

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

20 January 2014

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

**Present:**

Councillor: Peter Jackson (In the Chair)

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

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Clare Clark, Neighbourhood Manager  
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods  
Alyson Carr, Head of Finance (Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Edwin Jeffries, Secretary of the Joint Trade Unions

### **72. Apologies for Absence**

None.

### **73. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **74. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2014**

Received.

### **75. Safer Hartlepool Partnerships Draft Community Safety Plan 2014-17** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

**Type of decision**

Key Decision RN24/13 – test (ii) applies

### **Purpose of report**

To present and seek comments from the Neighbourhood Services Committee on the first draft of the Community Safety Plan 2014-17 (formerly known as the Community Safety Strategy).

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

It was reported that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership was required to produce a three year Community Safety Plan setting out how it intended to tackle crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending. The current plan would come to an end in March 2014. A copy of the Partnership's strategic assessment, executive summary was attached at Appendix 1 which included an analysis of local crime and offending data together with the results of community consultation.

Members were referred to the first draft of the proposed Community Safety Plan 2014-17, attached at Appendix 2, which set out the Partnership's strategic objectives and annual priorities. The draft plan was being consulted upon, the results of which would be considered and used to inform the production of the second draft which would be presented to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership in March 2014 before being considered by full Council in April 2014.

With regard to community perceptions, some concern was expressed regarding the significant decrease from 72% to 42% in the number of people who thought people from different ethnic backgrounds got on well together. The Neighbourhood Manager acknowledged this trend and highlighted that the objective to create confident cohesive and safe communities would examine issues of this type.

The Committee went on to discuss the general trends in relation to community perceptions and, in particular, the potential reasons for the reduction in the number of people who felt they could influence decisions that affected their local areas. Whilst acknowledging the concerns of Members, the Chair was pleased to note that the partnership had recognised areas of concern and actions were being taken to address this.

### **Decision**

That the draft Community Safety Plan 2014-17 and comments of Members, as detailed above, be noted.

## **76. 173 York Road** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To provide an update following investigations regarding the future sustainability of the Community Safety Office at 173 York Road.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods presented the report which provided background information to the Committee's request that options in relation to the sustainability of 173 York Road as a Neighbourhood Management base be explored. Since the relocation of the Neighbourhood Policing Team to Avenue Road early in November 2013, it would be necessary to identify additional occupants to take up space at 173 York Road to enable the Neighbourhood Management service to remain at this location.

Given that options had been explored and it had proved difficult to find a partner who could contribute the full amount required to guarantee sustainability of these premises, it was proposed that the teams transferred to the Civic Centre. The relocation of Neighbourhood Management and Community Safety staff would result in a reduced service in terms of accessibility and the free flow of intelligence between residents and officers. It was therefore proposed that a review of the current Neighbourhood Management Strategy be undertaken to explore alternative models which would continue to work to the three key principles of the Strategy ie Engagement and Involvement, integration of services and partnership working on a neighbourhood level and focusing on the most deprived neighbourhoods.

In the lengthy discussion that followed a Member raised concerns regarding the impact of the loss of police funding on the Council's financial position and the potential increase in redundancies within the Neighbourhood Management Service. Whilst a number of concerns were raised regarding the adverse impact of the closure of York Road in terms of accessibility, public confidence and community cohesion, the financial reasons for the proposed closure were acknowledged and supported. Members were keen to receive feedback on the impact of the transfer of the service and requested that future usage levels be explored and reported to a future meeting of this Committee. The importance of publicising the closure to ensure the public were signposted to the Civic Centre was emphasised.

## **Decision**

- (i) That the outcome of further investigations into the closure of 173 York Road be noted.
- (ii) That the recommendations to relocate the Neighbourhood Management and Community Safety Teams be endorsed.
- (iii) That a review of the current Neighbourhood Management Strategy be undertaken to explore alternative models which would continue to work to the three key principles of the Council's Neighbourhood Management Strategy ie engagement and involvement; integration of services and partnership working and focusing on the most deprived neighbourhoods.

## **77. Proposals for Inclusion in the Council Plan**

*(Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Departmental Management Team)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To provide the opportunity for the Neighbourhood Services Committee to consider the proposals for inclusion in the 2014/15 Council Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported the proposals included in the 2014/15 Council Plan that fell under the remit of the Neighbourhood Services Committee. As in previous years detailed proposals were being considered by each of the Committees throughout January and February. A further report would be prepared for the Finance and Policy Committee on 14 February 2014 detailing the comments/observations of each of the Committees along with a full draft of the 2014/15 Council Plan.

In relation to the proposed actions identified to deliver the outcomes, as detailed in an appendix to the report, the percentage uptake of school meals was discussed and Members emphasised the importance of maximising take-up. In response to a Member's suggestion that this target be increased to 100%, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods outlined the monitoring arrangements in place to encourage take-up .

With regard to the outcome to provide a sustainable, safe, efficient, effective and accessible transport system and in response to a Member's concerns relating to the impact of comments made by the town's MP in the House of Commons relating to the delivery of bus services in the town, the Chair indicated that any such comments from the MP were a separate issue and not a matter for debate at this Committee.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods provided clarification in response to further queries raised by Members in relation to the proposals.

### **Decision**

That the proposals reported for inclusion in the Council Plan 2014/15 be supported and the comments of Members be utilised to formulate a response on behalf of the Committee for consideration by the Finance and Policy Committee on 14 February 2014.

## **78. Update on Collaborative Environmental Working Arrangements** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key

### **Purpose of report**

To update the Neighbourhood Services Committee on current collaborative working arrangements between the Council's Neighbourhood Management Team and Partners that assist in addressing community priorities in relation to community safety, the environment, and employment.

To consider a number of proposals that aim to extend/enhance current schemes.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported on the background to collaborative working arrangements and outlined the proposals as to how these schemes could be extended in future. Details of the Community Payback Initiative was provided as detailed in the report. Members were advised that the initiative had worked relatively well. During 2012/13 the Community Payback Team undertook a total of 10,557 hours of 'unpaid work' in Hartlepool and this involved 163 offenders. The report included the type of works undertaken and more recently, in an effort to

enhance the skills of offenders and increase their employability, since April 2013 the Neighbourhood Management Team had piloted a number of placements of offenders on the Community Payback Initiative within the Council's cleansing teams for the duration of their unpaid work requirement.

The report included details of progress made on the Environmental Apprentice Scheme as well as progress made on the Delivering Initiatives Supporting Communities (DISC) Scheme. Given the success of previous years in relation to these schemes, it was proposed that these arrangements be placed on a formal footing with new partnership arrangements that included the extension of existing projects, details of which were set out in the report.

Although the Trade Unions had previously agreed to the original Community Payback Scheme and the Environmental Apprentice Scheme, further consultation had taken place with the Trade Unions on the proposals, feedback from which was outlined in the report.

The Secretary of the Joint Trade Unions was invited to provide the Committee with the Union's views on the proposals. Members were advised that the Trade Unions did not support the extension of the Community Safety Payback Scheme project to be inclusive of Neighbourhood Management supervision and placement with current teams of employees without significant further discussion on safeguarding, working environment and potential impact on staffing and service provision.

In the discussion that followed the Committee welcomed the schemes and was pleased to note the benefits and positive outcomes for the town. Members commended the hard work of officers and contribution from the Trade Unions in addressing staffing issues.

## **Decision**

- (i) That progress to date on current collaborative working arrangements between the Neighbourhood Management Team and partners be noted.
- (ii) That officers be authorised to agree future collaborative working arrangements with the Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust and undertake further negotiations with the Trade Unions regarding placements.

**79. Strategic Financial Management Report as at 31 October 2013** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Chief Finance Officer)*

**Type of decision**

For information

**Purpose of report**

The report informed Members of the 2013/14 Forecast General Fund Outturn; 2013/14 Capital Programme Monitoring, and provided details for the specific budget areas that the Committee was responsible for.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that the latest report submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 19 December 2013 advised Members that there would be an overall underspend in the current year. The report also advised Members that this position reflected action taken by the Corporate Management Team to achieve underspends to help address the significant financial challenges facing the Council over the next few years and to fund one-off commitments not provided for in the approved 2013/14 budget as these items were not known at the time.

Members were advised of the overall budget position for the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services Department by Committee, the reasons for the forecast outturn together with planned capital expenditure, as detailed in the report.

**Decision**

That the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.35 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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