

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

31 July 2020

The meeting commenced at 11.30 am and was an online remote meeting in compliance with the Council Procedure Rules Relating to the holding of Remote Meetings and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Present:

Councillor: John Tennant (In the Chair)

Councillors: Tom Cassidy, Marjorie James, Sue Little and Amy Prince

Also Present:

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 Councillor Tony Richardson was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher

Councillors Lee Cartwright and Leisa Smith

Officers: Tony Hanson, Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services)
Sylvia Pinkney, Interim Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)
Neil Wilson, Assistant Chief Solicitor
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2020

Received.

3. Local Transport Plan Scheme Update *(Interim Assistant Director (Place Management))*

Type of decision

Key decision tests (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Ref No RN05/20

Purpose of report

To seek approval for a delivery programme of safety schemes across Hartlepool for the financial year 2020/2021.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Environment and Neighbourhood Services reported that given that the level of demand for safety schemes exceeded the Local Transport Plan budget a scrutiny assessment was undertaken which was based on factors such as accident data, speed survey results etc. The Committee's approval was sought for a programme of potential safety schemes which had been developed, as detailed in Appendix 1. Whilst the schemes recommended for 2020/21 had been allotted a budget, it was acknowledged that detailed design changes may be added. Therefore it was possible that further schemes may be brought forward on the list should the main programme come in under budget. It was highlighted that schemes at Oxford Road and Stockton Road had been added.

In the discussion that followed the Assistant Director responded to a number of queries raised in relation to the report. In relation to the proposal to implement a road hump scheme on Landsdowne Road, a Member indicated that she did not support this proposal and suggested that this option be reconsidered and, as an alternative, the introduction of a one way system to include Landsdowne Road be explored as well as the extension of a one way system in the opposite direction.

A number of further issues/queries/suggestions were raised including requests for clarification around the speed limit on Rossmere Way and whether Clifton Avenue was within a conservation area. It was also suggested that 20mph speed zones be considered in Rossmere Way and Hart Lane. Some concerns were raised regarding the proposals to introduce road/speed humps in a number of locations including Sinclair Road, Macaulay Road and Berwick Street and the need to consider utilising chicanes as an alternative option to road humps were requested, the benefits of which were outlined. Emphasis was also placed upon the importance of consulting with Ward Members in relation to proposals for schemes of this type.

Decision

- (i) That the continuation of the oversubscribed LTP budget and the requirement for prioritisation be noted.
- (ii) The Committee noted that the list proposed was live and further schemes may be deliverable should savings within the 2020/21 programmed be identified.
- (iii) That the proposed safety scheme programme for 2020/21 be approved and the alternative options suggested be explored.
- (iv) That any changes to the proposed programme be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee.
- (v) That the comments/suggestions/queries of Members, as detailed above, be noted and actioned as appropriate following the meeting.

4. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) *(Interim Assistant Director, Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision test (ii) – General Exception applies

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the commencement of the renewal process for Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) already in place.

To consider what further PSPO's are, or may be required.

Issue(s) for consideration

Members were referred to the background to the changes in legislation regarding Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's). PSPO's were due to expire in October 2020 and it was necessary to consider whether they should be renewed. Two additional PSPO's relating to dog control were introduced last year, details of which were provided and, although they were not due to expire in October 2020, it was proposed that they be renewed with the others to enable all PSPO's to run to the same timetable.

Whilst there were a number of PSPO's in Hartlepool relating to dog control and alley gates, there were currently no legal restrictions in place in Hartlepool that prevented the consumption of alcohol in public places, details of which were set out in the report. It was proposed that Members and key partners be consulted to establish whether any alcohol related PSPO's were needed.

A number of concerns were raised by Members in relation to the impact of excessive consumption of alcohol during lockdown on the promenade at Seaton Carew and examples of anti-social behaviour arising as a result were shared with the Committee. Members spoke in support of a public space protection order at Seaton Promenade and beach as well as other family areas for example, parks.

The Interim Assistant Director, Regulatory Services, responded to queries raised arising from the report. It was agreed that clarification would be provided following the meeting in terms of the powers available to address dog fouling on private land and alley gate protection arrangements for residents. Discussion ensued in relation to the reporting arrangements of anti-social behaviour at weekends and the importance of enforcement powers to tackle such behaviour. Reference was made to a recent press release that had been issued confirming that additional police resources had been allocated in Hartlepool. The Assistant Director agreed to circulate this following the meeting.

The following recommendations were agreed with no dissent.

Decision

- (i) The Committee approved the commencement of consultation with a view to the renewal of all existing Public Space Protection Orders.
- (ii) The Committee approved the commencement of consultation with a view to establishing whether any new Public Space Protection Orders were required.
- (iii) That the comments/views of Members, as outlined above, be noted and actioned as appropriate.
- (iv) That information be provided following the meeting in relation to the powers available to address dog fouling on private land, alley gate protection arrangements and details of a recent press release relating to police resources.

5. Allotments Service Review and Dispute Resolution Process – Risks and Legal Implications *(Assistant Chief Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer))*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To advise Members of the Committee of the risks and legal implications of their decision regarding the Allotments Services – Dispute Resolution Process made on 13 March 2020.

Issue(s) for consideration

Members were referred to the background to the motion presented to Council regarding the allotment service and the Committee's consideration of the proposed changes to the allotment rules and regulations of tenancy and the proposal to introduce a dispute resolution process at its meeting on 13 March 2020. Reference was made to the Committee's decision to amend the recommendations, details of which were set out in the report and the Assistant Chief Solicitor went on to appraise Members of the risks and legal implications of this decision in detail before the matter was referred back to Full Council.

In the discussion that followed presentation of the report, a Member clarified the background to the decision taken by the Committee and highlighted the benefits of Elected Member involvement in the dispute resolution process. The Assistant Chief Solicitor advised that the revised process would not enable the local authority to respond appropriately or in a timely manner and outlined the following recommended process:-

- 1) Informal dialogue and negotiation with tenant
- 2) 1st warning letter
- 3) 2nd warning letter
- 4) Notice to Quit issued by Officer
- 5) Submit a complaint in accordance with the corporate complaints procedure. This procedure would include an investigation by an officer from a different department (who had received suitable training) and would also result in the monitoring and oversight of Finance and Policy Committee
- 6) Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report and accepted the process recommended by the Assistant Chief Solicitor which was to be referred back to Full Council.

Councillor James requested that her abstention be registered.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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