

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** of the
Teesdale District Council held at Teesdale House, Galgate,
Barnard Castle on **WEDNESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2009** at 5.30 pm

PRESENT: N Wood **Chair**

Councillors:

RA Bell	GM Richardson
M Bolden	KP Ryman
MJ Clark	A Smith
AJ Cooke	PL Stubbs
MM English	D Reed
D Metcalfe	JR Watson

Co-opted Members: Mr David Kinch and Mrs Pamela Spurrell

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Coates, JR Hinchcliffe and KJ Hodgson

Officers in attendance:

P Wilding	-	Interim Deputy Chief Executive
D Roberts	-	Democratic Services Manager
A Lambert	-	Scrutiny and Member Support Officer

66 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to discuss.

67 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members.

68 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2008 be confirmed as an accurate record.

69 DRAFT REPORT – PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Services Panel, Councillors KP Ryman and MJ Clark, submitted a report outlining the current situation in respect of the Council's planning enforcement activity. Councillor Clark confirmed that significant progress had been made over the last 18 months to reduce the number of outstanding enforcement cases and acknowledged the hard work of the Enforcement Officer in bringing these figures down. It was agreed that the report should be forwarded to the appropriate officers at Durham County Council, for consideration by the new unitary authority in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the report, as amended, be approved and submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration.

70 ATTENDANCE AT AND CONTRIBUTION TO PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS

The Chair of the Services Panel, Councillor KP Ryman, confirmed that over the last few months baseline information had been collated in relation to members' attendance and contribution at partnership meetings. It was noted that 18 responses had been received to a questionnaire issued to members, which represented a 56% rate of return.

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved and submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration.

71 UNAUTHORISED PARKING & OBSTRUCTION OF THE PAVEMENTS, THE USE OF, PROVISION & MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS/PAVEMENTS

The Chair of the Environment Panel, Councillor AJ Cooke, submitted a report outlining the work of the Environment Panel over the past few months in conducting a review of unauthorised parking etc. It was agreed that the report should be forwarded to the appropriate officers at Durham County Council, for consideration by the new unitary authority in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved and forwarded to the Executive Committee for consideration.

72 ANALYSIS OF CPA – 'THE SCALE OF THINGS' – PART 2 (Minute 62)

The Chair of the Committee submitted a report, pursuant to the above minute, updating members on progress made in collating evidence to address those areas of concern highlighted by the Audit Commission following the Council's CPA inspection in March 2008 and identifying those activities which would be forwarded, in some cases via Teesdale's County Councillors, to the new unitary authority for consideration. A schedule of partnerships was appended to the report and co-opted member David Kinch referred to this in making a presentation to the Committee detailing a wide range of organisations which received Council support in one form or another. Members referred in particular to grants which had been made to certain parish councils in respect of a contribution towards the costs of litter picking and queried whether the availability of such grants could have been more extensively publicised. It was suggested that this kind of service could be subject to a 'levelling' process following the establishment of the new unitary authority and so every parish would receive the same standard of service and/or grant.

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved and forwarded to the Executive Committee for consideration.

73 PROPOSAL FOR LIMITED FREE CAR PARKING

The Chair of the Services Panel, Councillor KP Ryman, submitted a report suggesting that consideration should be given to supporting a proposal for

limited free parking in the Council's car parks. It was noted that a neighbouring authority had already agreed to introduce a similar scheme, on the basis that it was not possible to implement the cut in VAT and reduce car park charges before 1 April 2009. The Interim Deputy Chief Executive indicated that it would be advisable to assess the financial implications of such a proposal prior to implementation.

RESOLVED:

That appropriate officers be requested to assess the implications of introducing periods of free parking in the Council's car parks with a view to submitting a report to the Executive Committee.

74 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report highlighting the work of the Committee during the current civic year. Details of completed and current reviews were appended to the report for information.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

75 PANEL CHAIRS' UPDATE

The Chair of the Finance Panel, Councillor Richard Bell, confirmed that the Panel had met on a number of occasions with relevant Council Officers to discuss progress made on matters relating to the Council's transfer of assets prior to the demise of Teesdale District Council and the Panel's ongoing value for money review of the Council's waste management service. It was anticipated that the panel would be in a position to submit a final report to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that minutes 69, 70 and 71 referred to reviews recently completed by the Services and Environment Panels.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm.