

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 26TH OCTOBER 2010 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), C. B. Taylor (Vice-Chairman),
A. N. Blagg, R. J. Deeming and C. J. Tidmarsh

Observers: Councillors Mrs. R. L. Dent and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mr. J. Godwin, Mrs. A. Heighway, Mrs. S. Sellers, Ms. S. Garratt,
Mr. M. Carr and Ms. A. Scarce

29/10 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C. R. Scurrall.

30/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest or whipping arrangements.

31/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Board meeting held on 28th September 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

32/10 **REVIEW OF STREET TRADING POLICY**

The Board considered a report which reminded Members of the previous decision to review the operation of the Street Trading Policy after it had been in operation for 6 months. Reference was made to the preliminary questions which had been put to the Licensing Manager and her answers, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report. Officers advised Members that all Councillors had been given the opportunity to put forward any concerns they had about the Policy, or particular issues within their Ward. An issue had been raised in respect of a farm shop and Officers confirmed that this was being investigated.

Members discussed the following areas in more detail:

- Whether “tatters” (mobile scrap metal dealers) came under the jurisdiction of the Street Trading Policy. Officers felt it was unlikely that they would need Street Trading Consent, but agreed to investigate the issue further.

- Members were concerned that Mobile Hot Food Takeaway vehicles which were parked in lay-bys did not meet food hygiene regulations or disposed of waste appropriately. Officers confirmed that checks were made, prior to the issue of a Street Trading Consent, to ensure that all necessary regulations would be met. Officers also confirmed that the enforcement of the Street Trading Consents would be delivered by officers from the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).
- Members asked if the fee structure was in line with other areas. Officers advised that this had been calculated by taking an average of the fees charged by all districts throughout Worcestershire.

The Board discussed any legislative powers that would restrict Ice Creams vehicles from parking outside schools, as they were aware that Hillingdon Borough Council had recently banned ice cream vendors from certain areas. The Senior Solicitor confirmed that the legislation that Hillingdon Borough Council had relied on was unique to London and therefore not applicable within the Bromsgrove District. However, it may be possible to give consideration to such a restriction when the new Core Strategy was in place.

Officers confirmed that the Street Trading Policy did not cover telephone canvassers or buskers.

Members thanked Officers for a comprehensive report and after further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Review of the Street Trading Policy be noted.

33/10 **SPORTS PROVISION REVIEW**

The Board was reminded that a review of sports provision had been put forward by the Leader at the Chairmen's quarterly meeting with him and the topic had been agreed by the Scrutiny Board for inclusion in its Work Programme 2010-2011.

The Chairman reminded Members of the terms of reference for the investigation: "*to consider the value for money of sports provision and explore any potential savings, alternative options and improvements*".

The Board considered a report from the Scrutiny Officer which compiled all of the key information provided by the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services. Reference was made to the preliminary questions to the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services and his answers provided at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Board considered the business aims and objectives for sports provision contained in the Service Business Plan 2009/2010 and the Sports & Active Recreation Strategy 2009 to 2012 and how these linked to the Council priority C03 (One Community). The Board also considered the wider benefits of sport and physical activity for the health and well being of communities, which was evidenced in a series of policy papers by Sports England, "*Shaping Places Through Sport*" which showed the impact that sport played in the lives of individuals and the wider community.

The Board considered the organisational structure for Leisure and Cultural Services and Sports Development, which was delivered in partnership with external organisations such as Sports England and Wychavon Leisure and Community Services Ltd (the Dolphin Centre). This included a Sports Development Manger post, two Sports Development Officer posts, Community Sports Coaches and a Walking Co-ordinator. It was noted that this structure was subject to change depending upon the service review as part of the organisational transformation process. It was also noted that the Sports Development Manger post had been vacant for 12 months and funding for the Community Sports Coaches (funded by Sports England) and Walking Co-ordinator posts was due to expire in 2011.

The Board considered the headline performance of Leisure and Cultural Services and sports services based on usage. Performance was reported as generally high. Members also considered the budget for sports provision, including details of revenue and capital spend and noted that the future delivery of the service was dependent upon the budget review and the organisational transformation process, which would commence in December 2010.

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services also advised Members that there was a need to develop the volunteering base in the community in the delivery of sports projects, in line with the Big Society agenda and to mitigate any funding gaps in the future.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that in the view of the Board the delivery of sports provision in Bromsgrove represents good value for money and is a valued and important part of facilities for the community, contributing to both community well being, leisure and healthy living; and
- (b) it be noted that, in the current budget context, which will require substantial savings across the Council, the vacant posts within Sports Development may represent an important savings opportunity if services are re-configured around shared services with Redditch Borough Council.

34/10

ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PLACE SURVEY

Members were advised that an update had been received from the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships. It was anticipated that, following the demise of the Place Survey, a local survey would be produced to measure residents' satisfaction and other areas. How this was done, would be dependant upon budget restraints following the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The Board agreed that this should be re-scheduled on the Work Programme for the meeting to be held on 25th January 2011.

35/10 **BROMSGROVE URBAN AND RURAL TRANSPORT (BURT)**

Members were advised that unfortunately, the BURT bus was currently out of action and the service was being provided by using the spare "Dial-a-Ride" bus from Redditch Borough Council. It was anticipated that the repairs needed to the BUIRT bus would cost in the region of £1,000. Funding was available for the service for the next 12 months; however a capital budget bid might have to be put forward to replace the bus; Members would then need to consider whether the Council wished to continue to provide this service.

The Head of Community Services provided Members with updated figures on the age profile of BURT users. However, she confirmed that, as part of her review of the BURT service, she was meeting the Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) on 28th October and had requested a comprehensive annual report on BURT and further clarification of the age profile information. As part of the review process the Head of Community Services would be advising and assisting WRVS with funding streams available to them, with a view to minimising the costs of the service to the Council.

Members also discussed the following areas in more detail:

- The Council does not have a statutory duty to provide the service.
- A breakdown of journey details (this would be provided by WRVS in the annual report).
- The feasibility of the option to link the service with the "Dial-a-Ride" service provided by Redditch Borough Council.
- Other possible avenues of funding available in order to maintain the service.

36/10 **WORK PROGRAMME AND MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Board agreed to update the Work Programme and Meeting Schedule to include an update on alternative arrangements for the Place Survey to the meeting to be held on 25th January 2011.

37/10 **QUESTIONS FOR WITNESSES ATTENDING MEETING ON 25TH JANUARY 2011**

Members were informed that the following topics would be discussed at the meeting to be held on 25th January 2011:-

- The Annual Bonfire Event (Part 1)
- Review of the Hot Food Takeaway Investigation

The Board agreed that the example questions provided would be appropriate for the Annual Bonfire Event and asked that they be provided with a full financial breakdown of the event for this and previous years.

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The relevant Heads of Service would be invited to attend the meeting and Members were asked to provide the Scrutiny Officer with any questions they would like to put forward to officers as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 6.20 p.m.

Chairman