

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

4th December 2006

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Cath Hill (Deputy Mayor),

Pam Hargreaves (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),

Peter Jackson (Performance Management Portfolio Holder),

Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder),

Ray Waller (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder).

Also Present

Jane Shaw , Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Forum

Officers:

Paul Walker, Chief Executive

Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services

Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services

Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services

Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor

Graham Frankland, Head of Property and Procurement Services

Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer

Steve Hilton, Assistant Public Relations Officer

Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

124. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Robbie Payne.

125. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

126. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 20th November 2006

Confirmed.

127. Formal Response to the Executive's Initial Budget and Policy Framework Consultation Proposals for 2007/08 (*Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide the formal response of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to the Executive's Initial Budget and Policy Framework Consultation Proposals for 2007/08.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

In the absence of the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, the Vice Chair presented the report which outlined the process through which the Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered the Executive's Budget and Policy Framework proposals 2007/08. Detailed within the report was a timetable for consideration of the Executive's finalised budget proposals for 2007/08 with a formal response being presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 5th February 2007.

Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and the four standing Scrutiny Forums considered in detail the Executive's budgetary pressures and priorities, grant terminations and proposed savings included within the initial consultation proposals. Members were largely supportive of the identified proposals, however, a number of concerns/comments were made and these were outlined in section 3 of the report. In conclusion, Cabinet were requested to:

- (i) consider the formal response of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee as outlined in Section 3 of the report;
- (ii) provide feedback to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to this formal response, during the consideration of the Executive's finalised Budget and Policy Proposals for 2007/08.

It was noted that Cabinet would determine the formal budget proposals at its meeting on 18th December 2006 which would be reported to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 19th December 2006. Cabinet will then make its final determination on 4th February 2007 for submission to Council.

Decision

- (i) The formal response from Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee was noted.

- (ii) That Cabinet provide feedback to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to this formal response at its meeting on 19th December 2006.

128. Hartlepool Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision – Test (i) and (ii) apply.

Purpose of report

To present the Hartlepool Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy for information and approval.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder presented a report which outlined how the Adult and Community Services Department of Hartlepool Borough Council had taken the lead in revising the Hartlepool Carers' Strategy. The Department recognised its duty for the social care delivery to informal carers, but also acknowledged that, in order to respond to recent legislation and deliver more effective, appropriate services and support to carers, it was essential to work in partnership with carers and other statutory and voluntary agencies.

The new Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy had nine sections plus an action plan and incorporated five key commitments which carers had identified as being of the most important to them and which require action and development, with the addition of 'Preparing for Emergencies'. This strategy, along with an action plan, was attached by way of appendix for Members' consideration. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that the section on Carer Involvement had been omitted from the revised Community Strategy and it was felt that this was a retrograde step and that the Carer's role should be higher in the priorities.

It was noted that the Hartlepool Carers element of the dedicated grant for carers was used to generate match funding and that carers should be part of the decision making process to where the grant funding was used.

Decision

Cabinet noted the contents of the Hartlepool Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy and approved its contents.

129. Annual Review of Performance for Adult Social Care (Director of Adult and Community Services)

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

To present the annual performance rating for Adults Social Care, provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder presented a report which outlined that there was an extensive system of monitoring by the Inspectorate, including inspections, monitoring visits, returns and performance indicators. This array of qualitative and quantitative data is used by CSCI to produce a Record of Performance Assessment (ROPA), which gives their views on our performance for the past year, and areas to improve for the year ahead.

National results were published on the CSCI website on 30 November 2006, but details of Hartlepool's own appraisal have been made available to the Council only, subject to a strict embargo. A significant element in the assessment this year was the results of the learning disability inspection, recently reported to Members.

Hartlepool was judged to be serving most adults well and to have promising capacity for improvement, which equates to a 2 star rating out of a maximum of three. The suite of performance indicators, as attached by way of appendix, showed continued good results with all indicators banded as stable or improving with 92% rated as "acceptable" or better. A fuller record of performance was provided by the ROPA for 2005/06 with the service improvements outlined within the report. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that there were no red PI's although in two cases, amber was the lowest band awarded. These refer to the balance of ethnicity for those assessed and provided with service.

The Children's Services Department were congratulated for their efforts and commitment in achieving continued good results.

Decision

The report was noted.

130. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs detailed below in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 131 – Briarfields House and Associated Land, Elwick Road (Para 3 – namely, Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

131. Briarfields House and Associated Land, Elwick Road *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision Test (i) and (ii) applies

Purpose of report

To advise Cabinet on the outcome of the recent marketing of three development lots at Briarfields.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

On 31st July 2006, Cabinet resolved that Briarfields House, Lodge and associated land be marketed in order to assess the current market situation. The report detailed the background to this procedure during which 29 bids were received and opened on 27th October 2006. The financial implications of the bids received were detailed within the confidential report.

It was noted that the highest overall bidder taking into account all permutations was bidder number 9 and a copy of their proposal was attached by way of confidential appendix. However, the scheme proposed by bidder number 9 was not compliant with the principles of the development brief. The second highest option was a combination of bids 8, 14 and 23 with the third highest being bidder 14. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that the proposal by bidder no 14 may result in more than 25% of plot coverage which was the limit defined within the brief. This would be clarified with the bidder and if necessary this bid could be replaced by bidder 17 which was a compliant bid. Members were informed that all the bids received represented market value and therefore presented a good opportunity to the Council.

As highlighted during an inquiry by the Regeneration and Planning Services

Scrutiny Forum, it was noted that adequate drainage provision would need to be included on any proposed development to reduce the potential for flooding. The Head of Property and Procurement Services reassured Members that this level of detail would be included within the terms and conditions attached to the planning consent for the development.

It was suggested that authorisation be given to the Estates Manager to seek further information from bidders 8, 14 and 23 to ascertain whether these were considered appropriate in planning terms and if this was the case, their delegated authority be given to the Estates Manager to progress the sale. Members requested that if the proposal submitted by bidder no 14 did propose a development of more than 25% of the site, a report be submitted to Cabinet to discuss alternative options available.

Decision

It was agreed:

- (i) In principle to dispose of the 3 lots as marketed subject to a further report outlining the findings from the request for further information.
- (ii) That bid number 9 would not be pursued due to its non-compliance with the Development Brief.
- (iii) The Estates Manager be authorised to seek further information from bidders 8, 14 and 23 to ascertain whether these were considered appropriate in planning terms and if this was the case, then delegated authority be given to the Estates Manager to progress the sale.
- (iv) That if bid number 14 was not deemed compliant with the development brief, the sale was not to be progressed and a report submitted to Cabinet to discuss the alternative options available.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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