

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

MONDAY, 17TH MAY, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors A Barker, B Cleasby,
R Downes, J Jarosz, J Marjoram,
L Mulherin and M Rafique

122 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the May meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods). He also welcomed Councillor B Cleasby who had been appointed to the Board following the recent non-election of the former Councillor D Hollingsworth.

123 Late Items

The Chair agreed to accept the following documents as late items:-

- Review of the Housing Lettings Process – Draft Statement (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 129 refers)
- Worklessness Review – Draft Statement (Agenda Item 10) (Minute 130 refers)
- Annual Report 2009/2010 – Draft Annual Report 2009/2010 (Agenda Item 11) (Minute 131 refers)

The documents in question were late due to ongoing consultation following the agenda despatch deadline.

124 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

125 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A Castle and J Dowson.

126 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2010 be approved as a correct record.

127 Executive Board - Minutes

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the Executive Board meetings held on 7th April 2010 and 28th April 2010 be received and noted.

128 Inquiry into the EASEL Regeneration Programme - Draft Interim Report

Referring to Minute 93 of the meeting held on 9th February 2009, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's inquiry into the EASEL Regeneration Programme.

Appended to the report was a document entitled 'Draft Scrutiny Interim report – East and South East Leeds Regeneration Programme May 2010' for the information/comment of the meeting.

Prior to considering the draft report, the Board noted that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods was in agreement with the content and did not wish to make any further comments.

Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer, Environment and Neighbourhoods was in attendance to respond to any Members' queries and comments.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That approval be given to the Board's interim inquiry report on the EASEL Regeneration Programme in accordance with the report now submitted.

129 Review of the Housing Lettings Process - Draft Statement

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting the Board's draft findings and recommendations in relation to its review of the Housing Lettings Process.

Appended to the report was a copy of a document entitled 'Draft Scrutiny Statement – Housing Lettings Process – May 2010' for the information/comment of the meeting.

Simeon Perry, Housing Policy and Monitoring Manager, Environment and Neighbourhoods was in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the content of the update report due to be considered by the Executive Board on 19th May 2010 in relation to the review of the Council's Lettings Policy and also the consultation undertaken to date with political groups in this regard
(The Housing Policy and Monitoring Manager responded and briefly outlined the areas covered within the Executive Board report and the consultation undertaken to date with Elected Members)
- that the timing of the Executive Board report had not allowed for the work of the Scrutiny Board to be taken into consideration at this stage. It was the view of the Board that an acknowledgement needed to be given to the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Board on the housing lettings process as part of the update to Executive Board on 19th May 2010
- the need to incorporate a defined timescale in relation to Recommendation 4 'That any concerns or complaints made to the ALMOs about the behaviour of a particular tenant are acted upon with urgency'

(Following discussions, the Board agreed to include the following additional wording after the word urgency.... ‘,with an interim response given within 5 working days’)

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That, subject to the proposed amendment to Recommendation 4 as referred to above, approval be given to the Board’s Statement on the Housing Lettings Process in accordance with the report now submitted.
- c) That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods be requested to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Board on the housing lettings process as part of the update being presented to the Executive Board on 19th May 2010.

(Councillor R Downes joined the meeting at 10.05am during discussions of the above item)

130 Worklessness Review - Draft Statement

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting the Board’s draft findings and recommendations in relation to its review on Worklessness.

Appended to the report was a copy of a document entitled ‘Draft Scrutiny Statement - Worklessness – May 2010’ for the information/comment of the meeting.

The following representatives were in attendance to respond to any Members’ queries and comments:-

- Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer, Environment and Neighbourhoods
- Sue Wynne, Head of Regeneration Policy and Planning, Environment and Neighbourhoods

Arising from discussions, it was the view of the Board that due to the complex nature of this issue, the successor Board should be provided with regular updates in relation to the overall delivery of the new Employment Leeds model.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That approval be given to the Board’s Statement following its review on Worklessness in accordance with the report now submitted.
- c) That the Board’s Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to update the work programme for the successor Board.

131 Annual Report 2009/2010

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting the draft contribution of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) to the Scrutiny Boards' Annual Report.

RESOLVED – That, subject to a number of minor amendments, the contribution of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) composite Scrutiny Annual Report be approved.

132 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's work programme.

Appended to the report was a copy of the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st May 2010 to 31st August 2010 for the information/comment of the meeting.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That this Board notes the current position with regard to the work programme, which will be forwarded to the new Board for the 2010/11 municipal year for consideration.

133 Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair reminded Members that this was the last Board meeting within the current municipal year. He personally thanked Board Members, witnesses and officers for their support and commitment during the year.

(The meeting concluded at 10.25am)