

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD**

14 October 2013

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

**Present:**

Councillor: Jim Ainslie (In the Chair)

Councillors: Allan Barclay, Keith Dawkins, Steve Gibbon, Brenda Loynes and Sylvia Tempest

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii) Councillor Carl Richardson was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Peter Jackson

Also Present: Councillor Marjorie James

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods  
Mike Blair, Highways, Traffic and Transport Manager  
Alyson Carr, Head of Finance (Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)  
Alyson Caman, Legal Services Manager  
Peter Frost, Traffic Team Leader  
Adele Wilson, Community Regeneration and Development Co-ordinator  
Clare Clark, Neighbourhood Manager  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **40. Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Peter Jackson.

## **41. Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **42. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 September 2013**

Received.

### **43. Blakelock Gardens Safety Review** *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key

#### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Neighbourhood Services Committee of the recent consultation outcome, regarding the positioning / removal of the crossing, based upon the preferences expressed by local residents and other members of the public.

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

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided background information relating to a decision taken in 2010 to install a puffin crossing at Blakelock Gardens which included a left turn ban onto Blakelock Gardens from Brinkburn Road. Despite the positive consultation outcome, several members of the public then made a number of representations objecting to the left turn ban and, as a result of a Portfolio Holder decision in March 2011, the crossing was relocated 15 metres to the east of its original position. In early 2012, residents living close to the crossing expressed concerns relating to parking, traffic speeds and access to and from their driveways. As a result, a number of actions were taken which included a decision in February 2013 to undertake further consultation relating to the complete removal of the puffin crossing and for the implementation of a 20mph speed limit.

Details of the full consultation results were provided as set out in the report. In total, 105 responses were received (20% of the total which were distributed) 17.14% wanted the crossing removed completely, 72.38% wanted the crossing to remain at its existing location and 10.48% wanted the crossing moved back to its original location.

With regard to the pinch-point sub option, this was not favoured by the majority with only 22.86% of the respondents requesting them. The parking control sub-option along Blakelock Gardens (for retaining the crossing at its present location ) showed only 23.81% in favour.

Members were referred to the financial considerations as detailed in the report. It was noted that relocation of the crossing and introduction of a left turn ban would cost approximately £35,000.

A number of members of the public were in attendance at the meeting and two representatives were invited to speak. Whilst one resident spoke in favour of retaining the crossing in its existing location, the reasons for which were shared with the Committee, another resident was of the view that the crossing should be relocated to its original location and highlighted a number of concerns in relation to traffic bottlenecks resulting in access problems to and from his driveway and the lack of use of the crossing given its present location.

The Chair shared with the Committee the contents of a letter to the Chair of this Committee from Councillor Brash, Ward Councillor, who was in favour of retaining the crossing in its current location.

In the discussion that followed the Assistant Director responded to issues raised by Members in relation to the options available, the financial implications of the various options as well as the reasons for relocation of the crossing. A map was tabled at the meeting which outlined the area affected to assist the Committee in determining the most appropriate way forward which Members considered in detail.

Members went on to further debate the background to the decision to relocate the crossing, the implications for the elderly and mobility impaired pedestrians if the crossing was to be removed, the costs of £35,000 to relocate the crossing as well as the advantages and disadvantages of installing pinch points and parking controls. Given the outcome of the consultation that 72% wanted the crossing to remain at its existing location and the costs associated with any relocation, Members were of the view that the crossing should remain in its existing location. With regard to the option to install pinch points and parking controls, following a lengthy debate, the Committee considered that pinch points would not provide any benefits but that parking controls should be introduced to address concerns raised by some residents.

## **Decision**

- (i) That the outcome of the consultation be noted.
- (ii) That the crossing at Blakelock Gardens be retained in its current location.
- (iii) That no pinch points be introduced at this location.
- (iv) That parking controls be introduced at this location, comprising of double yellow lines on the south side outside No's 43 – 49, to help make access to and from driveways easier, with a short section of limited waiting on the north side.

## **44. Street Lighting LED Replacement Programme** (Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)

### **Type of decision**

Key tests (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Reference No RN11/12

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval to upgrade the entire street lighting stock in the town to energy efficient LED units and highlight the possibility of a future business case to fund the replacement of 30 to 40 year old columns.

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

The report provided background information relating to the need to consider an upgrade to the entire street lighting stock in the town to energy efficient LED units.

It was proposed to upgrade the entire street lighting stock of 13,644 lanterns in the town to LED units on a point for point basis. The proposal was to prudentially borrow to fund the initial capital replacement cost and cover the annual loan repayments from the energy savings generated. Informal discussions had taken place with the private sector and an indicative price of £6.8m had been submitted for supply and fit of the units. Costings had been prepared on a similar basis for an in-house delivery model and these were estimated to be £5m, a summary of these costs were detailed in Appendix 1.

Based on the cheaper option of an in-house delivery model the financial business case for the scheme was summarised in the report. It was envisaged that there would be an additional budget pressure of approximately £40,000 pa under the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) if charges were made at a rate of £12 per tonne. Emissions were expected to reduce by two thirds after the refit reducing the pressure to £13k per annum. The risks including the need for future column replacement considerations together with conclusions were provided as detailed in the report.

A Member made reference to concerns of some residents that the new units did not provide sufficient lighting, whilst such concerns were acknowledged, assurances were provided in relation to the output variances complying with National Standards and the long term benefits of projects of this type. Members welcomed the scheme and were pleased to note the energy savings as a result. The Chair took the opportunity to thank officers for developing such a beneficial scheme.

## **Decision**

The Committee:-

1. Approved the project to replace 13,644 street lamps with LED lanterns subject to completion of a successful procurement exercise and equipment costs not exceeding £3.6m plus 5%. In the event that this threshold was exceeded a further report would be provided.
2. Referred the report to the Finance & Policy Committee and then Council to approve the Capital budget and note that this included a contingency which may be used to reduce the amount of Prudential Borrowing required on the Scheme.
3. Noted the revenue savings and that a future report would be prepared to consider the replacement strategy for columns which may include a business case for using part of the Capital or Revenue savings on this scheme.

## **45. Winter Service Plan** *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Key – tests (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Reference No RN 12/13

### **Purpose of report**

To set out the policies and priorities for delivering the Winter Service in Hartlepool.

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

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided the background to the delivery of the Winter Service Plan. The report included details of the development of the Winter Service Policy, Policy Statement, network priorities and route plans, information and publicity considerations, decisions and management information, winter service training and development as well as performance standards and monitoring information.

In relation to proposals relating to grit bins, there were currently 99 grit bin locations in the town as detailed in Appendix 1. Costs of positioning and re-filling these bins varied annually depending upon the severity of a particular winter period but was in the range of £400 - £500 each per annum. In

addition to the existing locations, requests had been received for the provision of bins at a further 82 locations as identified in Appendix 2.

Details of the scoring mechanism applied to each location was included in the report together with details of the scores for 151 locations. All 151 locations were not sustainable in respect of the costs of maintaining throughout the winter maintenance period under the current arrangements (£60,000 to £75,000 per annum on current rates). Choosing a score requirement of 12 points (for a bin to be provided), would give 100 locations based on the list of locations. This would, however, require the removal of 23 bins from existing locations. Rather than removing 23 salt bins from locations where they may have been for several years, it was proposed that all bins rated at 12 points or more and all existing bins be deployed.

In addition, and in order to reduce the cost, they would remain in-situ throughout the year, thus reducing the set up and removal costs each year which, it was anticipated would cover the costs of the extra 24 bins above current levels. The final list of salt bin locations was set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

In response to a request for clarification, the Assistant Director outlined the scoring process and arrangements in place for replacing bins which fell into disrepair.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the Winter Maintenance Plan be approved.
- (ii) That the proposed scoring mechanism to determine whether salt bin requests should be accepted be approved.
- (iii) That an increase in the number of salt bins to 123, as detailed in Appendix 4 be approved.

## **46. 173 York Road** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To provide the Neighbourhood Services Committee with an outline of the current position in relation to the Community Safety Office at 173 York Road.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported on the receipt of formal notification of Cleveland Police of their intention to relocate Neighbourhood Policing staff currently based at York Road to Hartlepool Police Headquarters on Avenue Road. The running costs of the York Road premises were currently shared between the Council and Cleveland Police. The legal and financial arrangements in relation to 173 York Road was currently managed by the Council who hold the lease for the building from the NDC Trust on behalf of partners. Details of the teams currently based at 173 York Road were included in the report.

Currently part of the Council's Community Safety Team occupied an area in the Hartlepool Police Station free of charge but the sustainability of this arrangement was in question. One option could be to relocate this team with the teams in 173 York Road or possibly the Civic Centre. The report included daily monitoring information in relation to the use of the building as well as risk and financial considerations. If the service were to remain in 173 York Road it would be necessary to identify additional occupants in order to contribute to the running costs. Negotiations with other parties were taking place which would feed into the option appraisal. The current year's budget for running 173 York Road was £32,000. The loss of police funding would result in a loss to the Council's central property budget of £14,000.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods made reference to a letter from the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee relating to the Committee's concerns regarding any potential closure of 173 York Road, a copy of which was tabled at the meeting and noted by the Committee. Members were advised that since writing the report, confirmation had been received from the Community Safety Team which currently occupied space at the Police Station could remain there and there was additional space should other staff wish to relocate.

In response to a query as to whether a grant had been received from NDC and whether there were any clawback provisions, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that whilst it was anticipated this was not the case, confirmation would be provided following the meeting.

The importance of exploring all the various options was emphasised by Members including the importance of neighbourhood policing teams maintaining contact with communities.

## **Decision**

That the proposal to investigate options in relation to the future sustainability of York Road as a Neighbourhood Management base be

agreed.

## **47. Neighbourhood Planning** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key – for information only

### **Purpose of report**

To update the Committee on the current position of Neighbourhood Planning in Hartlepool, to note a proposal to develop a payment schedule for Neighbourhood Planning services (that are in addition to those that have to be provided by statute) and to acknowledge an amendment to the reporting and decision making (in relation to designation of Neighbourhood Forums) process.

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

The report included background information in relation to Neighbourhood Planning together with details of the requirement of the Local Planning Authority to fulfil a number of duties throughout the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. A funding programme to support local authorities in meeting legislative duties in relation to Neighbourhood Planning had been announced which consisted of a number of elements, details of which were set out in the report. Four Neighbourhood Plans were currently being developed in Hartlepool, progress of which was provided.

It was proposed to develop a payment schedule for Neighbourhood Planning Services (outside those that had to be provided statutorily). An initial scoping exercise had indicated that consultancy services could be commissioned for expert planning services related to Neighbourhood Planning. However, an intensive community development based support package similar to that currently delivered by the HBC Neighbourhood Management Team was not readily available elsewhere and would be expensive to commission in the private sector should the full neighbourhood planning process be overseen. It was proposed to investigate this option through a full market evaluation exercise which would encompass a number of areas, details of which was set out in the report.

In relation to the proposal to utilise external consultants to carry out an independent validation of the Neighbourhood Plan, it was suggested that the option to utilise other local authorities to undertake this work within a reciprocal type arrangement be explored.



The Chair thanked officers for their hard work and efforts in relation to progress made to date on this issue.

### **Decision**

- (i) That progress in relation to Neighbourhood Planning in Hartlepool to date be noted.
- (ii) That the proposal to develop a payment schedule for Neighbourhood Planning services (that are in addition to those that have to be provided by statute) as outlined in Section 8 of the report be noted.
- (iii) That the amendment to the reporting and decision making process (in relation to the designation of Neighbourhood Forums) process as outlined in Section 9.2 of the report be noted.
- (iv) In relation to the Council's requirement to undertake an independent validation of the Neighbourhood Plan, it was agreed that the option to utilise other local authorities to undertake this work within a reciprocal type arrangement be explored.

The meeting concluded at 11.05 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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