

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

2 September 2024

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Present:

Councillor: Karen Oliver (In the Chair)

Councillors: Ben Clayton, Sue Little, Corinne Male and Christopher Wallace

Officers: Tony Hanson, Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
Kieran Bostock, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services
Sylvia Pinkney, Assistant Director, Regulatory Services
Jane Kett, Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support Officer

9. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Fiona Cook and Mike Young.

10. Declarations of Interest

None.

11. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2024

Received.

12. Minutes of the meeting of the Emergency Planning Joint Committee held on 23 July 2024

Received.

13. Local Transport Plan Scheme Update *(Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision (DNRS 06/24)

Purpose of report

To seek approval from Members of the Neighbourhood Services Committee for a delivery programme of safety schemes across the Borough for financial year 2024/2025.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) presented the report that identified the allocated budget for Local Safety and Safer Routes to School schemes for 2024/25 and detailed the prioritisation of schemes based on updated road casualty data. The level of demand for safety schemes continued to oversubscribe the Local Transport Plan and as such a scrutiny assessment was undertaken to develop the preferred list within the available budget.

As part of the prioritisation approach approved at Committee in October 2019 the following schemes were detailed in the report:

Oxford Road (Kingsley Avenue – Stockton Road) – Budget estimate £45k

There had been 1 serious and 4 slight accidents recorded on this section of road since 2019, with pedestrians and also cyclists entering the carriageway and then being struck. The proposed improvements will include additional guard rails at key points, bollards to prevent unauthorised footpath parking, an improved crossing point and the possibility of a pedestrian island along with an additional crossing point.

Elwick Road (Wooler Road – Dunston Road) – Budget estimate £80k

There had been 1 serious and 3 slight accidents recorded on this section of road since 2019. The proposed improvements will include an additional zebra crossing, a raised junction along with high belisha beacon lights on the existing and new zebra crossing.

Members were informed that consultation will be undertaken on all schemes where residents/businesses are directly affected and ward Members will be notified of this process in due course. Should any objections be received in line with the constitution, these will be reported back to Committee for further consideration.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) indicated that there were no additional resources currently available for additional crossing patrols. The Chair added that schools could be approached for financial support where feasible should any suggested crossing improvements be directly linked to the school.

A Member suggested that maps of the location of the proposed crossing improvements be provided for ease of reference at future meetings.

A member of the public sought clarification on why the area around Rossmere Primary School had not been designated a 20mph zone. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) confirmed that Rossmere Way was included within the list of future priorities which was refreshed annually with the latest information on accidents.

Decision

- (i) The continuation of the oversubscribed LTP budget and the requirement for prioritisation was noted.
- (ii) It was noted that the list proposed was live and further scheme(s) may be deliverable should savings within the 2024/25 programme be identified.
- (iii) The proposed safety scheme programme for 2024/25 was approved.
- (iv) That any changes to the proposed programme be delegated to the Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee.

14. Waste Management Update *(Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision (DNRS 07/24)

Purpose of report

To provide Members with an update on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) 'Simpler Recycling' scheme, and its implications.

To seek approval to commence household food waste collections in October 2025 on a trial basis.

To seek approval to review the feasibility of relocating the Council's existing Waste Transfer Station and Household Waste Recycling Centre.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided the detail of the review of waste services undertaken by DEFRA under the banner of 'Simpler Recycling' the aim of which is to help achieve the Government's target for the recycling of 65% of all municipal waste by 2035. In summary the proposed changes are:

- The introduction of mixed recycling collections and food waste collections to non-household municipal premises by 31 March 2025;

- The introduction of food waste collections to all domestic properties by 31 March 2026; and
- The introduction of plastic film recycling collections to all domestic and business properties by 31 March 2027.

Attached at confidential Appendix 1 (**This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government), (Access to Information), (Variation Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**) were tables that included the following information:

Table 1 – Estimated set-up costs of weekly food waste collection service for all households in the Borough.

Table 2 – Ongoing annual costs for the operation of a weekly food waste collection service for all households in the Borough.

Table 3 – One-off costs relating to beginning food waste collections 6 months prior to the 31 March 2026 deadline.

In relation to the Waste Transfer Station requirements, an options appraisal had been undertaken and this was included at Table 4. It was noted that Option C, whereby the Council build and operate its own residual waste transfer station and bulk-hauling waste using dedicated vehicles and staff was the best value, the most environmentally appropriate and operationally resilient solution. The running costs of the Waste Transfer Station for the contracted waste only would be equalised across all five Tees Valley energy recovery facility partners. The options appraisal had also identified a number of potential benefits along with an opportunity to generate savings and operational efficiencies by combining the requirement for a waste transfer station with a new replacement for the Household Waste Recycling Centre for Hartlepool on the same site as the new residual waste transfer station.

A lengthy discussion ensued around the positive and negative perceptions of the recycling of food waste. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) confirmed that a significant amount of work would be undertaken around education and raising awareness of the recycling of food waste including the operation of the waste transfer station that would be controlled through an Environment Agency licence. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) confirmed that collecting food waste would inevitably reduce cost as there would be less requirement for incineration. The Chair highlighted the importance of tackling climate change and improving the level of recycling undertaken was a key part of this. It was noted that the Government would provide grant funding from the New Burdens Grant to implement the changes, however there was a significant shortfall in this funding and the Chair indicated that she would write a letter to the relevant Government Minister to raise this issue.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) confirmed that the regional waste management

partnership were working to create a cost effective solution to identify a new site and operate a residual waste facility given that the site at Haverton Hill was coming to the end of its serviceable life. As such a replacement energy recovery facility to process its combined residual waste tonnages will be built at a site in Grangetown, Redcar. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) indicated that waste would be transferred to this facility from the Hartlepool waste transfer station on a weekly/fortnightly basis once compacted.

