

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

16 October 2017

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Dave Hunter (In the Chair)

Councillors: Stephen Akers-Belcher, Sandra Belcher, Tom Hind, Marjorie James, Brenda Loynes and Carl Richardson

Also Present: Councillor Shane Moore
Jo Heaton, Hart and St Peter's Elwick Primary Schools
Paul Smith, Hartlepool Seals

Officers: Tony Hanson, Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services
Peter Frost, Highways, Traffic and Transport Team Leader
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

22. Apologies for Absence

None

23. Declarations of Interest

Councillor S Akers-Belcher declared a personal interest in Minute 27.
Councillor Hind indicated that Councillor Moore was his appointed permanent substitute on this Committee for any meetings he was unable to attend.

24. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2017

Received

25. Savings Programme 2018/19 (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To enable Members to consider proposals to achieve further savings in 2018/19 following a report presented to Neighbourhood Services Committee on 11 September 2017

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the Committee's consideration of the savings report at the last meeting and Members' request that a further report be brought back to Committee that defined the savings and further detail regarding the Environmental Services target of £360,000 that had previously been approved.

With regard to the Environmental Services savings of £360,000, Members were advised that this saving was currently being achieved through a move to generic working within the grounds maintenance and cleansing teams, which had seen a reduction in the number of casual staff being required and employed, a reduction in overtime payments, a reduced number of cleansing vehicles in operation and the planting of more wildflower meadows that reduced grass cutting operations.

In line with the Committee's request, further details of how the additional savings proposals would be achieved to address the remaining 2018/19 forecast deficit of £278,000 was provided in relation to Highways Trading, Traffic and Transport, Sustainable Transport and Passenger Transport, a breakdown of which was included in the report.

It was considered that the proposed 2018/19 savings could be delivered, although not without difficulty or some degree of risk. Whilst this could be managed in the coming year, achieving such savings was becoming more difficult each year.

Members considered in detail the savings proposals and expressed the following views/queries/comments:-

- (i) A Member reiterated concerns expressed at the last meeting that this Committee had accepted the budget savings in the previous year on the basis that the Clean and Green Strategy would be implemented which included developing and implementing a deep cleansing

programme to replace neighbourhood action days. Given that the strategy indicated that the programme of works would be available by November 2017, disappointment was expressed that no timetable of works had been provided and no deep cleansing works had been undertaken in the town for some time, the impact of which was shared with the Committee. The Assistant Director provided assurances that actions within the strategy had commenced and deep cleansing works on the A689 had been explored. It was acknowledged that this needed to be widened across the town and priority areas identified, an update of which would be presented to this Committee in January. The Chair requested that a deep cleansing timetable of works be provided as soon as possible.

- (ii) Further queries were raised in relation to the savings proposals to which the Assistant Director responded. Clarification was provided regarding the current review of the trading accounts and the proposals for the in-house Highways Team to bring in additional income of £20k from capital or external works to help support the Council's general fund position.
- (iii) A Member provided examples of grounds maintenance issues that needed to be addressed which the Assistant Director agreed to examine following the meeting.
- (v) Further discussion ensued in relation to concerns raised regarding deep cleansing works and the importance of working with other agencies for support in this regard was highlighted. It was suggested that the update report on the Clean and Green Strategy, to be presented to the January meeting, should clearly identify priority areas and provide examples of planned works to facilitate Member input in terms of priorities.
- (iv) Given the concerns raised by Members regarding the limited level of detail included in the budget reports and the uncertainties around what savings had been agreed in the previous budget round, emphasis was placed upon the need to review and improve upon the budget reporting/information provision process as a matter of urgency to ensure this issue was addressed in future budget reports to Members.

Decision

- (i) That the contents of the report and comments of Members, as outlined above, be noted and be utilised to formulate a response to be presented to Finance and Policy Committee.
- (ii) The Committee reluctantly agreed the savings proposals relating to the Neighbourhood Services Division.

- (iii) That the update report on the Clean and Green Strategy should clearly identify priority areas and provide examples of planned works to facilitate input from Elected Members.
- (iv) That an urgent review of the budget reporting/information provision process be undertaken to ensure that the concerns and uncertainties of Members, as set out above, be addressed in future budget reports to Committee.

26. Hart Primary School – Traffic Regulation Order (Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report objections to the proposed double yellow lines in Magdalene Drive, Hart Village (Appendix 1 refers).

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services presented the report which provided background information to the Committee's request at the meeting in June 2016 that further consultation be undertaken with regard to the implementation of a resident's parking scheme.

The Committee considered the results of the consultation at their meeting on 23 January 2017, which comprised residents' permit parking on the south side of the road and double yellow lines to the north side. Whilst Members did not support a residents' parking zone, noting that the majority of residents were against the proposals, following representations from the school, the Committee approved the introduction of double yellow lines on the school side of the road. The traffic regulation order was subsequently advertised and four objections had been received, details of which were provided at the meeting.

Details of the reasons for objection were provided and included concerns that the lines would not make a difference as people tended to park on the north side, the problem was with vehicles parking on the south side of the road, residents objections to double yellow lines generally and comments that the problems were exacerbated by parents who lived outside the village bringing their children to the school. Members were referred to officers' responses to these concerns, as set out in the report.

