

## **Executive Scrutiny Committee (Task and Finish Group)**

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee (Task and Finish Group) was held on Thursday 21 June 2012.

**Present:** Cllr Ken Lupton (Chair), Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing

**Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Robert Gibson

**Officers:** M Jones, J Trainer (LD)

### **1 Appointment of Chair**

Cllr Eileen Johnson proposed Cllr Ken Lupton as chair of the Task and Finish Group, Cllr Paul Kirton seconded and Cllr Ken Lupton accepted.

CONCLUDED that:

Cllr Ken Lupton be chair of the Task and Finish Group

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 Review of Gated Communities**

The Task and Finish Group was appointed by Executive Scrutiny Committee to consider the issue of accessing residential properties with controlled access systems following a motion agreed at Council on 9 March 2011. The motion stated:

"This Council acknowledges the trend towards increased numbers of gated communities within the Stockton Borough Council Area necessitating entry codes to access and leave.

Council recognises the practical difficulties this creates for delivery of mail and other communications. Council therefore requests that the issue be considered by the Executive Scrutiny Committee or a Task Finish Group."

Members received a report outlining the issues experienced by Members, Council Services, and Emergency Services when accessing residential properties with gated access, intercom access systems, and/or any other controlled access system. It was noted that the majority of issues raised were by Ward Council Members when carrying out their ward work. The emergency services, Royal Mail/Post Office and several of the Council Services contacted had not raised any access issues.

Consideration was given to the solutions Ward Members had already put in place and any further possible solutions to assist Members carrying out their ward work. The Group acknowledged that using Ward Member contacts was the most successful solution to gaining access to controlled access properties. It was noted that there were no planning or building requirements when building new developments to ensure access for those who wished to circulate information, however it was queried whether Planning Services could highlight

the issue with developers at planning application stage.

Following discussion of the evidence presented the Task and Finish Group concluded that the only significant issue was Ward Member access. The Group agreed that the evidence gathered be reported to Executive Scrutiny Committee and no further review work was required.

CONCLUDED that:

1. the information be noted
2. the report be presented to Executive Scrutiny Committee on 31 July