

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE**

HELD ON TUESDAY, 14 MARCH, 2006

Present: Councillor A Napier (Chair)
Councillors Mrs J Freak, J Goodwin,
D Myers, G Patterson, F Shaw and
R J Todd

Apology: Councillor R Crute

- 1 **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 21 February, 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.

2 **LDF: REVISION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Environment and Transport which sought approval for a revised programme for the preparation of development plan documents in the Local Development Scheme, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Local Development Scheme be reviewed in accordance with the programme outlined in the report and the revised document be submitted to Government Office.
- (ii) delegated approval be granted to the Head of Planning and Building Control to make any minor amendments if requested by the Planning Inspectorate to meet their examination caseload.

3 **TRANSITIONAL PROTECTION FOR COUNCIL HOUSING TENANTS IN RECEIPT OF WARDEN SERVICES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing Strategy which sought approval of the continuation of transitional protection for Council housing tenants who were in receipt of Warden Services prior to the introduction of the Supporting People funding regime on 1 April 2003, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that in January 2003, the Council approved a "Charging Report" for the Care Services function which introduced transitional protection for Council tenants who would otherwise be subject to a significant increase in charges for the service under the Supporting People regime. It was agreed that the Housing Revenue Account "Windfall" money would be used to transitionally protect Council tenants from the full increase in the Warden Service charge up to April 2004.

A decision regarding continuation of transitional protection was needed to comply with the budget setting process. It was estimated that for 2006/7 approximately 436 clients would qualify for transitional protection. As the cost

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of transitional protection was decreasing annually, it was suggested that the Authority continue to protect existing clients from increased charges.

RESOLVED that approval be granted to:-

- (i) transitionally protect qualifying clients in receipt of Warden Services at a cost of £105,261.60 for 2006/2007.
- (ii) the ongoing transitional protection of qualifying clients, subject to an annual review by the Head of Housing Strategy and Head of Financial Management as part of the Council's budget setting processes.

4 RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE NEW PRIMARY CARE TRUST ARRANGEMENTS IN COUNTY DURHAM AND TEES VALLEY

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Health which sought approval to the Council's response to the consultation from the County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority on the proposed changes to the organisation of Primary Care Trusts (PCT) in County Durham and Tees Valley, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The consultation proposed the formation of a single PCT for County Durham by the merger of the County's five existing PCT's or a single PCT for County Durham and Darlington by the merger of the County's five existing PCT's with the PCT for Darlington.

The Chair thanked the Director of Regeneration and Development for the work undertaken on the consultation.

RESOLVED that the statement outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be approved as the Council's response to the County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority consultation in respect to new Primary Care Trust arrangements in County Durham and Tees Valley.

5 HOUSING REVENUE – RENT ACCOUNT

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing Strategy which sought approval to charge amounts to the Housing Revenue Account provision for Bad Debts amounting to £253,225.89 and former tenants credits amounting to £7,351.32, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) removal of the former tenants arrears from the accounts outlined in the report be approved.
- (ii) the details of the tenancies referred to be held in the Rent Section and recovery pursued wherever possible.

6 ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS 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 two items of business, not shown on the Agenda, as a matter of urgency. However, due to the confidential nature of

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these items they be considered following the exclusion of the press and public.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraphs 1, 3 and 4, Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8 REQUEST FOR VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Personnel which sought approval for a Voluntary Redundancy/Early Retirement from a Highways operative, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that approval be granted for the early retirement of the Highways Operative with effect from 31 March 2006.

9 POST OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGER

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Personnel which sought approval to mainstream the post of Communications and Marketing Manager, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that approval be granted to mainstream the post of Communications and Marketing Manager, Grade 12, with effect from 31 March, 2006.

10 URBAN AND RURAL RENAISSANCE INITIATIVE – WHEATLEY HILL

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which gave details of progress made with the Wheatley Hill Urban and Rural Renaissance Scheme and sought approval to contribute to the works under the provisions previously agreed by Executive, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be granted to support improvement works to the village centre of Wheatley Hill as part of the Durham County Urban and Rural Renaissance Initiative on the basis of the conditions for participating previously agreed.
- (ii) a contribution of £60,000 be approved from the Flexible Regeneration Budget as part of an agreed programme of contributions.

11 THE NORTH EAST ASSEMBLY AND THE ASSOCIATION OF NORTH EAST COUNCILS: PENSION PROVISIONS

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services which gave details of a request from the Association of North East Councils (ANEC) and the North East Assembly (NEA) for the Council to be party guarantor to both organisations to enable them to be admitted as members of

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the Tyne and Wear Local Government Pension Scheme, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the Council act as a guarantor of the fund under a joint arrangement with other local authority members of the NEA/ANEC on the proviso that:-

- (i) all other local authority members of the NEA/ANEC participate as guarantors.
- (ii) that the NEA/ANEC conduct a review of the pension/early retirement arrangements in consultation with local authority members.

12 LAND SWAP – GREEN STREET CAR PARK (AOB)

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which sought approval to a land swap involving Green Street Car Park, Seaham, to facilitate the re-location of the Sea Scouts and Angling Club, to enable the commencement of Seaham Town Centre re-development scheme by Modus Developments Limited, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that approval be granted to the exchange of 0.027 acres of land at Green Street Car Park for 0.05 acres of land at North Terrace, Seaham with Modus Developments Limited, subject to restrictive covenants and overage provisions being included in the legal documentation.

13 UNIT 2 MERIDIAN COURT, BRACKENHILL, PETERLEE (AOB)

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which sought approval for the Council to enter into a ten year head lease for Unit 2 Meridian Court, Peterlee and subsequently sub-let the property to East Durham Homes, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that approval be granted:-

- (i) to enter into a ten year repair and insuring lease of Unit 2 Meridian Court, Peterlee at an initial rental of £173,216 per annum exclusive with the Trustees of the 2003/2004 Regent Capital Whitehouse Syndicate subject to a five year break clause and a total rent free period of 33 months.
- (ii) to the sub-lease of Unit 2 Meridian Court to East Durham Homes Limited, subject to the same terms and conditions as contained within the head lease.