

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

19 March 2021

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm 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, Helen Howson, 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

Councillor Mike Young

Officers: Tony Hanson, Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
Sylvia Pinkney, Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)
Kieran Bostock, Assistant Director (Place Management)
Ian Harrison, Trading Standards and Licensing Manager
Phil Hepburn, Community Safety Operations Manager
Matthew King, Planning Policy Team Leader
Nomusa Malinga, Housing and Planning Information Officer
Karen Kelly, Principal Housing Strategy Officer
Peter Frost, Highways, Traffic and Transport Team Leader
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

22. Apologies for Absence

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

23. Declarations of Interest

None

24. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2020

Received.

25. Minutes of the meeting of the Emergency Planning Joint Committee held on 2 March 2021

Received.

26. Local Transport Plan Programme (*Assistant Director, Place Management*)

Type of decision

Key Decision test (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference No. NRS 03/20.

Purpose of report

To inform the Neighbourhood Services Committee of the current position with the Local Transport Delivery Plan, current policy aims, progress made under the Local Transport delivery programme during 2020/2021, and to identify potential schemes for 2021/2022.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Place Management reported that the third Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026, sets out how a safe and sustainable transport system could be delivered within Hartlepool. At the time of writing there was considerable uncertainty from Government on the form delivery plans should take and the level of funding which was likely to be allocated to authorities. The ongoing pandemic had also had a significant impact on all aspects of the 20/21 programme.

Details of ongoing schemes were provided as set out in the report which included updates on a major road network bid, bus corridor project, railway station development, local cycling and walking infrastructure plan, electric vehicle infrastructure, e-scooter trial, Wynyard, western growth corridor, transport network prioritisation, road safety, urban traffic management control and emergency active travel. All works/schemes would be funded via the LTP allocation with the local transport block allocation expected to remain at around £719,000. Allocations for 2020/21, along with provisional allocations for 2021/22 were detailed in Appendix 1. Members were referred to works identified for delivery during 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 2 as well as proposed schemes for 2021/22 (subject to further Committee approval).

The Committee welcomed progress made in relation to the ongoing schemes and initiatives and took the opportunity to thank officers for their efforts and hard work in this regard.

In the discussion that followed officers responded to a number of queries raised in relation to aspects of the report and agreed to provide clarification following the meeting in relation to queries raised around the number of bus shelters owned by the local authority, progress on verge works at Dunbar Road and the timescales for completion of works at Kesteven Road.

With regard to future schemes, a number of suggestions were made by Members which included the need to consider improvements and potential re-designation of the walkway/access to Summerhill to a cycle route and the designation of the pathway behind Gladys Worthy Close. Emphasis was placed upon the need to consider and lobby Central Government to ensure sufficient provision of electric vehicle points in the town as well as provision in new housing developments. Some concerns were raised regarding a number of complaints that had been received regarding the inappropriate use of e-scooters in the town, examples of which were shared with Members and it was suggested that the rules/regulations be publicised in a joint communications message between the Council and the police.

The Chair confirmed that the following recommendations had been agreed with no dissent.

Decision

1. That the works / schemes delivered during 2020/2021 be noted, and the anticipated budget breakdown for 2021/2022 be approved as set out in the appendices to the report.
2. That the comments/suggestions of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.
3. That clarification be provided following the meeting in relation to the queries raised around the number of bus shelters owned by the local authority, progress on verge works at Dunbar Road and the timescales for completion of works at Kesteven Road.
4. That the rules/regulations in relation to e-scooters be publicised.

27. Discount Market Sales Housing Policy (*Assistant Director, Place Management*)

Type of decision

Key decision (test ii) – General Exception applies

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the proposed Discount Market Sales Housing (DMSH) Policy.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Place Management reported on the background to the requirement to produce a proposed Discount Market Sales Housing Policy, attached at Appendix 1 as well as an application form to ensure properties remained as affordable units in perpetuity. Section 106 agreements will always set out key requirements for each development in terms of the level of discount from the market value. Developers would be required to ensure potential purchasers adhered to these terms and ensure purchasers completed the necessary application form. The council would need to keep a register of each property brought forward as a DMSH property.

Members welcomed the proposed policy and commented on the benefits as a result.

The following decision was agreed with no dissent.

Decision

That the Discount Market Sales Housing Policy, attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

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

Type of decision

Key Decision test (ii) – Forward Plan Ref No: NRS 01/21

Purpose of report

To inform the Committee of the results of a recent consultation exercise in respect of the proposed adoption of new public space protection orders (PSPO's)

To seek approval for the adoption of the proposed PSPO's

Issue(s) for consideration

Members were referred to the background information as set out in the report in terms of the purpose and legislation regarding Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's). Certain conditions must be met before a PSPO can be introduced, details of which were provided.

The Committee was advised that following a decision taken by this Committee on 1 December a consultation exercise had been undertaken to determine residents' views on the adoption of a new PSPO to prohibit the consumption of alcohol along Seaton Carew promenade, the Borough's identified parks and prohibit a number of activities in parks and other identified open spaces, details of which were outlined in Appendix 1. Whilst feedback from the consultation exercise was broadly in favour of both proposals, an objection had been received from Hartlepool Licensees Association, details of which were included in the report.

