

## City of Durham

At a Meeting of **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Town Hall, Durham, on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2006, at 5.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Pape (in the Chair) and Councillors: Crathorne, Cummings, Freeman, Hopgood, Howarth, Moderate, Robinson, Simmons, Simpson and Wolstenholme

**Also Present:** Councillors Hepplewhite, Kellett, Marsden, Southwell, Taylor, Turnbull & Woods. Mr. A Jackson (Technical Support Manager)

### **412. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Walton.

### **413. MINUTES**

Minutes of the Meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **414. ATTENDANCE OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance was invited to attend the meeting after Councillor Lodge had previously expressed concern over the increase in the cost of the Swimming Pool development.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised the Committee that the increase was due to changes in the specification of the Pool which had been requested by the residents of the District. When asked where the funds had come from the Portfolio Holder for Finance informed Members that funds were taken from a development account which held grants and monies received from land sales etc.

**Note 5.35 p.m. Councillor Southwell left the meeting**

### **415. ATTENDANCE OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Leisure had been invited to attend the meeting after a question had been asked by Councillor Howarth relating to an item on the list of Portfolio Holder decisions at the previous Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Councillor Howarth had asked for additional information relating to the allocation of funds by The Big Lottery Fund to the City of Durham for play projects.

Members were advised that a consultation exercise would be carried out throughout the District and that the information would be reported back to Scrutiny Committee in February/ March 2007.

**Note 5.50 p.m. Councillor Woods left the meeting**

### **416. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Chairman advised the Committee that a training session had taken place at Collingwood College with the IDEA. The training had covered Scrutiny Best Practice.

The Chairman advised that the results of the Democratic Support Team, Members' Satisfaction Survey had been published and asked Members to note the results.

The Chairman congratulated the Democratic Support Team on the results and on behalf of Members thanked them for their services.

The Chairman advised Members that information had been received from Birmingham University relating to the availability of Scrutiny Training Courses. The Chairman advised that if any members of the Scrutiny Committee wished to attend any of the courses available to contact the Democratic Support Team or himself as funds were available in the Scrutiny budget.

#### **417. FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan, which was effective from 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2006. Members requested that clarification be sought from the Head of Environment & Leisure Services regarding the selection criteria for parks proposed for Green Flag Status.

#### **418. DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS SINCE LAST MEETING**

A copy of the schedule indicating the decisions taken by Portfolio Holders since the last Meeting is attached at Appendix A.

Members asked for clarification as to why reasons for refusal were given for one Portfolio Holder Decision relating to the allocation of Durham City Enterprise Grants and not for another decision relating to allocation of Durham Enterprise Grants.

#### **419. CABINET DECISIONS 1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER, 2006**

The Cabinet report had been noted and there were no items on which the Committee wished to comment.

#### **420. VERBAL UPDATE ON PROGRESS FROM SCRUTINY PANELS**

The Chairmen of the various Scrutiny Panels gave verbal reports on the progress of their respective Scrutiny topics.

#### **421. SCRUTINY PANEL REPORT**

##### **(a) Community Services Scrutiny Panel Reports –**

Review of Council Garages – It was agreed that the report be submitted to Cabinet.  
Review of Council House Repairs – It was agreed that the report be submitted to Cabinet.

##### **(b) Economic Scrutiny Panel Report –**

Review of Incentives to Small Business – It was agreed that the report be submitted to Cabinet.

##### **(c) Environment Scrutiny Panel Reports –**

Review of Biodiversity – After some discussion members agreed that subject to the timescale of the review being altered to 6 months that the report be submitted to Cabinet.  
Review of Unauthorised Parking on Council Land – It was agreed that the report be submitted to Cabinet.

#### **422. SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR SCRUTINY**

Two suggested topics had been received:

**Note: 6.24 p.m. Councillor Simpson left the meeting**

## Members Online

Members discussed the Members Online initiative. The Chair pointed out that at the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 the Chair had asked Members whether they would agree to pilot the Members online initiative. Subsequently, at the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2006 *“After some discussion, Members agreed with the proposed Members Online pilot scheme and that those Members who wished to ‘opt-in’ to the scheme could do so accordingly.”*

The Chair then asked Members of the Committee whether the Members Online initiative be accepted as a topic for scrutiny and placed on the list for allocation.

