

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

31 JULY 2014

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

Present:

Councillor Robbie Payne (In the Chair)

Councillors: S Akers-Belcher, Cranney and Dawkins

Also Present: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii) Councillor Ainslie was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Cook

Stephen Catchpole, Managing Director, Tees Valley Unlimited

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration
Tom Britcliffe, Planning Policy Team Leader
Joanne Burnley, Principal Environmental Health Officer
Maggie Heaps, Adult Education Coordinator
Antony Steinberg, Economic Regeneration Manager
Dale Clark, Estates and Regeneration Manager
Rob Smith, Senior Regeneration Officer
Sylvia Pinkney, Public Protection Manager
Martin Spaldin, Empty Homes Officer
David Worthington, Head of Culture and Information
Denise Wimpenny, Democratic Services Team

7. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cook and Morris.

8. Declarations of Interest

None.

9. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2014

Received.

10. Progress on Bombardment Memorial (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

Type of decision

Non-Key Decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to advise Members on progress of the Bombardment Memorial and to lay out the timetable for the completion of the project. The report also requested that Members select an option from the three available.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Members were provided with background information as well as the description and costs of the proposed memorial as detailed in the report. Public consultation had taken place in relation to the following three options and was attended by 70-80 people:-

Option 1 – Flat top with a height of 3.375 metres

Option 2 – Tapered top with height of 2.55 metres

Option 3 – Lighthouse-style top with height of 3.35 metres

Whilst option 3 was the most popular, more people expressed a preference for a version of the Seaham Harbour Memorial but featuring a sailor and the child from the Clark painting.

In the discussion that followed a member of the public, who was invited to speak, raised queries in relation to the position of the memorial and the potential planning implications on a neighbouring property. The Chair advised that any planning issues would be a matter for the Planning Committee to consider.

In response to the Committee's support for a version of the Seaham Harbour Memorial in Hartlepool, the Assistant Director advised that there was insufficient funding available for a memorial of this type and the timescales for delivery of such a project was in the region of 18 months to 2 years. Following further discussion Members expressed a preference for Option 3 to include an inscription "The Hartlepoons".

Decision

That option 3, comprising a lighthouse-style top with a height of 3.35 metres be approved to include an inscription "The Hartlepoons".

11. Tees Valley Jobs and Investment Scheme (TVJIS) (Assistant Director, Regeneration)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

The report updated Members on the progress of the Tees Valley Jobs and Investment Scheme (TVJIS) since the scheme was last reported to the Committee on the 10th April 2014.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Economic Regeneration Manager reported on the background to the (TVJIS) and provided an update since the scheme was last reported to Committee. To access the scheme all companies had to be based in the Tees Valley and not from the public sector. 404 applications had been received up to 13 June of which 109 had either been withdrawn or identified as not meeting the criteria and therefore deemed ineligible for grant funding.

The report provided details of approved applications by local authority area and sector as well as applications in the pipeline. In summary Hartlepool had achieved 95 new jobs representing 19.8% of all jobs created to date. With regard to pipeline projects Hartlepool had a projected 87 new jobs representing a 25.6% share of the estimated new jobs.

The Managing Director of Tees Valley Unlimited commented on the benefits of the scheme for the area and hoped that additional revenue would be available in 16/17. It was noted that discussions had commenced to determine what other schemes should be considered for 16/17. The need to continue to promote the scheme to local businesses was emphasised including the benefits of the Chair and Vice-Chairs involvement in this process.

The Chair welcomed the scheme and requested that the Committee's thanks be expressed to everyone involved in the process.

Decision

That the report be noted, in particular Hartlepool's successful engagement with the programme and the Council would continue to promote the scheme to local SMEs.

12. Revision to the Local Development Scheme (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

To seek approval for a revision to the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) which was necessary to take account of the withdrawal of the submitted Local Plan and the recently agreed timetable for delivering a new Local Plan. It also updated the LDS regarding the planning system at the national level and changing circumstances locally.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Prior to consideration of this item of business, the Chair announced that this would be the last meeting of the Planning Policy Team Leader who was leaving the authority and took the opportunity to convey his thanks and very best wishes on behalf of the Committee to Tom for his hard work and commitment over the years and to wish him a long and happy career in his new post.

The Planning Policy Team Leader reported on the background to the requirement of the Local Authority to have an up to date Local Development Scheme. The fundamental reason for reviewing and revising the LDS this time was as a result of a Council decision to withdraw the submitted Local Plan and begin work on a new Local Plan. The Regeneration Services Committee had agreed a timetable for delivery of the new Local Plan and the LDS reflected this timescale. Approval was sought to the revised LDS, attached at Appendix 1, which reflected the proposed changes.

Decision

That the amendments to the Local Development Scheme, as reported, be approved.

13. Adult Education Fees (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

Type of decision

Key Decision - Key test (i) and (ii). Forward Plan Reference No. RN16/14.

Purpose of report

To consider the level of Adult Education fees for the academic year 1st August 2014 to 31st July 2015.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Members were referred to the current fee schedule for Adult Education courses 2013/14 and proposed policy and level of fees for 14/15, copies of which were attached as appendices to the report. Adult Education courses

fell into two categories, Adult Skills courses and Community Learning. At present funding for these different types of courses was set at different levels, details of which were set out in the report. Because of the desire to encourage participation in adult learning and a combination of low fees and extensive remission of fees had meant that overall income for Adult Education courses had been relatively low.

With regard to future fees, the report set out a number of options in terms of skills courses, community learning, courses which attracted no fee, level of remitted fee, fee remission eligibility and exam fees.

A Member highlighted that whilst a small increase was proposed, the fees were more competitive than neighbouring authorities and suggested that this information should be conveyed to local people.

The Assistant Director added that a 15% cut in funding was anticipated by the Skills Funding Agency for the next academic year.

Decision

The Committee approved the following: -

1. That Adult Skills courses increase by 10p per hour to £111 for a 60 hour course which equated to £1.85 per hour.
2. That Community Learning courses increase by 10p per hour to £156 for a 60 hour course which equated to £2.60 per hour.
3. That no course fees should be charged to students entitled under the SFA guidance on remitted fees.
4. That the enhanced fee remission policy should be maintained to encourage participation. The full proposed policy and level of fees as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
5. That the remitted fee should remain at current levels i.e. £10 for Skills courses and £15 for Community Learning courses;
6. That exam fees continue to be included in the course fees.
7. That courses which were not supported through SFA funding or other income streams be delivered at the Full Cost rate;
8. That the service continue to operate the advanced learning loans process in line with the government regulations.

14. Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2014/15 (*Director of Public Health*)

Type of decision

Non-Key Decision.

Purpose of report

To consider the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2014/15.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Public Protection Manager reported that the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2014/2015, set out as an appendix to the report, detailed the Service priorities for 2014/15 and highlighted how the priorities would be addressed. Over the past year the number of four and five star rated food premises had increased and the number of two star or lower rated premises had fallen. Details of the various initiatives that the team planned to carry out during 14/15 were provided and included a Takeaways Project, Campylobacter Awareness Campaign, Allergy Awareness Campaign and a Hand Washing Campaign.

The Committee welcomed the Takeaways Project and acknowledged the impact that access to unhealthy food was having on the rising rates of obesity and health inequalities. In response to a request for clarification, Members were provided with the proposed timescales for exploring the use of regulatory and planning measures to address the proliferation of hot food takeaway outlets. The Assistant Director outlined the potential planning difficulties in utilising such an approach.

Decision

That the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2014/15 be approved.

15. Free Junior Swim Initiative – Summer 2014 (*Director of Public Health*)

Type of decision

Non-Key Decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report was to inform and update Members with details of the proposed free junior (under 16's) swim initiative which would run on weekdays from Monday 4th August to Friday 29th August 2014, excluding the August Bank Holiday, Monday 25th August.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Director of Public Health reported that following the success of the 2013 free swim scheme and the request of Members it was proposed to run a similar initiative this summer during the school holidays. Following

feedback from customers at the time of the 2013 scheme it was proposed to adjust the timing of the swimming sessions slightly. Free transport would again be provided, details of which were set out at Appendix 1.

The estimated cost of the scheme was £27k, details of which were provided as well as how the overall cost of the scheme would be funded.

Decision

1. That the report be noted and the detail of the proposed free swimming initiative for the summer of 2014 be approved.
2. That it be noted that as part of the Budget and Policy Framework that the costs of the free swims would be funded from 2014/15 outturn as a fallback position, but only in the event that the Domes proceeds were not received within the financial year.

