

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 2ND JULY 2008 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, G. N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. and R. D. Smith

Observers: Councillor S. R. Peters

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. D. Hammond, Mr. J. Godwin, Mr. A. Coel, Mr. K. Hirons, Mr. S. Martin and Ms. D. Parker-Jones

18/08 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker.

19/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

20/08 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 4th June 2008 and 30th June 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as correct records.

21/08 **AUDIT BOARD**

The minutes of the meetings of the Audit Board held on 9th June 2008 and 25th June 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that, it being noted that the Recommendation contained at Minute No. 14/08 of the 25th June 2008 meeting (2007/08 Statement of Accounts and Governance Statement) had been dealt with at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held the previous evening, the minutes be noted.

22/08 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 17th June 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

(a) that the minutes be noted: and

- (b) that the recommendation contained at Minute No. 19/08 (Monthly Performance Report - revision of targets for local indicators relating to missed collections of household waste and recycled waste) be approved, and it be requested that future Monthly Performance Reports be updated to include details of the overall percentage of missed collections in comparison with the total number of collections undertaken, with the targets to be reviewed annually to ensure these were achievable.

23/08 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 22nd May 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that, subject to it being noted that the recommendation contained at Minute No. 08/08 (concessionary parking for the over 60's) was being dealt with by way of a separate report at agenda item 7, the minutes be noted.

24/08 **CONCESSIONARY PARKING - RECOMMENDATION FROM SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

Further to Minute No. 8/08 (Work Programme) of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 22nd May 2008, consideration was given to a recommendation from the Board, following a request received from a member of the public, for the Performance Management Board to consider a report on concessionary parking for the over 60s.

An update to the Constitution was sought as it was noted that the mechanisms currently in place for requests from the Council's boards for items of business be added to the agenda of another board could result in delays being encountered, added to which it was felt more appropriate, in the interests of democracy, for the Chief Executive, as opposed to the Cabinet, to deal with such requests. The Chief Executive advised that he would liaise with the respective Chairmen of the boards on any agenda requests which might be deemed to be inappropriate.

RESOLVED that this matter be referred to the Performance Management Board with the request that the Board considers an officer report on concessionary parking for the over 60s once six months worth of the necessary data is available; and

RECOMMENDED that the Constitution be amended to permit any of the Council's boards to ask the Chief Executive to add an item of business to the agenda of any other board.

25/08 **DOLPHIN CENTRE PHASE 2 UPDATE**

The Cabinet considered a report (contained in the original agenda papers) on issues arising from building works which were being undertaken as part of the second phase of the development of the Dolphin Centre, together with an additional report containing supplementary information in respect of point 3.5

of the original report, relating to the poolside slab and surrounds. Officers advised that the asbestos issues and health problems relating to the water heating system had now been resolved. It was also noted that the £150,000 savings recognised in Phase One of the works meant that the £90,000 virement being sought would not result in any additional release of Capital Receipts.

RESOLVED that a virement of £90,000 from Dolphin Centre Phase 1 to Phase 2, to ensure funds are available to carry out the required building works, including the remedial action to the poolside slab and surrounds, be approved.

26/08 **NATIONAL CHANGES TO MODERNISE DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to a report on changes introduced by the Communities and Local Government to modernise the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme and improve delivery of adaptations to the homes of disabled persons nationally. The report also asked whether Members wished to allow for a 'Claw Back' clause for DFGs granted over £5,000, requiring repayment of up to a maximum of £10,000 in the event of an adapted property being sold or transferred within ten years of the award of a grant. Officers advised that stair lifts were not included in the process and that these would be recycled should a property with a stair lift become vacated, with a County wide scheme due to be established for this. If agreeing to the introduction of charges Officers would work closely with the County Council to draw up detailed procedures for the implementation of this.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the package of changes introduced nationally to the Disabled Facilities Programme be noted;
- (b) that the general consent enabling the local authority to place a limited charge on owner occupied adapted properties where the grant exceeds £5,000 be implemented, and a condition requiring repayment of grant of up to a maximum of £10,000 in the event of the adapted property being sold or transferred within 10 years of the grant being awarded be introduced; and
- (c) that authority to waive the repayment condition in accordance with the Government's criteria set out in section 4.3 (b) of the report be delegated to the Head of Planning and Environment in consultation with the Strategic Housing Manager and the Private Sector Housing Team Leader.

27/08 **REVIEW OF REFUSE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING OPERATION**

The Cabinet considered a report on options for replacement of the existing refuse collection vehicle fleet due to serious reliability problems which were being experienced. It was noted that no actual decisions were being taken at this stage, with Officers continuing to work on the available options and to carry out the required negotiations to cover the long term changes and interim

arrangements necessary to facilitate such changes, and to allow the service to continue operating in a more robust manner than at present.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that officers continue to pursue an improvement in vehicle reliability through negotiation and discussion with the manufacturer;
- (b) that officers continue to pursue an alternative method of refuse collection using a standard type of refuse collection vehicle and seek part payment of some of the new fleet from the manufacturer through a compensation claim;
- (c) that officers continue to discuss future disposal options for collected waste with the County Council and their Contractors Severn Waste, or to modify the existing transfer station to be suitable for a standard type of vehicle;
- (d) that changes to the recycling service be co-ordinated with the opening of the new Material Reclamation Facility (MRF) in November 2009;
- (e) that the completely revised service becomes operational from April 2010 assuming that the new MRF is available from late 2009; and
- (f) that the revised service would link residual waste with recycling materials on an alternating week basis and that the green waste will be collected independently of the other materials on an 'at request' basis.

28/08 **VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to an updated Value for Money Strategy. Regarding efficiency with Value for Money and the Council's costs being as low as possible by comparison with similar councils, Members felt it important that where there were costs/factors involved over which the Council had no control, these be made clear in order for fair comparisons to be made and for the public to understand why any of Bromsgrove District Council's costs were higher than other councils.

RESOLVED that the updated Value for Money Strategy at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

29/08 **CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

The Cabinet considered a report, which summarised an in depth feasibility study by RTA Associates Ltd., on the adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) within the District. It was noted that whilst the adoption of CPE powers would have ongoing revenue cost, the adoption of alternative methods of operation would drastically enhance the business case for this, meaning it was crucial to maximise any alternative methods such as on-street charges and Automatic Plate Recognition Systems (ANPR). The current low level of enforcement by the Police also meant there was a strong customer business case for adoption, particularly in certain areas of the District. Members noted that it was officers' belief that CPE would become a statutory requirement for Councils in the future and that if ultimately proceeding down this route any decision to do so could not be reversed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), including Automatic Number Plate Recognition Systems (ANPR), be further scoped in line with the regeneration of the town centre, and that a further report be submitted to the Cabinet on this in twelve months' time;
- (b) that a steering group to manage the CPE process be established; and
- (c) that officers commence discussions with the County Council to establish an agency agreement between the District and County Council.

30/08 **ENERGY EFFICIENCY GROUP UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report on the work of the Energy Efficiency Group established to promote and pursue actions to secure more efficient energy use by the Council.

RESOLVED that the progress to date of the Energy Efficiency Group be noted.

31/08 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (APRIL 2008)**

Consideration was given to the updated Improvement Plan Exception Report for April 2008, together with the corrective action being taken.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report and the corrective action being taken be noted; and
- (b) that it be noted that of the 111 actions highlighted within the Plan for April 2008, 83.8% of the Plan was on target (green), 7.2% was one month behind (amber) and 2.7% was over a month behind (red). 6.3% of actions had been rescheduled or suspended with approval.

32/08 **NEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008-2009**

The Cabinet considered the new Improvement Plan for 2008/09. The annual Plan would enable the Cabinet and Performance Management Board to monitor progress against the Council's five priorities and the enablers that supported these. The Improvement Plan had been cross referenced to the Council Plan's key deliverables, Department of Communities and Local Government's disengagement criteria and the Audit Commission's direction of travel recommendations.

RECOMMENDED that the Improvement Plan 2008/09 be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman