

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2008

Present: Councillor C Patching (Chair)
Councillors B Burn, R Burnip,
Mrs A E Laing, T Longstaff, Mrs S Mason,
D Milsom and T Unsworth

Also Present: Councillor Mrs J Freak – Executive Member for
Social Inclusion and Culture

Apologies: Councillor P J Campbell

1 **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 19 February 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.

2 **MATTERS ARISING**

(i) **Service Unit Performance Reporting – Environmental Services**
(Minute no 6 refers)

The Chair explained that all Peterlee Members had received the information on the number of young people fined for dropping litter in Peterlee.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) **Consideration of the Extension of the Green Waste Kerbside Collection Service**
(Minute no 2 refers)

The Director of Community Services explained that it had been intended that the green waste would be taken to the site at Coxhoe. Premier Waste had informed that they were unable to dispose of the waste at that location and would now be using a local farm which had the approval from the Environment Agency. A report would be considered at Executive the following week.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

3 **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 26 February 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

RESOLVED that the information contained within the Minutes, be noted.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

5 **FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Chair advised that there were no issues discussed at the Scrutiny Management Board meeting held on 3 March 2008 which fell within the remit of the committee.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 POST OFFICE LIMITED NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME – AREA PLAN PROPOSAL FOR CLEVELAND WITH SOUTH DURHAM AND RICHMOND

Consideration was given to the report of the Scrutiny Support Manager which advised of the Post Office Limited Network Change Programme Area Plan Proposal for Cleveland with South Durham and Richmond and its implications for residents of the south of the District, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

In March 2007, the District Council had considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Inclusion and Culture which highlighted the Department of Trade and Industry consultation document regarding the future of the Post Office Network. The document described the government's future funding and structural plans for both urban and rural Post Offices.

In responding to the consultation document, the Leader of the Council and the Scrutiny Management Board raised a number of concerns in respect of the network review which were detailed in the report.

The Post Office had divided the UK into 47 areas. For each of the areas, Post Office Limited would develop a local area plan proposal which would set out the changes that it proposed to make within it.

Correspondence had been received from Post Watch in respect of proposals, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix A. Post Watch indicated that they had scrutinised proposals and had provided comments. They were satisfied that the proposals met the government's minimum distance criteria. However Post Watch had raised concerns about access, DDA compliance, capacity and retail standards at a number of branches to which customers would be expected to migrate.

The area plan proposals for Cleveland with South Durham and Richmond affected the wards of Hutton Henry, Thornley and Wheatley Hill and Wingate. A list of the Post Offices within these areas was attached at Appendix B. Of a total of 9 Post Offices within the area, 1 had been identified for closure at Front Street, Hutton Henry.

Appendix C detailed the Post Office Limited branch access report in respect of the Hutton Henry branch.

The Executive Member for Social Inclusion and Culture explained that the Post Office in Hutton Henry was the last remaining shop in the village. She was concerned about the poor transport and the bus frequency to take customers from Hutton Henry to adjacent villages. A meeting was to be held with the MP for Sedgefield the following week. With regard to the alternative locations for a Post Office, there were parking restrictions in Wingate front street with double yellow lines outside the Post Office. Parking on the other side of the road was limited and also served the Spar, Ward and Naylor, café and butchers. This Post Office was also not DDA compliant and had a heavy metal door.

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that the District Council were not aware of the Parish Councils and local residents views. It was therefore suggested that a meeting be held with the local Ward Member together with appropriate Executive and Scrutiny Councillors to discuss the proposals as well as the views of Hutton Henry Parish Council and local residents. The feedback from the meeting would form the basis of a response to the proposals from the District Council.

Community Services Scrutiny Committee – 11 March 2008

The Chair explained that the positive element of the report regarding the Post Offices that had been retained should be publicised. All of the bullet points at 3.5 to the report regarding the previous consultation were still valid and should be resubmitted. Hutton Henry Parish Council should be contacted to ascertain their views on the consultation. He felt that responsibility should be delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee and the Scrutiny Support Manager to progress this matter.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) Hutton Henry Parish Council be contacted to ascertain their views on the consultation;
- (ii) delegated authority be given to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Support Manager to respond to the consultation document.

JC/MA/com cssc/080301
12 March 2008