

## **EXECUTIVE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 at 4.30 p.m.

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor A. Watson, Chair

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

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillors W.J. Tyrie and J. Pickersgill

#### **136. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2004 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **137. CPA IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Councillor M. Malone presented the report which advised that the Council is required by law to use the strengths and weaknesses highlighted in the CPA Final Report as a basis for improvement planning. The High-Level Action Plan which was prepared as part of the CPA Self Assessment process has therefore been amended in light of comments made by the CPA Inspection Team in their Final Report.

**Option:** Whether or not to agree to the approach taken in the report for Improvement Planning and the proposed programme of Best Value Reviews.

#### **RESOLVED: that:-**

- (1) the approach taken to improvement planning and the content of the Improvement Plan as detailed in the report be approved;
- (2) The proposed programme of Best Value Reviews be approved.

**Reason:**

- (1) the Council has statutory obligation to use the strengths and weaknesses highlighted in the CPA Final Report as a basis for improvement planning which will include the programme of Best Value Reviews that they intend to carry out;
- (2) the Council is required by law to carry out Best Value Reviews and the Audit Commission has a statutory requirement to inspect local authorities and their compliance with their legal duty to achieve Best Value.

**138. LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Councillor W. Armstrong presented the report which evaluated the findings of the survey of the Esh Winning area (contained within Derwentside) to establish the exact position with regard to solid fuel burning in residential properties. The report also contained recommended actions that the authority is required to undertake in meeting its obligations with regard to air quality review and assessment.

**Options:** Whether or not to agree retrospective permission for the submission of a bid under the Supported Capital Expenditure (Review) Programme for Local Authority Capital Expenditure.

**RESOLVED:** that:-

- (1) Approval be granted in retrospect for the submission of a bid under the Supported Capital Expenditure (Review) Programme for Local Authority Capital Expenditure.
- (2) Subject to the approval of the bid for Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue) approval be granted for commencement of the detailed Assessment of Sulphur Dioxide in Esh Winning, as detailed in the report.
- (3) In the event that the bid is unsuccessful, the Council allocate a sum of £22,383 to enable this work to be undertaken.

**Reason:** The delivery of the Air Quality Management Programme is a statutory function.

**139. CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT MENTAL HEALTH**

Councillor W. Armstrong presented the report which gave an opportunity for Members to decide how to respond to the consultation undertaken by

County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust concerning the development of Adult Mental Health Services in North Durham.

**Option:** Whether or not to participate in the consultation process on development of Adult Mental Health Services in North Durham and whether to agree to the response attached to the report being forwarded as the Council's formal response.

**RESOLVED:** that the response as attached to the report be forwarded to the Trust as the Council's formal feedback to the consultation process.

**Reason:** The Council needs to support the efforts of the Trust and the PCT in developing an enhanced service for Mental Health services in the County, at the same time it needs to communicate its concerns of the specific issues raised in the report and included in the consultation response.

#### **140. CARELINE – PROGRESS REPORT**

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which detailed the issues facing the Careline service.

Councillor A. Watson reported that the Scrutiny Board had considered this report at their meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April and had raised no objections to the proposals, however, they requested that once the figures/costs detailed in Option 2 had been market tested, the costs be forwarded to the relevant Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

**Options:**

- (1) In-house provision with a new control centre.
- (2) A part-time partnership with an external service provider.
- (3) A full-time partnership with an external service provider.

**RESOLVED:** that:-

- (1) Approval be granted to market test Option 2 as detailed in the report (a part-time partnership with an external service provider) as the proposed approach for the future development for the Careline service.
- (2) Once the figures/costs detailed in Option 2 have been market tested, the costs be forwarded to the relevant Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

**Reasons:**

- (1) This offers some savings whilst ensuring the essential equipment

- upgrades (to the Control Centre equipment and dispersed alarms) are carried out.
- (2) This will offer minimal change to the majority of contacts with service users (given most people tend to contact the Control Centre during 'office hours').
  - (3) A proportion in the savings made in any contract can be passed back to the service users.
  - (4) This is in-line with the recommendations of the Best Value Inspection Report.

