

CABINET

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

2 April 2007

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond) - In the Chair

Councillors: Cath Hill (Deputy Mayor),

Pam Hargreaves (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),

Robbie Payne (Finance Portfolio Holder),

Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Stuart Green, Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Development
Paul Briggs, Assistant Director (Resources and Support)
John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)
Alison Mawson, Head of Community Safety and Prevention
John Potts, Principal Policy Officer
Denise Wimpeny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:

Lucy Mott, New Local Government Network

The Mayor welcomed Lucy Mott, Council Liaison Manager from the New Local Government Network who was in attendance at the meeting for observation purposes.

223. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Jackson and Ray Waller.

224. Declarations of interest by members

The Mayor and Councillor Robbie Payne declared a personal and prejudicial interest in minute number 229.

225. Confirmation of the minutes of the meetings held on 19 March 2007 and 26 March 2007.

Confirmed.

226. Matters Arising from the Minutes held on 19 March 2007

The Mayor referred to a letter which had recently been despatched to Dr John Reid MP, relating to the Drug Intervention Programme Allocation for 2007/08, a copy of which was circulated at the meeting for information purposes (Minute 213 refers).

227. Tees Valley Structure Plan – Saved Policies *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To seek agreement to the saving of specified policies of the Tees Valley Structure Plan pending the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor advised that under new planning legislation introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Tees Valley Structure Plan would cease to be a development plan after 27th September 2007. However, there was a procedure for extending the life of specific policies in the Structure Plan, and a case had been made by the North East Assembly, as Regional Planning Body, in conjunction with the structure plan authority. Such an extension would cover the period until the replacement Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East was adopted.

The government had identified a number of criteria against which it would assess applications to extend the life of specific structure plan policies, details of which were outlined in the report. The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee had agreed a schedule of policies that should be saved beyond September 2007 which were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. Saving these policies would avoid any significant policy voids until the replacement RSS was published, facilitate progress on the Local Development Framework documents and provide a continuing strategic planning context for the consideration of major development proposals.

In response to a Member question relating to the structure plan policies proposed for saving beyond 2007, as detailed in Appendix 1, the Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Development provided clarification.

Decision

Agreed that the schedule of Structure Plan policies be saved pending the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy and referred to Council for endorsement

228. Youth Justice Plan 2007-08 (*Head of Community Safety and Prevention*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet's support for approval of the Youth Justice Plan 2007/08

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor reported that each year, the Youth Justice Board required Youth Offending Services to submit an Annual Plan. This plan had a prescribed format and content. Cabinet had considered an initial report and issues paper on 19 February 2007. A consultation event had been undertaken involving Youth Offending Service staff, statutory and voluntary sector partners and the Management Board. The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum reviewed the draft plan in detail at their meeting on 22 March 2007. The draft Youth Justice Plan 2007/08, attached at Appendix 1, incorporated the comments and suggestions raised during the consultation.

Key achievements in performance for the first nine months of 2006/2007 were:

- Overall re-offending rate had reduced by 27%
- Access to accommodation for young people had improved, however, emergency accommodation could still prove difficult

Key objectives for 2007/08 were:-

- Implementation of the Improvement Plan based on recommendations from the Youth Offending Service Inspection in October 2006.
- Further development of preventative services, aimed to reduce the number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system.
- Improved performance in education, training and employment, leading to improved outcomes for young people.

The Head of Community Safety and Prevention provided feedback on the following concerns which were considered and discussed by the

Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum:-

- Actions taken to achieve education, training and employment target of 90%
- More focus on parenting intervention
- The authority's involvement in looked after children/corporate parenting
- Increase in first time entrants to Criminal Justice System

Members discussed the contributors to outcomes and targets and it was suggested that partners should be identified in the Hartlepool Youth Justice Plan to ensure that accountability and successes were recognised.

Following discussion with regard to the increase in the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System, A Member sought clarification that Hartlepool received sufficient funding to reduce these figures as well as address Anti-Social Behaviour problems. The Mayor stated that these matters were being addressed within the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and additional funding from appropriate sources was being pursued to target this issue.

With regard to education and training, a Member expressed concern relating to the low levels of attendance of young people on training programmes and questioned what supervisory procedures were in place to encourage attendance, participation and completion of the programmes. The Head of Community Safety and Prevention stated that training was provided by external training providers and the Children and Young Peoples' Plan outlined how this was delivered.

A Member questioned whether an evaluation of external providers had been undertaken and considered that this be explored. Members also referred to the recent establishment of an officer post to lead on the family intervention project and requested that a progress report be provided to Cabinet in this regard. It was highlighted that the unit had recently appointed an officer from Connexions whose employment had not yet commenced. The Head of Community Safety and Prevention agreed to provide a progress report on this issue at a future meeting of Cabinet.

Decision

1. That the Youth Justice Plan 2007/08 be referred to full Council together with the above comments with a recommendation that the plan be approved.
2. That external partners be identified in the Youth Justice Plan.
3. That a progress report in relation to the family intervention project be provided to a future meeting of Cabinet.

PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF ITEM NUMBERED 230 THE MAYOR, STUART DRUMMOND AND COUNCILLOR ROBBIE PAYNE LEFT THE MEETING

229. Quorum

It was noted that the meeting was not quorate. The Deputy Mayor stated that in the absence of a quorum, and in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and the Council's Constitution, she would exercise her power of decision, and do so in accordance with the wishes of the Members present, indicated in the usual way. The following decision (Minute No'd 230) was confirmed by the Deputy Mayor accordingly.

230. Grant – Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To consider the details of a grant application to the Community Pool referred by the Grants Committee of 12th March 2007

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Culture Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder presented the report which provided details of a grant application from the Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre to the Community Pool.

Grants Committee considered the applications of 27 organisations at its meeting on 12 March 2007. Two members of the Committee declared an interest and therefore the determination of the grant could not be made by the Grants Committee and had been referred to Cabinet for consideration. The criteria and guidance notes in relation to the Community Pool was attached at Appendix 1. It was recognised that Belle Vue Sports and Youth Centre fell into Category 4 (organisations who contributed to the overall community activity and addressed some of the themes of the Community Strategy). Belle Vue had requested a grant of £23,750 for 2007/2008, the same level of grant which had been approved for 2006/07. Grant aid would be used as a contribution towards the salary costs of two key posts within the organisation. The report to Grants Committee presented on 12 March 2007 officer's recommended that the grant of £23,750 be approved. Appendix 2 gave details relating to the application and proposed outputs and benefits which would be achieved with grant aid from the Community Pool in 2007/08.

In response to a Member query in relation to the role of Councillors and the outside body appointments process, the Assistant Chief Executive provided clarification.

Decision

That a grant to Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre of £23,750 for 2007/08 be approved.

THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR PAYNE REJOINED THE MEETING

231. The Tall Ships' Races 2010 – Organisational Arrangements *(Director of Adult and Community Services and Director of Regeneration and Planning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key.

Purpose of report

To set out draft proposals for the organisational arrangements for the wide range of tasks involved in the development and delivery of the Tall Ships' Race 2010 for Cabinet approval.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor presented the report which focussed on the issues which needed to be addressed to deliver a successful Tall Ships Race in 2010. Appendix 1 demonstrated the line of communication and responsibility with clearly defined roles of each Board, Steering Group, Project Team, Management Group and each Task Group. The workstream content for each Task Group was identified in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 set out the proposed composition of the Steering and Task Groups. It was proposed that a Tall Ships Office be established with an appropriate staffing structure. Authority was requested to agree in principle the need for the early appointment of a Project Manager to lead and co-ordinate the delivery of the event. Members were also requested to consider the establishment of a Tall Ships Project Board with proportional representation from Members of the Council.

Members discussed funding arrangements to assist with start-up costs as well as parking and toilet facilities for the event. The Chief Executive stated that extensive and detailed planning arrangements would be required in preparation for the event.

Decision

1. That the proposed structure delivery plan be approved.
2. That proposed work streams content of each working group be approved.
3. That the proposed composition of the Steering and Task Groups be approved.
4. That the development of a Tall Ships Office and the appointment of a Project Manager and support team be approved.
5. That the establishment of a Tall Ships Project Board with proportional representation from elected Members of the Council be approved.

232. Heugh Gun Battery Restoration – Provision of Bridging Finance Facility (*Chief Financial Officer and Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Non-Key.

Purpose of report

To enable Members to consider the provision of “bridging finance” towards the Heugh Gun Battery restoration project.

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Chief Financial Officer reported that the Heugh Gun Battery Trust Ltd had secured funding from North Hartlepool SRB and the Heritage Lottery Fund to fund the renovation of the Heugh Gun Battery. However, HLF funding could only be claimed after expenditure had been incurred. Therefore, the Council had been requested to provide “bridging finance” to enable the project to go ahead. The project was also part of the North Hartlepool SRB Programme, for which the Council acted as accountable body and its delivery would be one of the final components of the SRB Programme. In terms of the criteria for assessing individual proposals, details were included in paragraph 2.3 of the report and the proposals complied with these. In relation to risks should the grant not be paid, discussions between the Council and HLF had taken place towards minimizing that risk through the mechanism of making regular staged payments.

Decision

1. That the provision of “bridging finance” of up to £240,000 for Heugh Gun Battery renovation be approved.
2. That the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Solicitor be authorised to conclude the necessary agreements with the Heugh Gun Battery Trust Ltd to secure the “bridging finance”

233. Local Area Agreement (LAA) Draft Delivery and Improvement Plan (DIP) 2007/08 (*Head of Community Strategy*)

Type of decision

Non-Key.

Purpose of report

To update on the progress made in producing the 2007/08 Local Area Agreement (LAA) Delivery and Improvement Plan DIP)

Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet

The Mayor referred Members to the Draft Local Area Agreement Delivery

and Improvement Plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Theme Partnership Officers had taken the lead, working with staff from the Partnership Support Team to prepare the Delivery and Improvement Plan. Section one of the plan included details of background, key contacts, funding, current activity, barriers and solutions, areas and groups targeted and key actions for improvement for each of the 36 outcomes. Section 2 contained updated information on partnership working including self-assessments and associated action plans. Any information for inclusion in the plan must be provided by Friday 13 April 2007 and would be presented to Cabinet in May 2007.

The Mayor commented that the intention of the LAA was to reduce bureaucracy and paperwork, however, this appeared to have increased.

Following a Member's suggestion with regard to a possible role for scrutiny in the development of the plan, the Chief Executive reported that that all Council actions were included in the Corporate Plan and had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Forums and Cabinet.

Decision

That progress made in developing the 2007/08 DIP be noted and any comments for inclusion in the plan be provided to the Principal Policy Officer by Friday 13 April 2007.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 5 April 2007