

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE

HELD ON TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2008

Present: Councillor A. Napier (Chair)
Councillors R Crute, Mrs J Freak,
Mrs E Huntington, D Myers,
Mrs A Naylor, G Patterson, F Shaw,
R J Todd and P G Ward

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 18 March 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **NEW NATIONAL INDICATOR SET**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Improvement which gave details of the Council's approach to the implementation of the Government's proposed new single set of National Indicators from 1 April 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that the total number of PIs for local government had reduced from 1200 to 198, plus a further 16 related to education. These indicators were known as the National Indicator Set (NIs), and were the only indicators for which Government would be able to set targets for local government.

Top tier and unitary councils, with their partners, had to choose up to 35 NIs for inclusion in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). These should relate to issues which were important to that area. This process was almost complete in County Durham ready for the sign-off of the new LAA in May 2008. However, all 198 indicators had to be measured. Of the 198 indicators, 95 were existing measures, 39 were new but baseline data was available, and 64 were completely new. There was a further set of Assessments of Police and Community Safety indicators including satisfaction indicators.

A new biennial Place Survey, to replace the BV Satisfaction Survey, would capture opinion based data for 20 of the indicators. The first Place Survey was planned for Autumn 2008. The Housing Status survey would continue on a biennial basis, to capture tenants satisfaction with Local Authority Housing Services.

The Government had indicated the spatial level at which each indicator must be reported and indicators related to the District level were outlined in the report.

Whilst the NIs did not cover every issue that was important to an area or partner organisation, it was expected that local PIs would be developed and fully performance managed. However it was less likely that comparison of performance would be possible on local indicators.

In terms of reporting, it was intended in the long term to capture data electronically from local authorities' performance management systems or from existing nationwide databases. From April 2008 there would be a single place to view national performance data, known as the Data Interchange Hub. For the remaining indicators, local authorities would use the Data Interchange Hub as the mechanism for supplying the data for the indicators. Data quality would continue to be audited as part of Use of Resources judgements.

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The shift from process/output measures, mainly concerned with the Council's own activities, to outcome measures was apparent. There were no longer any "Corporate Health" indicators, demonstrating the shift away from the organisation to the benefit/outcome to residents and communities. The new indicators reflected the place in which people lived, and the quality of life of residents. Many of these outcome measures had been performance managed through the LSP in the past but not reported to the Council as a complete set.

The duty to publish a Best Value Performance Plan had been removed however an alternative method would be needed to report performance against the new NIs and against the Corporate Plan.

Guidance in relation to the new NIs set out which organisation would collect and report on each indicator. The NIs widened the data collection agencies to cover organisations outside of the Council. It was also proposed to streamline the reporting mechanisms to reduce the public sector reporting burden.

Although there were a significantly reduced number of indicators for the Council to report on, a number of these were brand new and required new systems of data collection and measurement.

The Council would continue to report on indicators which reflected levels of crime, as it would continue to play an important role in influencing the issues.

Consideration was needed on any gaps in the set, which focused on either how the Council was performing as an organisation or which were of particular importance to the residents of Easington, as identified within the Corporate Plan. In relation to the Council's performance, consideration was given to the indicators included in the current "Corporate Basket", 7 of which would continue to be measured. In addition to these, it was proposed to continue reporting on a number of "ex" BVPI's from the existing basket which no longer appeared in the new NI.

Details of the indicators included within the Durham LAA to be included within the Council's new reporting set were outlined.

It was proposed that the data around the set of Indicators identified in Appendix 2 was reported on a quarterly basis. This would give a set of 65 indicators to be collated and reported on a quarterly basis. This information would be presented to Council in accordance with the existing arrangements. Work as part of the Partnerships and policy work stream would determine any future developments in relation to the Unitary Performance Management framework and arrangements for reporting during the transitional period. Any changes affecting the Council would be reported through as the work progressed and options were proposed.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the reporting arrangements be approved.