**141. ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS TO NEWBURN ROAD, SHIELD ROW, STANLEY**

Councillor W. Armstrong presented the report which sought approval for Capital Expenditure to carry out works/access improvements at 9-24 Newburn Road, Shield Row, Stanley.

Councillor Taylor advised that residents in this area had experienced difficulty in accessing their road due to the arrangement of the footpath and road and also the parking of vehicles in the area and she therefore supported the recommendations in the report.

**Options:**

- (1) Whether or not the Council agree to meet the costs of the improvements to Newburn Road.
- (2) Whether or not to request that Durham County Council add the works to their work programme.

**RESOLVED:** that:-

- (1) Derwentside Council agree to approve the improvement works to Newburn Road as detailed in the report, and agree that this be an addition to the current non-housing Capital Programme.
- (2) The expected costs of works of £10,000 plus utility costs to be met from uncommitted Capital Receipts.

**Reason:**

- (1) To resolve a local problem of access for the residents of Newburn Road who have experienced difficulty in accessing their road due to the arrangement of the footpaths and roads and also due to parked vehicles. This also affects service delivery access and emergency vehicle access.

**142. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** on the motion of Councillor W. Armstrong, seconded by Councillor O. Johnson, 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 and 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act (as amended).

**143. BUILDING SERVICES – ERVR REQUEST**

(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 1).

Councillor Armstrong presented the report which sought approval on an outstanding ERVR request which was part of a restructuring exercise within the Housing Maintenance Operations Section within Building Services.

**Options:** Whether or not to agree to the ERVR request as mentioned in the report.

**RESOLVED:** that the ERVR request as mentioned in the report be agreed subject to the terms and conditions referred to.

**Reason:** To realise some financial benefits and allow the full implementation of the revised structure within Building Services Operations and to ensure the level of service currently achieved is maintained.

**144. LEGAL SERVICES REVIEW**

(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 1, 7 and 8).

Councillor M. Malone presented the report which advised that a comprehensive review of legal service provision had been undertaken in 2001/02 supported by a SOLACE Consultant, resulting in the appointment of a Legal Services Manager in mid-2003. This was in-line with the main recommendation of the review, namely, that the Council should consider creating an in-house legal capability. The current report to Executive outlined the current position, identified options available for future delivery of legal services and recommended a structural framework to provide a more responsive, proactive and therefore more effective legal service.

**Option:**

- (1) Increase the level of in-house provision of Legal Services.
- (2) Retain the existing level of external service, either with the current supplier or by testing the market.

**RESOLVED:** that authority be granted to implement the Legal Services Restructure as detailed in the report.

**Reason:** The proposed structure will provide a more responsive, proactive, better quality legal service, in accordance with the Council's corporate aims and principles, by securing Best Value in meeting local needs and priorities through the effective use of resources.

**145. SUPPORTING PEOPLE CHARGES**

(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 9).

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which proposed new charges under the Supporting People programme in respect of the Careline and Wardens' services.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had advised that there would be no additional funding for inflation and that Administering Authorities were expected to manage efficiency savings of 2.5%.

**Options:** Whether or not to agree the reduction in charges as detailed in the report.

**RESOLVED:** that the proposed charges as detailed in the report be approved.

**Reason:** Due to the reduced funding from the Supporting People Programme.

**146. REGENERATION OF GREENWOOD AVENUE AREA OF BURNHOPE**

(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 7).

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which sought approval for the repurchase of the remaining fourteen Two Castle Housing Association properties on the Greenwood Avenue Estate, Burnhope and the demolition of thirty properties in Greenwood Avenue.

**Options:**

- (1) Completion of the repurchase of Two Castles Housing Association properties; the demolition of the thirty properties numbers 2-32 (evens) and 9-35 (odds) Greenwood Avenue and the marketing of the resulting site along with the sites from the previous two phases of demolition of redevelopment.
- (2) The completion of the purchase of the Two Castle Housing Association properties, with no further demolition.

