

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2008

Present: Councillors P Connolly (Chairman); K Hitchen (Deputy Chairman); Mrs Y R T Clarkson; J Kane; R Salkeld; Mrs W Metherell and P Whalley.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs E Eastwood and M McVeigh.

Officers: N White, Scrutiny Support Officer; H Mitchell, Head of Policy and Performance; M Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and C Willoughby, Members Services Technical Support Officer.

C Lloyd, Business Development Manager Agenda Item 5

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MGT 65/07 Asset/Property Management Update February 2008

Consideration was given to the update report on the Council's Asset/property Management Plan.

Members were updated on plans for 12-14 Self Build Plots at White's School, Kells, the joint marketing development with Cumbria County Council for the disposal of land at Harras Moor, the possibility for further self build plots at Red Lonning and ongoing discussions regarding Council land at Birks Road, Cleator Moor.

Members were also updated on the number of house builds for the above schemes and their relationship with the Local Plan 2001-2016 and future implications for the Local Development Framework.

Members were advised that annual asset valuations were underway using the services of Capita to provide information for Finance.

The Committee was also updated on the planned maintenance of Public Buildings owned by Copeland Borough Council and discussed the powers available to deal with derelict properties.

Members discussed the Borough's public toilets and whether Annual grants were available to Parish Councils. Clarification regarding the policy for application for grants was requested.

RESOLVED – that

a) the Asset/Property Management Update be received and noted, and

b) the policy for applying for grants to maintain public toilets be clarified.

MGT 66/07 Update on Gershon Efficiencies

Consideration was given to the update report on Gershon efficiencies. Members were advised that the unaudited figures indicate that Copeland had over-achieved its targets.

Members were also advised that the target for the next three years was a further 3% reduction in budget. These efficiencies were anticipated to arise from increased use of technology, shared services, business process re-engineering and procurement improvements.

RESOLVED – that the Gershon efficiencies update be received and noted.

MGT 67/07 ICT Sub Group

RESOLVED – that the notes of the ICT Sub Group held on 11 January 2008 be received and noted.

MGT 68/07 Executive Decisions

Consideration was given to the Decisions from the Executive made on 12 February 2008.

During consideration of this item Members were advised that Item 12 (Reports on revised Partnership arrangements for the West Cumbria Partnership) and Item 14 (Working Neighbourhoods Fund) were withdrawn from the agenda.

Members were also advised that of the 25 recommendations in Item 8, (Energy Review), 15 were agreed and the following were to be considered separately when cost and resource implications were known:-

c) external training on Climate Change and other sustainable development issues be given to the Council and be commenced by the end of the Municipal year at the latest

f) from now on a greater emphasis be put on developers to use renewable energy in new developments and to improve energy efficiency

- g) the Council should place greater priority and resources into dealing with energy efficiency, affordable warmth and fuel poverty.
- h) in light of recommendation g) above, the Council fills the current vacant sustainability officer post as soon as possible to deal with climate change, energy efficiency, affordable warmth and fuel poverty targets and priority is given to these issues within the post
- k) the Council provide a scheme for the installation of energy efficiency measures for people on benefits and provide £100,000 per annum until 2010 as grants to enable those people who live in private dwellings and are not on benefits to apply for help in installing energy efficiency measures within Copeland
- m) specific funding for the implementation of green issues to raise awareness of energy efficiency and climate change be allocated within the Council's budget
- u) the Sustainability (LA21) Forum be reintroduced with a view to sharing resources and costs with Allerdale Borough Council.
- w) a target date of 2009 be set for the action in the Council's Corporate Plan to influence home energy conservation plans and tackle fuel poverty
- x) the Council explore options for the use of small scale hydropower and other aspects of micro generation, and
- y) a report be submitted to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months time on the progress made on these recommendations

The Committee noted that the Executive had agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's action plan which included Joint Executive/ Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meetings would be included on the 2008/2009 calendar of meetings.

RESOLVED – that

- a) the decisions from the Executive meeting on 12 February 2008 be noted,
- b) the Committee be advised why Item 14, Working Neighbourhoods Fund, was withdrawn.

MGT 69/07 Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions - January to April 2008.

RESOLVED – that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions - January to April 2008 be noted.

MGT 70/07 Work Plan

The Committee considered the Work Plans of all the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

During consideration of this item Members discussed the Big Lottery Fund and requested details of how funds had been prioritised.

Members were updated on the G3 meeting with the OSC Management Chairman and Vice Chairman from 7 February 2008.

It was noted that:-

a) concern was expressed at where some working groups such as the Nuclear Working Group and the Corporate Improvement Programme Board reported to and whether Scrutiny should be involved with such bodies.

b) in respect of the new Investors In People standard, whether the Council will meet this. The Executive should be asked to nominate an Executive member as a "Champion of Learning" to go along with the Officer Champion.

c) exploratory work is required as to how best Scrutiny can be involved with a proposed Communications MOT for Copeland.

d) there should be some member involvement in the work being done on Locality Working and on the Working Neighbourhood Fund.

RESOLVED – that

a) the Work Plans be noted;

b) the Committee be advised of how the Big Lottery Fund had been prioritised; and

c) it be clarified where Working Groups, such as Nuclear Working Group and Corporate Improvement Board report to and whether there should be greater Scrutiny involvement.

The meeting closed at 12.15pm

Chairman