

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL OF EASINGTON  
HELD ON THURSDAY 4th JANUARY 2007**

Present: Councillor C. Walker (Chair)

Councillors B. Bates, Mrs. G. Bleasdale, A. Burnip, R. Burnip, A. Collinson, R. Crute, R. Davison, Mrs. J. Freak, J. Goodwin, J. Haggan, H. High, Mrs. E. Huntington, B. Joyce, T. Longstaff, Mrs.J. Maslin, D. Milsom, D. Myers, Mrs. A. Naylor, M. Nicholls, Mrs M. Nugent, C. Patching, G. Patterson, W.R. Peardon, G. Pinkney, B. Quinn, D. Raine, F. Shaw, Mrs. B.A. Sloan, D.J. Taylor-Gooby, R. Taylor, R.J. Todd and P.G. Ward.

- 1 **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF EASINGTON** held on 7th December 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2007/2008 AND COUNCIL TAX POWERS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Financial Management on the calculation of the Council Tax base for 2007/2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Head of Financial Management reported that in order to fulfil obligations under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 with regard to tax setting, the Council must, before 31st January 2007, determine the Council Tax base for the whole of the District and those parts of the District known as Parish Councils.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (a) the report of the Head of Financial Management for the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the year 2007/2008, be approved;
- (b) pursuant to the report of the Head of Financial Management and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2003, the relevant amounts calculated by the District of Easington Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2007/2008 shall be 26,368.3;
- (c) pursuant to the report of the Head of Financial Management and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2003, the amounts calculated for individual parishes throughout Easington District are as follows:-

## District Council - 4th January 2007

Castle Eden	298.1
Dalton le Dale	516.4
Easington Colliery	1,401.8
Easington Village	739.3
Haswell	556.0
Hawthorn	190.4
Horden	2,233.6
Hutton Henry	495.5
Monk Hesleden	1,645.8
Murton	1,896.5
Nesbitt	2.2
Peterlee	5,673.2
Seaham	5,337.6
Seaton with Slingley	411.2
Sheraton	49.2
Shotton	1,166.2
South Hetton	763.9
Thornley	647.1
Trimdon	372.9
Wheatley Hill	864.5
Wingate	1,106.9

- (d) pursuant to the report of the Head of Financial Management and in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government Act 2003, The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings)(England) Regulations 2003 and The Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base)(Amendment)(England) Regulations 2003, the discount in respect of second homes shall remain at 50% for the year 2007/2008;
- (e) pursuant to the report of the Head of Financial Management and in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government Act 2003, The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings)(England) Regulations 2003 and The Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base)(Amendment)(England) Regulations 2003, the discount in respect of long term empty properties shall remain at 50% for the year 2007/2008;
- (f) pursuant to the report of the Head of Financial Management and in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government Act 2003, The Collection Fund (Council Tax Reductions)(England) Directions 2003 (Annex C) and The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement)(Amendment) Regulations 2003, the Council does not intend to introduce a locally defined discount for the year 2007/2008.

### 3. **SAVING OF ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN POLICIES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration on the saving of adopted Local Plan policies when the Plan lapsed in September 2007, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced Local Development Frameworks to replace Local Plans and determined that all Local Plans would automatically be saved for a period of 3 years to allow local authorities to prepare the new Framework.

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This period expired on 27th September 2007 and in common with most other Authorities, no documents in the Easington Development Framework would have reached adoption by the specified date. It was therefore necessary to seek a direction from the Secretary of State to have those policies saved that were considered essential to continue to plan for the use and development of land in the interim period.

A schedule of the Local Plan Policies proposed to be submitted to the Secretary of State was attached to the report for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government be requested to direct that the District of Easington Local Plan policies identified in the schedule appended to the report be saved beyond 27th September 2007 under the terms of Schedule 8(1(3)) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

### 4. TO SEAL DOCUMENTS

**RESOLVED** that the action taken in affixing the Common Seal to the following documents, be endorsed:-

- 19394 Transfer of Whole of Registered Title(s) made between EDC (1) and John Collingwood (2) relating to 34 Moore Terrace Shotton
- 19395 Transfer of Part of Registered Title(s) made between EDC (1) and Emma Louise Brown (2) relating to 46 Hazel Drive Hesleden
- 19396 Transfer of Part of Registered Title(s) made between EDC(1) and Tracey Hunter (2) relating to 7 Tweddle Crescent, Blackhall Rocks
- 19397 Transfer of Part of Registered Title(s) made between EDC (1) and Dawn Armstrong and David Oyston (2) relating to 15 Elgin Avenue, Seaham
- 19398 Transfer of Part of Registered Title(s) made between EDC (1) and Jane Symons (2) relating to 17 Kilnhill Walk Peterlee
- 19399 Lease made between EDC (1) and Haswell and District Mencap Society (2) relating to land and premises at Church Street, Haswell
- 19400 Licence made between DCC (1) and EDC (2) relating to highways situate at various locations in the Easington District in the County of Durham (in duplicate)

### 5. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Section 100B(4)(b) the Chair agreed that consideration be given to one item of business not shown on the Agenda as a matter of urgency, following consultation with the Proper Officer.

6. **BRIEFING ON PATHFINDER RESPONSE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER (AOB)**

J Johnson, Chief Executive was in attendance to brief Members on the current position with regard to the proposed Pathfinder option for local government reform in the County.

She explained that the Durham Districts' had worked together in response to the Government's White Paper proposals for local government changes in shire counties. The Government had invited Councils in two tier areas to submit a bid which

proposed a new form(s) of unitary council(s) for a County area

or

proposed a pathfinder approach to pioneer improvements to the existing arrangements

or

developed local solutions

Following careful consideration the Districts had opted for the 'Pathfinder' approach. In contrast to the single unitary council proposal which would bring about changes by 2009, the Durham Districts proposed a phased approach over a four year period to reach unitary council(s) status. It was felt that this approach would achieve minimum disruption to service provision, would be less costly than the single unitary approach and would retain high levels of democratic representation.

Overseen by a Transformation Board, staged improvements would be brought about in three phases to reach a decision on the best form of unitary government for the County.

J Johnson concluded that the pathfinder bid had to be submitted on or before 25 January 2007 and a decision was expected on the preferred bids by the end of March 2007. A further report would be given on the final proposals prior to the submission of the Durham Districts' bid.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.