

MINUTES

Community Services Scrutiny Panel

14th February 2007

Present: Councillors Howarth (in the Chair), Hepplewhite, Norman, Robinson, Taylor, Walton, Wolstenholme and Young.

Also Present: Councillors Kellett, Lodge and Stoddart.

Gavin Scott – Policy & Regeneration Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Griffin, Hopgood and Moderate.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th January, 2007, were confirmed as a correct record, subject to it being noted that although Councillor Robinson's apologies were recorded in the Minutes, she indicated that she had been present at the Meeting. Members agreed, therefore, that her name be added to the list of those in attendance.

It was also noted that Members were now in receipt of questionnaires from the consultants carrying out the Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment. This indicated that the Needs Assessment was now progressing. It was agreed that a copy of the assessment form should be included as an appendix to the report.

3. Gypsy/Traveller Sites

The draft report on Gypsy/Traveller Sites had been circulated to Members prior to the Meeting.

After due consideration, it was agreed that paragraph 4.2 be expanded to include further information on unauthorised encampments, and the affects of fly-tipping.

It was further decided that recommendation (iv) should be amended to read "that, with regard to the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller and settled communities, this Authority seeks to work positively with Durham County Council and other District Councils across the County", that recommendation (v) be deleted, recommendation (vi) be re-numbered (v), and that an additional recommendation be added to read "that a Scrutiny be carried out on the procedures for dealing with unauthorised encampments taking into account the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller and settled communities".

Subject to these amendments, it was agreed that the report, plus all appendices, be forwarded for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 22nd March 2007. It was decided that two copies of the report and appendices should be placed in the Members' Room, and that all witnesses be written to to thank them for their contribution to the Scrutiny.

4. Graveyards

The next Scrutiny topic was Graveyards. A draft planning sheet had been circulated and Members were invited to add to this. Councillor Lodge requested that the Scrutiny also consider War Graves within the District, as the War Graves Commission paid the City Council to maintain a number of

these. Members were also requested to give thought to whether the Scrutiny should consider closed graveyards, or include ones that were also currently open.

The terms of reference for this Scrutiny topic would be set at the Panel's next meeting.

5. Any Other Business

The Chairman reminded the Panel that the meeting on 14 March 2007 would be held in Carrville Communal Hall, Broomside Lane.

There was no other business to discuss.

The Meeting terminated at 6.15 pm