

**REGENERATION AND TECHNICAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Monday 11th August 2008**

PRESENT – *Councillor Julie Slater (in the Chair), Councillors, Kay, Surve, Maxfield and Konrad Tapp.*

IN ATTENDANCE –

Councillor Cottam	-	Executive Member for Regeneration
<i>Adam Scott</i>	-	Strategic Director for Regeneration
<i>Brian Bailey</i>	-	Lead Officer
<i>Ian Richardson</i>	-	Traffic and Transport Manager
<i>Paul Conlon</i>	-	Principal Scrutiny Officer
<i>John Addison</i>	-	Scrutiny Officer

RESOLUTIONS

7 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies from Councillors K. Foster, Mulla and Mike Johnson,

8 Minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2008

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2008 be received and signed subject to the inclusion of Councillor Maxfield in the attendance list.

9 Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest made.

10 Work of the Executive

The Executive Member for Regeneration was invited to give the Committee a brief overview and update on the Executive Decisions he had taken since the last meeting of the Committee, and to highlight any future decisions that he may be taking between this Committee and the Committees next meeting to be held in June 2008.

Members were also provided with a budget position statement for the Regeneration portfolio, which included progress on efficiency reviews.

The Committee considered the Executive Member decisions, Executive Board decisions relating to the portfolio and the current position in relation to the budget.

Members were informed that the budget pressure on Regeneration & Environment department had been reduced by £286,700 over the previous month, following scrutiny of projected receipts for the Shopping Centre Car Park, and ongoing negotiations with The Mall. It was noted that there was additional pressures on Parking Services and grounds maintenance.

The Executive Member informed Members that there was a pressure on his portfolio of £252,406 which related to 2006/07 estimated income from the shopping centre car park, initially written down by the department as unachievable.

Members held a detailed discussion around the Regeneration Portfolio's budget position and how the department planned to address its budget deficit.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11 PennineReach – Consultation

Members were shown a presentation on the progress on the design of the Pennine Reach Scheme from the Council's Traffic and Transportation Manager.

The Committee also received two reports prepared by Members which set out the initial recommendations on the consultation and the subsequent follow up action. Members were also asked to consider recommendations for consideration by the Policy and Review Committee

Members were reminded that Pennine Reach was a dynamic service designed to improve the public transport network between Darwen, Blackburn and Accrington and also between Accrington and Blackburn via Rishton, Great Harwood Clayton-le-Moors and Oswaldtwistle. It was noted that this issue was selected as a topic for scrutiny for the year and that the Committee agreed that the first phase of this scrutiny topic would be to look at the consultation being carried out on the scheme and how suggestions/ views were addressed and taken in to account in the final agreed plans.

The Chair reported that Committee Members had attended a number of consultation meetings the first of which was held on Monday 16th June 2008 at Darwen Town Hall.

It was reported that four Members of the Committee had attended the Darwen consultation meeting which was very well attended and had

exceeded the numbers expected. The meeting had also allowed Members of the Committee the opportunity to speak with many of those present. A number of issues highlighted to Members at the meeting included:-

1. The venue was not suitable for the needs of the consultation.
2. The format for the consultation was not appropriate for the issue being consulted on.
3. The consultation form and letter inviting people to the meeting was not delivered to all affected properties.
4. The consultation response form did not appear to allow for comments to be made but required a separate letter to the free post address.
5. There were numerous comments on the worth of the consultation and many stating that it was not a real consultation but a paper exercise.
6. The consultation documents and maps contained a number of inaccuracies.
7. Officers present were unable to give answers to all questions asked.

As a result of Members attending the first consultation meeting and talking and listening to members of the public, The Committee agreed that a number of interim recommendations be submitted to the Executive Member for Regeneration with the recommendation that they be implemented immediately, as listed below;

“That the Executive Member be requested to consider for immediate implementation;

1. A change to the format of the consultation meetings to ensure a more structured delivery of information by way of a presentation on the proposals setting out the benefits and issues followed by a question and answer session to enable members of the public to have their say and seek clarification on issues.
2. That the suitability of venues being used for the consultation be re-assessed in light of the experiences in Darwen and the level of public interest generated by the proposals.
3. That the distribution of information on the consultation to members of the public, businesses and residents be evaluated and reported

to the members of the Committee in light of the comments made at the meeting.

4. That efforts be made to ensure that the public are re-assured of the value of the consultation and how comments can affect the outcome. These steps taken to be reported to the next meeting of the Regeneration and Technical Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. That as an example the Committee would wish to see how concerns of residents/ businesses of a specific area are to be addressed.
6. That a further consultation meeting along the lines set out in recommendation 1 be arranged for Darwen at a more appropriate venue as soon as possible.
7. That step's be taken to ensure that officers at the consultation meetings are able to answer questions put by these attending".

Members were then presented a report from the Executive Member for Regeneration, providing Members with a response to each of the Committees interim recommendations.

Members also held a discussion with the Executive Member for Regeneration and the Strategic Director for Regeneration around the presentation, the consultation meetings and the interim recommendations and there response.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the reports be noted.
- 2) That the interim recommendations to the Executive Member for Regeneration and their response be noted.

12 The Work Programme

The Principal Scrutiny Officer provided Members with a report that set out the work programme of the Committee as agreed by the Policy and Review Committee at its meeting on 23rd July 2008.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer then outlined the Committees main work programme items for the year, PennineReach, Worklessness and Community Safety Partnership and Domestic Violence

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the work programme for the year as approved by the Policy and Review Committee be noted.

Signed.....
Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....