

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Thursday 17th August 2006

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room B

MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors R W Cook, S Cook, Gibbon, Laffey, London, A Marshall, J Marshall, Richardson, Wallace, D Waller and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

James Atkinson, Mary Power and Iris Ryder

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2006.

4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

No Items

5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No Items

6. **CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No Items

7. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Scrutiny Investigation into Railway Approaches:-

7.1 Railway Approaches Departmental Presentations:-

- (a) Covering Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*);
- (b) Image of the Town (*Presentation to be delivered by the Head of Regeneration*);
- (c) Planning and Development Control (*Presentation to be delivered by Principal Planning Officer – Policy Planning and Information*); and
- (d) Local Transport Plan (*Presentation to be delivered by the Head of Technical Services*)

7.2 Railway Approaches – Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation:-

- (a) Covering Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*); and
- (b) Verbal Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation.

7.3 Railway Approaches - Feedback from the Site Visit held on 14 August 2006:-

- (a) Covering Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*); and
- (b) Verbal Feedback/ Findings from Members in attendance at the Site Visit.

8. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- i) **Date of Next Meeting Friday 29 September 2006, commencing at 10.00 am in Committee Room B.**

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM MINUTES

13 July 2006

Present:

Councillor: Stephen Wallace (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Steve Gibbon, Frances London and Ann Marshall

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 Councillor Maureen Waller attended as a substitute for Councillor Dennis Waller.

Resident Representative: James Atkinson and Mary Power

Officers: Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration
Ian Jopling, Transportation Team Leader
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Jonathan Wistow, Scrutiny Support Officer

10. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shaun Cook, Dennis Waller and Edna Wright.

11. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

12. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2006

Confirmed.

13. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

14. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

15. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None.

16. Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's 'Railway Approaches' – Scoping Report *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a scoping report for the Forums investigation into Hartlepool's 'Railway Approaches'

- The aim of the investigation

To examine the railway approaches into Hartlepool and develop suggestions for improvement.

- The terms of reference for the investigation

- a) To gain an understanding of key government policy areas relating to railway approaches
- b) To explore the railway approaches into the town from the north and the south
- c) To explore the condition of Hartlepool and Seaton Carew railway stations
- d) To identify key 'problem spots' and areas of good practice in the railway approaches into the town
- e) To identify the ownership of key problem spots i.e. is the land privately owned, owned by the Council, owned by Network Rail, or owned by another body
- f) To consider the impact of the railway approaches into Hartlepool on the town's image, particularly in terms of the ongoing regeneration of the town
- g) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for the appearance of the Railway approaches into the town (i.e. commercial operator(s), regulators, private landowners and the Council)

- h) To consider issues of accessibility, particularly in terms of pedestrian access to Hartlepool Station from the Marina
- i) To compare what good practice exists in another Local Authority in relation to railway approaches
- j) To seek the views of the public in relation to the railway approaches into Hartlepool

- Timetable Of The Scrutiny Investigation

- Late July/early August 2006 – site visit to be arranged – North and South railway approaches
- 17th August 2006 – ‘Setting the Scene’ report/presentation from Council Officers. Feedback from the site visit. Possibly include key evidence from the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing and Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holders.
- 29th September 2006 – Evidence from key witnesses/outside bodies (MP for Hartlepool Iain Wright, Network Rail, Office of Rail Regulators, Grand Central and Northern Rail)
- 2nd November 2006 – Public Involvement Session, seek the views of the public and rail user groups on their perceptions of railway approaches into Hartlepool.
- Mid to late November – Schedule an informal meeting of the Forum to consider contents of a Draft Final Report.
- 7th December 2006 – Agree Draft Final Report

A Member added that the Forum should seek to encourage the views of young people during this inquiry.

Recommendation

That the Forum's remit for the Scrutiny investigation be agreed.

STEPHEN WALLACE

CHAIRMAN

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

17 August 2006



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: RAILWAY APPROACHES DEPARTMENTAL
PRESENTATIONS – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an introduction, and background, to the presentations that will take place during today's meeting.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of this Forum on 13 July 2006 Members considered some background information about the key agencies with some responsibility for the issues surrounding the Railway Approaches inquiry. Members of this Forum agreed to receive further evidence from Officers of the Council in relation to a number of areas in which Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) exercises some responsibility. Consequently, during today's meeting there will be three presentations into the following areas:

- (a) Image of the town;
- (b) Planning and Development Control; and
- (c) The Local Transport Plan (LTP).

- 2.2 Outlined in paragraphs 2.3 – 2.5 there is some background information to the presentations, which will take place during today's meeting.

Image of the Town

- 2.3 From a regeneration perspective the image of Hartlepool is considered to be particularly important in terms of attracting visitors, businesses and jobseekers to the town. The railway approaches into Hartlepool play an important role in terms of the initial impression they create of the town for visitors. In addition, the introduction of the Grand Central rail link (which is due to start operating in January 2007) will increase the profile of Hartlepool, whilst drawing further attention to the railway approaches into the town. Consequently, the presentation will focus on the image of the town from a regeneration perspective and how the railway approaches link into this.

Planning and Development Control

- 2.4 The adopted Local Plan has a number of policies that are relevant to this issue. Objective C4 of the adopted Hartlepool Local Plan 2006 seeks to encourage a high standard of design and the provision of high quality environment in all developments and particularly those on prominent sites, along the main road and rail corridors and along the coast. The supporting text emphasises that it is important that a good first impression is given to potential investors and tourists and other visitors to the town travelling along the main roads and the railway. Consequently General Environmental Principles Policy GEP7 requires a particularly high standard of design to improve the visual environment along, amongst other locations, the Middlesbrough - Newcastle Railway line. The Local Plan also includes a number of policies relating to untidy sites and environmental improvements and the need to consider the visual appearance of the main approaches including the railway line. In addition, Hartlepool Railway Station is located within the Church Street Conservation Area which is subject to policies which seek to enhance the area (Policy HE1). Adjacent land parcels are subject to a variety of policies and land allocations. Some areas are subject to regulations to enforce planning conditions and other environmental controls.

Local Transport Plan (LTP)

- 2.5 Rail has an increasingly important role to play in tackling congestion and supporting Hartlepool's continued economic growth and prosperity. The combined annual number of rail passenger journeys to/from Hartlepool has increased by 28% between 2001/02 and 2004/05. It is anticipated that the introduction of direct rail services to York and London by Grand Central will increase rail patronage further. Through the LTP, the Council has worked in partnership with Network Rail and Northern Rail to design improved facilities at Hartlepool and Seaton Carew rail stations. The Hartlepool Transport Interchange project will provide a 'multi-modal' interchange adjacent to Hartlepool railway station. A wide range of improvements will be undertaken as part of this project, such as changes to waiting room and ticket office facilities, new toilet facilities, new counter, new retail units and a pedestrian walkway linking the interchange to the railway station. In summary there are two key issues in relation to the LTP, which are improvements to rail facilities and the access to these facilities.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the contents of the report in preparation for the presentations at today's meeting.

CONTACT OFFICER

Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 647
Email: jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's 'Railway Approaches' – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 13.07.06

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

17 August 2006



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: RAILWAY APPROACHES – EVIDENCE FROM THE
AUTHORITY'S PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR
CULTURE, LEISURE AND TRANSPORTATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation has been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into Railway Approaches.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 13 July 2006, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Liveability and Housing and Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation have been invited to attend this meeting to submit evidence to the Forum. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Liveability and Housing is on leave during this meeting but will be invited to a future meeting to give evidence.
- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session with the Authority's Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder, it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- a) What are your roles and responsibilities in relation to railway approaches under the Local Transport Plan?
 - b) What are your views on the development of the new Hartlepool Transport Interchange?
 - c) What are your views on improvements to rail facilities within the town?
 - d) What are your views on access to rail facilities within the town?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.3.

CONTACT OFFICER

Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 647
Email: jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's 'Railway Approaches' – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 13.07.06

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

17 August 2006



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: RAILWAY APPROACHES – FEEDBACK FROM THE
SITE VISIT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the opportunity to share their views on the site visit on 14th August.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 On 14th August Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum undertook a site visit as part of the 'Railway Approaches' Scrutiny inquiry. This visit included a journey north to Seaham on the 9:02 from Hartlepool, returning on the 9:58, which arrives in Middlesbrough at 10:47. Members of the Forum will then return on the 11:32, arriving in Hartlepool at 12:02.
- 2.2 The purpose of this visit is to gain a better understanding of the railway approaches into Hartlepool from both the north and the south. Furthermore, the site visit provides Members with the opportunity to compare the approaches into Hartlepool with those of neighbouring towns.
- 2.3 Consequently, Members may wish to consider the following questions when discussing their findings from the site visit
- (a) What are the key 'problem areas' Members identified during the visit?
 - (b) What impression did Members gain of the railway stations at Hartlepool and Seaton Carew?
 - (c) How did the railway approaches into Hartlepool compare with the approaches into the other towns passed through during the visit?
 - (d) What impression did the railway approaches create on the overall image of the town?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the contents of the report, in particular paragraph 2.3, and use this as a basis for further discussion.

CONTACT OFFICER

Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 647
Email: jonathan.wistow@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's 'Railway Approaches' – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 13.07.06