

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF EASINGTON
HELD ON THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2008

Present: Councillor R. Taylor (Chair)

Councillors E. Bell, A Burnip, R Davison,
J Haggan, Mrs A E Laing, K. McGonnell,
D. Milsom, A. Napier, G. Patterson,
G. Pinkney, F. Shaw, P Stradling, D J Taylor Gooby,
T Unsworth, C. Walker and Mrs V M Williams

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF EASINGTON** held on 6 November 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE REGULATORY APPEALS PANEL** held on 20 November 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

RESOLVED that the decision taken, be noted.

3. **EASINGTON REGENERATION STATEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which gave details of the development and finalisation of the Regeneration Statement for Easington, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that successful economies were dependent on a range of factors, economic diversity, a skilled workforce, connectivity, institutional capacity and innovation, and quality of life. Increasingly place was recognised as a critical factor in achieving both economic development and social inclusion. Creating the environment and attitude for making Easington a successful place had been the main aim of developing a strategic document that would offer a comprehensive framework for continuing that change.

It provided a bridge between the Local Development Framework and the Community Strategy to inform the place shaping agenda. It had been cited by the RTPI as an example of good practice in performing this role.

In 2006 consultants Shared Intelligence were engaged with a brief to develop a non statutory, comprehensive regeneration statement and action plan for the district. Shared Intelligence conducted wide ranging discussions with key stakeholders with regard to the physical regeneration investment required to meet the council's 2021 vision for Easington, details of which were outlined in the report.

The Regeneration Statement was not designed to rest on the legacy of the past but to look towards the changing picture in Easington. By recognising and building upon the successes made in recent years in changing the physical appearance of the district an avenue to progress could be identified. However, it was important that the challenges created by our legacy were not ignored but shown to be surmountable through local activities such as housing growth, the

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success of the “turning the tide” initiative and improved business and retail infrastructure.

The statement aimed to connect the district to the regional economic drivers in the City Regions of Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley by demonstrating the strategic position the district held and the wealth of opportunities for both City Regions as the City Regional Development Plans and the Multi Areas Agreements for both areas began to take form.

This forward facing statement was not a statutory document but would form a reference point for many of the strategic plans that Easington District Council currently produced as well as inform the new Unitary Authority in its strategic planning deliberation, and had informed the recently produced County Durham Economic Strategy.

In achieving this strategic vision for Easington the Regeneration Statement mapped the way forward in creating the key physical aspects needed to deliver that vision by 2021.

The Regeneration Statement created a comprehensive guiding document that clearly defined the context in which the District could develop with the Local Authority providing leadership and monitoring progress.

RESOLVED that the Regeneration Statement be adopted.

4. NEW PUBLICATION SCHEME UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Consideration was given to the report of the Monitoring Officer which sought approval to adopt a new Publication Scheme from 1 January 2009 in accordance with the requirements of the Information Commissioner, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that it was a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that Councils made available a Publication Scheme which highlighted the class of documents that were available to the public and whether or not charges were applicable. The scheme currently on the Council's website was devised when the legislation became effective in 2004. It had subsequently been updated but did not represent a full picture of the material available on the Council's website.

A model scheme had been devised by the Commissioner and Councils were recommended to follow this model. Attached to the report was a draft scheme which adopted the model provisions.

The Monitoring Officer had reviewed the content of the website and was satisfied that it generally met the current specification of the model scheme. Consultations had identified areas which fell short of where we would ideally wish to be. If it were not for LGR the Monitoring Officer would recommend immediate action to improve the areas where shortcomings had been identified but the resources applied to this task needed to be proportionate to the lifespan of the scheme which would only be three months. It would not be appropriate to divert resources from LGR to remedy weaknesses which were nevertheless still compliant for such a limited period.

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When the initial scheme was drafted attention focused on the availability of the material in hard copy form. The Council's website was now the best source of material available. There remained an obligation to make a copy of the scheme available in hard copy form and a printed copy of the website's site plan could be used as the hard copy index.

RESOLVED that the Model Publication Scheme be adopted.

5. **TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 SECTION 257
THE DISTRICT OF EASINGTON (FORMER HAWTHORN COLLIERY, MURTON)
BRIDLEWAY NO 29 STOPPING UP AND DIVERSION ORDER 2008**

The Monitoring Officer advised that the District Council made the above Order on 2 October 2008 as it was satisfied that it was necessary to stop up and divert the bridleway to which it related to permit development to be carried out in accordance with planning permission granted. The necessary statutory notices and consultations had been completed and no objections had been received.

The Council was requested to confirm the Order without modification. A copy of the Order was attached to the Agenda.

RESOLVED that the District Council confirm the District of Easington (Former Hawthorn Colliery, Murton) Bridleway No 29 Stopping Up and Diversion Order 2008 without modification, and authorise the Council's Governance and Risk Manager to undertake the necessary confirmation notice procedures.

6. **TO SEAL DOCUMENTS**

RESOLVED that the action taken in affixing the Common Seal to documents numbered 19864 to 19872, as listed in the Council's Seal Register, be endorsed.

7. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 1, Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8. **REQUEST FOR EARLY RETIREMENT**

Consideration was given to the joint report of the Head of Personnel and the Monitoring Officer which gave details of a request for early retirement from the Chief Executive, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be granted for the early retirement of the Chief Executive with effect from 29 March 2009,
- (ii) the Chief Executive be awarded a statutory redundancy payment based on actual earnings and five years augmented service in accordance with the Council's Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy scheme,
- (iii) the termination be regulated by way of a Compromise Agreement.

9. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

Consideration was given to the joint report of the Head of Personnel and the Monitoring Officer which gave details of events which effected the previous decision to allow the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to retire early on redundancy terms, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be granted to retain the services of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services until 29 March 2009,
- (ii) the Director of Finance and Corporate Services be awarded Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy in accordance with the Council's scheme with effect from 29 March 2009,
- (iii) approval be granted to award a redundancy payment and augmentation in accordance with the provisions of the scheme,
- (iv) the additional costs falling on the District Council be met from savings in corporate management costs,
- (v) the early retirement be regulated by way of a Compromise Agreement.

JW/CB/COM/DIST/081201
4 December 2008