Members considered the options available and whilst acknowledging the objections of residents, given the importance of safety of school children, Members supported the proposal to introduce double yellow lines on Magdalene Drive. In addition, it was suggested that the yellow lines should be operational during school pick up and drop off periods only. The time periods that the proposed restrictions should apply were debated.

The Head Teacher from Hart Primary School, who was in attendance, and invited to speak, expressed her appreciation to the Committee in terms of support in carefully considering this issue and indicated that any traffic calming measures would be welcomed. Emphasis was placed on the need for restrictions being supported by appropriate signage and enforcement measures. The Head Teacher commented on the various options that had been considered by the school as well as the actions taken to improve road safety issues. The Committee was asked to note, in determining the time period of the restrictions, the school's breakfast and after school clubs, details of which were provided.

Members went on to further consider in detail the proposals and representations made at the meeting during which officers responded to queries raised by Members. Clarification was provided in relation to the timescales for implementation of the yellow lines and the process for advertising the order given the revised proposals in terms of time restrictions. It was noted that should further objections be received as a result of advertising the order, this would delay implementation of the decision. Given that this was the third report to Committee, featuring a number of different proposals and, given that the Committee did not wish to delay matters further, the Committee requested that authority be delegated to the Chair to consider any objections on behalf of the Committee to enable the yellow lines to be installed as a priority.

Decision

- (i) That yellow lines in Magdalene Drive, as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.
- (ii) That enforcement of the yellow lines be time restricted and operational during school time hours of 7.00 am and 10.00 am and 2.30 pm and 5.30 pm.
- (iii) That authority be delegated to the Chair to consider any objections received, in response to advertising the traffic regulation order, to enable the yellow lines to be installed as a priority and conclude matters as soon as practicable.

27. Stockton Street Highway Improvements (Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the detailed design of the highway scheme proposed for Stockton Street, which will give improved pedestrian connectivity in the town centre.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services referred to the approval of a report taken to a Joint Meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Regeneration Services Committee in June 2017 in relation to a number of town centre highway improvement schemes which was subject to the final designs for Stockton Street being approved by the Neighbourhood Services Committee.

At the joint meeting, Members raised a number of queries regarding the proposals and requested that a further report be brought to Neighbourhood Services Committee. In support of the report, detailed drawings were circulated at the meeting together with a google maps presentation which provided details of the pedestrian crossing improvements and traffic signal upgrades along with access and environmental improvements.

In the lengthy discussion that followed officers responded to a number of comments and queries raised in relation to the scheme including estimated costs. Clarification was provided regarding the benefits of removing the central wall which would create a more open, pleasant town centre environment, improve safety and crossing facilities and improve access for vehicles. A Member commented on the reliance on the expertise of professional officers in the design of schemes of this type who would ensure any safety concerns had been considered.

In response to concerns raised regarding the traffic signal controlled right turn into the multi-storey car park and the potential for vehicles to u-turn, Members were advised that whilst the scheme had been designed with a narrow approach to avoid instances of this type, this was not physically impossible. A Member suggested that the installation of cameras at this location to monitor this issue be explored.

Decision

- (i) That the detailed design of the highway improvements at Stockton Street, be approved.
- (ii) That the feasibility of introducing a camera to monitor u-turns at the controlled right turn into the multi-storey car park be explored.

28. Softball/Little League Baseball in Seaton Park

(Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval to allow Seaton Seals to use part of Seaton Park for softball and little league baseball.

Issue(s) for consideration

It was reported that the Council had recently been approached requesting permission for Seaton Seals to use part of Seaton Park for Softball and Little League Baseball. It was proposed to create a baseball little league/softball pitch, details of which were included in the report. Most of the items used in the game would be removed at the end of play and stored off site leaving only the basic pitch which would consist of gravelled bases and net post holders with some underground anchor points. Seaton Seals intended to use the pitch on two evenings per week and Sunday afternoon's in the summer months from April to September.

The manager of Seaton Seals had carried out consultation with residents of Allendale Street, Local Ward Councillors and Friends of Seaton Park who were all in favour of the proposals.

In response to assurances sought that the Group would undertake cleansing and grounds maintenance works of their own areas, the representative from Seaton Seals, who was in attendance at the meeting, indicated that those issues had been considered and would be taken on board by the Group.

Decision

- (i) That approval be granted for Seaton Seals to use part of Seaton Park for softball and little league baseball activities on two evenings per week and Sunday afternoon's from April to September.
- (ii) That permission be granted for one season of play and be reviewed at the end of each season.

29. Departmental Annual Procurement Report – Neighbourhood Services Committee *(Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To advise Committee of contractual activities where the annual value of the anticipated contract exceeds £60,000 for goods and services or £100,000 for works.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which outlined the range of services delivered through a combination of direct provision by the Council's own staff, contracts with the private and voluntary sector and partnership agreements with strategic partners. The report provided information on existing contracts and opportunities for Members to provide input to the strategic direction for the future delivery of these services.

To achieve these objectives the Department had produced a departmental annual procurement report for Members to review and included appendices which set out the financial information relating to individual contracts. **These appendices contained 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).**

Decision

The report and associated appendices were noted.

30. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was reported that the next meeting scheduled to take place on Monday 6 November would be cancelled and the next meeting would therefore be held on Monday 4 December at 2.00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 2.55 pm.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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