

At an Extraordinary meeting of the NORTH SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY 2nd APRIL, 2009 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Bell in the Chair

Councillors Charlton, Copeland, Francis, Howe, Shattock, Stewart, D. Wilson and N. Wright

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Foster, G. Hall, Leadbitter, J. Walton and L. Walton

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Community Leadership Programme: Review of Area Arrangements – Current Position and Next Steps

Mr. Phil Spooner, Community Leadership Programme Manager, provided Members with a comprehensive Powerpoint presentation on the importance and benefits of strengthening Area Governance through the Area Committees to make them more responsive to local circumstances and provide a key resource for Front Line Councillors.

Mr. Spooner referred Members to the vision for Area Committees where Members would lead their communities, identifying priorities. He highlighted the importance of engaging partners in the areas to work together with Members to address the priorities and the need for clear, focussed processes which were open, transparent and effective.

1. RESOLVED that the information be received and noted.

Area Committee Governance and Business Processes

Ms. Allison Patterson, Area Co-ordination and Special Programmes Manager, provided Members with a detailed Powerpoint presentation on the Review of Area Arrangements undertaken.

Ms. Patterson advised Members of the objectives of the Review and how those objectives would be achieved. She provided details of the proposed membership and core agenda model for the Area Committee.

In relation to decision making, Ms. Patterson advised that proposals had been drafted for Panel meetings to be held bi-monthly where all Members would attend to discuss SIB/SIP applications and applicants would attend to answer questions. Proposals had been drafted for Area Committee meetings to be held bi-monthly and to be divided into two parts. Part 1 would be a public meeting where the main items would be discussed and partners would attend. Part 2 would be a closed session where decisions on SIB/SIP applications were made and only Members of the Council would be present.

Members were concerned that the proposal to have Panel meetings alongside the Area Committees would be putting additional strain on Councillor's increasingly busy diaries. If any pressing issues were to arise then an extraordinary meeting could be called. Councillor Stewart stated that the meetings needed to be focused on the priorities and not be allowed to become a 'talking shop'.

Councillor D. Wilson advised that it was important that Members were involved in determining the applications and that this was not left solely in the hands of officers.

2. RESOLVED that the information be received and noted.

Local Area Plans – Analysis of Priorities

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an update on Local Area Plans and the development of priorities for the North Sunderland Area.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Pauline Hopper, Area Regeneration Officer, provided the Committee with a presentation detailing the process followed to date to identify the local priorities and pointing out the next steps to be taken to prioritise the list on which the Area Committee would focus its attention during 2009/10.

Ms. Hopper referred Members to the Local Area Plan draft Top Ten Priorities and the North Area Priorities Summary. She explained the format of the documentation to the Committee.

Members went through each priority in turn.

Ms. Hopper proposed that an Area Workshop with partners be held to agree the local priorities and how to measure performance against them.

The Chairman having thanked Mr. Spooner, Ms. Patterson and Ms. Hopper for their presentations, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that arrangements be made for an Area Workshop with partners to be held to agree the local priorities as detailed above.

(Signed) R. Bell,
Chairman.