

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 17th October, 2012.

Present: Cllr Lynne Apedaile (The Worshipful the Mayor); Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Mark Chatburn, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Michael Clark, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Phillip Dennis, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Ben Houchen, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Elliot Kennedy, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Ray McCall, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mrs Kathryn Nelson, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Andrew Stephenson, Cllr Norma Stephenson, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr David Wilburn, Cllr Norma Wilburn, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: N Schneider (CE); J Danks, L King (R), J Humphreys (CESC); P Kelly (DPH); D E Bond, P K Bell (LD).

Also in attendance: 4 Members of the Public.

Apologies: Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Bob Gibson, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Maureen Rigg, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Michael Stoker and Cllr Tracey Stott.

C Declarations of Interest

73/12

There were no interests declared.

C Minutes

74/12

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2012 were signed by the Worshipful the Mayor as a correct record.

C Sergeant Gareth Thursby and Private Thomas Wroe – 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment

75/12

Members stood in a minutes silence as a mark of respect for Sergeant Gareth Thursby and Private Thomas Wroe – 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment.

C Retirement of John Lowther

76/12

A presentation was made to John Lowther who was the former Director of the Joint Strategy Unit and was a Special Projects Advisor at Tees Valley Unlimited.

C APSE Awards

77/12

The Worshipful the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health presented Barbara Hall and Melanie Greenwood with the APSE Award for Best Health and Wellbeing Initiative.

C Northumbria in Bloom / Britain in Bloom Awards

78/12

The Worshipful the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Environment presented Jamie McCann, Jo Robinson and Nigel Clark with the gold award for the Champion of Champions section in the Britain in Bloom national finals and the trophies for the gold awards for the Northumbria in Bloom Awards for Stockton, Billingham and Thornaby.

C **North East Regional Ceremony of the National Training Awards**

79/12

The Worshipful the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Finance presented Jill Douglas with the National Training Award for the Middle Manager Development Programme.

C **Investors In People**

80/12

The Worshipful the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Finance presented Jill Douglas with the Investor in People organisation certificate that had been awarded to the Council.

C **Public Question Time**

81/12

The Director of Law & Democracy informed Members that no public questions had been received.

C **Members' Policy Seminar Programme**

82/12

Consideration was given to a report that provided Council with an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminar held in September 2012 which provided updates on Adults Social Care, School and Education Policy; The Local Authority responsibility and Local Landscape. School Emergency Planning arrangements were also covered in the presentation.

Members Policy Seminars were an important vehicle for both informing and consulting with Members on a variety of topics from Policy and Legislative changes, contributions to Government consultations, and providing an update on local service provision from partner organisations. They had been in place since January 2009 and were particularly useful for those issues which were of importance to the Council or partners but were in the early stages of development, or those which would be of interest to Members.

A programme of seminars was set annually with events planned on a monthly basis. Topics were reviewed monthly by the Corporate Management Team to ensure issues were current and discussions and information provision was timely. Special, additional seminars were arranged as required.

There had been one Member Seminar since the last report to Council. The September seminar provided an opportunity for Members to be briefed on the Adult Social Care Service and covered the legislative framework, achievements over the past 12 months, the challenges facing the service and any known emerging issues.

Key data identified that the Council had provided a service to 7555 clients in 2011/12, 2125 of whom were new to the service. The service had seen a number of improvements and changes over the past 12 months notably a new structure had been implemented, improved choice and control for service users, improved community provision, case management systems had been reviewed and improved, and prevention services such as Care Call had delivered better outcomes for users. There had been changes to the eligibility criteria following the FACS review and Health and Wellbeing Improvements made.

The service still faced a number of challenges including significant demographic changes which would impact on services, completion and implementation of the Learning Disability and Mental Health EIT Review, Care Director, the new IT recording systems needed embedding, responding to sector lead improvement arrangements, Care Home Fees and contract negotiations continued to provide challenges, in addition to the significant changes going on within the NHS.

Emerging issues for the service included the focus on the Prevention and Early Intervention agenda, the Dilnot Report on long term funding, implementing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the work being undertaken by the Adult Social Care Programme Board.

The second presentation provided an update on the enacted Education Act 2011, the detailed changes to Early Years Service with respect to provision of early year's education free to all 3 and 4 years olds and two year olds identified as disadvantaged. Details of the new Stop and Search powers were discussed changes to powers of Head Teachers with respect to exclusions and detentions. A summary of national organisations abolished was provided and information on regulations around the creation of new schools and the inspection of schools was discussed. An update on the impact of arrangements around Academy Status was provided along with a list of the priorities for Stockton Education provision.

