

# CABINET

Thursday, 30 November 2006

10.00 a.m.

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

# AGENDA and REPORTS

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যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান অথবা যদি আপনার একজন ইন্টারপ্রেটারের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

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यह दस्तावेज़ यदि आपको किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये, या आपको आनुवाद-सेवाओं की आवश्यकता हो तो हमसे संपर्क करें

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੈਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو براۓ مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

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**Democratic Services**



**01388 816166**

## AGENDA

**1. APOLOGIES**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To notify the Chairman of any items that appear in the agenda in which you may have an interest.

**3. MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2006. (Pages 1 - 4)

### KEY DECISION

#### HOUSING PORTFOLIO

**4. CALL OUT SERVICE FOR EMERGENCY HOUSING REPAIRS**

Report of Director of Housing. (Pages 5 - 8)

### OTHER DECISIONS

#### HOUSING PORTFOLIO

**5. IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES TO THE RIGHT TO BUY LEGISLATION**

Joint report of Director of Housing and Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 9 - 12)

### STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO

**6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP REPORT - INFORM**

Cabinet response to the recommendation of the Scrutiny Review Group. (Pages 13 - 16)

### MINUTES

**7. AREA FORUMS**

To consider the minutes of the following meetings:

- (a) Area 2 Forum - 31st October 2006 (Pages 17 - 20)
- (b) Area 1 Forum - 6th November 2006 (Pages 21 - 26)
- (c) Area 3 Forum - 8th November 2006 (Pages 27 - 30)
- (d) Area 4 Forum - 14th November 2006 (Pages 31 - 34)

**8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3**

Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2006. (Pages 35 - 36)

## **EXEMPT INFORMATION**

The following items are not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972. As such it is envisaged that an appropriate resolution will be passed at the meeting to exclude the press and public.

## **KEY DECISIONS**

### **ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

**9. FUTURE OF GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT 2 AND LINKS TO POTENTIAL FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD DELIVERY OF STREET SCENE SERVICES**

Report of Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 37 - 44)

### **HOUSING PORTFOLIO**

**10. PROCUREMENT OF HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE 2007 - 2012**

Report of Director of Housing. (Pages 45 - 72)

### **LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIOS**

**11. ASSET MANAGEMENT - INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY SALE OF INDUSTRIAL UNIT 170C WHINFIELD DRIVE, AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL PARK**

Joint report of Head of Strategy and Regeneration and Head of Financial Services. (Pages 73 - 78)

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Lead Members are requested to inform the Chief Executive or the Head of Democratic Services of any items they might wish to raise under this heading by no later than 12 noon on the day preceding the meeting. This will enable the Officers in consultation with the Chairman to determine whether consideration of the matter by the Cabinet is appropriate.

B. Allen  
Chief Executive

Council Offices  
SPENNYMOOR  
22<sup>ND</sup> November 2006

Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman)

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

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#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection in relation to this Agenda and associated papers should contact Gillian Garrigan, on Spennymoor 816166 Ext 4240

# Item 3

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Thursday,  
16 November 2006

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor K. Noble (Chairman) and

Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson,  
D.A. Newell, R.A. Patchett and W. Waters

**In**

**Attendance:** Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, V. Crosby, T.F. Forrest,  
A. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, B. Hall, D.M. Hancock, B. Meek, J.P. Moran,  
G. Morgan, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, A. Smith, Mrs. I. Jackson Smith, T. Ward  
and J. Wayman J.P

**Apologies:** Councillors R.S. Fleming and M. Iveson

**CAB.103/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Members present had no interests to declare.

**CAB.104/06 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**CAB.105/06 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - GREAT AYCLIFFE TOWN COUNCIL - GREAT AYCLIFFE WAY EXTENSION AND NATURE PARK (KEY DECISION)**

The Lead Member for Social Regeneration and Partnership presented a report regarding a Local Improvement Programme application from Great Aycliffe Town Council for funding to extend the existing Great Aycliffe Way to the south east of the town and to further improve an area of unused industrial land that had been converted into a nature park. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members noted that the application had been supported by Area 5 Forum at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2007 and the funding applications made to the County Durham Environmental Trust (£20,000) and The Conservation Foundation (£1,000) had been approved.

**RESOLVED :** *That the application for Local Improvement Programme funds, based upon the information provided, be approved.*

**CAB.106/06 HOUSING CAPITAL AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS NEGOTIATED CONTRACTS**

The Lead Member for Housing presented a report seeking approval to negotiate two bathroom improvement schemes, one roofing project and two heating schemes with the Contracts Section of the Housing Department, together with private contractors, who had successfully won tendered contracts with competitive rates. (For copy see file of Minutes)

Approval was also sought for the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, to proceed with accepting the most advantageous negotiated project, with details being subsequently reported to Cabinet.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That negotiations proceed with the Contracts Section of the Housing Department and with two private contractors to benefit from competitive costs from the lowest tenderer.*
  - 2. That negotiations be undertaken in accordance with Procedure Rule 1(2) and 8.*
  - 3. That approval to proceed with accepting the most advantageous negotiated project be delegated to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, and subsequently reported to Cabinet.*

**CAB.107/06 ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION ACT 2006**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to acquire the necessary software to comply with the requirements of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 with regard to the collection of personal identifiers (signature and date of birth) for all existing postal and postal proxy voters, and subsequent reproduction and checking at the time of voting. (For copy see file of Minutes)

The estimated cost of obtaining the additional software was £11,400, together with ongoing maintenance costs of 20%. It was expected that the Council would receive grant funding of a minimum of £20,500 to cover the cost of staff input, postage and stationery to implement the new requirements.

- RESOLVED :*
- That the necessary software be purchased from Express Software Solutions Limited, with the cost of the project being met from the 2006/07 Contingencies*

**CAB.108/06 REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT - POSITION AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2006**

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

The report gave details of the approved budget for the main portfolios for the first six months of 2006/07, actual income and expenditure, projected

probable outturn for 2006/07 based on actual spend to date and known commitments, as well as variance between the annual budget and the projected probable outturn.

With regard to the General Fund, it was expected that balances amounting to £581,500 would be used, compared to the initial budgeted use of £500,000.

Specific reference was made to the table detailed under Paragraph 3.2 of the report, which showed the overall financial position of the General Fund.

It was noted that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was currently predicting a small underspend of £94,000. HRA balances of £100,000 would be used to fund the first year's cost of the HRA Service Improvement Plan and £300,00 to cover the costs of the additional disabled persons adaptations, which had recently been approved by Cabinet. In addition, £500,000 was being used to support the HRA capital programme.

With regard to the Training and Employment Service, it was anticipated that an operating loss would be made in the region of £60,000, which was a significant improvement on the initial budget forecast of £125,000.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That the financial position for 2006/07 be noted.*
  - 2. That further reports be submitted to Cabinet detailing the position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 and final outturn as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, in line with the Budgetary Control Monitoring Arrangements 2006/07.*
  - 3. That detailed reports be submitted to future Strategic Working Groups to continue the monitoring process throughout the remainder of the year.*

**CAB.109/06 CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE AND FINANCING POSITION - POSITION AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2006**

Consideration was given to a report detailing the progress made to date in meeting the Council's spending targets, the available capital resources for financing the programme and developments which had occurred during the year that had an impact on the overall capital programme. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Reference was made to the table detailed in Paragraph 3.6 of the report, which showed the original approved 2006/07 capital programme, together with the carry forward commitments from 2005/06. It also showed all approved external funding secured to date and the total gross budget, reflecting the total capital resources available for the year.

Members' attention was then drawn to the table detailed in paragraph 3.7, which showed actual spend across all portfolios up to 30<sup>th</sup> September

2006. A gross total of £5.922m had been spent or 29% of the gross capital budget of £20.773m.

- RESOLVED :**
1. *That the half year spend position 30<sup>th</sup> September 2006 and the proposed financing of the Capital Programme be noted.*
  2. *That further reports be submitted to Management Team, Cabinet and all Strategic Working Groups detailing the position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 and final outturn as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, in line with the Budgetary Control Monitoring Arrangements 2006/07.*

**CAB.110/06 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2**

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2006. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED :** *That the report 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 may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Act.*

**CAB.111/06 SALE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT LAND AT HEIGHINGTON LANE BUSINESS PARK (KEY DECISION)**

Consideration was given to a report regarding an application to purchase 1.267 hectares of business development land on Heighington Lane Business Park. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED :** *That the recommendation detailed in the report be adopted.*

**Published on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006.**

**Any key decisions contained in these Minutes will be implemented on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006, five working days after the date of publication unless they are called in by three 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



# Item 4

## REPORT TO CABINET

30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2006

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

### Housing Portfolio

#### CALL OUT SERVICE FOR EMERGENCY HOUSING REPAIRS

##### 1. SUMMARY

1.1 Cabinet endorsed subjecting the call-out service to a tendering exercise on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006. Its resolution also made clear that any in-house bid had to reflect changes to participating employees contracts of employment. The tendering exercise has now been completed and it is not possible to award the contract within the existing budgets and therefore it is necessary to re-tender the service.

##### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the call-out service is re-tendered with a revised specification, reflecting current service standards whilst maintaining the requirement for this service to be delivered within a contracted agreement.

##### 3. KEY CONTENT

3.1 On 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006 the Cabinet received a report on the future provision of the call-out service, and approved the recommendations of the report which were as follows:-

- (a) That the future provision of the call-out service for emergency housing repairs is subject to market testing.
- (b) That in assembling an in-house bid there must be recognition of the need to secure continuous provision of the service throughout the year and that due consideration be given to negotiating a contractual agreement with the relevant Trade Unions.

3.2 Members were advised that the key driver for tendering the service was to locate the provision of call-out within a contractual agreement, thus reducing the high or significant risk that the service would be withdrawn without reasonable notice.

3.3 Tenders were invited based on a firm price contract with a 12 week contract period from the following firms:-

- (a) British Gas Housing Services
- (b) H. & B. Services Limited
- (c) Morrisons Facilities Services
- (d) R. Bland Limited
- (e) Rokbuild Limited
- (f) Property Services (Contract Management Section),  
Sedgefield Borough Council

3.4 Tenders were received as follows:-

- (i) £336,122.00
- (ii) £495,680.00
- (iii) Non-compliant tender (qualified)
- (iv) No tender
- (v) No tender
- (vi) No tender

3.5 In accordance with the code of procedure for single stage selective tendering, a number of meetings took place in order to give the non-compliant tenderer the opportunity to withdraw the qualification and produce a compliant tender. We were unable to reach an agreement for the qualification to be withdrawn and thus the offer is not a compliant tender.

3.6 The duration of those discussions has negatively impacted upon the anticipated contract start date of the project (13<sup>th</sup> November) specified within the invitations to tender.

3.7 The two unqualified tenders received were for sums in excess of the budget available to deliver the improved service specification. The specification sought to secure service improvements, requiring all emergency calls to be dealt with within one hour, currently approximately 50% are dealt with within an hour. It is apparent that the cost of securing such improvements is in excess of the available budget.

3.8 The service specification for the service has been revisited, and rewritten to reflect the current quality of service. It is recommended that the provision of the call-out service is re-tendered, with the tender specification reflecting current service standards whilst maintaining the requirement for the service to be delivered within a contractual agreement.

#### **4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The service specification has been revised to reflect current levels of provision, it is anticipated that those changes will facilitate future provision of the service within budget.

#### **5. CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 Consultations have taken place with the relevant Trades Unions with a view to negotiating a contractual agreement. However such an agreement cannot be reached.

#### **6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

##### **6.1 Legal Implications**

There is a risk of potential external challenge if the service is not re-tendered.

## 6.2 Asset Management

The provision of an emergency out of hours repairs service contributes towards maintaining the integrity of the Council's housing stock.

