

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**TUESDAY, 10TH JULY, 2007 AT 6.00 P. M.**

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

Observers: Councillors P. M. McDonald, C. B. Taylor and C. J. K. Wilson.

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. P. Street, Mr. H. Bennett, Mr. M. Bell, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. J. Godwin, Mr. D. Hammond, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman, Ms. D. Poole, Mr. A. Coel and Ms. R. Cole.

18/07 **APOLOGIES**

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

19/07 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Cabinet held on 27th June 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

20/07 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The Minutes of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 12th June 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted.

21/07 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 19th June 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted and the recommendation relating to the formation of an Action Plan to address issues at the Customer Service Centre be approved.

22/07 **AUDIT BOARD**

The Minutes of the Audit Board held on 25th June 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted.

23/07    **AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNDER THE HOMEBUY SCHEME**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Government's Homebuy Scheme which was operated in Worcestershire by the West Mercia Housing Group. The scheme allowed for the provision of a grant subsidy in the form of an equity loan to allow first time buyers to purchase a property on the open market at 75% of market value. There was a limited amount of funding from Central Government to support this scheme. There was an opportunity for the Council to participate in the Scheme by utilising funding from the Strategic Housing Capital Programme which had not been allocated for new build shared ownership schemes, should there be applicants wishing to take up the scheme after the Government funding had been exhausted. Following discussion, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Bromsgrove Homebuy Scheme be approved in principle, provided there is funding remaining within the Strategic Housing Capital Programme and there is a demand from applicants within the District after Government funding has been utilised; and
- (b) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Environment Services and the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing to determine specific applications.

24/07    **AMENDMENTS TO THE CAR PARKING ORDER**

Consideration was given to a report on changes to the existing Car Parking Order. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the new Car Parking Order as attached to the report be approved;
- (b) that the proposed charges set out in section 4.1 of the report be approved;
- (c) that the annual and quarterly permits be issued as set out in Schedule 4 of the proposed Order;
- (d) that Aston Road (Part) be incorporated within the Car Parking Order and managed as a non-paying car park;
- (e) that parking offenders who wish to appeal be allowed an additional 14 days in which to pay the reduced amount following the response to the appeal;
- (f) that recommendations (a) to (e) take effect from 1st October 2007;
- (g) that a full review of the car parking service be undertaken and a report submitted in 2008.

25/07    **DATA QUALITY STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report on a proposed Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan which it was hoped would ensure an improvement in the accuracy and quality of performance data in line with good practice.

**RESOLVED:** that the Data Quality Strategy and associated Action Plan be approved.

26/07 **COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007/2008**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment together with the new Improvement Plan for July 2007 to June 2008. As part of the discussion on the Improvement Plan reference was made to the additional areas for action listed by the Council's Improvement Director. These would need further consideration and as this is undertaken, actions would need to be agreed for incorporation into the Improvement Plan. Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment report and in particular the areas for improvement set out on page 7 of the report be noted;
- (b) that the Improvement Plan 2007/2010 be approved;
- (c) that it be noted that the Improvement Plan cross references to the recommendations contained in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment report but also contains other actions for 2007/2008 designed to deliver the Council Plan 2007/2010;
- (d) that the changes to the Council Plan set out in section 3.4 of the report, based on the Corporate Management Team's view of the Council's capacity to deliver the Council Plan 2007/2010 be approved; and
- (e) that it be agreed that further updates to the Improvement Plan for 2007/08 may be required as determined by discussions between the Improvement Director and Corporate Management Team.

27/07 **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK - REVISION OF LONE WORKING POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Cabinet considered a report on the revision of the Council's Lone Working and Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:** that the revised Lone Working and Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures be approved and be incorporated as part of the arrangements for Health and Safety at Work within the Council's Policy.

28/07 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME INCREASE - OAKALLS PLAY FACILITY**

The Cabinet considered a report on the request to amend the existing Capital Programme to include an additional £25,000 in respect of the provision of play facilities on the Oakalls Estate in Bromsgrove. The cost would be met by the remaining Section 106 funding from the Developer.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that the payment of an additional £25,000 in respect of play facilities at the Oakalls Estate in Bromsgrove from Section 106 monies be approved; and

(b) that the Capital Programme for 2007/2008 be amended accordingly.

29/07 **TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION**

The Cabinet considered a report on the approach to be taken regarding the regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre. It was recognised that progress was needed as quickly as possible having regard to the legislative restraints and the requirements of the planning system. Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that a Development Partner be sought either by way of the OJEU process or other appropriate mechanisms;
- (b) that specialist expertise be obtained to assist with the project management of the regeneration of the Town Centre until March 2008 and that this be funded from the Town Centre budget; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the appropriate Officers to issue Compulsory Purchase Orders to facilitate the redevelopment of the Town Centre in accordance with an agreed Area Action Plan.

30/07 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS - PROCEDURE**

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency)

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services referred to an issue which had arisen at a previous Cabinet Meeting relating to the procedure for members of the Public to submit questions to Cabinet. The issue had now been considered further by Officers and as the Council's Constitution currently made no provision for public questions, the item had been deleted from Cabinet agendas at present. It was intended however to revisit the matter as part of the forthcoming review of the Constitution. Cabinet would then be asked to consider options for receiving questions from the public. In the meantime, information would be included on the Council's website explaining that any questions received would be directed to the relevant Member.

A number of public questions had been submitted in writing on an anonymous basis, however the member of the public concerned was present at the Meeting and The Head of Legal and Democratic Services undertook to discuss the matter with him further.

31/07 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED: that, under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended the public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the items of business the subject of the following minutes on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended the relevant paragraphs of that part being as set out below:-

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
32/07	3
33/07	1

32/07    **CAPITAL PROGRAMME INCREASE - DOLPHIN CENTRE CATERING CONTRACT**

Following consideration of the report it was

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that the payment of £45,000 in respect of the capital investment relating to the cancellation of the current catering contract at the Dolphin Centre be approved;
- (b) that the Capital Programme for 2007/2008 be amended accordingly; and
- (c) that in order to ensure the availability of catering services to customers and having regard to the income implications, the continuation of the service on site until at least 31st October 2007 be approved.

33/07    **SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE**

The Chief Executive Officer explained the background to this item and reported that he intended to submit a further report on this matter to Cabinet on 18th July 2007 together with details of any responses received at the end of the consultation period. Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm

Chairman