

## RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28th July, 2008

**PRESENT** – Councillor Haszeldine (in the Chair); Councillors Burton, Coultas, Francis, Johnson, Lewis, Richmond, Thistlethwaite and Walker. (10)

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Maddison and Swainston (2)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillors Harker and Mrs. H. Scott. (2)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services, and David Hall, Assistant Director, Accounting Services and Local Taxation, within the Corporate Services Department.

**R20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**R21. CLOSURE OF POST OFFICES WITHIN DARLINGTON** - Consideration was given to a ‘call-in’ from the Cabinet meeting held on 8th July, 2008, (Minute C25(2)/Jun/08) in relation to the closure of Post Offices within Darlington. The ‘call-in’ was taken in accordance with the Council’s Constitution and had been signed by three Members of this Scrutiny Committee.

The Members who had requested that the decision be ‘called-in’ outlined their reasons for that decision and their concerns that they felt that the possibility of sustaining some of the Post Offices by Council subsidy had not been extensively looked at prior to Cabinet’s decision. They referred particularly to the Cleveland Terrace Post Office and reported that the Post Master of that Post Office had indicated that he would like to enter into discussions with the Council about retaining that Post Office and make a contribution towards the financial subsidy, thereby reducing the amount required from the Council.

The Post Master addressed the meeting on the proposal.

Discussion ensued on the priorities of the Council as set out in the Community Strategy and the view of some Members for the Committee to support Cabinet’s decision not to subsidise the Post Offices due to lack of funding and the unknown financial burden and focus on those previously identified priorities.

**RESOLVED** – That the decision of Cabinet not to subsidise those Post Offices being closed by Post Offices Limited be supported.