

At a meeting of the SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on MONDAY, 15TH JUNE, 2009 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor S. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Chamberlin, M. Dixon, Errington, Foster, Rolph, J. Scott, L. Walton, Wares and A. Wilson.

Also in Attendance:-

Councillor Tate – Chairman of the Management Scrutiny Committee.

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ellis.

Minutes of the last Meeting of the Culture and Leisure Review Committee

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Culture and Leisure Review Committee held on 21st April, 2009 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

Annual Work Programme and Policy Review 2009-2010

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) requesting Members to determine the Annual Work Programme for the Scrutiny Committee during 2009-10, including the main theme for a detailed policy review.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Nigel Cummings, Review Co-ordinator (Scrutiny), proceeded to brief Members on the report. He highlighted the remit of the new Scrutiny Committee and the previous policy reviews that had been undertaken by the six previous Committees on areas which now fell into this Committee's purview. Mr. Cummings referred the Committee to the addendum to the report, which had been circulated following the Scrutiny Conference on

11th June, which provided details of the topics highlighted from the breakout sessions as potential issues for the Committee to consider. He invited Members to consider the topics suggested and the proposed methods of enquiry detailed at paragraph 4.2 of the report.

Councillor Chamberlin suggested volunteering as a potential topic for policy review as this had last been reviewed in 2004.

Mr. Cummings briefed the Committee on aspects a policy review of volunteering might include. He then referred Members to the shortlist of topics for review topics for 2009-10 detailed at paragraph 5.4 and invited the Committee to select one topic from this shortlist for an in-depth review. Mr. Cummings referred Members to the list of single items and advised that Scrutiny should only take place in respect of those topics where the Committee felt value would be added.

Ms. Charlotte Burnham, Head of Scrutiny, added, Members were recommended to put more emphasis on policy development and to ensure that the Work Programme was deliverable. Where there were single issue items of interest to the Committee, Members may better be served by receiving this information through alternative methods such as Member briefings or the information under separate cover. In this way, the Committee's Work Programme would retain sufficient flexibility to allow the Committee to respond to issues that emerge during the year. The intention was for the Committee to focus on priority areas and for Members to have a range of involvement in the Corporate Improvement Programme and the Budget and Policy Framework.

In response to Councillor Rolph's enquiry as to which Scrutiny Committee's remit the issue of public conveniences fell, Ms. Burnham acknowledged that there were some omissions and consideration would be given to where this and any others best lay. A review would be undertaken through the corporate centre.

Members of the Committee proceeded to give consideration to the four policy review proposals detailed at paragraph 5.4 and it was, following discussion:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- a) Access to Housing be selected as the Scrutiny Committee's topic for in-depth policy review for 2009-10; and
- b) a review of History and the Local Heritage of Sunderland be undertaken by a Task and Finish Group of the Committee.

(Signed) S. WATSON,
Chairman.