## 6.3 Risk Management

Utilising the Zurich Municipal Risk Matrix to map and manage the risk of service failure, for the emergency call out service, leads to the conclusion that the risk is unacceptably high, with a potentially 'critical' impact and a 'high' or 'significant' likelihood of that occurring. This means that the risk must be managed down as a matter of urgency. In order to manage the risk 'downwards' it would be necessary for a contractual agreement to be in place that would give the Council and its tenants some confidence in relation to continued service provision.

## 6.4 Health and Safety

The service is provided 24 hours a day and tenants need to be happy their homes are safe and secure at all times. It is important that tenants can call on trained qualified craftsmen and know that there is certainty there will be a response. Such responses will include work to heating/hot water systems and electrical installations the maintenance of which clearly impact on the health and safety of tenants and the security and structural stability of their homes.

## 6.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is not in issue in these circumstances.

## 6.6 Information Technology

There are no I.T. implications.

## 6.7 Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity are not prejudiced in this report.

## 6.8 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues raised in this report.

## 6.9 Human Rights

No human rights issues are addressed in this report.

## 6.10 Social Inclusion

There are no implications for social inclusion raised in this report.

## 6.11 Procurement

The call out service will be procured in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, furthermore any innovations or suggestions for service improvement will also form part of the tender evaluation.

## 7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no implications for Overview and Scrutiny.

## 8. LIST OF APPENDICES

8.1 None.

**Contact Officer:** Colin Steel  
**Telephone Number:** 01388 816166 Ext. 4203  
**E-mail address:** [csteel@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:csteel@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Wards:** All Wards

**Key Decision Validation:** Yes

**Background Papers:** Not applicable

### Examination by Statutory Officers:

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Item 5

## REPORT TO CABINET

30<sup>th</sup> November 2006

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

#### Portfolio Housing

#### Implementation of changes to the Right to Buy Legislation

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 On the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006 Cabinet considered a report on a number of changes to legislation around Right to Buys (RTBs) and the management of Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) set out in the Housing Act 2004 and the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- 1.2 The changes to the RTB scheme are in two key areas. The first relates to the Council's option to exercise the first right of refusal to buyback a property purchased under the RTB provisions after the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005. The second allows the Council to waive the claw back of the RTB discount in certain circumstances. This report sets out policy for the effective implementation of the powers. A separate report will be present on the changes to management of ASB in January 2007.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Director of Housing in consultation with the Director of Neighborhood Services is authorised to agree the repurchase of properties sold in accordance with the Right to Buy requirements after the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005, subject to the requirements set out in paragraph 3.2 of this report.
2. That the Director of Housing is authorised to agree the waiving of the claw back of the Right to Buy discount subject to the requirements set out in paragraph 4.2 of this report.

#### 3.0 **RIGHT TO BUY – First right of refusal**

- 3.1 The Housing Act 2004 amends the Housing Act 1985 and makes further changes to the Right to Buy rules, as part of the Governments drive to modernise the system.
- 3.2 The right of first refusal applies to properties sold under the RTB requirements after the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005 and resold within 10 years of purchase. The Council must be notified that the property is to be sold and has a statutory timescale of 8 weeks to respond to this notification. To allow the effective management of this process it is recommended that the power to exercise the option to repurchase is delegated to

the Director of Housing in consultation with the Director of Neighborhood Services. The repurchase of any property under these provisions will be considered in the following circumstances:-

- Demand for the type of housing in the area where the property is located extra consideration will be given in relation to those properties that are in short supply in the housing stock i.e. 4 bed roomed houses.
- The impact of the option to repurchase properties to support the delivery of the master plan in the three priority area of the Borough.
- The condition of the property to be repurchased and any substantial impact on delivery of the decent homes programme.
- The financial impact of any decision to repurchase the property on the Housing Revenue Account. Consultation will be undertaken with the Director of Resources on this issue.

#### **4.0 RIGHT TO BUY – Power not to require the repayment of the claw back**

4.1 Section 185 of the Housing Act 2004 clarifies that Local Authorities now have discretion not to demand that former tenants should repay part or all of the discount they received. It is for each Local Authority to decide whether the circumstances in any particular case would justify the exercise of this discretion under s.155 of the Housing Act 1985 as amended. However, the Government considers that this is most likely to be justified in circumstances where repayment would lead to demonstrable personal hardship.

4.2 The Council would wish to exercise its power in the following circumstances: (In each case, it will normally be necessary to establish both the facts justifying a move, and that such a move could not take place unless part or the entire repayable discount were to be waived);

- Where an owner of the property wishes to move because otherwise he or she and/or other family members (especially children) face demonstrable threat of violence or of significant harm; for example, due to:
  - a) Relationship breakdowns involving actual or threatened domestic violence;
  - b) Racial, faith, homophobic or any other kind of harassment;
  - c) Extreme anti-social behaviour, such as persistent drug dealing in an adjoining or nearby property;
- Where the sudden onset of a severe medical condition or serious deterioration of an existing condition makes a move essential on medical grounds;
- Where an early move is essential to return to employment; for instance where an individual has a firm offer of a job in another area and would thereby be able to return to work; either:
  - a) After long term unemployment; or
  - b) After having been made redundant, when his/her skills are such that there is no prospect of getting another job locally.

- Where a traumatic personal event (for example, sudden bereavement) makes a move essential for emotional or psychological reasons.

It is envisaged that this discretionary power will only be used in exceptional circumstances and that this is not an exhaustive list of the circumstances where the Council may wish to consider the use of its powers in these matters.

- 4.3 To ensure the effective operation of these powers it is recommended that they are delegated to the Director of Housing. If the event of a refusal to exercise the discretion amendments have been made to the constitution to give the Housing Review Panel/Appeals Panel power to determine an appeal from a decision of the Director of Housing.

## **5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost incurred from exercise either of these provisions would have to be met from the Housing Revenue Account.

## **6. CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 Due to the statutory nature of these changes consultation has been carried out with the Borough Solicitor.

## **6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Links to Corporate Ambitions / Values**

- 6.1 The Community Strategy for Sedgefield Borough has adopted 4 key outcomes for the Borough one of which is *“a Borough with strong communities where people can access the housing and services they want in attractive and safe neighbourhoods.”* The Borough Council's ambitions mirror the Community Strategy's outcomes and the implementation of this policy in appropriate cases can contribute to the delivery of this ambition.

#### Health & Safety

"No additional implications have been identified".

#### Equality & Diversity

Full account will be taken of the Council's obligation to promote equality and diversity in the development of this project.

#### Legal & Constitutional

Consultation on the report has been undertaken with the Borough Solicitor.

## **7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no Overview and Scrutiny implications of this report.

## **8. LIST OF APPENDICES**

- 8.1 None

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**Contact Officer** Ian Brown  
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[jwilkinson@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:jwilkinson@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Wards:** West Ward

**Key Decision Validation:**

Not a key decision

**Background Papers:**

Cabinet Report 21st September 2006

**Examination by Statutory Officers**

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP REPORT – REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL’S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER INFORM  
CABINET RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN**

Review Recommendations	Cabinet Response		Implementation	
	Agreed?	Comments	Responsibility	Timescale
1. The current methods of publishing, printing and distributing Inform continue.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
2. Inform continues to be published on a monthly basis.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
3. The Press & Public Relations Officer liaises with the Council’s Strategy and Regeneration Section in an effort to include articles that would appeal to young people.	Agree	As youth engagement is a crosscutting issue all Departments should be consulted on a regular basis about the inclusion of relevant articles for young people.	Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
4. Following the 2007 Local Election, a ‘Guide to Councillors’ that includes a pen-portrait profile of each member be published on a six monthly basis to provide information to assist residents to contact their Ward Councillor.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	To be published June and December annually.
5. The format of Inform to be retained in full colour tabloid style.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
6. Inform to remain as a 16-page publication.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing

7. Appropriate budget provision be made to support publication of Inform on this basis	Agree	This will be considered within the budget review 2007/08	Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
8. Internal advertising to remain free of charge to provide the opportunity for Departments to promote their services and any forthcoming events to all residents within the Borough.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	Will continue without charge
9. External advertising coverage within Inform remain at approximately 5% of the publication to ensure that the focus is to provide information on Council news stories and events.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
10. The rate for external advertising be raised to £9 per centimetre column for new adverts and be reviewed periodically.	Agree	Advertising rates were last reviewed some years ago. The recommended rate would appear appropriate taking into account rates of comparative publications.  Advertising rates will in future be reviewed on an annual basis.	Press & Public Relations Officer	With effect from April 2007
11. Procedures for identifying articles for Inform be reviewed to ensure that appropriate news is included.	Agree	Arrangements to be put in place to improve communication of news, both externally (Inform and press releases) and internally (Update and Grapevine).	Press & Public Relations Officer	Ongoing
12. The redesigned masthead at Appendix 3 be adopted to provide a clear identity.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	January 2007
13. Arrangements be made to enable Inform to be downloaded from the Homepage of the Council's Website.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	January 2007

14. An appropriate article be published in Inform to indicate to readers that the newspaper can be downloaded from the Council's website.	Agree		Press & Public Relations Officer	January 2007
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# Item 7a

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 2 FORUM

Chilton and Windlestone  
Community College

Tuesday,  
31 October 2006

Time: 6.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs. K. Conroy (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor B. Fleming	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T.F. Forrest	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Hodgson	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
C. Hall	–	Castle Residents Association
Councillor Mrs L. Dixon	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor Mrs M. Errington	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor Drew	–	Cornforth Parish Council
A. Learmonth	–	County Durham Primary Care Trust
J. Weston	–	Dean Bank Residents Association
Sergeant I. Rodgers	–	Durham Constabulary
Councillor R. Greenwell	–	Ferryhill Town Council
S. Maral	–	Government Office for North East
J. Birchall	–	LADDER Centre
M. Chappell	–	PDIF
S. Dodsworth	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
C. Todd	–	Sedgefield Borough Learning Co-ordinator
P. Forrest	–	Local Resident
B. Sheppard	–	Local Resident

### In

**Attendance:** G. Wood (Sedgefield Borough Regeneration Manager)

**Apologies:**

Councillor B.F. Avery, J.P.	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.E. Higgin	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor B. Meek	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor G. Morgan	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor D.A. Newell	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. C. Potts	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Ms. M. Predki	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor G. Porter	–	Durham County Council
Mrs. D. Longsdale		

### **AF(2)13/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that Councillors A. Hodgson and R. A. Patchett would each be declaring a prejudicial interest in respect of Item No. 5 – Review of Area Forums as they were Members of Cabinet.

### **AF(2)14/06 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(2)15/06 POLICE REPORT**

Sergeant I. Rogers attended the meeting to give details of the crime figures and local initiatives for the area.

It was reported that the crime figures for the area were as follows: -

	<u>August :</u>	<u>September :</u>
<b>Detection Rate</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Detection Rate</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Dwelling Burglary</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Burglary Other</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Vehicle Crime</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Criminal Damage</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Violent Crime</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Theft</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>

Sergeant Rodgers updated Members of the Forum of the progress of Operation Acres Green, which concentrated on the Dean Bank area.

An update was also provided on staffing levels for the area. It was pointed out that two PCSO's would be based in West Cornforth and one in the Broom Ward. A further two officers were currently going through the required training, which was anticipated to be completed by the end of the year, resulting in 5 officers within Area 2.

Discussion was held regarding finances and staffing of the force as a whole and the debt that had occurred. It was explained that three hundred staff would be lost as a result of the financial difficulties.

Consideration was also held regarding Police attendance at public meetings. It was explained that the Police had made a commitment to only attend the Area Forums. Concern was therefore expressed as to the number of opportunities the public had to express their views. Sergeant Rodgers explained that the Police felt the Area Forums were the most effective way of receiving public views.

Questions were raised regarding responsibilities of the Police with regard to fly tipping. It was questioned whether the Police were able to stop vehicles carrying waste to check whether they carried the correct licence for disposal of the waste. Sergeant Rogers pointed out that fly tipping was a responsibility of the Council and not the Police. It was also questioned that now the Police were looking to target crime rather than anti-social behaviour would the local authority have to introduce By Laws and take responsibility for targeting such problems. It was explained that the Government was pushing for a crackdown on crime, however the Forum was reassured that PCSO's would still patrol the streets targeting problem areas. It was also pointed out that the Government had recently released a White Paper regarding responsibilities of local authorities this week.

Finally, questions were raised regarding the closure of Newton Aycliffe Police Station on weekends. Sergeant Rodgers explained that he was not aware of a closure, as the station was still designated and open 24 hours to allow offenders to be taken there.

**AF(2)16/06**

**REVIEW OF AREA FORUMS**

**NB :** In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct, Councillors A. Hodgson and R. A. Patchett declared a prejudicial interest in the above item and left the meeting for the duration of discussion.

G. Wood, Regeneration Manager, attended the Forum to consult and seek views from those in attendance regarding the proposals set out in the attached report to review the workings of the Area Forum. (For copy see file of Minutes). A questionnaire was also distributed.

Members of the Forum were informed that a Review Group had been set up to examine the operation and effectiveness of the Area Forums with a view to making changes to strengthen community involvement. The information provided throughout the review had been obtained from the Council's Regeneration Section with input from Council partners and tenants groups to ensure consultation was as wide as possible.

The Forum's attention was then drawn to the recommendations within the report and the questionnaire, which was requested to be completed.

**AF(2)17/06**

**COUNTY DURHAM PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

A. Learmonth was present at the meeting to update Members on local health matters.

A. Learmonth pointed out that this would be the last Forum she would attend as a result of the restructure of the Primary Care Trusts. Under the new County Durham Primary Care Trust she explained that it was unlikely that Area Forums would be attended by a field of Directors, instead it was suggested that invitations be extended to managers of the integrated teams.

With regard to the new health centre at Chilton it was suggested that contact be made directly with the lift company as Bob Parker had left the organisation.

Copies of the performance management report were also distributed where it was explained it was the most successful report to date.

Questions were raised regarding consultant appointments. Members of the Forum pointed that appointments were getting put back and questioned the reasoning. A. Learmonth suggested that contact with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) to highlight concerns.

Discussion was also held regarding the Neurology Section and its move from Bishop Auckland Hospital to Sunderland General Hospital.

**AF(2)18/06**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

9<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 at Dean Bank and Ferryhill Literary Institute at 6.30 p.m.

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**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@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk)



# Item 7b

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

### AREA 1 FORUM

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Monday,  
6 November 2006

Time: 6.30 p.m.

- Present:** Councillor J.M. Khan (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and
- Councillor A. Gray – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor M.T.B. Jones – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor B.M. Ord – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor Mrs. C. Sproat – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor A. Smith – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor K. Thompson – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor W. Waters – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Inspector A. Green – Durham Constabulary
  - Councillor N. Foster – Durham County Council
  - M. Fordham – County Durham PCT
  - G. Darkes – Greenways Residents Association
  - A. Lamb – Greenways Residents Association
  - A. Stapleton – Eden Residents Association
  - E. Croft – Neighbourhood Watch
  - C. Todd – Sedgefield Borough Learning  
– Co-ordinator
  - B. Abley – Spennymoor Settlement
  - P. Storey – Spennymoor Settlement
  - M. Welsh – Spennymoor Settlement
  - W. G. Wheaton – Spennymoor Settlement
  - V. Williams – Spennymoor Settlement
  - S. Dobson – Spennymoor Settlement
  - L. Edgar – Spennymoor Settlement
  - M. Marsden – Spennymoor Settlement
  - Councillor Mrs. M. Smith – Spennymoor Town Council
  - Councillor Mrs. E.Maddison – Councillor for Spennymoor Ward,  
Spennymoor Town Council
  - L. Aunger – St. John’s Ambulance, Spennymoor
  - B. Argyle – Local Resident
  - E. Hodgson – Local Resident
  - F. Ryder – Local Resident
  -
- Apologies:** Councillor Mrs.A.M.Armstrong – Sedgefield Borough Council
- Councillor Mrs. B. Graham – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor E. Foster – Durham County Council
  - Councillor Ms. S. Armstrong – Spennymoor Town Council

**AF(1)15/06      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors indicated that they would be declaring an interest in the following items:

Councillor A. Gray :	Item 4 – Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme – The Spennymoor Settlement	Personal Interest – Member of Spennymoor Settlement
Councillor A. Smith :	Item 4 – Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme – The Spennymoor Settlement	Personal Interest – Member of Executive Committee – Spennymoor Settlement
Councillor W. Waters	Item 4 – Sedgefield Borough Local Improvement Programme – The Spennymoor Settlement	Prejudicial Interest – Member of Sedgefield Borough Council Cabinet

**AF(1)16/06      MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(1)17/06      SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - THE SPENNYMOOR SETTLEMENT**

**NB :**            In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members’ Code of Conduct Councillors A. Gray and A. Smith declared a personal interest in the above item and remained in the meeting.

**NB :**            In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members’ Code of Conduct Councillor W. Waters declared a prejudicial interest in the above item and left the meeting for the duration of discussion on the item.

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

Members of the Forum were reminded that £836,000 had been allocated over three years to 2008/09 for the Local Improvement Programme in Area

1 to tackle the issues as outlined in the Council's Community Strategy. The allocation for 2006/07 was £278,800.

The role of the Area Forum was to provide a view as to the priority of the project within the area. The project would then be considered by the Council's Management Team and Cabinet. The latter would decide whether or not to allocate funding tot the project.

### **Spennymoor Settlement Regeneration Project**

D. Acock, Spennymoor Settlement, was in attendance to present the application.

The project involved refurbishing the existing facilities at the Everyman Theatre to enable the Settlement Association to provide extra arts and community based activities to ensure that the theatre was used to its full extent and safeguard it for the future. The theatre was built in 1939 and was a Grade II Listed Building.

It was pointed out that if the Heritage Lottery Fund did not agree to provide the required match funding for the scheme, other possible sources of funding had been identified.

The Forum noted that the scheme would not proceed without match funding being available. The project met all the Local Improvement Programme criteria and would link in very well with the planned development of Spennymoor Leisure Centre.

The Forum agreed to support the project.

## **AF(1)18/06 REVIEW OF AREA FORUMS**

The Forum was informed that a Scrutiny Review Group had been established to examine the operation of Area Forums to determine their effectiveness to identify changes that could be made to strengthen community involvement. A copy of the Group's report had been included in the agenda. (For copy see file of Minutes)

The Forum's attention was drawn to the following recommendations of the Review Group:

1. Area Forums be re-named and re-launched as Community Forums to reflect a greater emphasis on community involvement and the number be replaced with a name that reflects the area.
2. Agenda items to be based on local issues identified through the development of Local Area Frameworks and Local Improvement Plan.
3. Membership of Area Forum to be formalised to be representative of the communities to which it aims to serve.

4. Implement a public question time at the beginning of each Area Forum.

A questionnaire seeking views on the above recommendations was circulated at the meeting for completion.

It was reported that the views expressed at the Area Forum meeting, the community consultation event on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2006 and in the questionnaires, would be analysed by the Council's Regeneration Section and reported to Cabinet for consideration.

**AF(1)19/06**

**POLICE REPORT (LOCAL ISSUES AND ROAD SAFETY)**

Inspector Adrian Green was present at the meeting to give details of crime figures for the area.

The reported crime figures for September were as follows:

<u>Type of Crime</u>	<u>September 2006</u>
Total Crime	136
Dwelling Burglary	6
Burglary Other	7
Criminal Damage	37
Violent Crime	38

The crime detection rate as a percentage was 28.7%.

Specific reference was made to the launch of Operation Dark, which was aimed to tackle those criminal activities that were aided by darkness.

It was reported that a PCSO had just commenced in post and it was anticipated that either one or two additional PCSOs would be appointed either before or after Christmas.

Specific reference was made to recent press reports that Durham Constabulary was to lose approximately 300 officers, which would obviously impinge on the Force's ability to tackle crime.

It was explained that Durham Constabulary had a projected shortfall of £10m, which could necessitate reducing the number of police officers. It was pointed out that Durham Constabulary was classed as a 'rural force' and Government funding was being directed towards the inner cities.

Members of the Forum expressed concern regarding the time spent by police officers transporting people under arrest to the cells at Bishop Auckland and Newton Aycliffe Police Stations. It was explained that it was not cost-effective to keep the cells at Spennymoor Police Station continually open. Reference was made to the national drive to have one cell block to cater for the whole of the County.

Concern was expressed regarding the large number of taxis in the vicinity of The Cube on a Friday night, which often led to the highway being obstructed.

A question was raised on whether The Cube made any contribution to the cost of policing Spennymoor. It was reported that The Cube employed more than the required ratio of door staff and any anti social behaviour incidents in the High Street should not automatically be attributed to patrons of The Cube as there were a number of public houses in Spennymoor, with extended opening hours.

Concern was also expressed regarding the difficulties in contacting the Police using the non-emergency number and the slow response to some calls. It was pointed out that a graded response system had been introduced. Some non-urgent matters could be referred to beat officers and therefore not responded to for 2 – 3 days.

**AF(1)20/06**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006 at 6.30 p.m. at Spennymoor Town Hall.

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# Item 7c

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 3 FORUM

Community College,  
Trimdon Village

Wednesday,  
8 November 2006

Time: 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor T. Ward (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Mrs. L. Hovvels	– Sedgefield Borough Council
J. Robinson J.P	– Sedgefield Borough Council
J. Wayman J.P	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Sergeant B. O'Connor	– Durham Constabulary
J. Irvine	– Fishburn Parish Council
Ms. P. Genner	– Memorial Playground Fishburn
R. Genner	– Memorial Playground Fishburn
Z. Newton	– Memorial Playground Fishburn
D. Younger	– Memorial Playground Fishburn
A. Luke	– Joint Trimdon Regeneration Partnership
Miss. C. Todd Councillor	– Sedgefield Borough Learning Library – Sedgefield Town Council
Mrs. M. Robinson	
Ms. A. Simpson	– Sedgefield Town Council
Mrs. L. Swinbank	– Sedgefield Town Council
D. Waters	– Sedgefield Town Council
G. Wells	– Sedgefield Town Council
L. Oliver	– Trimdon Parish Council
Mrs. G. Norton	– Trimdon Resident

**In**

**Attendance:** A. Meggason, Mrs. C. Smith and Mrs. L. Walker  
(Sedgefield Borough Council)

**Apologies:** Councillor D.R. Brown - Sedgefield Borough Council  
Councillor J. Burton – Sedgefield Borough Council  
Councillor K. Noble – Sedgefield Borough Council  
P. Irving – County Durham PCT

**AF(3)15/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Members had no declarations of interest to declare.

**AF(3)16/06 MINUTES**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**AF(3)17/06 REVIEW OF AREA FORUMS**  
The Forum was informed that a Scrutiny Review Group had been established to examine the operation of Area Forums to determine their effectiveness to identify changes that could be made to strengthen community involvement. A copy of the Review Group's report had been included in the agenda. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The Forum's attention was drawn to the following recommendations of the Review Group :-

1. Area Forums be renamed and relaunched as Community Forums to reflect a greater emphasis on community involvement and the number replaced with the name that reflected the area.
2. Agenda items be based on local issues identified through the development of Local Area Frameworks and Local Improvement Plan.
3. Membership of Area Forums be formalised to be representative of the community groups to which it aimed to serve.
4. Implement a public question time at the beginning of each Area Forum.

A questionnaire seeking views on the above recommendations was circulated at the meeting for completion.

It was reported that the views expressed at the Area Forum meeting, a community consultation event on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2006 and the questionnaires, would be analysed by the Council's Regeneration Section and reported to Cabinet for consideration.

**AF(3)18/06**

**POLICE REPORT**

Sergeant B. O' Connor was present at the meeting to give details of crime statistics in the area. It was reported that the crime statistics were as follows:-

<u>Type of Crime :</u>	<u>Sedgefield :</u>	<u>Fishburn :</u>	<u>Trimdon Village :</u>	<u>Trimdon Grange/Trimdon Colliery</u>
Theft	13	4	10	0
Criminal Damage	14	8	11	6
Burglary (Dwelling)	1	0	1	1
Burglary (Other)	3	2	2	1
Assault	6	3	9	3
Vehicle Crime	1	0	5	8
Incidents Reported	254	99	196	93

It was reported that the total number of incidents had increased by approximately 100 compared to the same period in 2005.

Reference was made to anti-social behaviour in Trimdon Village. It was explained that although there had been 33 reports of anti-social behaviour, 16 of these related to the play area at Skerne Avenue.



It was felt that limiting access to the play area especially during the hours of darkness would reduce anti-social behaviour.

With regard to anti-social behaviour in Fishburn it was explained that Neighbourhood Services had been requested to monitor the grassed area adjacent to the crossroads.

**AF(3)19/06 COUNTY DURHAM PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

There was no representative from County Durham PCT present at the meeting.

**AF(3)20/06 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

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

Members of the Forum were reminded that £532,000 had been allocated over three years for the Local Improvement Programme in Area 3 to tackle the issues as outlined in the Council's Community Strategy. The allocation for 2006/07 was £177,334.

The role of the Area Forum was to provide the view as to the priority of the project within the area. The project would then be considered by the Council's Management Team and Cabinet.

**Ceddesfeld Hall Attics and Cellar Technical Study**

Councillor Mrs. M. Robinson, Sedgfield Town Council, was in attendance to present this application.

The project involved commissioning a consultant to investigate the feasibility of attics and/or cellars back into use at Ceddesfeld Hall.

It was pointed out that the applicant was applying for 100% of the funding for this project.

**Memorial Childrens Playing Field, Fishburn**

J. Irvine, Fishburn Parish Council, was in attendance at the meeting to present the application.

The project involved providing play equipment and associated works for use by local children. The intention was to design a scheme that met the needs of both toddler play and opportunities for older children.

The applicant had applied for £58,900 of Local Improvement Programme funding. This was 39% of the total project cost.

It was queried whether the park would be accessible to the public 24 hours a day as this could cause problems for local residents.

Reference was made to road safety. It was pointed out that efforts were being made to improve road safety in Fishburn.

**Sedgfield Parish Hall Regeneration Programme**

Mrs. L. Swinbank, Sedgefield Town Council was in attendance at the meeting to present the application.

It was explained that there were four elements to the project. These included an acoustic survey of the building, a new stage facility including fixed lighting/sound equipment, refurbishment of the kitchen to provide additional facilities and a chair lift to the first floor.

It was explained that the applicant was applying for 100% of the funding for this phase of the project.

*AGREED: That the projects be supported.*

# Item 7d

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 4 FORUM

Shildon Sunnydale  
Leisure Centre

Tuesday,  
14 November 2006

Time: 6.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor D.M. Hancock (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor Mrs. I. Jackson Smith	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. L. Smith	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Acting Inspector S. Ball	–	Durham Constabulary
Councillor V. Chapman	–	Durham County Council
Councillor H. Robinson	–	Eldon Parish Council
C. Todd	–	Sedgefield Borough Learning Co-ordinator
C. Fletcher	–	Shildon Community Safety
K. Hodgson	–	Shildon Community Museum
B. Rowley	–	Shildon Community Museum
A. Walker	–	Shildon Community Museum
A. Ellwood	–	Shildon History Recall Society
S. Naylor	–	Shildon Salvation Army
Councillor M. Stott	–	Shildon Town Council
J. Johnson	–	New Shildon Residents Association
C. Thompson	–	New Shildon Residents Association
B. Turnbull	–	NECA
B. C. Hind	–	Local Resident
M. Thompson	–	Local Resident

### In

**Attendance:** D. Anderson, Miss S. Billingham and N. Woodgate

**Apologies:**

Councillor G.M.R. Howe	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.G. Huntington	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.M. Smith	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. J. Bird	–	Shildon Town Council
Councillor Mrs. L. Goldy	–	Shildon Town Council
Mrs. E. Carr	–	Jubilee Fields Community Association

### **AF(4)17/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that Councillors D.M.Hancock and Mrs. I Jackson-Smith and Councillor M. Stott, Shildon Town Council would each be declaring a personal interest in respect of Item 7 – Local Improvement Programme – as they were Shildon Town Councillors.

### **AF(4)18/06 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(4)19/06 POLICE REPORT**

Acting Inspector S. Ball was present at the meeting to give details of the crime statistics for the area.

The reported crime figures for September and October were as follows :-

	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>
Total Crime	119	86
Violent Crime	21	12
Dwelling Burglary	4	6
Burglary Other	7	11
Criminal Damage	44	34
Vehicle Theft	5	3
Theft from Vehicle	9	5
Damage to Vehicle	19	11
Shoplifting	4	5
Total theft	36	18
Nuisance/Rowdy Behaviour	103	119

Acting Inspector Ball informed Members that Shildon now had 4 PCSOs. One vacant position had been filled and another officer would be joining the area upon completion of their training in two weeks time.

With regard to St. Johns Churchyard it was explained that a number of trees had been cut back and the area had generally been tidied up, including necessary repair work. Acting Inspector Ball pointed out that he had not been informed of any further problems.

**AF(4)20/06 NORTH EAST COUNCIL ON ADDICTIONS**

Barbara Turnbull, Project Manager for North East Council on Addictions (NECA) was present to inform Members of the work carried out by the organisation.

It was pointed out that it was established in 1975 as North East Council on Alcoholism, however, as trends changed and drugs and solvent use became prevalent the name was changed to North East Council on Addictions. Since that time the organisations size had increased and now employed 230 staff and was funded by the Government.

The organisation works in partnership with various other bodies and has officers based at Spennymoor, Newton Aycliffe and Bishop Auckland with outreach services throughout the Borough. It targets those who are hard to reach with a priority to aid drug use.

Questions were raised as to whether help was sought voluntarily or whether clients were sent under another scheme. It was explained that people came via various routes, however, in order to tackle the problems they need to attend voluntarily.

**AF(4)21/06 REVIEW OF AREA FORUMS**

D. Anderson, Principal Democratic Services Officer, was present at the meeting to seek views regarding the proposals set out in the attached report. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The Forum was reminded that a Scrutiny Review Group had been established to examine the operation of Area Forums to determine their effectiveness to identify changes that could be made to strengthen community involvement. The Forum's attention was drawn to the following recommendations of the Review Group :-

1. Area Forums and renamed and relaunched as Community Forums to reflect a greater emphasis on community involvement and the number replaced with a name that reflected the area.
2. Agenda items be based on local issues identified through the development of the Local Area Framework and Local Improvement Plan.
3. Membership of Area Forums be formalised to be representative of the community groups to which it aimed to serve.
4. Implement a public question time at the beginning of each Forum.

A questionnaire seeking views on the above recommendations was circulated at the meeting for completion.

**AF(4)22/06 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Consideration was given to a report detailing applications submitted to be approved by the Strategy and Regeneration Section for funding from the Local Improvement Project. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members of the Forum were reminded of the procedure to be followed throughout the Local Improvement Project.

The following project was then outlined :-

**Hackworth Park Tennis Courts**

S. Palombella, Groundwork East Durham, was present to outline the application on behalf of Shildon Town Council, which was to redevelop the existing dilapidated tennis courts, improve access and carry out any additional essential works.

It was explained that the amount of requested from the Local Improvement Project was £34,999. The remaining funding of £50,000 had been secured from Barclays Spaces for Sport, which brought the total project cost to £84,999.

It was explained that if the project was successful in obtaining the LIP funding and the work was carried out that Groundwork East Durham would be eligible to apply for development funding totalling £20,000. It would then be hoped that the development funding would enable Groundwork East

Durham to work with youngsters to encourage them to take ownership of the project, which it was hoped would prevent vandalism.

Questions were raised as to whether the current clubhouse would stay. It was explained that various options were being looked at.

*AGREED : That Cabinet be recommended to support the Hackworth Park Tennis Courts Project.*

**AF(4)23/06**

## **QUESTIONS**

### **General Communication**

Discussion was held regarding communication between the Borough Council, Town and Parish Councils and the public. It was felt that consultation and communication needed to be improved. Specific reference was made to planning issues. It was felt that the current consultation process when dealing with planning issues was not sufficient. Specific concerns were raised to consulting only those residents living in the close vicinity of a development when all residents in the area should be given the opportunity to comment.

### **Play Areas**

Discussion was held regarding the feasibility study, which had taken place across the Borough to consider areas for play facilities.

**AF(4)24/06**

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

16<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 at Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre at 6.30 p.m.

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#### **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@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk)

# Item 8

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Tuesday,  
7 November 2006

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor V. Crosby (Chairman) and  
Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. J. Gray, M.T.B. Jones, A. Smith and  
Mrs. C. Sproat

**In Attendance:** Councillors A. Gray, B. Hall, D.M. Hancock and J.G. Huntington

**Apologies:** Councillors B.F. Avery J.P, D.R. Brown, G.C. Gray, K. Henderson and  
Mrs. L. Smith

**OSC(3)13/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
No declarations of interest were received.

**OSC(3)14/06 MINUTES**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 were confirmed  
as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**OSC(3)15/06 PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
REPORT**  
Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive in relation to the  
preparation of the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report. (For copy see  
file of Minutes).

The Committee reviewed the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee 3 throughout 2005/2006, considered a suggested Action Plan  
for the Overview and Scrutiny function and reviewed working methods in  
order to improve the Overview and Scrutiny function.

The achievements that the Committee had progressed were also outlined  
in the report.

It was noted that, following consideration by all three Overview and  
Scrutiny Committees, a combined Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report  
would be submitted to Council.

**AGREED :**

1. *That the work undertaken during 2005/6 be noted.*
2. *That the proposed Action Plan for 2006/7 be supported.*

## OSC(3)16/06 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).

Members were updated on the progress of the ongoing Reviews on Recycling Services and the Council's Contribution to Reducing Economic Inactivity. It was noted that at its last meeting members of the "Worklessness" Review Group had agreed to change the name of the Review Group from "Worklessness" to "Increasing Employability".

In relation to future items for consideration, it was explained an item was scheduled to be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee relating to progress towards Performance Indicator targets relating to the community outcome "ensuring a cleaner, greener environment". The Committee was informed that, since this item had been placed on the Work Programme, a more recent set of Performance Indicators were available indicating that all but one of those targets had now been achieved. It was considered, therefore, that it was no longer appropriate to include this item on the Work Programme.

Consideration was also given to including an item on the Work Programme on climate change and the authority's role in working to tackle the issue.

- AGREED :**
- 1. That the progress in relation to the two ongoing reviews, Recycling Services and the Council's Contribution to Reducing Economic Inactivity (Increasing Employability) be noted.*
  - 2. That the item "progress towards Performance Indicator targets relating to the community outcome ensuring a cleaner, greener environment" be removed from the Work Programme.*
  - 3. That an item be placed on the Work Programme relating to the authority's role in working to tackle climate change.*

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