

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

25 April 2014

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Christopher Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Marjorie James, Robbie Payne, Carl Richardson,
Chris Simmons and Paul Thompson

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii), Councillor Kevin Cranney was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Peter Jackson.

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Chief Executive
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer
Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Wally Stagg, Organisational Development Manager
Deborah Gibbin, Health Improvement Practitioner
Steven Carter, Workplace Health Improvement Specialist
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services

246. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Dawkins, Peter Jackson, Alison Lilley and Ray Martin-Wells.

247. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Rob Cook, Kevin Cranney and Chris Simmons declared a personal interest in minute 251.

248. Minutes

- (i) Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 28 March 2014 – Received with the following amendments:
Minute 227 Rec (viii) – *That a list of all expenditure of the Council to Housing Hartlepool be circulated to the Committee. That this*

information be circulated to Members of the Committee as soon as practicable in a letter by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods under confidential cover due to the commercially sensitive information included.

Minute 236 Rec (d) be amended as noted in bold below, republished and recirculated by the Democratic Services Team:

d) That any remaining funding be allocated to the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department to match-fund the £131k received from the Government to repair local highways **and footpaths**.

- (ii) Minutes of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership held on 7 February 2014 – Received.
- (iii) Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 13 February 2014 – Received.

249. Review of Carers' Leave *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To obtain Finance and Policy Committee ratification of changes to the Carers' Leave arrangements which had been provisionally agreed with the Trade Unions.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background and national conditions of service for employees along with details on carers' leave arrangements within the Council. The report listed the current carers' leave provisions for the Council and schools based on the Single Status Agreement and the provisions contained within the Children and Families Act 2014.

A review of the support provided by the Council was undertaken with the trades unions and Assistant Director (Children) and a provisional agreement had been reached subject to ratification by the Committee. The proposed changes to the occupational carers' leave arrangements were detailed in Table 2 of the report and the Chief Executive advised that the arrangements would apply to Council funded apprentices and that the statutory keeping in Touch arrangements during maternity and adoption leave would apply to long term fostering leave. It was anticipated that the above changes would harmonise the arrangements for Council employees and school support staff on the same conditions of service. The Hartlepool Joint Trade Union Committee supported the proposed changes and its response to the proposals was included within the report. It was highlighted that Corporate Management were also supportive of the recommended

changes.

Decision

- (i) That the provisional agreement reached with the Trade Unions to incorporate into the Single Status Agreement the current occupational carers leave arrangements for employees including Council funded apprentices (excluding teachers) as amended by the proposed changes (as summarised in Table 2 and detailed in Appendix 1) be ratified.
- (ii) That the revised policy be communicated widely.

250. School Nursing Services *(Director of Public Health)*

Type of decision

Key Decision – Test (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Reference PH/03.

Purpose of report

To seek approval from the Finance and Policy Committee to secure a school nursing service, funded through the ring fenced Public Health Grant to commence 1 April 2015.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background to Local Authorities assuming the accountability for the commissioning of school nursing services. Details of the current school nursing provision were included in the report. A new national model for School Nursing had been published by the Department of Health that aimed to reduce health inequalities amongst children and young people and it was intended that the Council's procurement process commence in October 2014 with a view to the successful provider being mobilised to begin operation no later than April 2015. The financial considerations were detailed in the report including the need to commit resources for the procurement of a school nursing service from the 2015/16 ring fenced public health grant. The Director of Public Health indicated that communication with the current provider of the service was ongoing as a service review was undertaken.

Decision

- (i) That the content of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the development of a new service specification during 2014/15 based on the national model and taking into consideration local needs and view from the engagement process was approved.
- (iii) It was agreed to secure a provider for a school nursing service funded by the ring fenced public health grant in 2015/16.

Councillor Rob Cook and Kevin Cranney declared personal interests in the following item – minute 251.

251. Community Pool Category 4 Grant Allocations 2014-15 - Update *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Director of Child and Adult Services and Chief Finance Officer)*

Type of decision

Key Decision – Test (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference RN 8/14.

Purpose of report

To update the Finance and Policy Committee on an opportunity to fund additional Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations through Category 4 of the Community Pool for 2014/15.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report outlined the available budget and the grants approved at the Finance and Policy Committee on 28 March 2014. It was noted that in the current economic climate, the Community and Voluntary Sector were suffering from income funding pressures and required confirmation of any available funding as early as possible to enable them to maintain their service and retention of key staff. Early indications from the latest forecast outturn indicate that the underspend will exceed the minimum forecast of £0.792m. An opportunity had arisen to commit resources from the latest forecast outturn from the Child and Adult Services Adult Social Care budget of £21,143 to the Community Pool Programme for Category 4 to support additional VCS organisations with core costs.