A Member sought clarification on the option for residents to sort recycling at home prior to collection as this was already undertaken in a number of other areas. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) indicated that this was a difficult issue to implement as residents did not want too many bins to sort waste/recycling into.

The Chair suggested that Members may find it useful to visit the Council's existing Waste Transfer Station and Household Waste Recycling Centre and look at the operating restrictions within the site. In response to a question on the potential relocation of the site, the Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) commented that scoping work had commenced but no firm locations had been identified as yet. The Assistant Director added that if Members wished to, a visit to the Household Waste and Recycling Centre at Sunderland might prove useful as this site was an example of the operation of good practice.

The meeting went into closed session to enable Members to discuss confidential Appendix 1 **This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government), (Access to Information), (Variation Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.**

15. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

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 they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 14 – Waste Management Update (*Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*) – **This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government), (Access to Information), (Variation Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information**

14. Waste Management Update *(Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Issue(s) for consideration

A Member sought clarification on the number of vehicles required to operate the Food Waste. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) indicated that the estimated set up and operational costs were based on weekly collections and build resilience for the ongoing expansion of the town. The purchase of the vehicles would be funded by New Burdens grant funding from the Government. However, it was noted that there was a shortfall in the New Burdens Grant of circa £200k and the Executive Director estimated that these costs could increase given supply and demand as all local authorities source vehicles and equipment at the same time. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) informed Members that work was ongoing with other local authorities to achieve economies of scale for the purchases required to implement food waste collections. The Executive Director added that the New Burdens Grant funding was for any the capital expenditure of setting up the scheme and no details had been provided of any ongoing revenue costs for the future operation of the scheme.

The Chair queried the cost of communications referred to in the confidential Appendix. The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) commented that communications was key to the success of this scheme and work was ongoing to develop creative ways of engaging with the residents of the town to encourage the separation of their food waste from their residual waste collection. The Chair added that engaging with local schools should also be considered as part of the Communications Strategy.

The Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services) was hopeful that the trial to be undertaken in the Rossmere Ward area of the town would highlight any issues going forward.

The meeting returned to open session.

Decision

- (i) Members noted the implications of 'Simpler Recycling'.
- (ii) The early implementation of food waste collections noting the potential cost associated with this was approved.
- (iii) That Officers begin the detailed design work required to build a new waste transfer station, including site identification, capacity needs and construction design.
- (iv) That this piece of work also considers the possible inclusion of a new Household Waste Recycling Centre at this facility, including the benefits, risks, costs etc and this be reported back to Committee at a future date once the feasibility work was complete.
- (v) That the Chair write to the relevant Government Minister to raise concerns at the shortfall in the level of New Burdens Grant being

- provided to set up a weekly food waste collection scheme which was mandatory under the Simpler Recycling Programme.
- (vi) That site visits for Members of the Committee to the Hartlepool and Sunderland Household Recycling Centres be progressed.

16. Health and Safety Service Plan (*Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To approve the Healthy and Safety Service Plan for 2024-25, which is a requirement under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) presented a report which outlined the Health & Safety Service Plan for 2024-25 which complied with statutory requirements. The Plan had been updated to reflect last year's performance and reflected changes in service demand.

A summary of the main issues raised in the plan along with details of the work undertaken as part of the intervention programme for 2024-25 was included within the report. The report provided the local priorities that had been identified and were addressed through contact with businesses. The report provided a detailed and comprehensive breakdown of all the interventions undertaken, health and safety complaints and accident notifications received throughout 2023/24.

A discussion ensued during which a Member sought clarification on whether there was a similar star rating to food hygiene for beauty salons and tattoo studios. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that no scheme existed as cosmetic procedures were not as regulated as food hygiene but tattooists were rated through a local scheme. The Chair commented that the Team continually faced significant challenges, did an immense job and were proactive keeping abreast of legislative changes to keep the people of Hartlepool safe.

Decision

The Health and Safety Service Plan for 2024/24 was approved.

17. Food Law Enforcement Service Plan *(Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2024/25.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Regulatory Services reported on the Food Law Enforcement Plan for 2024/25 which complied with statutory guidance requirements. The Plan detailed the Service's priorities for 2024/25 and also highlighted how those priorities were to be addressed. The report also provided a comprehensive summary of all the work undertaken across the service during 2024/25.

In response to some queries from Members, the Environmental Health Manager confirmed that allergens were a high priority for the service and the 12 regional authorities regularly shared knowledge in this area. In relation to pop-up events, the Environmental Health Manager confirmed that vendors were inspected on site where feasible. Comments were also provided via the Safety Advisory Group to people responsible for events.

Officers were commended for their work with and provision of advice to local businesses.

Decision

The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2024/25 was approved.

18. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

There were no items the Chair considered urgent.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 4 November at 10.00am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

The meeting concluded at 11.30am

H MARTIN

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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