

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2005**

Present: Councillor A. Burnip (Chair)  
Councillors D. Armstrong, B. Burn,  
A. Collinson, Mrs. E.M. Connor,  
C. Patching, R. Taylor and P Ward

Also present: Councillor D. Myers - Executive Member for  
E-Government and Scrutiny Liaison

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 15th November, 2005, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 22nd November, 2005, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the information contained within the Minutes, be noted.

3. **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

4. **COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY**

The Scrutiny Support Manager advised that arrangements had been made for an article to be submitted for inclusion in the Christmas issue of Infopoint advising of the public question and answer facility at each Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

5. **CLEANSING AND MAINTENANCE OF BUS SHELTER BUDGETS**

The Chair welcomed G. Gray, Fleet and Transport Manager and B. Weatherall, Senior Technician, who were in attendance at the meeting to discuss the cleansing and maintenance budgets for bus shelters.

B. Weatherall reported that there were 300 bus shelters throughout the District of Easington, 45 of which were maintained by Adshell at no cost to the Council. The Council maintained the remaining 255, which were of various construction.

Members were advised that the current maintenance budget was £48,300 of which £34,000 had been spent to date and equated to £5,500 over profile for this time of year. It was explained that whilst budgets were continually monitored the maintenance budget would need to be assessed in the New Year as cut backs may need to be made to keep it on course.

B. Weatherall explained that an internal Performance Indicator had been introduced to measure urgent and non-urgent repairs. All non-urgent work was

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undertaken within 7 days of an order being issued and all urgent work was carried out within 24 hours. Details of performance from September to October 2005 was outlined to Members.

The Chair queried if there was any particular "hotspot" problem areas in the district. B. Weatherall advised that Haswell and Peterlee were "hotspot" areas closely followed by Seaham.

Councillor D. Armstrong queried the number of shelters in the District that were fitted with glass and were a target for vandals. B. Weatherall advised that the District Council did not maintain any shelters that were fitted with glass. They were all fitted with either Perspex or Polycarbonate, which was similar to glass, but vandal proof. However, Adshell did maintain some shelters which were fitted with toughened glass. Councillor D. Armstrong advised that the shelter located at Station Road, Easington Colliery was a target for vandals.

Councillor A. Collinson advised that the underspend on the cleansing and maintenance budgets and the impact on service delivery had been discussed at the Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee. B. Weatherall advised that there had been problems with the transfer of funding on the maintenance budget but this had been resolved. G. Gray advised that the cleansing budget had never been underspent. He explained that last year the unit had suffered high levels of sickness and at one point approximately 23 employees in the Unit had been absent from work. It was intended to purchase a new machine for bus shelter cleansing and it was hoped this would improve the service.

Councillor Mrs. E. Connor queried if there was finance available to replace old brick shelters with new Perspex ones. B. Weatherall advised that there had previously been a programme for the replacement of shelters, however, due to budget cutbacks this programme was shelved. B. Weatherall explained that if a Parish Council wanted to replace a shelter the District Council could provide half the finance for the replacement. Councillor Mrs. E. Connor expressed concern in relation to a particular bus shelter in Horden which was a target for vandals. B. Weatherall advised that the Parish Council or Adshell could be contacted to ascertain if they would be willing to replace the old shelter with a new one.

Councillor P. Ward queried if there was a procedure for cleansing operatives to report the condition of the shelters once they had been cleaned. B. Weatherall confirmed that there was an established internal procedure for cleansing operatives to report repairs and defects.

Councillor A. Collinson once again expressed concern at the underspend and the length of time it had been allowed to continue. B. Weatherall advised that this year's maintenance budget was approximately £6,000 overspent. The year before it had been £18,500 underspent and the year before that the underspend had been just under £6,000.

G. Gray advised that there was no underspend on the cleansing budget and there was more likely to be an overspend due to the high levels of sickness.

Councillor D. Armstrong suggested that further monitoring of both the cleansing and maintenance budgets was required. S. Gwilym, Scrutiny Support Manager, advised that a quarterly monitoring report on budgets was submitted to Executive, which highlighted any over/underspends. In addition

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the relevant portfolio holder could be invited to attend the Scrutiny Committees to explain the current position.

**RESOLVED** that P Penman and B Weatherall be invited to attend a future meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee to discuss the cleansing and maintenance budgets prior to the end of the financial year.

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