

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

27 January 2025

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

Present:

Councillor: Karen Oliver (In the Chair)

Councillors: Fiona Cook, Sue Little, Corinne Male and Christopher Wallace

Parish Council Representatives:

Lyn Noble, Dalton Piercy Parish Council
Stephen Smith, Greatham Parish Council

Officers: Tony Hanson, Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
Kieran Bostock, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services
Steve Hilton, Senior Public Relations Officer
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support Officer

32. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Young.

33. Declarations of Interest

None.

34. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2024

Received.

35. Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) 2023/24 *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To inform the Committee of the Hartlepool Local Plan Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) 2023/24.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services presented the Hartlepool Local Plan Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) 2023/24. The report provided comprehensive detail on the following:

- Housing
- Economy, Employment, Town Centre, Tourism
- Environmental Quality including natural environment, rural area and historic environment, waste and renewable energy, sustainable transport and access to the countryside, neighbourhood plans, community infrastructure level, duty to consult and S106 developer contributions.

It was highlighted that the AMR had been produced in accordance with Part 8, 34(3) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The report provided details on the implementation of the local plan and considered all policies to be robust and thus environment, sustainability and climate change considerations were being factored into planning decisions.

A discussion ensued during which the Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services along with the Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services provided clarification on several areas.

It was highlighted that the provision of affordable housing (social housing) had achieved a year on year positive rise since Covid and an assessment of the Strategic Housing Market Renewal was being undertaken and would include a review of the affordable housing target. In response to a question from a Member, the Chair confirmed that Section 106 agreements provided funding to enhance developments and take on board sustainability and were very varied depending on the specific development site but included the provision of planting trees, creation of cycleways and connectivity to other developments where necessary.

A Member referred to a current application in relation to the provision of renewable energy via an additional wind turbine. The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services confirmed the provision of renewable energy was

included within the Local Plan but as this was a current application, there was no further discussion in order not to prejudice that application. It was noted that the issue of odours at Seaton would be discussed with the Environment Agency later this week at a Ward Surgery as this was a concern for Seaton residents. The Chair added that Officers would check how this issue was referenced within the Local Plan.

In response to a question from a member of the public, the Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the receipt of Section 106 Agreement money was specific to each development and was based on the site and the impact on the local community. The timescales for the receipt of Section 106 money ranged from before work commenced on the site to the completion of the last house on the site. The Chair highlighted the importance of having robust mechanisms in place to ensure sustainability of future developments. In addition to this, the Government had introduced an initiative to deal with empty shops and this was also being considered. The Chair sought clarification on whether a definitive measurement of the quantity and type of green infrastructure lost or gained could be undertaken. The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services indicated that the potential to provide a definitive measurement would be explored further.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Services confirmed that there was a Heritage Working Group exploring innovative ways to ensure buildings and heritage across the town was protected.

The Chair thanked officers for their hard work on sustainable transport and securing additional funding from the Tees Valley Combined Authority to increase cycle ways across the town.

Decision

- (i) The content of the report was noted and endorsed as part of the Local Development Framework.
- (ii) That Members comments above be utilised to inform the Local Plan and indicative timescales going forward which will be outlined at the next meeting of the Committee.

36. Audit and Governance Committee Investigation – Derelict Land and Buildings *(Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee and Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To present:

- (i) The findings of the Audit and Governance Committee following completion of its investigation into Derelict Land and Buildings in Hartlepool. The report was accessed by a link to the website.
- (ii) The Action Plan produced to inform consideration of the investigation's recommendations, attached by way of appendix.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services presented the report from the Audit and Governance Committee's investigation into derelict land and buildings. The report had been deferred from the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee on 4 November 2024 to allow the findings to be considered in conjunction with a detailed updated Action Plan for each recommendation of the report which was attached at Appendix A.

In response to a question from a Member, the Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services indicated that a Derelict Land and Buildings Multi-Agency Group had been established, which we understand was the first of its kind in the northeast. The membership of this Group included representatives from the Police Service, Fire Service and Council Officers. The Group would identify buildings to be prioritised and encourage the owners to bring the buildings back into use. This process was very challenging as legislative powers were limited and the process was time consuming. A Member sought clarification on the business rates and council tax income from derelict buildings and the Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services would seek confirmation of this and forward it to Members. The Chair suggested that including the issue of business rate/council tax income to the scoring matrix on derelict buildings used by the Working Group be explored.

Clarification was sought on the status of the site opposite the Town Hall Theatre in Raby Road as it had been in a state of disrepair for some time and was unsightly when people were leaving the Theatre. The Executive Director for Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services confirmed that this site was in private ownership and was included within the boundary of the Mayoral Development Corporation's area, meaning planning responsibility belongs to them. The Chair suggested that this issue be fed back to the Mayoral Development Corporation.

The Chair added that ways be explored to ensure that tackling enforcement on empty domestic properties along with empty business properties was a robust process.

Decision

- (i) The recommendations and associated action plan of the Audit and Governance Committee's investigation were approved.
- (ii) That the inclusion of the issue of business rate/council tax income to the scoring matrix on derelict buildings used by the Working Group be explored.
- (iii) That the comments on the status of the site opposite the Town Hall Theatre in Raby Road be fed back to the Mayoral Development Corporation.
- (iv) That domestic empty properties be added to the action plan to allow for a more robust approach in dealing with empty properties/empty homes.

37. Presentation – Energy from Waste Update *(Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide an overview of the Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility Programme along with an outline of the objectives and progress to date.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services provided a detailed and comprehensive presentation on the Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility. It was noted that the project commenced in 2017 and the Councils of Newcastle City and Durham County had joined the project in 2019 which increased the size of the facility, the energy output and significantly reduced the costs to all Councils. A summary of the Joint Waste Management Strategy aims and objectives was provided in the presentation along with the requirements of the Service.

The site selection process was outlined which had led to the identification of a site at Dorman Point, Redcar which totalled 21.8 acres and had the access road in place, an option to lease for 50 years secured along with a grid connection. A timetable of key events was presented and culminated in the site being fully operational by 2029. It was noted that further information had been published by the project partners at www.tverf.co.uk

In response to several questions, the Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services confirmed that waste collected from Hartlepool homes would be taken to a waste transfer station locally and then onto the Energy Recovery Facility in bulk once sorted and compacted. Negotiations regarding the continued use of the current facility

at Billingham are ongoing so that this can be utilised until the new site is fully operational.

Decision

The presentation was noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.50am

H MARTIN

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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