

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE REGENERATION SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 29 OCTOBER 2007

Present: Councillor D Raine (Chair)
Councillors Mrs S Forster, H High,
A J Holmes, D J Taylor-Gooby and
C Walker

Apologies: Councillor Mrs E M Connor

- 1 **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 8 October 2007, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.

- 2 **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 16 October 2007, 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**

The Chair welcomed the children from Easington Colliery Primary School to the meeting.

- 4 **'HEALTHWORKS' CENTRE, EASINGTON COLLIERY**

The Chair welcomed Graeme Greig, Partnership and Performance Manager from County Durham PCT who was in attendance to brief Members on the services which were being provided at the new 'Healthworks' Centre in Easington Colliery.

G Greig explained that the 'Healthworks' Centre was a partnership approach which included County Durham Primary Care Trust, the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, East Durham Local Strategic Partnership, Northumbrian Water and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

The PCT had engaged with the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder in Round 1 Programme in 2001. The partnership developed several health improvement programmes including Stop Smoking Service, Teenage Parent Support Programme, Handy Van, Substance Misuse and Sexual Health Services for Young People. Government Office review had rated the programmes as excellent.

G Greig explained that the National Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy focussed on improving the quality of life for people living in disadvantaged areas including less crime, improved housing and physical environment, better health, better skills and lower worklessness. The aim was to narrow the gap on these measures between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country, so that within 10 – 20 years no one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they lived.

The 'Healthworks' covered Easington Colliery, Horden North and Horden South wards with a population of approximately 13,000.

The PCT and the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder had a partnership review in late summer 2004 when joint discussions had taken place on how better to integrate neighbourhood management and health agendas. Decisions were taken to explore the development of a Healthy Living Centre Concept.

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The aim of the 'Healthworks' was to bring about step changes in local health inequalities by tackling particular health issues like smoking, obesity, accidents, mental health, community safety and regeneration by changing how services were delivered locally by reducing barriers and improving choices.

Phase 1, September 2004 – October 2005

Early discussions had taken place with the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder and East Durham Local Strategic Partnership to develop the concept, map the local estate, identify premises and outline costs.

Phase 2, October 2005 – November 2006

Secured the support of the Health Improvement Group, developed the Partnership Steering Group, developed the full business case for CMT and developed the proposal to the Local Strategic Partnerships for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Additional negotiations were undertaken with Northumbrian Water and work was completed on service and risk plans.

Phase 3, November 2006 – October 2007

Appointments were made of a Healthworks Co-ordinator, an Inventures as Project Managers, designers and architects. The planning application was submitted and the tender package developed. Contractors were appointed and refurbishment work began in May 2007 with the 'Healthworks' opening in October 2007.

G Greig explained that 'Healthworks' would provide an increased local access to a range of integrated services and there would be a participation and ownership by the local community. Outputs, outcomes and customer satisfaction would all be measured to ascertain its success.

The services that would be provided in 'Healthworks' were as follows:-

- * Police and Community Safety Programmes
- * Age Concern
- * Health Visitor Services
- * Citizens Advice Bureau
- * Neighbourhood Management Team
- * Stop Smoking Service
- * Children's Gym and Cardio-vascular Suite
- * Weight Management Service
- * Health Information Zone
- * An outdoor play area was also being developed.

The 'Healthworks' would be staffed by a Health Works Co-ordinator, Core Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Team, NHS Health Trainer, Health and Fitness Development Officer, Information Support Officer and volunteer programme.

Funding from the project had come from the following:-

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- * NHS - £350,000
- * Northumbrian Water - £70,000 for grounds and car parking in addition to 20 years rent free
- * East Durham Local Strategic Partnership - £500,000
- * Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder - £60,000 and revenue funding from partners agencies

With regard to public involvement and accessibility, there would be a disability access audit of centre plans, transport accessibility audit, four PPI events and one community survey, newsletter, health needs assessment and Partnership Steering Group.

G Greig explained that the official opening for the 'Healthworks' Centre was Monday 5 November.

A Member referred to funding and asked if it was time limited. G Greig explained that the majority of the funding had been used to refurbish the building and staffing and revenue costs had all been mainstreamed. This was a partnership project and would be dealt with the same as any other health clinic.

A Member commented that the centre was for children from the age of 11 and queried if there were any plans for the younger children. G Greig explained that the cardio-vascular equipment could only be used for children aged 11 and over and they did not want to provide services which other organisations were providing. There would be an outdoor play area provided and the centre was hoping to link with the Primary School and the Children's Centre.

