

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday, 13th November, 2007.

Present: Cllr Robert Gibson (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Ann Cains, Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Fletcher (vice Cllr Mrs Rigg), Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Lee Narrowway, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Allison Trainer, Cllr William Woodhead

Officers: F Shayler, J Trainer, M Waggott (LD)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Harrington, Mrs Rigg, Sherris, Smith, Womphrey; Mrs Mustafa (Parent Governor Representative).

EXC Declarations of Interest

39/07

Councillor Narrowway declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 10 further to being employed by Tees, Esk and Wear NHS.

Councillor Coleman declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 8 and stated that he would not be taking part in the review of Stockton Voluntary and Community Sector Review further to being a Member of ??

EXC Minutes for Signing - 17th September 2007

40/07

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2007 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EXC Minutes for Information - 16th October 2007

41/07

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

EXC Feedback on Performance Queries

42/07

Members were provided with feedback following their queries raised at the previous meeting of the Committee.

A written response was provided for the Housing Benefits budget shortfall and for the query on Fostering Placements. The matter raised under the Forward Plan with regard to Sustainable Energy Options had since been removed from the forward plan.

RESOLVED that the responses be noted.

EXC Environment Select Committee - Management of Memorials

43/07

Members were provided with the Environment Select Committee's final report on their Review of The Management of Memorials.

Members were informed that a 'Drop in' session was being held by the

Chairman and Vice Chairman on 14th November for all Members of the Council to provide information and answer any queries that members may have.

RESOLVED that the Environment Select Committee's Review of the Management of Memorials be endorsed.

**EXC
44/07 Corporate and Social Inclusion - Theatre Subsidy**

Members were provided with the Corporate and Social Inclusion Select Committee's final report on the Review of Theatre Subsidy.

Councillor Coleman presented the report and highlighted the main points. Members were verbally updated of an amendment to the wording of one of the recommendations following the meeting of the Corporate and Social Inclusion Select Committee.

RESOLVED that the Corporate and Social Inclusion Select Committee's Review of Theatre Subsidy be endorsed.

**EXC
45/07 Scrutiny Work Programme 2007/08**

The report reminds the Committee of the review topics for 2007/08 proposed by the Scrutiny Liaison Committee, and advises of recent development affecting the work programme and seeks confirmation of the second review topics for 2007/08.

Prior to the Local Government elections, the Scrutiny Liaison Forum on 12 January 2007 and subsequently, the Executive Scrutiny Committee, approved a draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2007/08.

The Executive Scrutiny Committee on 30 May 2007, confirmed the first review topics for 2007/08 and these were set out below together with the other topics put forward by the Scrutiny Liaison Forum as priorities for review.

Arts, Leisure and Culture

- River Based Leisure Facilities (first review). Following the scoping of this review, it was agreed that this should be a year long review.

Corporate Policy and Social Inclusion

- Theatre Subsidy (first review)

(Stockton/Darlington Partnership – Joint Scrutiny with Darlington Borough Council by Sub Group) (in tandem with first review)

- Stockton Voluntary and Community Sector

Children and Young People

- Corporate Parenting (first review)

- School Organisation Plan (it is proposed that this review should commence in January 2008 following the consultation on Building Schools for the Future)

Environment

- Cemeteries and Memorials Phase 2 – The Management of Memorials (first review)
- Waste Collection Service – Comprehensive Review of Recycling

(Vermin Control – by Task and Finish Group)

Regeneration and Transport

- Employability (first review)

Adults and Health

- Alcoholism (first review)
- Hearing Aids Waiting Lists/ Delays in Referrals to Audiology
- Services for Young People in between Childhood and Adulthood

Housing and Community Safety

- Neighbourhood Enforcement Service (first review)
- Homelessness for Young People (incorporating accommodation for care leavers)

Since the draft programme was considered by the Scrutiny Liaison Forum, there have been a number of developments which should be taken into account:

- Regeneration and Transport Select Committee – The Executive Scrutiny Committee has already agreed that the second review topic for this newly established Committee should be a review of the School Travel Plan following its referral from Cabinet
- Homelessness for Young People - Since the review was first agreed as a priority for the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee by the Scrutiny Liaison Forum, the service had undertaken a considerable amount of work in this area and the Council had been identified as a Regional Centre of Excellence by the DCLG and would be hosting a national conference in December. As a result of the improvements, the value that scrutiny can add is questionable.

In the meantime, Cabinet had asked that Executive Scrutiny Committee incorporate a piece of scrutiny work within the current year's work programme in relation to the site selection of a travellers transit site. This review would need to be completed by February 2007. It was proposed that this topic replace the review of homelessness as the second review for the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee.

Members held discussion on the Review of River Based Leisure Facilities and were concerned about the rubbish in the water surrounding HMS Kellington and asked that this matter be investigated and a response be provided at the next meeting.

The Chairman of Adult Services and Health expressed concern about the growing work load for this Committee. As well as the reviews programmed for the Committee, they were also being consulted on 'Momentum', the North East Ambulance Service and LINKs (Local Involvement Networks).

RESOLVED that:-

1. The second reviews for 2007/08 be endorsed.
2. A response be provided at the next meeting on the query regarding HMS Kellington.

**EXC
46/07** **Forward Plan**

Members were provided with the Statutory Forward Plan for 1 November 2007 to 28 February 2008.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

**EXC
47/07** **Scrutiny Review - Chairman's Update**

Corporate and Social Inclusion Select Committee

The final report on Theatre Subsidy had been presented to this meeting earlier in the agenda and would be considered by Cabinet on 22nd November, 2007.

The Committee were due to receive progress reports on the implementation of the Meetings Venues Review and the Consultation Review.

Arts Leisure and Culture Select Committee

The Committee had met with Steve Chaytor from Tees Active to discuss Castlegate Quay Centre, and Supt. Dave Brunskill from Cleveland Police in order to discuss the issue of anti-social behaviour at various locations along the river. It was hoped that the meeting would bring about greater co-ordination between Police and Tees Barrage, especially at event times.

The next meeting was due to be held on 28th November to concentrate on issues surrounding Preston Hall and the proposed River Tees Heritage Park.

Consultation had begun with Parish/Town Councils and relevant ward councillors, in relation to local issues surrounding river use.

The review remained on schedule and was due to report to Cabinet at the first meeting of the next municipal year.

The Committee would be receiving updates on progress with the Preston Hall

review and an action plan for the Festivals review at the next meeting on 28 November.

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee

Following approval of the Committee's final report on 27 September, the Neighbourhood Enforcement Service (NES) report was submitted and approved by Cabinet on 25 October. The Committee supported the use of mainstream funding to continue the Service and also recommended ways in which to source additional funds, and improve awareness of the Service.

The review was completed on schedule and the final report was presented to Cabinet on 25 October.

The Choice Based Lettings action plan was agreed by the Committee in June, and the progress report is due in December.

Environment Select Committee

The Committee had finalised their report on the Review of the Management of Memorials and this was presented to this meeting today. The report was due to be reported to Cabinet on 22nd November 2007.

The Committee had received an action plan setting out how the Phase 1 recommendations would be implemented and were due to receive a report on progress in December 2007.

Adults, Health and Social Care Select Committee

The Committee was due to take evidence from Neil Nicholson, Director of Finance, North Tees PCT on Wednesday, 7th November in order to address funding issues raised during this review. This would conclude the evidence gathering for this review.

As a result of two extra meetings this review would be reported at the 17th January Cabinet and not the 20th December Cabinet as originally projected.

Members would be receiving a monitoring report of the Dentistry Review on 28th November 2007.

The Committee was to receive presentation/information from Paul Frank, Head of Patient Experience on Wednesday, 7th November regarding planning / development issues and LINKs.

The Committee would also have discussions with Peter Smith, Strategic Commissioner - Independent Living, Adult Strategy Team as the LA Lead officer for the development of LINKs.

The Committee would meet representatives from the North East Ambulance Service on 28th November to receive a presentation as part of the consultation process regarding the suggested relocation of the Middlesbrough contact centre to Hebburn, South Tyneside. All councillors would be invited to attend this presentation. The views of the Committee / councillors would be submitted to

the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee to give the formal scrutiny response to this consultation exercise.

Regeneration and Transport Select Committee

Since the previous update the Committee had completed receiving evidence. Information had been received from the Five Lamps Organisation, Stockton International Family Centre, and the Shaw Trust concerning the voluntary and community sector's role in relation to employability. Julia Spittle, Head of Human Resources; Jamie McCann, Head of Direct Services; and Richard Bradley, Care for Your Area Service Manager also provided information concerning how the Council as an employer could possibly assist in improving the employability of people from disadvantaged areas in the borough, with an insight into both the potential benefits and difficulties of this in practice. The final meeting included information from Roland Todd, Labour Market Coordinator for Stockton Borough Council.

The Committee made their recommendations at the start of November. The final agreement of the report will be made on 3rd December, with consideration of the report by Executive Scrutiny on 11th December. The report was due to go to Cabinet on 20th December.

The Committee was due to undertake monitoring of the recommendations contained within the Street Lighting review by December 2007.

Children and Young People Select Committee

The final report for the Review of Corporate Parenting received Cabinet approval on 25th October 2007.

The Committee were due to receive monitoring reports on their review of Teenage Pregnancy and Bullying.

On 19th December, 2007 the Committee would examine the Children, Education and Social Care's Annual Performance Assessment and the Children's Trust Strategy.

The scope and project plan for the Review of School Organisation was due to take place in January 2008 once the results of the current Building Schools for the Future consultation results were known.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.