

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING

OF THE EXECUTIVE

HELD ON TUESDAY, 15 JANUARY, 2008

Present: Councillor A Napier (Chair)
Councillors R Crute, Mrs E Huntington,
D Myers, Mrs A Naylor, G Patterson,
R J Todd and P G Ward

Apologies: Councillors Mrs J Freak and F Shaw

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 18 December 2007, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **AMENDMENT OF THE EASINGTON DISTRICT COUNCIL BYE-LAWS AND CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE THE SPECIFICATION OF VEHICLE STANDARD FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Health, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The report provided details of the specification of vehicles to be approved as suitable for wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage vehicles, specified the required training for drivers of such vehicles and amended the authority's current vehicle construction standards to include this additional criteria of vehicle.

Members were advised that in April 2006 the Council agreed to remove the limit on the number of Hackney Carriage vehicles in the district to 93. This was with the proviso that any new Hackney Carriage vehicles, above the current number, would only be licensed if they were wheelchair accessible.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 the Government had specified a date of 2020 by which all Hackney Carriages in certain larger authorities must be wheelchair accessible. It was anticipated that once this date was passed the legislation would be rolled out to all authorities in the country. Implementation of the policy now would pre-empt such a requirement.

Durham County Council currently provided training for drivers contracted for the transportation of wheelchair users. They were prepared to provide the same training for the drivers of wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages. The cost of this training would be borne by the driver and would be a requirement for the licensing of such vehicles.

It was prudent to produce a specification which vehicles must comply with in order to be licensed and this would alleviate the need to change the bye-laws or conditions every time a new vehicle type was added. A copy of the specification was attached at Appendix 1 to the report for Members' consideration.

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RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the existing bye-laws and conditions be amended to include the vehicle construction specification outlined in Appendix 1 in respect of Wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage vehicles.
- (ii) the specification of Durham County Council as the appropriate training body for drivers of such vehicles, be approved.

3. DOG CONTROL ORDERS FOR THE DISTRICT OF EASINGTON

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Liveability which sought approval to commence the process for introducing a “Fouling of Land by Dogs (District of Easington) Order 2008” and outlined the position regarding the use of other dog control powers that were available should further dog control orders be made. A copy of the report had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 local authorities could make a range of orders to control dog related problems in their areas. This included the power to replace the existing Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 designated no fouling areas with;

- A “Fouling of Land by Dogs Order”, and/or
- A “Dogs on Leads Order”, and/or
- A “Dogs on Leads by Direction Order”, and/or
- A “Dogs Exclusion Order”, and/or
- A “Dogs (Specified Maximum) Order”.

It was proposed that the existing no fouling areas should be extended to cover all appropriate areas within the District. This would require the Council to make a “Fouling of Land by Dogs (District of Easington) Order 2008 which would extend the no fouling controls to areas that were previously not designated under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, details of which were outlined.

A draft “Fouling of Land by Dogs (District of Easington) Order 2008” was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be granted to commence the publication process for the introduction of a “Fouling of Land by Dogs (District of Easington) Order 2008”.
- (ii) following the statutory consultation period, full Council make the Order.
- (iii) further reports related to the development of other dog control orders be forthcoming should appropriate working arrangements with Town and Parish Councils be developed.

4. EASINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration which gave details of the findings of the Easington Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report for 2006/2007, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

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Members were advised that under the terms of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council was required to submit an annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State.

The Annual Monitoring Report was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. Part 1 looked at social, economic and environmental trends in the District and highlighted studies being undertaken with regard to housing, derelict land/buildings, green space, wind energy generation and industrial land. This section helped define the policy objectives which the Local Development Framework needed to address.

Details of the key issues and findings arising from Part 1 were outlined in the report.

Part two of the Annual Monitoring Report highlighted that the Council had missed its objective of publishing its Core Strategy and Development Control Document in September 2007. This had been delayed due to the need to adapt the document to a rapidly changing government agenda.

The policies in the Easington District Local Plan lapsed in September 2007 but the Council received Direction from the Secretary of State that a list of policies agreed by the Executive in January 2007 could be 'saved' until the new LDF was in place. The saved Policy Schedule was confirmed by Full Council in November 2007 and was included in the monitoring report.

RESOLVED that the Easington Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2006/2007 be confirmed as submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

5. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEM 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 the following item of business, not shown on the Agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SPORTS NETWORKS (AOB)

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Social Inclusion and Culture which gave details of the development of a Community Sports Network within the district and outlined options for the Council's involvement in the Delivery Plan. A copy of the report had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that the Government document Game Plan published in 2002 recognised the importance of increasing participation in sport and physical activity. The document set a number of targets including an indicator to increase the number of people taking part in sport and active recreation by 1% a year up to 2020.

The Sport England publication, The Framework for Sport, stated that in order to meet Government targets there needed to be an increase in strategic planning amongst all partners involved in delivering sport and physical activity in each local authority area.

In 2005/2006 Sport England commissioned an "Active People" survey, to measure adult participation in sport and physical activity. The results of the survey had informed the CPA indicators introduced for unitary authorities and indicators in Local Area Agreements. Details of the results of the survey for local authorities in County Durham were outlined in the report.

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In order to encourage all partners to work together Sport England were encouraging the development of a Community Sports Network (CSN) in each local authority area. A CSN for Easington would bring together all partners and community representatives and develop a joined up action plan for driving up participation levels within the district.

Pump prime funding would be provided by Sport England to support CSNs in delivering the priorities identified in the action plan. Easington had been allocated a “notional” amount of £200,000 for 2008 to 2011 which could be accessed via Sport England using the Community Investment fund application process. Any application must demonstrate match funding, some of which may be in kind. The establishment of a CSN would then strengthen bids to bring further Sport England investment to the district.

In order to meet deadlines an initial CSN action plan had to be submitted to Sport England in December 2007, although the authority had until 7 February 2008 to finalise funding bids. The action plan identified 5 priority areas which had been agreed by the partners, details of which were outlined in the report.

There would be capacity issues attached to increased levels of service and in order to address these issues a number of specific posts needed to be established.

The County Durham Primary Care Trust (PCT) were prepared to apply for funding on behalf of the CSN and to commission organisations to deliver services which met the priorities of the action plan. The PCT had made an approach to the Council seeking to commission the authority to host the following posts;

- Women and Young Girls Development Officer.
- Disability Sports Development Officer.

Grant funding would support 100% of the employment costs potentially for up to a 3 year fixed term period 2008 - 2011. At this stage it was uncertain if funding would be available to fund these posts for a 2 or 3 year period.

Both posts would be reviewed by the CSN to measure their performance in demonstrating increasing participation rates in these key target groups.

RESOLVED that the option of the Council employing the Disability and Young Women’s posts potentially for up to a 3 year fixed term 2008 to 2011, be approved subject to 100% funding from the Community Investment Fund being secured.