



PROSPEROUS AND ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday,
23 September 2008
10.00 a.m.

Council Chamber,
Council Offices
Spennymoor

AGENDA

and

REPORTS



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العربية (Arabic)

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.

বাংলা (Bengali)

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

(中文 (繁體字)) (Cantonese)

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

हिन्दी (Hindi)

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

polski (Polish)

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi)

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

Español (Spanish)

Póngase en contacto con nosotros si desea recibir información en otro idioma o formato.

اردو (Urdu)

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھیے۔

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To notify the Chairman of any items that appear later in the agenda in which you may have an interest.

3. MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2008.
(Pages 1 - 4)

**4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REVIEW: FUTURE RECYCLING
SERVICE OPTIONS - PROGRESS ON ACTION PLAN**

To consider the attached Action Plan detailing progress against
recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny on Review of Future
Recycling Services Options.
(Pages 5 - 10)

**5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW: THE COUNCIL'S CONTRIBUTION TO
REDUCING ECONOMIC INACTIVITY (INCREASING EMPLOYABILITY) -
PROGRESS UPDATE**

To consider the attached Action Plan detailing progress against
recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Review of The Council's
Contribution to Reducing Economic Inactivity (Increasing Employability)
(Pages 11 - 14)

6. BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE - PERFORMANCE UPDATE

To consider a report of Head of Planning Services. (Pages 15 - 18)

**7. THE PROVISION OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS -
PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

To consider a report of Head of Planning Services. (Pages 19 - 22)

8. WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the attached report of Chairman of the Committee. (Pages 23 - 26)

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

Members are respectfully requested to give the Chief Executive notice of items they would wish to raise under the heading not later than 12 noon on the day preceding the meeting, in order that consultation may take place with the Chairman who will determine whether the item will be accepted.

**B. Allen
Chief Executive**

Councillor G.C. Gray (Chairman)
Councillor B. Lamb (Vice Chairman)

Councillors Mrs. L. M.G. Cuthbertson, P. Gittins J.P., D.M. Hancock, Mrs. I. Hewitson, G.M.R. Howe, Mrs. S. J. Iveson, Mrs. E. Maddison, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, A. Smith and B. Stephens.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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

Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROSPEROUS AND ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Council Chamber,
Council Offices
Spennymoor

Tuesday,
8 July 2008

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor G.C. Gray (Chairman) and

Councillors Mrs. L. M.G. Cuthbertson, D.M. Hancock, Mrs. S. J. Iveson and B. Lamb

In Attendance: Councillors V. Chapman, B. Haigh, Mrs. S. Haigh, J.G. Huntington and T. Ward

Apologies: Councillors P. Gittins J.P., Mrs. I. Hewitson, G.M.R. Howe, Mrs. E. Maddison, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, A. Smith and B. Stephens

P&A.1/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

P&A.2/07 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th April, 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

P&A.3/07 PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT - QUARTER 4 2007/2008 (APRIL 2007 - END MARCH 2008)

Consideration was given to a report measuring performance against the Prosperous Borough and Attractive Borough elements of the Corporate Plan covering the period from 1st April, 2007 to 31st March, 2008 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The report provided data on 71 performance indicators of which 14 were key to the Council's aims and objectives.

Of the 28 Prosperous Borough indicators 9 had demonstrated improved performance against 2006/2007 actual outturn, 3 were performing at same level and 5 where performance had declined. 8 of the indicators had not achieved the target. In respect of the Attractive Borough Performance indicators, it was noted of the 43 indicators, 24 had demonstrated improved performance against 2006/7 actual outturn, 2 had performed at the same level and 13 had not performed at as high a level. 15 indicators had not met the target.

Specific reference was made to the following :-

BV082 Percentage of the Total Tonnage of Household Waste Arisings that have been Recycled and or composted

It was explained that the target for this indicator for 2007/8 was 26%. The performance was, however, 18.57%, mainly as a result of issues at the waste digester. Consequently none of the output from the waste

digester had been able to be included within the compost recycling outturn figure for the Council. The effect on the performance of the indicator had therefore been out of the Council's control.

