

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday, 8th July, 2008.

Present: Cllr Robert Gibson (Chairman); Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Mrs Fletcher (vice Cllr Mrs Rigg), Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Lee Narroway, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Bill Woodhead

Officers: Nigel Hart, Roy MacGregor, Fiona Shayler, Margaret Waggott, Kirsty Wannop (LD); David Kitching, Colin Snowdon (DNS).

Also in attendance: Paul Connaughton (Parent Governor Representative)

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cains, Mrs Cains, Mrs Nesbitt, Perry, Mrs Rigg, Sherris, Smith, Mrs Trainer, Womphrey.

1 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Gibson declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 further to being a Tristar Board Member.

Councillor Woodhead declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 further to being a Tristar Board Member.

2 **Minutes - 10th June, 2008**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

3 **Scrutiny Review of Taxis**

Members were provided with further information regarding the possible remit and benefits of conducting a scrutiny review of Taxis within the current year.

At the last meeting, Members considered the need for a scrutiny review to be carried out on taxis within the Borough and requested further information as to the possible remit and potential benefits of carrying out such a review. Full detail was provided in a report to Members.

The background to the proposal for such a review to be carried out related in the main to recent controversy around the new level of licensing fees proposed by the Council in February 2008. Following consultation, the Council subsequently agreed a lower level of fees than originally proposed and a package of other measures, including the fact that there would be a scrutiny review during 2008/09.

Members were invited to consider whether it wished to prioritise a review of taxis in the near future and to consider the delegation of responsibility to an appropriate Select Committee or Task & Finish Group.

A review of policy and procedures was already underway by the Licensing Department in relation to practices, procedures and conditions relating to taxi drivers, vehicles and operators. Members felt that this review should be completed prior to a Scrutiny Review taking place, however, they would wish to be consulted on this process with a report back once the review was complete. Members requested that as part of this review that Officers consider further training for taxi drivers to include history of town to promote tourism and further training on disability awareness. It was felt that a taxi drivers role should be as an 'ambassador for the Borough. Once the review was complete Members would then consider whether a Scrutiny Review by a Select Committee/Task Finish Group was required.

RESOLVED that the Executive Scrutiny Committee be consulted during Officers review of policy and procedures as detailed above. Members consider whether a Scrutiny Review was required once this Review was complete.

4 **Final Report of Environment Task & Finish Group-Rats & Pigeons**

Members were provided with the final report by the Environment Task and Finish Group on their Review of Rat/Pigeon problem within the borough.

Councillor Woodhead highlighted key areas of the report and answered Members queries.

RESOLVED that the report be endorsed and forwarded to Cabinet.

5 Statutory Forward Plan

Members were provided with the Statutory Forward Plan 1st July 2008 - 31st October 2008.

RESOLVED that the Statutory Forward Plan be noted.

6 Report on Chairs Updates:-

The Chairman/Vice Chairman of the following Select Committees provided an update on their current reviews/work programme:-

Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee - Review of Tees Active.

Children and Young People Select Committee - Review of Obesity.

Corporate and Social Inclusion Select Committee - Review of Older People Strategy; Progress update on Theatre Subsidy; Update on proposed permit scheme to allow taxis to access the High Street Northbound should they meet the accessibility criteria.

Environment Select Committee - Review of Customer First.

Health Select Committee - Momentum: Pathways to Healthcare - Consultation Review; North Tees Health Centre Development; Updates on Local Involvement Network (LINK).

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee - Review of Registered Social Landlords; Monitoring of Choise Based Lettings.

Regeneration and Transport Select Committee - Review of Highway Network Management; Monitoring of Planning Services and Street Lighting.

RESOLVED that the Chair's updates be noted.