

At a meeting of the ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 17TH JUNE, 2010 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Miller in the Chair

Councillors Ball, Bonallie, E. Gibson, Kelly, Padgett, Tye, L. Walton, Wood and A. Wright

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Wakefield.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee held on 26th April, 2010

Councillor Tye stated that the possibility of a report on Events Safety had been discussed however this had not been recorded in the minutes. He had also not received a response.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the committee were agreed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the above amendment.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially those Members who had been newly appointed to the Committee.

Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which advised Members of the responses received following public consultation and which sought the Committee's views on the revised supplementary planning document.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Keith Lowes, Head of Planning and Environment, presented the report and advised that the Committee's comments would be reported to Cabinet on 21st July, 2010, when the Cabinet would be asked to approve the draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document.

The Document set out detailed design guidance on alterations and extensions to existing residential properties and was intended to help achieve consistency in determining planning applications while allowing for local characteristics and the effect of previous decisions to be taken into account.

The Cabinet had approved the draft document for public consultation on 7th October, 2009 and the public consultation had been undertaken during March 2010. The document would now go back to Cabinet to be adopted.

The Chairman stated that he was pleased to see such a simple document which would be able to be used by everyone.

2. RESOLVED that the amended draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document be received and noted and the comments of the Committee be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

Sunderland City Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2010-2025

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which allowed the Committee to give consideration to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive on the Strategic Housing Land Assessment that was approved by the Cabinet on 2nd June, 2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Neil Cole, Planning Policy Manager, presented the report and advised Members that the SHLAA was not a policy document in its own right but informed the Core Strategy and Allocations Development Plan Document of the Local Development Framework (LDF). The targets set out in the SHLAA were based on the targets set in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which set the targets for the whole region. The Government intended to abolish the Regional Spatial Strategy.

The Chairman queried whether the new policies would be more flexible than the RSS.

Mr Cole advised that the policies needed to be more flexible; the RSS had not been flexible enough and had not been able to respond to the changes following the economic downturn.

Councillor A. Wright asked whether the brownfield sites would be land which was new housing land or whether it would be the land which had been cleared during the regeneration programmes.

Mr Cole advised that the brownfield land was a mix of both. The net change in housing capacity on cleared sites had been taken into account during the assessment.

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Annual Work Programme and Policy Review 2010-11

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which allowed Members to determine the work programme for the Committee for 2010-11 and to agree a main theme for a detailed policy review.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Helen Lancaster, Acting Scrutiny Officer, presented the report and advised that the report would be considered in two sections with consideration being given to the work programme and then the policy review being considered separately.

The remit of the Committee was set out in the report and the Committee was responsible for setting its own work programme.

Councillor Tye asked whether, following Cabinet approval, the 20mph zones pilot would be referred back to the Committee.

The Chairman confirmed that it would be coming back to the Committee in September.

The Chairman then advised that he felt it would be preferable to programme most of the existing work toward the start of the year to ensure that there was a more even spread of work and ensure that there was enough time at the later meetings to fully discuss all of the reports.

The Members agreed the draft Work Programme for 2010-11.

Ms Lancaster then introduced the policy review section of the report. At the Annual Scrutiny Conference held on 20th May, 2010 potential topics had been discussed. These six proposed potential topics were listed in the report.

The Chairman commented that the topics were listed in the report in order of popularity.

Councillor E. Gibson moved that the Committee study Sunderland 'The Place' as the main policy review topic for the year.

Councillor Tye seconded this.

The Chairman stated that people thought of Newcastle as being a city of culture. There was a need to identify what Sunderland had to offer to tourists and effectively promote the attractions. Sunderland was a beautiful city with numerous visitor attractions however visitors did not come to the city and there was a need to address the reasons why people did not come to the city.

Ms Lancaster confirmed that a report would be brought back to Committee in September which would scope the policy review of Sunderland 'the Place'

Councillor Wood commented that recycling and public transport both had items already on the Work Programme for the coming year. He suggested that the Committee could consider Traffic Management as well.

The Chairman stated that the Committee had looked at a lot of transport issues in recent years. Traffic Management could be kept in mind as a potential topic for consideration later in the year.

4. RESOLVED that:-

- a. The draft Work Programme for 2010-11 be approved.
- b. Sunderland 'The Place' be studied as the Committee's Policy Review topic.

Request to Attend Seminar – Centre for Public Scrutiny 8th Annual Conference and Exhibition

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which requested Members to consider nominating delegates to attend the Centre for Public Scrutiny's 8th Annual Conference and Exhibition to be held on 30th June – 1st July, 2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Helen Lancaster, Acting Scrutiny Officer, presented the report and advised the Committee that the details of the conference were attached to the report. The Chairman would be attending in his capacity as Chair of the regional Integrated Transport Authority and his place would be funded by that body. Any additional places would be funded from the Scrutiny Committee's budget.

Councillor Tye suggested that the Vice-Chairman, Councillor A. Wright, should attend the conference.

Councillor Bonallie expressed an interest in attending the conference.

5. RESOLVED that Councillors Bonallie and A. Wright attend the Centre for Public Scrutiny 8th Annual Conference and Exhibition.

Forward Plan – Key Decisions for the Period 1 June 2010 – 30 September 2010

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an opportunity to consider the items within the Committee's remit which were included in the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 June 2010 to 30 September 2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms Sarah Abernethy, Acting Assistant Scrutiny Officer, presented the report and advised Members that there had been an updated Forward Plan published which covered the period 1 July 2010 to 31 October 2010. The items within the remit of the Committee had been circulated to Members.

6. RESOLVED that report be received and noted and consideration be given to the Executive's Forward Plan.

(Signed) G. MILLER,
Chairman.