

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2010 AT 2:00PM

Present: Councillors B. Dixon (Chairman), K Hitchen (Deputy Chairman), Mrs Y Clarkson; Mrs M Docherty; Mrs E Eastwood; G Garrity; J Kane; Mrs W Metherell and P Whalley.

Officers: A Johnson, Interim Scrutiny Consultant; K Parker, Acting Director Quality of Life; H Mitchell, Head of Policy and Performance; M Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; T Capper, Democratic Services Manager; J Carroll, Waste Services Manager; J Betteridge, Head of Development and Strategy (for item 9 only); S Mitchell, Locality Manager and C Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer.

Also Present: Ms V Milburn, County Scrutiny Manager.
Councillors R Pitt and N Williams.

MGT 71/09

Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2010 be signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2010 be signed as a correct record subject to the fifth paragraph of minute MGT 69/09 being amended to read “It was requested that to move forward, a workshop be arranged to scrutinise the Corporate Planning process in the future.”

It was noted that ‘Total Place’ and ‘Calling Cumbria, Counting Cumbria’ documents had been circulated for background information, prior to commencement of this meeting, as agreed by the Head of Finance and MIS at the previous meeting.

MGT 72/09

Report From Cumbria Joint Scrutiny Committee – Place Survey Scrutiny Reviews

The County Scrutiny Manager presented a report from Cumbria Joint Scrutiny Committee – Place Survey Scrutiny Reviews to the Committee.

Members were advised that the Place Survey is undertaken in all English counties every two years, the next one being due in September 2010. The 2008 Place Survey in Cumbria showed higher levels of dissatisfaction for local authorities than in previous years and higher than other public sector services.

Members were also advised that a national trend that had emerged from the 2008 Place Survey was the strong relationship between information on services and higher public satisfaction. Communication and information on services were key factors in how the public rates a service overall.

A task group met officers from two authorities that had scored the highest and lowest for the following two service areas:

- Refuse Collection
- Street Cleanliness

During the discussion that followed, The Committee raised their concern that the public in general were unaware of who is responsible for what services in their area.

The Committee then considered the eight recommendations detailed in the report:

- 1.1 Cumbria's Local Authorities should examine how they currently endeavour to engage with the public to inform service design or reconfiguration. This means involving the public as a first part of the process of service change, rather than consulting on a list of options at a later stage.
- 1.2 Authorities should consider how they engage with colleagues from neighbouring authorities in Cumbria as part of the wider consultation process for service change.
- 1.3 Authorities should consider the possibilities of harmonising service delivery at or near district boundaries, where this is practicable.
- 1.4 Cabinet/responsible elected members should consider whether and how they engage in information-sharing on key service issues with colleagues in other local authorities across Cumbria.
- 1.5 Where street cleanliness services are subject to change, local authority branding should be considered as part of that process to raise the public profile of that service.
- 1.6 The Cumbria Strategic Partnership should consider how member and public engagement informs the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy refreshment process, to help shape local targets that have a greater resonance with local people and elected members.
- 1.7 The Joint Scrutiny Committee should consider how it engages with the public as part of its scrutiny review practice and consider the merits of establishing its own Community Engagement Framework and protocols to this end.
- 1.8 The Cumbria Joint Scrutiny Committee includes in its work Programme the outcomes of the 2010 Cumbria Place Survey, when that information is available.

RESOLVED - that recommendations 1.1 to 1.5 above be agreed.

MGT 73/09

Work Plan

At this point in the meeting, due to the presence of the County Scrutiny Manager, consideration was given to the Work Plan of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees, in particular the items on 'The barriers to closer collaboration between Councils' and 'The ability/capacity of partners in Copeland to deliver the Local Area Agreement'.

RESOLVED - that the two items be joined as one on the Work Plan.

MGT 74/09

Customer First

The Acting Director Quality of Life, Head of Policy and Performance and Waste Services Manager presented to the Committee on 'Customer First'.

Members were advised that the 'Customer First' project was created following the Place Survey results. The need to raise the profile and skill levels on customer care were highlighted, along with the training of Officers and Members.

Members were also advised that calls to Copeland Direct were already being recorded and used in one to one staff training. At this point of the meeting a draft briefing paper was distributed to Members, which included a summary of the activity to date.

The Committee was then updated on changes made within Waste Management where, over the last 18 months and with assistance from the Process Improvement Team and the Waste Management staff, areas for improvement had been identified. These included Bin Emptying, Fly Tipping and Litter Picking.

The Borough had now been divided into four zones and a waste management team allocated to each zone. Each team was able to create their own daily work plan.

At the same time, a target was set of a 5,000 litre reduction in fuel usage and this was well on the way to being achieved.

Waste management plan to conduct a short survey on their service within the next few months.

It was suggested that this item be included in the Committee's Work Plan for the municipal year 2010-2011.

RESOLVED - that the update on Customer First be received.

MGT 75/09

Locality Working

An update on Locality Working was provided by the Head of Development Strategy.

This included updates on the Pilot schemes at Howgate/North East Copeland, North West Copeland and Mid Copeland.

During the discussion that followed, Members expressed concern at how some areas, not already involved in the Pilot scheme, would be communicated to, particularly Whitehaven that had no Town or Parish Council.

Members also queried the funding arrangements of the Locality Managers.

RESOLVED - that the update on Locality Working be received.

MGT 76/09

Work Plan

Consideration was given to the Work Plan of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED - that the Work Plan be amended/updated as agreed,

MGT 77/09

Executive Decisions

Consideration was given to the reports considered in public by the Executive at its meeting on 10 February 2010.

During discussion of this item, Members raised concern regarding Executive Decision 9 – Minerals and Wastes Sites Allocation. It was noted that the Executive decision was "d) Copeland Borough Council in partnership with the County Council look to secure an appropriate package of community benefits from site operators on similar principles established for the LLW Repository near Drigg", however, Members were unaware what the established principles were.

The Committee then requested the Councillors E Woodburn and D Moore be invited to a future meeting of this committee to inform Members of how much was available, how much has been distributed and how communities can access funds.

The Committee also requested the Director of Development be invited to a future meeting of this committee to inform Members of the principles established for the appropriate package of Community benefits for the LLW Repository near Drigg.

RESOLVED - that

- a) the decisions made by the Executive at its meeting on 10 February 2010 be noted.
- b) Councillors E Woodburn and D Moore be invited to a future meeting of this committee to inform Members of how much was available, how much has been distributed and how communities can access funds.
- c) the Director of Development be invited to a future meeting of this committee to inform Members of the principles established for the appropriate package of Community benefits for the LLW Repository near Drigg.

MGT 78/09

Member's Communication

Councillor Hitchen raised the issue of communication to Members and in particular the number of Members who still did not receive communications via email, which was currently 22. This was for a number of reasons including not having a Council email address or a Laptop.

It was suggested that a Members IT Sub Group be reformed.

RESOLVED - that a Members IT Sub Group be reformed.

MGT 79/09

Progress Report on the Scrutiny Review

The Interim Scrutiny Consultant provided an update report on the Scrutiny Review.

A suggestion was put forward for a further one day workshop to be held on Friday 26 February from 9:00am until 3:00pm. The morning session would be cover Governance Arrangements and the afternoon session on Structures.

RESOLVED - that a further one day workshop to be held on Friday 26 February from 9:00am until 3:00pm at a venue to be arranged.

MGT 80/09

Strengthening Local Democracy

Councillor R Pitt raised a question regarding the process surrounding the Strengthening Local Democracy consultation.

Members were advised that the consultation document was received at the end of July 2009. The subject was discussed by Full Council on 8 September 2009 and a decision made to delegate the response to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Portfolio Holder (Councillor N Williams) and Shadow Portfolio Holder (Councillor C Whiteside).

A meeting for all members was held on 25 September 2009, following

which the response was sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government on 30 September 2009.

Following a discussion the Committee asked for copies of the response to be circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED - that Council's response on the Strengthening Local Democracy consultation, sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government on 30 September 2009, be circulated to all Members by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The meeting closed at 4:55 pm

Chairman.....

Date.....