

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

16 February 2015

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

Present:

Councillor: Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jim Ainslie, Allan Barclay, Keith Dawkins, Steve Gibbon, Peter Jackson and Brenda Loynes

Also Present: Councillors Kelly Atkinson, Steve Thomas, Paul Thompson and David Riddle

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Alyson Carr, Head of Finance, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

61. Apologies for Absence

None.

62. Declarations of Interest

None at this point in the meeting. However, an interest was declared by the Chair later in the meeting (Minute 67 refers)

63. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2015

Received.

64. Fulthorpe Avenue Verge Tarmacking – Update Report *(Assistant Director Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To advise the Committee of further consultation undertaken, following the report to Committee in October 2014, which outlined a proposed scheme to convert a grass verge in Fulthorpe Avenue to tarmac.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the decision taken by this Committee in October 2014 that further options be explored in relation to the proposal to convert a grass verge in Fulthorpe Avenue to tarmac. A proposal had been developed to extend the existing lay-by at the front of the shops with the bus stop moved forward and a loading bay created closest to the shops for deliveries.

Consultation had taken place with the shops, with particular regard to the Nisa shop, given that the lay-by was located directly outside. Nisa responded that they did not wish to see the bus stop moved further away from their premises, the reasons for which were included in the report. They were, however, sympathetic to the issues in Fulthorpe Avenue and had given a commitment to use smaller wagons for deliveries which should prevent damage to the grass verge. A letter had been sent to Nisa seeking a commitment in writing and a response was currently awaited.

A resident who was in attendance at the meeting and invited to speak raised concerns in relation to the environmental and drainage issues of converting grass verges to tarmac. Members were referred to examples where tarmacking grass verges had contributed to flash flooding and photographs were shared with the Committee in this regard.

Discussion ensued in relation to the reasons for potential flooding issues in the town. A Member referred to similar access problems in another area of the town and whilst it was acknowledged that the commitment from Nisa to use smaller delivery vans may address part of the problem, disappointment was expressed that the parking problems had not been considered in the report. Clarification was sought in terms of how this issue would be monitored. The Assistant Director advised that there was an option to utilise the camera car to monitor the situation as well as work closely with shop owners. The timescales for a response from Nisa were considered and the Chair emphasised the importance of this commitment and that a response from Nisa was required within 7 days of the date of this meeting. Following further debate the Committee requested that a feedback report in relation to the monitoring process be presented to this Committee in three months time.

Decision

- (i) That the commitment from Nisa be noted and followed up as necessary.
- (ii) That the issue be monitored and the findings be presented to this Committee in three months time to consider any subsequent damage to the grass verge, resulting from delivery vehicles and consider any enforcement action.

65. **Warrior Drive Bus Shelter Request** (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To update on the report to the Committee meeting of 27 October, giving further consultation details relating to the possibility of installing a bus shelter at an existing bus stop in Warrior Drive (south-west bound), adjacent to 1 and 9 Courageous Close (as shown at **Appendix 1**).

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information to the request via a Ward Councillor, on behalf of a local resident, and the request that further information be sought into the usage of the existing bus stop. Whilst the initial consultation showed 6 in favour and 4 against the shelter, the residents who would have the shelter closest to their homes were against the proposal.

As requested, the views of Stagecoach had been sought which indicated that very few passengers were picked up from this stop at one time and it was not felt that a shelter was warranted. The Council's Transport Champions Group met in early January and, again the consensus was that this was not a greatly used bus stop.

A Ward Member had provided further information in respect of bus stop usage, a copy of which was tabled at the meeting. The Ward Member, who was in attendance at the meeting was invited to address the Committee. The Ward Member spoke in support of a shelter and highlighted the outcome of the initial consultation of 6 residents in favour of a bus shelter and 4 against. Statistical information in terms of usage was also referred to

from personal observations.

Another Ward Member, who was in attendance, was also in favour of a shelter and emphasised the need to consider the outcome of the consultation which revealed support for a shelter. Concerns were raised that the reasons for the recommendations included reference to anti-social behaviour and damage to property in the past and concerns were also raised that there was no evidence base to support this suggestion. In response, it was reported that the recommendations had also been made on the basis of feedback from bus operators and the Transport Champions Group. The Committee further debated the Ward Members' comments and further information was considered in terms of which respondents were in favour and which respondents were against. Having considered the information provided and the views of Ward Members the majority of Members were against the installation of a shelter.