**RESOLVED:** that:-

Option 1 as detailed in the report be agreed to include:-

- (a) Completion of the purchase of the fourteen Two Castles Housing Association properties; as agreed at Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2001.
- (b) The demolition of the thirty properties numbers 2-32 (evens) and 9-35 (odds), Greenwood Avenue
- (c) The Head of Land and Property to negotiate the acquisition of the four non-Council properties, with the authorisation to prepare draft Compulsory Purchase Orders if settlements cannot be reached.
- (d) The marketing of the resulting vacant site, for redevelopment.

**Reasons:**

- (1) This will provide the completion of a third and final phase of demolition within Greenwood Avenue. The reduction of the over supply of rented accommodation within the estate will contribute to the sustainability of the wider community. It also enhances the potential for the redevelopment of this and the previous demolition sites by the provision of an appropriate access route.
- (2) These proposals contribute to the Council's Corporate Aims to: Deliver a place with strong, cohesive communities' and to 'Create an attractive, sustainable environment.'

**147. INFORMATION SERVICES RESTRUCTURING**

(Not for Publication by virtue of Paragraphs 1 and 9).

Councillor A. Watson advised that the Scrutiny Board had considered this item at their meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 and had requested that the item be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration. They also requested that the Director of Information Services be requested to give a presentation to the committee on the restructure, shaped on any queries/questions Members may have and can

submit in advance however, they also requested that Members be offered the opportunity to ask questions at the meeting.

**Options:** Whether to consider the recommendations in the report or to agree to the request of the Scrutiny Board to forward the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be deferred and forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration and that the Director of Information Services be requested to give a presentation to Members on the restructuring of Information Services.

**Reason:** To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to debate the issues in the report.

#### **148. TENNIS FACILITY DEVELOPMENT**

(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 9).

Councillor A. Taylor presented the report which requested Members to increase the level of funding currently identified within the Capital Programme for the development of tennis facilities within the District. The current allocation is £40,000 which leverages in an additional £30,000 from partners. However, by increasing this allocation by a further £40,000 there is now the opportunity to leverage an additional £410,000 of investment into the District.

Councillor Watson advised that the Scrutiny Board had discussed this item at their meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April and had no objections to the proposals in the report however, they wished to strongly emphasise that they were in favour of Recommendation 3 in the report to ensure that the facilities are made available across the whole of Derwentside.

Councillor Malone commented that this was an excellent scheme and the Sports Development Plan as attached to the report detailed the proposals for wider access for tennis across the District.

Councillor Malone questioned whether Durham County Council had supported this proposal with major funding and in response the Head of Leisure advised that he was aware that a donation had been made from the Community Chest but was not aware of any major investment in the project.

Councillor Llewellyn suggested that Durham County Council be contacted and if they had not been approached for funding for this project they be made aware of and requested to consider offering financial support to this initiative. Councillor Taylor supported the view that the County Council be



asked to become a partner in this initiative and commented that this was an excellent activity to offer across the District.

**Option:** Whether or not to agree to the request for funding for the development of tennis facilities within the District.

**RESOLVED:** that:-

- (1) A resource of £40,000 be made available to the Shotley and Benfieldside Tennis Project subject to securing match funding for the development.
- (2) Subject to (1) above, Officers agree a level of access to the new facilities for Sports Development use.
- (3) The support identified in (1) above be subject to the delivery of a District-wide scheme of participation as outlined in the Club's Development Plan.
- (4) Officers be requested to contact Durham County Council to enquire whether any financial support would be available to support this project.

**Reasons:**

- (1) By making the resource of £40,000 available for this project there is the opportunity to leverage an additional £410,000 of investment into the District.
- (2) A comprehensive Development Plan has been prepared by the Club which will build on the success of the Derwentside Community Tennis Partnership which provides a comprehensive range of opportunities to participate in tennis.
- (3) Derwentside Community Tennis Partnership have put together a comprehensive scheme for the development of tennis across the District.
- (4) The Council's Sports Development Section, through the CTP would be able to make significant use of the facilities in both tennis and other sports in the delivery of its programme of activities.

## **CONCLUSION OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 5.15 p.m.

**Chair.**