

Community Services Committee

Held at Ryedale House, Malton
on Thursday 24 September 2009

Present

Councillors Mrs L Cowling (Chairman), Mrs De Wend Fenton, Hemesley, Ms Warriner and Woodward

Councillor Knaggs - Substitute
Councillor Mrs Shields - Overview & Scrutiny Committee Observer

In Attendance

Mrs B Bennett, Mrs F Brown, Mrs L Carter, R Etherington, Mrs M Jackson, P Long, S Richmond and J Rudd.

Minutes

23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Arnold, Mrs Frank, Hope and Mrs Keal.

24 Minutes

The minutes of a meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 23 July 2009 were presented.

Resolved

That the minutes of a meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 23 July 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

25 Urgent Business

The Chairman reported that there were no items to be considered under urgent business.

26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

PART 'A' ITEMS - Matters to be dealt with under delegated powers or

matters determined by Committee

27 Performance and Finance Report - Council Aims 1 - 4

The Heads of Economy & Housing, Environment and Planning submitted a joint report the purpose of which was to present for comment the performance and finance reports for Council Aims 1 - 4, and to inform Members of progress made against the Council's agreed aims and strategic objectives, as agreed by Members in the Council Plan 2009/13.

The Council Plan for 2009-13 had been adopted in March 2009. The Financial Strategy had been agreed in February 2009. The report included a progress report on the delivery of the Council Plan to the end of August 2009, in terms of actions delivered and performance levels achieved together with a review of the financial implications to date.

The report included the first 4 aims, which all fell within the terms of reference of the Community Services Committee:

- Aim 1 To meet housing need in the Ryedale District Council area;
- Aim 2 To create the conditions for economic success
- Aim 3 To have a high quality, clean and sustainable environment; and
- Aim 4 To help residents to achieve a healthy weight by encouraging an active lifestyle, in communities where everyone felt welcome and safe.

It was noted that performance against Aim 5: To Transform the Council was to be reported to the Policy & Resources Committee on 1 October 2009.

In addition, the report detailed the schedule of performance reports to be presented to Members throughout the year together with the links to the corporate planning framework.

Members considered the report in detail and sought clarification from officers on various points within the report. Members requested that where possible the use of jargon be avoided and that the report include a glossary of terms and abbreviations.

Resolved

That the Performance and Finance Report be endorsed.

28 Housing - Performance Report

The Head of Economy & Housing submitted a report the purpose of which was to inform Members of progress made against the Council's agreed Housing policies and to invite comments from the Committee.

The report outlined progress made towards the following strategic objectives:

- To enable the provision of affordable housing for rent and low cost ownership for sale
- Development of services to meet the needs of homeless applicants and implementation of measures to prevent homelessness
- To address decency issues in the private sector and the maintenance of the private housing stock in general
- Enabling independent living
- To contribute to social inclusion and the provision of sustainable communities

Members noted that the proposed development of 15 homes on an exception site in Pickering had received funding, and that consultation with the Town Council and the local community was in progress. It was anticipated that a planning application for the development would be submitted in the near future. A Pickering Ward Member reported that a presentation on the proposed development had been given to Pickering Town Council. The Housing Services Manager reported that an Open Day was to be arranged and this would provide an opportunity for members of the public to comment and ask questions. Members were of the opinion that it was important to ensure that the homes would be offered to Pickering residents. The Housing Services Manager reported that as this was an 'exception' site, the Section 106 Agreement would include a condition to this effect.

Further mention was made to the ongoing improved performance in relation to homelessness and the progress made in relation to mortgage rescue. The Committee recorded its thanks to the Housing Services Team.

Resolved

That the report be endorsed.

29

Policy in Relation to Wild Animals on Council Owned Land

The Head of Environment submitted a report which requested the Committee to determine a position in relation to the exhibiting/performance of wild animals through circuses etc on Council owned land.

Members were reminded that at a meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 26 March 2009, during a discussion on the proposed policy on the use of car parks, Members had requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting in connection with a policy relating to wild animals on Council-owned land.

It was reported that the Council had very little appropriate land on which to hold a circus, either with or without animals, and had never had an approach made to it. The legal position of issuing a blanket ban was not as simple as it first appeared but was open to legal challenge. Given the hypothetical question of a request for the staging of a circus with wild (non-domesticated) animals on its land it was recommended that the Council should not adopt a blanket ban on circuses with wild (non-domesticated) or performing animals but should consider each application on its own merits and refer any such application to the Community Services Committee for decision.

Resolved

That each application to stage a circus with non-domesticated animals on Council owned land be considered on its own merits and that any such application be referred to the Community Services Committee for determination.

NB Councillor Woodward recorded his vote against the above decision.

30 Low Carbon Economy - Regional Information Papers

The Head of Environment submitted a report the purpose of which was to inform and update Members in relation to regional activity and initiatives on the low carbon economy in Yorkshire and Humber and in particular the work of Yorkshire Forward, Government Office (GOYH) and the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (NYSP).

At the July 2009 meeting of the Committee Members had recommended to Council a range of initiatives to support the achievement of the Council's CO₂ targets.

The report included three papers outlining the work across the region to help reduce CO₂ emissions and promote a low carbon economy:

- Low Carbon Economy Update - Yorkshire Forward
- The Climate Change Challenge for North Yorkshire - GOYH
- A partnership approach to Climate Change - NYSP

The reports were presented for information and to help demonstrate how Ryedale District Council's initiatives related to the wider regional and sub-

regional context. However, the Head of Environment reported that in the event of any issues arising from the reports that the Committee wished to explore further, either by way of a visit or a presentation, this could be brought to a future meeting.

With reference to the GOYH report and the Renewable Energy Strategy and the aim to provide 15% of energy from renewables by 2020, Councillor Woodward sought clarification of the percentage of renewables applying to Ryedale. In addition, Councillor Woodward requested details of the top ten interventions to cut regional carbon emissions as referred to in the GOYH report. It was agreed that Councillor Woodward would receive a response to the former point and all Members would be provided with a copy of the response to the latter point.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

PART 'B' - Matters referred to Council

31 Monthly Winter Garden Waste Collection Pilot

The Head of Environment submitted a report the purpose of which was to consider the implementation of a monthly collection system pilot for garden waste during the winter months to reduce operational miles travelled, facilitate reductions in CO₂ emissions and secure efficiency savings.

The Council had made significant strides in actions to reduce CO₂ emissions and challenging targets had been set. Implementation of the changes recommended in the report would help reduce CO₂ emissions and enable RDC to exceed the emission reduction targets set as well as realise cashable efficiency savings. Meeting long-term government emission reduction targets would continue to be a real challenge, requiring significant further investment.

The report outlined two options for the Committee's consideration, option 2 being the preferred option, which involved four-weekly garden waste collections from around the end of November to early March - essentially three months, which would achieve the following benefits:

- Mileage reduction of an estimated 8,677 miles
- Estimated fuel savings of £13,910 for 2009/10
- Potential carbon savings of up to 42.07 tonnes and an estimated 2% reduction on RDC total emissions for 2009/10
- Vehicle hire savings over the Christmas/New Year period of £2000
- Potential recurring efficiency savings in future years of £8000.

In the event that the Committee supported the recommendation it would be referred to the next meeting of Council on 5 November 2009, with a view to implementation at the end of November 2009. Although the timescale for implementation was tight officers considered it achievable.

Resolved

That Council be recommended to approve

- (a) A pilot scheme to reduce the frequency of winter garden waste collections across the District from alternate weekly to once every four weeks during December, January and February 2009/10 to reduce CO₂ emissions and secure efficiency savings
- (b) Outcomes from the pilot to be reported back to Community Services Committee for consideration following the trial.

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm