

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET

Wednesday, 6th September 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Executive Leader), Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Deputy Executive Leader), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and P. J. Whittaker.

Observers: Councillors Miss D. H. Campbell J.P., P. M. McDonald and N. Psirides J. P.

48/06 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor B. L. Fuller C.B.E., Q.F.S.M.

49/06 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 2nd August 2006 were submitted.

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

50/06 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Framework held on 3rd August 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted and that the recommendations be approved.

51/06 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 1st August 2006 were submitted.

With reference to Minute No. 31/06 regarding the Board's concerns at the decision of the Cabinet to set up its own Advisory Group in relation to the Bromsgrove Museum, the Leader explained that the Cabinet wished to explore an option in more detail which had been dismissed in the Task Group report. It was also reported that the relevant Portfolio Holder had been looking into the matter prior to convening the Advisory Group

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted.

52/06 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 21st August 2006 were submitted.

Councillor P. M. McDonald, Chairman of the Board, addressed the Cabinet and drew attention to a number of issues, concerns and requests for information raised at the meeting, including the need to investigate the use of two separate consultants to undertake assessments of disabled access to Council buildings.

RESOLVED:

(a) that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted;

(b) that the comments made by Councillor P. M. McDonald be noted and addressed.

53/06

INTEGRATED FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 1, 2006/07

The Cabinet considered a report which provided information on the results across a range of performance indicators in relation to corporate priorities for the first quarter of 2006/07, together with the interrelationship between the Council's financial position and operational performance in key areas. At the request of the Leader, each Portfolio Holder referred to the actions to be taken to mitigate overspends within their respective service areas. It was noted that the report had also been considered at the last meeting of the Performance Management Board and the Leader drew attention to the need to ensure that decisions taken by the Performance Management Board were recorded as recommendations.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report and appendices be noted;
- (b) that the current underspend to budget of £10,000 be noted;
- (c) that the predicted overspend be noted; that Heads of Service be requested to review the services provided to reduce the overspends where appropriate; and that the Head of Financial Services be requested to submit a report in two weeks' time to the Leader on the actions to be taken by individual service areas to reduce the overspend to bring it back in line with budget, including an analysis of revenue and cost;
- (d) that the use of balances be noted;
- (e) that the capital underspend of £549,000 against the probable Revised Capital Programme at June 2006 and the progress on capital schemes to date be discussed by Cabinet Members outside the meeting.

54/06

A STRATEGY FOR DE-COMMISSIONING COUNCIL OWNED HOSTELS

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposed strategy for the phased de-commissioning of the Council's four hostels for persons experiencing homelessness and their partial replacement with better quality self contained units of temporary accommodation. The report explained why there was a need to de-commission the hostels and highlighted the potential risks to the Council arising from the proposals and actions to minimise such risks. During the discussion the Leader emphasised the need for good working relations between Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) and the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Council commit to working in partnership with BDHT on the de-commissioning of Council owned hostels;
- (b) that the strategy be approved in principle on the basis of option a) as detailed in section 6.4 of the report, subject to further consideration of detailed financial and design proposals, and that an assurance be obtained from BDHT that it will make available two units of temporary accommodation for emergency use by the Council in the Wythall area on the basis that the Council will consider allocating grant funding towards conversion costs;
- (c) that in the event the Council withdraws from the strategy, any abortive design and plan preparation costs (commissioned following the approval of the strategy in principle) experienced by BDHT be met in accordance with arrangements to be mutually agreed by the Council and BDHT;

RECOMMENDED: that the potential asset value of the land and buildings associated with de-commissioning of the hotels be re-invested into the re-modelling scheme, and that any surplus monies be ringfenced and used in the final phase of the strategy in relation to Burcot Hostel.

55/06 **COUNCIL PLAN 2007- 2010 PART 1**

Consideration was given to a report on a new vision, objectives, priorities and underlying values for the Council which would form the basis of the Council Plan for 2007- 2010, together with new "strap lines" for the Council. Officers indicated that they wished to withdraw the proposed internal "strap line" for further discussion with staff.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the new vision, Council objectives, priorities and the values that underpin these, as set out in the report, be approved;
- (b) that the new Council "strap line" for use in public be approved;
- (c) that the next stages in the process of developing a Council Plan be noted.

