

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

TUESDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2007 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), J. T. Duddy (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker, R. J. Deeming, B. Lewis F.CMI, D. L. Pardoe and C. B. Taylor (during Minute Nos. 59/07 to 63/07)

Observers: Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E.

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

55/07 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

56/07 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were made.

57/07 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 6th November 2007 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

58/07 **AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Board considered the Scrutiny Report compiled by the Air Quality Task Group and Councillor McDonald, as Chairman of the Task Group, answered all questions raised.

One query related to whether or not a buyer of a property within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) would be alerted to the fact that the property was within an AQMA. It was believed by officers that this would not be highlighted through a standard Local Land Charges Search, however, it was possible for additional questions to be asked as part of the local search.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be requested to confirm whether the Local Land Charges Search Con 29 form included any questions relating to AQMAs; and
- (b) that the Air Quality Scrutiny Report containing recommendations be approved.

RECOMMENDED that the Air Quality Scrutiny Report be placed on the next available Agenda for Cabinet's consideration and all recommendations contained within the report be approved.

59/07 **TRACKING APPROVED SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members considered a report relating to how the Scrutiny Steering Board could track approved scrutiny recommendations. It was explained that any scrutiny recommendations which were not approved would not be included in the tracker report as there would be nothing to update upon. However, with regard to recommendations coming out of scrutiny task group investigations, the Board would receive a response from Cabinet which would include reasons why recommendations may not have been approved.

It was confirmed that although it was expected that the tracking of the recommendations would be primarily for the recommendations which came out of scrutiny task group investigations, the tracker report would include all scrutiny recommendations put forward to Cabinet.

There was a discussion on how often the tracker report should be submitted to the Board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a tracker report, based on the format attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be used on a trial basis for twelve months to monitor all scrutiny recommendations approved by Cabinet; and
- (b) that the tracker report be submitted to the Scrutiny Steering Board on a bi-monthly basis during the twelve month trial.

60/07 **UPDATES ON SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS**

(i) Public Transport – Buses Task Group

The Chairman of the Public Transport – Buses Task Group, Councillor Lewis, provided Members of the Board with an update on the work of the Task Group. He stated that 91 responses had been received to the bus survey published in the Together Bromsgrove Magazine and with the 107 interviews which had taken place previously at the Bus Station, a total of 198 responses had been gathered. A second survey at the Bus Station was planned during the late afternoon/early evening of 18th December 2007.

Councillor Lewis informed the Board that he had attended two workshops held by Worcestershire County Council in November which related to transport issues. He also stated that he had arranged for Mr. Harrison from Worcestershire County Council to give a presentation on the Worcestershire Bus Strategy for Members before the start of the next Task Group Meeting scheduled to be held on 21st December 2007. An invitation would be sent out in due course.

Other items mentioned were: dial-a-ride in Redditch; the Disabled User Group; the recent report relating to Disability Equality in the District; and discussions on low platform vehicles between the Task Group Chairman and the Network Performance Manager of First Buses.

Due to more information coming to light, the Chairman requested an extension for the Task Group to enable it to properly complete its investigation.

(ii) Refuse and Recycling Task Group

A brief update from the Task Group Chairman, Councillor Scurrell, was read out to the Board. Members were informed that the Task Group had received a very positive report from Ms. Parkinson, Learning and Organisational Development Manager, relating to NVQ Training for Refuse and Recycling Operatives. It was reported that Members were pleased with the outcome of meetings between Ms. Parkinson, senior officers from Street Scene and Waste Management and NEW College representatives .

The Board was informed that responses from two other local authorities with high recycling rates had been received and that local supermarkets had been contacted relating to reusing, recycling and reducing waste.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the updates given on the progress of each of the Scrutiny Task Groups be noted; and
- (ii) that the Public Transport – Buses Task Group be granted an extension to complete its work and that 21st January 2008 be the revised deadline.

61/07 **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.

Item number 8 related to flooding matters and the Cabinet was due to consider a response to representations received from Tewkesbury Borough Council on this matter on 5th December 2007. It was stated that within the Cabinet report it referred to the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network Meeting on the 26th November 2007 when Scrutiny Members from Worcestershire County Council and District Councils within Worcestershire were due to consider the suggestion of a countywide joint scrutiny on flooding. At this point the Chairman of the Board offered to provide Members with an update on the outcome of that meeting.

The Chairman gave a brief summary of the meeting where a presentation had been given by officers. The Board was informed that it had been decided that each District would provide County Council officers information on work that they had already carried out on flooding and for any Scrutiny Member who was interested in leading the investigation to be encouraged to put themselves forward. It was confirmed that the joint scrutiny on flooding would be an item on the agenda for the next Scrutiny Steering Board meeting for Members to discuss further.

It was suggested that it be recommended to Cabinet that the representations received from Tewkesbury Borough Council be discussed by the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network. It was pointed out that the letter from Tewkesbury had been sent to all local authorities within Worcestershire County Council.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Cabinet's Forward Plan be noted; and
- (b) that the update from the Chairman on the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network Meeting held on 26th November 2007 be noted.

RECOMMENDED that the Chief Executive be requested to inform the Cabinet that the Scrutiny Steering Board would like to recommend that the letter from Tewkesbury Borough Council be discussed by the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network.

62/07 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme for the Scrutiny Steering Board was considered.

Members were informed that since the work programme had been compiled the BDHT Task Group Review Meeting had been scheduled to take place on 11th December 2007.

(The update from the Chairman on the meeting of the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairmen Network was provided under the previous item, Minute Number 61/07.)

RESOLVED that the report, including the verbal update, be noted.

63/07 **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT CABINET**

Members considered the items on the Cabinet agenda for the meeting scheduled to be held on 5th December 2007.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the items on the Cabinet agenda be noted; and
- (b) that the Cabinet agenda papers no longer be included as an item on the agenda for future Scrutiny Steering Board meetings.

(NOTE: Before the close of the meeting, Members were reminded of the Budget Presentation scheduled to be held on Wednesday 19th December 2007 at 6.00pm.)

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm

Chairman