

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD ON TUESDAY 29 JANUARY 2008

Present: Councillor C. Patching (Chair)
Councillors B. Burn, R. Burnip,
Mrs. A.E. Laing, T. Longstaff
and D. Milsom.

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. S. Mason and
P.J. Campbell

Also Present: Councillor G. Patterson - Executive Member for Liveability
Councillor A. Naylor - Executive Member for Neighbourhood
Engagement and Communications

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 8 January 2008 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 15 January 2008 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

RESOLVED that the information contained within the Minutes, be noted.

3. **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

4. **FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

At the last meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 21 January 2008, the following issue was discussed:-

Evaluation of Overview and Scrutiny in County Durham

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that it had been agreed that an evaluation of the Overview and Scrutiny procedures in County Durham would be undertaken. This would identify areas of Best Practice, potential improvement and produce a road map for the new authority. The County Durham network of Members and Officers were keen to ensure that scrutiny practitioners had influenced the model. Scrutiny Management Board had been consulted and the draft document circulated. He would circulate the document to Members of the Committee and include any comments received.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5. **SERVICE UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORTING - COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING**

Consideration was given to the report of the Communications and Marketing Manager which updated Members on the performance of the Communications and Marketing Unit, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

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The Communications and Marketing Manager explained that the Unit's plans continued to be significantly affected by the impact of the Local Government Review. The Unit was working with colleagues at Durham County Council and the District Council to develop a Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. The Communications Unit would concentrate locally on publicising plans for unitary government and increasing the understanding of staff, residents and other stakeholders regarding the transition process and the impact of organisational change.

As part of the Council's Community Engagement Strategy, a Community Advisory Panel was being recruited so that local people could give their views on Council services, issues affecting their daily lives and the neighbourhoods they live in. Recruitment packs had been distributed to 7,500 residents to invite their involvement on the 1,000 strong panel of people of all ages from communities right across the whole district. Residents could also apply on line. To date, 30 people had applied. It was envisaged that the Panel would be established by the end of March 2008.

The Communications and Marketing Manager gave details of the media activity including the numbers of press releases and articles. Coverage generally remained buoyant and positive with minimal negative press.

The Local Government Review workstream was building up a programme for people across the whole of the County to be involved. Durham County Council had a panel of residents and all residents would be combined into the new Panel. It was vital to give the opportunity to people in Easington to have a say.

The Chair commented that there needed to be sensitivity to the views of all stakeholders. There needed to be awareness of the process of reconciliation to be gone through despite the fact that some people voted against a unitary authority. People were worried that there would be a sense of locality lost.

The Communications and Marketing Manager explained that in the build up to local elections, it was very important to make residents aware of who they were voting for.

The Chair thanked the Communications and Marketing Manager for his report.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF THE EXTENSION OF THE GREEN WASTE KERBSIDE COLLECTION SERVICE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Liveability to consider the extension of the green waste collection in the District from 16,000 households to approximately 32,000 households, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Environmental Health and Licensing Manager explained that there was an opportunity to extend the green waste collection service to the remaining 17,100 additional households in the District that had sufficient garden space and were not currently covered by the service. On 1 February 2005, Members approved the introduction of a fortnightly kerbside green waste collection to 15,000 homes in the District. Experience in the first year allowed the scheme to be extended during 2006 to cover 16,000 homes which was the maximum capacity that the vehicle and crew could cope with.

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During 2006/7, the Council achieved 34%, the third best in the North East in its recycling and composting rates. The impact of the new refuse policies together with the introduction of the districtwide plastics and cardboard recycling through the new kerbside collection contract would likely improve this performance still further.

The potential impact of extending the green waste collection service had been evaluated against a number of performance criteria which had enabled the identification of favourable and adverse impacts which were summarised in the report. Research showed that authorities which had been awarded beacon status for their recycling service provided garden waste collection service to the majority of their residents and this helped to achieve the high levels of performance against the range of relevant indicators. Appendix 1 to the report gave examples.

The Environmental Health and Licensing Manager explained that Durham County Council's contribution was now confirmed and £50,000 was to be contributed towards the scheme.

Members commented that they felt there was public demand for extension to the scheme and it would benefit the people who lived in the District.

RESOLVED that the proposal of the extension of the green waste collection service to 17,100 more properties in the District of Easington be endorsed.

7. ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

(i) Visit to Aeorobic Digester (AOB)

The Chair explained that a memo had been sent to Members regarding the joint visit to the Digester Plant by Members of the Committee and representatives from Stockton Metropolitan Borough Council's Scrutiny Panel. The visit would commence at 10am on Friday 8 February 2008 and Members were to advise the Scrutiny Support Manager as soon as possible of their availability.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

(ii) Presentation by Greencycle (AOB)

The Chair reminded Members of the presentation by Greencycle that was to be held at the Glebe Centre from 1.30pm that day.

The Executive Member for Liveability congratulated Officers on the work that had been carried out during the tender process.

The Environmental Health and Licensing Manager explained that if Members had any complaints regarding the collection of recycling then they should report this to Envirocall for the matter to be dealt with promptly.

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RESOLVED the information given be noted.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

DATE.....

CHAIR.....

JC/CB/COM/CS/080101
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