

# **REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

18 DECEMBER 2014

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

Councillor Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Stephen Akers-Belcher and Rob Cook.

Also Present: Councillor Alan Clark as substitute for Councillor Robbie Payne in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration  
Antony Steinberg, Economic Regeneration Manager  
David Worthington, Head of Culture and Information  
Patrick Wilson, Employment Development Officer  
Alyson Carr, Head of Finance (Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)  
Dale Clarke, Estates and Assets Manager  
Rob Smith, Senior Regeneration Officer  
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **80. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Keith Dawkins, Pamela Hargreaves, George Morris and Robbie Payne.

### **81. Declarations of Interest**

None were declared at the commencement of the meeting.

### **82. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2014**

Received.

### **83. Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment** (Assistant Director, Regeneration)

#### **Type of decision**

Non Key Decision.

#### **Purpose of report**

The report is to update the Committee on the findings of the Hartlepool Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and to endorse the findings of the GTAA as part of the emerging Local Plan evidence base.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Assistant Director, Regeneration reported that the submitted GTAA would replace the existing 2009 Tees Valley GTAA which looked at need across the sub-region over the period 2007 to 2021. The Tees Valley GTAA estimated a total need for 145 additional pitches in the Tees Valley with 6 (six) pitches identified for Hartlepool.

In meeting the requirements of the national policy the Council appointed independent planning consultants Renaissance Research Ltd to carry out the Hartlepool GTAA. The GTAA found a hypothetical need for 5 (five) Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Hartlepool between 2016 and 2031. In theory, demand for four of those pitches was likely to occur over the next five years, with the remaining pitch being required at some time in the following five year period. The assessment found that there was no requirement to carry out an analysis of plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople because none were living in Hartlepool.

The GTAA report clarified the difference between 'need' and 'demand'. In the context of this study, need was simply a normative prediction of the accommodation provision potentially required in future, based on what was known about the local Gypsy and Traveller community today. Therefore, need was always hypothetical, being based on the theoretical assumptions and methods used to calculate it. Demand on the other hand was actual; it occurred when hypothetical/theoretical need was expressed by someone actually asking for a particular service or (in the case of this study) form of accommodation.

The need for pitches that had been identified over the next five years appeared to come from two sources: young men with a Gypsy and Traveller heritage setting up home for the first time whose parents were living in bricks and mortar housing, and people in late middle age who had been living in bricks and mortar housing for some time whilst retaining an intention to return to living on a site.

The Assistant Director, Regeneration stated that the report concluded that no actual demand to live on a dedicated site was ever likely to be forthcoming. Therefore, the recommendation was that the Council commit to proactively support and positively intervene with any member of the

Gypsy and Traveller community needing re-housing to explore their housing options, and does not seek to provide a dedicated site for Gypsy and Travellers in the new Local Plan.

In light of the previous GTAA, Members sought assurance that the new document would be sufficient for the new Local Plan. The Assistant Director, Regeneration commented that the various policies that formed the plan had to be evidence based. In officers view the new GTAA was solid evidence for the recommendation now proposed. However, when the Local Plan went forward for examination by a Planning Inspector, much may depend on their opinion. There was also still the potential for the government to change their guidance as they had done with the initial GTAA.

#### **Decision**

That the findings of the Hartlepool Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) be noted and that the findings of the GTAA as part of the emerging Local Plan evidence base be endorsed.

### **84. Heritage Lottery Fund: Townscape Heritage Programme and Heritage Enterprise Scheme** *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non Key Decision.

#### **Purpose of report**

The Purpose of the report was to inform the Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Programme and Heritage Enterprise Scheme. The opportunities from the Heritage Lottery Fund could help to deliver the regeneration of Church Street.

The report sought permission to develop and submit applications to both the Townscape Heritage Programme and Heritage Enterprise Scheme to support the regeneration of Church Street. Permission was also sought to explore match funding opportunities.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Senior Regeneration Officer reported that the regeneration of Church Street and the surrounding area, which form the Innovation and Skills Quarter, had been identified by the Council and other stakeholders as a key priority. The heritage and architecture of Church Street provided the character upon which to develop a distinct quarter of the town.

The development of a new Campus for Cleveland College of Art and Design on the Council's current Lynn Street Depot site would provide a catalyst for economic growth and would anchor the eastern end of the street. Having students who were resident and learning in the area would increase footfall which would help to introduce more activity and spending

power within the area. The College's expansion plans were based upon attracting students from outside of the area and it was important to create the conditions to support this aim.

The Townscape Heritage Programme was designed to improve the built historic environment of conservation areas in need of investment. This provided an opportunity to fund improvements to the public realm and buildings within Church Street. Grants were available from £100,000 to £2 million through a two stage application process. The Townscape Heritage Programme is for schemes that make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities.

The Heritage Lottery Fund also had a scheme that sought to achieve economic growth by investing in heritage. It was primarily for enterprising community organisations to help them rescue neglected historic buildings and sites and return them to a viable productive use. The programme was open to applications from local authorities and not-for profit organisations or partnerships led by not-for-profit organisations.

Both schemes would require match funding of between 5% to 10%. Both schemes could also involve the Heritage Apprenticeship Scheme.

Members supported the proposals to bid for funds under both schemes, though did express some concern that the change of Church Street to a more daytime focussed economy may impact on other areas such as the Marina as the night-time economy refocused there. The Assistant Director, Regeneration commented that there was no intention to push the night-time economy to any specific area. Church Street itself was calling out for a change in its use towards a much more daytime focussed economy. The plan would be targeted towards more employment related activities.

