

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 an 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.

P&A.4/07 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.