

CULTURE, LEISURE AND TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO

DECISION RECORD

20th February, 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. at Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre, Kendal Road

Present:

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

Councillor Geoff Lilley was in attendance to speak on minute 94.

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)
Derek Gouldburn, Urban Policy Manager
Alastair Smith, Head of Technical Services
Peter Frost, Traffic Team Leader
Pat Watson, Democratic Services Officer

94. Greatham Play Area – Replacement of Existing Play Equipment *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek the approval of the Portfolio Holder to the replacement of Play Equipment at Greatham.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report indicated that the existing play area at Greatham had been inspected in December 2006 by the independent inspectors at ROSPA and a summary of the inspection report was attached as an appendix. The Inspectors had commented that the play area was in need of immediate replacement. Funding to replace the play area totalling £40K had been secured from Community Services revenue (£5K) Mayors Portfolio (£25K) and the South Neighbourhood Forum (£10K).

At a meeting in November 2005 the Parish Council had agreed the process to be followed in replacing the play equipment. The Parish

Council with Council Officers then undertook the process of selecting a preferred contractor and undertaking a public consultation exercise.

The public consultation undertaken involved consultation with the primary school and Youth group on the specific items of play equipment to be used in order to reach a preferred design stage. Two designs were then put forward for a wider consultation with residents.

The report indicated that at a public meeting held on Monday 22nd January 2007 both plans had been discussed and residents were given the opportunity to comment on the designs. The meeting highlighted residents concerns over the proposed equipment, in particular the equipment being proposed that would overspill onto the opposite side of the cycle path, outside of the current area of play provision.

Residents were asked to feedback comments regarding the play areas in order for a decision to be made at the Parish Council Meeting on the 25th January 2007. At this meeting the support had been expressed for the replacement of the Current equipment but there was a wish for a more suitable alternative venue for the two pieces of equipment being proposed outside of the existing play area namely the Aerial Runway and the Nutmeg ball game.

Following the meeting of the Parish Council the recommendations had been discussed further in a meeting between Council Officers and a representative from the Parish Council to determine a way forward for the replacement scheme.

The proposal in the current report to the Portfolio Holder was that the playground be retained within the existing grass triangle of grass to the north of the cycle way. That equipment be restricted in this location to that for younger children and would include all items identified on the approved option. The play area would also have 1.2m bow top fencing to restrict access from the play area onto the cycle path but would not be required all the way around the site as existing hedges and fences provide a barrier. Further to this the existing right of way around the north westerly side of the play area cannot be impeded.

The proposed aerial runway and nutmeg would not be installed on this site. The budget provides for the provision of the aerial runway and it was proposed that this budget be ring fenced to play provision in Greatham as part of a separate project, possibly on the Sports Field, for older children who would be more trusted to use a remote site than the younger children who should or would normally be accompanied in the play area. Whilst the Nutmeg was a popular choice of equipment with young people it would not be provided as part of this development but consideration would be given to its inclusion as a more ambitious future programme in the village.

The final designs, along with projected implementation dates, were to be presented in graphical form for display within the village to ensure all residents with an interest in this matter are kept fully informed.

A summary of the public comments were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and the Portfolio Holder indicated that he had particularly noted the following:

Positive comments:

- ? “The idea of replacing and improving play facilities for the children of Greatham Parish is excellent, wherever this equipment is sited it will have some negative points but, as a community we must work together. I was ashamed of being a villager in the meeting of the 22nd January 2007”.
- ? “I think the play area should be built in the same site as the old one as it has always been there and it is a safe place surrounded by houses so the children aren’t isolated. It is also well away from the main road”.
- ? “I want this one because it’s near where we live”.
- ? “I think it will be good for children of all ages”.

Negative comments:

- ? “Yes they should also have new things but somewhere away from peoples homes”.
- ? “It is too near to a private housing estate. Valuation of those houses will go down”.
- ? “Too near to the bicycle path”.
- ? “A and B design would, in a short time, just look like it does now. Think again before you go ahead”.
- ? “I do not want a replacement play area at all”.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that he had taken all comments into consideration before making his decision.

The report indicated that there would be no additional financial implications as the proposed play area would be within the original £40K budget. Any residual funding due to the aerial runway not being provided in this area would be held in a separate capital budget for use towards play provision for older children in the Village.

Councillor Geoff Lilley thanked the Portfolio Holder for the considerations given throughout the process and thanked the officers for their help and professionalism. He hoped that officers could pursue the placing of the aerial runway (slide) on the sportsfield.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the results of the consultation undertaken and approved the replacement of the play equipment, having taken on board the issues raised by Greatham Parish Council in response to public concerns.

The Portfolio Holder gave his thanks to all concerned for progressing this scheme, ie The Mayor's Portfolio and the South Neighbourhood Forum for help with funding, Councillor Geoff Lilley for his continued support and the Parish Council for their great assistance in the consultation process.

95. Adult and Community Services Departmental Plan 2006/07 – 3rd Quarter Monitoring Report *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the Adult and Community Services Departmental Plan 2006/07 in the first half quarter of the year.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the progress against actions contained in the Adult and Community Services Departmental Plan 2006/07 and the third quarter outturns of key performance indicators.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the achievement on actions and indicators and thanked all concerned for their continued hard work.

96. Proposal to submit a bid to the Big Lottery Community Libraries Programme by Hartlepool's Library Service *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the Big Lottery Community Libraries Programme and to seek support for the submission of a bid in the programme.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report contained a background description of the programme and the type of projects the funding would support, an outline of the financial implications and a recommendation to support the submission of a bid to the programme.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder supported the submission of a bid by Hartlepool's Library Service to the Big Lottery Community Libraries Programme.

97. Grayfields Artificial Grass Pitch – Pricing Proposals *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for a proposed pricing structure for the artificial grass pitch at Grayfields Recreation Ground.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided background information and a summary of comparable prices. The Assistant Director reported orally that reference to "half-pitch" should be disregarded as this option was not now proposed.

The report also provided details of a consultation exercise held with local clubs and organisations and relevant extracts from the original business plan.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the proposed pricing structure for the artificial grass pitch as detailed in the report but without reference to "half pitch" in all cases.

The Portfolio Holder was also pleased to approve the use of the Active Card and concessionary prices in order to encourage use of the facility by under represented and low income groups.

98. Mill House Leisure Centre – Waterslide Repairs

(Director of Adult and Community Services)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the placing of a contract with a specialist supplier, Nationwide Waterslide Services, to enable essential refurbishment works to be carried out to the waterslide at Mill House Centre.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report contained full details of the works required and also explained alternative arrangements to be made for staff during the required closure period of the Centre.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the placement of the works contract for essential refurbishment works to the waterslide at Mill House Centre with Nationwide Waterslide Services and noted the arrangements for staff during the closure period of the Centre.

99. Recruitment of Part-time Local Access Forum

Development Officer *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the current development of the Tees Valley Local Access Forum, of which Hartlepool is a member, and to seek approval for the establishment of a new post of Local Access Forum Development Officer to be based in Hartlepool, serving the Tees Valley Local Access Forum.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report advised that in March 2003, Council approval had been sought and gained for participation in the formation of a Joint Local Access Forum. The Forum is a statutory requirement, arising from Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. A Joint Forum had therefore been formed between four Local Authorities – namely Middlesbrough, Stockton, Hartlepool and Darlington.

The Portfolio Holder was advised that the primary purpose of the Local Access Forum is to advise the Highway Authorities on a range of matters including:-

- ? Development of recreation and access strategies which cater for a wide range of people, e.g. Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- ? Improvements of the Rights of Way Network.
- ? Implementation, management and revision of statutory rights of access to the countryside.

The report advised that since the Tees Valley Local Access Forum's (TVLAF) formation, in September 2003, it had become increasingly obvious to the Forum members and the advising Rights of Way Officers (one from each Authority) that the administration and provision of secretariat duties takes up too much of the advising officers time. Each year (on a rota basis) one Authority becomes lead authority and has to provide secretariat support and manage the administration of the forum. This is above the normal day to day duties that the officer has to perform. The recruitment of the Local Access Forum Development Officer (LAFDO) would create an interface between the Authorities and the Forum. The report sought to gain approval for the appointment of such an Officer.

The report detailed the financial arrangement for the proposed post.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- (a) approved the establishment of a post of Local Access Forum Development, as detailed in the report, on a two year fixed term contract, and
- (b) authorised the Director of Adult and Community Services to extend the period of employment beyond two years, so long as funding from the partner Local Authorities is made available.

100. Town Wall Paving Scheme *(Head of Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

The report detailed proposed changes to the design of the Town Wall paving scheme and sought the Portfolio Holder's endorsement of the changes.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report advised the Portfolio Holder of a recent court case involving another local authority which had an impact on the requirement of the Council to provide a protective railing alongside the proposed paving improvements to the Town Wall. In light of this and in reflection of resident consultation feedback it was proposed to amend the scheme design to exclude the railing from the majority of the length of the scheme.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the revised design proposals as outlined in the report.

101. Local Transport Capital Settlement 2007/08 (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide information on the 2007/08 local transport capital settlement for the Hartlepool area and seek approval for the proposed budget allocations for integrated transport and highway maintenance.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided a summary of the Government's assessment of the Council's progress in delivering the first Local Transport Plan (LTP), assessment of the final second LTP, related transport capital allocations for 2007/08 and beyond and the proposed budget allocations for 2007/08.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the proposed budget allocation for integrated transport and highway maintenance as outlined in the report.

102. Adoption of Highways – Hartlepool Marina (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the adoption of the highway infrastructure on Hartlepool Marina.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report outlined a brief history of events together with considerations as to subsequent liability for the Council.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the adoption of the highway infrastructure as detailed in the report and commented that the introduction of traffic management measures to regulate the amount of traffic that currently uses Harbour Walk (Garlands area) needs addressing quickly.

103. Traffic Schemes (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for traffic schemes at West View Road and Greenwood Road and request consideration of any objections which may have been received to the statutory road hump notices, for the previously approved traffic calming schemes.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the background to the schemes in (a) West View Road, (b) Greenwood Road and (c) statutory legal notices for the road humps in a number of previously approved schemes, ie Browning Avenue, Challoner Road, Southburn Terrace and the Sheriff Street area.

The consultation undertaken and the financial implications were also outlined in the report.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the schemes as detailed and with funding as indicated in the report.

104. Hart Primary School – Safer Routes to Schools (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the consultation findings on the safer routes to schools project to increase levels of healthier and sustainable travel to and from school.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report contained information outlining access and safety improvements to Hart Primary School as part of a safer routes to schools initiative. The Head of Technical Services reported orally that there had been concerns raised by some elected Members on the overall consultation process and he requested a further period to enable him to seek assurance that all consultation had been resolved to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties concerned.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder indicated that he would await a further report on the proposals relating to Hart Primary School and a safer routes to schools initiative.

105. Seaton Carew Nursery School – Safer Routes to Schools (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the consultation findings on the safer routes to schools project to increase levels of healthier and sustainable travel to and from school.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report contained information outlining access and safety improvements to Seaton Carew Nursery School as part of a safer routes to schools initiative. Three options for the scheme had been put forward and were outlined in appendices A, B and C. The issues for consideration and a summary of comments received during consultation were also outlined in the report.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the implementation of option 3, as outlined in the report, to improve pedestrian access to and from Seaton Carew Nursery School.

106. Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2006/07 – 3rd Quarter Monitoring Report (*Director of Neighbourhood Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2006/07 in the first three quarters of the year.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report detailed progress against the actions contained in the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2006/07 and the first three quarters outturns of key performance indicators.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the achievement of actions and indicators

107. Review of Supported Bus Services (*Head of Technical Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on progress made in the review and tendering of the Council's supported bus services.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided a summary of the evaluation of supported bus services and identified alternative options available to the Council.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- (a) approved the undertaking of consultation to refine service options;
- (b) approved the recommended approach for tendering bus services, and
- (c) approved the development of a scoring system to aid the prioritisation of supported bus services.

108. Various Rights Programme *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on the revised Various Rights programme.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report indicated that the Various Rights programme issues a number of short-term trading licences for defined sites to private operators. Licences are issued by a simple tendering process where the highest bidder 'wins' the site. Due to the recent changes in street licensing the programme has decreased from 22 sites in 2004 to just a handful of sites. This, along with other issues required the programme to be revised, further leading to only 2 sites being proposed for the future. Although small in number the effect of the changes would be to provide a small amount of income to support the foreshore budget and to provide public amenity facilities for families with young children at Seaton Carew.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the report.

109. Local Government Access to Information Act

Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1982, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 5 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 110 – Consideration of Modification of Block Sands Paddling Pool (Director of Adult and Community Services) (Para 5 – Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.)

110. Consideration of Modification of Block Sands Paddling Pool *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

The report and appendix were exempt under para 5 as it included information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

Purpose of report

To present the background to the development of the Block Sands Paddling Pool and to detail the options for consideration.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The exempt report contained detailed information and a copy of the RoSPA report of 11th August 2006 was attached as an appendix and the considerations which the Portfolio Holder needed to give in assessing the options available.

The Portfolio Holder noted that on making the decision a balance needed to be made between the popularity of a well used play facility and the acceptance that no play facility is without some level of risk, particularly when offering children a challenging environment for exploring and developing their abilities. On the basis that the paddling pool and its stepping stones do not provide an unacceptable level or risk it was recommended that the facility remains as designed and the position is monitored.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved Option 4 as detailed in the report – ie that the paddling pool be left as designed and that the advice of RoSPA is taken in regard to “continue to monitor the situation”.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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