

**SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET**

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Thursday,
31 January 2008

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong (Chairman) and

Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy, V. Crosby, Mrs. B. Graham, Mrs. L. Howvels,
D.A. Newell and W. Waters

In Attendance: Councillors Mrs. P. Crathorne, Mrs. J. Gray, J.E. Higgin, Ms. I. Jackson,
B. Lamb, Mrs. E.M. Paylor and T. Ward

Apologies: Councillors A. Hodgson and J.M. Khan

CAB.136/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Members had no interests to declare.

CAB.137/07 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2008 were confirmed as
a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.138/07 INTRODUCTION OF HOUSING INCOME PAYMENT CARDS
The Lead Member for Housing presented a report seeking approval to
introduce housing income payment cards for the recovery of former
tenants arrears. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were reminded that the prevention and effective management of
rent arrears had been identified as a key priority in Housing Department's
Service Improvement Plan.

It was explained that the use of housing income cards was recognised as
good practice by the Audit Commission when carrying out inspections of
social housing and they were used both regionally and sub regionally, by a
large number of Registered Social Landlords, Arms Length Management
Organisations and retained housing services.

The report evaluated the value of money issues associated with
introducing income payment cards for the collection of former tenants
arrears as well as the benefits to tenants and the service.

RESOLVED : *That the Council introduces Housing Income Payment
Cards for the recovery of former tenant arrears.*

CAB.139/07 DISABLED PERSONS ADAPTATIONS POLICY

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

It was explained that the Housing Services Department, with input from Social Care and Health, had reviewed the existing Disabled Persons Adaptations Policy, which had been adopted in 1997.

The Review had considered how the Council met its obligations in terms of ensuring that Disabled Persons Adaptations were carried out to properties in a timely, cost-effective and appropriate manner. A self-assessment of the existing arrangements had been carried out using the Key Lines of Enquiry.

The self-assessment had identified a number of areas for improvement, some of which had been addressed in the policy, set out in Appendix 1. Other areas would require further consideration and had been detailed in a Service Improvement Plan (Appendix 2).

Members' attention was drawn to Section 5 of the report, which set out the key points of the revised policy.

RESOLVED : That the Disabled Persons Policy be approved and implemented.

CAB.140/07 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2008. (For copy see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the Minutes be received.

CAB.141/07 EMPLOYMENT ISSUES PANEL

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2008. (For copy see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED : That the Minutes 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.142/07 COMPETITION LINE PARTNERSHIP (KEY DECISION)

The Lead Member for Leisure and Culture presented a report regarding the Council's contractual arrangements with Competition Line. (For copy see file of Minutes).

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

Published on 1st February 2008.

The key decision contained in these Minutes will be implemented on Monday 11th February 2008 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 ggarrigan@sedgefield.gov.uk