



**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

Tuesday,  
12 June 2007  
10.00 a.m.

Council Chamber,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

**AGENDA**  
and  
**REPORTS**



**This document is also available in other languages,  
large print and audio format upon request**

**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 پوچھئے۔

**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 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007. (Pages 1 - 4)
- 4. ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY CORPORATE COMPLAINTS STAFF**  
Report of Chief Executive. (Pages 5 - 10)
- 5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP REPORT: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION - ACTION PLAN UPDATE**  
Report of Chairman of the Committee. (Pages 11 - 14)
- 6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL: RECRUITMENT OF TWO SENIOR OFFICERS**  
Report of Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 15 - 16)
- 7. WORK PROGRAMME**  
Report of Chairman of the Committee. (Pages 17 - 20)
- 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**B. Allen  
Chief Executive**

**Council Offices  
SPENNYMOOR  
4<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

Councillor A. Gray (Chairman)

Councillors B.F. Avery J.P, D.R. Brown, V. Chapman, D. Farry, T.F. Forrest, Mrs. J. Gray, B. Haigh, T. Hogan, Mrs. I. Jackson and B.M. Ord.

---

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection etc. in relation to this agenda and associated papers should contact Mrs. L. Walker Tel 01388 816166 ext 4237 email [lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

# Item 3

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

Council Chamber,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Tuesday,  
27 March 2007

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor A. Gray (Chairman) and

Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy, J.G. Huntington, J.M. Khan, B. Meek,  
G. Morgan, Mrs. E.M. Paylor and Mrs. I. Jackson Smith

**In**

**Attendance:** Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, V. Crosby, D.M. Hancock, J.E. Higgin,  
J.P. Moran, A. Smith, T. Ward and J. Wayman J.P

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs. J. Croft, B. Hall, J.K. Piggott and G.W. Scott

### **OSC(1).42/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members had no declarations of interest to submit.

### **OSC(1).43/06 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> February 2007 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes).

### **OSC(1).44/06 HUMAN RESOURCES BEST VALUE REVIEW SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Organisational Development providing an annual update on progress on the implementation of the Human Resources Service Improvement Plan (SIP). (For copy see file of Minutes).

The report set out progress to date on the following key aims: -

- The development, implementation and review of a corporate Human Resources Strategy
- Implement Single Status across the Council.
- Flexible working arrangements
- Streamline information systems and procedures and improve management information
- Electronic service delivery options for HR/Payroll/Creditors
- Organisational development
- BV11a Percentage of top 5% earners who are women

It was reported that 12 of the 14 actions in the Service Improvement Plan were complete and the remaining 2 were under development.

As only two ongoing actions (covered by the Sickness Absence SIP) remained incomplete it was proposed that no further updates be provided.

Members questioned whether the electronic service delivery options for HR/Payroll/Creditors would assist in the management of sickness absence. It was explained that the 'Resourcelink' system enabled Managers to receive sickness absence reports on a monthly basis.

The Self Service module of the 'Resourcelink' system allowed employees to receive electronic payslips and access and amend their personal details online. This was being piloted in the Resources Department before being rolled out to other departments during May – September 2007.

In response to a Members question it was explained that although the Self Service module of the system would initially be made available to employees there was a facility to roll out the service to Councillors.

*RECOMMENDED:*

- 1. That progress made to date against the Service Improvement Plan be noted.*
- 2. That no further updates on the Human Resources Service Improvement Plan be provided.*

#### **OSC(1).45/06 PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF BVPI 11(a)**

It was explained that the Equality and Diversity Officer was present at the meeting to give a presentation in relation to the development of women within Sedgefield Borough – BVPI 11 (a).

The presentation covered the following: -

- Performance Indicator (PI) Definition
- Current Position
- Recruitment
- Leavers
- Consultancy Project
- Current Practices
- Future Developments

(For copy see file of Minutes).

It was brought to Members attention that performance at Sedgefield Borough Council compared favourably with other District Councils in the area. However performance at Unitary and County Councils was higher as they had a higher percentage of traditionally female dominated sectors such as Social Work and Education.

