

# **REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

22 July 2016

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

**Present:**

Councillor: Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Stephen Akers-Belcher, Dave Hunter, Jim Lindridge and Paul Thompson

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii), Councillor Sandra Belcher was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Allan Barclay.

Also present: Councillors Brenda Harrison and David Riddle

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health  
David Worthington, Head of Culture and Information  
Dale Clark, Estates and Regeneration Manager  
Jane Kett, Commercial Services Manager  
Martin Spaldin, Empty Homes Officer  
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer  
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **9. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allan Barclay and Brenda Loynes.

### **10. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **11. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2016**

Received.

## **12. Health and Safety Service Plan 2016/17** *(Director of Public Health)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To consider the Health and Safety Service Plan 2016/17, which is a requirement under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

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

The report for 2016/17 had been updated to reflect performance during 2015/16 which had included the completion of health and safety interventions in a total of 254 premises. In addition to this, Officers had undertaken 565 enforcement visits to assess compliance with smoke free legislation, a proportion of which were carried out in conjunction with health and safety interventions. Promotional/campaign work was ongoing in relation to the Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme and the Save our Skins Campaign.

Further detailed information was provided on the performance of the service including visits to premises, accident notifications, the issue of Notices and current enforcement. A number of local priorities were identified which would be addressed during contact with businesses, including food inspections and licensing visits.

The Chair questioned whether the reduction in reported incidents and the number of accidents requiring investigation was due to the pro-active approach currently being undertaken by partners. The Environmental Health Manager (Commercial) commented that the pro-active approach and the issuing of guidance may have contributed to the reductions as the key aim of this approach is to support businesses to improve working practices.

In response to a question from a Member, the Environmental Health Manager (Commercial) indicated that an aim of the Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme was to reduce infections by examining the control measures implemented. The Director of Public Health added that this Local Authority was one of the first in the country to implement a Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme. The Local Authority examined data around blood-borne viruses to understand trends and added that she would discuss potential mechanisms to monitor the number of skin complaints resulting from tattoos with NHS colleagues.

## **Decision**

- (i) The Health and Safety Service Plan for 2016/17 was approved.
- (ii) The Director of Public Health to explore the potential mechanisms to monitor the number of skin complaints resulting from tattoos with NHS colleagues.

### **13. Jacksons Landing Demolition** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

#### **Type of decision**

Non key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To seek Committee approval to demolish the existing Jacksons Landing building subsequent to the “We are Family” music festival on 10 September 2016.

The Committee was also requested to consider options relating to the extent of the demolition and related cost implications.

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

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods provided a detailed history to the Jacksons Landing Site and Hartlepool’s Regeneration Masterplan. The site was identified within the Masterplan as a potential development with a capacity of 11,200 sq m with scope to accommodate a range of quality land mark buildings including leisure, hotel, cultural and residential uses that would act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the town. The removal of the existing building would offer the opportunity to re-launch the waterfront as a visitor destination and change people’s perception of the area.

It was highlighted that an application for £4.75m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) had been applied for through the Tees Valley Combined Authority for the waterfront area which included Jacksons Landing. A development brief was being created in order to attract private sector investors and provide them with the detailed information required for submission of proposals that align with the vision for the site.

The options for demolition and removal of the existing building were outlined in the report and included:

Option 1 – Retention of the existing building until a developer was sought;  
Option 2 – Demolition of the structure and retention of the existing large concrete floor plate;  
Option 3 – Demolition of the structure and removal of the concrete floor plate.

The report proposed that option 2 be undertaken commencing on site after 19 September 2016 following the “We are family” event that will be using the building the previous week. This option would enable the demolition of the building to be done in a cost effective way whilst maintaining a suitable public realm until an appropriate developer was found. Further detail of the financial implications were included within the report as well as within a **confidential appendix which 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.**

The Chair opened up the meeting to questions from Members and the public. A member of the public read out a prepared statement which suggested that the building on the Jackson’s Landing site be utilised as a college facility teaching all aspects of boat building, including apprenticeships, to enhance the opportunities for students through the provision of enhanced practical skills.

A Member raised a number of concerns indicating that he could not support the demolition of this building as, whilst he acknowledged that there were ongoing discussions, there appeared to be no credible plan in place for the future development of the site and there was no absolute guarantee that there would be. The Member added that he had spoken to a prominent local developer who had suggested that the vision for the Jacksons Landing building should include mixed retail and leisure facilities with the potential to add waterside features. He concluded that in a time when more and more people were turning to food banks, he could not support the use of more Council funding on the Jacksons Landing site.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that she was encouraged by the comments above as discussions were ongoing with potential developers which included the development of a stem centre focussed on maritime engineering alongside leisure facilities associated with the waterside including a hotel and retail facilities. Members were reminded that the Jacksons Landing building had been empty since 2004 since the retail outlet closed. This highlighted the need for a mixed economy use to complement Hartlepool’s heritage and maritime history and developers had confirmed that the building on the site was not suitable for further development.

A member of the public referred to the ‘quick flip’ reasoning to purchase the building in the first instance. The Chair indicated that the development of

this area was part of the wider Regeneration Masterplan as this area was a key asset for the future economy of the town. The member of the public responded that he had walked around the outside of the building on several occasions and that the building looked like it was a sound structure and suggested that a fresh coat of paint, the removal of weeds along with the removal of the signage on the main entrance would make the building a lot more attractive to potential developers. He also referred to a piece of land behind the 'MECCA' building and questioned why this area was not being developed. The Chair responded that Officers had soft marketed the Jacksons Landing site with a number of potential developers showing an interest but they had all indicated that the building on the site would not form part of their plans.

Another member of the public supported the suggestion of tidying up the building adding that the inclusion of flowers around the building may also enhance the area and questioned why the Council would buy a building three years ago when it was considered too old and already unsuitable for future development. The Chair added that the Council bought the site and not the building specifically as the site was of considerable importance and significance to the future development of the marina area. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods confirmed that the building was erected in 1996 and was 20 years old.

In response to clarification from a Member, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods confirmed that the building had been empty since 2004 and since the closure of the building, there had been no developers come forward to develop the building or the site.

A Member commented that whilst he fully understood the frustrations of the public in thinking that no progress had been made with the development of the site, the feedback from Officers were that discussions were ongoing and were positive. It was noted that the demolition costs were minimal when weighed up against the potential development opportunities for the site as part of the Regeneration Masterplan. This was a great opportunity to develop the site alongside the National Museum of the Royal Navy's vision for the area, including the development of the water front.

A Member sought clarification on the loan repayments from the original purchase of the site. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that the loan was an interest free loan which had an original repayment target of October 2017. However, if this loan repayment period was extended in order to facilitate the future development of the site, it would continue to be interest free. The Director acknowledged that 3 years may seem like a long time to secure the future development of the site, but every effort must be made to ensure any future development was sustainable and future proof and complement the other facilities in that area as well as the Regeneration Masterplan.

In response to a question from a member of the public, the Estates and Regeneration Manager confirmed that building surveyors had looked at the

site when it was purchased and the building was considered sound. However, the building was not a building that could be divided easily and was not making the best use of the site. It was reiterated that the fundamental reasoning behind the purchase of the site was a strategic purchase as this was such a prime site to develop and sustain the Regeneration Masterplan for the Town. It was highlighted that the Regeneration Masterplan would bring transformational change for Hartlepool and the National Museum for the Royal Navy was the key driver for the future development of that site.

A Member questioned if a private developer had looked to purchase the building and site, would it be correct to assume the Council would have lost control of the site and its future use. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods responded that there was always the potential for private developers to land bank areas that they had purchased and the only control mechanism in place would have been through the Planning regulations.

Reference was made to previous discussions around the development of the site for housing development, however it was noted that the developer withdrew at the last minute. Concern was expressed by a Member that developers may be looking at the site with the building in place and yet the Council was proposing to demolish the building which may deter some developers. He added that as the decision to purchase Jacksons Landing was a decision of Council, the decision to demolish the building should be referred to Council for decision.

The Chair asked the Committee to vote on the proposals which were carried with 5 in favour and 1 against. Councillor Paul Thompson asked that his vote against the decision be recorded.

## **Decision**

- (1) The demolition of the existing Jacksons Landing building following the “We are family” event on 10th September 2016 including retention of the existing concrete floor plate was approved.
- (2) It was noted that there was currently no budget provision allocated to fund the demolition costs for Jacksons Landing and the funding proposal was referred to Finance and Policy Committee to seek Council approval to allocate £40,000 to fund these costs from the resources previously allocated to cash back the potential repayment of the interest free loan if the sale proceeds do not cover the repayment costs.
- (3) It was noted that recommendation (3) will reduce the cash backing for the Jackson’s landing costs from 83% to 81%.
- (4) The proposal that if resources become available during the current year from the 2016/17 managed outturn, or reserves review to be completed later in the year, that part of these resources are allocated to return the cash backing of expenditure on Jackson’s landing to 83% was approved. This would require resources of £40,000 to be

allocated.

A number of people asked to speak further on this issue and the Chair responded that the vote had been taken and there would be no further discussion as the same points were being raised. A disturbance ensued and the Chair indicated that a brief adjournment would take place.

Meeting adjourned at 10.24 am.

The meeting was reconvened at 10.30 am.

#### **14. Performance Reporting 2016-17** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Director of Public Health)*

##### **Type of decision**

Non key.

##### **Purpose of report**

To update the Committee on the new style of performance reports, commencing at Quarter 1 2016/17 and to identify the priority areas the Committee would like to receive updates on during the quarterly reporting cycle.

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

It was proposed that each Policy Committee would receive a report which would include an overview of performance on those areas within the Council Plan that were relevant to the Committee. In addition, the report would also include a brief update on one specific project or activity relevant to that Committee. It was proposed that each Committee would identify four areas at the beginning of the financial year to be included within their quarterly performance reports (one topic per quarter) and the following areas were suggested:

- Economic Climate;
- Public Protection;
- Skills and Workforce Development; and
- Sport and Recreation.

