

**Record of
Executive
Decisions
published
13/Mar/2014**



Elaine Waugh
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Civic Centre
Sunderland

13 March 2014

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:
Cabinet

**Appropriate Scrutiny
Committee:**
Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:
12 March 2014

Date of decision:
12 March 2014

Full description of decision:

To approve, in principle, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the eight North East Local Planning Authorities in respect of the duty to co-operate and to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise and agree the MOU subject to appropriate amendments.

Reasons for decision:

To comply with the Duty to Co-operate

Alternative options considered and rejected:

There are no alternative options. The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the duty to co-operate in respect of preparation of its new development plan documents. Developing a MOU is strongly advocated by the Planning Inspectorate as being an important tool in demonstrating compliance with the duty at the Local Plan Examination.

Title and author(s) of written report:

The Duty to Co-operate – Agreement of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the North East Local Planning Authorities – Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

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Is this a key decision: No

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information: No

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:
Cabinet

**Appropriate Scrutiny
Committee:**
Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:
12 March 2014

Date of decision:
12 March 2014

Full description of decision:

To approve amendment of the current policy on Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief effective from the 1st April 2014, to include

- relief of up to £1,000 per annum to occupied retail businesses with a rateable value of £50,000 or less for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16,
- 50% relief for 18 months between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more.

as detailed in the Governments Autumn statement

Reasons for decision:

To support occupied retail premises with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in 2014/15 and 2015/16 and to grant 50% relief for 18 months between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2016 for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more, both in line with Government policy.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Continue to offer Discretionary Relief in line with our current policy however this would not be reflective of Government policy

Title and author(s) of written report:

Review of the Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy – Report of the Head of Financial Resources

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Is this a key decision: No

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information: No

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:

Cabinet

Appropriate Scrutiny**Committee:**

Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:

21 March 2014

Date of decision:

12 March 2014

Full description of decision:

1. To agree to establish a collective energy switching scheme for both domestic and SME businesses in the City.
2. To agree the use of the NEPO procurement framework for Collective Energy Switching Schemes with I-Choosr as the switching agent.
3. To agree on the timescale of the first switching process.
4. To agree for any income received over and above costs be used to support future fuel poverty initiatives.

Reasons for decision:

As fuel costs continue to increase putting more of the city's residents in fuel poverty, it is vital that we do whatever we can to try to provide options for reducing fuel poverty. Establishing a Collective Energy Switching Scheme will be another strand in our approach to reducing fuel poverty and making warmth affordable for the city's residents.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

1. Do Nothing – Taking this approach would be nil costs and nil effort for the Council. A reliance on national campaigns to raise awareness to residents. This would mean that energy costs would remain high for tenants, residents, businesses and Voluntary and Community sector organisations in the City.
2. Work collaboratively with other regional local authorities – This approach will build on the existing partnership arrangement with Warm Up North scheme. Although none of the North East local authorities have a scheme currently, Gateshead, Durham and Newcastle have expressed an interest with NEPO. This approach will provide an opportunity for a wider regional participation but will require additional officer time to develop an approach that meets all authorities involved.
3. Join an existing local authority scheme – There are a number of schemes in existence such as Peterborough and Greater Manchester and these make a direct charge for joining a collective with subsequent charges for each auction.

Title and author(s) of written report:

Collective Energy Switching Scheme – Report of the Executive Director of People Services

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Is this a key decision: Yes

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information: No

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:
Cabinet

**Appropriate Scrutiny
Committee:**
Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:
21 March 2014

Date of decision:
12 March 2014

Full description of decision:

To approve the proposals for the adult social care grant assistance process for 2015 onwards and the funding proposed for 2014/15.

Reasons for decision:

The Directorate recognises the importance of supporting voluntary sector organisations to provide preventative community based support to people, with the ambition of preventing the need for statutory care support and services, whilst enabling people to be active citizens locally.

In order to support the continued transformation within adult social care, there is a requirement to continue working with voluntary organizations' as they play a vital role in our health and care system. They offer support to people at the most vulnerable points in their lives and help to build stronger relationships between services and the local community.

Voluntary organizations' bring expertise, which allows them to design and develop innovative solutions to the big challenges we face in health, public health and social care; creating community resilience.

The current grant assistance process has been set up to support the sustainability of voluntary sector organizations' or for the delivery of specific projects/services based on meeting broad adult social care outcomes. Whilst this process has been successfully operated for a number of years; there is a requirement to review how the voluntary sector are supported as the Directorate continues to implement the transformation required within adult social care.

To ensure the timeliness of the review, in line with the changes to the directorate and the implications of the Care Bill, there is a requirement to agree funding for the existing funded voluntary sector organizations' for 2014/15.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Do not provide grant assistance funding to Third Sector organisations in 2014/15 – this option has been considered and rejected as many of the organisations and projects/services that are currently funded may not be sustainable, at a time when the Council is looking to transform the provision of adult social care through better use of community services.

Title and author(s) of written report:

People Services – Adult Social Care Grant Assistance Process - Executive Director of People Services

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Is this a key decision:

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information:

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:
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**Appropriate Scrutiny
Committee:**
Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:
21 March 2014

Date of decision:
12 March 2014

Full description of decision:
To:

1. Agree that the Council is applicant and accountable body for the project and acts as project manager;
2. Agree that the Council enters into partnership and contract delivery arrangements with the project partner (Gentoo) and sub-contractors where appropriate;
3. Agree that the Council procures a supplier or consortium of specialist training services for the targeted Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs);
4. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of People Services in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary to take all necessary steps to procure and deliver the planned activities subject, where appropriate, to relevant grant funding conditions; and
5. Acknowledge the terms of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Final Grant Offer and the requirement to enter into a funding agreement on this basis.

Reasons for decision:

Approval is being sought as the project involves managing external grant support of more than £250,000. Approval is also required to progress delivery of the project, approve the funding package and agree the revised project management, partnership and procurement arrangements.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Four alternative options have been considered as follows:

- Do nothing - This option has been rejected as it does not contribute to local carbon reduction targets, business development opportunities or the deployment of renewable energy innovations to achieve savings in energy bills for local householders.
- Reduce the scale of the project - This option has been rejected because of its more limited contribution to reducing carbon emission levels and its inability to adequately develop the capacity and skills of local SMEs.
- Increase the scale of the project - This option is rejected due to the unavailability of additional ERDF and match funding.
- An alternative delivery model - This option is rejected as this delivery method would not be able to deliver the combination of outputs, innovation, research, training and deployment activities that the project proposes.

Title and author(s) of written report:

Low Carbon Social Housing Pilot – Biomass District Heating System and Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) Supply Chain Training - Joint Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of People Services

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Is this a key decision: Yes

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information: No

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:
Cabinet

**Appropriate Scrutiny
Committee:**
Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:
21 March 2014

Date of decision:
12 March 2014

Full description of decision:

To approve the following in relation to the 2015/16 academic year:

1. The admissions policy and procedures associated with the coordinated scheme of admissions. This includes a proposed change to the scheme as described in 5.5 – 5.7 of this report;
2. The criteria that will be applied where oversubscription occurs;
3. The published admission numbers (PANS)

Reasons for decision:

Approval of the city's admission arrangements is required prior to submission to the Department for Education (DFE) and publication for parents making applications for primary and secondary school admissions for the September 2015 academic year.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Given the requirements described above there are no alternative recommendations to consider.

Title and author(s) of written report:

School Admissions Arrangements from September 2015 – Report of the Executive Director of People Services

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Is this a key decision:

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information:

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

Record of Executive Decisions Published: 13/Mar/2014

Decision Taker:
Cabinet

**Appropriate Scrutiny
Committee:**
Scrutiny Committee

Date decision in force:
21 March 2014

Date of decision:
12 March 2014

Full description of decision:

to approve the acquisition of land and other assets from the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) as detailed in the report and otherwise on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Cabinet Secretary, Head of Financial Resources; Head of Streetscene and Head of Law and Governance.

Reasons for decision:

To enable the Council to be in a position to ensure that well used riverside sites are maintained to a high standard.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

1. Decline full transfer – this will avoid the risks associated with the land, but the Council will not gain control of maintaining standards on well used riverside sites and is likely to result in a lower level of maintenance in future years.
2. Decline partial transfer – sites/areas of major risk – this will avoid the risks associated with the ongoing maintenance of major structures/areas associated with the transfer but sufficient funding to maintain these structures over a long period will mitigate the risk in taking on responsibility for these assets. HCA has also indicated that the transfer must be as a complete package.

Title and author(s) of written report:

Sunderland Riverside at Stadium Park: Proposed land transfer from the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) - Report of the Deputy Chief Executive.

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Is this a key decision: Yes

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information: Yes

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None declared