Concern was expressed in relation to employees gaining qualifications at Sedgefield Borough Council's expense and then leaving the authority. It was explained that staff from Sedgefield Borough Council had transferred to other Councils after gaining qualifications funded by the Borough Council. It was however pointed out that Sedgefield Borough Council had also employed staff that had gained their qualifications at other local

Councils. An employee would however be required to repay training costs if they left local authority employment within two years of gaining a qualification.

Members queried whether there were procedures in place to enable employees to raise concerns regarding their employment. It was pointed out that employees could raise concerns through the following:-

- Employee Development Programme
- Grievance Procedure
- Confidential Reporting Policy
- Dignity at Work Policies

Specific reference was made to job evaluation. It was pointed out that an impact needs assessment had been carried out to ensure that job evaluation had been fairly applied throughout the Council.

Members pointed out that there had been a perception that high numbers of staff had left the authority whilst at the same time difficulties had been experienced in recruiting staff, especially to specialist posts. It was explained that turnover of staff had been considered as part of the Review of Recruitment and Retention. Turnover was also monitored as a Local Performance Indicator.

With regard to part time working it was noted that flexible working and job share was available for all posts within the Council including senior management positions.

It was requested that the Committee receive an update on the progress towards BVPI 11 (a) – Percentage of top-paid 5% of local authority staff who are women – in 12 months.

- AGREED:**
1. *That the information be noted.*
  2. *That a progress report on achievement of BVPI 11(a) – Percentage of top-paid 5% of local authority staff who are women - be included on the Committees work programme for 12 months.*

#### **OSC(1).46/06 WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the Chairman of the Committee setting out the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and review. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members reviewed the current work programme.

It was reported that both the review of Sickness Management and Inform had been completed.

The Committee agreed that a progress report on the achievement of BVPI 11(a) - Percentage of top-paid 5% of local authority staff who are women) - be included on the work programme for 12 months.

**AGREED:**

1. *That a progress report on achievement of BVPI 11 (a) – Percentage of top-paid 5% of local authority staff who are women - be included on the Committees work programme for 12 months.*
2. *That the Committee's work programme as outlined in the report be agreed.*

---

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Mrs. L. Walker Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4237 email [lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk)



# Item 4

## REPORT TO STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12<sup>th</sup> June 2007

## REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### Strategic Leadership

### ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY CORPORATE COMPLAINTS STAFF

#### 1. SUMMARY

1.1 This Report outlines the complaints/issues received by the Corporate Customer Relations Staff in the Chief Executive's Department in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006-31<sup>st</sup> March 2007. Figures are also given for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005-31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 to enable comparisons to be made (Appendix 1).

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Annual Report be received and published on the Borough's Website.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Borough adopted a revised Complaints Policy in December 2004, which allows residents and other users of Borough Services the opportunity to comment on/criticise Borough Services or service delivery.

3.2 The Policy provides for the publication of a half yearly and an Annual Report on complaints handling. The half yearly report was considered at the meeting of this Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006.

#### 4. DETAIL

4.1 It is pleasing to note that the number of complaints/issues received by Corporate Complaints Staff has decreased from 1053 in 2005/2006 to 679 in 2006/2007, a decrease of 374 (35%). Departments have been encouraged to resolve issues at the first point of contact and this is reflected by the reducing number of complaints reaching Corporate Complaints.

4.2 The main area of complaint (40% of the total) relates to Housing Maintenance, Management and Capital Improvements. However the total number of complaints about these services has fallen from 545 to 269 (50%) with justified complaints falling from 150 to 34 (77%).

4.3 There has been a marked decrease in the overall number of complaints about the Maintenance Service from 384 to 147. Similarly the number of justified

complaints has decreased from 132 to 31. 48,000 repairs were carried out in 2006/07 and justified complaints represents 0.06% of that total.

- 4.4 The main reason for complaints on maintenance relate to repairs not being carried out within timescale. It has to be accepted that, on occasions, resources are simply not available to complete every job within timescale e.g. following high winds.
- 4.5 The need to effectively manage the repairs service within budget resulted in 2,250 low priority jobs reported between June 2005 and March 2006 not being attended to in that financial year which led to a substantial number of complaints being made. This issue was addressed in the Budget for 2006/2007 with £240,000 additional revenue funding being allocated which has cleared the backlog and, generally, has enabled new jobs to be completed within target.
- 4.6 The Borough provides a comprehensive housing management service to 8,650 properties. 104 complaints (39 from one tenant – none justified) were made about the service with only three being found to be justified.
- 4.7 The first related to recharging a former tenant for clearing out a garage without informing him that a charge would be levied for removing items which had been left and, therefore, not giving him the opportunity of doing it himself. The redesign of garage termination forms will address this when the rechargeable items policy has been fully reviewed. The second involved a breakdown in communications on the same complaint which led to further recovery action being instigated. This was simply human error and staff have been reminded of the need to follow the correct procedure. The third related to documents being lost and controls have been introduced to track documents between offices.
- 4.8 None of the 18 complaints made about Capital Improvements were found to be justified.
- 4.9 No complaints have been made about adaptations for the benefit of people with disabilities in 2006/2007. As explained in the Annual Report for 2005/2006 the Director of Housing had reviewed this service area and a number of specific actions to improve the service had been incorporated in the Housing Service Improvement Plan. An additional £350,000 had also been allocated for adaptations in 2006/2007 to clear the backlog which had built up.
- 4.10 Corporate Complaints Staff continue to offer advice and direct people to Other Agencies e.g. Police, County Council as well as directing service requests to the correct Department (some 38% of the issues raised).
- 4.11 There were no complaints made against Committee Services who are responsible for the franking and despatch of mail. This is pleasing bearing in mind the hundreds of thousands of mail items which are despatched each year.
- 4.12 Customer Services had 2 justified complaints made against the Service, all relating to the failure of the call centre telephony. A new system was installed in early May 2006 and there have been no further complaints since that time.

- 4.13 33 complaints were made against the Benefits, Council Tax and Business Rates Services but none were found to be justified. Viewed against the transactions carried out over the period the performance of these services is very good.
- 4.14 6 complaints (5 from one complainant) were received about the Borough's adoption of the Coalfield Communities Regeneration Policy but none were justified. One complainant did complain to the Ombudsman who did not find any maladministration by the Council.
- 4.15 There were 15 complaints about Development Control with two being found to be justified. The first involved the giving of incorrect advice in 2003 which had led to a conservatory being erected without the benefit of planning permission. Development Control are working with the complainant to resolve this issue in line with the Ombudsman's Guidance on remedies. Staff have been reminded to carry out the correct checks when responding to informal enquiries regarding proposals. The second related to delay in responding to a request for a meeting and staff have been reminded to respond within a reasonable time.
- 4.16 There has been a reduction in the number of complaints received about Environmental Health (from 8 to 3) with none being found to be justified.
- 4.17 The number of complaints made against the Street Cleansing service has also fallen (from 4 to 3) with none of the complaints being justified.
- 4.18 Refuse Collection has seen a fall in the number of complaints received from 101 to 59 (42% reduction) with only 3 complaints being justified. Two were missed collections which were rectified. The third was where the bin had not been returned to its presentation point and the crew were reminded of our Policy. Viewed against the number of collections/deliveries carried out each year e.g. almost 3 million domestic collections (wheeled bins and Kerbit), there is not any cause for concern.
- 4.19 Only 2 complaints were made against Leisure Services with none being justified.
- 4.20 An apology is given whenever the Borough has been at fault.
- 4.21 The Corporate Complaints Staff aim to respond to 100% of complaints and enquiries within 10 Working days and achieved 98.5% in 2006/2007 compared with 98.8.% in 2005/2006 . The average time to respond to a complaint/enquiry in 2006/2007 was 1.5 days compared with 1.95 days in 2005/2006.
- 4.22 If complainants are still not satisfied after they have exhausted the Borough's Complaints Procedure they are advised that they have the right to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman. Where the Borough has been at fault, however, Staff do try to reach a settlement so that complainants do not feel it necessary to approach the Ombudsman. When attempting to reach a settlement Staff do refer to the Ombudsman's Guidance on remedies.

