

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER 2012 AT 6.35 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Hart (Chairman), D. Thain (Vice-Chairman), M. A. Bullivant, D. Hughes, Roger Hill (substituting for Councillor M. Braley), P. Mould, Mrs. L. Hodgson, J. Riaz, A. N. Blagg, Mrs. E. Stokes and P. Harrison

Observers: Mr. V. Allison, Deputy Managing director, Wychavon District Council and Mr. I. Pumfrey, Head of Community Services, Malvern Hills District Council

Invitees:

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. S. Jordan, Mr. K. Barnett, Mr. M. Kay, Mr. S. Wilkes and Mrs. P. Ross

25/12 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. B. Taylor, Bromsgrove District Council, Mrs. B. Behan, Malvern Hills District Council, M. Braley, Redditch Borough Council and K. Jennings, Wychavon District Council.

26/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

27/12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 27th September 2012 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

28/12 **WORCESTERSHIRE LEP REGULATORS BUSINESS CHARTER**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the Worcestershire Regulatory and Business Partnership Charter.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) presented the report and in doing so informed the Committee of the positive contribution WRS had made to both the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Worcestershire LEP, taking the lead for the

'regulatory' theme. WRS was a UK leader in simplifying regulatory cultures and delivery which supported business growth and enterprise whilst reducing burdens on businesses. The Worcestershire LEP and WRS had held discussions with key national regulators, as detailed in the report, all of which were willing to work collaboratively with the LEP and WRS to create solutions to help businesses establish and grow.

The Regulatory and Business Partnership Charter, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, was signed and launched by the various regulators including WRS at the Worcestershire LEP mid-term conference on 9th November 2012.

The Worcestershire Regulatory and Business Partnership Charter was the starting point to convert the Charter principles into a delivery plan.

RESOLVED that the signing of the Worcestershire Regulatory and Business Partnership Charter be endorsed and that the Committee support WRS to undertake the work required to convert the Charter principles into a delivery plan.

29/12 **ICT PROJECT UPDATE - VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE HEAD OF WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES**

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) provided the Committee with a verbal update on the ICT Project. Members were informed that the project was advancing steadily with the project team undertaking training. The live system was currently up and running for project team members only. The Idox solution would link with the Worcestershire Hub and other partner authorities' systems. Idox would carry out the data transfer and provide support. A period of 'backfilling' where needed would cover WRS staff transferred onto the project team. The Project Board had met with the IT departments for each partner authority. A detailed project plan to be made available to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

The Head of WRS responded to Members' questions with regard to the test system and the capacity of Bromsgrove District Council as Host Authority for the system. The Head of WRS informed the Committee that the core system that had been loaded was exactly the system required and that Bromsgrove District Council would be purchasing an additional server in order to meet the requirements of hosting the Idox system. Members were further informed that Idox was keen to work with WRS as a regional business partner to support delivery of future and similar initiatives.

30/12 **IMPACT ON SERVICE DELIVERY AND QUALITY OF 5%, 10% AND 15% REDUCTIONS IN BASE BUDGET**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the likely impact on service delivery and quality of 5%, 10% and 15% reductions in base budget following the next financial settlement from central government.

Mr. Mark Kay, Business Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) introduced the report and in doing so informed the Committee that WRS,

under its business case, had been tasked to deliver savings of 17.25% and had to date delivered savings of 22.57%. It was agreed at the Management Board meeting on 30th August 2012 that licensing would not be included in any calculated savings as licensing must, by law, be self financing and partners were not able to make a profit without running the risk of formal challenge through the court system. In undertaking this work it had become apparent that rather than focus on cuts there was an opportunity to grow the business in such a way that any income could be used to offset the base budget.

A brief discussion followed on Appendix E to the report. Members agreed that officers should look at opportunities to grow the business rather than focus on cuts.

Councillor D. Thain informed the Committee that he had recently attended the WRS away day and had been impressed with the service offered and felt that it gave an indication of the quality of service provided, he agreed with officers being innovative with the focus on marketing services and not reducing services.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

31/12 **INFORMATION REPORT ON SERVICE ACTIVITY RELATING TO SCRAP METAL DEALERS**

The Committee consider a report which provided information on service activity relating to Scrap Metal Dealers.

Mr. Simon Wilkes, Business Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) introduced the report and in doing so informed the Committee that the Operation Titan report had been produced to outline legislative background and to provide Members with a clear understanding of the limits to which the service could act. The service had received a number of complaints in relation to the activities of itinerant scrap metal collectors operating in all parts of the county. Generally these complaints were raised as noise nuisance issues. Currently there was little the service could do to resolve residents problems, in relation to itinerant scrap metal dealers, who drove around in flat bed transit type vans and the noise created by either crying out or using bugles. The report outlined the proposed provisions of a private members bill aimed at improving local authority's ability to deal with these issues.

Members' attention was drawn to the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill 2012/2013 Private Members' Bill sponsored by Richard Ottaway MP which was due for its second reading in the House of Lords on 30th November 2012.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted; and
- (b) that Members lobby local MPs to support the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill 2012/2013 Private Members' Bill sponsored by Richard Ottaway MP.

32/12 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUDGET MONITORING
APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2012**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the financial position for the period April to September 2012.

The Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council introduced the report and in doing so informed the Committee that the approved budget for 2012/2013 was £5.626 million, this was a reduction on the revised 2011/2012 budget of £6.008 million and reflected a 22.57% reduction from the original participating Councils 2010/2011 budgets.

The Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council drew Members' attention to the savings figure of £282,000, as detailed at Appendix 2 to the report. The Section 151 officers for each participating partner authority had been made aware that the partner savings of £282,000 would not be refunded to participating Councils as in previous years, it would result in a reduction in the planned charges to be made to the participating Councils.

RESOLVED that the financial position for the period April to September 2012, be noted.

33/12 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUDGET 2013 / 2014**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the proposed revenue and capital budget for Worcestershire Regulatory Services for 2013/2014.

The Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council introduced the report and in doing so informed the Committee that the current revenue budget for 2012/2013 was £5.626 million, this was a reduction on the revised 2011/2012 budget of £6.008 million and reflected a 22.57% reduction from the original participating Councils 2010/2011 budgets. This exceeded the initial level of 15% and was mainly due to a reduction in accommodation charges together with further restructures that had been implemented over the last 12 months.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services informed the Committee that as detailed in the report, officers were exploring the potential for a one year pilot of modified service standards that would result in a one off adjustment of Worcester City Council's contribution by approximately 6% for 2013/2014.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revenue budget for 2013/2014 of £5.626 million, be approved;
and
- (b) that the capital budget for 2013/2014 of £244,000, be approved.

34/12 **WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE -**
PROPOSED MEETING DATES 2013 / 2014

The Committee considered the proposed meeting dates scheduled for 2013/2014.

The Chairman reminded Members of the agreed quorum for meetings and asked Members to consider this with regard to future agenda items and any declarations of interest being declared. If only one Member was in attendance for their participating authority and upon declaring an interest had to leave the meeting, the meeting would be inquorate.

RESOLVED that the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee meeting dates and start time of 5.30pm for 2013/2014 be approved as follows:

- Thursday 21st February 2013
- Thursday 27th June 2013 – Annual Meeting
- Thursday 26th September 2013
- Thursday 21st November 2013 – Budget Meeting
- Thursday 20th February 2014

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman

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