

# **SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2009**

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F Gleaves and P Watson.

Also present: Councillors H Branney; R Cole; A Jacob; J Kane; P Tyson and Miss E Woodburn.

Officers: N White, Scrutiny Support Officer; J Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy and C Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer.

### **SSC 17/08 Minutes of the Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2008 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **SSC 18/08 Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest in Agenda Items**

Councillor R Pitt declared a personal interest in the Haverigg Prison Item due to his Wife being an occasional researcher at the prison.  
Councillor R Heathcote declared a personal interest in the same item due to his Son working at the prison.

### **SSC 19/08 Haverigg Prison**

Prior to discussion of this item, written comments received from Councillors P Whalley and D Wilson were distributed to Members.

Councillor Pitt then introduced this item to the committee and stressed the benefits to the local economy that the extra 150 jobs would bring. It was also noted that a community prison could house less serious offenders.

The need for full public consultation was acknowledged, however at this stage there was insufficient detail on which to consult. If the idea were to be supported in principle, a more detailed case would be prepared and then full public consultation could take place.

Questions were then invited from Members.

Members asked how a community prison differed from the type of establishment already in place. This was explained and also that prisoners

housed closer to home where family could visit more easily, were up to six times less likely to re-offend.

The need for full public consultation was further raised and it was again stressed that this would be undertaken at the right time, when more detail was available.

It was also noted that Copeland Borough Council was a consultee and not the lead on this item.

Members raised the question of extra traffic using the roads to the prison and were advised that the extra 150 jobs would be on a shift basis and would not create too much extra traffic.

The committee wished to know what percentage of current inmates were local and were advised this was 10%. If a community prison were established, this would be able to hold all the current Cumbrian prisoners and have space for approximately 200 non-Cumbrians.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee advises full council that the council should, in principle, support the concept of a Community Prison but that it would like to see the Home Office undertake:

- a) a detailed work up of plans by the Home Office for a Community Prison, and
- b) a full public consultation exercise, to include this council and South Copeland, on those plans.

**SSC 20/08**

### **Locality Working**

The Head of Development Strategy presented her progress report on Locality Working to the Committee and invited questions from Members.

During discussion of this item, it was confirmed that locality boundaries had not yet been finalised and were still subject to change.

It was noted that the Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) was being invited to send a representative to the Locality Working Group and it was requested that the Copeland Association of Local Councils also be invited.

The Head of Development Strategy was thanked for her report.

**RESOLVED** – That the

- a) progress report on Locality Working be received and
- b) Copeland Association of Local Councils be invited to send a representative to the Locality Working Group.

**SSC 21/08**      **Good Practice Example of Public Convenience Provision**

Members received a report from the Head of Development Strategy which highlighted a partnership case study offering public access to toilet facilities developed by Perth and Kinross Council in consultation with the Perthshire Tourist Board.

During the discussion that followed, Members were keen to progress any improvement to public convenience provision in Whitehaven as it was felt there was currently a severe shortage.

The Committee also noted that there had been no progress made on the issues previously raised regarding the multi-storey car park and requested the Portfolio Holder attend the next meeting.

Members also discussed the possibility of further investigations being made as part of the Townscape Heritage.

**RESOLVED** – that

- a) the Good Practice Example of Public Convenience Provision report be received,
- b) further investigations be made as part of the Townscape Heritage and
- c) the Portfolio Holder be requested to attend the next meeting to provide an update on the multi storey car park.

**SSC 22/08**      **Work Plan**

Members considered the Committee’s Work Plan.

**RESOLVED:** that the Work Plan be received.

The Meeting Closed at 3:20pm

Signed:.....

Date:.....