

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on Monday, 1st September, 2003 at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Watson, Chair

Councillors W. Armstrong, Mrs. E.J. Coulson, J. Huntley, O. Johnson, D.G. Llewellyn and A. Taylor.

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M.J. Malone.

34. MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive held on 4th August, 2003 were agreed as a correct record.

35. LEISURE GRANTS REVIEW – FUNDING OFFICER POST

Councillor Taylor presented the report, which detailed the process undertaken during the Leisure Grants Review and the findings of the Member Panel, which had been set up to review grants and external funding within Leisure. The matter had been previously deferred to enable Scrutiny to debate and comment on the proposals.

Councillor Watson suggested that the post be reviewed through the scrutiny process with a thorough review after 12 months.

Option: Whether or not to agree the Funding Officer Post.

RESOLVED: that the reasons and recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

Reason: The post, as well as attracting funding to the authority would also meet with a number of corporate objectives.

- (1) A Leisure Funding Officer be appointed on the basis outlined in the report:
- (2) Subject to recommendation 1, an agreement be entered into with Derwentside Leisure Ltd. to fund 1/5th post.
- (3) Subject to recommendation 1 and 2 being agreed, surplus funds be used to establish a small leisure grants scheme. The criteria of which to be determined by a future committee.

36. A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DERWENTSIDE

Councillor Johnson presented a report outlining a revised sustainability strategy for Derwentside, which intends to set the scene of sustainable development in the district and aims to make sustainability an integral part of the Council's policies and projects.

Option: Whether or not to adopt the strategy for Sustainable Derwentside.

RESOLVED: that the strategy for Sustainable Derwentside as detailed in the report be agreed.

Reason: The strategy is needed to pave the way forward to achieve sustainable development in Derwentside.

37. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF LANDLORD SERVICES – FINAL REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Councillor Huntley presented the report, which advised Members of the conclusion of the Best Value Review of Landlord Services and sought approval for the resultant Improvement Plan.

Option: Whether or not to agree to the Improvement Plan contained in the report.

RESOLVED:- that the content of the report and the Improvement Plan therein was agreed by Members.

Reason: To maintain a continuous improvement of Landlord Services.

38. CAPITAL STRATEGY

Councillor Coulson presented the report which asked Members to formally ratify the Capital Strategy 2003 previously submitted to the Government Office for the North East. (GONE).

Option: Whether or not to agree the Capital Strategy 2003 as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: The Capital Strategy 2003 be ratified.

Reason: To comply with the statutory requirement to submit a Capital Strategy, under the Asset Management of Local Authority Land and Buildings and Single Capital Pot Guidance.

39. DERWENTSIDE PRIVATE LANDLORDS ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Councillor Armstrong presented the report outlining the work undertaken by the Private Landlords Accreditation Liaison Officer in the development of the Derwentside Private Landlords Accreditation Scheme.

Option: Whether or not to approve the scheme as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: that the Voluntary Private Landlords Accreditation Scheme as detailed in the report be agreed.

Reason: The scheme would enable work to proceed on promoting take up within the private rented sector within Derwentside.

40. SCRUTINY REVIEW AND WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Watson presented the report on behalf of Councillor Malone outlining the progress made in enhancing the Council's scrutiny work programme following the changes made at the Special Meeting of the Council on the 24th June 2003.

Option: Whether or not to approve the Scrutiny Work Programme as detailed in the report and also agree to the remodelling of the Executive Support Unit to enable the provision of scrutiny support from internal resources

RESOLVED: that the work programme and the remodelling of the Executive Support Unit as detailed in the report be agreed.

Reason: To improve the scrutiny arrangements of the authority.

41. PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION

Councillor Armstrong presented the report which advised that Derwentside District Council provides public toilets under its powers in the Public Health Act 1936. Over recent years the number of public toilets has been reduced for a variety of reasons, from antisocial behaviour and poor quality to other more serious reasons.

Options:

- (1) Status Quo – continue to provide public toilet facilities in one existing location to the existing standard.
- (2) Remove service completely.
- (3) Replace public toilets on strategically selected sites across the District.

RESOLVED: that the Public Toilets Provision is replaced through a series of site specific solutions to deliver modern facilities in the most appropriate locations, each location to be considered by Ward Members and the Executive for approval.

Reasons:

- (1) The matter of suitable Public Toilet provision is in need of full consideration by the Council, as there is little doubt that the current provision is not meeting the expectations of residents.
- (2) Members are recommended to determine the level of provision across the District. Based on the current provision this would mean that five public toilets are provided.
- (3) Presuming that Members wish to continue to provide Public Toilets, then the amount of money that the Council will be required to spend on DDA should not be expended on the existing toilets at this time (DDA requires that buildings are compliant by October 2004). Rather this money is identified as a contribution to the replacement or upgrading of facilities in accordance with a detailed programme which will be brought before Members for approval and will be

considered for funding within the Capital Programme.

42. FESTIVALS REVIEW – PROCESS REPORT

Councillor Taylor presented the report, which sought approval for the scope, terms of reference, and process which officers propose to follow, in order to enable the Council to undertake a comprehensive review of current involvement in festivals activity, and take decisions on future options for 2004.

Option: Whether or not to approve the methodology and timetable set out in the report to enable a Festivals Review to begin immediately.

RESOLVED: that the methodology and timetable set out in Section 2 and 3 of the report be agreed.

Reason: To enable a review of festival activity for 2004 to begin immediately.

43. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor W. Armstrong, seconded by Councillor D.G. Llewellyn that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 7, 8, 9, and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act (as amended).

44. STRATEGIC RESOURCES REVIEW

Councillor Taylor presented a report, which detailed proposals for the reorganisation of the Capital Works, Public Buildings and Housing Management Divisions. The report as such, reviewed that Strategic Resources Division.

The report sought to align resources to support the newly constituted directorates to clarify roles and responsibilities within the Housing and Capital Works Directorate, ensuring that issues such as the increase in the number of Right to Buy applications and the advent of the Supporting People regime can be accommodated.

Options: Whether or not to agree the recommendations as set out in the report, which would allow the review of strategic resources to take place.

RESOLVED: that the options as contained in the report be agreed.

Reason: To align resources to the newly constituted directorates and to clarify roles and responsibilities within the Housing and Capital Works Directorate. To ensure that the Council is well-placed to respond to both internal pressure for change and the Government's agenda for housing and community regeneration. To enable the Council to determine the preferred distribution mechanism for concessionary bus passes for future years.

45. FUTURE OPTIONS OF BURNSIDE RESOURCE CENTRE

Councillor Huntley presented the report which asked Members to agree the future of the Burnside Resource Centre.

Options:

- (1) The building is declared surplus to requirements of the Housing Directorate and transferred to the Land and Property Division for disposal and/or expression of interest invited for the transfer and management of the building.
- (2) The building is declared surplus to the requirements of the Housing Division and is transferred to another division within the council, e.g. Leisure or Economic Development for continued use by community groups.
- (3) The building is retained with a change of use to that of a non-community use, e.g. for use by Building Services as an area office or for management purposes.
- (4) Building is surplus to requirements and is gifted to Community Enterprise Direct (N) for continuous use in the Community.
- (5) The building is surplus to requirements and is gifted to the Craghead Area Partnership (CAP) for continuous use in the community.
- (6) Appointment of a management committee.
- (7) Closure / Demolition of building / Sale of Cleared site.

RESOLVED: that the option 5 and the recommendations included therein are agreed, although not as an end result. Discussions will need to take place

between the parties involved and the appropriate legal requirements will need to be followed. The Councils Land and Property department are to deal with the process as required.

Reason: To improve service/resource to the community.

46. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Watson presented the report which asked Members to consider the introduction of a Performance and Development Scheme for the Executive Director of the Council and how that process should be implemented.

Options: Whether or not to agree the options as detailed in the report in regard to the introduction of a Performance and Development Scheme for the Executive Director of the Council.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations as contained in the report be agreed.

Reason: The process is very similar to that which has been introduced for Directors with the exception that assessment will be via members rather than the executive director.

47. PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Councillor Huntley presented the report, which updated Members on the 7th July 2003 report to improve services to the elderly and other vulnerable adults by changing the way Social Services, Primary Care Trusts and other local authorities work together within County Durham.

A partnership committee has been agreed and its first formal meeting was held on 27th August 2003, however to facilitate its development funding as required of around £16k per annum.

Options: Whether or not to agree a bid this year from the Corporate Development Reserve then mainstream funding after this year.

RESOLVED: that a bid for this year (approximately £80k for the half year) from the Corporate Development Reserve be agreed, then mainstream funding after this year.

Reason: The development of a partnership board follows the Government's strategy in developing services to the user in a more efficient manner and also tries to remove the restrictions in cross-boundary working.

48. REQUEST TO WAIVE REPAYMENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Chairman advised that the paper had been withdrawn.

49. REGENERATION OF THE BRIDGEHILL ESTATE

Councillor Huntley presented the report, which sought approval of the demolition of 44 properties situated on the Bridgehill Estate, the redevelopment of the resulting site and an amendment to the current re-housing procedure for those residents losing their homes through demolition.

Options:

- (1) No Demolition.
- (2) Demolition of 44 dwellings with cleared site being marketed for redevelopment with properties for sale.

RESOLVED: that option 2 and the recommendations contained at 4.1 in the report are the agreed option.

Reason: Option 2 allows a number of residents the choice to remain on the estate, whilst reducing the overall rented stock in that immediate area. This rationalisation of council housing, combined with the redevelopment with housing for sale will produce a more cohesive, sustainable community within that section of the estate. These recommendations are attainable with regard to capacity to re-house these families displaced and yet still release a substantial amount of land for re-development purposes.

50. CCTV PROGRAMME – PHASE II

Councillor Watson presented the report, which asked Members to consider a further bid to allow the completion of the second phase of the CCTV rollout.

Options: Whether or not to agree a bid to allow the completion of the second phase of CCTV.

RESOLVED: As 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 of the report.

Reason: To adhere to the corporate aim of making Derwentside a safer place and the priority objective of reducing the fear of crime the authority has embarked on a programme of expanding the CCTV provision into all wards.

51. REGENERATION OF LILY GARDENS

Councillor Huntley presented the report detailing the progress that has been made in respect of the regeneration of the Lily Gardens Estate. The report sought the approval of Dunelm and Castle Homes and Nomad Housing Association as partner organisations in the scheme. Also sought was the approval of the implementation of the 1st phase of the scheme as well as seeking delegated authority to the relevant directors to conclude negotiations.

Options: To agree the options as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: As 4.1 (a) (b) and (c) of the report.

Reason: To progress the regeneration of the Lily Gardens Estate.

CONCLUSION OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.35 p.m.

Chair.