The Head Teacher of Easington Colliery Primary School explained that the school was very supportive of any partnership working and was excited about having a new resource on the doorstep.

The Chair thanked G Greig for his attendance.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5

FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At the last meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 22 October 2007, the following issues were discussed:-

- * Green Waste Recycling Scheme
- * Gender Equality Scheme

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 SERVICE UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORTING – EAST DURHAM BUSINESS SERVICE

Consideration was given to the report of the manager of East Durham Business Service which provided information on the performance of East Durham Business Service, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Appendix 1 to the report outlined performance from 1 April 2007 - 30 September 2007. Appendix 2 detailed major areas of work for the Economic Development Team within EDBS during the first half of the financial year in relation to the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) programme and the Deprived Areas Fund.

EDBS had continued to take the lead on behalf of the four Districts involved in the LEGI to develop the workstream on 'Transforming Enterprise Culture'. Two projects had been developed to go out to tender to deliver activity under the workstream. Another key development through the LEGI programme had been the establishment of a network of Enterprise Coaches to provide pre-start support to local residents wishing to go into business or enterprise. As Easington had 48% of the residents in the Super Output Areas targeted by the LEGI programme, 9 coaches had been allocated to Easington district to be funded by LEGI. 7 out of the 9 posts had been filled so far.

S Slaven explained that the Deprived Areas Fund (DAF) was a national initiative that aimed to increase employment rates in wards in local authority areas with the highest levels of worklessness, such as Easington. The aim of DAF was to address localised worklessness needs by giving local authorities, in partnership with their LSPs, the flexibility to deliver tailored support or provision to suit local needs and circumstances.

In terms of employment issues, the apprenticeships programme to match young people with companies continued to prove successful, with 36 young people commencing apprenticeships so far and a further 10 due to start at the beginning of October. One issue that did have a negative impact on the take up of apprenticeships related to the availability of engineering training locally. A number of young people had decided not to pursue an apprenticeship because they did not want to travel outside the district for their training.

The Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator had been active in supporting and developing lifelong learning initiatives within the district. Most notable of those was a donation from Eden Farm, a Peterlee based employer who had been working the EDBS over the last three years. Grants, advice and support from EDBS had enabled Eden Farm to make substantial increases in productivity and turnover and the managing director was so appreciative of the support from EDBS, that the company donated £10,000 back into the local community to support family and community learning projects.

In terms of business growth, the Business Service had advised 74 businesses to date and 17 companies expanding or relocating within the district. Work was also being undertaken to assist companies who may have to relocate from the North East Industrial Estate to identify suitable alternative premises within the district.

The tenants currently within the Novus Business Centre were detailed in the report. Since moving to the Novus Business Centre, 3 tenants had taken on 6 new members of staff, 1 tenant had moved to a larger unit and 1 further tenant was moving to a larger unit on 1 November. Two more units had been taken from the beginning of October and another tenant was going through the application process with a view to moving in by the end of the month.

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A Member referred to the 'Transforming Enterprise Culture' and queried if work should not begin with schools. S Slaven explained that seeing a short term result was very difficult but it was never too late to start working with someone.

A Member queried if the apprentices were guaranteed employment after their apprenticeship had ended. S Slaven explained that they could not guarantee jobs but the majority of apprentices were kept on. They had been advised that there was a skills gap and people who lived in the district did not have the skills that employers required. The recruitment consultant kept in contact with the apprentice throughout their apprenticeship.

A Member referred to the job pledges and asked for an explanation. S Slaven explained that this was the number of jobs that they were pledging to create. To date only 54 jobs had been pledged in this financial year. Last year there was more than 500 pledges but a lot of companies were now trying to expand through productivity rather than staffing.

The Chair thanked S Slaven for her report.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 **ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS 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 following items of business, not shown on the Agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency.

8 **BRACKENHILL/WHITEHOUSE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE (AOB)**

A Member referred to the previously reported problems related to traffic congestion at Brackenhill/Whitehouse Industrial Estates. The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that this would be discussed at the next meeting and representatives from the relevant organisations had been invited to attend.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

9 **ABUSE OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES (AOB)**

A Member explained that the abuse of public open spaces had been raised previously at the Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee. He had spoken to the Enforcement Co-ordinator who had advised that it would be helpful if they had stickers to put on cars that were abusing the public open spaces. The Chair advised that the Scrutiny Support Manager would refer this to the relevant committee.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIR

DATE