

**SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET**

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Thursday,
2 February 2006

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and

Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson,
M. Iveson, D.A. Newell, K. Noble and W. Waters

In Attendance: Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. J. Croft, V. Crosby,
A. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, B. Hall, D.M. Hancock, B. Meek, J.P. Moran,
G. Morgan, Mrs. E.M. Paylor and A. Smith

Apologies: Councillors J. Robinson J.P

CAB.127/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R.S. Fleming indicated that he would be declaring a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 5 – Comprehensive Performance Assessment : Key Lines of Enquiry Corporate Governance Inspection: Implications for Standards and Ethics, the Standards Committee and Member Training – Taking the Ethics Agenda Forward as he was mentioned in the report.

CAB.128/05 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.129/05 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 AND RE-USE OF PUBLIC SECTOR INFORMATION REGULATIONS 2005

Consideration was given to a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Part A of the report gave details of the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) in relation to the procedures set up to deal with requests and the number of requests received.

Part B of the report set out the main obligations of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005 and the measures that needed to be implemented by the Council to ensure compliance with the new regulations.

RESOLVED: 1. *That the contents of Part A of the report in relation to the Freedom of Information Act be noted and that*

further similar reports be submitted annually to Cabinet.

2. *That responsibility for the operation of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations (Part B) be delegated to the Customer Services Manager and the Solicitor to the Council as set out in paragraph 4.11 of the report and that the Council's Constitution be amended accordingly.*

CAB.130/05 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT - KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY CORPORATE GOVERNANCE INSPECTION: IMPLICATIONS FOR STANDARDS AND ETHICS, THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE AND MEMBER TRAINING - TAKING THE ETHICS AGENDA FORWARD

NB: In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members' Code of Conduct Councillor R.S. Fleming declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the above item and left the meeting for the duration of discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor K. Noble in the chair

Consideration was given to a report regarding the impact of the forthcoming Corporate Governance Inspection component of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and those aspects that focused upon how best authorities take forward their ethics agenda. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was reported that in December 2005 the Government had published a series of major proposals that would significantly change the role of the Standards Board, local Standards Committees and the duties of the Council's Monitoring Officer. Details of the key changes envisaged were set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

Members' attention was drawn to the proposal that the Council should assign lead responsibility to the Leader of the Council for conduct and standards issues as part of its corporate governance arrangements.

Specific reference was also made to the possibility of extending the existing remit of the Council's Standards Committee and the move towards mandatory attendance of councillors at training events.

- RESOLVED :**
1. *That the report be considered by Standards Committee .*
 2. *That Council be recommended to approve the report and the consequential changes to the Council's Constitution as appropriate.*

Councillor R.S. Fleming in the chair

CAB.131/05 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06 - EDEN TERRACE GROUP REPAIR SCHEME TENDERS (KEY DECISION)

The Lead Member for Housing presented a report, which gave details on the operation of Group Repair Schemes, the contribution they could make to improve the confidence in the housing market of a neighbourhood, and the outcome of the procurement process for the Eden Terrace Group Repair Scheme. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were reminded that Cabinet at its meeting on 1st September 2005 had considered the Private Sector Renewal Programme for 2005/06 and had agreed to develop and implement a Group Repair Scheme for Eden Terrace, Chilton.

It was reported that five contractors that had experience of delivering such projects had been invited to tender for the Eden Terrace Group Repair Scheme and the lowest tender had been submitted by Vest Construction, in the sum of £829,459.25. It was, however, pointed out that the final contract price would be reduced significantly to take account of the take up of the scheme by eligible participants and any savings in relation to contingencies.

RESOLVED : That the lowest tender submitted by Vest Construction to undertake the Private Sector Housing Renewal Capital Programme – Eden Terrace Group Repair Scheme be accepted in the sum of £829,459.25. The final account to be reduced to take account of the take up of the scheme by eligible participants.

CAB.132/05 DURHAM COALFIELD HOUSING RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE ON PROGRESS

The Lead Member for Housing presented a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that since the Durham Coalfield Housing Partnership had been established in 2003, a significant amount of work had been undertaken to gain a better understanding of the issues within the Durham Coalfield Sub Region and develop an evidence base to support any proposed interventions. The Partnership had commissioned Jacobs Babbie and Genecon Consultants to undertake the following:

- Phase 1 – Establish a strategic context in relation to housing investment and a sub regional settlement pattern.
- Phase 2 – Assess settlement relationships in the Durham Coalfields and outline the rationale for intervention.
- Phase 3 – Establishing a broad programme of settlement interventions to support changes through area based interventions and the identification of those communities where production of an Area Development Framework was an essential pre cursor to any funding bid for further resources.

It was pointed out that English Partnerships had specifically requested that all District Authority partners consider Phase 3 of the above study and formally adopt its findings to ensure that any funding bid to the Government had clear and unequivocal support from all members of the Partnership. Paragraph 3.2 of the report gave details of the County Durham Settlement Study Phase 3.

Members noted that the study had confirmed the existing three priority communities in Sedgefield Borough as Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton West and required the production of Area Development Frameworks for each community. The study had also identified the strategic importance of Newton Aycliffe as a major economic centre in the Borough and the importance of its role in the sustainability of the interventions in Chilton and the potential impact in the other communities.

RESOLVED : That the findings of Phase 3 of the Durham Settlements Study be adopted and the production of the Area Development Framework for the communities of Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station, Chilton West and Newton Aycliffe be undertaken.

CAB.133/05 CONFERENCES

Consideration was given to a report (for copy see file of Minutes) regarding the Council's representation at the following:

- a) The Centre for Public Scrutiny – Parliamentary Seminar – ‘Scrutiny: Transforming Local Democracy’ – London 15th March 2006.
- b) The LGA Annual Cultural Services Conference, Norwich, 28-29th March 2006.

RESOLVED : That the Council be represented at the Parliamentary Seminar – Scrutiny Transforming Local Democracy by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3, together with one officer.

That the Council be represented at the LGA Annual Cultural Services Conference by the appropriate Lead Officer, together with one officer.

CAB.134/05 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the following:

- a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 – 10th January 2006
- b) Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 – 19th January 2006

(For copies see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the Committees recommendations be noted and appropriate action taken.

CAB.135/05 AREA FORUMS

Consideration was given to the minutes of the following:

- a) Area 2 Forum – 10th January 2006
- b) Area 3 Forum – 11th January 2006

(For copies see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the reports be received.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1,7 and 9 of Schedule 12a of the Act.

CAB.136/05 PROTECTED SPECIES MITIGATION STRATEGY - AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL PARK

Consideration was given to a report setting out the recommendations of above strategy as well as the corporate policy and financial implications. (For copy see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the recommendations detailed in the report be adopted.

CAB.137/05 ASSET MANAGEMENT LAND SALE AT ALL SAINTS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON

Consideration was given to a report regarding an application to purchase land at All Saints Industrial Estate, Shildon. (For copy see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the recommendations detailed in the report be adopted.

CAB.138/05 CHIEF EXECUTIVES DEPARTMENT - STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT - STRATEGY AND REGENERATION

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to revise the ob descriptions and grades of two posts in the above department. (For copy see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the recommendations detailed in the report be adopted.

Published on 3rd February 2006.

The key decisions contained in these Minutes will be implemented on Monday 6th February 2006 five working days after the date of publication unless they are called in by five Members of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call in procedure rules.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Gillian Garrigan, on Spennymoor 816166 Ext 4240 ggarrigan@sedgefield.gov.uk