

Item 13

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Tuesday,
27 June 2006

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor J.E. Higgin (Chairman) and

Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, T.F. Forrest, G.M.R. Howe, J.P. Moran,
T. Ward and J. Wayman J.P.

Tenant Representatives

Mrs. M. Thomson

In

Attendance: Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, V. Crosby, B. Hall, J.G. Huntington, B. Meek,
G. Morgan and J.K. Piggott

**Observer
with
Chairman's
Consent**

Councillor W. Waters

Apologies: Councillors J. Burton, D.M. Hancock, Ms. M. Predki and J. Robinson J.P

OSC(2).1/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Members had no interests to declare.

OSC(2).2/06 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th April 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OSC(2).3/06 DISABLED PERSONS ADAPTATIONS
Further to a request from the Committee at its meeting on 25th October, 2006 (Minute No: OSC2.19/05 refers) consideration was given to a report of the Director of Housing regarding the provision of aids and adaptations, the cost and the work schedule. (for copy see file of Minutes).

The report informed the Committee of the increase of the number of referrals from Durham County Council Occupational Therapist Section, which had resulted in a large backlog and overspend. The backlog equated to an 11-month waiting list. It was, however, pointed out that during the setting of the budgets for 2006/07 an increase of £305,000 had been set to enable the backlog of work to be completed, which was anticipated to be by the end of September 2006.

The Committee was also informed that although there would continue to be referrals from Durham County Council, including priority 1 work the waiting list had been reduced to 4½ months. Anticipating that similar resources would be set for 2007/08 any outstanding work would be completed in that year.

During discussion of the report it was pointed out that the Director of Neighbourhood Services was currently reviewing a number of the services under his responsibility. It was therefore suggested that the recommendation be amended to refer the report to the Director of Neighbourhood Services for consideration under current practices and procedures prior to consideration by Cabinet.

It was also agreed that the document regarding Durham County Council's expenditure for equipment and adaptations for the Sedgefield District which had been submitted to the Chairman of the Committee be circulated to Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2.

RECOMMENDED: That the Director of Neighbourhood Services be requested to consider whether the current practices and procedures are relevant under the present circumstances and whether there would be any benefit in harmonizing the different approaches to and management of adaptations in respect of Council tenants and private sector applicants.

OSC(2).4/06 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report of the Chairman of the Committee setting out the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and review. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The Committee was updated on the progress of each of the Review Groups Provision of Affordable Housing and Leisure Centre Concessionary Fares.

The Committee was also informed that the current Work Programme would need to be reviewed due to the portfolio changes agreed at Annual Council. It was explained that the following anticipated items would no longer be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2.

- Benefits Service Improvement Plan Progress Update
- Equality and Diversity Improvement Plan Progress Update

Detailed discussion was held regarding the anticipated item Housing Department Service Improvement Plan Progress Update. It was pointed out that due to the size of the report there were a number of issues that needed further consideration.

It was agreed that a meeting be held between the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 and the Housing Property Services Manager to discuss the report.

AGREED:

1. *That the Committee's Work Programmes be amended to reflect the portfolio changes agreed at Annual Council.*
2. *That a meeting be scheduled to be held between the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Housing and Property Services Manager.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Miss S. Billingham, Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4240, sbillingham@sedgfield.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank