

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW BOARD

TUESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER 2008 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors A. N. Blagg, Mrs. M. Bunker, Miss D. H. Campbell JP,
S. R. Colella, Dr. G. H. Lord (during Minute Nos. 8/08 to 9/08),
P. M. McDonald and L. J. Turner

Observers: Councillor D. L. Pardoe and Councillor S. R. Peters

Officers: Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs. S. Sellers and
Ms. D. McCarthy

1/08 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor P. M. McDonald be elected as Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

2/08 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor L. J. Turner be elected as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

3/08 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

4/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were received.

5/08 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting of the former Scrutiny Steering Board held on 2nd September 2008 were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

6/08 **JOINT COUNTYWIDE SCRUTINY ON FLOODING**

Members were reminded of the Joint Countywide Scrutiny on Flooding which involved all local authorities across Worcestershire. For the benefit of those Members who were new to Overview and Scrutiny, the background to the investigation was briefly mentioned and it was stated that the first Joint Flooding Task Group meeting had been held in February 2008.

The Board was informed that during September 2008, a draft report had been circulated to Task Group Members and representatives who had contributed to the investigation. Due to the comments received, the Task Group Chairman had decided that one further meeting was required and this had been scheduled to take place on 6th November 2008. It was anticipated that the report would be finalised and circulated the following week and therefore would be available in time for the joint meeting of the Overview Board and Scrutiny Board due to be held on 2nd December 2008.

RESOLVED that the update relating to the Joint Countywide Flooding Scrutiny be noted.

7/08 **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND ALCOHOL FREE ZONES TASK GROUP**

A brief progress report from Councillor Taylor, Chairman of the Anti-Social Behaviour and Alcohol Free Zones Task Group, was read out to the Board which informed Members that a number of representatives had attended the last Task Group meeting including Mr. Evans, Operations Manager (North Worcestershire) from Worcestershire County Council's Youth Support and the District Council's Principal Licensing Officer, Mrs. Smith. It was stated that a review of the information gathered so far would be undertaken at the next Task Group meeting due to be held on 5th November 2008.

There were concerns from Board Members that the subject area the Task Group had been requested to cover was too great. However, it was believed that the Task Group was on schedule to complete its investigation next month and report back to the next meeting of the Overview Board on 6th January 2009.

RESOLVED that the update on the progress of the Anti-Social Behaviour and Alcohol Free Zones Task Group be noted.

8/08 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to the Forward Plan which included key and non-key decisions due to be taken by the Cabinet over the forthcoming months.

The Chairman requested that the Forward Plan be extended to cover a 6 month period to: ensure the Overview Board was properly informed of future items the Cabinet would be taking decisions on; and to give the Board sufficient time to investigate such items. The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Service responded that although the information being requested might not be available in the present Forward Plan format, Heads of Service could be requested to ensure their Business Plans, which included an annual projection of items coming forward to Cabinet, were accessible to Members of the Overview Board.

Questions were raised on a number of items including: Bromsgrove Town Centre; Review of Planning and Environment Services; Worcestershire Hub; Countywide Air Quality Strategy; and Future management of the Leisure Centres.

There was a particular concern raised in relation to the Countywide Air Quality Strategy and Members questioned what the Strategy could achieve. The Board briefly considered whether or not further investigation was required into this matter, specifically in relation to what the Council planned to do to address air quality issues facing the District. It was pointed out that a number of recommendations had been put forward by the Air Quality Task Group and the majority had been approved. However, officers had been unable to implement them as speedily as they had wished.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services liaise with other members of the Corporate Management Team to ensure that in future, the Overview Board has access to relevant information contained within Service Business Plans (i.e. items that were expected to be considered by the Cabinet in 3-6 months time);
- (b) that confirmation on the reasons for the delay of the report relating to the review of Planning and Environment Services be circulated to Members of the Board;
- (c) that information relating to the Worcestershire Hub and the Future Strategic Direction and Establishment of Worcestershire Hub Shared Service be circulated to Members of the Board;
- (d) that an informal meeting (possibly on 26th November 2008) between the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, any other interested Overview Board Members and relevant officers be set up for preliminary discussions to be held regarding the Countywide Air Quality Strategy and future plans of the Council to address air quality, with a view to help the Board decide whether or not further investigation by the Board might be required; and
- (e) that all other items on the Forward Plan be noted.

9/08 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered all the items included within its Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the Overview Board's Work Programme be noted and updated as necessary.

The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.

Chairman