

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

31 July 2015

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

Present:

Councillor: Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Stephen Akers-Belcher, Rob Cook, Jim Lindridge, and Paul Thompson.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii), Councillor Christopher C Akers-Belcher was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Alan Clark.

Officers: Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration
Antony Steinberg, Economic Regeneration Manager
Patrick Wilson, Employment Development Manager
Steve Hilton, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

24. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alan Clark and George Morris.

25. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Stephen Akers-Belcher and Paul Thompson declared a personal interest

26. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2015

Received.

27. Presentation – Tees Valley Innovation Strategy (*Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager, Tees Valley Unlimited*))

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide Members with an update on the development of the Tees Valley Innovation Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager from Tees Valley Unlimited provided Members with a detailed and comprehensive presentation which outlined the progress with the development of the Tees Valley Innovation Strategy. The Strategy focussed on the following four key sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing;
- Process;
- Digital;
- Healthcare.

The presentation outlined the national innovation assets as well as future investments in the Tees Valley area. The Strategy provides support to SME's within the Tees Valley area through the following:

- A single routeway;
- Advice on access to finance;
- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships;
- Focus on innovation;
- Innovation Centres;
- Sector specific innovation support and market knowledge; and
- Financial support

The Chair sought an update on the progress with green and low carbon initiatives. The Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager indicated that the Government was still focussed on a low carbon economy as were Tees Valley Unlimited on a local level. It was noted that there were still global opportunities available in relation to off shore wind industries.

A Member questioned how the funding for research and development was being promoted. The Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager confirmed that work was ongoing to join up more services under a Tees

Valley Compass Business Support Scheme to provide a single point of contact consisting of teams from all Tees Valley local authorities, for businesses in the area to seek assistance in relation to accessing tax credits, business vouchers and university expertise. In response to a further question, the Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager indicated that TVU were exploring energy efficiency vouchers to reduce carbon emissions and therefore reduce taxation as this would encourage more investment in the Tees Valley area.

A Member sought clarification on whether there were any areas across the Tees Valley involved in fracking. The Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager commented that he was not aware of any instances of fracking across the Tees Valley area.

The Chair thanked the Economic Strategy and Intelligence Manager for his informative presentation and for answering Members' questions and indicated that a copy of the presentation would be circulated to Members after the meeting.

Decision

The presentation was noted and a copy would be forwarded to all Members of the Committee.

28. New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits Supplementary Planning Document *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

To seek endorsement of the New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following a successful 8 week consultation on the draft SPD which ended on 1 May 2015 and recommend the report to be presented to full Council for adoption. The SPD is attached at Appendix 1 to this report and the consultation statement at Appendix 2.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided the background to the development of the New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). According to the current National Planning Policy Framework, the need for new dwellings in the countryside was driven by

many factors; among the few circumstances in which isolated residential development may be justified were:

- Rural enterprise;
- Heritage;
- Redundant or Disused Buildings;
- Outstanding Design; and
- Relevant policies.

The proposed changes would help applicants make successful applications through establishing a framework where details illustrating the developments conformity with the justification criteria were required as part of an application. The SPD would specifically give both developers and the Council clarity and guidance on what was expected as part of any special justification with regards to proposals for residential development in the countryside outside of development limits.

A Member sought clarification on how the development of Neighbourhood Plans would affect the SPD. The Assistant Director, Regeneration indicated that the Neighbourhood Plans would support increasing the village envelope to deal with housing developments as opposed to the development of single dwellings. Both Neighbourhood Plans and the SPD would be complimentary but the Neighbourhood Plans would need to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. The Local Plan would always take precedence. The Assistant Director, Regeneration informed Members that Planning Officers were involved in the development of all Neighbourhood Plans with the Chair of Planning Committee being kept updated on the progress of all the Plans. A Member highlighted the amount of work, time and costs associated with the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

In relation to the criteria to be used to justify residential development, the Assistant Director, Regeneration commented that 'Outstanding Design' was very subjective and if this criteria was to be used, the application may require consideration by the Planning Committee and the consensus of that Committee would determine if the development was acceptable.

The Chair sought clarification on the list of people/organisations consulted. The Assistant Director, Regeneration confirmed that the list would be clarified to ensure in what context people/organisations were consulted. To assist Members, the Assistant Director Regeneration indicated he would circulate a list of all those people/organisations who had responded to the consultation.

Decision

- (1) The New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was endorsed for presentation to Full Council for adoption.
- (2) The Assistant Director, Regeneration to circulate a list of all those

people/organisations who responded to the consultation to all Members of the Committee.

29. Carr/Hopps Street Housing Regeneration Area Proposals – Recommendation July 2015 *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To provide a progress update on the implementation of the Carr/Hopps Street housing regeneration programme including an up to date progress report. The report set out a proposal for a tender/development brief to be issued for demolition of the existing properties owned by the Council and the redevelopment of the site with new build properties.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided the background and history to the Carr/Hopps area and the proposed residential regeneration. Members were informed that preparatory work including a bat survey and the disconnection of utility services, had commenced to progress the demolition of the acquired properties and the Procurement Team had completed the pre-qualification stage for a demolition contractor. The Housing Services Team was managing the site on a daily basis alongside multi agency meetings with adjacent residents to the site. Members were informed that a number of developers had come forward to discuss options for the site and as a result of these discussions, it was proposed in the direction of the tender being issued, to include demolition and redevelopment of the land with new build properties.

