

## **EXECUTIVE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2006 at 4.30 p.m.

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor A. Watson, Chair.

Councillors: W. Armstrong, C. Christer, J Huntley, O. Johnson, D.G. Llewellyn and M. Malone.

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors E. Coulson, J. Fothergill, D. McMahon and W. Tyrie.

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor A. Taylor.

**The Chairman commented that a number of members of the public were in attendance to hear Item 11 on the agenda, Stanley Area Development Framework and in view of this public interest he proposed that this item be brought forward and dealt with after Item 3 on the agenda. This was agreed by all at the meeting.**

### **37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **38. STANLEY AREA DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Councillor Lewellyn presented the report which set out the current position regarding the Stanley Area Development Framework (ADF), confirmed the process involved in developing the ADF and its current status.

#### **Options:**

1. Withdrawn from the ADF process
2. Allow the ADF to progress as drafted.
3. Ensure that reference to specific demolitions is withdrawn from the final submission to be made by English Partnerships to Government.
4. Withdraw the current Stanley ADF and submit a revised version by early November 2006.

Councillor Watson commented that a misconception had arisen in the Stanley area that the ADF was an implementation plan. He confirmed that the ADF was not a plan or a proposal that was to be implemented. It was a framework and, should resources be made available by Government to support housing improvement in Stanley then, as set out in the ADF, full community consultation would need to be undertaken before any actual implementation plans were agreed. He advised that he had attended 3 public meetings on this issue and that the level of public concern about the ADF was clear. There was unanimous agreement at the meetings that the ADF should be withdrawn. He recommended that:

- The current Stanley ADF be formally withdrawn;
- Officers, local Members and Community Partnership representatives be asked to work together to create a new ADF for consideration by the Council and submission to English partnerships by early November 2006;
- The Council reaffirms its position that comprehensive community consultation would take place should Government resources be made available to support housing improvement in the Stanley area and only at that stage would plans be agreed for implementation; and
- This decision be communicated through letters being sent to individual households within the ADF area.

Councillor O. Johnson was concerned that the timescale for any re-submission would be extremely tight, he also commented that it was extremely important that the local Ward Councillors get the community involved in these issues.

Councillor C. Christer agreed with Councillor Johnson's comments, he also added that it was clear that there was no public support for the current ADF and it was vital that any new scheme had full community support. He added that he supported the withdrawal and re-submission.

Councillor W. Armstrong concurred with these remarks he raised questions whether the Steering Group would be involved in the process.

Councillor Lewellyn advised that this was a housing led initiative and it was important that their private resources were secured as part of the bid.

Councillor M. Malone commented that the Memorandum of Understanding agreed by the Council in July 2005 gave a commitment to tackle severe housing problems. He thought it unlikely that the bid would be given a high priority unless interventions to tackle key problems were included. He also commented that information had been made available through the Steering Group consultation process but no concerns had been raised with the Executive.

**RESOLVED:**

1. The current Stanley ADF be formally withdrawn;
2. Officers, local Members and Community Partnership representatives be

- asked to work together to create a new ADF for consideration by the Council and submission to English partnerships by early November 2006;
3. The Council reaffirms its position that comprehensive community consultation would take place should Government resources be made available to support housing improvement in the Stanley area and only at that stage would plans be agreed for implementation; and
  4. This decision be communicated through letters being sent to individual households within the ADF area.

**Reasons:**

1. This retains the potential to secure substantial levels of housing investment in the ADF area.
2. This allows previous commitments to be honoured to tackle severe housing problems in the District.
3. This still allows for full community consultation on formal plans should funding be available.
4. This recognises the key issue raised at public meetings.
5. This should remove confusion and concerns regarding changes to housing in the ADF area.

**39. MINUTES**

In considering the minutes Members took note of the issues raised at Scrutiny Board concerning the use of any capital receipt received from the disposal of land at View Lane Park (see minute no. 40 below). Executive confirmed the minutes and, in doing so, confirmed that officers had been tasked with the development of proposals for the regeneration of the park utilising monies received from the developer for this purpose.

**40. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY BOARD DEBATE**

The Executive Director referred to Minute Number 1, Scrutiny Board Minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006, which had considered Minute Number 32 of Executive of 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.(a) View Lane Park, Stanley. He advised that the words "*if received*" to be inserted into the Scrutiny Board notes, minute no. 1 (a), 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph after the words "*any appeal*".

A list of items discussed at Scrutiny Board were circulated, the Chair advised that the comments, if any, would be referred to as each agenda item was discussed. A copy of the notes of the Board meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006 are attached for information. (Appendix 'A')

#### **41. REVENUE OUTTURN 2005/06**

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which advised Members on the Authority's Revenue Outturn for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March and summarised the positions of both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account as well as showing the final figures for the DSO areas of operation. Details of the available General Fund and HRA Reserves after accounting for all know commitments were also presented. Members were advised that the accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 were now complete and that the Draft Statement had been approved at the Special Council meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> June. The Audit Commission were currently undertaking the year end audit and a report was to be presented to Council by the end of September.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**Options:** Whether to approve, amend or reject the proposals regarding Revenue Outturn 2005/06.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the report be received.
2. That the report is allowed to progress to the Strategic Planning Panel meeting to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> October.
3. That the approval be granted for the set aside of £30,000 in balances to contribute towards the KPMG study into Local Government Modernisation.

**Reasons:** To allow the limited available resources to be monitored and utilised in the most effective way, allowing the Council to mobilise the most essential projects.

#### **40. CAPITAL PROGRAMME FINANCING 2005/06**

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which advised Members of the final capital expenditure for 2005/06 and requested approval for the financing of that expenditure. Members were also informed of the slippage on the capital programme and of suggestions for resources to cover this slippage.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**Options:** Whether to approve, amend or reject the proposals in the report for capital expenditure.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That approval be granted for the financing of the 2005/06 capital expenditure.
2. That approval be granted for the slippage position and for the resources to be carried forward.

**Reasons:** To allow the limited available resources to be monitored and utilised in the most effective way, allowing the Council to mobilise the most essential projects.

#### **41. ASSISTED AREA REVIEW**

Councillor D. Lewellyn presented the report which provided an update on the ongoing review of Assisted Areas in the UK. The existence of Assisted Areas forms part of the Governments policy to improve economic performance of the regions. The report highlighted the implications for Derwentside of the review and what response had been made to the Government on behalf of the Council.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**Options:**

1. Accept the proposed map and agree to the actions undertaken to request an amendment to the proposed Assisted Area map.
2. Reject the proposed Assisted Areas map for Derwentside.

**RESOLVED:** That option 1 be agreed, that the proposed map for Derwentside be accepted and approval granted for the actions undertaken to request an amendment to the proposed Assisted Area map.

**Reasons:**

1. The proposed Assisted Area map represents a good outcome for the District compared to some other parts of the UK.
2. The proposed Assisted Areas map will ensure the District retains access to a level of regional aid that is needed for Derwentside to remain a competitive location for business.
3. Rejection of the proposed Assisted Areas map for Derwentside could jeopardise the ability of the District to remain a competitive location for business.

#### **42. YEAR END REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE 2005/06**

Councillor M. Malone presented the report the purpose of which was to inform Members of the following:

- Performance of the Council against Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) for 2005/06.
- Comparisons with national performance quartile data from 2004/05
- Exceptional variances in BVPI's for the year end 2005/06
- Risk assessment rating to highlight where performance is a concern
- Action Planning arrangements for 2006/07
- Targets for 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09

In response to Councillor C. Christer's questions the Director of Corporate Policy and Administration advised that the BVPI action plans would be monitored through the scrutiny process.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**Options:** Whether or not to commission further investigation by the relevant scrutiny panel of any of the performance indicators detailed.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the content of the report be noted
2. That the relevant officers be requested to prepare action plans for 2006/07 for those indicators detailed in paragraph 7.3 of the report.
3. That all indicators referred to in paragraph 7.4 rated as an amber risk be part of a monthly monitoring process to Corporate Management .
4. That all indicators rated green no longer have their progress reported monthly to Corporate Management Team but have performance monitored every quarter as part of the Quarterly Monitoring Performance reporting framework.

**Reasons:**

1. To investigate innovative solutions to address falling performance.
2. To enable any slippage in performance to be noted and risk bandings re-assessed throughout the year.

**43. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006/08**

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which advised that within the next 18 months the Council will be transforming the way that it provides services to the people of Derwentside. The creation of Derwentside Homes, the potential expansion of the Leisure Trust and partnering of ICT and Printing will have a significant impact upon the organisation structure and skills / knowledge base of the Council and the expectations of its employees, members and customers.

**Options:** Whether to agree, amend or reject the proposals in the report.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**RESOLVED:** That the Workforce Development Plan 2006/08 be agreed for the provision of training and development for 2006/08.

**Reasons:**

1. If the Council are to continue to make the most of the employees, there must be a plan which brings together how to ensure a well skilled, well motivated, high performing workforce delivering excellent services.
2. By focusing upon key priorities the plan seeks to develop the skills of employees and plan for future workforce requirements, initially over the next 18 months.

**44. CORPORATE PLAN 2006-2010 – FINAL DRAFT**

Councillor M. Malone presented the report which sought approval for the final draft of the Council's Corporate Plan for 2006-2010.

**Options:** To agree, amend or reject the final draft of the Corporate Plan 2006-2010.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

Councillor Malone made the following suggestions:

- Page 7, Corporate Aim: To deliver a learning community – remove the references to Key Stage 3 & 4.
- Page 16, Comprehensive Performance Assessment – re-word the reference aiming to become an Excellent Council.
- Page 16, Local Government Review – reference to super districts.
- Page 22 – Insert use of the Citizens' Panel to ask question whether the presence of CCTV reduces the fear of crime.
- Page 24 – Fire Safety – use the Fire Brigade PI's for fire alarms and inspections.
- Page 29 - Education Objective – revised the target.
- Page 38 – Include review of Shotley Bridge hospital as a priority.
- Page 64 - Member Champions
- Page 65 - Check the GCSE A\*-C passes.
- Page 69 – need to include benefits/ freedoms / extras to be gained by aiming for Excellence.

Councillor Lewellyn raised concerns regarding Page 52 EH.4.3 “interim affordable housing policy” and asked whether it was possible to implement this policy before March 2007. In response the Director of Environmental Services advised that the policy had to go through a consultation process in order to have evidence that this was a robust policy.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that the suggestions be considered as part of the consultation process and approval be granted to commence consultation on the attached final draft of the Corporate Plan 2006-2010.

**Reason:** To provide strategic direction to the Council up to 2010.

#### **45. COUNTY DURHAM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (CDSP) REVIEW PROPOSED DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSE**

Councillor A. Watson presented the report which informed Members of the proposals for the future of the County Durham Strategic Partnership (CDSP) and to seek Executive’s agreement to the Council signing up to a joint district council response to the review.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**Options:** Whether to agree or not that the Council forms part of a joint district response to the review.

**RESOLVED:** That agreement be granted for Derwentside District Council to form part of a joint district response to the review of the County Durham Strategic Partnership; and that the draft response detailed in Appendix ‘B’ to the report forms the basis of that submission.

**Reason:** The review will provide the framework for shaping the future of partnership working at a Durham County level, which will have an impact on all partner organisations, district council’s and district LSP’s.

#### **46. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** On the motion of Councillor W. Armstrong seconded by Councillor D. Lewellyn that under Section 100(A) 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 Paragraph 2 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.



#### **47. REVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION**

Councillor J. Huntley presented the report which identified the key challenges facing the Council and the Human Resources Division and sought to achieve a service that is able to ensure quality provision and support to Members and officers within the Council.

The Chair referred Members to the notes of Scrutiny Board held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**Options:** Whether to agree, reject or amend the options in the report regarding the review.

**RESOLVED:** That Option 2 in the report be agreed and the appropriate arrangements be put into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006. The exception being the single honoraria payment which will come into effect following the report being agreed.

**Reason:** To ensure that the Council has a Human Resources function that is robust enough to meet the existing and anticipated demands of the Council both now and for the future.

#### **CONCLUSION OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 5.50 p.m.