16. Regeneration of Church Street – Creative Industries Strategy *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non-Key Decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to inform the Committee of the Creative Industries Strategy that had been developed for the Church Street area of Hartlepool with support from the Local Government Associations (LGA's) Economic Growth Adviser Programme. The Committee was requested to endorse the strategy.

The report also provided details of a bid to the Coastal Communities Fund as a result of the strategy which aimed to nurture and develop new business start-ups and improve the provision of specialist support and advice for the creative industries sector in Hartlepool.

The report also provided an update on the application to the Coastal Communities Fund for the Hartlepool STEM Centre.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report set out the background to the development of the Creative Industries Strategy, attached at Appendix 1. The Strategy would help to guide the Hartlepool Regeneration Masterplan which would set out a site specific vision for the Innovation and Skills Quarter. A Creative Cluster Partnership Group had been established to take ownership of the Strategy and the Strategy had enabled a bid to be submitted to the Coastal Communities Fund in order to start to deliver the action plan.

An application had previously been submitted to an earlier round of the Coastal Communities Fund for the Hartlepool STEM Centre. The

application had been invited to the second stage, however, the project could not meet the timescales outlined in the CCF conditions as only projects that could immediately start on site were able to continue with the application process. The Coastal Communities Fund had been supportive of the project and had encouraged the Council to resubmit an application to a future funding round once further development work had been completed.

A Member queried what skills based activities were planned to encourage movement to the area. The Assistant Director referred to the already established strong cluster of creative industry based activities in the Church Street vicinity and the aim to retain and attract graduates from outside the area to utilise their skills and potentially set up businesses in the area. Examples of where this approach had been successful were shared with the Committee.

The Assistant Director responded to issues raised by Members in relation to the impact of the proposals on footfall, the night time economy and the potential increase in empty units. It was noted that a future report would be submitted to Members which would include proposals for maximising occupation of business units. Some concerns were raised in relation to the condition of certain buildings in Church Street and the need to consider and address such issues at the planning stage was highlighted. The Committee welcomed the strategy and the benefits for the town.

Decision

1. That the report be noted and the Hartlepool Creative Industries Strategy as a Regeneration Strategy for Church Street be approved and adopted.
2. That officers explore funding opportunities and develop projects relating to the findings of the Creative Industries Strategy.
3. That the submission of bid to round three of the Coastal Communities Fund for the Hartlepool Creative Industries project, including the potential requirement for match funding be noted.
4. That the update on the Hartlepool STEM Centre be noted.

17. Mobile Library Service Review (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

Type of decision

Non-Key Decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to advise Members of the procurement options for a replacement Mobile Library vehicle.

The report informed the Committee of the timeframe for the procurement of a replacement public access vehicle and sought approval for the procurement of a replacement vehicle/s.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Head of Culture and Information presented the report which set out the procurement options for a replacement Mobile Library vehicle following the Library Service Review report of 5 December 2013. Whilst approval had been given to dispose of the current mobile vehicle, it was considered that the vehicle was capable of providing an interim service until a new vehicle was procured. Members were referred to the financial considerations of the proposals as detailed in the report.

Decision

1. That the purchase of a public access vehicle and the continuation of an interim service from the current Mobile Library vehicle be approved.
2. That the lease of an additional delivery vehicle to enable the all aspects of library outreach to be achieved as outlined in the original Library Service Review of the 5th December 2013 be approved.
3. That any associated budget pressures be addressed within Departmental Resources.

**18. Updated Planning Policy Framework Justification
May 2014** *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

To update the Committee on the significant change to the five year land supply situation in the Borough.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided background information to the recent review of the 5 year land supply. In the last financial year alone the Council had granted permission for 1,347 new dwellings. This new information would form part of the emerging evidence base for the new Local Plan. The 5 year land supply had been recalculated and had significantly improved from the 3.5 year supply reported in the November 2013 document and Hartlepool now had a 4.6 year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The Planning Policy Framework Justification had been updated to reflect the factual changes, a copy of which was attached as an appendix to the report.

Decision

That the report be noted.

