

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday, 22nd November, 2011.

Present: Cllr Ken Lupton (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey.

Officers: Michelle Jones, Peter Mennear, Fiona McKie, Judith Trainer (LD).

Also in attendance:

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Tina Large, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Ross Patterson.

1 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Gibson declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 5 EIT Review of Building Assets further to being a Board Member of Know How North East.

Cllr Mohammed Javed declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 11 - Report on Chairs Updates further to being an employee of Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust.

Cllr Nigel Cooke declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 11 - Report on Chairs Updates further to being an employee of Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust.

Cllr Mick Stoker declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 5 - EIT Review of Building Assets further to his association with Chapel Road Youth Club.

Cllr Kenneth Lupton declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 8 further to his involvement in peer reviews on behalf of the LGA.

2 Minutes for Signing - 4th October 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2011 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 Minutes of meeting held on 25th October 2011

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2011.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

4 EIT Review of Building Assets

Members were provided with an update on the EIT Review of Building Assets. It included proposals to reduce the level of office accommodation which would make significant savings with no impact on front-line services.

The report considered the impact of the EIG review reported to Members in November 2011 on buildings, the principals for future delivery of the Library Service presented to Members in October 2011. It outlined areas where there were possibilities for co-location of services which could improve service delivery whilst enabling and supporting a reduction in asset utilisation. It also built upon the Council's overall approach of involving the Voluntary and Community Sector by identifying opportunities for asset transfer, which could improve sustainability of community buildings.

Members requested a breakdown of the Council Subsidy for community facilities. Garry Cummings would supply this information to Members. It was also felt useful that an all Member Seminar be held during the consultation process.

AGREED that Cabinet be advised that the Committee endorse the following recommendations:-

1. Officers work with Community Groups to explore opportunities and options for asset transfer in line with the approved Asset Transfer Strategy. This included working with Catalyst who were exploring the option of developing a Community Asset Trust.

2. To progress discussions on the transfer of the New Life Centre following the approach by the current leaseholder and to advertise the following assets for transfer and/or disposal:

- Riverbank (this will include a condition of use as a childrens centre)
- Thornaby Family Centre
- 98 Dovecot Street
- Wrensfeld Community Centre

3. To explore the option for co-location of Services and rationalisation of facilities outlined in the report including consultation with stakeholders.

4. Review the current utilisation of the Education Centre and assess its future long term viability.

5 EIT Review of Regeneration and Economic Development - Final Report of Regeneration and Transport Select Committee

Consideration was given to the draft report for the EIT Review of Regeneration and Economic Development. Members were provided with updated recommendations for recommendations 3 and 5 which had been amended since the report had been distributed.

Members went through each of the recommendations. The final report would be presented to Cabinet on 1st December 2011.

AGREED that the final report be approved and forwarded to to Cabinet.

6 Final Report - Care for Your Area EIT Review

Consideration was given to the draft report for the EIT Review of Care for Your Area.

Members went through each of the recommendations. The final report would be presented to Cabinet on 1st December 2011.

AGREED that the final report be approved and forwarded to Cabinet.

7 Scrutiny Work Programme - Referral from Cabinet - Membership of the Local Government Association

At their meeting held on 3 November 2011, Cabinet considered a report relating to the Council's membership of the Local Government Association (LGA). Members were reminded that the LGA lobbied and campaigned for changes in policy, legislation and funding on behalf its member Councils. Whilst the membership costs had reduced since 2006/7 they were £42,870 for the financial year 2011/12. Withdrawal from the annual subscription required a 12 month notice period. Cabinet was provided with background to the LGA and the benefits currently provided through the annual subscription.

To inform a decision about future membership, it was suggested that a Task and Finish Review, as part of the Scrutiny Work Programme, possibly through the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee, consider the benefits, value for money, role and function of the LGA. In the meantime, Cabinet agreed that the Council issue a 12 month notice to the LGA to withdraw subscription.

Members felt that other similar subscriptions that the authority contributes to such as AMEC, North East Regional Employers Organisation and other similar organisations should be included within this review.

AGREED that the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee carry out a Task and Finish review of the LGA benefits and other associations such as AMEC, North East Regional Employers Organisation and other similar organisations.

8 Quarterly Progress Updates on Previously Agreed Recommendations

Members were requested to consider the assessments of progress on the implementation of previously agreed recommendations. There were outstanding recommendations from the following reviews:-

- EIT Reporting In Review of Advice and Information
- EIT Reporting In Review of Procurement and Commissioning
- EIT Task and Finish Review of Xentrall
- EIT Task and Finish Review of Democratic Services
- Scrutiny Review of Outside Bodies

Members were concerned that some of the assessments of progress had slipped on the EIT Review of Advice and Information and would like a further

update. It was highlighted that not all of the predicted savings had been met on some of the reviews and the Committee highlighted that the appropriate Select Committee should vigorously monitor and challenge implementation of EIT recommendations.

AGREED that:-

1) the Progress Updates be noted and the assessments for progress be confirmed.

2) further information be provided as requested above.

9 Forward Plan

The Statutory Forward Plan for 1st November 2011 and 28 February 2012 was provided for Members information.

AGREED that the Forward Plan be noted.

10 Report on Chairs Updates

Members were provided with an update from each of the Select Committees.

AGREED that the updates be noted.