Members were reminded of the revised arrangements already in place for Emergency Planning situations in schools and the changes to the communication arrangements to support these.

All slides, agenda and supporting material from the seminars could be accessed at <http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**C
83/12**

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Consideration was given to a report on the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees. It outlined the feedback received from the consultation events held over the summer period and how this had been incorporated into the revised Strategy. In order to implement the Strategy, a delivery plan approach would be developed which would outline the actions and accountabilities required to meet the aims and aspirations of the Strategy.

The Health and Wellbeing Board and Partnership had undertaken the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Stockton on Tees based on the emerging themes and issues identified through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). As part of the process the draft Strategy was consulted on during the period of 12th July to 25th August 2012.

As part of the consultation a number of engagement routes were undertaken and these were detailed within the report.

The full report and all of the consultation feedback was attached to the report and the feedback would also be used to inform the Joint Strategic Needs

Assessment work as there would be specific elements which may help inform the “what people say” section.

In order to address the feedback, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy was redrafted and a copy was attached to the report. From the feedback received there were some priorities within the Strategy which emerged and these were detailed within the report.

There were a number of comments around ensuring the infrastructure enabled the delivery of these plans.

From the feedback the Health and Wellbeing Board and Partnership recommended that the Strategy had an overarching framework which maintained an oversight of the six Marmot Principles but that it focuses its attention on:-

- Give every child the best start in life,
- Addressing ill health prevention, and
- Getting the infrastructure right.

The Health and Wellbeing Board and Partnership had endorsed an approach to support the implementation, of the Strategy. It was proposed that the delivery plan be developed for the purpose of implementing, reviewing and monitoring the progress of the Strategy.

The objectives and actions across the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy required the input and contribution from a range of organisations and partners. The Delivery Plan arrangements needed to be proportionate, to provide challenge without creating an undue burden of reporting processes. Some work was being undertaken to map the various plans and strategies that link with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (e.g. Family Poverty Framework, Sustainable Community Strategy and delivery plan etc,) which would help to inform development of the Delivery Plan and its links with other, existing partnership strategies.

The Local Authority Policy Officer Group (POG) would take a lead on drafting the initial delivery plan and would seek input from other stakeholders as the plan developed. The role of POG would also help bring together some of the specific feedback from the public consultation around actions / issues that needed to be considered. This might encompass elements such as the health needs of ex service personnel or targeting of work via specific areas or towards vulnerable groups, which may be overlooked in local plans. The Health and Wellbeing Board would maintain oversight of the delivery plan and ensure that the delivery plan was robust.

The format of the delivery plan should also enable the development of an associated performance report. This would need to monitor the relevant outcome measures, ensure alignment with the national Public Health Outcomes Framework and enable the tracking of performance. This work would need to be integral to the delivery plan.

Cabinet considered the report at its meeting held on 4th October 2012 and a copy of the relevant minute was attached to the report.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The consultation feedback be noted.
2. The revised Health and Wellbeing Strategy based on the consultation feedback be agreed.
3. Any minor changes to the Strategy be incorporated and
4. The delivery plan approach to support the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy be noted.

**C
84/12** **Amendment to the Planning Committee**

At its Annual Meeting, held on Wednesday 25 May 2011, the Council approved appointments to its Committees, Panels and Joint/Outside Bodies for 2011/15.

Subsequently the Council had been asked to make one amendment to the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that Councillor John Gardner be removed and Councillor Ken Lupton be added to the Planning Committee.

**C
85/12** **Flood Update**

The Cabinet Member for Environment gave an update regarding the floods that had taken place.

The Cabinet Member for Environment outlined that the rainfall which started in earnest on Monday 24th September led to an unprecedented emergency flooding situation facing Stockton Council and other public services.

The Cabinet Member for Environment thanked staff from many different teams within the Council and other public services including the Police, Fire and Ambulance services and Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit for their work.

The flood update covered three areas:-

- * the immediate response
- * recovery
- * the wider issues of flood defences

More than 100mm of rain fell inside two days. The equivalent of a typical September's rainfall in less than 48 hours.

This led to flooding across the borough and wider. Lustrum Beck burst its banks as did Billingham beck. Surface water flooding occurred in many areas, including major and minor roads.

The floods had a devastating impact for people whose homes were flooded.

Council staff had worked tirelessly to try and support people and the Council

was committed to continuing to do so.

The priority on Tuesday, 25th September and over the following days was to keep residents safe.

Staff from Stockton Council were out monitoring the situation from 2am onwards on that Tuesday.

Senior staff were immediately dispatched to the multi-agency Command Room at Police Headquarters to represent the Council and local arrangements were established in the Borough to co-ordinate actions.

Actions included:-

- Direct Services assisted at the scene and worked with the emergency services to help evacuate people from their homes and transport them to family, friends or the emergency relief centre
- Technical Services worked to assess the stability of housing and other structures
- A number of roads were closed throughout the Borough by officers to safeguard motorists
- Neighbourhood Enforcement Service staffed road closures on site and guarded generators
- Staff from Children, Education & Social Care set up a Reception Centre at Splash
- Emergency temporary accommodation was arranged by the Housing team for a small number of residents
- The Council communications team used all available channels to try and ensure people understood what was happening and encourage them not to put themselves at risk.

The speed with which waters rose, in particular within Lustrum Beck, and later at Billingham Beck, meant this was a genuine emergency situation.

Many Stockton Council staff worked intensively over this period, with just a few hours sleep.

In total more than 140 domestic properties were flooded.

A full review of the response to this unprecedented flooding would be carried out and any lessons learnt from it.

The security and safety of residents was paramount the work of Stockton Council staff and partners from the emergency services, the RNLI, the NHS and other agencies helped achieve this.

From Thursday, 27th September onwards the recovery phase had taken place.

Immediate recovery work included staff visiting homes door to door in the Newtown area hit by the beck bursting its banks at Browns Bridge.

Northern Power Grid moved rapidly to try and restore power, which also involved going door to door for safety reasons to reconnect houses individually.

A temporary mobile information point was put in place in Hartburn then at Browns Bridge, providing information on a range of support services available.

Leaflets were dropped through doors of flood affected properties with advice, contact numbers and details of service such as how to get flood damaged goods removed by the council.

Details of help available for people affected by flooding from the Council and third sector organisations and advice for property owners was also on the Council's website.

Since the flooding, Council staff had been regularly monitoring roads and culverts to try and keep the surface water drainage systems flowing where possible and road networks open.

Examples of very specific responses to individual households had included:-

- Additional security measures including fitting alarms and increased night time patrols of areas for residents who couldn't stay in their house immediately after the floods.
- Emergency and extended temporary housing accommodation.
- Once the ok was given by insurance companies, flood-damaged goods had been taken away and the outsides of houses jetwashed on request.

For people whose homes were badly flooded, the nightmare wasn't over and the Council would do everything possible to help them.

Again a full review would be held looking at every aspect of recovery operations and activities, alongside other agencies.

This would of course take into account issues and concerns directly raised by residents.

What went well and what could be improved would be looked at and built into resilience, response and recovery plans for the future.

The devastating flooding had brought the question of flood defences to the forefront.

Funding of £150,000 was approved more than a year ago, through the Local Levy scheme, for the Environment Agency to deliver a flood defence scheme at Brown's Bridge.

The scheme had not been delivered. Although its scale may not have prevented

the extent of flooding and damage to property experienced by Stockton residents, the failure to deliver the scheme was totally unacceptable.

The Environment Agency had been pressed for many months to get on and deliver the flood defences at Browns Bridge. The Cabinet Member for Environment had met with the Environment Agency on site at the start of 2012, they consulted with residents, and even issued a press release in February 2012 saying work would start soon.

The Cabinet Member for Environment had written to the regional director of the Agency expressing anger and had held meetings with senior managers. The Council would not stop pressing for the defences to be built.

The Agency's plans for a larger flood alleviation scheme to disperse water upstream at Six fields had been around for more than a decade.

This was a multi-million pound scheme. Funding was not forthcoming for it over the past decade, even at a time after the 2007 Humberside floods when the Labour government increased the national flood defences budget to some £350m per year. This budget was cut by 27% by the current government.

This made it even more pressing that the Agency constructs defences at least to a 1 in 20 year standard at Browns Bridge.

The Council must work in partnership with the Environment Agency to look at any further opportunities to build flood defences in the future. But at the moment, the Council was holding them to account and they were in no doubt how people in Stockton felt.

The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed to forward his flood update to all Members and was thanked for his communications to Members during the floods.

C
86/12

Motion

The following motion was submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1 by Councillor Michael Clark, seconded by Councillor Beall:-

"In the 1930s the pioneering Chief Medical Officer for Stockton, Dr George M'Gonigle demonstrated the link between poverty and deprivation and ill-health and high mortality rates.

80 years on with people in the poorer parts of the borough still experiencing poorer health and dying earlier than their better-off fellow-residents, his work remains as relevant as ever.

