

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Wednesday, 11th July, 2012.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman) Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Michael Smith

Officers: N. Schneider (CEO); J. Danks, B. Brown, E. Chesworth (R); R. Poundford, R. McGuckin, M. Batty, C. Straughan, Rosemary Young, Paul Diggins (DNS); J. Humphreys (CESC) D. Bond, M. Henderson (LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr P. Dennis, Cllr K. Lupton

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy and Cllr Steve Nelson,

CAB Declarations of Interest

42/12

Councillors Coleman and Rose declared personal non prejudicial interests in the item entitled Troubled Families Programme, as they served on the Catalyst Board.

Councillor Beall declared a personal prejudicial interest in the item entitled Troubled Families Programme as he was Chairman of the East Ravens Trust Board. Councillor Beall left the meeting room prior to any debate or voting on this item.

CAB Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2012

43/12

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

CAB LA Nominations

44/12

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved at Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet were requested to approve the nomination to school Governing Body as detailed within the report.

RESOLVED that appointment be made to the vacant Governorship subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure, as follows:-

Crooksbar Primary School – Catehrine Wilburn
St Bede's Catholic Primary School – Miss M. Galloway
St Joseph's RC – Mrs K. Donnelly
The Glebe Primary School – Cllr N. Wilburn

CAB Economic Climate Update Report

45/12

Cabinet considered a monthly update report providing members with an overview of the current economic climate, outlining the effects that this was having on Stockton Borough, and the mitigations already in place and those being developed.

Members noted some of the positive and negative developments since the last

report. Details of the support on offer to people and businesses was also provided.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work being undertaken supported.

CAB **Billingham Town Centre Regeneration**
46/12

Cabinet considered a report that provided an update on the successful agreement of a redevelopment scheme between the Council and Stockland UK for Billingham Town Centre.

The report covered work already underway on the provision of new public toilets, recent progress related to investment in the centre, detail of works to be undertaken and the outline delivery programme for the high quality paving, public realm and refurbishment works.

Members were reminded that despite Stockland exploring all reasonable avenues it had been unsuccessful in delivering a foodstore, which had been a key element of the 2010 Masterplan for the Town Centre.

Members had agreed, at it's meeting held on 3 November 2011, that this should not prevent the Council from releasing allocated capital to support the delivery of regeneration proposals.

Following Cabinet in November 2011, detailed design work had been undertaken, culminating in a high quality redevelopment scheme, which prioritised areas for investment across the centre.

Proposals, developed in partnership with Stockland UK and Billingham Members, focused on a new paving and public realm scheme throughout the town centre, improvements to access, lighting, building frontages, a dedicated market area and new public toilets in West Precinct. A plan and images of the public realm scheme were provided to Cabinet.

The scope of all works in the town was reflected in a revised development agreement between the Council and Stockland. The agreement which would supersede the conditions within the sale agreement of 2007 had been signed in May 2012.

The revised development agreement would enable works to go ahead that would bring meaningful redevelopment to Billingham Town Centre, complementing the £18.5million investment in the refurbishment of Billingham Forum and investment in improvements to John Whitehead Park.

Plans for the delivery of a £2.7m Customer Service Centre in the heart of Billingham town centre were underway. Officers were in discussion with the PCT as to whether it required space within the new facility. A detailed report on the Customer Service Centre would be brought to Cabinet in September 2012.

Members noted that positive progress in agreeing redevelopment priorities had

been supported by new retail interest in the town centre.

Detailed design work was underway and would continue in order to get the proposals to a point where tender documents could be issued. In the meantime work would begin in autumn 2012 on all other elements of the refurbishment, including new stairways, removal of unused aerial walkways to Kingsway car park.

It was anticipated that all of the elements of the refurbishment, outside of the public realm works would be complete by Christmas 2012, allowing for paving and public realm works to begin in January 2013. It was anticipated that new public toilets in West Precinct would be opening in September 2012

Once detailed design work was complete, a number of 3D visuals and drawings would be produced to be used at a public display in Billingham Town Centre in mid July, to inform the public, community groups, businesses and stakeholders of the proposals and to allow them an opportunity to comment and gain further information.

The outline programme for the delivery of the main paving and public realm works would be confirmed once tenders had been let and a report would be brought to Cabinet later in the year to update Members on progress of works and further developments in Billingham town centre.

RESOLVED that

1. the progress made in moving forward redevelopment proposals in Billingham Town Centre be noted.
2. the outline programme for delivery of redevelopment works and public communication be noted.

**CAB
47/12** **Teesdale**

Cabinet considered a report relating to the maintenance of elements of the infrastructure of the Teesdale area.

Members noted that, for some considerable time, the Council had been receiving complaints in relation to the lack of maintenance of areas of Teesdale.

Cabinet noted that officers had been able to identify the owners of the areas where maintenance was an issue and had calculated the cost to bring the areas up to an adoptable standard. See below

The Crown (formerly Stemgrove) - £145,041
Teesdale Property Company - £46,830
Homes and Communities Agency - £18,716 (plus £16,310 for Anchorage Bridge)

It was noted that the Crown was unlikely to contribute to the costs however, contributions from other landowners were being secured. The £145,000 would need to be funded from existing Council budgets.

Members agreed that the only long term solution for this area was to secure adoption and maintenance of the infrastructure. This was not a route the Council would normally pursue as it would usually be achieved via a commuted lump sum or section 106 agreements. However, such options did not exist in this situation. Coupled with this the area in question was high profile and of strategic importance to the existing office and residential accommodation.

Plans showing the land owned by the above bodies were provided to members with an overview of the areas proposed for adoption.

Members agreed that the issues relating to Crown property should be highlighted with the local MP with a request that he takes the matter up with the relevant Government department.

RESOLVED that

1. the progress made to date on the issue of maintenance of areas of infrastructure in Teesdale be noted.
2. the principles of seeking a long term solution of these issues, via adoption, be agreed, subject to satisfactory resources being available and contributions received from existing land owners where possible.

**CAB
48/12**

Tackling Family Poverty

Members were provided with an update on the family poverty framework and were asked to approve a revised document.

It was explained that a special consultation event was arranged with Stockton Renaissance to consider the Family Poverty Framework.

The event was to determine what poverty looked like for the Council and many of the organisations working across Stockton and to determine what actions collectively and individually could be taken to address some of the issues raised.

Members noted that since the original report to Cabinet the national picture continued to change, not least in terms of central government policy, the publication of a number of relevant reviews and research, a much reduced financial settlement across all public sector organisations. These had been reflected in the Framework document.

The outcome from the event showed that whilst there were some ambitions included in the original framework which were supported, overall the draft was seen as too general and all encompassing and needed to be more ambitious in its tone. There was also a strong suggestion that the document proposed a universal approach to tackling family poverty which would be difficult to achieve given the current financial climate. It identified there was a need to be far more targeted in which families were offered support. It was noted that since the consultation event took place the programme of EIT reviews and some policy initiatives within the Council, had resulted in outcomes that were implementing a more targeted approach. For example, the Early Intervention Grant Review. Other activity included the Troubled Families initiative and work on the impact of

the Welfare Reform.

It was noted that since the last report in January 2012 the Framework document had been updated to reflect:

- National Policy changes
- National research undertaken
- Recent consultation undertaken with Renaissance and Young People in our area
- Strategic Aims documented in both the Council and partnership documents that focus on tackling the poverty agenda.
- Day to day practical activity we and our partners are delivering to address the poverty agenda in Stockton.

The Coalition Government's policy framework with regard to family poverty had also become clearer and this was documented in the framework.

The Government also instigated a number of relevant reviews which had concluded and reported. The findings had been taken into consideration.

All of the factors outlined above have been taken into account and a revised draft framework produced. This was provided to members as an appendix to the report.

Measures and targets would be finalised to enable monitoring of the impact of the framework over the short medium and long term.

An Annual update of the Framework Document would be required to reflect changes following the development and update of both the Council and partnership plans and strategies, such as the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, JSNA, impacts of policy changes etc.

RESOLVED that the Poverty Framework Document, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

**CAB
49/12** **Quarter 4 and 2011/12 Year End Performance and 2011/12 Financial
Outturn.**

Members were provided with a report which detailed outturn and commentary on progress against the targets set for 2011/12. It highlighted achievements against the Council Plan and it was noted that 82.7% of objectives had been met. The report detailed areas for improvement, provided a summary of Freedom of Information requests, complaints, commendations and comments, RIPA update, EIT update and provided details of the staff suggestions scheme.

The report also provided the Council's financial position at the end of the 2011/12 financial year. Details of future uncertainties were also provided, specifically:

- Localisation of Business Rates and uncertainties around how it will work.
- Localisation of Council Tax Benefit and funding reduction of 10%.
- Public Health allocation and a potential reduction in allocation.

RESOLVED that:

1. the levels of performance and proposed actions be noted.
2. the updated Medium Term Financial Plan be approved.

**CAB
50/12** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of various bodies.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Children's Trust Board – 27 March 2012
Safer Stockton Partnership – 8 May 2012
Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership – 15 May 2012
Western Area Partnership – 28 May 2012
Central Area Partnership Board – 31 May 2012
Northern Area Partnership – 11 June 2012

**CAB
51/12** **'Troubled Families' Programme - Delivery Proposals**

Members considered a report that sought approval to a proposed agreement with the Children and Young People's Consortium facilitated by Catalyst in relation to the funding and delivery of the Government's 'Troubled Families' programme in Stockton on Tees.

Cabinet was reminded that, at its meeting held on 17 May 2012, it had approved the overall approach to delivering the 'Troubled Families' programme in Stockton. Since that meeting appropriate contract arrangements had been made with Tees Valley Housing Association (TVHA) to extend and expand the Family Intervention Project, which they delivered on behalf of the Council.

Further discussions had also taken place with third sector organisations, including Catalyst, about their potential roles in programme delivery, and agreement had been reached to recommend working with the third sector via the Children & Young People's Consortium, which was facilitated by Catalyst and had 22 local community and voluntary organisations in membership, with an established governance structure through the Consortium Board.

Members noted the merits of this approach in terms of expertise, consistency, co operation and efficiency.

It was proposed to invest up to £300,000 in the Consortium approach over the initial programme period (i.e. up to March 2015), and to make 5% of this funding subject to satisfactory delivery of the overall programme, at the level of at least 50% success (as defined by the CLG criteria), in line with the agreed financial model. It was explained that it would be an explicit principle of any agreement with the Consortium that both the Consortium itself and the appropriate Consortium member organisations were all fully signed up to maximising the impact and benefits of the programme for the families and for the wider communities across the Borough, and to recording and providing all the data

needed to support the Payment by Results claims process and to support the Council's position in relation to audit of the programme. Furthermore, it was proposed to set up the arrangement as an initial 12 month agreement, with options to extend subject to satisfactory performance (in line with the existing arrangement with TVHA).

In relation to allocation of cases between TVHA and the Consortium, it was intended that the more complex and demanding cases were allocated to TVHA, in view of their particular expertise and track record in family intervention, and that other cases were allocated via the Consortium. It was recognised that in some cases organisations in membership of the Consortium had an established presence in particular communities and that this was likely to have a bearing on case allocation to and within the Consortium.

It was noted that cases could be allocated from early October 2012.

RESOLVED that:

1. the principle of entering into a funding agreement with the Children & Young People's Consortium to assist with the delivery of the 'Troubled Families' programme in Stockton-on-Tees, up to a value of £300,000 during the period up to the end of March 2015 be approved.
2. the Head of Community Protection, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to finalise the details of the agreement.

CAB 52/12 Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan: Regeneration and Environment Local Development Document (LDD) and Draft Shop Fronts and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Members considered a report that presented the Regeneration and Environment Local Development Document and the Draft Shop Fronts and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document and their associated assessments.

It was explained that the documents would, when adopted, form part of Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan (formerly termed Local Development Framework) along with the adopted Core Strategy, the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPDs and a number of adopted SPDs. Together with these documents, they would provide the policy basis for the determination of planning applications within the borough.

The Regeneration and Environment LDD itself was an amalgamation of several documents which were previously to be prepared separately and also incorporated the results of the 'Planning for Housing' consultation which took place last year. The primary purpose of the LDD was to provide the detail of how the strategic policies in the adopted Core Strategy would be implemented by allocating sites for housing, transport infrastructure, economic development, retail, community facilities and mixed use regeneration schemes, as well as identifying key environmental and historic designations in the borough. Members noted that the LDD also included four strategic policies relating to sustainable development, the distribution of housing, limits to development and

the extent of green wedges and detailed policies for their implementation.

The Shop Fronts and Advertisements SPD provided additional guidance for developers on the implementation of Core Strategy policy CS3 with the aim of improving design standards and quality of shop fronts and advertisements, to help create more attractive and distinctive retail centres.

Both documents required a period of public consultation before they could move on to the next stage in their production.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- 1. the Regeneration and Environment LDD Preferred Options, its associated assessments (Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)), draft Policies Map, draft Infrastructure Strategy and Consultation Statement be endorsed for a period of public consultation from Monday 30 July to Monday 24 September 2012.**
- 2. the Draft Shop Fronts and Advertisements SPD and the associated Habitats Regulations Assessment be endorsed for a period of public consultation from Monday 30 July to Monday 24 September 2012.**
- 3. any further changes to the documents, prior to the consultation period, be delegated to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport.**

CAB 53/12 Localism Act 2011 (“the Act”) – A New Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members

Members considered a report that provided details of a proposed new code of conduct for the Council’s members, as required by the Localism Act 2011 (“ the Act”).

Members were reminded that Council, at its meeting in March 2012, had agreed principles and guidance to officers for the drafting of the new code.

Cabinet was provided with a briefing note and a copy of the revised draft code of conduct for Stockton’s Members.

It was explained that members of the Standards Committee had had an opportunity to comment on the draft code and it had been discussed with leading Members and Officers.

Members noted that, when adopted, the Council was required to publicise the new code to bring it to the attention of persons living in the area.

Cabinet agreed that the code should be included in the planned review of the arrangements for dealing with misconduct allegations.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- 1. the draft code of conduct, attached at Appendix 4 to the report, be**

approved and adopted by the Council as the code for dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the Authority when acting in that capacity.

2. the publicising of the adoption of the code required by the Act, be delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Finance; and that

3. the review of the new standards arrangements, which Council previously agreed the Monitoring Officer should carry out after 12 months of their operation, include a review of the new code of conduct for members.