Decision

That following the consultation exercise, which showed that those residents closest to the bus stop were against the proposal and the information provided, the request for installation of a bus shelter at Warrior Drive was refused.

66. Seaton Lane Bus Shelters Request (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report the result of a recent consultation exercise relating to the possibility of installing 2 bus shelters, at existing bus stops in Seaton Lane, 1 eastbound opposite 61 to 63, and 1 westbound, adjacent 51 to 55 (as shown at Appendix 1)

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported that following a request via a Ward Councillor, on behalf of a local resident to install 2 bus shelters at existing bus stop locations in Seaton Lane, as set out at Appendix 1, a consultation exercise had been undertaken with residents, details of which were included in the report. The outcome result showed 22 in favour and 7

against the proposal with 4 of the 7 from Seaton Lane residents. Objections included comments that the bus stops were not used frequently enough to justify the cost, safety concerns at night and the potential for anti-social behaviour.

The views of Stagecoach and the Council's Transport Champions Group had been sought and the general consensus was that they were not particularly well used bus stops and it was not felt that shelters were warranted.

The potential cost of the scheme would be approximately £6,000 and would be funded from the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements Project.

A member of the public, who was invited to speak, was against the installation of a shelter on the basis of low demand and raised concerns that the shelter may create visibility issues when exiting Seaton Lane. These comments were supported by a Ward Member in attendance.

Decision

That the request for installation of 2 bus shelters at Seaton Lane be refused.

67. Council Plan 2015/16 – Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department Proposals *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

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 2015/16 Council Plan that fell under the remit of the Committee for the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported on the proposals included in the 2015/16 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 February. A further report would be prepared for the Finance and Policy

Committee on 23 March 2014 detailing the comments/observations of each of the Committees along with a full draft of the 2015/16 Council Plan.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods responded to issues raised in relation to the proposed actions identified to deliver the outcomes, as detailed in an appendix to the report. Clarification was provided on the proposed timescales for rollout of the LED lamp and column replacement programme, the arrangements in place to promote participation in household waste recycling as well as the monitoring process. Discussion ensued in relation to the feasibility of improving on targets set relating to the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting and reducing the targets in relation to the percentage of municipal waste landfilled. It was suggested that trends be examined with a view to future landfill targets being reduced.

At this point in the meeting and during discussions regarding the recycling contract the Chair declared a personal interest in this item of business.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Assistant Director 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 2015/16 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 23 March 2015.

68. Strategic Financial Management Report – As at 31 December 2014 *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Chief Finance Officer)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

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 this Committee was responsible for.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Head of Finance (Regeneration and Neighbourhoods) presented the report which provided the background and reporting arrangements for 2014/15. The latest report submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 30 January 2015 advised that there was currently a net forecast budget under spend of £188,000 which was dependent on the outturn for seasonal budgets.

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

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

69. Allotment Holders Contribution to the Hartlepool Foodbank *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To advise Members and update on the success of the 'Big Christmas Dinner Challenge'.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the Christmas Dinner Challenge which had been suggested as a way of making good use of surplus allotment produce that might otherwise have been thrown away. This produce had been donated to help feed local families in crisis through the Hartlepool Foodbank and resulted in 55 vegetable boxes being donated to the Foodbank for immediate distribution on 19 December.

During 2014 Hartlepool Foodbank had fed 4,357 people (1,440 families) and, in December alone, it supported 290 people, 89 of whom were children.

The Chair welcomed the campaign outlining the benefits as a result and was keen to see a similar arrangement take place two or three times a year. The suggestion to extend this project was welcomed by Members and the need to explore further projects of this type was suggested. The benefits of

engaging with schools with a view to involving school children in allotment type activities was highlighted.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the allotment holders and staff for their contribution to the success of the campaign and indicated that a letter of thanks would be conveyed to the allotment holders from the Chair on behalf of the Committee. The letter to be placed on notice boards at each allotment site.

Decision

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Chair convey the Committee's thanks to individual allotment sites for their involvement in making the Big Christmas Dinner Challenge a success.
- (iii) That with the agreement of Allotment Holders, this initiative be extended to take place 2 or three times a year and further projects of this type be explored.

The meeting concluded at 10.30 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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