

City of Durham

At a Meeting of **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Studio, Gala Theatre, on Thursday, 13th September, 2007 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Hopgood (in the Chair)
and Councillors Colledge, Howarth, McDonnell, Mitchell, Moderate, Robinson, Simpson, Wilkes and Wolstenholme.

Also Present: Councillors Lodge, D. Smith, Turnbull and van Zwanenberg.

227. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Walton.

228. MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of 26th July, 2007 were confirmed as a correct record.

229. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Councillor Mitchell had asked (via email) for more information relating to a Portfolio Holder Decision made by the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Regeneration Councillor van Zwanenberg. Councillor van Zwanenberg was in attendance at the Meeting to give a verbal response. The Chair agreed that Councillor van Zwanenberg give his response to the Committee at the beginning of the meeting so he could then fulfil a prior engagement.

Councillor van Zwanenberg informed the Committee that the reasoning behind Portfolio Holder Decision had been to maintain effective business continuity. If the services of the original author of the Sustainability Appraisal could not have been secured then it was likely that the whole process would have had to be re-started.

The Chair requested that the full text of Councillor van Zwanenberg's response be given to Councillor Mitchell.

Note: *Councillor van Zwanenberg left the meeting 5.40 p.m.*

230. CABINET DECISIONS – 5 September 2007

The Committee were advised that all Scrutiny reports that had been sent to Cabinet with the exception of the Policy Scrutiny Panel's Report on Working with Parish Councils which had been deferred pending the outcome of LGR were accepted. These reports were the first to test the new Scrutiny/Cabinet reporting procedure and Scrutiny Panel Chairs would await formal responses from the relevant Portfolio Holders within the agreed time limit.

Note: *Councillor Mitchell joined the meeting 5.44 p.m.*

Members expressed concern that questions had not been allowed at the Cabinet Presentation on the Swimming Pool and requested that copies of the presentation slides be made available to Members of the Committee. Members requested that a further update be given to December Cabinet. The Committee also expressed

concern that Bluestone, the original contractor, had been taken over but Members had not been informed of this.

231. VERBAL REPORTS OF PANEL CHAIRS

An update was given by each Panel Chair on the progress of their Panel business.

232. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan No. 64, which was effective from 3rd September, 2007, and had no comments to make.

233. DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS SINCE LAST MEETING

A copy of the schedule indicating the decisions taken by Portfolio Holders since the last Meeting is attached at Appendix A.

Councillor Howarth referred to Portfolio Decision number 7 and asked if the Committee could receive confirmation on where the other sites are located.

Councillor Robinson referred to Portfolio Decision number 8 and asked if the decision could be clarified.

It was agreed that responses would be requested to be forwarded direct to Councillors Howarth and Robinson.

234. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were advised that subsequent to a previous request by Councillor Mitchell an update on the Town Hall refurbishments would be given at the October meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

Members were informed that a Scrutiny topic suggestion had been received, to scrutinise CCTV coverage within the City Centre. The Committee agreed to accept this suggestion and allocated the topic to Economic Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Wilkes asked that the percentage of Scrutiny Panel recommendations that have been implemented be reflected in the Annual Report.

A new set of performance figures had been included in the 2006/2007 Annual Report and it was the intention that further performance figures be developed.

Meeting terminated at 6.10 p.m.

Chairman

Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Review of Scrutiny of Playing Pitch Strategy (City of Durham Council's Recreation Grounds)

1. Background

- 1.1 The Playing Pitch Strategy was commissioned in July, 2001 by City of Durham Council, Durham County Council and Sport England in order to assess the playing pitch requirements in the District both at that time and over the following five years.
- 1.2 Following a request by Cabinet in January 2005, the Playing Pitch Strategy had been referred to Scrutiny Committee prior to being adopted by Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee had subsequently referred the Strategy to the Community Services Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.3 The Community Services Scrutiny Panel initially scrutinised the Playing Pitch Strategy from October 2005 to April 2006. During the scrutiny the Panel asked for a site inspection of the Council's recreation grounds this took place March 2006.
- 1.4 In order to carry out this review the Panel arranged another set of site inspections of Council owned recreation grounds in July 2007.

2. Findings

- 2.1 The Panel visited several recreation grounds in March 2006 and further site inspections were carried out in July 2007.
- 2.2 The Panel found that the recommendations following the site inspections in March 2006 had been carried out. Window frames to the front of the sun lounge at Esh Winning recreation ground had been replaced. The changing rooms at Bearpark recreational ground had greatly improved.
- 2.3 Following the site inspections it was noted that the signage at some of the recreation grounds was either in need of updating or lacking.
- 2.4 Drainage was found to be a problem on some recreational grounds. The Technical Support Manager advised that a survey would need to be carried out to determine the current problems and how they can be remedied.

3. Recommendations

General

- 3.1 That the recommendations with regard to the promotion of each sport, as made in the City of Durham Playing Pitch Strategy and approved by Cabinet, should be actively pursued to further develop pitches and facilities for participants of both sexes, across the full age range.

- 3.2 That through City Council initiatives and communication with partners, encouragement should be given to incorporate playing pitches into cohesive community provision that reflects both local and District needs.

City Council Pitches

- 3.3 That all playing pitches in City of Durham ownership are retained for recreational use.
- 3.4 That in accordance with the conclusions in the Playing Pitch Strategy, the availability, condition and maintenance of all City of Durham pitches should continue to be monitored and reviewed.
- 3.5 That in accordance with current practice, where a pitch is under-used, reasons should be carefully analysed and measures to improve take-up considered, taking a flexible approach to supply and demand.

Changing Facilities

- 3.6 That particular attention is given to increasing availability and improving facilities for female players as and when the need arises.
- 3.7 That increased community engagement is pursued to extend the use and concept of ownership/ responsibility for premises.
- 3.8 That facilities be regularly inspected and appropriately maintained.
- 3.9 That notices be posted stating expectations of appropriate use.
- 3.10 That in accordance with present practice user clubs be asked to either remove all sports gear at the end of their season or arrange acceptable storage with the Council.

Maintenance and Drainage

- 3.11 That funds be allocated to undertake a survey to investigate problems with drainage and to carry out necessary works to alleviate the problems over a 5 year period. The estimated cost of the drainage survey is 5K and it is suggested that a further 10K be allocated each year to improve drainage.

Playing Pitch Signage

- 3.12 That funds be allocated for playing pitch signs and changing room notices, separate from Pride in Durham initiative, over a 5 year period. It is important for members of the public to know that the recreation grounds are owned and maintained by the City of Durham. The average cost for each sign including installation is 1K. The estimated cost of installing signage at 5 facilities each year is 10K.

Working with other Organisations

3.13 The Panel urges continued and supportive working with partners to fulfil and secure playing pitch needs throughout the District and to maximise participation in sports activities i.e. co-operation with organisations such as Sports Governing Bodies, Durham County Council/Schools, Durham University, and Private Clubs. To that end, the Panel makes the following recommendations:-

a). Durham County Council/ Schools

3.14 That the City Council maintains close communication with County Council Officers, particularly the Schools Sports Partnership Manager, to explore ways of extending links, shared use and sports promotion.

3.15 That the Council seeks to further involve schools in the development of Community Hubs, either centred around existing Leisure Centres or schools in areas without such a Centre. The move to Extend School Day Timetables opens up opportunities for this and scope for partnership in provision of activities and tackling transport needs.

b). Durham University

3.16 That further research be made into recruitment and training of more sports coaches; this work to be across the City Council, County Council, School Sports Partnership and University. Joint funding bids could be considered.

3.17 That the Durham City News be used to recruit more potential sports coaches and attract suitably qualified coaches, who may not currently be actively involved, back into coaching.

c). Private Clubs

3.18 That encouragement be given to clubs that currently use City Council pitches and facilities, and that where appropriate, new joint initiatives be considered.

Additional Recommendations

3.19 That the Community Services Scrutiny Panel reviews the Playing Pitch Strategy in July 2008

**Report of Economic Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny of Tourism in the City of Durham**

1. Background

- 1.1 Economic Scrutiny Panel was tasked with scrutinising Tourism in the City of Durham (encompassing the City centre and the surrounding areas). The Panel requested information from the Head of Cultural Services and the Tourism & Conference Manager as well as information from the Council's partners – Durham County Council and One North East.
- 1.2 The Castle and Cathedral is a World Heritage site – Durham City has a lot of visitors passing through or day visitors, this type of tourism should be expanded to boost the district economy.
- 1.3 The Panel wished to investigate whether tourism in Durham could be boosted to make the most of the assets available.

2. Aims & Objectives

2.1 It was the objective of the Panel to discover the following:-

- To clarify what strategies are in place and whether improvements can be made
- To establish that current marketing strategies are correct for their purpose.
- The value of tourism in Durham City district
- To identify strengths and weaknesses of tourism in Durham
- To increase opportunities
- To limit and manage threats
- How Business in the district support tourism
- How Durham City Council can support business'

3. Findings

- 3.1 The Head of Cultural Services and the Tourism and Conference Manager attended several of the Panel meetings and advised the Panel on the current situation. They gave background information on tourism and explained how its profile has been raised over the past twenty years. Tourism generates an estimated £92 million to Durham City's economy, however, it should be noted that when compared with similar Cities £92 million is a low figure. It is important to build on this, but competition is extremely challenging therefore Durham City has to give something unique.
- 3.2 Over recent years tourism has come to the fore and with advances in technology it is possible to book a visit and accommodation online via the internet, therefore the boundaries are global. Instant bookings and fast technology makes competition very tough, therefore communication to visitors is very important.
- 3.3 Melanie Sensicle, Chief Executive of Durham Area Tourism Partnership outlined the position and the way forward in tourism for the region. When people buy a holiday whether short or long they are buying into an experience. People will take away with them memories and experiences of their visit therefore it is vital that the experience is a good one.

- 3.4 Members expressed concern about the methods used to market and communicate various places and activities to visitors, also that marketing methods had not been used to their full potential.
- 3.5 Members also were concerned with problems with transport links due to the cancellation of buses and the reduced numbers of trains that stop at Durham.
- 3.6 Mr Tom Keating, an independent Blue Badge Tourist Guide attended a Panel meeting and made observations regarding tourism in Durham City. Mr Keating mentioned poor signage of the Tourist Information Centre and of problems with finding attractions, such as the Botanical Gardens, the Oriental Museum and Crookhall. Mr Keating suggested utilising both the Cathedral bus and the Park and Ride buses to take visitors to these places during the main visitor season.
- 3.7 The Christian Heritage Trail was another issue brought to the attention of the Panel, when visitors are on the Christian Heritage Trail obviously they visit Durham Cathedral and possibly the Church of St Margaret of Antioch but, getting to Churches such as St Lawrence's Church at Pitlington, St. Helen's at Kelloe can prove difficult if no information is available on which bus to get, where to get it, up to date timetables, where to get off the bus and how to get there when you have got off the bus.
- 3.8 Once the development at Walkergate is completed then new signage will be put in place, also visitors who park at Walkergate or the coach park will walk up to Millennium Place and directly pass the Tourist Information Centre. This will give visitors the opportunity to collect information on the attractions in and around the City.
- 3.9 Mr Colin Wilkes, Managing Director of Durham Market Company outlined tourism from a business perspective and advised that the footfall of customers had dropped which could be related to the current out of town shopping outlets at Pity Me and Dragonville and the levels of rents and rates in the City. Specialised shops would be the way to go but levels of rents and rates are very high, thus making the situation circuitous.
- 3.10 The Tourism and Conference Manager brought to Members attention figures recently received from Heritage Cities Group and compiled by STEAM.

4. Recommendations

A response from the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Leisure can be found at Appendix A.

- 4.1 That the panel receive updates on tourism strategies on a three month basis
- 4.2 That the panel review the scrutiny of tourism in six months.
- 4.3 That the Tourist section continues to work with partners to enhance the provision of tourism in the City of Durham district.
 - Make better use of the information stands at the Park & Ride
 - To encourage the expansion of the Cathedral bus service route to take in attractions such as Crookhall, Botanic Gardens, Gulbenkian Museum etc.
 - To work with the current rail provider in order to display marketing literature and uniform signage
 - Continue to work with Durham Area Tourism Partnership
 - Continue to work closely with Durham University and Dean and Chapter to encourage people to visit the district.

- To work closely with Durham City Arts, Durham City Forum and Durham Markets Company with the common goal of encouraging visitors to attend festivals in the City.
- To establish links with Tour Operators and develop Christian Heritage Trails visiting local churches of interest as well as Durham Cathedral.

- 4.4 To ensure that the signage in the City is uniform, correct multi lingual and gives an approximate distance.
- 4.5 When the City Centre Co-ordinator has been in post 6 months check to ensure that the City is making the most of what it has to offer visitors.
- 4.6 To market specialist brochures of district attractions and to make this available in hard copy and on the website. To develop the idea of the attractions within the district as a bicycle wheel with the City Centre as the centre and the various district attractions to appear as spokes of the wheel.
- 4.7 To liaise with hotels in the district to ascertain the types of accommodation on offer and other facilities provided by the hotel. It is recommended to ensure that hotels display relevant and update information relating to the district attractions and to pursue the conference circuit marketing.
- 4.8 To liaise with various partners especially Durham City Forum to market festivals and perhaps increase the length of the Christmas and Summer festivals. To encourage the marketing of the Durham Miners' Gala on a larger scale and the possibility of a Mining Heritage Centre. To market the many walks in the district, the Necklace Park, Crowtrees Walk, Ghost Walks in the City Centre. Encourage the development of children's activities such as concerts, plays and festivals.
- 4.9 Members to take part in a stock-take exercise – for each member to identify an attraction or place of interest in their ward.
- 4.10 To fully support the suggestion of a unique shopping experience in Durham City and to undertake a review of the business rate criteria within the district, to entice retailers into the area.

Report of Economic Scrutiny Panel - Scrutiny of Tourism in the City of Durham

1. Background

1.1 Economic Scrutiny Panel was tasked with scrutinising Tourism in the City of Durham (encompassing the City centre and the surrounding areas). The Panel requested information from the Head of Cultural Services and the Tourism & Conference Manager as well as information from the Council's partners – Durham County Council and One North East.

The Panel wished to investigate whether tourism in Durham could be boosted to make the most of the assets available.

2. Recommendations

The Panel recognised the challenges facing Durham City's Tourism Service in an increasingly competitive environment and made a number of recommendations. A Response and Progress Report on measures taken to address these recommendations (given in italics), in order to maintain and improve the service, is given below:

- *That the Tourist section continues to work with partners to enhance the provision of tourism in the City of Durham district.*

Since the establishment of the CDTP, the Tourism Service has worked closely with its staff to ensure that the time and effort invested in setting up the organisation pays dividends to the city. This has already proved to be the case:

- *Make better use of the information stands at the Park & Ride*
- *To encourage the expansion of the Cathedral bus service route to take in attractions such as Crookhall, Botanic Gardens, Gulbenkian Museum etc.*
- *To work with the current rail provider in order to display marketing literature and uniform signage*
- *Continue to work with Durham Area Tourism Partnership.*

One of the difficulties experienced by the Tourism Service was the inability to provide information and maps in sufficient quantities to satisfy the demand from visitors (some 3.7m. per annum), and to supply new outlets such as the Park and Ride sites. By working with the County Durham Tourism Partnership a new Durham City Pocket Guide has been produced which includes a city map, and has been printed in a quantity of half a million. This will enable widespread distribution, including Park and Ride sites and the Railway Station. Work is ongoing with the station to enhance our presence there, as part of the refurbishment.

- *Continue to work closely with Durham University and Dean and Chapter to encourage people to visit the district.*

Discussions are underway with Durham City Vision partners, to explore opportunities for a World Heritage Site Visitor Centre on Palace Green. This would provide a focus for the site, encourage exploration of the city centre and beyond, and link with the Tourist Information Centre in Millennium Place.

- *To work closely with Durham City Arts, Durham City Forum and Durham Markets Company with the common goal of encouraging visitors to attend festivals in the City.*

Through the Durham City Vision, the Tourism Service has established an Events Team of an Events Co-ordinator and Events Support Officer to work with DCV partners and all other relevant bodies to improve the quality of events, create new ones, and to raise the profile of the City. An Events Toolkit will be provided on-line for potential organisers, and an events licensing policy for the city centre will be drawn up to encourage an increased level of high-quality activity.

- *To establish links with Tour Operators and develop Christian Heritage Trails visiting local churches of interest as well as Durham Cathedral.*

The Tourism Service works closely with tour operators and hosts occasional familiarisation visits. Resulting directly from this activity, the City's efforts were recently recognised by Group Organiser Magazine in its annual awards. Durham City was a finalist in the 'Group-Friendly Destination' category (won by Blackpool), St Aidan's was voted best University Accommodation for groups, and Beamish was Best Large Attraction.

- *To ensure that the signage in the City is uniform, correct multi lingual and gives an approximate distance.*

Durham City Vision has responded to concerns about signage, expressed by visitors in the satisfaction surveys conducted by the Tourist Information Centre, by commissioning a full-scale report from the specialist consultants Placemarque. Their findings and recommended signage strategy are due to be announced in September 2007.

- *When the City Centre Co-ordinator has been in post 6 months check to ensure that the City is making the most of what it has to offer visitors.*

The Co-ordinator is a member of the Durham City Vision Executive and meets regularly with the Events Team.

- *To market specialist brochures of district attractions and to make this available in hard copy and on the website. To develop the idea of the attractions within the district as a bicycle wheel with the City Centre as the centre and the various district attractions to appear as spokes of the wheel.*

Now that the Durham City pocket guide has been produced, work is underway to produce supporting themed brochures, which will draw attention to attractions across the district. The first of these will feature gardens, parks, nature trails etc. They will form part of a national marketing campaign to be undertaken by the County Durham Tourism Partnership this year on themes such as Hidden Gems, Durham City Breaks etc.

- *To liaise with hotels in the district to ascertain the types of accommodation on offer and other facilities provided by the hotel. It is recommended to ensure that hotels display relevant and update information relating to the district attractions and to pursue the conference circuit marketing.*

This work is ongoing with hotels. Conference marketing is now undertaken on behalf of the City by Event Durham the University's conference office, which has recently been voted the UK's best conference office.

- *To liaise with various partners especially Durham City Forum to market festivals and perhaps increase the length of the Christmas and Summer festivals. To encourage the marketing of the Durham Miners' Gala on a larger scale and the possibility of a Mining Heritage Centre. To market the many walks in the district, the Necklace Park, Crowtrees Walk, Ghost Walks in the City Centre. Encourage the development of children's activities such as concerts, plays and festivals.*

See above, on Events and Publications.

- *Members to take part in a stock-take exercise – for each member to identify an attraction or place of interest in their ward.*

Suggestions welcomed for potential attractions to be featured.

- *To fully support the suggestion of a unique shopping experience in Durham City and to undertake a review of the business rate criteria within the district, to entice retailers into the area.*

The Durham City Vision is to commission a report on distinctive shopping for the city, to attract specialist retailers and to improve the shopping appeal for visitors.

Scrutiny Committee

25th October 2007

Report of the Head of Property Services

Alterations to the Town Hall

1. **Background**

The Town Hall building is a Grade 2* listed building and at present is not accessible by all members of the community. This is mainly due to the nature of the building and the various changes in level at the entrances and throughout the building. Under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act, building owners have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of a building to overcome physical barriers to access. In addition to the works required under the DDA, the Town Hall also has an inadequate level of fire escape and fire alarm/detection provision, which may present a danger to the building and its occupants.

As a listed building we were required to obtain listed building consent from the authority and have this decision confirmed by GONE. Several conditions attached to the approval had to be discharged before work could commence.

2. **Proposed Works**

In order to address the issues of access within the Town Hall, it is intended to carry out the following works:-

Lower Ground Floor Level

- Create new level access Entrance & Reception Area using the old Tourist Information building (including accessible reception counter, Staff Room & Display Areas)
- Renew timber windows and entrance doors (automatic opening)
- Install lift & staircase to upper levels (both to be fitted with swipe card system to only allow staff/member access)
- Install staircase from Reception down into Cellar
- Install new Fire Alarm System
- Decorate all affected areas

Ground Floor Level

- Re-locate and renew Male & Female toilets adjacent to Supper Room
- Form new unisex Accessible Toilet
- Re-locate & replace Kitchen & Bar areas within Supper Room
- Strip walls, renew suspended ceiling, renew flooring & re-clad walls and re-decorate Supper Room

- Install new staircase to floor above – this will replace the existing ‘trap door’ fire escape route from the top floor of the building
- Fit double doors to Crush Hall
- Form access from new lift into existing Members Room
- Remove W.C. from toilet at Main Entrance and form new Cleaners Store
- Install new Fire Alarm System
- Decorate all affected areas

Mezzanine Level

- Take new lift & staircase into existing ‘Void’ area (both to be fitted with swipe card system to only allow staff/member access)
- Dry-line existing block walls and decorate, install new suspended ceiling and install new windows into existing boarded up openings. Create a new room which can either be used as a Store, or if required as an Office.
- Install new Fire Alarm System
- Decorate all affected areas

First Floor Level

- Remove walls to Kitchen, Office & Store to allow for the new staircase to enter, thus forming a protected Fire Escape Staircase as an alternative means of escape.
- Form new Kitchen and Office, rooms to suit new layout
- Form new Comms Room off Landing area & alter existing door positions
- Re-furbish existing toilets
- Re-furbish Offices
- Install new Fire Alarm System
- Decorate all affected areas

As part of a design analysis a lift was proposed to the Guild Hall with access being taken through the ‘City Silver’ display cabinet. Following discussions with the Heritage Section, it was noted that the wall was of too great a historical importance to carry out significant works, and therefore not possible to access the room via a lift. As an alternative means of access, the possibility of using a stair-climber has been investigated. Similarly, the staircase from the Crush Hall leading to the Council Chamber is of such a layout that it will not be possible to install a fixed platform lift; therefore, again a stair-climber appears to be the only feasible means of allowing a wheelchair user to negotiate this staircase. An access statement has been prepared which sets out arrangements for access to rooms outside of the reach of the lift.

3. Tender Information

Expressions of interest from suitably experienced contractors to carry out the works at the Town Hall were received in line with the requirements of the Contract Procedure Rules. There were 13 companies who expressed an interest in the work, 7 of whom returned a Post Qualification Questionnaire and all 7 were invited to submit a tender.

The companies were:

Border Construction
P.F. Burrige
Dorin Construction
Lumsden & Carroll
Pyeroy
Sendrig Construction
Vest Construction

Of these, 6 companies returned a tender ranging from £754,006 to £1,012,000

A panel consisting of the Authority's Technical Officers and the Consulting Engineers, who designed the mechanical and electrical elements of the project, reviewed the tender submissions and requested further information where appropriate, especially in the area of Health and Safety. The outcome of these deliberations was:

- (1) The tender submitted by Vest Construction of £754,006.00 is the most financially advantageous and is within the budget for the work of £800,000.
- (2) The panel who considered the tenders were convinced that Vest Construction were sufficiently competent and had committed sufficient resources to the project.
- (3) The referees provided confirmed the competence of Vest Construction.

The recommendation to appoint Vest Construction as the principal contractor for the project was put to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Reynolds, and he agreed this in line with the plenary powers granted to him. (*Cabinet, 18th April 2007, min no. 612*)

An official order was placed with Vest Construction and the start date of the main contract was the 16th July 2007 with a 20 week contract period.

4. Current Position

Work on this type of building is always difficult and there are often unforeseeable issues which will occur and cause delay and / or additional costs, including the successful discharge of conditions attached to the listed building consent

The present situation is;

- a. Out of 21 conditions associated with the listed building consent 10 are to still be discharged; some of these will not need to be discharged until completion of the work.
- b. Removal of existing panelling has revealed some potentially serious problems with the building, with water ingress. Prices are being obtained

to carry out remedial work and as this work was outside of that tendered there is a possibility that there may be an impact on cost and programme, although we are attempting to manage the situation to avoid this.

- c. The main contractor is presently 2 weeks behind the original programme due to some changes in specification and finishes required following completion of demolition and strip out phase.

Report of Economic Scrutiny Panel

Scrutiny of Disabled Parking within City of Durham District

1. Background

The Economic Scrutiny Panel was tasked with scrutinising the available provision of disabled parking within the district.

Members had noted that there was a problem with able bodied drivers parking in disabled designated spaces; however, this mostly happens on privately owned land.

The Panel wished to explore how to discourage able bodied people from using specially designated spaces for disabled people.

2. Aims & Objectives

It was the objective of the Panel to discover the following:-

- What facilities are currently available
- Are current facilities adequate
- What are the future needs
- Focus on disabled parking within the District and aim to improve
- How the Council can work with other organisations to improve current situation

3. Findings

The current parking facilities for Disabled Drivers in Durham City are as follows:-

City of Durham Council Car Parks – 2 Disabled Parking Spaces

Park & Ride

Belmont –	12 Spaces
Sniperely –	5 Spaces
Howlands –	6 Spaces

There are several private car parks within the City that have dedicated disabled parking spaces. Also, the out of town retail parks at the Arniston Centre and Dragonville have a large number of disabled parking spaces. Superstores in the district also provide disabled parking spaces.

However, inconsiderate parking of able-bodied people in disabled bays can only be enforced by the private land owners on their land. Some private car parks display notices warning of wheel clamping but this is directed at any unauthorised parking.

The Disability Now, the Disabled Drivers' Association, Disabled Drivers' Motor Club and British Polio Fellowship are campaigning to end the abuse of disabled parking bays by non-disabled people. The Baywatch Campaign aims to improve public

awareness of the misuse of designated disabled bays and encouraging drivers not use disabled bays unless they are a valid blue badge holder. The Campaign has the backing of the Minister for the Disabled and many disabled organisations together with major grocery retailers.

The Baywatch Campaign has gained interest from many high street supermarkets, motoring organisations and some local authorities.

Disabled drivers who display the Blue Badge are entitled to free on street parking. In fee paying car parks disabled drivers whilst having designated spaces are expected to pay unless otherwise stated.

A disabled lady came along to a panel meeting and gave Panel Members an insight into problems she encounters regularly. The most common problem encountered is able bodied people parking in designated disabled spaces. Also there are problems for wheel chair users when people inconsiderately park their vehicles in front of dropped kerbs thus making it difficult if not impossible to reach their destination.

The Manager of Prince Bishop's Shopping Centre and the Managing Director of Durham City Markets Company agreed with Panel Members that Shopmobility should receive more publicity. The Managing Director of Durham Market Company advised Members of abuse of the blue badge scheme in parking bays to the rear of the Market Hall.

4. Outcomes

Access for All provide a bus that takes disabled people on shopping trips to various locations which otherwise they would find difficult. Shopmobility offers a service for a nominal fee, of collecting disabled shoppers from their homes and drops them off at the shopmobility centre in Durham where scooters have been prebooked for them

That more publicity should be given to organisations such as *Access for All* and *Shopmobility* to promote the good work they do which is a benefit to the City. Thus encouraging disabled people into the city centre which otherwise may have been inaccessible to them.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That Durham City Council monitor its public carparks and alert able bodied drivers who have parked their vehicles in a designated disabled parking bays illegally that enforcement action will be taken against them.
- 5.2 That Durham City Council publicly support the Baywatch Scheme to stop abuse of designated disabled parking spaces
- 5.3 To encourage Durham County Council to include in their Blue Badge Packs information about Access to All and Shopmobility.
- 5.3 To urge Durham County Council, University Hospital of North Durham, Health Centres and Doctors' Surgeries to display Access to All guide and Shopmobility leaflets at their waiting areas (Park and Ride). Also that hospitals, health Centres and Doctors Surgeries display Access for All bus timetables on their notice boards.

- 5.4 To encourage the Community Police or Traffic Wardens to be available to ensure that the loading bay dropped kerb area of the Market Place is clear for drop off and pick up of the monthly Access Bus.
- 5.5 That City of Durham Council give their full support to Durham County Council as Highway Authority, in their proposal to obtain Civil Powers in the decriminalising of parking offences.
- 5.6 That Parish Councils carry out a survey of disabled parking facilities in their parish and where appropriate designate at least one disabled parking bay at their Community Centres.
- 5.7 That Durham City News advertise Shopmobility and the timetable for the Access for All bus in future editions and include a feature on the disabled facilities in Durham City.

Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Scrutiny of Closed Graveyards

1. Background

- 1.1 The Panel were tasked with scrutinising closed Graveyards within the District with the purpose of obtaining an overview of the Council's responsibilities for closed church/graveyards.
- 1.2 Panel Members discussed and agreed the scope of the scrutiny and a scrutiny planning sheet was produced. Members agreed that War Graves be included within the scrutiny.
- 1.3 The Panel meetings were attended by the Street Scene Technical Officer, the Environmental Services Manager and Heritage and Design Manager.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 To determine what is a closed graveyard; how does a graveyard become closed; how the Council became responsible for closed graveyards/cemeteries and whether adequate attention is given to maintenance and standards of repair.
- 2.2 To establish who owns closed church/graveyards within the District and which other organisations/ individuals may have responsibility for maintenance.
- 2.3 To ascertain how much money the City Council allocates for the management, maintenance and upkeep of closed graveyards in comparison to the actual amount of works needed.

3. Actions

- 3.1 Members agreed that Officers from Environment & Leisure and Heritage & Design should be invited to attend the panel meetings.
- 3.2 The Council's Procedure for Closed Churchyard Memorial Management was made available to Members for their information. This procedure was adopted by Cabinet at their meeting on 20th September, 2006. *This report can be found at Appendix A in the Members' Room.*

4. Outcomes

- 4.1 The term "closed graveyards" generally means that the graveyard has been closed for burials by an Order in Council under the Burial Act 1853. Also, a graveyard is closed when there is insufficient space to provide a new grave and continued use would be a risk to public health or stopping further burials would prevent nuisance. People who have bought a grave-space and the graveyard then becomes closed would still be able to be buried in that graveyard.

- 4.2 When an Order in Council is made, Parish and District Councils may object to the closure if they believe there is sufficient space for additional graves or if the closure is being applied to avoid the cost of repairing and maintaining the graveyard.
- 4.3 When an order has been granted maintenance responsibilities remain with the Parochial Church Council unless they serve written notice on the Parish Council to transfer responsibility on to them. The Parish Council could then in turn serve written notice on the district council. However the parochial church council must ensure prior to the takeover that all walls and fences are in good condition.
- 4.4 Maintenance responsibilities particularly include health and safety aspects but also include grass, shrubs and trees. Headstones are the responsibility of the family and heirs but the council has the power to prevent dangers to graveyard users.
- 4.5 City of Durham is responsible for the maintenance of a number of closed graveyards across the district (*a comprehensive list can be found at Appendix B in the Member's room*), however, in some cases the responsibility is shared with the parish council. General Maintenance included grass cutting and visits take place every 10-14 days throughout the summer. Headstones at most closed churchyards are treated with herbicides around the base to control growth.
- 4.6 Vandalism or damage is reported by maintenance personnel, litter collection does not regularly take place, but it is removed as it accumulates or interferes with maintenance.
It was noted that closed graveyards are vulnerable to anti social behaviour and as a result Neighbourhood Wardens check on the graveyards.
- 4.7 Regular safety inspections are carried out by Heritage and Design together with the Council's Health and Safety Officer checking on headstones. Works identified as a result of the safety inspections are paid from capital works budget. Environmental Services hold budgets for grass cutting and some general maintenance.
- 4.8 It was suggested that some selective graveyards may become biodiversity sites. However, in most cases it would be inappropriate also communications with the Parochial Church Council would be required. The Diocese is reported to be happy with the levels of grounds maintenance currently carried out.
- 4.9 Officers explained that there is a budget of £25,000 set aside for repairs but if costs increase then the numbers of repairs being carried out will need to reduce. As the inspections of the graveyards have progressed there are fewer repairs needed. In some graveyards grounds maintenance and some minor works have been carried out by volunteers, for example dry stone walling at Quarrington Hill.
- 4.10 Proposals for any work to make safe, repair or install, including memorial stones, fences and walls, in a Church of England Churchyard have to be approved by the Diocesan Chancellor advised by the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The Durham Diocesan Registry at Smith Roddam Solicitors, 56 North Bondgate, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 7PG; Telephone

01388- 603-073, will be contacted to indicate this procedure, which will require a detailed schedule of proposed works to accompany the application.

War Graves

- 4.11 The majority of War Graves are marked by the Commonwealth War Grave Commission's (CWGC's) familiar standard war pattern headstone, however there are a significant number that are marked by private memorials in accordance with the wishes of relatives. Only the commission can verify whether memorials/headstones mark war graves or not.
- 4.12 All memorials failing the safety testing procedure, with inscriptions between 1914 and 1947, and requiring works to make them safe are checked against the register provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in order to verify from the CWGC's own definitive records as to whether or not the memorial constitutes as a war grave.
- 4.13 If a memorial is found to be included on the CWGC's register and is therefore a war grave then the City Council will not carry out any works to it. The memorial will be recorded, photographed, its location plotted on to an Ordnance Survey plan and its condition reported in writing to the CWGC.
- 4.14 Once confirmed the Commission will obtain permission from Team Rector to undertake repair works and the works will be scheduled next time the travelling war graves caretakers are in the vicinity.
- 4.15 Details of all of the registered war graves within the City of Durham district can be found within the register published from records by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The register contains a list of all of the churchyards/cemeteries within the City Council's district containing registered war graves and also other burials in the care of the war graves commissions.
There are problems with subsidence at Brandon Cemetery and grounds maintenance is unable to tend the war graves due to health and safety.

The War Graves Current Procedure can be found at Appendix C which has been placed in the Members' Room

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That City of Durham Council continue to work closely with Durham Diocese and that Heritage and Design department and The Council's Health and Safety Officer continue to inspect the graveyards.
- 5.2 That the good work of Environment Services, grounds maintenance team continue in closed graveyards.
- 5.3 That Neighbourhood Wardens continue to monitor graveyards and advise of any problems.
- 5.4 That Members be requested to check on the condition of any closed graveyard in their area and report litter problems to the Street Scene Officer and any evidence of anti-social behaviour to the Neighbourhood Wardens.

5.5 That a copy of the scrutiny report be sent to each PCC and Parish Councils for information and comment.

POLICY SCRUTINY PANEL

UPDATE REPORT 2007

TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

BACKGROUND

1. The Policy Scrutiny Panel carried out an initial Scrutiny of the Telephone Communications System during 2006. In October, 2006, the Head of Community Services attended the Panel meeting to brief Members on progress and further address Member's concerns.

1.2 The Panel requested the Head of Community Services to develop Performance Indicators, in the form of target times for responses to calls, to allow comparison to actual response time figures.

1.3 The Head of Community Services was also requested to attend a future Policy Scrutiny Panel meeting, to update Members on progress.

AIMS

2. To review progress of the development the Telephone Communications System and address any further problems identified by Council Members and Members of the Public.

ACTIONS

3. The Head of Community Services and the Customer Services Manager attended the Policy Scrutiny Panel Meeting on the 17th July, 2007.

3.1 Members were presented with performance indicator information in relation to response times for calls. The information related specifically to calls through Cityinfo.

3.2 The Head of Community Services and the Customer Services Manager responded to concerns highlighted and questions asked by Panel Members.

OUTCOMES

4. The Performance Information circulated to Panel Members showed that over 300,000 calls a year are currently being handled. The Head of Community Services indicated that there had been a general improvement in call handling with over 70% of calls answered at first point of contact in 2006/2007. The target for 2007/2008 has been set for 75%. A revised target of 50% of calls to be answered within 1 minute has also been set for 2007/2008.

4.1 It was apparent that the current telephony software which was introduced some time ago to support the initial Cityinfo centres could not now support the expanded

system. It is likely that the call demand placed on Cityinfo has outgrown the original software and Members were informed that alternative software is now being looked at.

4.2 The Panel was informed that a “Lean Review” is also currently being carried out, by Community Services, in conjunction with the Business Development Section, in order to identify and eliminate wasteful or duplicated procedures, trim down demand and eliminate unnecessary calls, with a view to streamlining and speeding up the system.

4.3 Members still have concerns about specific instances of lengthy delays in responses, both to telephone calls and to Voicemail messages. It was noted from the figures that some individual calls showed waiting times of well over an hour. Some investigation has taken place into these calls and indications show that the figures may result from technical anomalies.

4.4 Members also expressed concern over the “option” offered to callers waiting for a response, to hold and then leave a contact number. In practice, the caller was automatically cut off after 3 minutes, therefore there was no option. Panel Members requested that the recorded message be amended to give callers a clear description of what would happen. The recorded message has since been amended.

4.5 A considerable number of calls are received via the telephone number issued on the Council’s Website. Members were informed that there was, on average, seven staff to cover calls on that number. It was indicated that more analysis was necessary of demands placed on current staff in relation to peaks and troughs of calls.

4.6 Members were informed that a new project is to be undertaken in relation to the Council’s Telephone Communications. A Project Initiation Document will be agreed and a subsequent Project Plan will be developed in relation to future requirements. Progress on the Telephone Communications Project Plan will be subject to LGR developments.

4.7 The Policy Scrutiny Panel request that the following steps be taken to facilitate short term improvements.

That where, following investigation, it is found that technical anomalies are causing extraneously recorded response times, the issue be taken up under the current software service contract.

That in relation to calls held in the queuing system, if it is not already the case, the longest held calls automatically take precedence for response.

4.8 Members of the Policy Scrutiny Panel have serious concerns regarding staff retention in this area and how this is affected by comparative levels of remuneration at neighbouring Authorities.

Recommendations

1) That subject to the current system’s capabilities, the short term measures identified in 4.7 above, be implemented.

2) That a review of Cityinfo staffing levels be undertaken, in order to ensure that sufficient numbers of staff are available at all times to respond to incoming calls and therefore reduce call response times.

3) That Cabinet prioritise the review and replacement of the current Telephone Communications Software and identify associated future staffing requirements.

4) That OMT issue instructions to Heads of Service to require all staff to respond to all Voicemail messages within 24 hours and that staff be required to keep up to date Voicemail greetings.

5) That, subject to the progress of LGR, the proposed Telephone Communications Project Plan, when finalised, be submitted to the Policy Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

6) That the Policy Scrutiny Panel further review the Telephone Communications System at its meeting in April, 2008.

POLICY SCRUTINY PANEL

REPORT

REVIEW OF SICKNESS ABSENCE '07

BACKGROUND

1. The Policy Scrutiny Panel reviewed the Council's current Sickness Absence Figures in June, 2007. Members also considered responses to the Employee Attitude Survey which had been carried out at the previous request of the Policy Scrutiny Panel.

AIMS

2. To consider what progress had been made in reducing the Council's Sickness Absence levels and to examine the reasons for highlighted responses to individual questions in the Employee Attitude Survey.

ACTIONS

3. The Head of HR attended the Panel Meetings held on the 19th June and the 11th September, 2007, to discuss Sickness Absence Figures and responses to individual questions on the Attitude Survey.

3.1 Members were initially circulated with a detailed breakdown of responses to questions in the Employee Attitude Survey. The breakdown also gave comparisons with previous Employee Attitude Surveys, carried out in 2001 and 2004. Due to some concern over certain responses, a further, more detailed breakdown by Department/Section was circulated at the September Panel Meeting.

3.2 At the June Panel Meeting, Members were informed of the Council's current overall Sickness Absence level. A further breakdown of Sickness Absence figures by Department/Section was requested by Members and these were circulated at the September meeting.

OUTCOMES

4. Sickness Absence

4.1 At the June Panel Meeting, Members were informed that the national lower quartile figure for Sickness Absence was 10.9 days per employee; the upper quartile figure was 8.2 days. The Council's current figure was 12.3 days per employee which showed an improvement on the figure of two years ago, of 13.9 days per employee, though the Council's target remained at 10 days.

4.2 Figures for the first two months of this financial year were encouraging but it was noted that a full comparison needed to be made on the annual trend.

4.3 At the September meeting the Panel was informed that a subsequent comparison, taken over the last 12 months, shows a significant, 2 days per employee

decrease in the overall figure, to 10.3 days per employee, slightly above the Council's target. Members wished to acknowledge the improvement.

4.3 The breakdown of Sickness Absence figures in relation to individual Departments/Sections shows "Hot-Spots" throughout the Authority. Some are in relation to areas of work which by their nature are particularly stressful or involve physical work, or both. Some reflect instances of a small number of Employees absent on long term sickness, disproportionately affecting the overall figure.

4.4 The Head of HR discussed in detail with Members the figures for individual Departments/Sections and confirmed that in some instances of persistent sickness absence, disciplinary action has been pursued and in others the situation is being monitored and managed. Problem areas are highlighted with Heads of Service but in other instances employees formerly recorded as being on sickness absence have since left the Council's employment under the ER/VR scheme or have returned to work.

4.5 The Sickness Absence reporting system, through Diagnostic Health Solutions is now fully functioning and a tightly structured raft of internal reporting procedures is in place across the Authority. It is considered that the key to controlling and improving the level of Sickness Absence is the consistent application of these procedures across all Services.

4.6 Members were informed that it is estimated that since the introduction of the services of Diagnostic Health Solutions on an annual contract of £32,000, savings of between £80,000 and £100,000 have been made by the Authority.

4.7 An established counselling/physiotherapy service, in conjunction with the City of Sunderland is in place. This service is available to all employees and is independent of the employee's management structure. As a significant proportion of the Council's Sickness Absence is stress related, Members welcomed the availability of this service.

4.8 Members acknowledged the progress being made in reducing the Council's Sickness Absence figures and wished to express their appreciation to employees and managers for their efforts.

5. Employee Attitude Survey

5.1 Members received an overview of the results of the Employee Attitude Survey carried out in response to a previous request by the Policy Scrutiny Panel and considered in detail the responses to individual questions.

5.2 Approximately 200 responses to 700 Survey questionnaires were received, in comparison with approximately 350 responses to the previous Survey.

5.3 Members had previously expressed some concern over a number of responses to certain questions in the Employee Attitude Survey. A breakdown of those responses was circulated and the Head of HR discussed them in detail with Members in relation to individual Departments/Sections.

5.4 Members felt that the wording and phrasing of certain questions was unclear or ambiguous and suggested that a review of the wording be carried out before the next survey was undertaken.

5.5 The Panel considers that because it is important to monitor trends and quickly identify possible problem areas the Survey should be carried out on an annual basis.

5.6 An employee Viewpoint Panel is being developed to act as a focus group to engage employees in discussions of relevant issues. It was suggested that this Panel be tasked with reviewing the wording of the Employee Attitude Survey questionnaire and the Policy Scrutiny Panel has requested to be involved with them in discussions about the re-drafted questionnaire.

Recommendations

- 1) That the Head of HR update the Policy Scrutiny Panel on the progress of development of the Employee Viewpoint Panel.
- 2) That following the revision by the Employee Viewpoint Panel of the Staff Attitude Survey questionnaire, the questionnaire be submitted to the Policy Scrutiny Panel for consideration before the 2008 Survey is undertaken.
- 3) That from 2008, the Employee Attitude Survey be undertaken on an annual basis.
- 4) That the Policy Scrutiny Panel review the Council's Sickness Absence levels at its meeting in April, 2008.



FORWARD PLAN

In accordance with Regulations 13 and 14 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2000, As Amended, details of matters likely to be the subject of key decisions to be made by the City Council in the following 4 month period, commencing on Monday, 1st October, 2007, are set out hereunder. Anyone wishing to make representations to the City Council Cabinet or to the Decision maker about the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made may do so by writing to the Chief Executive, 17 Claypath, Durham City, DH1 1RH by no later than Monday, 1st October, 2007.

Topic	Decision Maker	Target Date for Decision to be made	Consultees (if any)	Contacts	Background Documents
Review of the Fraud Policy	* Cabinet	October, 2007	Numerous Consultees	Head of Internal Audit Tel: 0191 3018607	In draft

***Cabinet Members:** Councillors Bell, Dickie, Jackson, Pitts, Rae, Reynolds, Southwell, Thomson, van Zwanenberg & Woods

Publication Date: Monday, 17th September, 2007

Effective Date: Monday, 1st October, 2007.

Councillor F. Reynolds
Leader of the Council
Forward Plan No. 65

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
25 October 2007
DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO MEMBERS

No.	Portfolio Member	Nature of Decision	Date
1	Councillor Reynolds	An application to dedicate land for parking schemes at Henry Avenue, Bowburn has been received from the City of Durham's Senior Engineer, with Durham County Council's Service Direct carrying out the works. Recommend that the application be approved.	3.9.07
2	Councillor Van Zwanenberg & Councillor Southwell	Application for prior approval for the commissioning of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment jointly between Wear Valley DC, Chester-le-Street DC, Derwentside DC and Durham County Council with Wear Valley carrying out the tender process in accordance with their constitution. This approval is required to comply with the exemption to the contract procedure rules on the basis of Rule 8.2(f) of the Constitution. Recommend that the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Regeneration gives prior approval for Wear Valley DC to commission a joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with rule 8.2(f) of the Constitution in line with Option 4 of the Options considered.	3.9.07
3	Councillor Thomson	Application received in respect of Disturbance Payment (Ref 311) as a result of the council compulsorily displacing the applicant from his home. The applicant has asked for the fixed payment in the sum of £1000 as he was displaced from a one bedroom bungalow. Recommended payment of £1000 be made.	18.8.07
4	Councillor Thomson and Councillor Southwell	Application received in respect of Home Loss payment as a result of the council compulsorily displacing the applicant from his home (Ref 311). The applicant has outstanding rent arrears of £1107.85. The amount due is in the sum of £4,000. Recommended that the arrears be deducted from the Home Loss payment.	18.8.07
5	Councillor Thomson	Application received in respect of Home Loss payment as a result of the council compulsorily displacing the applicant from his home (Ref 312). The amount due is the sum of £4000. Recommended that the Home Loss payment be made.	30.8.07
6	Councillor Thomson	Application received in respect of Disturbance allowance in the sum of £1000 fixed payment for displacement from a one bedroom bungalow. Recommended that the payment be made.	30.8.07
7	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from the resident of 7 Durham Road West, Bowburn to purchase an area of approx. 26 square metres of land adjoining that property and to determine future use of the land Recommend that the application to purchase the land be refused and that the owner of Artful Ink be offered a licence to occupy the land for use as working space in conjunction with work being carried out at his premises and conditional upon conditions which he should carry	6.9.07

		out to restore the land to its former condition at the time that the licence expires on 31 March 2008	
8	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Mr David Henderson of 4 Halliday Grove, Langley Moor to purchase land at the rear of his property to extend garden and perhaps in the future for construction and erection of a garage. Recommend that the application be refused	6.9.07
9	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Mrs Comerford of 18 Black Road, Langley Moor enquiring whether the Council would consider leasing to her a strip of land adjoining her property for use as garden and to keep rubbish from accumulating in the area. Recommend that the application be refused	6.9.07
10	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Mr & Mrs Coulson of 6 Mary Crescent, Kelloe enquiring if the Council would be willing to dispose of an area of Council owned land adjoining their property. Mr & Mrs Coulson state that they wish the land for garden use only, though it would be in lieu of vehicular hard standing area that would be lost if their garden were extended into their current driveway area. Initially this was a Garden Only Application and Mr & Mrs Coulson wished to go through the full procedure. Recommend that the application be approved.	6.9.07
11	Councillor Reynolds	Appointments to populate the new management structure. To approve the appointment of personnel to the revised management structure in accordance with the recommendation of Solace Enterprises. Recommended that the new management structure be populated as follows: Director of Strategic Services by Director of Strategic Resources Director of Corporate Services by Head of Human Resources Director of Financial Services by Head of Financial Services Head of Community Services by Head of Community Services	26.9.07
12	Councillors Woods, Colledge, Reynolds and Walton	Application received to consider the renewal or otherwise of a Lease to the Trustees of Sherburn Village Bowling Club for a further period of 7 years. Recommend approval of the granting of a further 7 year lease to the Trustees of the Club	27.9.07
13	Councillor Reynolds	Application received from Mr Farrell of 45 Jubilee Crescent, Sherburn Hill for renewal of Grazing Licence relating to an area of land to the north of Jubilee Crescent Recommend that the Licence is renewed for a further 12 months at a revised fee	1.10.07
14	Councillor Southwell	Application received from Durham County Schools' Football Association requesting financial assistance. Recommend that a donation of £100 be made to the Association for the financial year 2007/2008.	3.10.07
15	Councillor Reynolds	Award of a grant of £1,000 to Sherburn Community Association from the Flourishing Communities (Small Grants) Fund for the purchase of portable screens	1.10.07

		Recommend the award of grant of £1,000 on condition that further funds of £1,100.90 are forthcoming from other bodies and that the screens are purchased and the grant claimed by 31 December 2007	
16	Councillor Reynolds	Award of a grant of £629 to Friends of Witton Gilbert Dene from the Flourishing Communities (Small Grants) Fund for the purchase of a strimmer and to fund the costs of a tree surgeon Recommend the award of grant subject to certain conditions and that the works, procurement of equipment and the request for payment of grant by 31 December 2007	1.10.07
17	Councillor Reynolds	Award of a grant of £986 to Kelloe & District Homing Society from the Flourishing Communities (Small Grants) fund for the purchase of 16 bird carrying baskets Recommend the award of grant on condition that the baskets are purchased and the grant claimed b y 31 December 2007	1.10.07
18	Councillor Reynolds	Award of a grant of £3,735 to the Harry Carr House Luncheon Club from the Flourishing Communities (Small Grants) Fund for the refurbishment of the kitchen at Harry Carr House. Recommend the award of grant on condition that Property Services order the goods and undertake the work and that the project be completed and payment made by March 2008	1.10.07