

Minutes of the meeting held at Yoredale, Bainbridge on Friday, 3 August 2007.

Present:

WH Brown, D Heather, SR Macaré, Mrs Y Peacock, Dr KM Petyt and Ms N Stedman.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

15/07 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The report of the Secretariat Officer was noted.

16/07 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Having been nominated unopposed, it was –

RESOLVED –

That SR Macaré be elected Chairman of the Committee, to hold office until the first meeting of the Committee following the annual meeting of the Authority in 2008.

SR MACARÉ IN THE CHAIR

17/07 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Having been nominated unopposed, it was –

RESOLVED –

That Mrs Y Peacock be elected Deputy Chairman of the Committee, to hold office until the first meeting of the Committee following the annual meeting of the Authority in 2008.

18/07 PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2007, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

19/07 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No notifications of public questions or of the intention to make a statement had been received.

20/07 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

That pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the consideration of Item Nos 22 and 23 on the agenda on the grounds that, respectively, they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

21/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were presented from W Fenten, KJ Lancaster and Mrs S Marshall.

22/07 DECLARATIONS OF THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Members were reminded that at the Authority meeting on 31 July it had been agreed that Declarations of Interest should be taken at the start of each item rather than 'en bloc' at the start of the meeting.

23/07 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

No declarations of lobbying were made at the meeting.

24/07 EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Finance and Resources.

Members welcomed Chris Powell of Deloitte (the accountancy practice appointed as external auditor for the Authority by the Audit Commission). He briefly outlined the approach to identifying the programme of work and stated that the draft Audit Plan would, if necessary, be revisited as a result of any outcomes from the 2006/07 audit work.

RESOLVED –

That the draft Audit and Inspection Plan for 2007/08, as submitted by Deloitte, be noted and adopted.

25/07 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Finance and Resources.

The Internal Auditor advised members that there were four 'grades' of audit opinion, with 'Unsound' being the category omitted from the report.

Members welcomed the reports and commended officers for the high standard of performance reflected in the Internal Audit reports.

RESOLVED -

That the report and member comments be noted.

26/07 INTERNAL AUDIT: 2007/08 AUDIT PLAN

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Finance and Resources.

In response to a member's question, the Internal Auditor stated that some of the work for the 2007/08 audit would need to be carried out after the year-end, hence some work being programmed to be undertaken in 2008/09.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted and the Internal Audit Plan for 2007/08 be approved.

27/07 REVIEW OF AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE IN 2006/07

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy. Following questions on: valid planning applications; barn conservation and building conservation, it was -

RESOLVED –

That the Authority's performance in 2006/07 be noted.

28/07 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SATISFACTION SURVEY

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Planning.

Members welcomed the report and congratulated all those involved in its achievement.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

29/07 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REVIEWS 2007/08

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy.

It was suggested that if it was agreed to review the provision and management of the Authority's toilet facilities, it might be appropriate for the review to cover the wider visitor 'experience' at such

locations. Issues suggested included car parking, signage, footpaths, toilets and the visitor centres (although it was emphasised that this latter element should only be in respect of the initial impact and not become a full review of visitor centres). It was felt that the Review Group could 'scope' the precise detail of the review if and when established.

RESOLVED –

That:

(a) the report and further comments be noted;

(b) performance improvement reviews be carried out during 2007/08 on the following areas of the Authority's work:

- Provision of toilets (and associated visitor infrastructure)
- Production of planning policy

(c) Review Groups be established to include the following member representation – Dr KM Petyt and Ms N Stedman (Provision of toilets) and Mrs Y Peacock and WH Brown (Production of planning policy).

30/07 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSULTATIONS – PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REVIEW

[Note: Ms N Stedman declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in this item as an employee of Natural England.]

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy.

In response to a member's question, the Chief Executive stated that in due course a report on the possibility of the Authority charging for services, would be brought to the Authority for consideration.

RESOLVED –

That:

(a) the outcome of the review of the Authority's performance in relation to dealing with natural environment and cultural heritage consultations be noted; and

(b) the action plan at Annex D of the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy be approved, subject to funding being secured for item 5.

31/07 PROGRAMME FOR MAJOR PROJECT REVIEWS

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy.

RESOLVED –

That the proposed programme of major project reviews set out in Annex B .to the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy be approved

32/07 AUDIT COMMITTEES – PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

CONSIDERED – the report of the Senior Finance Officer.

In considering the Issues within the Self-assessment checklist which had achieved a 'No' response, the following points were raised:

- Summaries of 'quality questionnaires' would be included within internal audit reports
- No action was required on the annual report issue
- The External and Internal Auditors would be available for private meetings with members 15 minutes before the start of Committee meetings
- No action required in respect of attendance at meetings by the Section 151 Officer.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted and subject to the further points raised at the meeting, the draft Self-assessment checklist be endorsed.

33/07 BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2007/08 PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AT END OF QUARTER 1

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Conservation and Policy.

In considering the Action Plan, members raised a number of issues to which officers responded as follows:

- Target 31(a) had been rescheduled because of the pressure of work and the setting up of the Three Peaks Forum
- Whilst Target 66 had been revised following the departure of one of the Authority's Enforcement Officers, the remaining two Enforcement Officers (job-share as 1 full-time equivalent post) had had their hours extended to approximately a 1.3 full time equivalent post
- The rescheduling of Target 75 was regretted and members advised of the precise reason

RESOLVED –

That subject to the further comments being taken into account, the progress made towards achieving the actions set out in the Best value Performance Plan 2007/08 be noted.

34/07 REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIPS

CONSIDERED – the report of the Chief Executive, who reminded members that at the Authority meeting on 31 July, it had been agreed that the Authority's representation on a number of partnerships should be by the Member Champion for that area of work.

Members, in considering the report:

- endorsed the recommended partnership deletions
- supported the deletion of the Richmondshire Regeneration Board
- noted that the Authority's representation (KJ Lancaster) on Hudson House should be deleted as not being a 'partnership'

- endorsed the proposed change in representation on the Pennine Bridleway Steering Group.

RESOLVED –

That:

- (a) the report and further comments be noted; and
- (b) the Authority be recommended to
 - endorse the proposed deletion of representation from the marked partnerships, and from the Richmondshire Regeneration Board; and
 - revise the representation on the Pennine Bridleway Steering Group as proposed.

35/07 MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

CONSIDERED – the report of the Chief Executive.

Members were advised that officers had attended a meeting of the North Yorkshire Improvement Partnership, a County-wide group that co-ordinates training events for elected members and which the Authority could use as a training resource.

RESOLVED –

That:

- (a) the report be noted;
- (b) no action be taken on arranging specific training on the two issues referred to in the report; and
- (c) a further report be brought to the Committee when a programme of training has been produced through the North Yorkshire Improvement Partnership.

The remainder of business was considered in private

36/07 PRIVATE MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the private minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2007, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

37/07 REVIEW OF THE WIDE AREA NETWORK CONTRACT AND SUPPORTED SYSTEMS

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Finance and Resources.

Members welcomed the report as interesting and informative.

They were advised that the Authority's '0870' number was a 'national' not a 'premium' rate number and it was confirmed that the local exchange numbers could still be used.

RESOLVED –

That the report and 'Lessons learnt' content within Appendices 1 and 2 of the report of the Head of Finance and Resources be noted.