Members agreed 7 to 3 that the topic should be accepted.

### **Note 6.30 p.m. Councillor Cummings left the meeting**

## Swimming Pool

A suggestion had been made to scrutinise the Swimming Pool Development. Following an in-depth discussion the Chair suggested that: All Swimming Pool reports referred to in the response given at the Council meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2006, be subsequently forwarded to Scrutiny Committee for information.

### **423. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members had no further business to discuss.

Meeting terminated at 6.45 p.m.

Chairman

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**18 December 2006**  
**DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO MEMBERS**

No.	Portfolio Member	Nature of Decision	Date
1	Councillors Reynolds, Smith and Jackson	Application to retrospective grant of Licence to occupy land to the tenant of 44 Burnigill, Meadowfield for an erection of fencing surrounding land because of anti-social behaviour. Recommendation to formalise the existing arrangement by way of granting an Annual Garden Licence	October 06
2	Councillor Woods	Application received for authorisation of temporary closure of roads on Monday, 6 November between the hours of 4.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m. for the purpose of a Firework Display Recommend that an order be made in accordance with the provisions of Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 authorising the temporary closure.	23.10.06
3	Councillor Woods	Application received for authorisation of temporary closure of roads on Sunday, 19 November between the hours of 2.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. for the purpose of switching on the Christmas Lights Recommend that an order be made in accordance with the provisions of Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 authorising the temporary closure.	23.10.06
4	Councillor Woods	Application received for authorisation of temporary closure of roads on Saturday, 2 December between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. and Sunday, 3 December between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. for the purpose of the Christmas Festival Recommend that an order be made in accordance with the provisions of Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 authorising the temporary closure.	23.10.06
5	Councillor Woods	Adoption of Open Space at Lowes Barn, The Downs, Nevilles Cross Durham at the estimated annual maintenance cost of £1,920.00 Recommend that the adoption is agreed.	5.11.06
6	Councillor Reynolds	Application for authorisation of Sponsorship of Durham City Retail Awards on 29 November 2005 Recommend authorisation of sponsorship of Retail Award of £2,000 from the Durham Development Initiatives Fund.	6.11.06
7	Councillor Woods	Application has been received from Mr Bankhead enquiring if the Council would consider allowing a catering trailer to be located on Millennium Place between the hours of 7.00 p.m. and 3.00 a.m. Recommend refusal of application.	12.11.06
8	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Mr Johnson of 18 Dene Drive, Carrville enquiring whether the Council would consider granting rights of pedestrian access over land adjoining his property. The use would be for access for maintenance to the side of the property and to allow access to the rear garden of the	10.11.06

		<p>applicant's property without having to go through the property. This application was subsequent to the Council's Building &amp; Land Surveyor noticing that Mr Johnson had, in fact, encroached on to a narrow strip of Council land after the construction of a garage joined to his property.</p> <p>Recommend that subject to conditions the applicant purchase the freehold of the application site.</p>	
9	Councillor Reynolds	<p>Application received from Mrs King of M&amp;M Chemists Ltd enquiring as to whether Council would consider selling to her land to the rear of the M&amp;M Chemists at 4 Sawmill Lane, Brandon for use as parking associated with the Chemists i.e. vehicles used to deliver prescriptions to the public. The applicant has already encroached on the Council owned land.</p> <p>Recommend that a site inspection be arranged with Ward Councillors and the Leader of the Council together with appropriate Officers of the Council.</p>	10.11.06
10	Councillor Reynolds	<p>Application received from Mr &amp; Mrs Wood of 19 Littleburn Lane, Langley Moor enquiring whether the Council would consider selling to them land to the rear of their property initially for use in the construction of a Conservatory and for garden use. The Conservatory was no longer going ahead so the application is for land to be used as garden only.</p> <p>Recommend that the application be refused.</p>	10.11.06
11	Councillor Rae	<p>Application received for a Durham City Enterprise Grant of £1,000 divided as follows:- Susan McGhee t/a Venus Floral Design - £500 Donna Tunny/Trudy Cranley t/a The Kicking Cuddy - £500</p> <p>Recommend approval of payment of grant to applicants.</p>	20.11.06
12	Councillor Southwell	<p>Application for financial assistance from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Centre, Washington towards running costs.</p> <p>Recommend donation of £150 from the general donations budget for the financial year 2006/07.</p>	18.11.06
13	Councillor Holland	<p>Application received for a Durham City Enterprise Grant of £500 from Stewart Campbell t/a 33 Internet Ltd</p> <p>Recommend approval of grant.</p>	22.11.06
14	Councillor Holland	<p>Application received for a Durham City Enterprise Grant of £500 from Martin Punshon t/a Pole2Pole</p> <p>Recommend approval of grant.</p>	22.11.06
15	Councillor Holland	<p>Applications received for a Durham City Enterprise Grant of £2,500 as follows:- Andrea Townsley t/a Clever Cloggs Day Nurseries Ltd - £500 Stuart Young t/a North View Private Hire - £500 Ray Lartey t/a Mobility Direct - £500 Judith Rhea Steel t/a Kindermusik with Rhea - £500 Vick Bates t/a Hair 4 U - £500</p> <p>Recommend approval of grants to Stuart Young, Ray Lartey, Judith Rhea Steel and Vick Bates of £500 each.</p>	

