

Minutes

Economic Scrutiny Panel

2nd October, 2008 Mayor's Chamber, Town Hall

Present: Councillor Hoppood (in the Chair) and Councillors Bartle, Colledge, Kellett, Marsden, Plews, Simmons, D. Smith and Wilkes.

Also Present: Councillors Kinghorn, Robinson, Wolstenholme and Young.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Guy, Lightley, Simpson and Walker.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th September, 2008, were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Review of Economic and Community Development – Draft Report

A copy of the Draft Report on the Panel's review of Community Development had been circulated to Members with the Agenda Papers. Members were asked whether they had any further comments on the main body of the Draft Report. Members agreed that the Report had comprehensively covered the points raised at previous meetings.

Members were invited to put forward suggestions for recommendations to be included on the Report. The Chair offered two recommendations, one praising the work that had been conducted by the City of Durham's (COD) Community Development Team over the last 3 years. A second would ask the new Unitary Authority (DCC) to take on board the best practise as displayed by the COD Community Development Team and use this as a framework around which to build a successful Community Development function for the new Authority.

Members agreed with these recommendations in principle, but there was concern over where Community Development would fit in the new DCC overall corporate structure. Members noted that in previous drafts of a proposed structure for the DCC post-April 2008, there had not appeared to be any mention of "Community Development". The Chair informed Members that at the DCC meeting of Council held 01 October 2008 that their "Blueprint" document was agreed. However, the document as agreed did not have included within it draft structures below the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director level. Members thought this could provide an opportunity to perhaps influence the issue through the relevant Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Programme Board and its constituent workstreams. Accordingly, Members agreed that part of the proposed second recommendation should be that the COD model of Community Development should be taken into account through the relevant programme board and workstream.

Members discussed the issue of Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and how the proposed boundaries for these groups may have an effect upon how Community Development is shaped within the new Unitary Authority. Members were concerned that some areas were missed from proposed AAP boundaries and that other may lie outside of their "natural community". Members were made aware that the proposals as published by DCC were indeed "first drafts" and that the 14 AAP areas had not yet been finalised.

Members felt that they may be some merit in mentioning that there were differences in how different AAP areas would need to be managed from a Community Development aspect. An example given was the differences between Easington, which attracts additional funding as it contains areas of deprivation and Durham City where COD Community Development Officers have to access different types of funding as it does not qualify for funding via areas of deprivation. Members appreciated that different approaches would be required in different circumstances, but agree that the COD Community Development model would be a good starting point for a DCC Community Development section.

Accordingly, Members decided upon the following recommendations to be added to the Report:

3.1 That the City of Durham Community Development Team be commended for their excellent work and achievements over the last 3 years.

3.2 That the Durham County Council adopts the City of Durham model of Community Development as a framework in order to provide a level of service across the County equal to current best practise and to provide a solid foundation on which the relevant LGR workstreams and DCC Directorates can build upon.

4. Any Other Business

The Chair asked Members to note that the meeting of the Panel scheduled for 21st October, 2008 had been cancelled and that therefore the next meeting of the Panel would be 27th November 2008.

At the next meeting feedback from the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture regarding the recommendation that was not taken forward by Cabinet will be presented. As the November meeting will be the final Economic Scrutiny Panel meeting, any other outstanding Panel issues will be looked at.

Meeting terminated 5.50 p.m.

Economic Scrutiny Panel

Review of Community Development

1. Background

- 1.1 The work of the Economic and Community Development team had been brought to the attention of Economic Scrutiny Panel through their excellent SRB work this was originally scrutinised in July, 2005. SRB funding is no longer available but Economic and Community Development teams have continued to work closely with the communities within the District completing many successful projects.
- 1.2 The Community Development Team was set up following a restructure in 2005.
- 1.3 The Panel were eager to discover what is going well, what the current situation is and how the excellent practice can be continued in the new Unitary Authority.

2. Findings

- 2.1 The Community Development structure is not replicated in any of the other seven Councils in County Durham. The work carried out by the Team is unique, they with community groups and individuals on a range of projects, they help to build capacity and confidence
- 2.2 The Community Development Team have developed a 'hands on' approach and there is one Community Development Officer (CDO) for every three villages. The CDOs help groups and individuals in various ways from filling application forms for funding at the beginning to seeing a project all the way through to the end.
- 2.3 Since the team was formed in 2005 over 300 new groups have been supported this is an average of 87 groups per month being supported. The team has been directly responsible for securing approximately £3 million of funding for City of Durham District local groups and residents. This figure does not include projects where officers have had limited responsibility or where officers have just made recommendations.
- 2.4 Community Development Officer Activity Grants were established in June 2006. The grants allow CDO's to use their discretion to distribute funds to projects within their zone. Up to February 2008 a total of £91,266 had been distributed to local community groups.
- 2.5 The Community Development Team is not subject to National Performance Indicators therefore they have developed 12 outputs which are recorded. Therefore monitoring their own progress and recording how grants benefit the local groups and communities. A list of the 12 outputs is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.6 The team have also assisted with a wide range of corporate exercises relating to most departments of the Authority

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the City of Durham Community Development Team be commended for their excellent work and achievements over the last 3 years.
- 3.2 That the Durham County Council adopts the City of Durham model of Community Development as a framework in order to provide a level of service across the County equal to current best practise and to provide a solid foundation on which the relevant LGR workstreams and DCC Directorates can build upon.

Appendix 1

■ Outputs to CDO grants June 2006 – February 2008

Outputs are attached to the previously highlighted Community Development Activity Grants in order that we may effectively monitor how our grants benefit the local groups and communities we fund. Outputs as at February 2008 were as below:

Output	Definition	Actual
1A	No. of employed people trained obtaining qualifications	27
1A(i)	No. of unemployed people trained obtaining qualifications	12
1A(ii)	No. of 1A or 1A(i) who are female	20
1A(iii)	No. of 1A or 1A(i) who are from minority backgrounds	6
1B	No. of training programmes supported	13
2A	No. of young people benefiting from projects to promote personal and social development	7464
2B	No. of older people (60+) benefiting from projects to promote personal and social development	3924
3A	No. of community safety initiatives	11
4A	No. of new community health opportunities supported	46
4Ai	No. of people accessing these new opportunities	6425
5A	No. of new community sports opportunities supported	252
5A(i)	No. of people accessing these new opportunities	7702
6A	No. of new community cultural opportunities supported	1205
6A(i)	No. of people accessing these new opportunities	10794
7A	No. of voluntary organisations/community groups supported	394
8A	No. of individuals involved in voluntary work	2224