This council believes that the allocation of increasingly scarce NHS resources must continue to take into account deprivation levels and consequently makes clear its opposition to the funding formula recommendations from ACRA (Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation) contained in the DoH Healthy Lives, Healthy People document which if applied, would result in a reduction of £2.49m in Stockton's baseline funding for public health and a loss of more than £53m across the region.

It calls on our MPs to support our skilled public health professionals in their continued efforts to reduce health inequalities in the borough."

Under Council Procedure Rule 14.8 Councillor Clark made the following alteration to the last paragraph of the Motion:-

"Council agrees to write to both our local MPs to ask them to support our skilled public health professionals in their continued efforts to reduce health inequalities in the borough."

The motion was carried.

**C
87/12**

Motion

The following motion was submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1 by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Lewis:-

"This Council would like the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to note the following:-

Stockton Borough Council believes that local people, through their democratically elected local authorities, are the most suitable judges of what development is acceptable in an area and the suitable level of contributions that developers need to make;

Stockton Borough Council opposes:-

- The Secretary of State's proposals for the Planning Inspectorate to have powers to override agreements between Councils and developers over the number of affordable housing units allocated to planning applications.
- The Secretary of State's proposals for planning permission – currently required for extensions of more than three or four metres from the rear wall of any home – to only be needed for those reaching beyond 8m for detached homes and 6m for others
- The Secretary of State's intention to override Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1990 which will allow developers to immediately appeal to the Planning Inspectorate over the allocation of affordable housing units in any scheme with which they may be concerned.
- The Secretary of State's proposals for the Planning Inspectorate to take planning powers away from local authorities which he deems to be slow or of making poor quality planning decisions in determining applications.

This Council notes that the current Coalition government did listen earlier in the year over concerns regarding the National Planning Policy Framework and revised its plans accordingly, so urges the Government to listen to the concerns being expressed by the cross-party LGA;

This council however welcomes other parts of the stimulus package including:-

- £300 million to provide 15,000 affordable homes across the country
- An extension of the refurbishment programme to bring an extra 5,000 empty homes back into use
- £280m for FirstBuy, the shared equity scheme to give a further 16,500 first time buyers the chance to own their own homes

- Up to £10bn of guarantees to housing associations, property management companies and developers which will be able to use the guarantees to secure lower borrowing costs. This will lead to hundreds of thousands of extra rental homes being built.

This council resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, outlining this council's opposition to the plans."

Councillor Beall moved and Councillor Cook seconded the following amended motion:-

"This Council would like the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to note the following:-

Stockton Borough Council believes that local people, through their democratically elected local authorities, are the most suitable judges of what development is acceptable in an area and the suitable level of contributions that developers need to make;

Stockton Borough Council opposes:-

- The Secretary of State's proposals for the Planning Inspectorate to have powers to override agreements between Councils and developers over the number of affordable housing units allocated to planning applications.
- The Secretary of State's proposals for planning permission – currently required for extensions of more than three or four metres from the rear wall of any home – to only be needed for those reaching beyond 8m for detached homes and 6m for others.
- The Secretary of State's intention to override Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1990 which will allow developers to immediately appeal to the Planning Inspectorate over the allocation of affordable housing units in any scheme with which they may be concerned.
- The Secretary of State's proposals for the Planning Inspectorate to take planning powers away from local authorities which he deems to be slow or of making poor quality planning decisions in determining applications.

This Council urges the Government to listen to the concerns being expressed by the cross-party LGA.

This council resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, outlining this council's opposition to the plans."

The amended motion was carried.

C
88/12

Members' Question Time

The following question was submitted by Councillor Cherrett for response by the Cabinet Member for Access & Communities:-

"On 3rd August members were consulted about the "Access to Services

Programme, Phase 2 – Improvements to Municipal Buildings Reception Area. We were told that works would be undertaken to construct a new reception desk and replace the soft furnishings. “This will be a modest reconfiguration which, to keep costs to a minimum, retains existing flooring and the wooden panelling on the walls....” Various other cost saving measures were mentioned in the e-mail.

We were told that Municipal Buildings is no longer accessed by our customers but that some cosmetic changes were to take place to the reception / foyer area to “tidy it up, make it welcoming, fit for purpose and create a good first impression for visitors”.

I note that a large screen television has been installed in this area.

How much has this television screen cost and to whose benefit? How does this make the reception area “fit for purpose”?

The Cabinet Member for Access & Communities responded with:-

"The opening of the Stockton Customer Service Centre brought together a range of Council services, previously delivered from various reception points across the town centre, into a single location with modern facilities offering improved access to services for our customers. It enabled the closure of 5 service specific reception areas to the public and changed the way that the Municipal Buildings reception area is used; it is no longer used by members of the public, instead mainly by those attending business meetings. Around 300 people per week use the reception point. To these visitors the reception area and services provided there continue to be seen as “the face of the Council”.

Over recent weeks the reception area waiting facilities have been used by senior MDs from multi-national companies, representatives from local businesses, colleagues from other councils and those attending for job interviews. The television has helped to provide a business friendly environment, providing news and information for those that want to listen or watch whilst they wait. This type of feature is now the norm in modern business receptions. At the moment the TV is used only to show the BBC News channel but in addition, the screen itself can be used to give out corporate or public messages, when required.

We have been seeking feedback from visitors that have used the new Reception and have received some very positive comments to quote a few examples

Director of Investment for American corporation investing £500m in Stockton: “I caught up on the news for 5 minutes – I didn’t really notice the reception area – which says enough”.

Managing Director of one of the region’s biggest developers and owners of one of the region’s most successful business parks: “it’s like our business centre reception – open, relaxed and welcoming – bet you pinched the idea from us!”

European Managing Director of manufacturing company investing £10m, creating 200 jobs in Stockton: “your reception is looking great”

The cost of the television was £229.14."

Councillor Cherrett asked the following supplementary question:-

"I must comment that all those high profile people should not be kept waiting for so long that they have to start watching television. In times of austerity it seems that we can't afford to repair the floor or the walls but we can afford a new television. Who authorised the big flat screen television?"

The Cabinet for Access & Communities responded with:-

"It was authorised by whoever agreed the original scheme for the reception works."

Councillor Lupton withdrew his question to the Cabinet Member for Environment as it had already been covered in the Flood Update item.

The following question was submitted by Councillor Lupton for response by the Cabinet Member for Adult Services & Health:-

"I understand that under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Department of Health will be transferring the responsibility for fluoridisation schemes to local authorities on the 1st April 2013.

Currently the DOH is consulting with the public and interested parties on what process local authorities should use for consultations on whether or not to fluoridate water. This process will be open until 27th November 2012.

Could you please inform Members what response the Council has made to this consultation request?"

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services & Health responded with:-

"Firstly, it is not a consultation on fluoridisation but a consultation on how local authorities will consult on fluoridisation. The consultation is open until 27th November and as yet the council has not made any response. There will be short briefing on the consultation at the Members seminar on the 18th October followed by a similar briefing at the shadow Health and Well-Being board on 22nd October. The NHS Tees consultant in dental public health, Dr Kamini Shah, is preparing her advice on the proposals for members to consider and that will be circulated through the leaders of each group within the council. Our own Director of Public Health in conjunction with myself will draw up a draft response which will be circulated to Group Leaders for any comments before submission to Government. The Council also had a Dentistry Scrutiny Review in 2006 and concluded that it would be beneficial to have fluoridated water and recommended to the Strategic Health Authority that they undertook public consultation but this never transpired. With this responsibility transferring to Local Authorities from next April it would give us the opportunity to pursue this."

C Forward Plan and Leaders Statement

The Leader of the Council gave his Forward Plan and Leaders Statement.

The significant items from the last Cabinet meeting were:-

- Major Transport Scheme Funding devolution
- Tees Valley Tenancy Strategy
- Local Authority Mortgage Scheme
- Changes to Council Tax Charges for Empty Properties
- Medium Tern Financial Plan

Other matters since the last council meeting were:-

- A task group had been established for Direct Line closure and First Source closure
- Yarm Parking – A Judicial Review had upheld Council policy
- Morley Carr Farm – Secretary of State Eric Pickles did not intend to call the recent planning decision in
- Transport funding - There had been success of £11m for A19 Wynyard and Parkway junction
- Rediscover Stockton – A shop was about to open on the High Street
- Work had started on the High Street regeneration scheme
- The Globe was waiting for a decision on funding from Heritage Lottery Fund but work was continuing
- Billingham Town Centre Regeneration was progressing well with the Integrated Health Centre refurbishment Library and Customer service centre
- Councillors and residents would be glad to hear, Billingham House was almost down!
- Thornaby Town Hall - The heads of terms has been agreed and completion was due on 2nd November 2012
- Northshore – A bid had been accepted by HCA in 1st round for an innovation centre
- Air Products at Seal Sands – The largest new renewable energy power station in the world with 600 construction jobs and 100 company jobs
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections – A TV and marketing campaign had started

At the Cabinet meeting on 22nd October significant items to be discussed were:-

- Asset Review

- Local Business Rate Discount
- Parliamentary Constituency Review Boundary Commission Report