

Corporate, Adult Services & Social Inclusion Select Committee

A meeting of Corporate, Adult Services & Social Inclusion Select Committee was held on Tuesday, 7th April, 2009.

Present: Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Aidan Cockerill, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Andrew Larkin, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Roy Rix, Mrs C Clark, Mrs T Fraser

Officers: J. Humphreys (CESC); S. Lee (PPC); N. Gibb (DNS); N. Hart, C. Lunn (LD)

Also in attendance: No other persons in attendance.

Apologies: Cllr Mick Stoker(Chairman), Cllr Mick Womphrey

1 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Miss Large declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda item no. 4 - Scrutiny Review of Older People's Strategy, further to being a volunteer for the Retired and Seniors Volunteer Programme (RSVP).

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th February 2009

Members considered the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 17th February 2009.

CONCLUDED that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 17th February 2009 be agreed as a correct record, and be forwarded to Council for consideration.

3 Scrutiny Review of Older People's Strategy

- To consider and agree the draft report for the above review

The Committee received and considered the draft report of the Scrutiny Review of Older People's Strategy; the main points arising were as follows:-

Community safety

- Regarding 1.6, Members queried how the MORI survey results would pin-point those areas that were evidenced as having the most victims of doorstep crime. It was explained that information from various sources was utilised in order to identify and target those areas of greater vulnerability; MORI survey 2008 results were referenced during this process.

- In relation to 1.7, Members queried the progress made regarding the Retired and Seniors Volunteer Programme (RSVP). Councillor Miss Large informed the Committee that she and Councillor Mrs Aggio had undertaken volunteer training, and there were approximately 30 volunteers enrolled on the programme. The Scrutiny Officer informed that recruitment leaflets were in circulation, and a training DVD was available for Members to view.

Cultural & Leisure Services

- Regarding the notion of a 'pop-in' centre, Members queried why this had been

omitted from the recommendations. The Corporate Director of Children, Education & Social Care considered the purpose and funding of this, and suggested that it might prove more economical to promote and signpost services that already existed across the Borough. The Committee discussed this topic and considered the potential financial implications involved.

- Members discussed third sector working and queried why organisations such as Catalyst had not been considered in the report; it was explained that findings would be shared with Catalyst.

Housing

- The Committee discussed the Broadacres Housing Improvement Agency (HIA) and how this related to the free home safety checks provided by Cleveland Fire Authority. Members considered and queried the overlap of services, the level of expertise offered by the HIA, and whether or not a service-level agreement existed Stockton Borough Council and Cleveland Fire Authority. The Corporate Director of Children, Education & Social Care informed the Committee that a service-level agreement did not exist; however the interface would be reviewed. This, together with methods of service referral, would be investigated and reported back to the Committee.

- Members considered the budget allowance for the Handyperson Service in relation to the potential popularity of the service, and queried how spending would be monitored. The Scrutiny Officer explained that monitoring would be undertaken by the Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership. In respect of R11, the Committee queried the criteria on eligibility and resources in order to utilise the Handyman Service. The Corporate Director of Children, Education & Social Care informed that this would be investigated and reported back to the Committee.

Transport Issues

- Members discussed the issues raised in the report and considered the impact that changes made by external bus services would have on access to services, particularly in respect of medical appointments. The Committee queried the possibility of contacting one of the bus companies in order to seek information regarding the service changes, particularly in respect of access to local hospitals. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to forward this enquiry onto the Regeneration & Transport Select Committee.

Health

- The Committee discussed access to health services, the referrals process, and the Stockton Primary Care Trust (PCT) in respect of commissioning services. In relation to 1.26, Members highlighted the importance of the Health & Well Being Partnership, particularly in respect of the Well Being element. The Committee agreed that this section should be reworded to demonstrate this; the Scrutiny Officer would action this.

Working with the Third Sector/Other Organisations

- Members considered R30 in respect of the Older Person Elected Member

Champion role. The Committee discussed this, and queried the working pattern and activities associated with the role.

- The Committee discussed the importance of raising awareness in order to ensure that individuals knew where to go to obtain information, and what to do when they had concerns. Members highlighted the significance of front-line personnel in order to achieve this, for example PCSOs, and the support and assistance that they were able to offer to residents.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The further information requested by the Committee be obtained and forwarded to Members.
2. The draft recommendations for the Scrutiny Review of Older People's Strategy be agreed, subject to the changes as outlined above.

4 Progress Updates on Previously Agreed Recommendations

At the meeting held on the 17th February 2009, Members received updates in respect of the previous meeting venues and consultation reviews and agreed that the relevant officers be invited to the Committee to discuss the following areas in more detail:-

- Consultation Review - the robustness of the post consultation review process,
- Meeting Venues - the arrangements (including take up) for the new taxi permit scheme to improve access to the Town Hall.

The Senior Policy and Projects Manager provided the Committee with detailed Members' feedback results, and answered Members' queries relating to review timescales and Ward development consultation processes.

Regarding Meeting Venues, the Car Park Manager informed the Committee of access permit take-up figures. Members agreed that these figures - 18 respondents from a potential 234 - were disappointing, and queried what would be the next step in terms of improving this take-up. The Committee was informed that an enforcement exercise was being considered; a progress update would be offered at a future meeting. Members agreed that a representative from the taxi driver's union be invited to the Committee to discuss this issue.

In terms of sound quality at venues, Members expressed concern that hearing facilities at meeting venues continued to be a prominent issue; the Committee discussed this and considered potential improvements.

Regarding telephone conference calling, Members queried the progress that had been made. The Committee considered the video calling pilot, and requested that feedback be sought; the Scrutiny Officer would accommodate this.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The further information requested by the Committee be obtained and forwarded to Members.
2. The information be noted.

5 Work Programme

- **To prepare questions for witnesses attending the next meeting**
- **To review the project plan in respect of the current review**
- **To discuss ideas for future review topics**

Members were informed that at the Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24th March 2009, it was agreed that the next Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Scrutiny Review to be undertaken by the Committee would revolve around Communication, Consultation and Engagement.

The Scrutiny Officer explained that a training event would be organised for Members in order to provide further information regarding the EIT review. Members queried the date and time of this session; the Scrutiny Officer agreed to provide this information as soon as possible, though did confirm that it would take place in the week commencing 20th April 2009.

The Committee enquired about the EIT reviews in respect of the other Select Committees; the Scrutiny Officer provided these details.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The Work Programme be noted.
2. Members be provided with EIT training session details.