BV199(a) Percentage of relevant land and highways that are assessed with having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level

It was explained that the target for 2007/2008 for this performance indicator was 8.5%. The actual outturn figure was 15%. It was believed that this figure was not an accurate reflection of the position due to issues with the final quarter inspection. Discussions were being held with DEFRA and the Audit Commission in respect of this indicator.

LPI01 – Number of Collections Missed per 100,000 Collections Household Waste

It was explained that the target for this indicator was 11 missed collections per 100,000. The actual outturn figure was 19 missed collections per 100,000. This figure had been influenced by operational issues.

BV106 - Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.

The Committee was informed that the Indicator was performing 14% under target. Housing completions in the Borough continued to be dominated by Greenfield development. However, the sites coming forward were within sustainable locations. It was noted that the credit crunch was likely to result in a shift in housing delivery whereby developers would focus on easier sites to deliver. This was likely to see the majority of completions being in Greenfield development.

BV109(a) – Percentage of Major Commercial and Industrial Applications decided within 13 weeks.

It was noted that the target for this indicator was 60% whereas the actual performance was 49.7%. The reason for the outturn figure was as a result of applications being referred to Government Office and delays in signing off Section 106 Agreements. Alternative approaches were being investigated through the County Council's workstream meetings.

BV109 (c) – Percentage of all other applications decided within 8 weeks.

The target for this indicator was 91%. The actual outturn figure was 89.5%. It was noted, however, that although the indicator was performing below target the outturn was still well above the national target of 80%. Additional reports would be produced to help monitor and identify applications which were about to expire.

BV200(b) – Has the Local Planning Authority met the milestones which the current local development scheme sets out?

The Committee was informed that Local Government Re-organisation had led to the partial suspension of core planning documents. Work would commence over the summer and the new authority's LDS which was to be submitted at the end of September.

BV204 – The percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse on planning applications.

Although this indicator was performing 3.6% under target as a result two out of seven appeals being upheld during the period, the number of appeals allowed was below the national average of 34%.

BV216 – Number of sites of potential concern within the local authority area with respect to land contamination.

It was explained that there had been no target set for the indicator as baseline was not considered to last. Initial prioritisation of Council owned sites had taken place. There were 50 sites still requiring further discussion to prioritise site investigation.

With regard to Prosperous Borough Performance Indicators the following comments were made:-

CPP03 – Percentage of rent reviews/lease renewals

The Committee was informed that the target for this indicator was 98% with actual performance at 96%. Of these all except three rent reviews had been completed before or on the due date.

CPP24 – Timely success rate of young people who have completed an apprenticeship programme with Sedgefield Borough Council.

This indicator was performing at 37.23% against a target of 50%. This was due mainly to the nature of the occupational area and the difficulty for employers to maintain a sufficient workload for apprentices to constantly gather evidence towards their respective NVQs.

BV076(c) – Number of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload.

The Committee was informed that the indicator was performing 6.91 investigations below target as a result of staffing issues and also the Government's intervention following the loss of their child benefit data.

BV078(a) – Speed of processing average time for all new claims

The target for this indicator was 18 days with actual outturn at 20.8 days. This was, however, still within the Government's top Grade 4.

BV078(b) – Speed of processing average time for a change

The Committee was informed that although this indicator was performing marginally below target this was a significant improvement on the 2006/7 performance.

CPP26 - Number of groups receiving financial assistance through Local Improvement Programme

The Committee was informed that the target had narrowly been missed by 2 projects. With the project deadline being 31st July, 2008 it was anticipated that there would be a increase in the number of projects and the target would be hit for the first quarter of 2008/9.

AGREED : That the report be accepted.

WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Committee's work programme (for copy see file of Minutes).

An update was given on the Committees two review groups: Attractive Borough Scrutiny Review Group and Prosperous Borough Scrutiny Review Group.

AGREED : That the Committee's work programme be approved.

PROGRESS REPORT ON:

CABINET RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN in relation to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECYCLING SERVICES REVIEW GROUP
REPORT OF THE REVIEW OF FUTURE RECYCLING SERVICE OPTIONS

Review Recommendations		Cabinet Response		Implementation for consideration by Management Team	
		Agreed?	Comments	Responsibility	Timescale
1.	The Groups preferred option for a co-mingled collection system be implemented in the long term, be noted.	Yes	<p>The Review Groups long-term preferred option for recycling services be noted. However in light of the Government's decision regarding Local Government Review it is considered that the long-term preferences for recycling services be addressed in the development of the Waste Management Strategy of the new Unitary Authority.</p> <p>Progress to Date: A working group of senior waste officers representing all of the Durham District/Borough Councils and the County Council are currently working on the development of the County Durham Waste Management Strategy.</p>	Director of Neighbourhood Services	On-going
2.	The Kerb-it Scheme to continue until 31 March 2008.	Yes	<p>Progress to date: The Kerb-it scheme continued in place until 31st March 2008 at which point the Contract came to an end.</p>	Streetscene Manager	Completed

Review Recommendations		Cabinet Response		Implementation for consideration by Management Team	
		Agreed?	Comments	Responsibility	Timescale
3.	Consideration be given for various options for the continuation of a kerbside collection service after 31 March 2008, including working in partnership with current partners of the existing kerb-it scheme.	Yes	<p>Progress to date: Agreement was reached between the four recipient Authorities of the 'Kerb-it' scheme to jointly procure a new kerbside recycling collection service.</p> <p>The new jointly procured kerbside collection service offered by Greencycle Plc commenced on the 1st April 2008. The new service provided enhanced opportunities for recycling including the collection of plastics, cardboard and tetrapack.</p> <p>Members were introduced to the new company (Greencycle Plc) and presented with an up-date on procedures for implementation of the new collection system at a Special Meeting of this Committee held on the 18th February 2008.</p>	<p>Technical Services Manager</p> <p>Streetscene Manager</p>	Completed
4.	The segregated collection of glass for recycling continues following the withdrawal of the Kerb-it Scheme in 2008	Yes	<p>Progress to Date: The segregated collection of glass is included in the new service proposals.</p>	Streetscene Manager	On-going

Review Recommendations		Cabinet Response	
		Agreed?	Comments
5.	Glass collection methods are continuously reviewed to allow full appraisal of collection, separation and disposal options available at that time	Yes	Progress to Date: <i>Ongoing</i>
6.	Sedgefield Borough Council's 29 bring sites be rationalised, with the retention of 6 dedicated sites at Newton Aycliffe (Tesco), Sedgefield (Library), Shildon (Co-op), Spennymoor (Asda), Tudhoe Civic Amenity Site and Aycliffe Civic Amenity site, and phasing out of the remaining 23 sites	Yes	Progress to Date: <i>All 23 of the identified redundant sites have been removed.</i>
7.	A separate, free collection service for televisions, monitors and white goods continues to be provided to all residents of the Borough	Yes	Progress to Date: <i>Service continuing</i>

Implementation for consideration by Management Team	
Responsibility	Timescale
Streetscene Manager	On-going
Streetscene Manager	Completed
Streetscene Manager	On-going

Review Recommendations		Cabinet Response		Implementation for consideration by Management Team	
		Agreed?	Comments	Responsibility	Timescale
8.	The free green waste collection service offered in a limited area of the Borough be withdrawn following the cessation of Waste Performance Grant funding in 2007/08	No	<p>Existing arrangements to be maintained in the short term subject to financial consideration when setting the 2008/09 Revenue budget.</p> <p>Progress to Date: <i>Funding provision for the continuation of the existing service until 31st March 2009 was secured. The service is still operating in the original pilot scheme area servicing some 3000 properties.</i></p>	<p>Technical Services Mgr</p> <p>Streetscene Manager</p>	Completed
9.	The provision of a discretionary chargeable green waste collection service, offered throughout Sedgfield Borough, is explored for introduction post-April 2008	No	<p>As a consequence of Local Government Review it is considered that this recommendation should not be progressed. Long term arrangements for the collection of 'green waste', considering the financial; operational and sustainability impacts of the various options available, will need to be addressed in the Waste Management Strategy of the new Unitary Authority.</p> <p>Current Position: <i>Extension of 'green waste' collection services across the whole of the County are currently being considered within the development of the Waste Management Strategy of the new Unitary Authority.</i></p>	<p>Technical Services Mgr</p> <p>Streetscene Manager</p>	On-going

Review Recommendations		Cabinet Response		Implementation for consideration by Management Team	
		Agreed?	Comments	Responsibility	Timescale
10.	A comprehensive education and awareness-raising campaign be promoted to support recycling arrangements.	Yes	<i>Progress to Date:</i> <i>Ongoing</i>	Technical Services Manager	On-going

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP REPORT – REDUCING ECONOMIC INACTIVITY (INCREASING EMPLOYABILITY) REVIEW

Progress Report.

Cabinet Response		Progress
Review Recommendations	Agreed? Comments	Comments
1. Cabinet recognises that the official unemployment rate does not give a true picture of the economic conditions of the Borough.	<u>Yes</u> Cabinet recognises that there are significant numbers of residents in the Borough that suffer economic disadvantage and that the economic conditions in the Borough are far more complex than the headline unemployment figures would suggest. Despite the low official unemployment rate Economic development remains a priority for the Council and its partners as reflected in the Community Strategy and corporate Plan.	Completed. The Council now uses a range of information to determine the true rate of unemployment in its strategic planning and priority setting. This includes the Job Seekers Allowance, the Labour Force Survey, Incapacity Benefit and numbers of people which are economically inactive.
2. Sedgefield Borough Council's Economic Development Service focuses on supporting entrepreneurship and access to employment in disadvantaged communities.	<u>Yes</u> The Cabinet is aware of the changing economic conditions within the Borough and notes the upturn in the market for land and premises and the improving employment rate in the Borough. However Cabinet is concerned that many in our disadvantaged communities are being excluded from the labour market, having a detrimental effect on the productivity of the borough. Economic policy will focus on improving access to employment, training and entrepreneurship in disadvantaged communities as well as more traditional	Completed The economic development service is refocused to provide more support to enterprise in disadvantaged communities. Two officers have agreed new job descriptions to that effect.

		aspects of economic development. This will be reflected in the Corporate Plan and monitored through the Prosperous SWG.	
3. The Borough Council cease grants of up to £10,000 for companies and refocus on smaller grants for individuals starting businesses.	<u>Yes</u>	In line with Policy set out above, the Cabinet agrees that there is little additional in giving out such grants as the market has improved and other agencies such as ONE now fulfil this service. Council resource will be redirected into supporting individuals seeking to start in business with continuing effort on aftercare and support. Cabinet has agreed a new grant programme of small grants to individuals in anticipation of this recommendation.	Completed. The Council now offers small grants as a flexible fund to those starting in business. This supplements the grants available through the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative.
4. Systems need to be in place to link training services to information on company expansions and relocations.	<u>Yes</u>	The Cabinet agrees that information brought into the Council via planning applications, enquires to Economic Development and employer forums needs to be used systematically to ensure residents can be trained to take up new opportunities. Officers will be instructed to examine how internal communications can be improved.	Completed Economic development officers attend the one stop meetings with the Council's planning officers to gain an insight into those developments that may be coming on stream in the future. This information is shared with the Training services manager through the Divisional Management Team of Strategy and Regeneration.
5. The Government is lobbied to provide further funds, for paid to local authorities, for neighbourhood-focused regeneration activity.	<u>Yes</u>	The Cabinet is awaiting the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review currently being carried out in Government.	Completed NRF has been replaced with Working Neighbourhoods Fund. The WNF allocation for Sedgefield is double the previous NRF allocation.
6. The Council actively engages in the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative programme as integral to	<u>Yes</u>	The Council is actively involved in the LEGI programme at an officer level, with mainstream resources diverted to support the programme. Cabinet notes that there is	Completed. The enterprise coaches funded through the LEGI fund are integrated into the economic development service. Two

its economic development function.		less scope for political involvement in the programme and will be recommending that officers examine this gap.	officers have agreed new job descriptions to accommodate this shift.
7. The value of the Local Strategic Partnership is recognised in tackling such a multi-faceted problem as employability.	<u>Yes</u>	<p>The Cabinet notes that as the democratically elected body for Sedgefield Borough the Council leads the development of the Community Strategy. This plan is currently being refreshed however Cabinet fully supports Employability as one of the key strategic objectives for partnership working through the LSP. Cabinet will also lobby to ensure that Employability is incorporated within the Local Area Agreement.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The leader of the Council now chairs the Local Strategic Partnership Board.</p>
8. The important role of the voluntary and community sector in delivering services locally is recognised.	<u>Yes</u>	<p>The Voluntary and Community Sector are better placed than the Council in reaching many residents with employability issues. The Council is working with CAVOS to explore how the Community and Voluntary sector can be commissioned to carry out work in this area.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>LEGI funded Coaches are located in VCS premises throughout the Borough promoting self employment and social enterprise developments..</p> <p>VCS organisations provide much of the Information advice and guidance element of the Worklessness commission as well as some health conditions programmes.</p>

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Item 6

REPORT TO PROSPEROUS & ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23RD SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE PERFORMANCE

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on the 29th January 2008, the Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report that provided information on the performance levels in relation to the following indicators:-

LPI 32 Percentage of applicants considering the Building Control Service very good or better, and

LPI 34 Percentage of building control plans approved/responded to within three weeks.

The purpose of that report was to provide an explanation of the current performance levels, on which Members had expressed concern, and to identify actions to improve performance of these indicators.

Members will recall that the new Building Control Manager had recently been appointed and that he was crucially aware of the difficulties facing the service in terms of the competitive environment in which the service has to function, and staff recruitment and retention problems, but was eager to provide a new impetus to service delivery. He had at that stage already demonstrated a willingness to introduce different methods of working with a renewed emphasis on performance management.

At that meeting it was agreed that a short follow up report would be produced in the autumn to monitor progress as a result of the actions introduced to improve performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee acknowledge the improvements made in respect of LPI 32 and 34 (now CPA04 and CPA05) during the period from the 1st January 2008 to the 30th June 2008.

PROGRESS TO DATE

The percentage of applicants considering the Building Control Service very good or better for the period 1st January 2008 to the 30th June 2008 was 93% consistently above the 89% target set for this period, buoyed up by a 100% same day inspection service as a result of the raised awareness of staff to this significant statistic.

The percentage of building control plans approved/responded to within three weeks for the period 1st January 2008 to 31st March 2008 was 87% (target 89%). This rose to 96% (target 89%) for the period 1st April 2008 to the 30th June 2008.

These figures demonstrate the step change in performance which it is hoped demonstrates the Building Control Team's commitment to continually improving the service and as a consequence allay any fears that the Members may have had about a decline in performance.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Human Resources

The improvements to the Building Control Service outlined in this report can be met from existing staff resources.

Financial Resources

The improvements to the Building Control Service outlined in this report can be met from the existing budget.

Sustainability

One of the original motivations for producing a Masterplan for the three priority neighbourhoods was to ensure that they could be seen as sustainable communities in their own right.

Consultation

The members of staff in the Building Control Team are aware of the current performance issues.

Links to Corporate Ambitions/Values

Corporate Ambition: A Healthy Borough.

Community Outcome: Safeguarding Public Health

Planning and Technical Services Key Action: To provide an efficient and effective Building Control Service.

Risk Management

None required.

Health and Safety

No additional implications have been identified.

Equality and Diversity

No additional implications have been identified.

Legal and Constitutional

No additional implications have been identified.

LIST OF APPENDICES

No appendices

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Item 7

REPORT TO PROSPEROUS & ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23RD SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO THE PRODUCTION OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on the 29th January 2008, the Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report that provided information on the performance levels in relation to the following indicator:-

BV 219 (b) Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up to date character appraisal.

The purpose of that report was to provide an explanation of the current performance levels, on which Members had expressed concern, and to identify actions to try to improve the situation.

Members will recall the report explained why conservation area appraisals and management plans were required and the progress that had been achieved to date. The report further explained the main reasons for the delay in preparing conservation area appraisals such as:-

- As a result of best practice guidance issued by English Heritage on how to prepare appraisals, the draft appraisals prepared by the Forward Planning Team four years ago had to be substantially revised to make them, amongst other things, more user friendly;
- The work on conservation area appraisals, being a specialist area of work, fall primarily upon the Design, Conservation, Tree Management and Landscape Team Manager to oversee;
- A great deal of time had been spent at the beginning of the last financial year to prepare the Grant Application and Delivery Plan for the Cornforth Conservation Area;
- Similarly, the Team Manager had been overseeing works in the Bishop Middleham Conservation Area and project managing works in the grounds of St Edmund's Church, a Grade 1 Listed Building, at the heart of the Sedgefield Conservation Area;
- The Team Manager had also had to oversee works allocated in the Capital Programme and the Spennymoor Town Centre shop front improvement grant scheme; and
- Another substantial piece of work that had to be done at short notice was the preparation of the Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Development Brief which is now being converted into a Supplementary

Planning Document by the Forward Planning Team in close consultation with the Team Manager.

At that meeting it was agreed that a short follow up report would be produced in the autumn to monitor progress as a result of the actions introduced to improve delivery of the conservation area appraisals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee accept the explanations provided in the report to justify current performance levels and the actions proposed to improve performance in respect of BV 219 (b) (now XBV 219 (b)).

SITUATION TO DATE

It is clear that the Team is less likely to be subjected to changing priorities and workloads to the detriment of preparing conservation area appraisals. The earlier report advocated that the Team Manager produces a Conservation Area Appraisal Action Plan setting out realistic timescales for their production and that the Action Plan is given priority status in the Team's Work Plan for 2008/9. That Action Plan is appended to this report for the Member's information.

Regrettably, the target for 2008/9 of 19.9% has not yet been achieved; the performance level remaining at 6.60%. Although the first quarter percentage has not changed from the previous quarter, satisfactory progress is being made on two additional conservation areas, Shildon and Bishop Middleham. It should be noted, however, that English Heritage has requested a review of the existing appraisal for the Cornforth Conservation Area which was the first to have had an appraisal but was carried out over five years ago. English Heritage has also insisted that Cornforth requires a Conservation Management Plan. Both these exercises are currently underway and are expected to be completed fully in the new calendar year. Clearly, this additional work has taken priority over the other two appraisals as the Council is contractually bound with English Heritage due to the aforementioned Grant Scheme currently underway in the Cornforth Conservation Area.

It is also relevant to report that the potential developers for the Windlestone Hall site have now submitted a substantial document, a draft Conservation Plan, which needs to be thoroughly examined by the Team Leader in close consultation with other officers in Planning and Technical Services.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Human Resources

The improvements to the Building Control Service outlined in this report can be met from existing staff resources.

Financial Resources

The improvements to the Building Control Service outlined in this report can be met from the existing budget.

Sustainability

One of the original motivations for producing a Masterplan for the three priority neighbourhoods was to ensure that they could be seen as sustainable communities in their own right.