3. GENERAL FUND/HOUSING REVENUE – 2007/2008 MONITORING STATEMENT

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Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Resources which gave details of the financial position for the period ending 29 February 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the commitments outlined in the report be approved.

4. PROPOSAL TO DECLARE THREE LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Liveability which sought approval to formally declare three District Council owned sites as Local Nature Reserves, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The District Council owned the following three sites, which were ideal for declaration and management as Local Nature Reserve's;

- Gore Burn, Wheatley Hill,
- Crimdon Dene
- Rockhouse Dene, Seaham

RESOLVED that Gore Burn, Wheatley Hill, Crimdon Dene and Rockhouse Dene, Seaham be declared as Local Nature Reserves under sections 19 and 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

5. DEVELOPING THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR EASINGTON

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which gave an update on the preparation of the Easington Development Framework within the context of legislative change and Local Government Review, and sought approval for plan production not to proceed beyond the 'Preferred Options' stage, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

It was explained that a number of factors would influence the future development of Planning including the growing influence of the Government's place shaping agenda. These factors had an influence on the development of planning policy of Easington as part of the Local Development Framework. The pace of Local Government Review was also expected to influence the timing of plan production.

RESOLVED that approval be granted not to progress the Local Development Framework further, once the 'Preferred Options' report stage had been concluded.

6. EASINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK : CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PREFERRED OPTIONS DOCUMENT

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which sought approval for publication of the Easington Local Development Framework: Core Strategy and Development Management – Preferred Options Document, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that the Preferred Options was a key stage of development plan preparation. Following government advice, policies for Development Control had to focus on managing development proposals in accordance with national planning policy statements and local priorities. Accordingly, the Core Strategy provided a local framework for development, published in a single document. It also

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needed to be accompanied by a formal Sustainability Appraisal, which considered the likely significant effects of the preferred options and other options considered.

The Core Strategy set out the key elements of a planning framework for the District for the next 15 years. It established a clear strategic direction, comprising a spatial vision, with strategies to achieve that vision, and core policies to deliver the strategies. These took account of other relevant strategies and programmes such as regeneration, health, education, social inclusion and environmental protection.

The Preferred Options was the first key stage in LDF preparation. It was not proposed to proceed beyond this stage, but publication would establish a timely statement of Easington's future planning objectives as a legacy to be taken forward by the new planning authority. This would be made explicit when representations were invited.

The Chair thanked all those involved for their efforts on this piece of work.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Easington Local Development Framework: Core Strategy and Development Management - Preferred Options and associated documents be approved for consultation purposes, under Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations, 2004
- (ii) the Director of Regeneration and Development, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration, be authorised to make appropriate textual adjustments to update the Preferred Options document to take account of studies and government announcements prior to publication.

7. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Section 100B(4)(b) the Chair, following consultation with the Proper Officer, agreed that one item of business, not shown on the Agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency. However, due to the exempt nature of the item it be considered following the exclusion of the press and public.

8. 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 3 and 4, Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

AT THIS POINT J BRINDLE AND B GARSIDE LEFT THE MEETING.

9. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Consideration was given to the joint report of the Executive Members for Improvement and Resources which outlined proposals for the restructuring of a number of corporate support services as part of the implementation of the Best Value Review of Support Services which included the formalisation of temporary

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arrangements and realised efficiency savings of £73,000 per year, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the restructuring proposals outlined in the report, be approved.

10. EAST DURHAM HOMES: CAPITAL WORKS PROCUREMENT (AOB)

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Housing which gave a summary of the process undertaken by East Durham Homes (EDH) to select a partner for the transfer of the EDH Capital Works Unit and sought approval to award the transfer of investment works to the successful contractor and transfer of personnel under TUPE regulations, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that;

- (i) the transfer of capital investment works funding to Kier Regional under the existing strategic partnering agreement for the period April 2008 to March 2012 be approved;
- (ii) the transfer of affected personnel under TUPE regulations to Kier Regional following resolution of the outstanding pension matters, be approved.