

Minutes

Economic Scrutiny Panel

22 January 2008, Newton Hall Community Centre

Present: Councillor Hopgood (in the Chair) and Councillors Colledge, Guy, Kelly, Lightley, Marsden, Simpson, Stoddart and Wilkes

Also Present: Councillors: Kellett, Robinson and Thompson

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Simmons

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th December, 2007, were agreed as a true record.

3. Scrutiny of CCTV Draft Report

Members agreed that the report be sent to Scrutiny Committee for consideration subject to amendments being made to all recommendations and the inclusion of two additional recommendations.

3.5 That the City of Durham Council work in partnership with all other commercial CCTV users including Prince Bishops and The Gates shopping centres.

3.6 That Durham City Council asks that the new Unitary Authority commits to a policy to maintain the CCTV system in Durham City to a level equivalent to a minimum of the current service provided.

4. Any Other Business

Members were given as an aide memoir a copy of the leisure services review report and a question sheet to enable any additional questions to be answered at the next meeting.

The meeting terminated at 5.55 p.m.

Question for Economic Scrutiny Panel – 19 February 2008

(originally raised by Councillor Moderate at Scrutiny Committee [Estimates], referred on Economic Scrutiny by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Hopgood)

**Ref: Fees & Charges 2008/2009
Page 143 of the Estimates Book
Leisure Centres - Section (D)**

“Members may recall that I questioned this disparity between Abbey Leisure Centre and the other Leisure Centres last year when scrutinising the Budget.

Abbey **Annual Membership** £250.00 (2007/2008), increased by 5% (2008/2009) due to inflation (increase of £12.50 to £262.50) and casual usage has increased by 5%.

I accept the Directors' (Director of Finance) explanation last year that the facilities at Abbey Leisure Centre were greater than at the other Leisure Centres, **and that we are moving towards removing the differential.**

Firstly the quality of equipment, although better than the rest (of the other Leisure Centres), is far from ideal and has not been improved since last year. I have received complaints about the state of the squash courts.
Secondly, it also needs to be borne in mind that the facility was built with funding from Community Gain, £1,000,000+.

Accordingly, I find it difficult to expect local Residents to pay more for a better facility that was given to given to their community at no/little cost to the Authority.

If we do not reach parity (Abbey Leisure Centre fees being equal to the other Leisure Centre) this year (2008/2009), when can we expect it?”

**Councillor T. Moderate
Ward Councillor - Framwellgate Moor**