

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

**TUESDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER 2007**

PRESENT: Councillors J. T. Duddy (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker, R. J. Deeming, B. Lewis F.CMI, D. L. Pardoe and C. B. Taylor

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. P. Street, Mrs. S. Sellers and Ms. D. McCarthy

46/07 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. M. McDonald.

47/07 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were made.

48/07 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 2nd October 2007 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

49/07 **TASK GROUPS**

The Board considered a report relating to a revised Task Group Membership Form and a new Task Group Chairman Form.

**RESOLVED** that the revised Task Group Membership Form and new Task Group Chairman Form be used in future.

50/07 **UPDATES ON SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS**

(i) Air Quality Task Group

In the absence of Councillor McDonald, Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor Pardoe, a Member of the Task Group, provided an update and made particular reference to information provided by Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT) on respiratory illnesses including asthma.

The Board was informed that a draft scrutiny report with recommendations was being compiled and would be considered at the next Task Group meeting scheduled to be held on Monday 19th November 2007. It was anticipated that the report would be finalised in time for the next meeting of the Board in December.

(ii) Public Transport – Buses Task Group

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor Lewis, informed the Board that the Task Group had carried out a survey at the Bus Station in Bromsgrove on 10th October 2007 where 107 individuals had been consulted. At the following meeting on the 19th October 2007 the responses from the consultation had been analysed. It was reported that, to date, a further 22 responses had been received from members of the public completing the survey published in the Together Bromsgrove Magazine.

Councillor Lewis stated he had received a report from the Council's Equalities Department entitled "Achieving Disability Equality in Bromsgrove District" which emphasised public transport issues. Finally, it was reported that the next meeting was due to be held on 8th November 2007 where representatives from MRD Travel Services and Go West Midlands were expected to attend. It was confirmed that the Task Group was due to complete its investigation in December 2007.

(iii) Refuse and Recycling Task Group

A brief update from the Task Group Chairman, Councillor Scurrall, was read out to the Board. Members were informed that the third Task Group meeting had been held on 29th October 2007 and a report regarding policies and procedures adopted by other local authorities, that had achieved higher recycling rates than Bromsgrove, had been considered. It was stated that only one out of three Councils approached had replied to the Task Group's request. However, since then the other two Councils had provided a late response which the Task Group would consider at its next meeting.

The Board was informed that a report had been requested from HR regarding the evaluation of proposed training courses for refuse crews from two training providers. It was expected that any course recommended would have been fully evaluated, especially with regards to customer service improvements.

Members were informed that Parish Councils had been consulted on the fortnightly collection of refuse with a closing date for replies in mid December. It was explained that the next meeting was due to be held on 26th November 2007 and the Task Group was due to complete its work by the end of January 2008.

**RESOLVED** that the updates given on the progress of each of the Scrutiny Task Groups be noted.

51/07 **CABINET'S FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Cabinet's Forward Plan which contained the key decisions scheduled to be made over the next few months.

It was explained that the Scrutiny Steering Board would be consulted on the Medium Term Financial Plan and that the Head of Financial Services would give a presentation.

It was clarified that with regard the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre, it was expected there would be a transfer to a Leisure Trust, subject to consideration of a full business case.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet's Forward Plan be noted.

52/07 **SCRUTINY PROPOSALS**

The Board considered the scrutiny proposal put forward by the Leader relating to reducing teenage anti-social behaviour and the scrutiny suggestion put forward by the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects on alcohol free zones. A discussion on the proposed topics for scrutiny ensued.

It was explained to Members that the Air Quality Scrutiny Report was due to be considered by the Board in December and if approved, would be considered by the Cabinet in January. It was anticipated that the Cabinet would submit a response to the Board at its meeting in February; at which point the Board could disband the Task Group and a new Task Group could begin a fresh scrutiny investigation. It was stated that the Board could establish a new Task Group in January and agree the terms of reference and membership in February. Further Task Groups could be set up in subsequent months once the Public Transport - Buses Task Group and the Refuse and Recycling Task Group were disbanded.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the scrutiny proposal relating to teenage anti-social behaviour be deferred to the meeting in January; and
- (b) that Councillor Duddy submit a scrutiny proposal in relation to the suggestion from the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects on alcohol free zones to the January meeting.

53/07 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme for the Scrutiny Steering Board was considered.

The possible scrutiny topics, climate change and older people, were considered. It was understood that there was a limit to the number of Task Groups which could be set up at one time and therefore the Board would need to consider all scrutiny proposals and prioritise them.

The Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects was asked to provide an update on what work was already being carried out in relation to climate change. The Board was informed that the Energy Efficiency Project Group had been set up to evaluate the recommendations contained within the Energy Savings Trust Assessment and the first meeting of the Project Group was scheduled to be held later in November.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that Councillor Mrs. Bunker submit a scrutiny proposal relating to older people to the Board meeting in January; and

- (b) that the suggestion to scrutinise climate change be deferred to the meeting in March.

54/07 **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT CABINET**

Members considered the items on the Cabinet agenda for the meeting scheduled to be held on 7th November 2007.

Clarification was given to the recommendation put forward by the Performance Management Board at its meeting on 23rd October 2007 regarding the need for full consultation on the use of the Market Hall site as well as the town centre redevelopment. An update on the progress so far was also given by the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects.

**RESOLVED** that the items on the Cabinet agenda be noted and that no comments be put forward to Cabinet from the Scrutiny Steering Board.

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm

Chairman