

Item 3a

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Friday,
28 July 2006

Time: 11.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. L. Hovvels (Mayor) and

Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. K. Conroy, Mrs. J. Croft, V. Crosby, M.A. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Gray, G.C. Gray, B. Hall, K. Henderson, M.T.B. Jones, B. Meek, J.P. Moran, G. Morgan, B.M. Ord, R.A. Patchett, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, G.W. Scott, A. Smith, J.M. Smith, Mrs. I. Jackson Smith, K. Thompson, T. Ward and J. Wayman J.P

Apologies: Councillors B.F. Avery J.P, D.R. Brown, J. Burton, Mrs. A.M. Fleming, T.F. Forrest, Mrs. J. Gray, D.M. Hancock, J.E. Higgin, A. Hodgson, G.M.R. Howe, J.G. Huntington, M. Iveson, J.M. Khan, D.A. Newell, K. Noble, J.K. Piggott, Mrs. C. Potts, Ms. M. Predki, J. Robinson J.P, Mrs. L. Smith, Mrs. C. Sproat and W. Waters

C.42/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors M. A. Dalton and B. M. Ord reported that they would be declaring a personal and prejudicial interest in the item relating to Members Allowances as Chairman and Vice Chairman of Audit Committee. .

C.43/06 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 30th June, 2006 and 13th July, 2006 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

C.44/06 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that since the last meeting she had attended 23 functions and events including Byers Green carnival, the Pioneering Care Partnership's Annual General Meeting, the official opening of Spennymoor Gala and Durham Miners Gala.

She had also attended the Learning Library 20th birthday celebration Open Day at Spennymoor Town Hall, Sport Relief Mile Event at Stadium 2000 Sildon and an exhibition of gymnastics at the new gymnastics centre at Spennymoor, the Royal British Legion Annual County Rally service in Durham Cathedral and Billingham International Folklore Festival.

In addition she had attended a number of diamond and golden wedding anniversary celebrations as well as civic functions and events.

C.45/06

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive (for copy see file of Minutes) detailing a further Review of the Constitution for the purposes of Article 16.

It was explained that the Council's Constitution had been adopted on the 24th May, 2002 as part of the Council's approach to implementing the Local Government Act.

Recommendations detailed in the report had been based on advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer and had been considered by the Constitutional Review Group and reflected those areas where it was considered appropriate to make some further changes.

Those changes related to the operation of the Appeals/Review Panels to improve organisational and meeting arrangements and modification to the Officer Delegations at Part 3c.

RESOLVED : *That the amendments as set out in the Appendix to the report be approved and the Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to :-*

- Amend the Constitution accordingly and make all necessary and consequential arrangements.
- Publish an amended version on the Council's website.

C.46/06

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE - ANNUAL REPORT AND REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2005-06

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive (for copy see file of Minutes) which detailed compliance with, content of and progress against Action Plans established to develop the Council's corporate governance arrangements during 2005/06 financial year.

It was explained The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers existing framework document "Corporate Governance in Local Government : A Keystone for Community Governance" was about to be revised and the Audit Commission was also about to issue its revised methodology for undertaking Corporate Governance inspection and associated Key Lines of Enquiry.

Officers of the Council would review those documents when available and consider the implications in order to determine the extent of the Council's compliance with their revised requirements.

The Council's Corporate Governance arrangements would therefore continue to be subject to annual external and internal review and audit. The operation of the existing or revised Code of Practice would be subject to regular update reports to Management Team on progress achieved against Action Plans, which was designed to strengthen those arrangements.

There was therefore no reason to change, amend or alter the existing Local Code of Practice until further information was available from CIPFA, SOLACE and the Audit Commission.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That the Annual Report for 2005/06 be approved.*
 - 2. That following the review of compliance with, content of and progress against the Action Plans established, the Local Code of Corporate Governance, as approved by Council in December, 2002 remains unchanged.*
 - 3. That the Chief Executive continues to monitor, through Management Team, progress against the Corporate Governance action plans and further reports be submitted to Council on an annual basis.*

C.47/06

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - CORE STRATEGY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services (for copy see file of Minutes) in relation to the above.

It was explained that the Core Strategy Development Plan Document would provide the overall strategic spatial planning policies for the Borough up to 2018.

Under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004 in order to take the document forward the Council needed to undertake an early consultation exercise to identify planning issues and options to be addressed.

The Key Issues Paper was published last year and following an assessment of the responses received an Alternative Options Document had been developed. This Document built upon the issues raised by the community during the consultation and proposed a series of Alternative Options to address those issues. The responses received for this round of consultation would feed into the Preferred Options Report due to be published in February, 2007.

- RESOLVED :* *That the Core Strategy Alternative Options Document be approved and published.*

C.48/06

REVIEW OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

N.B. In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members' Code of Conduct Councillors M. A. Dalton and B.M. Ord declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive (for copy see file of Minutes) in relation to a Review of Members Allowances,

incorporating the recommendations and findings of the Independent Remuneration Panel..

Members were reminded that at Annual Meeting of the Council on 19th May, 2006, Council had agreed the establishment of an Audit Committee and that the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to determine the appropriate level of Special Responsibility Allowance to be paid to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

When the Independent Remuneration Panel met, the opportunity was taken to consider Member's Basic Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances to be paid in 2007/08 and to review Co-opted Members Allowances and also the Special Responsibilities for the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Licensing Committees.

Spennymoor Town Council had also requested that consideration be given to the re-consideration of recommendations made in October, 2003 in relation to Parish Allowances.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That the findings and recommendations outlined in Section 10 of the Panel's report be approved and adopted.*
 - 2. That appropriate publicity be arranged indicating that the Panel's report and recommendations were available for public inspection in accordance with the Members' Allowances Regulations.*
 - 3. That the amendments to the Members' Allowance Scheme be incorporated into the Council's Constitution.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Liz Norrth 01388 816166 ext 4237 email: enorth@sedgefield.gov.uk