

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET

Wednesday, 4th October 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Executive Leader), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, Mrs. C. J. Spencer.

Observers: Councillors Miss D. H. Campbell J.P. G. N. Denaro, N. Psirides J. P. and J.A. Ruck.

76/06 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B. L. Fuller C.B.E., Q.F.S.M., Mrs. M.M.T. Taylor and P.J. Whittaker.

77/06 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 6th September 2006 were submitted.

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

78/06 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 5th September 2006 were submitted.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Steering Board also referred to items which had been discussed by the Board at their Meeting on 3rd October 2006. An issue had arisen in relation to enforcement by the Police of the ban on alcohol in areas which had been designated as "Alcohol Free Zones". Officers were requested to send a letter to all Members of the Council setting out the position and clarifying the powers of the Police and Community Safety Officers.

Following discussion on the current Task Groups, concern was expressed by the Cabinet in relation to the number of Task Groups which were now in existence and that there was a possibility that they may not be focussing on priority issues. It was felt that this may result in a delay in recommendations being made to Cabinet and it was requested that this concern be expressed to the Board .

It was reported that the issue of attendance by Portfolio Holders at the Scrutiny Board meetings had been raised. It was confirmed that relevant Portfolio Holders would attend at the invitation of the Board.

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

79/06

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 15th September 2006 were submitted.

The Leader also referred to a number of recommendations from the Meeting of the Board held on 21st August 2006 and reported on the instances where the recommendations or comments had not been accepted. Actions taken in relation to these were as follows:

(a) LPI Transport Services – Percentage of responses to Excess Charge appeals within 3 days. This target had been amended to 100% with a full response to be sent within 10 days as it was felt this was a more satisfactory way of dealing with the appeal process.

(b) BVPI 218 – Removal of Abandoned Vehicles within 24 hours. This target had been maintained at 95% and had not been increased to 100% as recommended by the Board as it was felt this was an unrealistic target.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th September 2006 be noted and the recommendations be considered.

80/06

AUDIT BOARD

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Board held on 18th September 2006 were submitted.

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

81/06

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Working Party held on 25th September 2006 were submitted. Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Portfolio Holder for Planning also reported on the discussions at the recent meeting of the Regional Planning Partnership.

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

82/06

GAMBLING ACT 2005 – STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposed Statement of Gambling Principles which the Council had been required to prepare and publish under the Gambling Act 2005. The Policy had been the subject of a wide ranging consultation process and a number of comments and responses had been received, which were largely in support of the

Policy. In the light of the comments received it was not felt to be necessary to amend the Statement of Principles.

RECOMMENDED: that the Council approve the Statement of Gambling Principles.

83/06

CONSULTATION POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Consideration was given to a report on a proposed External Consultation Policy and Guidance for Managers in support of the Policy. The report also updated members on progress made with regard to the contract for the Customer Panel.

During the consideration of this item members expressed the wish that efforts be made where possible to encourage the involvement of young people in consultations and discussions. It was hoped that in future years the Authority would be in a position to participate more fully in initiatives such as Local Democracy Week.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the External Consultation policy and the Guidance for Managers in support of this policy as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Report be approved;
- (b) that the proposal to hold seven focus groups during the period October to December 2006, five on developing customer standards and two on the budget for 2007/08 be approved;
- (c) that it be noted that the focus groups cannot be fully representative but that every attempt will be made to ensure that the focus groups are representative of the demographics and various communities of the District;
- (d) that the focus groups be held at the Council House.

84/06

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Consideration was give to a report on the introduction of a Management Development Strategy which would relate to all managers in the Authority at whatever level. It was intended that the Strategy would ensure that the future training and development of managers would deliver a skilled, knowledgeable and motivated management team which was equipped to drive the Authority through its improvement agenda and towards being an excellent Council.

RESOLVED: that the Management Development Strategy be noted.

85/06

FRONT OF HOUSE PROJECT

Consideration was given to a report which referred to budget issues which had arisen in relation to the alterations to the front of house area at the Council House and which requested that additional costs be met from existing capital receipts.

It was noted that the original budget for the necessary works had been set at £77,000 which was the budget underspend following completion of building works at the Customer Service Centre. That original budget for the front of house works was later effectively reduced by £22,179 as it had subsequently become apparent that the requirement to make retention payments for this amount in respect of the Customer Service Centre project had not been taken into account when the budget was agreed. It was therefore recognised that the true overspend on the front of house project itself was in fact only £1,771.

RECOMMENDED: that subject to the impact on the medium term financial plan being taken into account, the total shortfall of £23,951 be met from existing Capital receipts.

The Meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman