

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
REGENERATION SERVICE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 31 MARCH 2008**

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

Also present: Councillor Mrs. E. Huntington - Executive Member for Health
Councillor B. Quinn
Mrs. M. Taylor-Gooby

Apologies: Councillor C. Walker

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 10 March 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were agreed.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

**Old Co-op Building, Vane Terrace
(Minute No. 7 refers)**

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that works to the frontage had been completed. The scaffolding had been taken down and the obstruction to the pavement removed. There were still some outstanding issues to the rear of the property and Officers were determining whether this constituted an enforcement action or a planning decision. The owners intended to renovate the rear of the property.

The previous week, an Officer from the Engineers Section had spoken to the owner of the adjacent building and he was to arrange fencing off of the area to the rear yard. Discussions were still on-going regarding the loose slate tiles and debris.

With regard to the Pest Control, the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager was in the process of gathering evidence.

A Member explained that she had spoken to the man in charge of the renovations and the rear had been left because it was too expensive. In high winds the tarpaulin was flapping and making a terrible noise.

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that he would refer Members' concerns back to Officers.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

3. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 18th March, 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

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

4. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

The Chair welcomed Mrs. Taylor-Gooby to the meeting.

5. FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT

At the last meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 26th March, 2008, the following issue was discussed:-

LSP Performance Reporting - Light Touch Inspection.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6. FUTURE OF PETERLEE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

The Chair welcomed Debbie Edwards, Head of Strategic Projects, who was in attendance to discuss the future of Peterlee Community Hospital.

Mrs. Edwards explained that she was Head of Strategic Projects at County Durham Primary Care Trust. The main part of her role was around the work the PCT were involved in purchasing Shotley Bridge Hospital. She explained that Community Hospitals had had a rocky ride in the NHS and her previous role was managing a community hospital on Teesside and they were very much at the hub of their communities.

At one point they had seen community hospitals closing and reproviding services but they were now seen as necessary. Lord Darzi was very much pushing forward the regeneration of community hospitals.

Easington PCT had undertaken a study of the Community Hospital in Peterlee and had deemed that it was not fit for purpose. The PCT were looking at the possibility of the acquisition of the Community Hospital but this was not a certainty as it was in early discussions. The PCT wanted to know what services were required and wanted by the people of Peterlee. They needed to fit in with the development of Primary Care Services in Local Health Centres and GP Practices.

The Chair commented that people in the area were worried that they were going to lose their access to hospital services if the University Hospital of Hartlepool closed.

A Member referred to the Easington PCT and explained that they had looked at sites to build a purpose built centre. He queried if the current Community Hospital would be sufficient to provide that range of services. Mrs. Edwards explained that it was her understanding that Peterlee Community Hospital was not fit for purpose. Some areas in the hospital were not being utilised and the PCT wanted to build on what was good and enhance the services. From the PCT's point of view, they needed to make sure the correct services were provided. All the previous files needed to be taken into consideration to ascertain why it had not been fit for purpose.

Mrs. Taylor-Gooby explained that she had been on the board of the Easington PCT and explained that they had developed a floor plan and came to the conclusion that the building was not fit for purpose. The Urgent Care Centre was having problems because of its size. Lord Darzi's report had been

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published and he was now looking at poly-clinics. The hospital did not have the facilities to carry out operations.

Mrs. Edwards explained that the PCT was committed to developing the right services. Peterlee Community Hospital had theatres that had never been utilised. The Urgent Care Centre was heavily used, it was a good facility and they were currently doing some adaptations to expand it.

A Member queried if there was capacity on the Peterlee Community Hospital site. There was no car parking and it was often chaos and there was very little room to expand. He queried if she saw the building being retained in its current location or a purpose built facility.

Mrs. Edwards explained that it was her opinion that there was a future for Peterlee Community Hospital but it would be different to what it was at present. There would also be an impact of the new build at North Tees and Hartlepool.

A Member referred to the Health Centre in St. John's Square at Seaham and queried if it would make a difference. Mrs. Edwards explained that the Seaham facility would be bringing services closer to people's homes. There needed to be statistics gathered from a number of departments to know where the patients were coming from.

The Executive Member for Health explained that the services in the community needed enhancing. There needed to be integration tailored to meet individual needs.

Mrs Edwards explained that there were key staff in community hospitals and a new hospital would need flexibility of space.

A Member referred to access to the new facility, the use of public transport and managing the transition. He was aware that people were having to travel from Stanley and Consett to the University Hospital of Durham as the services provided at Shotley Bridge had been reduced.

Mrs. Edwards explained that work would commence on the Stanley Health Centre on 4th April. The PCT was committed to primary care facilities.

Mrs. Taylor-Gooby queried if there was a timescale on the Peterlee Community Hospital. Mrs. Edwards explained that there was no official timescale but she felt that something would happen very quickly and she could attend a future meeting to provide further information.

The Chair explained that when the hospital was built, a delegation from the Council visited the community hospital. There were operating theatres in the hospital and he felt that there could be rooms which could be utilised to provide more services in the community.

