

REGENERATION, LIVEABILITY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

DECISION RECORD

20th April, 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in Training Room 4, Municipal Buildings, Church Square, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor Stuart Drummond (Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Sarah Scarr, Landscape Planning and Conservation Manager
Derek Gouldburn, Urban Policy Manager
Gemma Clough, Principal Regeneration Officer
Joe Hogan, Crime and Disorder Co-ordinator
Ralph Harrison, Head of Public Protection
Peter Riddell, Enforcement Officer
Mike Blair, Transportation and Traffic Manager
Malcolm Walker, NDC Programme Director
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

79. NDC Area Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP)

(Programme Director, New Deal for Communities (NDC))

Type of decision

Key – test ii applies

Purpose of report

To seek endorsement of the Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) for the NDC area.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAP) are important in encouraging local people and organisations to work together to narrow the gap between the most deprived wards and the rest of the country. The NDC area Neighbourhood Action Plan was the final NAP to be prepared for Neighbourhood Renewal Areas across the town and covered parts of Burn Valley, Foggy Furze, Grange and Stranton.

During consideration of the NAP attention was drawn to:

- The contents of the finalised plan and the processes undertaken for its

development.

- Proposals for the implementation of the plan and the various roles to be undertaken by the Council's Neighbourhood Services Department, the Neighbourhood Panel and Hartlepool Partnership's Theme Groups.

The Hartlepool NDC Partnership had agreed to allocate £55,000 per annum over the next four years for the Neighbourhood Panel to address some of the residents' priorities, along with any subsequent match funding

The Portfolio Holder welcomed the plan but noted that proposals with any financial implications for the Council would need to be considered for inclusion in the normal budgetary review process and could not be assumed to be supported.

Decision

That the NAP for the NDC area be endorsed, subject to endorsement from the Central Neighbourhood Consultative Forum

80. Choice Based Lettings (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide up to date information to the Portfolio Holder on the development and implementation of Choice Based Lettings in Hartlepool and participation in a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme for the Tees Valley.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Choice Based Lettings was a new approach to the allocation of social housing whereby all available properties would be advertised and applicants invited to bid for the property of their choice. The successful bidder would then be selected according to the allocations policy. This would replace the current system which relied on social landlords selecting properties to offer to the applicants at the top of their waiting list. All Local Authorities were required by the Government to have a Choice Based Lettings scheme implemented by 2010. The Government had also indicated that they would prefer to see cross-authority schemes developed into national or sub-regional schemes. Details were given of Hartlepool Borough Council's participation in a feasibility study to develop a Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings scheme for the sub-region.

The Portfolio Holder was advised that this sub-regional proposal was now at a critical stage where strategic and financial decisions needed to be made. These included confirmation of participation in a sub-regional scheme, the procurement of ICT systems and the revision of the existing allocations policy, with a view to introducing a Common Housing Register

and a Common Allocation Policy allowing for local lettings policies.

The Portfolio Holder noted the content of the report and expressed his dissatisfaction with the proposals, which he felt had been forced through by the Government and would be a complete disaster.

Decision

That the report be noted.

81. Conservation Policy Review (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide information on the conservation policy review and obtain the views of the Portfolio Holder on the current position.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Planning Committee Working Party was established in July 2006 in the light of considering four planning applications relating to the installation of UPVC windows in the Grange Conservation Area. The Working Party considered those proposals set out in its remit and a report would be taken back to the Planning Committee outlining progress to date. Attention was drawn to the suggestion to pursue appraisals/assessments for the six residential conservation areas as part of the review.

The Portfolio Holder welcomed the report to Planning Committee which it was hoped would clear up a lot of the current confusion surrounding conservation matters.

Decision

That the appended report be noted

82. Update on Conservation Grant Scheme (*Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To outline current progress on the conservation grant scheme.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Conservation Grant Scheme was launched on 12th July 2006 with a budget of £50,000. It was aimed at listed buildings and residential

properties located within conservation areas built pre-1919 and offered grants to undertake repairs to the structure and external fabric of the buildings together with reinstatement and restoration of important architectural features.

Details of the spend to date were attached to the report along with the potential future spend anticipated in the next financial year. Other issues were also highlighted.

The Portfolio Holder expressed his support for the scheme and suggested officers bid for more funding from the budget review process for 2008/09.

Decision

That the report be noted.

83. Update of the Coastal Arc Strategy *(Head of Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek endorsement of the Update of the Coastal Arc Strategy

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Coastal Arc is a joint regeneration initiative between Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Councils. The update focused on reviewing the regeneration programmes for the Coastal Arc area from the original strategy produced in 2004. The financial implications and risk were also outlined. A copy of the updated strategy was attached as an appendix.

Decision

That the Update of the Coastal Arc Strategy be endorsed

84. Progress Report on Strengthening Communities Best Value Review *(Head of Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on those actions contained within the Strategic Improvement Plan for the Best Value Review of the Council's role in Strengthening Communities.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Strategic Improvement Plan for the Strengthening Communities Best Value Review was approved by Cabinet on 25th September 2006. It was

indicated that progress on implementing the actions contained within the Improvement Plan would be reported to the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder on a six-monthly basis, pending their incorporation within appropriate Departmental/Service Plans.

The report gave a brief commentary upon progress achieved to date within the eight broad strategic objectives of the Strengthening Communities theme. The importance of progressing the Community Compact was discussed.

Decision

That the progress which is being made towards the delivery of the Strengthening Communities Improvement Plan as at March 2007 be noted.

That the intention for all future monitoring to be accommodated within the mechanisms for reporting upon Departmental/Service Plans hereafter be noted.

85. Draft One: Rift House/Burn Valley Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) Update *(Head of Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek comments on draft one of the Rift House/Burn Valley Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) Update.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report described the background to Neighbourhood Action Plans with a specific focus on the Rift House/Burn Valley NAP. It outlined the current position with regard to the consultation process, from the initial community conference to the formation of the draft NAP, as well as detailing the further consultation which would be undertaken. The report highlighted the contents/format of the NAP and described the future residents' summary pamphlet which was to be produced. The key concerns raised by residents at the community conference were also detailed in the report. Finally, the report identified the financial implications of the NAP once endorsement had been sought from the Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder, the Central Neighbourhood Consultative Forum, the Rift House/Burn Valley Forum and the Hartlepool Partnership.

Decision

That the update on draft one of the Neighbourhood Action Plan be noted.

86. Domestic Violence Strategy 2007 - 2010 (*Head of Community Safety and Prevention*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the service provision for the Domestic Violence Strategy 2007-2010.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Work to support victims of Domestic Violence in Hartlepool had traditionally been carried out by the Voluntary Sector, Police and various housing organisations. However there was felt to be a need for a coherent strategy to tackle domestic violence. In June 2006 a Domestic Violence Strategy development event was held involving representatives from a number of agencies including Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police and North Tees Women's Aid. Following this a Hartlepool Domestic Violence Strategy Group was formed and a Domestic Violence co-ordinator appointed who would be accountable to the strategy group.

The draft strategy identified five key objectives:

- Reduce domestic violence using prevention and education
- Support victims and improve access to services
- Increase detections and positive enforcement outcomes
- Develop data collection and information sharing
- Coordination and multi agency structures

An action plan had been prepared with timescales and responsibility for implementation and indicators to measure the success of each action were also detailed. The draft strategy was attached as an appendix.

Decision

That the Domestic Violence Strategy 2007-2010 be approved

87. Pride in Hartlepool Proposals (*Head of Public Protection*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To consider a recommendation of the Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group in respect of proposals for community projects.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report listed the proposals and recommendations for funding.

Decision

That the recommendations of the Pride in Hartlepool Steering Group in respect of community environmental projects be agreed.

88. Housing Capital Programme 2006/08 (*Strategic Housing Manager*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on the two year housing capital programme 2006/7 approved in March 2006 and to recommend approval of the draft housing capital programme 2007/8 following confirmation of the North East Regional Housing Board's capital allocation to Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The housing capital programme for 2006/8 was approved by the Portfolio Holder however the allocation for 2007/8 was subject to confirmation. The North East Housing Board had advised that the SHIP allocations were subject to a reduction of 8% following a reduction in grant allocation from central government to the NE region. This reduction in funding would affect all capital projects funding through SHIP and mean fewer works carried out. This would in turn adversely affect the Council's ability to achieve Government targets of 70% of homes in the private sector reaching decent home standard by 2010. The Portfolio Holder indicated he was not happy about the reduction in funding but approved the amendments.

Decision

That the update to the 2006/7 housing capital programme be noted and the amendments to the housing capital programme 2007-8 be approved.

89. Untidy Land and Derelict Buildings – A Co-ordinated approach to their Improvement (*Assistant Director (Planning and Economic Development), Director of Neighbourhood Services and Chief Solicitor*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To advise the Portfolio Holder of the powers to deal with derelict and untidy buildings in the town with particular emphasis on the scope for demolition, to update on action taken to deal with identified problem sites and to propose a further list of premises for targeted action.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report contained information on progress on sites being investigated as part of a targeted initiative to secure improvements in the appearance/use of derelict and untidy buildings and land in the town. An update in relation to each of the sites was attached as an appendix. Details were also given of the next batch of buildings identified for action.

Decision

That the report be noted and officers authorised to pursue appropriate action as indicated in the report.

90. Proposed Residents only Parking Scheme – Collingwood Road/Walk and Brook Street *(Head of Technical Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To consider introducing residents only parking permit controls on Collingwood Road, Collingwood Walk and Brook Street

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report contained background information and detailed the results of a consultation exercise, which had taken place with residents. The financial implications were also outlined in the report.

The Portfolio Holder indicated he would approve the request as a majority of residents were in favour of it. However he requested that the issue of residents only parking as a whole be looked at, specifically the low cost of resident permits.

Decision

That the request to create a residents only permit parking zone for Collingwood Road, Collingwood Walk and Brook Street be approved.

91. Ashwood Close *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To consider the results of two consultation exercises carried out in relation to residents request to close the cut-through from Ashwood Close to

Templeton Close on the grounds of anti-social behaviour.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

In March 2006 the North Neighbourhood Manager carried out a consultation exercise based on a request from several residents regarding the closure of the cut-through from Ashwood Close to Templeton Close and from Templeton through to the Gillen's shops. Residents were consulted and of 113 respondents 62 wanted the closure while 51 were against. A further consultation exercise in February 2007 showed 26 in favour and 16 opposed.

Any closure of a public footpath required the approval of a Magistrates Court and needed almost 100% approval from the community. It was the view of the Head of Technical Services that given the number of objections already received an application would most likely be unsuccessful. Given this the Portfolio Holder felt he had no option other than to recommend to the Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder that the cut-through remain open. The Portfolio Holder apologised to those residents in favour of the closure but felt it was unlikely that magistrates would agree to it. It was also felt preferable not to close residents off in this manner.

Decision

That the Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder be recommended not to approve the closure of the cut-through from Ashwood Close to Templeton Close.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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