

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

26th February, 2007

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. in Conference Room 3, Belle Vue
Community Sports & Youth Centre, Kendal Road

Present:

Councillor Peter Jackson (Performance Management Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Jane Shaw, Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Forum was in attendance to present item 109 – Formal Response to the Language Translation and Interpretation Services Scrutiny Referral.

Councillor Geoff Lilley was also in attendance with an interest in item 107.

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager
Liz Crookston, Principal Strategy and Research Officer
Emma Dixon, Estates Manager
Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services
Stuart Green, Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development)
Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Officer
Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Pat Watson, Democratic Services Officer

Public in attendance: Mr & Mrs Allen, Mr & Mrs Picken, Mr & Mrs Armstrong
and Mr Herbert with an interest in item 107..

107. Land at the rear of Barford Close/Wisbech Close (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To obtain the Portfolio Holder's views on a proposal by residents to purchase Council land.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report outlined the history to the proposal and detailed the consultations that had taken place. The areas of land were indicated on a plan attached as appendix 1. The report indicated that, in line with the principles set out in the approved Policy on Public Open Space, the Estates Manager had contacted the Development Control 'one stop shop' to ascertain whether they would have any objections to the disposal of the land. The response was attached as appendix 2. In summary, the response was that an application for the change of use of land would not be viewed favourably. It also stated that Hartlepool Police's Crime Prevention Officer had claimed that there had not been any reported problems of anti social behaviour.

The report indicated that at the time of the initial request, the Council's Neighbourhood Manager had been made aware of the terms subject to which any disposal would be considered. This was prior to the 'one stop shop' response and given this response it was felt premature to be proposing terms. For information, however, the initial memorandum proposing terms was attached to the report as appendix 3.

The Head of Procurement and Property Services reported orally that, further to the above, residents had challenged the views of the Crime Prevention Officer and a number of those residents were in attendance at the Portfolio meeting.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder commented that it seemed fair to say that there was evidence of anti-social behaviour. He, therefore, agreed to the disposal of the land subject to the terms outlined in appendix 3 to the report including planning permission, with consideration being given to two issues, ie (i) that access to services within the area is needed and should be referred to in the legal documents, and (ii) Officers should be mindful of the size of the area of land adjoining number 16 Barford Close.

108. Employee Attendance 2006/07 – 3rd Quarter *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on the Council's performance up to and including the third quarter of 2006/07 and action taken in the third quarter of 2006/07.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided details of employee absences up to and including the third quarter of 2006/07. The Portfolio Holder was asked to note that when considering performance and particularly projected out-turn figures it is important to recognise that experience indicates that sickness levels are generally higher during the winter months compared to the summer months. The performance data for 2006/07 includes actual data (previously named unweighted data, which does not reflect seasonal differences) and weighted data (which weights the current performance to reflect seasonal sickness patterns over an average of the preceding two years). The target figure for the third quarter was 12.21 days absence per FTE employee. A more detailed breakdown, by department, was attach.

The report detailed a number of actions that had been undertaken during the third quarter of 2006/07 which were expected to help to achieve targets. The actions planned for the fourth quarter of 2006/07 were also detailed in the report.

In accordance with the wishes of the Portfolio Holder, made at an earlier Portfolio meeting, a Director/Chief Officer from each department/section that had reported an increase in levels of sickness absence, was in attendance to comment on their performance.

The Assistant Director (Planning & Economic Development) advised that the Departmental Management Team reviewed sickness absence levels, patterns and reasons for absence on a regular basis. For the third quarter, the Departmental figures had been heavily influenced by the coincidence of a number of longer term absences which were due to specific circumstances (e.g. injury sustained in a road traffic accident, a broken leg) which were not capable of being addressed via attendance management procedures; in a relatively small department the effect of a small number of such individual cases on overall figures is significant and the longer term absences accounted for just over 60% of the total days lost in the quarter. The Department was using the reporting facilities on absence levels and liaising with HR where necessary to deal with individual cases in a supportive way. Overall, despite the slight decline in performance over the quarter, performance remained good relative to the target for the year.

The Director of Children's Services advised that work had been undertaken on raising the profile of procedures and sickness absence was routinely reviewed at all management levels. Successful work had been carried out, with the support of Human Resources, to examine and, where possible, find solutions to long term sickness absences but the Director said it would take time for the results to impact on the data. There appeared to be genuine sickness reasons for the short term absences.

The Assistant Chief Executive advised that Chief Executive's Management Team review sickness on a monthly basis; each section is examined as are individual cases. There are some long term sickness cases and some short

and Officers were considering options for return to work where appropriate. He said the underlying trend would be down without the long term cases, however there was active management of sickness with a view to reducing overall absence.

The Head of Procurement and Property Services confirmed that managing absence was being addressed in similar ways to other departments. He also advised of the difficulties within the department, ie absences in the manual, cleaning and catering services. The department had drawn ten long term cases to a close and enabled twelve cases to return to work, some on a phased basis. He said that there had been an improving trend since Christmas.

The Portfolio Holder advised that he had anticipated some of the reasons given and referred to the proposed future actions to be put in place.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- noted the employee absences in relation to the third quarter of 2006/07, the actions taken in the third quarter and planned future actions;
- asked departments to be diligent and for middle and lower level management also to take an active role in implementing the proposed actions;
- accepted that improvements may not be seen for six months or so, and
- thanked Officers for attending to comment on their performance.

109. Formal Response to the Language Translation and Interpretation Services Scrutiny Referral (*Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee*)

Type of decision

Formal Response of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Purpose of report

To provide the formal response of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to the Language Translation and Interpretation Services referred by the Performance Management Portfolio on 18th September 2008.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The response indicated that members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee were largely supportive of the framework of the Draft Access Strategy, however, a number of comments had been made, as outlined below:-

- (a) That concern was expressed in relation to the cost to the Authority of using Interpreters as and when required;
- (b) That where possible the Authority should encourage mothers to talk to their children in their mother tongue to avoid the dependency upon interpreters;
- (c) That consideration should be given to the provision of appropriate aids and adaptations within the Authority's new Contact Centre;
- (d) That the overarching strategy should include Education;
- (e) That the travelling community were an 'overlooked' group in terms of their language issues, integration when they choose to settle, suppression of culture and roots and should therefore be included within the diversity planning and consultation exercise;
- (f) That the 'straplines' currently included on the Authority's literature that are currently made available to the public for example Members' Ward Surgery posters were felt to be impractical and that a recognised branding should be further explored; and
- (g) That there should be better use of public notice boards to display the Authority's diversity statement / branding.

The Chief Personnel Officer indicated that the comments from the Scrutiny Forum had been the result of debate and would be considered or implemented as appropriate within the overall equalities and diversity action plan.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder considered the formal response of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, as outlined in section 3 of the report and detailed in (a) to (g) above. He requested that departments take on board the comments and implement them where possible and if not possible then report back to Scrutiny with the reasons why.

The Portfolio Holder also agreed to allow the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to further comment on key aspects of the Draft Access Strategy where possible and prior to its approval.

110. Chief Executive's Departmental Plan 2006/07 – 3rd Quarter Monitoring Report *(Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the Chief Executive's Departmental Plan 2006/07 in the third quarter of the year.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the progress against the actions contained in the Chief Executive's Departmental Plan 2006/07 and the third quarter outturns of key performance indicators.

The Assistant Chief Executive, the Chief Personnel Officer and the Head of Procurement and Property Services each outlined actions and achievements that were the responsibility of Corporate Strategy Division, Human Resources and Procurement and Property Services respectively.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the achievement on actions and indicators. He commented that the overall position was good and accepted that Single Status issues were impacting on workloads. He also accepted that some targets were not going to be achieved but that this was not significant in the context of those which had been achieved.

111. Analysis of Best Value Performance Indicators 2005/2006 *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the Council's performance against the set of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) in 2005/06 and to target areas of possible improvement for 2007/08.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The detailed report and appendices contained analysis of the Council's performance against the prescribed Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) in comparison with other authorities. The scorecard below summarised the findings.

| 2005/06 BVPI Scorecard | | |
|--|-------------|---------|
| | All England | Unitary |
| BVPIs in top quartile | 40.2% | 41.7% |
| BVPIs in second quartile | 22.4% | 24.1% |
| BVPIs in third quartile | 18.7% | 14.8% |
| BVPIs in bottom quartile | 18.7% | 19.4% |
| Direction of Travel 2004/05 to 2005/06 | | |
| BVPIs improving | 64.6% | |
| BVPIs remaining the same | 9.1% | |
| BVPIs worsening | 26.3% | |

An average performing Council would expect to have 25% of all indicators in each of the four quartiles. Therefore, to have over 40% of indicators in the top quartile is a sign that the Council is performing well.

The report indicated that one way of evaluating how well Hartlepool is currently delivering its services is to compare performance with that of other local authorities. For each BVPI, where comparisons can be made, Hartlepool's objective is for performance to be within the top performing 25% of local authorities (top quartile).

In the report, on current performance, comparisons were made with all other local authorities in England, all other Unitary authorities, all other Tees Valley authorities and nearest neighbour authorities.

The report grouped the indicators by the seven Community Strategy themes. An additional theme, called Corporate Performance, was used to include those indicators that did not fall under one of the Community Strategy themes.

The capacity to improve was reported and a section of the report examined 99 measures of performance which were comparable between 2004/05 and 2005/06 and compared Hartlepool performance between the two years.

The Portfolio Holder was advised that an integral part of the performance management process is the ability to set accurate targets for the forthcoming year. For each BVPI is the Council's long term aim to be in the top quartile of performers nationally. For this reason all targets should be challenging, but realistic to ensure that they are achievable. Appendix 5 detailed all of the BVPIs that could be compared with other Unitary Authorities, and was broken down by department. For each indicator, the outturn for 2005/06 was given, together with the range for that particular quartile and the top 5 performing unitary authorities for that particular indicator.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder commented that the analysis of performance showed clearly how well the Council was performing in all areas, demonstrated by the information in appendix 5 that demonstrated departmental performance compared to national measures and showed significant number of cases where the authority was in the top 5 nationally.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased that the Council are setting challenging targets, he could not think of any action that Officers had not already put in place and he was delighted with the overall performance. .

112. Corporate Complaints – October to December, 2006
(Assistant Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report on corporate complaints performance for the third quarter of 2006/07.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report covered performance information on numbers of complaints, timescales for investigation and outcomes of investigations for formal complaints dealt with in the third quarter of 2006/07

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the report and indicated he was pleased that such a small number of complaints had been received. He asked for departments to be reminded about the 15 day target for reporting back to complainants with a written response to their complaint, after a thorough investigation.

113. BVPI Satisfaction Surveys 2006 – Headline Results
(Assistant Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report on the headline results from the Best Value Performance Indicator Surveys carried out in 2006.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report and appendix outlined the top line information on residents' satisfaction with Council services as collected in a range of self completion surveys carried out in the latter half of 2006.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the report accepted that a more detailed report would be brought to a future Portfolio Holder meeting after all the data collected from the surveys becomes available.

The Portfolio Holder agreed to circulation of the report to the other Portfolio Holders with the message that although this was a positive report, four service areas had below average levels of satisfaction and consideration should be given as to how they can be improved.

114. Update on statutory fees in the Registration Service

(Assistant Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on the revision of the locally set fees for non statutory services provided by the Register Office.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report briefly described the levels of fees set for mid week ceremonies in the Willows Ceremony Suite at Hartlepool Register Office and the impact on the budgets for 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the phased fee increase and the predicted effect on the budget over the three years, 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

115. Final Draft – Workforce Development Strategy 2007-2012 *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of consultation regarding a new Workforce Development Strategy covering the period 2007-2012.

To make the Portfolio Holder aware of the changes made to the draft document following the consultation.

To seek Portfolio Holder approval for the Workforce Development Strategy to be implemented (including the launch arrangements) and accept the final draft as the formal document.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report indicated that the Corporate Workforce Development arrangements are part of the Corporate Way Forward Change Management Programme. Its aim being to ensure that Hartlepool Borough Council has a workforce that meets the current and future service needs of the community and is shaped to meet external pressures and drivers. It is integral to departmental plans and contributes positively to the Council's long term vision and objectives. The Workforce Development Strategy 2007-2012 was attached as an appendix.

The Portfolio Holder was reminded that the Workforce Development Strategy 2007-2012 had been submitted to him in December 2006 and a consultation period had been approved. The report detailed the response to the consultation and the changes made to the document following the consultation responses.

The Chief Personnel Officer reported that two awards that had been won;

1. The Get On Local Government Award (GO Award), for the Council as a whole, and
2. Learner of the Year Award by the Together Project Co-ordinator.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the content of the Workforce Development Strategy 2007-2012 and agreed to the document being implemented as the final version, subject to final comments from the Trade Unions expected later this week.

The Portfolio Holder felt this was an excellent document and thanked the Officers concerned and those who had been involved in the consultation.

116. Local Government Pension Scheme – Discretionary Payments *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek the decision of the Portfolio Holder regarding the options available to Hartlepool Borough Council for the review of the current discretionary payments for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) following the introduction of new legislation that takes into account the new Age Discrimination Regulations.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided background information regarding the new regulations and three options for consideration. In addition the options highlighted the financial impacts and the Trade Union responses to each.

The Chief Personnel Officer reported orally that the Chief Solicitor had advised that, as this issue is within 'Pensions Functions, regulations under section 7, 12 or 24 of the Superannuation Act 1972' it should go to the General Purposes Committee for their consideration.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder agreed that Option 1 with the Employer Led part of Option 2, as detailed in the report, be recommended to General Purposes Committee.

117. Local Government Services Employees – 2007/08 Pay Claim *(Chief Personnel Services Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the 2007/08 pay claim submitted by the National Trade Unions in respect of Local Government Services (Green Book) employees.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided details of the 2007/08 pay claim submitted by the National Trade Unions in respect of Local Government Services (Green Book) employees.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the pay claim.

118. Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Centre – Proposed Sublease *(Head of Procurement and Property Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To request Portfolio Holder approval to the proposed sub-lease which is being implemented to allow grant funding to be obtained for building improvements.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report contained a summary of the occupational arrangements currently in place and outlined what is required for grant funding to be obtained for the building improvement works. The financial implications were outlined in the report.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder granted consent to the sub-lease and consent for the licence for alterations. The Portfolio Holder authorised the Estates Manager to negotiate a licence for a ramp to the building to be installed.

119. 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 the progress against the actions contained in the Neighbourhood 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.

120. (1) Land at King Oswy Drive (Former Henry Smith's Sports Hall) and (2) Land at Tees Road (Seaton Snook) *(Head of Procurement and Property Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To obtain Portfolio Holder authorised the Estates Manager to enter into a statutory declaration to obtain legal title to two areas of land, as follows:

- 1) Land at King Oswy Drive (former Henry Smith's Sports Hall)
- 2) Land at Tees Road (Seaton Snook).

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the history regarding the two sites and indicated the reasons as to why the Council should pursue title to them. Plans of the areas were attached as appendices 1 and 2 and the financial implications were outlined.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder authorised the Estates Manager to complete a statutory declaration in order to establish the Council's legal title to the areas.

121. Local Government Access to Information

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 122 – Approval for Compulsory Redundancy (*Chief Personnel Officer*) – Para. 4 Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority).

Minute 123 – Land adjacent to 34 The Fens, Hart (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*) – Para. 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

Minute 124 – Land at the junction of Belle Vue Way and Oxford Street (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*) – Para 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

Minute 125 – Land adjacent Corus works, Brenda Road (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*) – Para. 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

122. Approval for Compulsory Redundancy (*Chief Personnel Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key

The report was exempt under Para. 4 ie Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority).

Purpose of report

To seek a decision regarding the future employment of an employee.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The Chief Personnel Officer requested orally that this item be withdrawn.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder agreed to the withdrawal of the item.

123. Land adjacent to 34 the Fens, Hart (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

The report was exempt under Para. 3, ie Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Purpose of report

To seek the Portfolio Holder's views in relation to land.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the nature of the enquiry and the consultation that had taken place with other Council departments. It also included an officer recommendation. A plan of the area was provided and the report detailed the financial implications

Decision

The Portfolio Holder authorised the disposal of land subject to the terms detailed in the report and subject to planning permission being obtained before the sale.

124. Land at the junction of Belle Vue Way and Oxford Street (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

The report was exempt under Para. 3, ie Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Purpose of report

To seek Portfolio Holder approval to the proposed transfer of the Council's freehold reversionary interest.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The background and history of the site was provided. Details of the bid for the leaseholder of the land were provided together with the opinions on the value offered given by the Estates Manager. The report detailed the financial implications and the benefits and disadvantages of selling the site were also included in the report. A plan of the area was attached as an appendix.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder granted authority to the Estates Manager to complete the transaction subject to all contractual terms, detailed in the report, being agreed.

125. Land adjacent Corus Works, Brenda Road (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

The report was exempt under Para. 3, ie Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Purpose of report

To seek Portfolio Holder approval to proposed land transactions.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report contained background including reference to previous Portfolio reports. The financial implications were outlined in the report and a plan of the area was attached as an appendix.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- approved the sale of the reduced area of land subject to the consideration proposed in Section 3 of the report, and
- authorised the Estates Manager to negotiate a 'land swap' deal with Corus for the development of the walkway.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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