The Assistant Director confirmed that any bids received to demolish and redevelop the site would be reported to Members for the consideration of the outcomes and merits of those bids. The Committee was also informed that a request had been received from a Member to ensure that the development must be completed before the end of the financial year and this would be built into the brief for potential developers. A Member commented that it would be useful to explore an alternative option should a developer not be identified, to ensure the demolition of the site would still be progressed before the end of March 2016 as residents had waited a long time for the regeneration of this area. The Assistant Director, Regeneration confirmed that he was meeting with residents to discuss the proposals for the area which presented an opportunity for a substantial development to enhance the properties and property values within that area. In addition, at

least one of the interested developers had indicated their intention to demolish the site as quickly as possible if they were selected and there were contingencies in place to enable the demolition of the site before the end of March 2016 even if a developer for the site was not secured.

Decision

- (1) That Officers of the Council continue to do preparatory works necessary for the physical demolition of properties on the Carr/Hopps housing regeneration site, this included asbestos surveys, any other surveys necessary and utility disconnect to make the properties ready for practical demolition.
- (2) That a tender/development brief be issued for demolition of the existing properties owned by the Council before the end of March 2016 and the redevelopment of the site with new build properties.
- (3) That Officers develop an evaluation matrix to assess the delivery requirements of the Council for the site, this will provide the information on what can be delivered on the redeveloped site.
- (4) Once the bids from the procurement process have been assessed and evaluated a further report is brought back to Members on the merits and outcomes of particular bids.

30. ERDF Small Business Start Up Programme *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the submission of an Expression Of Interest (EOI) for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded business start up programme in Tees Valley.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided the background to the Government's call for the submission of Expressions of Interests to undertake a business start up programme across the Tees Valley. The Council was part of a proposal that had submitted an EOI and the accountable body was proposed to be the North East Enterprise Agency Ltd (NEEAL). Based on previous ERDF funding programmes, it was likely that Economic Regeneration match funding from existing resources would be around £32,000 net per annum with a minimum of 50 businesses supported per annum. Any support provided through the programme would be over and above the core

business support offer currently provided by the Council.

In response to a request for clarification from a Member, the Economic Regeneration Manager confirmed that the NEEAL had been existence for some time and had a strong track record in the north of the area. Further detailed information on the NEEAL was requested to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee including their role as the accountable body of this consortium.

Decision

The report was noted with a further detailed report to be submitted to the Committee should the EOI proceed to a contractual offer to deliver the ERDF funded business start up programme within Hartlepool, including detailed information on NEEAL and their role as the accountable body for this consortium.

31. Building Better Opportunities Fund *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To inform Members that the Council will be submitting a BIG Lottery Stage One application to become the Lead Accountable Body for the Building Better Opportunities programme.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided the background to the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2014-2020 and how they can be utilised across the sub-region by Tees Valley Unlimited who was the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the area. A key theme of the ESIF was social inclusion and this was to be delivered through the Big Lottery and European Social Fund Building Better Opportunities Programme. The total funding for the programme was £8.8m which equated to £5.3m from the ESF and £3.5m from the Big Lottery Fund across a three year programme from 2016-2019 across the Tees Valley with Hartlepool acting as the Lead Accountable Body.

The project will address the following three themes:

- Removing Health and Wellbeing Barriers to Employment;
- Steps towards Employment; and
- Financial/Digital Inclusion.

All participants must be unemployed or economically inactive as defined the Council's programme guide and further detail on this was provided in the report. The programme targets and outputs for the programme were detailed in the report with at least 2,153 people to be engaged in activities to improve their work readiness.

It was highlighted that Lead Accountable Bodies would be informed within four months if they had reached the Stage Two (Final Phase) and they will then have up to six months to develop and submit a detailed programme proposal. This will allow the Partnership to undertake extensive consultation with statutory organisations, potential participant and community groups.

The Employment Development Officer indicated that this Programme would be delivered in the most deprived wards by community based organisations and 28 wards had been identified as target wards. A further report will be submitted to Committee should Stage Two of the process be reached.

A discussion ensued on the financial implications for local community based organisations from a 'payment by results' system. The Employment Development Officer indicated that the first quarterly payment of the fund will be paid up front to the Lead Accountable Body to enable payment to small voluntary and community groups to enable delivery of the programme from day one. The Employment Development Officer informed Members that a detailed monthly forecast would need to be submitted to the Big Lottery who will retain 10% of the grant funding until the project closes and all evidence was verified which will reduce the risk of future claw-back.

Decision

The report was noted with further update reports being submitted to members.

32. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The meeting concluded at 10.34 am

P J DEVLIN
CHIEF SOLICITOR
PUBLICATION DATE: 6 August 2015