A Member considered that the Council should be moving towards buying some of the vacant properties in Church Street to convert them to new uses in line with the masterplan proposals. The Assistant Director, Regeneration commented that the Council did want to move to being more proactive and would bring a report on a strategy for redeveloping property in line with the masterplan proposals.

### **Decision**

1. That applications be developed and submitted to the Townscape Heritage Programme and Heritage Enterprise Scheme to support the regeneration of Church Street and the development of the Innovation and Skills Quarter.
2. That match funding opportunities are explored to support applications to the Townscape Heritage Programme and Heritage Enterprise Scheme.
3. That £355,000 of the approved regeneration budget be set aside as match funding for any successful Heritage Lottery Fund applications.

In advance of the following report Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher declared a personal interest in the following item.

**85. Scoping Of Community Centres Review 2015** (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

**Type of decision**

Non Key Decision.

**Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to establish the scope of the Council's community centre's review relating to Owton Manor, Burbank and Rift House Community Centres.

**Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Head of Culture and Information reported that at the meeting on the 24 July 2014, Members were informed of the proposed Regeneration Division savings for 2015/16. It was agreed that community centre closures would not form part of the proposed savings for 2015/2016; however, some staffing costs from the Community Resources team had been identified as a saving in 2015/2016. It has also been agreed that a review of the Council's Community Centres should be undertaken in anticipation of the need for future savings in 2016/17. The outcome of the review would be implemented in 2016/17. The report set out the proposed scope of the review, the consultation and the associated risks and considerations.

In relation to the potential for community asset transfers, Members expressed concern at the potential of Owton Manor Community Centre transferring under such an arrangement. It was commented that it was one of the better used centres and the Assistant Director, Regeneration indicated that the aim was to make all the centres more sustainable.

**Decision**

That the proposed scope of the community centre review as reported be approved.

**86. Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30th September 2014** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Director of Public Health and Chief Finance Officer*)

**Type of decision**

For information.

**Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to inform Members of the 2014/15 Forecast General Fund Outturn, 2014/15 Capital Programme Monitoring and provide details for the specific budget areas that the Committee is responsible for.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Head of Finance reported that the latest report submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014 advised Members that there will be an overall underspend in the current year. This position reflects 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 2014/15 budget as these items were not known at the time.

The favourable outturn variance reported (before creation of reserves) reflected increased planning income, a managed underspend on the depot (deferred repairs expenditure) and an underspend on the Coastal Protection budget arising as a result of major capital investments. It was proposed to create a reserve to part fund the relocation of the Lynn Street Depot to enable Cleveland College of Art and Design to build on this site.

The report also included details of the Public Health budget that fell within the Committee's remit together with details of the capital expenditure to date.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **87. Economic Regeneration Quarterly Update** *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To update Members on the work of the Economic Regeneration Team (ERT).

### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Economic Regeneration Manager updated the Committee on the key activities undertaken by the Economic Regeneration Team (ERT). The report covered the over-arching activity of the team, the activity of the Business Support Team, including: Worksmart, Managed Workspace, Industrial Estates, Grant Support and Small Business Saturday. The report included details of the Hartlepool Working Solutions, Hartlepool Youth Investment Project, Live Work Based Enterprise and Familywise projects.

Members welcomed the recent reduction in youth unemployment statistics for the town. The Economic Regeneration Manager commented that youth unemployment remained a key priority as the figures were still high.

A Member commented that they understood there had been the potential

for a new forge business in the town but this had been withdrawn. There seemed to be a great emphasis on new businesses at Queen's Meadow to the detriment of other industrial areas. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods commented that with Enterprise Zone status, there would be some emphasis on that site for new businesses, but this was a common issue with all the enterprise zones in other areas also. The Economic Regeneration Manager highlighted that a draft terms of reference had just been completed that looking at securing EU funding to undertake improvements to existing industrial areas including the Southern Business Zone (Brenda Road).

A Member commented on the new ownership of Hartlepool United and questioned if the Mill House Masterplan would now be back on the agenda. The Assistant Director, Regeneration indicated that the Mill House plan had never been off the agenda and would be raised with the new owners. It was understood that the new owners may be interested in acquiring the freehold of the Victoria Ground and informal discussions would be held with them if they came forward with a reasonable proposal.

#### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

### **88. Estates and Regeneration Update Report - July–December 2014** *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

#### **Type of decision**

For information.

#### **Purpose of report**

To update the Committee on progress across key areas of the Estates and Regeneration Section relating to capital receipts and property management together with progress in relation to the masterplan, other regeneration initiatives and capital investment and funding bids.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Estates and Assets Manager updated Members on progress on the Seaton Masterplan, the Hartlepool Masterplan, the Local Growth Fund, the Burbank Street bungalows development, the Creative Industries Strategy and the planning application for Friarage Manor House. The report also updated the Committee on capital receipts, acquisitions, non-operational property and capital investment.

Members welcomed the capital investment in schools through the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Priority Schools Buildings Programme. A Member questioned how the sale of land at the Brierton site for housing and how that would affect the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at Brierton. The Estates and Assets Manager indicated that the sale of the land was linked to the funding for the PRU improvements. Members also commented on the potential for a new PRU. The Director stated that this had been an

aspiration voiced by some Members of the Children's Services Committee but at this time investment was based on the existing site.

A Member referred to issues surrounding an area of land near Rossmere Way / Dumfries Road. The Estates and Assets Manager indicated that he was aware of the issues and action was being taken against those who encroached onto the land as the potential of it being released for development was being examined.

**Decision**

That the report be noted.

**89. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

None.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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