Consultation

The members of staff in the Building Control Team are aware of the current performance issues.

Links to Corporate Ambitions/Values

Corporate Ambition: A Healthy Borough.

Community Outcome: Safeguarding Public Health

Planning and Technical Services Key Action: To provide an efficient and effective Building Control Service.

Risk Management

None required.

Health and Safety

No additional implications have been identified.

Equality and Diversity

No additional implications have been identified.

Legal and Constitutional

No additional implications have been identified.

LIST OF APPENDICES

No appendices

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Item 8

PROSPEROUS AND ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 SEPTEMBER 2008

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

This report sets out the Committee's current Work Programme for consideration and review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee's Work Programme be reviewed.

DETAIL

1. In accordance with Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8 of the Council's Constitution, Overview & Scrutiny Committees are responsible for setting their own work programme.
2. Each Overview & Scrutiny Committee should agree a realistic, achievable and considered work programme on the understanding that, from time to time, more urgent or immediate issues may require scrutiny. Issues may, for example, be raised by Cabinet reports, Members' constituency business or be referred to Scrutiny by Cabinet in advance of a Cabinet decision.
3. The current Work Programme for this Committee is appended to the report which details:-
 - Scrutiny Reviews currently being undertaken.
 - Scrutiny review topics held in reserve for future investigation.
 - A schedule of items to be considered by the Committee for the period to 31st March 2009.
4. **Scrutiny Review**
The Committee should aim to undertake a small number of high quality reviews that will make a real difference to the work of the Authority, rather than high numbers of reviews on more minor issues. Overview & Scrutiny Committees should normally aim to undertake two reviews concurrently. Any additional review topics that have been agreed by Members will be placed on a reserve list and as one review is completed the Committee will decide on which review should be undertaken next.

A workshop was held for Overview & Scrutiny Members on 20th February 2008 to discuss the role of the Committees within the period leading to the establishment of a new Unitary Council in April 2009. One element of the workshop was to consider a number of options for undertaking scrutiny reviews

within this period. Members supported undertaking a State of the Borough Review, which would look at achievements within each of the Council's ambitions. The Review would provide a benchmark for future assessment, highlight areas for improvement and make recommendations to the new council where appropriate.

It was proposed that Overview & Scrutiny Committees establish Review Groups to examine each of the Council's ambitions as follows:-

Committee	Review Groups
Healthy Borough with Strong Communities O&S Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthy Borough Review Group• Strong Communities Review Group
Prosperous and Attractive Borough O&S Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prosperous Borough Review Group• Attractive Borough Review Group

The final reports from each of these reviews would be combined to form a single State of the Borough report.

5. Business for Future Meetings

The Committees Work Programme for the period leading to the establishment of a new Unitary Council in April 2009 is attached for consideration.

Members are requested to review the Committee's Work Programme and identify, where necessary, issues that they feel should be investigated by the Committee. The Work Programme will need to be carefully managed to ensure that the most important issues are considered in the limited time available.

It will not always be possible to anticipate all reports which will need to be considered by an Overview & Scrutiny Committee and therefore a flexible approach will need to be taken to work programming.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this report.

7 CONSULTATION

Contact Officers: Jonathan Slee
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Ward(s): Not ward specific
Background Papers None

**PROSPEROUS & ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

WORK PROGRAMME

Ongoing Reviews

State of the Borough Review

Future Reviews

There are currently no review topics identified by the Committee for future review. As one review is completed Members will decide which review should be undertaken next.

ANTICIPATED ITEMS

2008/09 Municipal Year

4 November 2008

- *Half Yearly Performance Report*

9 December 2008

- *Sedgefield Borough Council's Climate Change Strategy – Progress Update*
- *Prosperous Borough Overview & Scrutiny Review Group Report*
- *Attractive Borough Overview & Scrutiny Review Group Report*

27 January 2009

- *No items identified*

10 March 2009

- *No items identified*

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