

## Corporate Policy Review Select Committee

A meeting of Corporate Policy Review Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 14th June, 2006.

**Present:** Cllr B Woodhead (Chairman), Cllr D T Brown, Cllr K Dewison, Cllr Mrs S Fletcher, Cllr M Frankland, Cllr K Lupton, Cllr J M Lynch, Cllr Mrs E A Nesbitt, Cllr R Patterson, Cllr Mrs M Rigg, Cllr Mrs B Robinson, Cllr Mrs M B Womphrey,

**Officers:** Ms H Dean (CE); G Birtle, Mrs T Harrison and Mrs J Trainer (LD)

**Also in attendance:** No other persons present

**Apologies:** were submitted on behalf of Councillor Larkin

### 455 Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd May 2006

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2006 were considered, prior to their submission to Council for approval.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2006 be forwarded to Council.

### 456 Review of Corporate Consultation

Review of Corporate Consultation

Presentations were provided by the Assistant Chief Executive, Head of Policy and Performance and Research and Consultation Manager. The presentation covered the following areas:

- Approach to consultation and engagement
- The national policy context – shift in public service context
- Ladder of Consultation and Engagement
- Current duties and responsibilities and the implementing the general duty
- History of Consultation in Stockton
- What had been done and Results
- Structure
- Coordination
- Training
- Support
- Advice and Guidance
- Types of Consultation
- Residents Panels
- Adult Viewpoint
- Arrangement for consulting the Hard to Reach
- Satisfaction statistics with panel
- Youth Viewpoint
- Established forums and groups
- General Survey, Service users consultation
- Service based/thematic non regular consultations
- Service based regular consultations
- Issues to consider
- Local Government White Paper
- Other white papers and recent legislation
- Lyons review of local government

- Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- Diversity
- Efficiency and Effectiveness.

Members queried how representative the viewpoint panels and figures were. Officers advised that viewpoint was just one type of consultation undertaken by Stockton Council however; the size was in line with good practice and was statistically robust.

Members advised that Stockton News did not reach everybody in the Borough and queried whether Stockton News could be posted to residents of flats rather than left for collection in communal areas. Officers advised that there would be financial implications and care had to be taken to avoid an iniquitous approach. Members also cautioned against too much reliance on on-line surveys as not all residents had access to a computer or were computer literate.

An officer advised that some consultations were heavily prescribed by the Government who dictated how it was carried out which resulted in some consultations being done on-line.

Members queried who decided what would be consulted on and the questions included in the Mori Poll and whether Select Committees could have any input into planned consultations to inform reviews.

An officer advised that the nature and size of the issue dictated who would decide and lead on the consultation. If the issue was small this would be the responsibility of the relevant Head of Service but if it was a big issue it would be dealt with via a project team. The approach to consultation for individual scrutiny reviews would be determined at the scoping of the review.

The Committee queried how consultation results were reported back to Members and suggested that where results were available on the intranet an e-mail should be sent with a hyperlink taking them direct to the relevant site.

Members enquired whether assessments were carried out on how the consultations were carried out and were advised that viewpoint was regularly reviewed. Following consultation exercises, Officers were encouraged to feed consultation results to the Corporate Consultation Unit. However, this did not always take place and Officers had identified this as an area for development.

Historically authorities had not listened enough, however this was now changing and efforts were being made to ensure that money spent on consultation was used effectively.

The Assistant Chief Executive suggested that the lead Officers identified half a dozen consultations which had taken place to be presented to the committee to identify consultations for further examination by the committee.

CONCLUDED that the committee be provided with a selection of consultations carried out by Council in order to identify appropriate consultations for further examination as part of the review.