A representative from Hartlepool Licensees Association, who was in attendance remotely and invited to address the Committee, spoke against the proposals to prohibit the consumption of alcohol on Seaton Carew promenade. The representative raised a number of concerns in terms of the impact of such restrictions on the local economy, hospitality businesses, family's ability to enjoy a glass of wine or bubbly with a picnic and highlighted that anti-social behaviour in Seaton were one off incidents which had occurred during the pandemic as a result of the closure of pubs and restaurants involving a small number of individuals congregating and misbehaving outside a takeaway of which police powers were available to deal with such matters.

Whilst some Members supported the representative's views that an alcohol ban on the promenade would have a detrimental impact on local hospitality businesses, other Members, including a Seaton Ward Member, spoke in support of the alcohol PSPO. The Member reiterated concerns expressed at an earlier meeting in relation to the impact of excessive consumption of alcohol during the pandemic on the promenade at Seaton Carew and shared examples of anti-social behaviour arising as a result. Officers confirmed that the alcohol PSPO was not a drinking ban but would be used to control those drinking alcohol and causing anti-social behaviour where appropriate.

In the lengthy discussion that followed officers responded to queries arising from the report which included clarification in relation to enforcement arrangements, what constituted a breach, that a breach did not create an automatic offence and the area enforcement would apply. Concerns were raised around the resource implications in terms of policing such breaches, that the proposals did not include enforcement of the beach and the importance of ensuring safety for families was also emphasised.

Further debate ensued in relation to the timescales that anti-social behaviour occurred, the links to the lock down restrictions and it was suggested that the proposed alcohol PSPO at Seaton Carew promenade should specify times of restriction to address concerns expressed earlier in the meeting around the hospitality industry whilst also addressing safety concerns raised in relation to families. Therefore, in relation to Seaton Carew promenade, a Member proposed an amended motion to consider introducing a PSPO that would apply for longer hours in the 6 months of summer from April to October and for lesser hours in the winter months of October through to April.

This proposal was moved and seconded.

The Chair then suggested that the recommendation in the report be split into two, one for parks and open spaces and one for the amended motion on the alcohol PSPO.

In the absence of any dissent the Chair confirmed that the parks and open spaces PSPO was approved.

Following further discussion, a recorded vote was taken in accordance with Rule 8 of the Council's Procedure Rules relating to the holding of remote meetings in relation to the amended PSPO for alcohol which included a times restriction at Seaton Carew promenade of: -

Summer – April to October – 6.00 am to 8.00 pm

Winter – October to April – 8.00 am to 4.00 pm

Those in favour:-

Cllrs Howson, James, Little and Prince

Those against

Cllrs Tony Richardson, Cassidy and Tennant

Those abstaining

None

It was announced that the vote was carried.

Decision

1. The Committee approved the adoption of a PSPO, as detailed in Appendix 1, to prohibit the consumption of alcohol at Seaton Carew promenade and identified parks.
2. That in relation to Seaton Carew promenade the PSPO be operational during the following timescales:-

Summer – April to October – 6.00 am to 8.00 pm
Winter – October to April – 8.00 am to 4.00 pm
3. That a PSPO in identified parks and other open spaces, as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.

29. Five Year Highway Maintenance Programme (*Assistant Director, Place Management*)

Type of decision

Key tests (i) and (ii) apply. Forward Plan Reference No NRS02/20

Purpose of report

To seek approval for a 5 year Highway Maintenance Programme, determined by carriageway condition surveys and following Department for Transport recommended asset management processes.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Place Management reported that for the financial year 2021/2022 the capital grant allocation for highway maintenance was expected to be broadly similar to 2020/21 (£1,188,000) and the 5 year programme had been prepared assuming a similar level was allocated each year.

Due to the large number of roads having the same condition rating, results were also supplemented by rating assessments carried out in house on the basis of Highway Inspector's reports to determine the schemes that should be given priority within the 5 year programme. Consideration had also been given to requests received from members of the public and Elected Members, through the Community Forums or directly to Officers.

Appendix 1 to the report set out the programme of works proposed.

The following recommendations were agreed with no dissent.

Decision

1. That the proposed programme, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved, and it was noted that this would fully commit the funding available in 2021/2022.
2. That any changes to the proposed programme be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee.

30. Authorities Monitoring Report 2019/20 (*Assistant Director, Place Management*)

Type of decision

Non Key – Part of Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR) 2019/20.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information to the production and purpose of the AMR which included progress made over the last 12 months on the implementation of policies in the Local Plan, including housing, economy, employment, town centre tourism, environmental quality, countryside/rural area, historic environment, waste, renewable energy, sustainable transport and neighbourhood plans.

The following recommendation was agreed with no dissent.

Decision

That the 2019/20 Authorities Monitoring Report, attached at Appendix 1, be endorsed.

31. Chair's Concluding Remarks

In concluding the debate, the Chair took the opportunity to place on record his personal thanks to all Members of the Committee for their input and contributions particularly Members who were not intending to stand in the

forthcoming elections. Thanks were also expressed to all officers for their hard work and contributions to the achievements of the Committee.

Councillor James paid tribute to Member colleagues and officers who she had worked with during her 22 years as a Borough Councillor.

The meeting concluded at 3.25 pm.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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