##### **Decision**

The inclusion of the four topics noted above would be included within the Council Plan performance reporting for 2016/17.

## **15. Library Volunteers** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval to expand the number of volunteer opportunities within the Library Service.

The report will inform Members of the current volunteer programme and outline the benefit of developing this to further enhance Library Service delivery.

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

The report provided the background to the volunteering opportunities already in place within the Library Service. It was proposed that the Library Service expand its offer of volunteer opportunities to enhance services to the public including front of house sales; provision of basic refreshments and assistance with promotion and delivery of events. It was noted that all volunteer opportunities would represent additional value to the service and would not replace employees of the Library Service.

A Member referred to other Local Authorities that utilise similar schemes and the educational benefits that arise from such schemes. The Head of Culture and Information indicated that a lot of the volunteers work with children and young people and referred to the successful summer reading challenge which was the best performing across the north east region. There had been over 1300 children who had taken part in the challenge last year. It was highlighted that Hartlepool was in a unique position with the majority of volunteers being young people.

The Chair indicated his support for this initiative as volunteering was a way of increasing people's skills and employability and was pleased to note the link to the Adult Education Service Volunteer Programme which had recently been the first in the country to be awarded a kite mark.

### **Decision**

- (1) New volunteering opportunities be introduced in 2016/17 to support;
  - i. Front of house sales at the Central Library;
  - ii. The provision of a refreshment and improved 'Library Shop' offer at the Central Library; and



- iii. Library events and similar activities.
- (2) Volunteers to be recruited through Adult Education Service Volunteer Programme.

## **16. Tees Valley Combined Authority Priority Pipeline** (Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Committee of the latest position regarding Hartlepool projects within the Tees Valley Investment Priority Pipeline.

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

The report provided the background to the work undertaken by the Tees Valley Combined Authority which was in line with the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan, to demonstrate to the Government where additional investment was required. It was noted that the Council had previously been successful in securing an initial award of £5.5m from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) for the Innovation and Skills Quarter (ISQ). Members were informed that Hartlepool currently had six projects within the Tees Valley Investment Priority Pipeline and further details were included within the report. Details of the financial considerations were outlined in the report with further information contained within **confidential appendix 1 which included 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.**

A Member commented that there some fantastic pipeline provisions proposed which showed that the Council did have a vision for the future of the Town.

### **Decision**

- (1) The report was noted.
- (2) The priorities submitted as part of the Tees Valley Investment Priority Pipeline were ratified.
- (3) It was noted that funding or resources may be required for project development work on an individual project basis. A further report

would be submitted at a later date to consider any funding implications.

**17. Warm Up North Progress Report** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

**Type of decision**

For information.

**Purpose of report**

To provide information about Warm Up North activity up to 31 March 2016.

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

The report provided the background to the partnership arrangement with British Gas and eight other Local Authorities in the region to deliver a scheme to improve the energy efficiency of homes. It was highlighted that since the start of the scheme until 31 March 2016, 377 measures to improve the energy efficiency of residents' homes had been undertaken. Further detailed information on the type of measures was included in the report.

It was highlighted that without the Warm Up North partnership, it would not have been possible to fund the level of improvements undertaken.

The Chair sought clarification on how the scheme could be accessed. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that the scheme was well publicised and it was open to anyone to apply. A Member questioned whether there was a breakdown available of the numbers of properties where measures had been implemented in order to identify any areas that were under utilising this scheme. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that the provision of take-up of the scheme on a ward basis would be circulated to Members to enable a more proactive approach to encouraging people to sign up to the scheme.

The Director of Public Health added that this initiative supported the efforts to continue with the winter agenda which also looked at fuel poverty in cold weather.

**Decision**

The contents of the report and progress made over the lifetime of the Warm Up North scheme were noted.

## **18. Compulsory Purchase of Empty Residential Dwelling – Property 004** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide an update on progress in relation to returning long term empty property 6 Chesterton Road back into residential use following the compulsory purchase of 6 Chesterton Road under Section 17, Housing Act 1985.

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

The report outlined the case history to this property which included numerous attempts and reasonable endeavours to encourage the owner of the property to return 6 Chesterton Road back into residential use, all of which were unsuccessful. At a meeting of the Committee on 12 March 2015 authorisation was given to undertake the compulsory purchase of the property to enable it to be brought back into residential use.

The property had been refurbished as part of the Empty Homes Purchasing Scheme Phase 2 which was completed on 24 June 2016 prior to the property being tenanted and re-occupied. It was noted that compensation was yet to be agreed regarding the compulsory acquisition of the property and negotiations were ongoing. Further detail on the financial and risk implications was included in the report.

A Member thanked the Team for all their hard work and commitment to bringing this property back into use as it had been a problem for the local neighbourhood for some time. This was endorsed by all Members of the Committee.

### **Decision**

The report was noted.

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

None.

The meeting concluded at 10.46 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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