

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

21 February 2020

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: John Tennant (In the Chair)

Councillors: Marjorie James, Sue Little and Amy Prince

Also Present:

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher and Councillor James Brewer was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Tom Cassidy

Councillor Tony Richardson

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Tony Hanson, Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services)
Catherine Grimwood, Performance and Partnerships Manager
Sarah Scarr, Heritage and Countryside Manager
Kieran Bostock, Transport and Infrastructure Manager
Sylvia Pinkney, Head of Public Protection
Chris Wenlock, Environmental Services Manager
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

50. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Stephen Akers-Belcher and Tom Cassidy.

51. Declarations of Interest

None.

52. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2020

Received.

53. Minutes of the meetings of the Emergency Planning Joint Committees held on 24 July, 11 September and 28 November 2019

Received.

54. Council Plan (*Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To consider the proposals that fall under the remit of this Committee for inclusion in the Council Plan 2020/21 – 2022/23 which was currently out to consultation.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported on the background to the development of a new Council Plan during which a number of key questions had been asked as part of the initial consultation. The consultation draft of the Council Plan had been agreed by Finance and Policy Committee on 13 January. The draft Council Plan, attached at Appendix 1, included a summary of progress made through the last Council Plan, an outline of the current position in Hartlepool in relation to some of the key indicators and the key themes that had emerged from the recent consultation exercise. The report set out the proposed strategic priorities as well as the actions to be taken to deliver the priorities. The Committee was requested to consider the consultation draft plan and provide feedback to inform the final Council Plan which would be open to a five week consultation, details of which were provided.

In the discussion that followed officers responded to a number of queries raised in relation to aspects of the report. In relation to Strategic Priority 1, the importance of effective community safety in the town to encourage individuals to invest, work or live in the town was highlighted. A query was raised in terms of whether there were any plans in place to introduce public protection orders given recent anti-social behaviour problems in the town and emphasis was placed upon the need for the plan to provide reassurances to the public that the Council was serious about developing town centre areas. Clarification was provided regarding the additional resources that had been allocated to support recent anti-social behaviour issues in the town and it was noted that Hartlepool would see recruitment of

a significant number of neighbourhood police officers in the next few weeks and further additions throughout the year, details of which were awaited.

Whilst views were expressed regarding the positive outcomes as a result of introducing dispersal orders, some concerns were raised that police response times to serious incidents were unsatisfactory, examples of which were shared with Committee. The Chair suggested that the concerns raised in relation to anti-social behaviour be referred to the Community Safety Team as well as the Safer Hartlepool Partnership to which a Member commented on the importance of feedback also being provided to this Committee.

With regard to Strategic Priority 2 and recent discussions at Council the previous evening around the enforcement of littering, fly tipping and dog fouling when it was confirmed that a report would be presented to the next meeting of Neighbourhood Services Committee, a breakdown of statistical information to all Ward Members was requested in advance of the March meeting to include the number of fixed penalty notices issued by month and by ward for the last twelve months. Clarification was provided in relation to the number of enforcement officers as well as their roles and responsibilities. A Member commented on the benefits of publicising details of Enforcement Officer's roles and responsibilities.

In terms of reference in the draft plan to providing more purpose built homes for vulnerable adults, it was suggested that the plan should include clarity around the commitment to provide homes for life including bungalows to accommodate the needs of younger families requiring disabled support as well as the elderly.

Decision

- (i) That the consultation draft of the Council Plan 2020/21 – 2022/23, as set out in Appendix 1, be supported and the comments of Members, as set out above, be utilised to inform the preparation of the final Council Plan.
- (ii) That a breakdown of statistical information be provided to all Ward Members in advance of the March meeting to include the number of fixed penalty notices issued by month and by ward for the last twelve months.
- (iii) That the concerns of Members in relation to anti-social behaviour, as set out above, be referred to the Community Safety Team and Safer Hartlepool Partnership, feedback of which to be reported back to this Committee.

55. Hartlepool Tree Strategy Refresh (*Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision test (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference No RN20/19

Purpose of report

To update the Hartlepool Tree Strategy 2011-2016. It was previously the intention to bring this report to the January Committee. However, this report was delayed as officers were still working on the action plan for the strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services presented the report which included background information to the development of the Tree Strategy and included the aims and objectives of the Strategy. The Strategy, attached at Appendix 1, had been revised to reflect current working practices and resources to provide a Strategy which can be developed in the current climate.

The Committee discussed the Tree Strategy at length during which views were expressed that the Strategy should include hedgerows, reference to growing space as well as a description of trees by type, the benefits of which were debated. Members were keen to see an increase in the number of trees in the town and receive evidence around the success of the previous Strategy. Reference was made to a case where an individual had been adversely affected by a Tree Preservation Order, details of which were shared with Members, and the need for a common sense approach when dealing with such matters was highlighted. Monitoring information regarding the current number of trees in the town, as a comparator since the new strategy was introduced in 2016, was requested. The Assistant Director outlined the process for dealing with issues of this type and provided assurances that more trees had been planted than removed. The Assistant Director went on to provide clarification in response to further queries raised in relation to the report.

In response to a request for more detailed information in relation to the plans for a memorial wood, in advance of the strategy being considered by Full Council, the Assistant Director advised that the memorial wood plans were included in the Neighbourhood Investment Programme for Summerhill which would be reported to this Committee in due course.

Decision

- (i) That the updated Tree Strategy 2020-2030 be approved and the comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.
- (ii) That information be provided in relation to the success of the previous strategy as well as monitoring information regarding the current number of trees in the town as a comparator since the new Strategy was introduced in 2016.

56. Tees Valley Local Standards For Sustainable Drainage *(Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the adoption of the updated Tees Valley guidance document for the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) across the Borough.

Issue(s) for consideration

Members were referred to the background to the Committee's approval in November 2015 for the use of the Tees Valley Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in order to provide both developers and regulators with consistent standards across the Tees Valley. The updated guidance document, a copy of which was available in the Members' Library, had been produced by a Working Group of Local Authorities of Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton on Tees and Darlington. Members were referred to the risk, legal and asset management considerations as set out in the report.

Decision

- (i) That the revised Local Standards Document be approved.
- (ii) That the revised Local Standards Document be referred to Planning Committee for information purposes.

57. 'Clean and Green' Strategy Update (Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To inform the Committee of the progress achieved against the actions outlined in the Clean and Green Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the launch of the three year Clean and Green Strategy and the production of an action plan, attached as an Appendix to the report, to assist in delivering the vision. The action plan provided a summary of key achievements linked to each of the strategic objectives and included progress towards creating a clean town, creating a green town and ensuring a well maintained town. In presenting the report, the Assistant Director highlighted salient points and was pleased to report that excellent progress had been made against the action plan with the majority of actions, including those actions added in year two complete or underway.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which the Chair proposed an additional action that young people and schools be encouraged to become more involved in clean and green activities, that the Council work collaboratively with schools to develop a social media campaign as well as advertise on bins outside schools. Members supported the proposal and a number of additional actions were suggested in support of the strategy which included the need to explore the feasibility of talking bins in parks to encourage children to be clean and green citizens, introducing a Council awards/recognition process for individuals involved in clean and green activities, the benefits of which were outlined, improve/refresh signage in public spaces associated with keeping Hartlepool clean and litter free and that the new CRM system (Firm Step), for delivering much improved customer interface and communication with frontline Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance teams, be more widely publicised.

In relation to the proposal that any further actions covering the objectives would now be reported under the Love Hartlepool Campaign, Members were of the view that ownership of Clean and Green should be retained within the remit of Neighbourhood Services Committee.

Decision

- (i) That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.
- (ii) That ownership of Clean and Green be retained within the remit of Neighbourhood Services Committee.

58. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair reported that the next meeting would be held on Friday 13 March 2020 at 11.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 2.00 pm.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 28 FEBRUARY 2020