

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**OF THE REGENERATION SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillor D. Raine (Chair)  
Councillors S. Bishop, Mrs. E.M.  
Connor and H. High

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. B.A. Sloan, D.J.  
Taylor-Gooby and A. J. Holmes

Also Present: Councillors A. Napier, Mrs. A.  
Naylor, R. Crute and F. Shaw

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 27 October 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 4 November 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

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

3. **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

4. **FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Chair reported that at the last meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board, held on 10 November 2008, the following issue was discussed:-

**DCLG Consultation – “Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power”**

The Scrutiny Management Board had considered and approved a response to the abovementioned consultation paper.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

5. **NHS COUNTY DURHAM/COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST - SEIZING THE FUTURE CONSULTATION**

The Chair explained that representatives of NHS County Durham had been unable to attend.

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that a formal public consultation had been held the previous week with representatives from the Foundation Trust. The consultation centred around the potential closure of the A & E Department at Bishop Auckland General Hospital and how this would impact upon A & E at the University Hospital of North Durham and residents of the district. Waiting times at Durham A & E were between 3 - 5 hours and there was a risk that this could be lengthened. The Trust had explained that there was not a full A & E

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Department at Bishop Auckland General Hospital and its future could not be sustained because they could not guarantee medical specialists.

Concerns around the development of community based hospitals and facilities were also discussed and the need for them to be developed, provided and sustained before any changes in acute hospital care had been approved and implemented.

East Durham Transport Scheme pilot was funded by the PCT and Durham County Council and there was a concern that the public were unaware of how the system operated, how to access the scheme or where it was publicised. This was a demand based service so if it was not used, it would be lost. Easington District Council had highlighted that access and transport to hospitals was a number 1 priority.

Councillor Napier explained that Bishop Auckland General Hospital was a PFI hospital and had been established with a full A & E service. He commented that he did not think this should be acceptable for them.

**RESOLVED** that the information given be noted.

### 6. **SERVICE UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORTING - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND LICENSING UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORT 1 APRIL - 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Consideration was given to the report of the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager which provided information on the performance of the Commercial Enforcement and Licensing Teams of the Environmental Health and Licensing Unit, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Work in the Environmental Health and Licensing Unit was divided according to teams. The report provided details on the Commercial and Enforcement Team which included food safety and infectious disease control, food premises inspection, complaints relating to food safety or food premises, cases of food related infectious disease, outbreaks of infectious disease, health and safety at work enforcement, inspection of premises for health and safety, complaints relating to health and safety, notification of workplace accidents, pollution control, authorised process inspections, assessment of local air quality, investigation of pollution, noise and public health complaints from commercial and industrial activities and contaminated land assessment, consultations and smoke free legislation.

The report also detailed work of the Licensing Team which included taxis, the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.

As at 30 September 2008, there were 114 Hackney Carriages and 162 Private Hire vehicles. The number of Hackney Carriages had increased since March from the previous restricted number of 93 vehicles.

A Member referred to the number of high risk properties that were inspected. J Benson explained that compared to the HSE, the Council had a relatively low number of premises in the high risk categories, and whilst high risk premises were included in the inspection programme, lower risk premises were targeted in other ways, using local and national initiatives eg reducing the risk of injury from slips and trips.

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A Member queried if the aerobic digester was now in operation. Councillor Napier explained that the aerobic digester was still inoperative.

A Member referred to taxis licensing and commented that she had fears it may lapse once the new authority took over in March. J. Benson explained that a taxi licensing policy was being developed. The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that a report was to be considered by Durham County Council's Cabinet that week on countywide protocols and he would inform Members of the outcome once it was known.

A Member referred to the licensing of food outlets and queried what happened to the ones that did not have planning permission. J. Benson explained that in relation to food safety, Environmental Health had no input in planning and food premises must register with Environmental Health before they could sell food, although they could register without having planning permission in place.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his report.

**RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

### **7. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Section 100B(4)(b) the Chair, following consultation with the Proper Officer, agreed that following item of business, not shown on the Agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency.

### **8. MOMENTUM: PATHWAYS TO HEALTHCARE (AOB)**

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that he had received notification of planning exhibitions for the Momentum project which would be held in Peterlee Leisure Centre on 9 December 2008 and 7 January 2009.

**RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

### **9. BRACKENHILL BUSINESS PARK (AOB)**

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that an Officer from Durham County Council would provide a briefing note by the end of the week. Some negotiations had taken place with the businesses on the industrial park regarding travel to work plans to ease congestion.

**RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

JC/CB/COM/RSSC/081102  
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