

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

13 June 2018

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor: Stephen Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Paul Beck, Tom Cassidy, Marjorie James and Tony Richardson

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2(ii) Councillor Kevin Cranney was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Sandra Belcher

Also Present: Councillor Sue Little  
Fiona Wilkins, Greenpeace

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Tony Hanson, Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services  
Phil Hepburn, Environmental Enforcement Team Leader  
Chris Scaife, Countryside Access Officer  
Sarah Scarr, Heritage and Countryside Manager  
Matthew Pearce, Projects Officer  
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Sandra Belcher and Brenda Loynes.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

None

## **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2018**

Received

**4. Minutes of the meeting of the Emergency Planning Joint Committee held on 21 February 2018**

Received

**5. An Awareness Campaign on the Releasing of Balloons/Sky Lanterns on Council Owned Land**  
(Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

**Type of decision**

Key decision – test (ii) – Forward Plan Reference No RN011/18

**Purpose of report**

To inform the Committee of the impact of balloon and Chinese/sky lantern releases and request that it considers undertaking public consultations for a public awareness campaign on all releases on all Council owned and managed land.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services reported on the background to the campaign by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) to raise awareness on the negative impact of balloon releases and the detrimental effect on the environment and particularly marine wildlife. The MCS was encouraging local authorities to look at the banning of these releases on Council owned and managed land, as well as their authority area.

Members were advised that at present, 79 local authorities in the UK had signed up to support the ban on balloon releases. Hartlepool was looking to become the 4<sup>th</sup> local authority in the north east to consider supporting the Marine Conservation Society by initially conducting a public awareness campaign. It was proposed that public consultation be carried out to raise awareness of a non-release policy on all balloon and Chinese/sky lantern releases on all Council-owned land in order to gauge public opinion on the proposals.

A representative from Greenpeace, who was in attendance, and invited to address the Committee, spoke in relation to the negative impact of balloon releases on the environment and, in particular wildlife as well as marine wildlife. The representative sought the Committee's support for the Council to be a leader in the north east in terms of taking this forward. Members acknowledged that this was a sensitive issue and were keen to continue to support alternative memorial activities such as tree planting or dedicated

memorial woods. The health and safety risks and environmental impact of heat inflated processes of this type were debated during which officers provided clarification in response to queries raised by Members.

A representative from Miles for Men, whilst acknowledging the environmental issues associated with balloon release, shared examples of circumstances during which balloon releases/sky lanterns had assisted individuals dealing with grief.

It was noted that the Council were looking to hold an eight week consultation period during July and August. The Chair emphasised the importance of the consultation which would enable all views to be considered prior to any decision being taken and encouraged all Members and attendees to respond to the consultation and offer solutions as to alternative sustainable activities. With regard to the proposed consultees, as detailed in the report, the importance of seeking views from a variety of additional groups/organisations such as local charities and Miles for Men was highlighted. Given the issues raised, it was suggested that the consultation period be extended until 30 September 2018 to enable as many contributors as possible to participate.

A Member commented on the benefits of utilising visuals in Council buildings and via the website, to inform the public of examples of sustainable alternatives such as bubble machines.

### **Decision**

- (i) That a public consultation be carried out on the proposals to undertake a public awareness campaign on the detrimental effect of balloon and Chinese/sky lanterns releases from Council owned and managed land.
- (ii) That views be sought from additional groups/organisations including Miles for Men and local charities.
- (iii) That the consultation period be extended until 30 September 2018.
- (iv) That the comments/suggestions raised, as set out above, be noted and explored as appropriate.

## **6. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO)** *(Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Key decision – test (ii) – Forward Plan Reference No RN13/18

## **Purpose of report**

To inform the Neighbourhood Services Committee of changes to legislation regarding dog control measures and to advise that as a result, established Dog Control Orders have now been superseded and replaced by Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's).

To consider and agree a public consultation in relation to the introduction of two additional locations and the inclusion of additional enforcement measures within the Public Space Protection Order.

## **Issue(s) for consideration**

Members were referred to the background to the changes in legislation regarding the introduction of new Public Space Protection Orders. There were currently 5 Dog Control Orders in place in certain locations across Hartlepool, details of which were included in the report. Additional requests had been received to add new Dog Control Orders at North Cemetery and seasonal restrictions at North Sands to protect the wild bird colonies. Although the previous Dog Control Orders had now already become PSPO's, the review required formal consultation to include North Cemetery and North Sands.

Members approval was sought to begin formal consultation on the inclusion of two additional areas of North Cemetery and North Sands. The inclusion of North Cemetery would result in a "Dogs on Leads" Order being put in place which would cover the whole areas of the cemetery as shown on the map, attached at Appendix B.

A Member highlighted concerns that despite the high number of dog waste bins available in the town, there were examples of some individuals picking up dog waste and not disposing of the bag in the dog waste bins provided. The benefits of carrying out a promotional campaign to encourage people to dispose of waste of this type in alternative bins was suggested.

## **Decision**

- (i) The Committee noted that previous Dog Control Orders had now been replaced and superseded by PSPO's under the new legislation changes.
- (ii) That the Council carry out a consultation exercise with regard to the inclusion of North Cemetery and North Sands within the PSPO.

## 7. Allotment Review: Phase Two and Allotment Strategy (Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

### Type of decision

Key Decision – Tests (i) and (ii) apply. Forward Plan Reference No RN 04/18

### Purpose of report

1. The report had been intended for submission to the Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> March however, due to the need for further work to be carried out assessing the type of works which are required to the allotments, and subsequent consultation on these works at the Allotment Focus Group Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March, there was a departure from the Forward Plan.
2. The report considers the findings of the second phase of the review undertaken into allotment provision in Hartlepool attached as **Appendix 1**) and proposes a revised programme of capital works as set out in Section 5, Table 1.
3. In addition it also includes a review of the Allotment Strategy 2010 – 2015 noting the achievements that have been delivered (encompassed in **Appendix 1**) and proposes an Allotment Action Plan 2018 – 2020 (encompassed in **Appendix 1**).

### Issue(s) for consideration

It was reported that following a report to Committee in January 2015 outlining current allotment issues and the decision taken to undertake a review of current allotment provision, a number of specific activities had been undertaken, a summary of which was set out in the report. Details of the key findings of the review were provided which included the Stranton Relocation Project, creation of new allotment sites and disposal of allotment sites.

Following completion of the Allotment Review and consultation with the Allotment Focus Group, a revised programme of capital works had been developed, details of which were provided, as set out in the report.

The Allotment Strategy had been launched in 2010 and contained seven strategic aims. These were delivered through 25 objectives and 140 actions. A review of the actions contained within the Allotment Strategy had been undertaken and a simpler and more straightforward action plan had been developed, a copy of which was encompassed within Appendix 1 and

would inform the basis of the work programme for the allotment service over the next three years.

With regard to the Review of Allotment Provision: Phase 2 document, attached at Appendix 1, a Member referred to an error in terms of the wording on Page 11, section 4.9 c. It was agreed that the word adjacent be replaced with the word parallel and be amended to read as follows:-

“As the Nicholson Field site is parallel to a new estate.....”

The Chair commented on the benefits of exploring opportunities of smaller allotment sites in future and requested that this option be explored.

### **Decision**

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report and the findings of the second phase of the review of the allotment provision.
- (ii) The Committee approved the revised programme of works, as set out in Table 1, using powers delegated to the Committee as part of the approval by Council of the original programme of works in the 2013/14 MTFS.
- (iii) That the review of the Allotment Development Strategy 2010-2015 be noted.
- (iv) The Committee approved the adoption of the proposed Allotment Action Plan.
- (v) That Page 11, section 4.9 c of Appendix 1 be amended to read as follows:-  
“As the Nicholson Field site is parallel to a new estate.....”
- (vi) That opportunities to develop smaller allotment sites in future be explored.

## **8. HBC Major Incident Plan** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

### **Type of decision**

Key decision - Test (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference No RN 15/18

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval of the update to the Council’s Major Incident Plan.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported on the background to the Council's responsibility to prepare and maintain a Major Incident Plan. The Council was supported by the Joint Committee's arrangement, made up of Hartlepool, Stockton, Redcar and Cleveland and Middlesbrough Councils.

The Council had a duty to have in place appropriate plans for major incidents. The Committee's approval was sought to amend the Major Incident Plan, attached at Appendix 1, which was categorised as low to medium risk.

### **Decision**

That the amendments to the Council's Major Incident Plan, attached at Appendix 1, be approved.

## **9. Ward Member Budgets 2017/18** *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision

### **Purpose of report**

To inform Neighbourhood Services Committee of the Ward Member Budget final outturn for 2017/18.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The report provided the Neighbourhood Services Committee with the final outturn for Ward Members Budgets during 2017/18. Appendix A to the report highlighted that during 2017/18 £100,427 Ward Member budget funds had been approved. Details of funding remaining which had been carried over into 2018/19 was also outlined.

Members were advised that any Ward Member budget unspent funds from previous years had been carried over and would be shared equally amongst all 3 Ward Members for 2018/19. Each Elected Member had an additional allocation of £2,500 for 2017/18 to which any underspends had been added.

Members were referred to the legal considerations, as set out in the report,

in terms of what Ward Members were permitted to do in relation to Ward Member budgets.

In response to query raised regarding the limits on the level of carry over and timescales for carrying over unspent budget funds, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods agreed to explore this issue.

### **Decision**

- (i) The Ward Member Budget outturn for 2017/18 was noted.
- (ii) It was noted that in the interests of open and transparent decision making Ward Member Budget application forms would be amended to reflect the legal position as outlined in section 6.3 of the report.
- (iii) That any uncommitted, unspent Ward Member Budget funds from 2017/18 relating to outgoing Ward Councillors following the May election, be distributed equally between the existing and incoming Councillors within that Ward.
- (iv) That the level of carry over and timescales for carrying over unspent budget funds be explored.

## **10. Neighbourhood Investment Programme** (*Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhoods*)

### **Type of decision**

For information

### **Purpose of report**

To provide information on the capital investment programme that will deliver improvements to neighbourhoods across Hartlepool.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

It was reported that in March 2017 the Finance and Policy Committee had considered a programme of capital investment to deliver improvements to neighbourhoods across Hartlepool and had been assessed against a criteria, details of which were included in the report.

It had been agreed that a number of schemes would be taken forward and were prioritised. Schemes identified included, shopping parades at King Oswy Drive, Rossmere Park, Stranton Cemetery, play space on Coronation Drive, paving works in Whitby Street, the Headland, barrier works and



roundabouts at key gateway points. A document had been produced, attached at Appendix 1, outlining details available on each scheme, which provided a timetable for the works and costs, together with location plans and photographs.

The Finance and Policy Committee had requested that some additional schemes be included in the programme. These schemes would be costed up and, should funding become available, agreement would be sought from the Finance and Policy Committee to implement these works. In addition to the works agreed, Thirteen Group had proposed an investment of £250,000, details of which were set out in the report.

In the discussion that followed, the process for identifying future schemes was debated. In order to avoid the system being flooded with requests, views were expressed that any proposed initiatives, submitted by Members, should be a managed process and should include a short business case which identified the purpose of the scheme as well as why it was needed.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the update provided on the Neighbourhood Investment Programme be noted.
- (ii) That the comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

The Chair reported that the next meeting would be held on 25 July 2018 at 4.00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 4.35 pm

**H MARTIN**

**INTERIM CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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