

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the **Scrutiny Sub-Committee for Looking After the Environment** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Monday 19 June 2006** at **10.00 a.m.**

COUNCILLOR CARROLL in the Chair

Members:

Councillors Armstrong, Burlison, Carr, Carroll, Douthwaite, Henderson, Holroyd, Ord, Smith Tennant and Wade.

Co-opted:

D Easton and M Jones

Other Members:

Councillors Burlison, Iveson, Meir and Nicholls

Apologies were received from Councillor Young

A1 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2006 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

A2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3 Items from Co-opted Members

There were no items from Co-opted Members.

A4 Terms of Reference of the Sub Committee

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny explaining the terms of reference of the Sub Committee (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

A5 Durham County Waste Management Company Limited

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny providing information about the Durham County Waste Management Company (for copy see file of Minutes)

Responding to questions about the Company and the remuneration paid to Directors, the Head of Overview and Scrutiny explained that the Waste Management Company was set up as an arms length company. Members of a local authority are entitled to ask questions and to seek such information, as they require to carry out their duties. Therefore it would be possible to ask a question about the remuneration of Executive and Non- Executive Directors.

In relation to the contract to dispose of the County's waste, it was explained that notice to terminate the contract had not yet been given. Notice will be served as soon as the County Council has completed the contract documentation and legislative requirements and is ready to move forward on the procurement process. A report providing an update on the contract process will be submitted to Cabinet in the near future. It was further explained that the County Council has joint responsibility for the landfill sites which commenced filling after the contract or are not yet filled. The County Council has responsibility for those sites which were filled before the contract commenced.

In response to questions about waste treatment, John Wade explained that the tender documentation would not specify how the waste is to be treated. Bids will be assessed to decide which is the best way forward.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

A6 Presentation by Corporate Director Environment

The Sub Committee received a presentation from John Richardson, Corporate Director Environment about his background and experience prior to commencing his post, the role of the Environment Department and identified the following challenges facing the Authority:

- Waste
- Transport
- Highways
- Consumers
- Regional Spatial Strategy (City Regions)
- Voice and Choice.

Resolved:

That the presentation be noted.

A7 "Open for Business ?" Report of the Access to the Durham Countryside Scrutiny Working Group

The Sub Committee considered a report of Access to the Durham Countryside the Scrutiny Working Group (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be approved for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet.

A8 Review of Sustainability Environment Policy

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Sustainability Scrutiny Working Group reviewing the progress made in implementing the recommendations made by the Working Group (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the progress and issues outlined in the report be noted and this project now be concluded.

A9 Review of Access to the Durham Coast

The Sub Committee considered a report of Access to the Durham Coast Scrutiny Working Group reviewing progress in implementing the recommendations made by the Working Group (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the project be now concluded, subject to a further report on the progress of the two outstanding issues outlined in paragraph 5 being brought to the next meeting of the Sub Committee on 18 September 2006.

A10 Year End Performance 2005/06

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Head of Corporate Policy providing an update on Best Value Performance Indicators for 2005/06 (for copy see file of Minutes)

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

A11 Forward Plan

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny on the Forward Plan (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved

That the report be noted.

A12 Work Programme

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny on the current work programme for the Sub-Committee (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved

That the current work programme be noted.