56/06 **COUNCIL RESULTS 2005 - 2006**

Consideration was given to a report which presented the Council Results document for 2005-06. The document included information which compared the Council's performance against Best Value Performance Indicators, particularly those which were key to the Council's recovery. It was pointed out by the Leader that considerable progress had been made by the Council since the year end which was due to the effort and dedication of the Officer team.

RECOMMENDED: that the Council Results 2005-06 document be approved.

57/06 **BROMSGROVE PARTNERSHIP – LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the Government thinking on Local Strategic Partnerships, together with the new arrangements for the Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership which had included a restructuring of the Board and the agreement of four new priorities. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Government thinking on LSP's be noted;
- (b) that the priorities of the Bromsgrove Partnership as set out in the report be endorsed;
- (c) that the new arrangements for the Bromsgrove Partnership as set out in the report be endorsed.

58/06 **CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

Consideration was given to a report which presented a new Corporate Risk register. This had been prepared following the development of a Risk Management Strategy which had been a key component of the Council's Recovery Plan.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Corporate Risk Register set out in Appendix B to the report be endorsed, subject to an amendment to include reference to the need to ensure all Members embrace new and modern ways of Council working;
- (b) that the revised Risk Matrix set out in Appendix A to the report be endorsed.

59/06 **2005/06 INTERIM MEMORANDUM**

Consideration was given to a report which presented the 2005/06 Interim Memorandum issued by the Audit Commission and KPMG, together with the management response to the recommendations.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the 2005/06 Interim Memorandum be accepted;
- (b) that the management response to the audit and Inspection Letter recommendations be endorsed.

60/06 **INTERNAL CONTROL FRAMEWORK**

Consideration was given to a proposed Internal Control Framework which included arrangements for the management of risk across six key areas including Performance Management, Internal Audit, External Audit, Assurances by Managers, Risk Management and other sources of assurance.

RESOLVED: that the Internal Control Framework be approved.

61/06 **PROPOSED MERGER OF THREE NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS**

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the benefits of a proposed merger of the three Community Safety Partnerships in North Worcestershire into a single Strategic Partnership for North Worcestershire. Members were informed that further details of the proposed merger would be reported in due course.

RESOLVED: that the strategic merger of the three Community Safety Partnerships in North Worcestershire be supported in principle.

62/06 **LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of the progress to date on the preparation of an Area Action Plan for the former MG Rover works at Longbridge. The Leader provided a further update on the matter arising from a meeting held the previous day.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

63/06 **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Consideration was given to the Statement of Community Involvement which the Council was required to produce as a key element of the Local Development Framework planning system. The purpose of the Statement was to demonstrate how the Council aimed to involve the community throughout the planning process and how this would be resourced and managed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the contents of the Statement of Community Involvement be noted;
- (b) that the Statement of Community Involvement be adopted and take effect from 7th September 2006;
- (c) that the Head of Planning and Environment Services be given delegated authority to amend the Statement of Community Involvement to reflect any amendments to the Local Development Scheme.

64/06 **OUTTURN OF THE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2005/06**

The Cabinet considered a report containing the financial outturn position of the Revenue Budget, capital schemes and the capitalisation direction for the 2005/06 financial year. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that that the net revenue outturn position of £9.747 million against the Budget of £9.561 million be noted;
- (b) that the use of reserves and balances be noted and approved;
- (c) that the capital underspend of £2.065 million against the Estimated Outturn Capital Programme for the year 2005/06 be noted;
- (d) that the total expenditure of £1.571 million made available under the capitalisation direction be noted;

RECOMMENDED: that the progress made on capital schemes in the year 2005/06 be noted and budget carry forwards totalling £1.655 million be approved by the Council.

65/06

VIREMENTS WITHIN THE REVENUE BUDGET 2006/07

The Cabinet considered a report on the need for a number of virements within the Revenue Budget 2006/07. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the virements between £15,000 and £100,000 as set out in table 3 of Appendix A to the report be approved;

RECOMMENDED: that the virements in excess of £100,000 as set out in tables 1 and 2 of Appendix A be approved by the Council.

66/06

REVISING THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2005/06 TO 2008/09

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed process and timetable to be followed in order to achieve a review of the three year Revenue and Capital Budget by March 2007. The Leader was of the view that that the Medium Term Financial Plan should be revised as and when decisions were made which impacted on it.

RESOLVED: that the Budget timetable as set out in the report be approved.

67/06

NEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Cabinet considered a report which presented new Financial Regulations which had been prepared following a thorough review of the existing Regulations. The Regulations provided a framework for the administration and control of the Council's financial affairs and formed part of the Council's Constitution. It was noted that some further slight changes needed to be made to the new Regulations.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the new Financial Regulations as set out in the Appendix to the report be noted;
- (b) that the Council delegate authority to the Acting Chief Executive in agreement with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance to finalise the new Regulations.

68/06

AN OLDER PEOPLE'S STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE

The Cabinet considered a report which presented a proposed countywide strategy for the delivery of housing options for older people, together with the delivery of joined-up appropriate healthcare, social care, preventative services and support services to enable people to live as independently as possible.

During the discussion Members expressed concern that some views expressed by older people during the consultation process had been disregarded in the proposed strategy, and at the process adopted for the agreement of countywide strategies. It was also suggested that if Members attended external consultation sessions on strategies such as this, there needed to be a mechanism in place for them to report back to other Members.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Older People's Strategy for Worcestershire as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved in principle, subject to further reports on any subsequent financial implications;
- (b) that officers be requested to deal as appropriate with the issues raised by Members, particularly with regard to examining the process by which countywide strategies are adopted.

69/06

DEVELOPMENT OF A SUB REGIONAL CHOICE-BASED LETTINGS SCHEME

The Cabinet considered a report on the Government's plans for taking forward its choice-based lettings policy for the allocation of social housing, together with proposals for the development of a cross authority scheme for the South Housing Market area (Worcestershire, Stratford and Warwick). Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Government plans for taking forward its Choice-Based Lettings policy for the allocation of social housing be noted;
- (b) that the sub regional submission of a bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government on the basis set out in the report be supported in principle, subject to the views of the Head of e-Government and Customer Services being sought in respect of the potential for the Council's Spatial Project being able to provide a full IT service to the scheme for the districts within the South Housing Market area.

70/06

FRONT OF HOUSE CONVERSION WORKS

This item was withdrawn.

71/06

CONVERSION WORKS – REVENUES AND BENEFITS

This item was withdrawn.

72/06

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED: that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the items of business the subject of the following minutes on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant paragraph of that part, in each case, being as set out below:-

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>
73/06	1, 8 and 9
74/06	11

73/06

REVIEW OF THE PEST CONTROL SERVICE

Having considered a report on options for the future of the Council's Pest Control Service which had emerged following a review of the Service, it was

RECOMMENDED: that approval be give to the externalisation of the Pest Control Service on the basis of Option 2 as set out in the report (service limited to the most vulnerable residents), subject to further consideration and consultation on the definition of vulnerable.

74/06

IMPLEMENTATION OF SINGLE STATUS

During this item the Leader welcomed Ms. J. Pitman, Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development to her first meeting of the Cabinet.

Following consideration of the report on the background and implementation of Single Status, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted;
- (b) that the Cabinet confirm its support for the principles of Single Status.

75/06

ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Leader referred to the significant number of items which had been included on the agenda for the meeting and expressed the view that it was not possible to do justice to the effort put into reports by officers or in the public interest to have such lengthy meetings. He therefore requested that in future all agenda items should be timed in agreement with Portfolio Holders and that meetings should be planned to finish by 8.30 p.m. He also stated that no reports would be accepted without having been signed off by the Head of Financial Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder and an indication of the effect on the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Chairman