The Chair thanked Mrs. Edwards for her attendance.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7. SERVICE UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORTING

(i) East Durham Business Service Performance Report

Consideration was given to the report of the Manager of East Durham Business Service which provided information on the performance of East Durham Business Service, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Appendix 1 to the report listed the key priorities and activities that EDBS was undertaking during 2007/2008 towards each of its six aims. Appendix 2 detailed the progress that had been made against the performance targets in the EDBS Service Plan for 2007/2008.

In addition to the targets listed in Appendix 2, major areas of work for Economic Development Team during the financial year had been in relation to Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) Programme and the Deprived Areas Fund.

The Head of Regeneration and Partnerships provided an update on the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative Programme (LEGI) and the Deprived Areas Fund.

The Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator had been active in support and development of lifelong learning, training and education initiatives within the District. The World of Work project with Fusion enabled twenty 14 year old pupils from each of the District's six comprehensive schools plus Glendene School and Community Arts College to use cameras donated by Fusion to capture images of their work placements. The co-ordinator had also facilitated the establishment of an East Durham Engineering Forum established to help the sector locally to identify and address common problems.

The Tourism Officer had continued to promote the range of grants designed to assist local accommodation providers improve their premises. Out of the fifteen premises in the District, ten had been given a grading.

In terms of business growth, the Business Service had advised 110 business to date and 28 companies expanding or relocating within the District. Work was also being undertaken to assist companies who may have to relocate from the North East Industrial Estate to identify suitable alternative premises within the District.

Details of the tenants currently within the NOVUS Business Centre were outlined in the report.

The Chair thanked the Head of Regeneration and Partnerships for his report.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

(ii) Regeneration and Partnerships Unit Performance Report

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Regeneration and Partnerships which provided information on the performance of the

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Regeneration and Partnerships Unit, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Details of the initial performance from 1st November, 2007 to 1st April, 2008 was outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, progress, achievements and non-achievements were also fully detailed.

Members were advised that the service continued to manage and facilitate large infrastructure investment and development projects.

- East Durham Link Road
- Hawthorn Business Park
- Seaham St. Johns Square
- Seaham/Murton Colliery Sites
- The Great Initiative and North Dock Feasibility Studies
- Peterlee Master Plan

The Head of Regeneration and Partnerships explained that Easington Colliery and Dawdon had been identified as early priorities for the first three years of the Durham Coalfield Housing Initiative and draft funding programmes had been completed for the consideration of funding partners in the coming months.

Feasibility work relating to Peterlee and Coalfield Housing that had been undertaken to date had been used as a basis of an expression of interest for a Housing 'Growth Point' bid to Government to cover the sub-region. This initiative would attract resources and greater flexibility in relation to housing numbers.

The road required for servicing of the Hawthorn Business Park would soon commence and was scheduled for completion by December 2009.

With regard to Seaham North Dock, there were problems with the dredging. The application for dredging had been refused because contaminants had been found. It was hoped that these issues could be overcome but construction works would now be delayed.

The Compulsory Purchase Order and the Stopping Up Order had commenced on St. John's Square. The bus station was currently being demolished and Durham County Council would commence their build in November 2008. The remainder of the building construction would be approximately 12 months after that date. The Pop-in Centre had also closed that day.

The Unit had led on the enquiry to establish a Media Village on the strategic reserve site south of Seaham. The planning permission had been submitted and it was hoped that a decision would be made in the next two to three weeks.

The NRF allocation made to the District had been successfully allocated for the 2006/2008 period and monitoring of progress was under way. NRF expenditure was balanced within 0.5% of the budget for the financial year 2006/2007. The annual allocation for the 2007/2008 period was £6,067,583. At the end of quarter 3,

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expenditure had slipped by 8% against profile but was expected to be within the 5% tolerance limit by the end of the financial year.

Work on developing and monitoring European programmes was now all undertaken by Government Office however support for local projects was still offered throughout the team.

A Member referred to the Durham Coalfield Housing Initiative and queried why Horden had not been identified as an early priority. The Head of Regeneration and Partnerships explained that Horden was not as prepared as other villages in terms of previous regeneration work. He would like to see Horden come forward in future years.

A Member referred to the Peterlee Master Plan and explained that he was concerned about Local Government Review and if the plans for the town centre would continue. The Head of Regeneration and Partnerships explained that he could not give any definite assurances but the Council was working with English Partnerships. Public funds would be required for the redevelopment of Peterlee and the only way to do this was through land values. The Chief Executive was Chair of the LGR "place shaping" workstream and the Leader was one of the elected Members. Both were fully aware of the situation.

A Member referred to the Safer Stronger Communities Fund and queried if this would be retained under Local Government Review. The Head of Regeneration and Development explained that the programme should go ahead as normal although at the moment there was a lot of bureaucracy.

The Chair thanked the Head of Regeneration and Partnerships for his report.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

JC/CB com/regen/080303
1st April, 2008