

JOINT MEETING REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

18 September 2018

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Present:

Councillor Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Paddy Brown, Rob Cook, Brenda Harrison, Sue Little, Shane Moore, Leisa Smith and Katie Trueman

Co-opted Members:

Mark Tilling, Secondary Schools Head Representative
David Turner, Primary Schools Head Representative

Also Present: Councillors Brenda Loynes and Steve Thomas
Joe Flounders, Cleveland Fire Brigade

Officers: Andrew Carter, Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Stephen Akers-Belcher, Jim Lindridge, Allan Barclay, Bob Buchan, Tim Fleming, George Morris and Co-opted Members, Jo Heaton and Zoe Westley.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Local School Sprinkler Policy *(Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Key Test (i) applies – Forward Plan Ref No RN18/18

Purpose of report

1. The report had been intended for submission to the Committee in August 2018, however, due to absentees of key stakeholders i.e. Education Professionals it was judged prudent to bring it to the September Committee when relevant members of staff were available to participate. Due to these circumstances there was a departure from the Forward Plan.
2. The purpose of the report was to inform Elected Members of the joint Committee of the background to the proposed local school sprinkler policy and to seek agreement to endorse the local school sprinkler policy.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Environment Growth and Regeneration presented the report which provided background information in relation to the proposals to develop a local school sprinkler policy.

Members were referred to the future funding arrangements for school buildings and it was noted that the ESFA were continually bringing new funding streams to the market. Whilst the cost of providing sprinklers would be included in the overall design and build costs, going forward, where schools incorporated sprinklers, the schools would need to cover the cost of maintenance through their current/future budgets. Currently there was no additional funding to support this from the Council of the ESFA.

With regard to the proposed Sprinkler Policy, the Council expects that school developments will be designed to incorporate sprinklers into the design and delivered as part of the works. The Council does not expect that existing school buildings retrospectively incorporate sprinklers as part of this policy.

The Committee was advised that the fitting of sprinkler systems was not a planning matter. However, Planning Officers, at the earliest stage in the process, would notify the applicant in writing of the Council's target to have sprinklers fitted in all schools. The Committee was referred to the risk, financial and legal considerations as detailed in the report.

In the discussion that followed a Member queried the responsibilities of schools as a result of the policy. The Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration advised that the policy included information on the requirements for Hartlepool and it was a matter for the school as to whether they wished to incorporate sprinklers into future designs. However, once this policy was in place, the school would be required to justify to the Planning Committee the reasons why a sprinkler system had not been included in the design.

Views were sought from the representative of Cleveland Fire Authority, who was in attendance at the meeting, in relation to the policy. The representative spoke in support of the policy outlining the safety benefits to children, the community as well as the environment.

In response to clarification sought as to the sprinkler requirements for buildings such as houses of multiple occupation (HMO's), Members were advised that whilst there were building regulations relating to the specific provision of sprinklers in place for schools, there was not one relating to other uses, (other than the general building regulations) including shops, leisure centres and residential buildings. In relation to hostels, hotels and HMO's, (and buildings of three stories or above), whilst this was not a planning matter, the Planning Committee would be able to identify whether any sprinkler provision was being incorporated in planning applications and officers would also ask for such provision at the beginning of the planning application stage.

The school representatives, who were in attendance at the meeting, commented on the benefits of guidelines being made available to schools in relation to the requirements of the policy. Whilst the safety of children was the schools' priority, some concerns were expressed regarding the budgetary implications for schools in maintaining sprinkler systems given that there was no additional funding from the Government to maintain systems of this type.

Decision

1. That the following Local School Sprinkler Policy be endorsed:-
 - (i) The Council expects that the following developments will be designed to incorporate sprinklers into the design and delivered as part of the works:
 - 1) New school buildings
 - 2) Extensions to existing school buildings
 - 3) Change of use of non-school buildings to school use
 - (ii) The Council does not expect that existing school buildings retrospectively incorporate sprinklers as part of this policy; it exclusively relates to new development.
 - (iii) It is expected that the provision of sprinklers be incorporated into the early design and costing exercise to ensure that the buildings can physically incorporate the infrastructure and that funding is in place to deliver sprinklers.
2. That guidelines be made available to schools in relation to the requirements of the Policy.

The meeting concluded at 3.25 pm

H MARTIN

INTERIM CHIEF SOLICITOR

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