

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2009

Present: Councillors Mrs W Metherell, Chairman; Mrs E Eastwood; G Garrity; F Heathcote; J Jackson; J Park; W Southward; Mrs C Watson, P Watson and Mrs J Williams.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F Gleaves, K Hitchen and R Pitt.

Also present: Councillors G Clements and Miss E Woodburn.

Officers: N White, Scrutiny Support Officer; L Priebe, Housing Services Manager; C Lloyd, Contracts and Property Manager; T Magean, Open Spaces Manager and C Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer.

SSC 23/08 Minutes of the Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2009 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SSC 24/08 Feedback from Audit Commission's Housing Inspectorate

Feedback from the Audit Commission's Housing Inspectorate (following their three day consultancy visit in January 2009) was presented to Members by the Housing Services Manager.

It was stressed that this visit was informal and the feedback will not be published by the Audit Commission and does not count towards the assessment of the service when Copeland Borough Council is re-inspected in October 2009.

The feedback indicates that progress has been made in this subject and Members should bear in mind that the full team has only been in place since October 2008.

Questions were then invited from Members, during which empty properties, the use of Consultants, family intervention for Young People and a sanctuary for women subjected to domestic violence was discussed.

The Committee thanked the Housing Services Manager and his team for their hard work and progress to date.

RESOLVED – That

- a) the feedback be received, and
- b) the Housing Services team be thanked for their hard work and progress to date.

SSC 25/08 Whitehaven Multi Storey Car Park

Members were reminded of their report from September 2008 following a site visit to Whitehaven's Multi Storey Car Park which highlighted a number of concerns they had regarding the Lifts being out of action, poor signage, Toilet facilities being closed, lighting and the stairs being slippery especially when wet.

An update from the Portfolio Holder advised Members that no improvements had been made, however, Copeland Borough Council was working with the Harbour Commissioner on the regeneration of the harbourside area.

The Committee was disappointed with the lack of progress and it was suggested that the views of Council staff who use the Multi Storey Car Park be sought. It was also suggested that Environmental Health Department be asked to visit the Car Park and comment on any Health and Safety issues. Members would also like to write to the Harbour Commissioner and the car park operator APCOA and invite them to a future meeting of this committee.

RESOLVED – That

- a) the update on Whitehaven's Multi Storey Car Park be received,
- b) Copeland Borough Council staff be asked for their views on the Car Park, and
- c) the Harbour Commissioner and the car park operator APCOA be invited to attend a future meeting of this committee.

SSC 26/08 Crematorium

Members received a report from the Open Spaces Manager on the operation of the Crematorium and Contracts and Property Manager on the maintenance of the building.

It was noted that a significant amount of work had been undertaken recently including resurfacing the road, resurfacing and remarking the car park, widening the exit road, and the addition of eight car parking bays.

The area for laying out of flowers had also been resurfaced using a green coloured top surface.

Within the building area, a new cooler unit had been installed for overnight storage of bodies awaiting cremation, glass was currently being installed in the cloister windows and the cloister garden was being updated.

With regard to the cremators, Members were advised that these were fifteen years old and nearing the end of their working life. Members were also advised that modernisation of the main chapel area was being considered and would involve possibly new flooring, seating, walls, ceiling and lighting.

Some Members of this Committee had visited the Crematorium on 29 April 2009 and they thanked the Crematorium staff for hosting a most informative visit.

The Committee was pleased to see improvements at the Crematorium and the update was welcomed.

RESOLVED – that

- a) the update on the Crematorium be received, and
- b) the Crematorium staff be thanked for hosting a most informative visit for Members on 29 April 2009.

SSC 27/08 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference**

Members considered a report on the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Following discussion, it was suggested that Option 3 – ‘Committees based on Task And Finish Groups’ be recommended to the OSC Management Committee as the preferred option of this Committee and the second preference be Option1 – Committees based on new Local Area Agreement.

RESOLVED – that Option 3 – ‘Committees based on Task And Finish Groups’ be recommended to the OSC Management Committee as the preferred OSC Terms of Reference option of this Committee and the second preference be Option1 – Committees based on new Local Area Agreement.

SSC 28/08 **Work Plan**

Members considered the Committee’s Work Plan.

RESOLVED: that the Work Plan be received.

SSC 29/08 **Vote of Thanks**

As this was the last meeting of the OSC Safer and Stronger Communities Committee in the 2008/2009 Municipal Year, the Chairman thanked the Committee Members and Scrutiny Officer for the work that had been achieved during the year. The Committee thanked the Chairman and Vice Chairman for their leadership.

RESOLVED: that a vote of thanks be recorded.

The Meeting Closed at 4:20pm

Signed:.....

Date:.....