B R O M S G R O V E D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

16TH JANUARY 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), S. A. Webb (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham (Substitute), R. J. Laight and M. Thompson

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. A. Scarce and Ms. J. Bayley

77/16 **APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors S. J. Baxter, C. J. Spencer and P. L. Thomas and it was confirmed that Councillor C. Hotham was attending as a substitute for Councillor Baxter.

78/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest nor of any whipping arrangements.

79/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on Monday 19th December 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 19th December 2016 be approved as a correct record.

80/16 **REVIEW OF THE CCTV PROCESS**

The Chairman noted that it had been proposed at the previous meeting of the Board that CCTV should be the subject of further scrutiny. A draft topic proposal form had been produced which was tabled for Members' consideration (Appendix 1).

CCTV had formed the subject of a review by a cross-party working group. This investigation had been launched following a Notice of Motion to Council in 2015 and had been undertaken as an independent exercise rather than as part of the Council's scrutiny process. There had been 3 Councillors appointed to this review; Councillors M. Glass, P. McDonald and L. Turner. The review had originally been scheduled for

the consideration of the Cabinet in 2016 and had been selected by the Board for pre-scrutiny. Whilst the subject had subsequently been withdrawn from the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme the Overview and Scrutiny Board had asked to receive an update in December 2016.

Members agreed that it would be useful to address the following in a review of CCTV:

- The process for introducing new CCTV cameras and whether this was timely, value for money and fit for purpose.
- The decision making process for introducing new cameras. Members were advised that wherever additional funding was required this would need to be referred to Members for consideration.
- Any blockages that held up decision making about the installation of new CCTV cameras.
- The financial implications for the Council of introducing any new CCTV cameras.
- The approach adopted to monitoring the performance of existing CCTV cameras.
- Any alternative measures to CCTV cameras that could help to address concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime within the community

There was general consensus that a review of this subject should not repeat the work of the previous cross-party working group and that the exercise should be conducted as a short, sharp review.

The following objectives were added to the topic proposal:

- To understand and validate the process and monitoring of CCTV cameras and its ongoing review.
- To understand the barriers to putting new CCTV cameras in place.
- To gain a better understanding and, if necessary, make recommendations to Council regarding the placement, process and development of the service.

The membership of the short sharp review was briefly discussed. Members agreed that Councillor S. R. Colella should be appointed Chairman, with Councillors B. T. Cooper and M. Thompson also volunteering to take part. The Board concurred that other non-Executive Members not on the Board should also be invited to take part in the review if they were interested in doing so.

RESOLVED that

1) Subject to the inclusion of the proposed key objectives, as detailed in the preamble above, the terms of reference for the Strategic Review of the CCTV Operation be approved for a short sharp review;

2) Councillor S. R. Colella be appointed Chairman of this review and Councillors B. T. Cooper and M. Thompson also be appointed; and
3) Non-Executive Members not serving on the Overview and Scrutiny Board be invited to express an interest in participating in the review.

81/16 **POTENTIAL JOINT SCRUTINY OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER PARTNERSHIP**

The Board considered a report detailing proposals to consider the potential to undertake joint scrutiny of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership with Redditch Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

There was a requirement under the Police and Justice Act 2006 for local authorities to designate a Committee with lead responsibility for scrutinising the work of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Scrutiny Members could only focus on the work of the partnership as a whole and not on the work of individual partner organisations. The legislation required that the partnership was held to account during at least one meeting a year.

When the legislation was first introduced there had been separate community safety partnerships in Bromsgrove, Wyre Forest and Redditch. However, more recently these had merged into one crime and disorder reduction partnership for the north of the county. Wyre Forest District Council, like Bromsgrove, had arranged for crime and disorder scrutiny to be undertaken by their lead Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Redditch Borough Council had been the only authority in the county to establish a separate Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel to undertake this function.

In the south of the county there was also a joint community safety partnership. Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council had worked together for some time on joint scrutiny of their community safety partnership. The Councils took it in turns to host the meetings and it had been suggested that a similar approach could be adopted in the north of the county. Officers confirmed that neither Redditch Borough Council nor Wyre Forest District Council had yet scrutinised the partnership in 2016/17 so could potentially start joint scrutiny this year.

Members discussed the various options available moving forward and the most appropriate way to ensure that the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership was held to account. Concerns were raised that by undertaking this role jointly the focus on needs within Bromsgrove district might be diluted. Members noted that in Bromsgrove there had never been any recommendations made in respect of the partnership since the legal requirement was introduced so the value of the process in its existing form was questionable. By working together it was possible that Members would have an

opportunity to revitalise this form of scrutiny, by identifying patterns and issues impacting across borders, and to make this process more constructive. Joint working could be trialled in 2016/17 and, if Members felt that this process was effective, could be further developed in future years.

RESOLVED to approach Redditch Borough and Wyre Forest District Councils' Overview and Scrutiny Committees and to invite them to participate in a new Joint Scrutiny Committee of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

82/16 **FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP**

The Chairman of the Finance and Budget Working Group, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett, provided an update on the work of the group and highlighted the following for Members' consideration:

- The group had considered the Cabinet's feedback in respect of the group's previous recommendations and had amended its recommendation on the subject of virements of £40,000 or less; Members were suggesting these should be considered by the relevant Head of Service in consultation with the lead Portfolio Holder; any above £40k would be subject to Cabinet approval.
- Members had reviewed the content of the capital programme and concluded that whilst a lot of capital bids were scheduled for the first year additional planning was required from Heads of Service in the subsequent years of the capital programme.
- The inclusion of S106 agreements on the capital programme for approval was considered by the group to be confusing as these had effectively already been approved.

During consideration of this item the Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Resources also provided an update in respect of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) and Council Tax:

- There was an option to increase Council Tax by up to £5 over the 1.9 per cent for Band D properties which would provide the Council with an additional £40,000 in the budget.
- The Government consultation on the NHB had concluded and local authorities had been advised that the fund would not be sustainable in its current form.
- The Government was proposing that there would be a "deadweight" of 0.4 per cent.
- In future this would mean that approximately 165 new properties built in the district would not be subject to the NHB which would impact on Council finances.
- The Government was also proposing that some funding from the NHB would in future be allocated to County Councils in two tier authority areas to help fund social care.

- There was also a proposal to reduce the length of the NHB scheme from 6 to 4 years.
- This would lead to a loss in funding to the Council of £242,000 in 2017/17 and £1.8 million over 4 years until 2020/21.
- Members would need to give further consideration to discretionary services provided by the Council and whether these added value to the customer.

There were 3 key areas from the Efficiency Plan that remained to be addressed before the budget was set in February 2017:

- Alternative models of service delivery; only £70,000 in savings had been identified to date.
- Income and growth; over £300,000 more had been identified.
- The proposed Management Review which needed to identify further savings.

Following these updates the Board discussed a number of points in detail:

- The need to balance the Council's budget and the point at which further reductions in funding would make local authority services unsustainable.
- The potential savings that could be achieved from the Management Review and the value of prioritising this as it was anticipated that this would have a limited direct impact on the customer.
- The achievements that had been made to date in terms of delivering the aspirations detailed in the Efficiency Statement and the need for further action to be taken.
- The finalisation of the Council's fees and charges in 2017/18 and the role of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group in holding senior Officers to account for any proposed increases over 3 per cent.
- The total cumulative deficit predicted by the end of the 4 year period on the date of the meeting of £2.8 million. Members were advised that this would reduce by February when the Council set its budget.
- The need to be cautious about using funding from balances to balance the budget in any given year as this funding could only be used once.
- The need for Heads of Service to take responsibility for identifying savings and potential options to generate further income.
- The approach of the other local authorities that had received severe reductions in the government's budget settlement. Members were advised that the Council was the only local authority in this position outside the M25 and the other Councils had had access to significant balances and New Homes Bonus funding to help address their budget gaps.

- The position of other local authorities in Worcestershire. The Board was informed that many local authorities in the county were using a traffic light system for their budget.
- The progress that had been achieved in respect of economic development within the district and the innovative ideas that were being put forward by Officers.
- The increase in Council Tax that would be experienced by local residents and the significant proportion of this funding that would be allocated to the County Council and other partner organisations.
- The anticipated recorded income from the Dolphin Centre of over £400,000. Members noted that this figure should actually be approximately £520,000 in line with the figures agreed for prudential borrowing costs.

83/16 **MEASURES DASHBOARD WORKING GROUP**

Councillor S. A. Webb, Chairman of the Measures Dashboard Working Group, provided Members with an update. The Board was advised that the group had struggled to access the dashboard on their iPads and the impediments to access remained in place. Despite this it had been agreed that the working group should reconvene. Representatives of the ICT team could be invited to a meeting of the group if these problems persisted.

Following the resignation of Councillor S. J. Baxter there was a vacancy on the group. Councillor R. J. Laight volunteered to become a Member to replace Councillor Baxter. Whilst it was noted that this would mean every Member of the group would represent the same party there were no requirements for scrutiny working groups to be politically balanced and no objections were raised during the meeting.

RESOLVED that Councillor R. J. Laight be appointed to the Measures Dashboard Working Group.

84/16 **TASK GROUP UPDATES**

The following updates were provided in respect of current Task Group reviews:

a) Social Media Task Group

Councillor R. J. Laight, Chairman of the Social Media Task Group, explained that the review was progressing well. The group had recently interviewed the Council's Communications Manager who had provided a significant amount of information about the Council's use of social media. The local authority's use of social media compared favourably with other Councils in the region and there were opportunities to make further use of these tools. The group would shortly be circulating a survey amongst Members requesting feedback in respect of how they used social media. The group also anticipated that training would be provided to enable

Members to make appropriate use of social media to communicate with the public.

There were 3 Members on the group who were finding the review very rewarding. Councillor Laight noted that an additional Member, particularly someone who regularly used social media, would be welcomed. The Members of the group were thanked for their commitment together with the Democratic Services Officer for her hard work supporting the review.

b) Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group

Councillor S. R. Colella, Chairman of the Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group, explained that there had been no meetings of the group since the last meeting of the Board. Unfortunately the meeting of the group scheduled to take place on 18th January would have to be cancelled as 3 Members of the group had given their apologies. A new date would be identified shortly for this meeting, which would provide an opportunity for the group to consult with senior Officers about the Programme Board and the subsidiary working groups.

85/16 **WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

The Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Councillor B. T. Cooper, provided an update on the latest meeting of the Committee which took place on 11th January 2017.

Members were advised that there had been a single item on the agenda dedicated to a presentation on the subject of the West Midland Ambulance Service (WMAS). The Chief Operating Officer for the service had attended for this item and had advised Members that WMAS was the only ambulance service in the country to meet all of their national targets and was the best performing ambulance trust in the country. Unfortunately there had been a few difficulties in recent months with handovers involving hospitals within the Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust; in December up to 12 ambulances had been waiting at Worcester Royal Hospital at a time. Waiting times could be longer for patients once they had been registered at the hospital and HOSC was in the process of raising concerns about this with the trust.

Concerns were raised in respect of changes to the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch and the extent to which these changes had been effectively communicated to residents. In particular Members raised concerns about limited awareness that the hospital's A&E department was no longer responsible for treating children and recent cases were highlighted whereby concerned parents had been referred to Worcester Royal Hospital in challenging weather conditions.

86/16 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 1ST FEBRUARY TO 31ST MAY 2017**

The Board considered the contents of the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme for the period 1st February to 31st May 2017. Members noted that few changes had been made to the work programme since December and no items were selected as suitable for pre-decision scrutiny.

Concerns were raised that there was only one item listed on the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme for consideration after February 2017. This made it difficult for Members to identify any items that might be suitable for pre-scrutiny in advance of a Cabinet decision. The Board suggested that this undermined the accountability and transparency of the Council's decision making process. Heads of Service, who were primarily responsible for adding items to the work programme, were therefore urged to plan further ahead.

RECOMMENDED to the Corporate Management Team that Heads of Service plan further ahead and add items to the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme in a more timely manner.

87/16 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Work Programme and in so doing noted the following points:

a) Economic Priorities

A report in respect of the Council's economic priorities, which had been scheduled for consideration in January, had been postponed in the absence of the relevant Portfolio Holder. There was the possibility that this item would be considered by the Cabinet in February and if this occurred the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group would be provided with an opportunity to pre-scrutinise the proposals detailed in the report. Otherwise the report would be considered by the Board in March.

b) Monitoring Updates

The Board's recommendation tracker would be provided for Members' consideration in March. This would include a detailed overview of the progress that had been achieved in respect of the Car Parking Task Group's recommendations.

c) Dolphin Centre

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services had advised that he would be in a position to provide a comprehensive update on the progress that had been achieved in identifying support for displaced groups in March 2017. The Council would need to

resolve this issue by September 2017 and was in the early stages of providing support to effected groups. Members expressed some concerns, however, about the delay in providing an update on this subject and the potential implications for the local community. Consequently Members agreed that the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services should be invited to provide an interim update to the Board in respect of this matter in February with further information following in March.

d) Council Plan

Members were advised that the Council Plan was scheduled for consideration by the Cabinet in February 2017.

e) Write off of Debts Report

The Board noted that this report would be considered by the finance and Budget Working group on an annual basis.

The meeting closed at 7.37 p.m.

Chairman

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APPENDIX 1

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL

This form can be used for either a Task Group or a Short Sharp Review topic proposal.

Completed forms should be returned to scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk – Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council.

Name of Proposer: Cllrs Luke Mallett and Brian Cooper	
Tel No: 07951205499 07711014820	Email: l.mallett@bromsgrove.gov.uk b.cooper@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Date: 12th January 2016	

Title of Proposed Topic (including specific subject areas to be investigate)	Strategic Review of the CCTV Operation
Background to the Proposal (Including reasons why this topic should be investigated and evidence to support the need for the investigation.)	An item was placed on the Cabinet Work Programme which focused on CCTV in Bromsgrove, which arose as a consequence of a Notice of Motion at Council on 15th July 2015. This item was scheduled to outline the findings of a cross party task and finish review that was set up to look at CCTV. It is important to note that this task and finish review was an independent review and not part of the O&S Board's work programme. As a consequence, the O&S Board had requested an opportunity to pre-scrutinise this final piece of work, which was later withdrawn from the Cabinet Work Programme. Officers attended the meeting of the Board on 19th December 2016 to provide background information and details of the review which was undertaken. A number of concerns were raised by Members at that meeting in respect of the allocation of CCTV cameras, and in determining that allocation (particularly timescales and decision makers).

	Following discussions at its meeting, the Board were unanimous in its views that the matter needed further investigation from an Overview and Scrutiny perspective to ensure that the service met the needs of residents, was fit for purpose and provided value for money. It is not the intention of the Board to repeat the work which was carried out by the original Group and its findings are attached to this scoping document as background papers and supporting evidence.			
Links to national, regional and local priorities (including the Council's strategic purposes)	Council Priority: • Keep my place safe and looking good. Bromsgrove Partnership Priorities: • Reduce the fear of becoming a victim of domestic burglary • Protect Communities by tackling domestic abuse, youth related anti-social behaviour and supporting vulnerable people. • Maintain safe clear streets by tackling night-time economy and reducing graffiti.			
Possible Key Objectives (these should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely)	• Understand and validate the process and monitoring of CCTV cameras and its ongoing review. • Understand the barriers to putting new CCTV Cameras in place. • To gain a better understanding and if necessary, make recommendations to Council regarding the placement, process and development of the service.			
Anticipated Timescale for completion of the work.	It is anticipated that a maximum of 6 meetings will need to be held to carry out a Short Sharp Review.			
Would it be appropriate to hold a Short Sharp Inquiry or a Task Group? (please tick relevant box)	Task Group		Short Sharp Inquiry	X

OFFICE USE ONLY - TO BE COMLETED WHEN THE TOPIC PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED

Evidence	
Key documents, data, reports	
Possible Site Visits	
Is a general press release required asking for general comments/suggestions from the public?	
Is a period of public consultation required?	
Witnesses	
Officers	
Councillors (including Portfolio Holder)	
Any External Witnesses	

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