

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER 2012 AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP (Deputy Leader), M. A. Bullivant, C. B. Taylor and M. J. A. Webb

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. J. Staniland, Mrs. S. Sellers, Mr. M. Dunphy and Ms. R. Cole.

46/12 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP.

47/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

48/12 **AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2011/2012**

The Cabinet considered the Audit Commission Annual Governance Report 2011/2012 together with the draft letter of representation and the Annual Audit Letter for 2011/2012. The Leader welcomed Ms E. Cave and Ms. Z. Thomas from the Audit Commission to the meeting.

Ms Cave commented that it was recognised by the Audit Commission that the accounts were well prepared and that no material amendments were necessary. The Audit Commission recognised the challenges faced by most Councils when making required savings in expenditure.

The five recommendations proposed by the Audit Commission which had been agreed by officers were noted. It was also noted that workshops were to take place in order to explore ways in which the accounting arrangements in respect of Shared Services may be simplified whilst remaining fully transparent.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Audit Commission Annual Governance Report be noted;
- (b) that the draft letter of representation be approved; and
- (c) that the Annual Audit Letter for 2011/2012 be noted.

49/12 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2012**

The Cabinet considered a report on a revised version of the Local Development Scheme.

It was noted that the scheme updated the programme of preparation of planning policy documents and reflected the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and National Planning Policy Framework.

It was reported that the most significant change from the previous document was the inclusion of an extra phase of consultation to consider the request under the duty to cooperate from Redditch Borough Council to accommodate the growth which cannot be delivered sustainably within the Borough.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the report be noted including the proposed amendments to the Local Development Scheme.
- (b) that Appendix A be approved as Bromsgrove District Council's forthcoming programme for planning policy documents from 26th September 2012.

50/12 **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2011/2012**

Consideration was given to the report on the Statement of Accounts for 2011/2012.

The Leader thanked the officers involved for their work in producing the accounts.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED that the Statement of Accounts for 2011/2012 be approved.

51/12 **POOLING OF BUSINESS RATES - DRAFT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Members considered a report on the current position on the draft Governance arrangements in relation to the decision to pool Business Rates with a number of other Authorities within the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership.

It was noted that the details of the Governance arrangements were still being discussed including a mechanism for resolving disputes if there was more than one dissenting vote. The details would need to be resolved prior to the date for final agreement on 19th October 2012.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the draft Governance Arrangements attached as Appendix 1 to the report be noted; and
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Chief executive and the Section 151 Officer in conjunction with the Leader of the Council to finalise the agreement by 19th October 2012, in accordance with the Governance arrangements in Appendix 1.

52/12 **LOCAL TRANSPORT BODIES**

(The Leader agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency as a decision was required thereon prior to the next meeting of the Cabinet)

It was reported that the Department for Transport (DfT) had recently published the results of a consultation on “Devolving Local Major Transport Schemes” which proposed a new system for prioritising and funding local transport schemes costing over £5,000,000. The process involved the establishment of Local Transport Bodies which would consist of Local Transport Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and others with a key interest.

The Cabinet considered a proposed response to a request from the Department for Transport (DfT) for partners to confirm their Local Transport Body boundaries by 28th September 2012. There was some doubt regarding whether Authorities such as Bromsgrove, which was a member of more than one Local Enterprise Partnership, could be in more than one Local Transport Body.

Members considered the position and it was felt that in view of Bromsgrove’s geographic position and its strong links to both Birmingham and South Worcestershire it was appropriate that Bromsgrove should be within the two Transport Bodies reflecting its Local Enterprise Partnership membership.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Council responds to the Department for Transport stating that, despite the guidance and for the reasons outlined in the report, Bromsgrove District Council should be allowed to sit within two Local Transport Bodies with their respective geography based upon the existing Local Enterprise Partnership boundaries and with funding to be divided equally between the two Local Transport Bodies; and
- (b) that following receipt of the response to the Council’s view from the Department of Transport, authority be delegated to the Executive Director Planning and regeneration, regulatory and Housing Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder, to make the final arrangements relating to the Local Transport Body.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

Chairman