

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
REGENERATION SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD ON MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2008

Present: Councillor D. Raine (Chair)
Councillors Mrs. E.M. Connor, Mrs.
S. Forster, H. High, A.J. Holmes,
M. Routledge, Mrs. B.A. Sloan, D.J.
Taylor-Gooby and C. Walker.

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 28 January 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 5 February 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

RESOLVED that the information contained within the Minutes, be noted.

3. **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

4. **FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

At the last meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 11 February 2008, the following issue was discussed:-

Transitional Plan for Local Government Review - Impact on 2008/9 Work Programme

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

5. **SERVICE UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORTING - ASSET AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Asset and Property Management which provided Members with performance information in relation to the Asset and Property Management Unit, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Head of Asset and Property Management explained that the Council's property portfolio comprised 339 property assets and was managed in an operational estate and a non-operational estate. There were currently 10 staff employed within the Section including the Head of Service, two valuation staff, one Facilities Manager, an Electrical Engineer, two Administrators, two Car Park Security Officers and one Caretaker. Recruitment had proved difficult for the additional four new posts which had been agreed in September 2007. The lack of professional staff was having a significant impact in achieving the full aspirations of the current Service Plan and as such, work was being prioritised.

The Unit was divided into specialist work areas:-

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- * Valuation Services
- * Acquisitions and Disposals
- * Property Management
- * Facilities Management

Performance indicators had been developed and included in Appendix 1 which formed part of the Unit Service Plan for 2007/8. These were a new suite of indicators that reflected the priorities and objectives of the newly restructured Unit.

A Member queried if the investment in the two Leisure Centres was sustainable when they were transferred to the new unitary authority. The Asset and Property Manager explained that the Leisure Centres were managed by an Officer in another section. In Seaham, the Building Schools for Future Programme could possibly provide leisure facilities within a newly built school.

A Member referred to the Peterlee Master Plan and queried how far progress had been made on the North Blunts site. He was also concerned that there would not be enough land for the proposals. The Asset and Property Manager explained that with regard to the North Blunts site, final negotiations were being made with Morrisons. With regard to the availability of land in Peterlee, a number of sites had been highlighted, some in the control of the District Council and some in the control of Durham County Council. Durham County Council had allocated their sites for the Building Schools for Future Programme. The figures were slightly less than anticipated but Officers were looking at this closely.

The Chair referred to the number of allotments and queried what would happen when the new unitary authority was established and if they would be handed over the Parish Councils. The Asset and Property Manager explained that Durham County Council also managed a number of allotments and they allotments would be placed where it was best to deliver the right level of service. This would need discussing as part of the transition to the unitary authority.

The Chair thanked the Asset and Property Manager for his report.

RESOLVED the information given, be noted.

JC/CB/RSSC/080201
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