- 4.23 2005/2006 26 cases were investigated and decided by the Ombudsman. The Borough was not found guilty of maladministration in any of these cases. In 2006/2007 21 cases were investigated and decided by the Ombudsman. The Borough was not found guilty of maladministration in any of these cases and in three cases reached a local settlement to the Ombudsman's satisfaction.
- 4.24 It is pleasing to note that there were no complaints made relating to any of the six strands of the Equity and Diversity Standard for Local Government i.e. race, disability, age, religion and philosophical belief, gender or sexual orientation. Any complaints of this nature which are received will be discussed with the Borough's Equity and Diversity Staff and appropriate action taken.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are not any resource implications arising from this Report.

## **6. CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 The Report will be available on the Council's website.

## **7 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Link to Corporate Objectives/Values**

- 7.1 The complaints process is aimed at being open, accessible, equitable, fair and responsive to the public and to speedily resolve any problems. This report is a public document and is available on the Borough's Website. The analysis of complaints received helps drive service improvement through the presentation of regular reports to Departments and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Risk Management**

- 7.2 Systems are in place to provide a Half Yearly Report and an Annual Report on Complaints to ensure that the complaints process informs learning throughout the Council and encourages service improvements. The failure to provide regular reports to Committee could adversely affect our CPA Assessment Score.

### **Health and Safety**

- 7.3 There are no additional Health and Safety implications.

### **Equality and Diversity**

- 7.4 The Complaints Process actively promotes the Borough's commitment to promote equality and diversity. Complaints can be made in any form e.g. in writing, by phone, e-mail and interpreters and signers are available for people requiring such assistance.

### **Legal and Constitutional**

7.5 No new implications have been identified.

No other material considerations have been identified.

## 8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 A Half Year Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007 will be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

## 9. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Complaints/Issues received by Corporate Complaints Staff.

-----

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Jerry Miller/Chris Ward
<b>Telephone Number</b>	01388 816166 Ext. 7709/4100
<b>E-mail address</b>	<a href="mailto:jmiller@sedgefield.gov.uk">jmiller@sedgefield.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:cward@sedgefield.gov.uk">cward@sedgefield.gov.uk</a>

**Wards:** All

### Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## Appendix 1 – Complaints/Issues received by Corporate Complaints Staff

	2005/06		2006/07	
	Total	No. Justified	Total	No. Justified
Housing Maintenance	384	132	147	31
Housing Management	96	4	104	3
Housing Improvements	28	3	18	0
Adaptations for Disabled	37	11	0	0
Advice/Other Agency	152	N/a	128	N/a
Committee Services	2	2	0	0
Customer Services	13	8	6	2
Freedom of Information	0	0	1	0
Regeneration	0	0	1	0
Benefits	13	1	14	0
Business Rates	0	0	1	0
Collections	1	0	0	0
Council Tax	10	0	18	0
Valuation	3	0	1	0
Coalfield Communities	N/a	N/a	6	0
Regeneration Policy				
Anti-social Behaviour	0	0	1	0
Community Safety	0	0	2	0
Neighbourhood Wardens	3	0	5	0
Carelink	5	0	2	0
Development Control	19	1	15	2
Building Control	1	1	0	0
Homelessness	1	0	0	0
Environmental Health	8	0	3	0
Licensing	3	0	2	0
Horticulture	18	0	12	1
Street Cleansing	4	0	3	0
Refuse	101	22	59	3
Transport	1	0	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1	1	0	0
Leisure	2	0	3	0
Service Requests	147	N/a	127	N/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>41</b>

# Item 5

## **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**12 JUNE 2007**

## **REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP REPORT – REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

#### **SUMMARY**

At its meeting on 9 January 2007 Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1 recommended that the response of Cabinet to the recommendations of the Review of Recruitment and Retention, together with the implementation timetable, be noted and progress on the Action Plan be reviewed.

The attached schedule details progress to date from the Cabinet's response and action plan following its consideration of the recommendations arising from the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Review for Recruitment and Retention.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Committee notes progress of the Action Plan for the Overview & Scrutiny Review for Recruitment and Retention.

#### **DETAIL**

1. The Review Group report, detailing the conclusions and recommendations arising from the review, was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 13 July 2006 for consideration.
2. At its meeting on 9 January 2007 Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1 recommended that the response of Cabinet to the recommendations of the review, together with the implementation timetable outlined, be noted and progress on the Action Plan be reviewed.
3. The attached schedule details the Cabinet's response and provides an action plan following its consideration of the recommendations arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Review of Recruitment and Retention.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

1. Overview and Scrutiny Review Group Report: Review of Recruitment and Retention Cabinet Response and Action Plan – Update June 2007

-----

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Jonathan Slee
<b>Telephone Number</b>	01388 816166 Ext. 4362
<b>E-mail address</b>	<a href="mailto:jslee@sedgefield.gov.uk">jslee@sedgefield.gov.uk</a>

<b>Wards</b>	Non-specific
--------------	--------------

### **Background Papers**

Review of Recruitment and Retention: Overview and Scrutiny Review Group Report



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP REPORT - REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

**CABINET RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN – UPDATE JUNE 2007**

<u>Review Recommendations</u>	Cabinet Response		Implementation	
	Agreed?	Comments	Responsibility	Timescale / Progress
<p>1. Turnover, broken down by Department, be adopted as a PI to be monitored by Human Resources and reported periodically to Members.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This local PI should be reported to the Strategic Leadership Working Group (chaired by the Leader of the Council) and also to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1. Its relevance should be reviewed in March 2007 to determine whether such a detailed PI warrants continuation and inclusion in the Corporate Plan</p>	<p>Head of Organisational Development</p>	<p><u>Corporate Turnover</u>                      Number of leavers 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007 = 112 (11%). Corporate turnover has been reported to Strategic Leadership Group on a quarterly basis.                      Turnover by department 2006/7 is as follows:                      Chief Executive's – 17%                      Housing – 11%                      Neighbourhood Services – 11%                      Resources – 6%                      Leisure – 7%</p> <p>The local performance indicator is useful as an internal management/monitoring tool and will continue to be reported to Strategic Leadership Group. However, because of the internal focus of this PI it is inappropriate for it to be included in the 2007/8 Corporate plan.</p>

<b>Review Recommendations</b>		<b>Cabinet Response</b>		<b>Implementation</b>	
<b>Agreed?</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale / Progress</b>		
Yes	Recommended that elected members should receive a statistical PI – as opposed to details of specific vacancies. This needs to be reported as above.	Head of Organisational Development	As at 31 March 2007, 9 (0.8% of total structure) posts had remained vacant for six months or over, and had been advertised but not filled.  This consists of:  8 posts in Housing (Property Services Division) which have not been filled due to the uncertainty surrounding Housing Partnering and are currently occupied by Agency workers.  1 post in Resources (Estates Officer in Valuation and Corporate Property Services) which is currently occupied by an Agency worker. The agency worker has achieved significant results in letting Industrial Units and the cost of which is no greater than that of employing a permanent member of staff.		
Yes	Systems to put in place to monitor turnover / vacancies and recruitment so that any problem areas can be identified	Head of Organisational Development	Recommendations 1 and 2 above will provide the systems necessary to monitor turnover/vacancies.	See Above Performance Indicators	

# Item 6

## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 JUNE 2007

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

### DEVELOPMENT CONTROL – RECRUITMENT OF TWO SENIOR OFFICERS

#### SUMMARY

At its meeting on 9 January 2007, Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 considered an item that had been referred by Overview & Scrutiny 3 regarding '*Progress towards the achievement of Best Value Performance Indicator 204 - The Percentage of Appeals allowed against the Authority's decision to refuse on planning applications*'. The role of Overview & Scrutiny 1 was to examine the pay structure within the Development Control Division including an analysis of comparative salaries in adjacent authorities and the cost and implications of using temporary agency staff to fill posts.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1 recommended that 'an interim report on developments following proposals to address staffing issues in Development Control Division be received in 3 months and a full report in 6 months'.

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Committee note the content of the report.

#### DETAIL

1. At its meeting on 9 January 2007, the Director of Neighbourhood Services attended this meeting to discuss the pay structure within the Development Control Division and the plan to recruit two Senior Development Control Officers to the division.
2. Following a recruitment process, three vacant posts have been filled to strengthen the Development Control Team with effect from 21 May 2007. The three posts are a Principal Development Control Officer, Development Control Officer and a Planning Enforcement Officer.
3. The Principal Development Control Officer, together with the other senior officer in the team will assist the Development Control Manager

in the day to day management and supervision of the team, as well as deal with the more complex and contentious planning applications.

4. The Development Control Officer will provide much needed support for the other development control officers dealing with the more routine, but nevertheless demanding, workload. Whilst the Planning Enforcement Officer will conduct investigations into alleged breaches of planning control and is already tackling the backlog of cases that have built up since the departure of the previous Enforcement Officer.
5. Successful recruitment to these posts will address staffing issues with the Development Control Team and contribute significantly to improved performance and the quality of service the team aims to deliver.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

None

---

<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Andrew Farnie</b>
<b>Telephone Number</b>	01388 816166 Ext. 4507
<b>E-mail address</b>	<b>afarnie@sedgefield.gov.uk</b>

<b>Wards</b>	Non-specific
--------------	--------------

<b>Background Papers</b>	None
--------------------------	------

# Item 7

## **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **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 next 6 meetings.
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. Each Overview & Scrutiny Committee should therefore 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.

Scrutiny reviews will be conducted by a Review Group established by the Committee comprising of 5-6 Members. In most cases the Review Group will

be made up of Members from the establishing Committee. However, Members may decide to conduct a review that cuts across the responsibilities of another Overview & Scrutiny Committee. In these cases Members should consider whether it would be appropriate to co-opt Members from the other relative Overview & Scrutiny Committee(s). If it is decided that the review is crosscutting the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Overview & Scrutiny Committees concerned should decide which Committee should take the lead on the review and how many Members should be co-opted from other Overview & Scrutiny Committee(s). The number of Members to be co-opted will depend on the extent to which the responsibility of the topic is shared, however the Review Group should have no more than 6 members.

#### **5. Business for Future Meetings**

The Work Programme sets out a plan of when it is anticipated that certain items will be considered by the Committee. These items may include:-

- Best Value Service Improvement Plan updates
- Items which are submitted at regular intervals
- Issues identified by Members for consideration
- Any updates requested by Members

Members are requested to review the Committee's Work Programme and identify, where necessary, issues which they feel should be investigated by the Committee. 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.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None associated with this report.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

**Contact Officers:** David Anderson  
**Telephone No:** (01388) 816166 ext 4109/4362  
**Email Address:** [danderson@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:danderson@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Ward(s):** Not ward specific

**Background Papers** None

## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### WORK PROGRAMME

#### Ongoing Reviews

- *No reviews currently ongoing*

#### Future Reviews

The following review topics have been identified by the Committee for future review. As one review is completed Members will decide which review should be undertaken next.

- *No reviews identified*

#### ANTICIPATED ITEMS

##### 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007

- *Review of Customer Complaints*
- *Overview and Scrutiny Review Group Report: Recruitment and Retention – Action Plan Update*
- *Development Control Recruitment of Two Senior Officers – Interim Update*

##### 28<sup>th</sup> August 2007

- *Performance Indicators*
- *Overview and Scrutiny Review Group Reports: Review of the Council's Community Newspaper Inform – Action Plan Update*
- *Overview and Scrutiny Review Group Report: Review of Sickness Management – Action Plan Update*

##### 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007

- *No items currently identified*

##### 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008

- *No items currently identified*

##### 8<sup>th</sup> January 2008

- *Review of Customer Complaints*

##### 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008

- *Budgets*

This page is intentionally left blank