It was proposed that the additional funding will support the Hartlepool Foodbank enabling the full grant allocation originally requested and support the next two highest scoring eligible grant applications. Details of the additional applications recommended for approval were included in confidential Appendix 1. **This item contains exempt information under**

Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para 3). It was highlighted that this additional funding allocated to Category 4 of the Community Pool was a non recurring amount for allocation in 2014/15 only and continued financial support would not be available on an ongoing basis.

In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods confirmed that the majority of the additional allocation to the Hartlepool Foodbank was to be topped up from slippage from other community pool grants as per the decision of the previous Committee meeting. However, to enable the full £10k grant allocation to be met a small amount would be funded from the Adult Social Care budget.

A discussion ensued on the monitoring of how the organisations spend the allocated grant and the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that all grant applications were robustly challenged and monitored on a quarterly basis, which led to a wider debate around Ward Member budgets and monitoring of spend. Ward member budgets were reported to the Neighbourhood forums on a quarterly basis and annually to the Neighbourhood Services Committee. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods advised that further monitoring arrangements could be explored and reported to a future meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee.

A Member highlighted the opportunity of applying for European Funding and suggested that a way of match funding this to support and sustain the community pool should be explored further. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods advised that the Big Lottery had been appointed by the TVU and would be responsible for allocating the European Funding, however government guidance regarding the model of delivery for this funding was yet to be published. There was some concern expressed by a Member that some smaller community groups may miss out on funding opportunities as they may not have the expertise of the larger groups to write successful bids.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that organisations were unable to apply for community pool funding in consecutive years and would confirm this to Members in writing.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods confirmed that in situations where more than one Member supported an organisation's request for funding from their Ward Member Budget, this would be combined and processed as one transaction.

Decision

- (i) That the following allocation of grants in Category 4 were approved:
 - Hartlepool Foodbank - £10,000
 - Age UK Teesside - £9,032
 - Hartlepool Access Group - £10,000
- (ii) That the monitoring the how organisations spend the allocated funding from Ward Member budgets be explored and reported to a future meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee.
- (iii) That a further report be submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee attaching previous update and annual reports submitted to the Neighbourhood Services Committee.
- (iv) That the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods explore further the model of delivery and opportunities available to secure European funding from Tees Valley Unlimited through the Big Lottery for Hartlepool with a view to sustaining the community pool funding.
- (iv) The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods to confirm to Members the arrangements for organisations applying for community pool funding on more than one occasion.

252. Defibrillation Units *(Director of Public Health)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To inform Members of an opportunity for the Council to contribute to reducing deaths in Hartlepool due to sudden cardiac arrest, by installing easy to use defibrillation units at key sites for both staff and members of the public.

To obtain Members' views on the location of the defibrillation units and gain support to help raise awareness and knowledge of the units among Hartlepool residents and Council employees.

A demonstration for Members of the preferred defibrillator had taken place prior to the meeting.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background to the support provided by the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) to install defibrillator units in remote locations and key community sites in the

UK. It had been identified in conjunction with NEAS that Hartlepool Borough Council had a number of sites that could warrant hosting a defibrillator unit and these were identified in the report. It was noted that some Council leisure services sites already had units in place and were checked and replaced as appropriate and funded through departmental budgets. A training schedule would be developed for host sites to include designated first aiders, Members, staff, caretakers and other staff/volunteers however, it was reiterated that anyone on the scene can use the device in an emergency.

The financial implications were detailed in the report and it was noted that the total cost per unit would be £849 plus approximately £100 per year in maintenance costs.

Members were fully supportive of the proposals and requested that wider promotion of the installation and location of these devices be undertaken including through the Council's Hartbeat magazine as the importance of raising awareness was reiterated.

In response to Members' concerns, the Workplace Health Improvement Specialist indicated that the units can be procured with anti-vandal boxes which were operated by a key code provided from the Emergency Services Control Room. However, the Director of Public Health commented that the risk of vandalism needed to be weighed up against the risk of saving a life and this was the opportunity for Members to do something practical in their leadership role for public health within the community.

It was suggested that consideration should be given to the purchase of more of the defibrillator units as and when such additional funding became available.

During the discussions that followed, it was suggested that consideration be given to the location of defibrillator units within the local villages surrounding Hartlepool. This could be done in partnership with the local Parish Councils. In addition, it was suggested that additional defibrillator units be installed where the Council had staff employed such as lifeguards at the local beaches or possibly within refuse collection wagons.

In response to a query from a Member, the Workplace Health Improvement Specialist confirmed that the North East Ambulance Service had produced statistical information on the position of defibrillator units in the north east and the number of times the units had been used. There had also been a number of high profile cases nationally.

Decision

- (i) That resources be identified from the ring-fenced public health grant (circa £10k) to meet the costs of the defibrillator units and ongoing maintenance.

- (ii) That the installation of the defibrillator units be promoted and communicated widely across Hartlepool including through the Council's Hartbeat magazine.
- (iii) That further consideration be given to locating defibrillator units within the local villages surrounding Hartlepool working in partnership with local Parish Councils, at local beaches where lifeguards operated and in places where other Council staff would have access to them such as on refuse collection wagons.
- (iv) That should any additional funding become available, consideration be given to the purchase and installation of more defibrillator units.

253. Hartlepool Borough Council Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy and Procedure *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To provide an update to the Committee on the review of the Council's substance misuse policy and to seek the Committee's support in the adoption of an alcohol and substance misuse policy.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background to the introduction of the Council's substance misuse policy. This policy had now been revised and was attached by way of Appendix and aimed to address any ambiguities and strengthens the testing regime to maintain a robust and comprehensive policy.

A number of issues were considered as part of the review of this policy including alcohol misuse leading to impaired judgement and risk taking and substance misuse which leads to a range of health and social problems and had been linked to crime mainly through acquisitive crime to fund the addiction. The revised policy makes it clear that being under the influence of alcohol or other substance in work time or whilst on Council business was not acceptable. The risks to the Council can be quite significant under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 and further detail around this was included in the report.

The key elements of the revised policy encourages and was supportive of individuals who acknowledge they had an issue and ask for assistance. However, it strengthens the arrangements for testing of an individual following an accident or if there were "grounds to suspect that an employee was impaired" due to the influence of alcohol or other substance.

Discussions had been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team who support the revised policy and the policy had been formally agreed with the trade unions at the Single Table meeting.

In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that the testing of an individual had been instigated several times with employees almost always agreeing to take the test.

Members were supportive of the revised policy as it reiterated the support and help given to the Council's employees to overcome some of the problem they may have.

Decision

That the Committee supported the adoption of the revised Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy and Procedure.

254. Hartlepool Maritime Experience – Lease of Catering Outlets *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the lease of the catering premises at Hartlepool Maritime Experience and also Museum of Hartlepool (the Wingfield Castle) to a new lessee.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background to the operation of the catering arrangements of the HME and associated the function rooms and the Historic Quay Café as well as the Wingfield Castle. The opportunity arose to take a new lease of the catering facilities of both the HME and Wingfield Castle arise and was marketed at the end of 2013. A tender which was considered suitable was received from Johnorr Development Ltd, the terms offered were included in confidential Appendix 1. **This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (paragraph 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.**

It was noted that under the previous arrangements, the caterers also undertook the catering for events on HMS Trincomalee on behalf of the Trincomalee Trust and it was the intention that the new incumbent take on the same role and discussions had therefore taken place with the representatives of the Trust. Subject to references, it was proposed to proceed with a new lease to Johnorr Developments Ltd on the terms outlined in confidential Appendix 1.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods added that the operation of the catering arrangements will be monitored regularly as the operation of the HME and associated catering was key to the success of the Hartlepool Vision.

Decision

That the proposed lease to Johnorr Developments Ltd is progressed.

255. Better Care Fund *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide the Finance and Policy Committee with information regarding the Better Care Fund, including the latest guidance, financial allocations and timescales. The report included the final plan that was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 26 March 2014 for submission by 4 April 2014.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background to the announcement of a £3.8bn pool of funding to promote the integration of health and social care services that support some of our most vulnerable population groups. In December 2013, the North of Tees Partnership Board agreed the local principles for the Better Care Fund (BCF) which were consistent with the principles and aims set out in the planning guidance published on 20 December 2013. The main principles were outlined in the report.

Hartlepool's BCF had been developed in partnership with stakeholders from the Council, CCG, primary care and community services and acute and mental health service providers and the plan templates were attached by way of Appendix.

The next steps including key timescales and milestones were outlined in the report. Further detailed work was underway to confirm the risk sharing and contingency arrangements and a paper outlining these arrangements would be submitted to the Health and Wellbeing Board for approval in April 2014.

The Chief Executive added that this was a different way of working with adult social care and which will bring about a number of changes.

Decision

That the Committee noted the Better Care Fund Plan for Hartlepool.

256. Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To satisfy the requirement of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules with regard to the Finance and Policy Committee:

- Receiving and examining quarterly reports on the outcome of contract letting procedures including those where the lowest/highest price was not payable/receiveable;
- Receiving and examining reports on any exemptions granted to these Contract Procedure Rules.

Issue(s) for consideration

Detailed information for each procurement tender issued since the last quarterly report was attached at Appendix A. Details of the required information in relation to Contract Procedure Rules exemptions granted since the last Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts was also attached at Appendix B.

A table including all the commercial information in respect of the tenders received was attached at confidential Appendix C. **This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) para 3.**

Decision

The contents of the report were noted.

257. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The meeting concluded at 3.01 pm

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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