

# **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET**

Wednesday, 14th December 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Executive Leader), Miss D. H. Campbell J.P., Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey J.P., Mrs C. J. Spencer, Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor and P. J. Whittaker.

Observer: Councillor A. N. Blagg.

132/05 **INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. M. Bell, Head of Street Scene and Waste Management to his first Meeting of the Cabinet.

133/05 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 30th November 2005 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

134/05 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP**

It was noted that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Group dated 12th December 2005 would be submitted to the next Meeting of the Executive Cabinet.

135/05 **REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY PROCESS**

Consideration was given to the report on the review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the light of comments made by Members and the Scrutiny Committees and following the Scrutiny Workshop. The Cabinet were generally in support of the proposed new arrangements and structure as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

It was felt, however, that it would be appropriate to refer the Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Task Groups, together with Terms of Reference for the Performance Management Board and the Audit Board to the Standards Committee for detailed consideration, to enable a full discussion to take place on their various roles and responsibilities together with the interaction between each body. It was

**RESOLVED:** that a full report on the proposed Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Task Groups, together with the Terms of Reference for the Performance Management Board and Audit Board be submitted to a Special Meeting of the Standards Committee to take place as soon as possible.

136/05

**ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

(1) High Hedges Legislation

Members considered recommendations received from the Housing and Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee regarding fees charged by the Council in relation to appeals submitted under the high hedges legislation. The Chairman of the Housing and Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee, Councillor A. N. Blagg, spoke in support of the recommendations.

Members felt that there was insufficient evidence to indicate that the present fees should be reduced in line with the proposals from the Housing and Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee, particularly in view of the budgetary pressures on the Authority and the cost of implementing Government legislation. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the proposed level of fees be referred back to the Scrutiny Committee for further consideration;
- (b) that Officers be requested to investigate alternative ways of enabling applicants to pay the fee such as paying by instalments.

(2) Play Areas in Rubery

Members considered the motion referred from the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee in relation to the provision of a play area in Brook Road Recreation Ground, Rubery and the installation of a BMX/skateboard facility at St. Chads Recreation Ground, Rubery.

It was reported that both the improvement scheme in Brook Road and the installation of a BMX/skateboard facility at St. Chads Recreation Ground were proceeding together with a number of other schemes throughout the District, but consideration needed to be taken of the capacity implications in terms of Officer time required to implement the schemes. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:** that the position be noted.

137/05

**COUNCIL TAX BASE CALCULATION 2006-07**

Having considered the figures relating to the calculation of the Council's Tax Base, it was

**RESOLVED:** that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992 the Council's Tax Base for 2006-07 assume a collection rate of 99.00% and be calculated at 35,593.67 for the area as a whole and for individual Parishes as set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

138/05

**COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2006-07**

Consideration was given to the draft Committee Timetable for 2006-07. It was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Committee Timetable for 2006-07 be approved.

139/05

**WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS**

Consideration was given to the report on the Local Area Agreement for Worcestershire and the importance of this Council's participation in the process as part of the Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership. Members recognised the need to participate fully in the Local Area Agreement and noted comments submitted on the Agreement. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that it be noted that a Local Area Agreement is a Performance contract between Central Government and the County Local Strategic Partnership designed to deliver improved outcomes for local people;
- (b) that the Council commits to work closely with Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership in participating in the development of the Local Area Agreement for Worcestershire as part of the Recovery Plan;
- (c) that the Council commits to work closely with Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership in participating in the development of the Local Area Agreement as part of the drive to meet statutory responsibilities;
- (d) that the Council commits to work closely with Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership to secure the best outcomes for the people of the District through participation in Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement;
- (e) that the progress to date in developing the Local Area Agreement for Worcestershire be noted, in particular the shortlist of outcome priorities selected;
- (f) that the developing approach to project managing Bromsgrove's Local Strategic Partnership (and the Council's) contribution to the Local Area Agreement for Worcestershire be noted, in particular the funding stream issue which will need to be kept under review; and
- (g) that the tight timescales imposed by the Government be noted and that approval of the final Local Area Agreement submission be delegated to the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Recovery and Strategic Partnerships.

140/05

**ARTS STRATEGY – CONSULTATION RESULTS**

Members gave consideration to the report on comments received on the Draft Arts Strategy 2006-2011 following the consultation process. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the comments set out in the Appendix to the report be noted and that the recommended actions be approved;
- (b) that in relation to comment 2, it be noted that any requests from the Artrix Trust for additional capital investment would be considered in the usual way and at present no such request had been received;
- (c) that subject to the agreed amendments the Arts Strategy 2006-2011 be approved.

(NOTE: Councillors Miss D. H. Campbell J.P., and Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths declared personal interests in this item as Members of the Bromsgrove Arts Centre Operating Trust.)

141/05

**STREET SCENE STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to the report on the implementation of the Street Scene Strategy following recommendations from the Scrutiny Sub-Group and consideration by the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:** that the view of the Scrutiny Sub-Group and the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee regarding prioritisation of key areas of the Depot Strategy as set out in the report be approved.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the preferred implementation plan be approved subject to the agreement of Council to the release of funding of £35,750 from working balances to enable the Strategy to be introduced from 1st April 2006.

142/05

**APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency as a decision was required thereon before the next Meeting of the Executive Cabinet.)

It was reported that in order to facilitate the appointment of Departmental Heads of Service, it would be appropriate to amend the Council's Scheme of Delegation to restrict the role of the Appointments Committee to determining applications for the posts of Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Director. Following discussion, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Standards Committee be requested to approve the amendment to the Council's Scheme of Delegation to restrict the role of the Appointments Committee to determining applications for the posts of Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Director; and
- (b) that in view of the urgency of the matter the Cabinet's decision on this matter be not subject to the Council's call-in procedure.

The Meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.

Chairman