
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2004

COS.149/04 RESPONSES FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered the following Executive's response to matters raised originally by this Committee :

(b) EX.179/04 – Rural Strategy – Review of Action Plans

The Executive on 13 September 2004 had considered matters raised by this Committee on the Rural Strategy Action Plan Review. The Executive had responded as follows :

- “(1) That the outcome of the Rural Strategy Action Plan Review be noted and the suggested overall priorities agreed.
- (2) That the comments of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.”

Members expressed concern that the Executive had not specifically dealt with the detailed comments made by this Committee. In particular, they referred to the concerns of this Committee over the amount of affordable housing in the rural area, and the Committee's suggestion that the Housing Enabling Officer post could be used to work on demonstrating housing needs in these areas. Members were concerned that the Executive had merely “noted” the comments of the Committee, but had not given responses to the individual matters raised by this Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that this concern over the Executive “noting” references from Overview and Scrutiny Committees had also been raised at the Management Committee, and that the Acting Town Clerk and Chief Executive had undertaken to discuss the matter with the Leader.

Members referred to the nine overall priorities within the Rural Strategy as set out in the Executive Minutes, and suggested that these priorities could be ranked in order of priority either individually or in bands.

Although this Committee has not specifically requested prioritisation of these 9 priorities at the time, they had emphasised the importance of affordable rural housing and also youth provision and suggested that these should be the top priorities.

The Health and Community Activities Portfolio Holder stated that, whilst the Executive does sometimes note the comments of Overview & Scrutiny Committees, there are also instances when the Executive asks Overview & Scrutiny Committees to consider certain matters and they are simply “noted”.

RESOLVED – That the Executive be informed that the Committee is concerned that the specific points raised by this Committee were not addressed, particularly the work of the Housing Enabling Officer and it is also specifically suggested to the Executive that within the overall priorities in the Rural Strategy, Affordable Rural Housing and Youth Provision should be highlighted as the top two priorities.