		Andrea Townsley's business not classed as a small business therefore application refused.	
16	Councillor Reynolds	Application to lease land adjacent to 23 Fair View West Rainton from Mr Wood of 23 Fair View for use as additional parking. Recommended that the application be refused.	27.11.06
17	Councillor Reynolds	Application to purchase land adjacent to Holden Building Supplies off Front Street South Quarrington Hill received from Mr Holden of 2 Church Street Quarrington Hill. The land is adjacent to his business and would be used for additional storage in connection with the business. Recommended that the application be refused.	27.11.06
18	Councillor Thomson	Application for extension of Contract between Homelessness Action Partnership (HAP) and National Children's Homes (NCH) until 30 June 2007 for an additional fee of £17,500 Recommend approval to extension of Contract under existing terms and conditions of original contract dated 26 May 2005 between the Council of the City of Durham and NCH Children Services.	15.11.06
19	Councillor Rae	Application for a Durham City Enterprise Grant of £1,000 as follows:- Claire Moyse t/a Claire's Cleaning services - £500 Nigel Peter Varty t/a Varty Handyman Services - £500 Recommend approval of grant.	30.11.06
20	Councillor Woods	Application received to allow free coach parking in the City Centre for the Christmas Festival to commence at 4.00 p.m. on 1 December 2006 to promote the City as a shopping destination during the Christmas Festival Weekend Recommend approval.	30.11.06
21	Councillor Holland	Application for Durham City Enterprise Grant of £2,500 as follows:- Steven Bagnall t/a S Bagnall Roofing & Plastics - £500 Alan Burberry t/a Origems - £500 Doug Garner t/a DWG Services - £500 Jamie Dury t/a JD Sports Therapy - £500 Fiona Mawson t/a Anam Cara - £500 Recommend approval of <b>only 2</b> of the applications as follows:- Steven Bagnall t/a S Bagnall Roofing & Plastics - £500 Doug Garner t/a DWG Services - £500.	30.11.06
22	Councillor Reynolds	Application receive from Mrs King of M & M Chemists Ltd enquiring whether the Council would consider selling to her land at the rear of M & M Chemists at 4 Sawmill Lane, Brandon for use as parking of vehicles associated with the delivery of prescriptions to the public Recommend that subject to certain conditions and restrictions an approximate area of 78 square metres of land be offered for sale to applicant.	1.12.06
23	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Miss G Dando of 22 Woodside, Shadforth enquiring whether the Council	1.12.06

		would consider selling her a strip of land adjacent to her property for use as vehicular hardstanding, garage and garden Recommend approval of application.	
24	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Mr Turnbull of 15 Fir Avenue, Brandon enquiring whether the Council would consider selling to him land to the rear of his property for garden use only. Mr Turnbull is willing to lease the land if purchase is not permitted. Recommend that the application be refused.	1.12.06
25	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Terri Waters of 22 Ridding Road, Esh Winning enquiring whether the Council would grant vehicular access over Council owned land at the property to gain access to the curtilage of the property for off-street parking. Recommend that the application be approved.	1.12.06