

## **Environment & Regeneration Select Committee**

A meeting of Environment & Regeneration Select Committee was held on Monday, 5th March, 2007.

**Present:** Cllr Mrs J Beaumont (Chairman), Cllr D Cains, Cllr J A Fletcher, Cllr C Leckonby, Cllr W Noble, Cllr R Rix, Cllr Mrs B Robinson, Cllr F G Salt, Cllr M Smith, Cllr B Woodhead.

**Officers:** S Daniels, J Robins, C Straughan (DNS); P K Bell, J Trainer (LD).

**Also in attendance:** J Laverick, S Clough (Thomas Rea); R Crake, S Lee (Crake and Mallon); J Sisson (Co-Op); C Mean (Mason and Gerald); Mr Baksh, Mr Hussain (Thornaby Funerals).

**Apologies:** Cllr Larkin, Cllr Mrs Norton and Cllr Walmsley.

### **1045 Draft minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2007**

Consideration was given to the content of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2007.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2007 be forwarded to Council for consideration.

### **1046 Review of Cemeteries and Memorials**

As part of the Review of Cemeteries and Memorials Funeral Directors from local firms had been invited to attend the meeting to give evidence.

The following Funeral Directors were in attendance at the meeting:-

J Laverick, S Clough (Thomas Rea)  
R Crake, S Lee (Crake and Mallon)  
J Sisson (Co-Op)  
C Mean (Mason and Gerald)  
S Baksh, M Hussan (Thornaby Funerals)

The Funeral Directors answered questions that centred around the following areas:-

1. Opening and Funeral Times
2. Cemetery Facilities
3. Alternative Burial Options
4. Future Provision

The Scrutiny Officer and the Democratic Services Officer made detailed notes of the answers that were given by the Funeral Directors.

Members then considered the summaries of the focus groups from the groups that were held on 19th and 20th February 2007. The focus groups consisted of adult Viewpoint Members.

Members were also presented with the feedback from the Elderly Citizens Liaison Forum held on 28th February 2007. The Chair and the Scrutiny Officer had attended the Forum to ascertain their views on the review.

Members discussed the evidence that had been presented to them and agreed that a summary of the key points of all of the evidence that has been received throughout the review be presented to Members at the next meeting of the Committee.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The evidence from the Funeral Directors, Viewpoint Focus Groups and Elderly Citizens Liaison Forum be noted.
2. A summary of the key points of all of the evidence that has been received throughout the review be presented to Members at the next meeting of the Committee.

#### **1047 Progress Report on Implementation of Planning Review**

Members were presented with a Progress Report on the implementation of the Planning Services Review. The Head of Planning Services was in attendance at the meeting and detailed the Planning Performance Plan 2006 to 2009 and the Progress Report as at end of December 2006.

The Head of Planning Services reported the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) for the determination of planning applications. The BVPI's showed a good improvement and as a result of the improvement, Planning Services would not be a Standards Authority for 2007/08.

The Head of Planning Services reported that although the recruitment and retention of staff within the Service had improved, the Service was having difficulty appointing an Area Team Leader.

The Head of Planning Services then went on to detail the areas of pressure within the Planning Performance Improvement Plan. Members were then given the opportunity to ask any questions of the Head of Planning Services.

Members were very impressed with the progress that had been made to date and thanked the Head of Planning Services for her attendance at the meeting.

CONCLUDED that the Progress Report on the implementation of the Planning Review be noted.