

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 3RD JULY, 2006

PRESENT: Councillor Driver in the Chair
Councillors B Anderson, J Bale,
P Grahame, B Lancaster and T Leadley

12 Late Items

Reference was made to a late item of business, Agenda Item 8 (Minute No 17 refers), the response of the Environment and Committee Safety Corporate Priority Board to the final Inquiry Report of the Scrutiny Commission (Avoiding Alcohol Misuse), which had been sent out after the agenda despatch.

This had been accepted as a late item of urgent business under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 because to delay receipt of the formal response would hinder the business of the Committee in that they would not be able to agree monitoring arrangements.

13 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cleasby and Pryke

15 Minutes - 5th June 2006

- (a) Scrutiny Commission (Flooding within Leeds) (Minute No 5(b) refers)
Councillor Leadly indicated that the meeting he had attended, which was referred to in this minute, was actually a 'Regional Spatial Strategy Review Meeting', rather than an Emergency Planning Meeting.
- (b) The Advisory Role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Minute No 8 refers)
The Chair indicated that he was endeavouring to arrange a meeting with Councillors Harris and Andrew Carter in order to progress this subject.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the above matters arising be noted

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday 4th September 2006.

- (b) That subject to the above, the minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2006 be confirmed as a correct record.

16 Vision for Leeds- 'Narrowing the Gap'

Further to Minute No 10, 5th June 2006, the Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and received evidence from Council Officers relating to strategies associated with the Council's 'Narrowing the Gap' objective contained in the Vision for Leeds document and also on the development of the Local Area Agreement for Leeds 2006-2009.

In attendance at the meeting were Kathy Kudelnitsky (Leeds Initiative), Sue Wynn (Neighbourhoods and Housing) and Jane Stageman (Chief Executive's Department). In brief summary, the main issues discussed were:

- Additional information was circulated at the meeting relating to the Index of Multiple Deprivation Statistics 2004, Intensive Neighbourhood Management Areas and 2004/05 Floor Targets – a combination of national and local benchmarks used to assess the progress of local partnerships and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding against Government targets;
- 'IoD Crime Domain 2004' statistics were queried, and it was felt that more detailed questions on matters such as this would perhaps be best addressed by any Working Group which the Committee might establish to look at matters in greater depth;
- A matrix was requested for submission to a future Committee or Working Group meeting, detailing the different levels of problems in different 'Super Output' areas;
- The differing problems in different areas, and the problems for the Council in providing appropriate, interconnected responses via Intensive Neighbourhood Management Areas initiative. This included helping the area to decide its own priorities and supporting and empowering individuals and groups in these areas to effect sustainable change on their own behalf;
- The need for the City as a whole to accept collective responsibility for the narrowing the gap agenda and sharing the relative affluence of the City as a whole to effect changes in areas of need;
- The role which the Local Area Agreement for Leeds 2006-2009 could play in terms of multi-agency approaches to some of the problems associated with areas of deprivation and how OSC might contribute to the process;
- The effectiveness or otherwise of 'broad brush' initiatives in tackling local issues;
- The question of 'buffer funding' to help alleviate the continuing problems of 'borderline' Super Output Areas if they suddenly fell out of that official category and suffered financially as a result.
- The current role of District Partnerships in tackling this issue.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted, and the subject be added to the Board's work programme for further consideration at the October meeting

- (b) That in the meantime, officers circulate more detailed data to OSC Members by the end of August, to enable Members to begin to grasp the extent of the problems and current initiatives.

17 Scrutiny Commission - (Avoiding Alcohol Misuse) - Response to Recommendations

The Committee considered the response of the Environment and Community Safety Corporate Priority Board to the findings of the Scrutiny Commission on Avoiding Alcohol Abuse, which had been circulated as a late item of urgent business (Minute No 12 refers).

The Chair proposed that an OSC Working Group be established to pursue the implementation of the Commission's recommendations over the next 12 months, and this was accepted. The Chair suggested that the Working Group should comprise himself and any OSC Member or former Commission members who wished to participate, names to be forwarded to the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development, who would advise Members of dates and times for Working Group meetings.

RESOLVED – That subject to the above, the report be received and noted.

18 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the Committee's work programme, updated to reflect decisions taken at previous meetings, together with a relevant extract of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and a copy of the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 14th June 2006.

Amongst the themes discussed for future Inquiries were the items referred to at the last meeting (Minute No 10 refers), as well as the workforce skills aspect of 'Narrowing the Gap' and Traffic and Transport Management across the City.

RESOLVED – That subject to the above comments, the Board's work programme be approved and accepted, and further discussions take place between the Chair and the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development regarding defining and scheduling the subjects to be covered.

19 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 4th September 2006, at 10.00am (Pre-Meeting 9.30am).