only Permit Parking Scheme in Flaxton Court** *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key

#### **Purpose of report**

To report on the outcome of a consultation with residents regarding proposals to introduce a prohibition of waiting restriction in Flaxton Street and resident only permit parking scheme in Flaxton Court.

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

The Assistant Director provided background information in relation to the proposals. Residents of Flaxton Street had been consulted on the proposal to create a prohibition of waiting restriction on the currently non-regulated eastern side of Flaxton Street which would be applicable 24 hours, 7 days per week.

Letters of consultation had been sent to 17 properties in Flaxton Street who were directly affected by the proposal. 10 residents responded to the consultation who were all in support of the scheme. Whilst supporting the scheme, one business did express a need to review the new restrictions and any affect this may have on the business.

Consultation had also taken place with 19 residents in Flaxton Court of which 11 letters of response had been received, with 8 residents in support of the scheme and 3 opposed to the scheme. A map showing the extent of the proposed parking restrictions was attached as an appendix to the report.

The cost of the scheme was estimated at around £400 and would be funded through the parking services operational budget. Residents at Flaxton Court would be offered permits at an annual cost of £5 per permit.

In response to a query from a Member in relation to enforcement in the event of any contravention of the restriction, the Parking Services Manager

provided clarification in relation to the Council's enforcement arrangements.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the proposed prohibition of waiting restriction on Flaxton Street (eastern side) be approved.
- (ii) That the proposed resident only permit parking scheme in Flaxton Court be approved.
- (iii) That the Head of Legal Services be requested to advertise the necessary legal orders for consideration.

## **34. Proposed 20 mph Speed Restriction Scheme Through Hart Village** *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for the implementation of a 20 mph speed restriction throughout Hart Village (where vehicle speeds were currently restricted to 30mph) - Appendix 1 refers.

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

The Assistant Director reported that following requests from local Ward and Parish Councils regarding concerns about speeding motorists, consultation had taken place with residents, Ward Councillors and the Neighbourhood Manager in relation to the proposal to implement a 20mph speed restriction in the village. From a total of 247 residential letters issued, 108 replies had been received. The response was positively in favour of the scheme with 83 responses in favour and 25 opposed to the proposal.

It was proposed that the scheme would be delivered using signage only, details of which were included in the report. The scheme would be funded via the Local Transport budget allocation at an estimated cost of £1,000.

### **Decision**

That the proposed 20mph speed limit be implemented within the area, as outlined in the report.

## **35. Change of Name: Brierton and Catcote Allotment Sites** *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

For information

### **Purpose of report**

To inform Members of the name change of Brierton and Catcote allotments and other minor proposals aimed at improving safety and reducing risks to Members of the public and tenants on allotment sites across Hartlepool.

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

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the discussions that had taken place with the emergency services following a fatality caused by a shed fire on a Hartlepool allotment site in 2012, details of which were set out in the report. As a result of discussions with emergency services and concerns raised regarding confusion over some of the site locations, it was proposed that the following name changes be made at the specific allotment sites:-

- Brierton Allotments to become known as Rossmere Allotments
- Catcote Allotments to become known as Summerhill Allotments

It was also proposed that further minor changes be made to improve response times which included site information boards, plot numbers and hazard warning signs, allotment master keys to be provided to emergency services as well as an audit of accessibility to establish whether emergency vehicles were able to easily access sites.

With regard to consultation, all tenants at Brierton and Catcote allotments had been consulted on the proposals. Of the 68 respondents at Brierton allotments, the majority agreed to the proposals with only one person disagreeing. Of the 57 respondents at Catcote allotments, all tenants agreed to the proposals.

In the discussion that followed, the importance of publicising the change of name to the general public in Hartbeat was emphasised to ensure there was no confusion in terms of the incident location when residents were reporting incidents of this type to the emergency services.

## **Decision**

- (i) That the proposed changes aimed at improving safety and reducing risks to members of the public and tenants on allotments sites in Hartlepool be noted.
- (ii) That the change of names at Brierton and Catcote allotments be publicised in Hartbeat.

## **36. Quarter 1 – Financial Management Report** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Chief Finance Officer*)

### **Type of decision**

For information

### **Purpose of report**

To inform Members of the 2013/14 forecast General Fund budget outturn for the Neighbourhood Services Department and specific details of the services this Committee is responsible for.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods presented the report which provided the background and financial reporting arrangements for 2013/14 as well as the General Fund budget outturn information in relation to the Neighbourhood Services Department.

As previously reported to the Finance and Policy Committee, Members were advised that there would be an overall underspend in the current year. In relation to the management of departmental budgets, the Corporate Management Team was again seeking to achieve underspends to help address the significant financial challenges through a combination of robust management actions, as detailed in the report. After reflecting these actions, it was currently anticipated that there would be a gross managed year end underspend of between £2.090m to £2.764m. A range of additional one off commitments had also been identified since the initial 2013/14 outturn forecast. When account was taken of these commitments and the earmarking of the initial forecast outturn, it was anticipated there would be a net uncommitted underspend of between £19,000 and £693,00.

Details of the overall budget position for the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services Department was summarised in a table included in the report which included the reasons for the forecast outturn. Further details of specific budget areas was set out at Appendix A.



## **Decision**

That the contents of the report be noted.

### **37. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

The Chairman ruled that the following items of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

### **38. Any Other Business – Implementation of Local Safety Scheme on Rossmere Way**

The Chair reported that following a decision taken at the last meeting in relation to the implementation of a local safety scheme on Rossmere Way, objections to the decision had been received, One objection was in relation to safety which the Chair had requested be investigated to ensure the health and safety concerns could be eliminated.

### **39. Any Other Business – Northgate Bus Stop**

The Chair reported that a letter would be tabled for discussion at the next meeting from a Ward Member in relation to a request to review the decision taken at the last meeting to relocate Northgate Bus Stop.

In response to a Member's concerns regarding the implications of giving further consideration to decisions that had previously been taken, the Chair advised that the purpose of reporting the matter today was for information purposes and it was a matter for the Committee to determine the appropriate course of action in response to the letter.

The meeting concluded at 10.05 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 9 SEPTEMBER 2013**