19. Hartlepool Regeneration Masterplan Appointment (Assistant Director, Regeneration)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to inform the Committee of the appointment of GVA to work alongside the Council to develop the Hartlepool Regeneration Masterplan.

The report outlined the background to the Masterplan, the project timetable and an overview of the proposed consultation methods.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Estates and Regeneration Manager presented the report which outlined the background to the recent launch of the Hartlepool Vision and the Hartlepool Regeneration Masterplan. Following an extensive tender exercise, GVA had been selected as the company to develop the Masterplan. The Masterplan would help to inform the new Local Plan. A detailed project timetable had been prepared for the development of the Masterplan, attached as an Appendix to the report.

Consultation would form a key component of the Masterplan, details of which were included in the report. Wider public consultation would be held on the week beginning 4 August and would involve a drop-in session in Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.

With regard to the public consultation exercise scheduled for 4 August and, given that this was the peak summer holiday period, a Member suggested that further public consultation be undertaken in September or October.

Decision

That the report be noted.

20. Quarterly Housing Report January to March 2013/14 (Assistant Director, Regeneration)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

To update the Committee about progress across key areas of the Housing Service relating to empty homes, enforcement activity, Selective Licensing, Disabled Facilities Grants, housing allocations, the impacts of Welfare Reform, housing advice and homelessness prevention and Warm up North during the fourth quarter of 2013/14. The report also summarised the

improvements carried out to homes in private ownership through financial assistance over the course of the year and outlined future activities and development of the service.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Principal Environmental Health Officer provided an update on progress and benchmarking across key areas of the Housing Service during Quarter 4, 2013/14 as well as an update since the last report presented to the Regeneration Services Committee on 20 March 2014. The report covered the following key areas:-

- Empty homes update including enforcement activity and the empty homes incentive scheme overview
- Enforcement update including Enforcement Team service requests
- Selective licensing update including selective licensing activity
- Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) benchmarking data
- Allocations summary including lettings information
- Impacts of Welfare Reform
- Housing advice and homelessness prevention activity
- Housing reports on forward plan

Following presentation of the report, A Member complimented the proactive work of the Environmental and Enforcement Teams in addressing issues relating to a property in disrepair which had resulted in positive feedback from a neighbouring resident. The Chair requested that the Committee's personal thanks be conveyed to the staff.

Decision

That the report be noted.

21. Culture and Information Services Progress Report – January – March 2014 (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report was to inform and update members on the work of the Culture and Information Services for the period 1st January – 31st March 2014 and end of year figures for 2013/14.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report outlined the work of the Culture and Information Services across the Borough. These services were provided at venues including: Burbank Community Centre; Central Library; Hartlepool Art Gallery; Hartlepool Maritime Experience; Headland Library; Museum of Hartlepool; Owton Manor Community Centre and Library; Seaton Community Centre; Seaton Library; Masefield Centre; Town Hall Theatre and Throston Library.

The report highlighted some of the key achievements and work streams in terms of services provided, progress made over the last three months and usage figures. These included library led activities, library enquiries, arts and outreach work, events as well as museum and library collections.

With regard to access to library and community centre facilities, the Chair was pleased to note the increase in usage figures for the reporting period.

Decision

That the report be noted.

22. Sport and Physical Activity Team – Six Monthly Progress Report (*Director of Public Health*)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to inform and update Members on the work of the Sport and Physical Activity Team which was part of Hartlepool Borough Council's Sport and Recreation Service. This area of work included Summerhill Outdoor Activity Centre and Country Park, the Outdoor Activities Service, GP Referral Programme, Learn to Swim (including Primary School Lessons) and all targeted work aimed at increasing participation in Sport and Physical Activity.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided background information on the aims and work of the Sport and Physical Activity Team. Details of key areas of work and progress made over the past 6 months were provided and included Summerhill Outdoor Activity Centre and Country Park, the Outdoor Activities Service, GP Referral Programme, Learn to Swim (including Primary School Lessons) and all targeted work aimed at increasing participation in Sport and Physical Activity. The service continued to sustain and explore new opportunities for partnerships and access to external funding and resources to deliver high quality services.

The Committee welcomed the update acknowledging the ongoing contribution to the Council's strategic priorities and health and wellbeing agenda.

Decision

That the report be noted.

23. Sport and Recreation Service – Outcome of Grant Funding Bids, Brierton Third Generation Pitch and Service Accreditation *(Director of Public Health)*

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to inform and update Committee on three particular areas of recent work for the Sport and Recreation service.

The first area concerned the outcome of two recent grant applications made to Sport England for new sport and physical activity initiatives; one on a Tees Valley partnership basis to the 'Inclusive Sports Fund' and the other that the service submitted to the 'Community Sports Activation Fund'.

The second area related to the progress of the development of the new third generation pitch at Brierton Community Sports Centre which had been largely funded by the Football Foundation.

The final area concerned the outcomes of quality assurance inspections undertaken by national service accreditation providers across the Sport and Recreation service area.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Director of Public Health reported that the grant application submitted by Tees Valley County Sports Partnership to the Inclusive Sports Fund "Insport" to increase disability sport participation was unfortunately unsuccessful. However, the Director was pleased to report that the other grant application to Sport England Community Sports Activation Fund, details of which were set out in the report, was on this occasion successful and would provide a grant of £192,727 towards a three year programme with an overall project value of £334,327.

The official launch of the new third generation pitch at Brierton Community Sports Centre was scheduled for 9 August 2014.

Members were referred to the outcomes of quality assurance inspections undertaken by the national service accreditation providers where leisure centres across the town had been rated "good" and the approach to Sports Development had received an "excellent" rating. The report included an update on the outcomes of a number of recent/pending inspections.

The Chair requested that all Members of this Committee and Ward Members be invited to the launch of the new third generation pitch at Brierton Community Sports Centre.

Decision

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That all Members of this Committee and Ward Members be invited to the official launch of the new third generation pitch at Brierton Community Sports Centre.

24. Estates Excellence Initiative (*Director of Public Health*)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report was to provide the Committee with information regarding the Hartlepool Estates Excellence initiative.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided background information in relation to the Estates Excellence Initiative. The Initiative provided support to local business raising awareness to help businesses identify and manage their health and safety risks and protect their employees. Officers had identified a selection of the larger Longhill and Sandgate Industrial Estate area, consisting of approximately 90 businesses.

There had been a great deal of support for the initiative among both public health and private sector partners, details of which were included in the report. The initiative had been launched on 14 April 2014 and visiting officers from the Council and partner agencies had carried out 67 promotional visits during the first week of the initiative. It had identified that the local authority had responsibility for health and safety enforcement in 49% of the businesses on the estate, with the remainder being HSE enforced. The initiative had forged closer links with partner organisations. A detailed evaluation report of the initiative was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Decision

That the report be noted.

25. Quarterly Update Report for Public Protection (*Director of Public Health*)

Type of decision

The report was for the Committee's information only.

Purpose of report

To update the Regeneration Services Committee on performance and progress across key areas of the Public Protection service.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Public Protection Manager gave an update on performance and an outline of the work undertaken during 13/14 by the Commercial Services, Environmental Protection and Trading Standards and Licensing teams in the Public Protection service as detailed in the report. Members were referred to the outcome of a project undertaken in relation to fake identification cards where the results were most concerning. Examples of fake ID cards that the team had purchased online were circulated at the meeting for Members' information.

In the discussion that followed a query was raised in relation to the powers available to the Council to address the problem of fake IDs. In response, Members were advised that given that several of the internet sites used to purchase these cards were based overseas, stopping them or closing them down was virtually impossible. Instead, officers would be working closely on awareness raising with shopkeepers to ensure that they could identify genuine proof of age cards and advise on the course of action. A Member shared with the Committee instances where fake money had been uncovered and highlighted the need to inform event organisers of these issues and the need for extra vigilance in this regard.

Decision

That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted.

26. 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.

None.

27. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 28 – Proposed Compulsory Purchase of Empty Residential Dwelling – Property 003 – 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 (para. 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

- 28. Proposed Compulsory Purchase of Empty Residential Dwelling – Property 003** (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*) 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 (para. 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

Type of decision

Key Decision - test (i) – Forward Plan Reference Number RN 17/14.

Purpose of report

To update the Committee on progress in relation to returning long term empty properties back into use and to seek approval for the proposed Compulsory Purchase of properties under Section 17, Housing Act 1985.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Details were set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

The decision was set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 11.15 am

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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