
**EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD ON 7 APRIL 2011**

EEOSP.24/11 NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) submitted report OS.08/11 which included the draft report of the Neighbourhood Services Task and Finish Group.

Mrs Edwards reminded the Panel that the Task and Finish Group was a joint Group between the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Group had produced the draft report which set out a number of recommendations for action for the Executive.

Mrs Edwards took the Panel through the background and methodology of the Task and Finish Group and highlighted an update on Cumbria County Council's Task group on Locality Working.

Mrs Edwards informed the Panel that the County Council had also undertaken a review of Neighbourhood Working focussing on localities. The City Council Task and Finish Group invited a representative from the County Council to give a presentation to the Task and Finish Group on their work. The Task and Finish Group had suggested that it would be useful for the City and County Council to meet to discuss the outcomes but unfortunately this had not happened.

Mrs Edwards drew Members attention to the recommendations in the report and asked for their comments.

- *While happy with the recommendations the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group was not that which the Panel thought the Group would focus on. It was believed that the report would focus more on the work around area maintenance and how Officers would work with partners to obtain the best results for the Council.*

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder stated that he agreed and that the Council needed to look at area based working.

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) added that the emphasis of the report was on community engagement and that the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group had not looked at the delivery of environmental services in depth. She explained that transformation and the consideration of area working had been held back to allow for the Task and Finish work to be completed. Ms Culleton explained that savings for next year must now be found and Officers were working on ways to find

savings by changes in service delivery and she was keen for Panel Members to be involved. Ms Culleton advised that staff workshops had been arranged for end of May and Early June to enable staff to have input into those changes and asked that she meet with the Chair of the Panel for a short meeting for the Panel's input. It was then expected that firm proposals would be in place by the end of June.

- *What are the next steps and when will the proposals be implemented?*

Ms Culleton explained that the outcome of the workshops would lead to the proposals and there would be consultation with staff before those proposals could be implemented. While Officers were aware of the work the County Council were doing in respect of community engagement, the City Council were looking at more multi-agency working and work within the Neighbourhood and Green Spaces Team to arrange services and deliver services to the community.

The Strategic Director (Mr Crossley) explained that once the report had been considered by the Executive Officers could begin work on timetabling the required work.

Ms Culleton added that the work was part of the Corporate Plan and all the actions were included in the Covalent system and that was monitoring progress and updated quarterly.

- *The City Council is not letting the public know that things are working well and that things are being achieved.*

Mr Crossley advised that the process for the changes was underway and that the recommendations from the Community and Environment and Economy Scrutiny Panels would be taken to the Executive for consideration. If the Panel wished to add more recommendations with regard to more practical work it was important that that was done quickly to keep momentum and to work with the meeting cycle.

- *The Panel's development session to be held in June would look at those monitoring changes and look at changes in the practical work of the Council. Performance Indicators could be produced that would monitor those change.*

Mr Crossley believed there needed to be more clarity on service delivery and methods of service delivery and that multi-agency working would be useful. While he agreed that the report seemed biased towards community engagement there was not a lot of work to be done to add more recommendations. That work could be done by the Panel or a sub-group and should focus on any additional recommendations for inclusion in the report.

The Panel agreed that the Task and Finish Group would meet on 11 April 2011 at 1:00pm to consider further recommendations.

RESOLVED – 1) That the recommendations as set out in the Neighbourhood Working report be agreed and the Panel give delegated responsibility to members of the Task and Finish Group to provide additional recommendations following their meeting on 11 April 2011;

2) That the Neighbourhood Working report be referred to the Executive for a formal response to the recommendations.