

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 9TH JANUARY 2008 AT 6.00 PM

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

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

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, 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. M. Dunphy, Ms A. Darroch and Ms. R. Cole.

115/07 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M. J. A. Webb.

116/07 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor G. N. Denaro declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011), as a member of Wythall Community Hall Trust.

Councillor Mrs J. Dyer M.B. E. declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011), as a member of the Amphlett Hall Management Committee and of Wythall Community Hall Trust.

Councillor Mrs J. M. L. A. Griffiths declared a personal interest in item 9 (Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011), as a member of the Operating Trust of Bromsgrove Arts Centre and member of the Amphlett Hall Management Committee and in agenda item 11, (Concessions Policy for Users of Council Services) as a close relative may benefit from Council Concessions.

Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011), as a member of the Operating Trust of Bromsgrove Arts Centre.

Councillor R. D. Smith declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Medium Term Financial Plan 2008-2009 to 2010-2011), as a member of the Operating Trust of Bromsgrove Arts Centre.

117/07 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th December 2007 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

118/07 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The minutes of the meetings of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 4th December and 20th December 2007 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

119/07 **AUDIT BOARD**

The minutes of the Audit Board held on 10th December 2007 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting be noted.

120/07 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

The Minutes of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 13th December 2007 were submitted. The Portfolio Holder for Planning also reported the latest position regarding housing allocation figures which it was hoped would be clarified shortly.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting be noted and the recommendations approved.

121/07 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 18th December 2007 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting be noted and the recommendations approved.

122/07 **AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Cabinet considered recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board based on the report of the Task Group set up to scrutinise issues relating to Air Quality. The Leader acknowledged the detailed work undertaken by the Task Group together with the excellent quality of the final report. He thanked the Chairman of the Task Group for its efforts in undertaking the exercise. The Chairman of the Task Group referred to the thorough exercise which had been undertaken, and highlighted the consultation which had taken place with a variety of individuals and agencies as part of the scrutiny process. Following detailed discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

(a) *that recommendation 1 relating to a request to the County Council for the introduction of Low Emission Zones (LEZ) to cover certain roads in*

the District be deferred until further information is available, following the introduction of such zones in other areas of the Country and the implications for the adjacent road network;

- (b) that the Council remain committed to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station including the Park and Ride facility;
- (c) *that it be noted that whilst the Cabinet is minded to support the future recommendations of the Public Transport – Buses Scrutiny Task Group which relate to the improvement of local bus services, full consideration will need to be given on receipt of the recommendations and this will be subject to any financial implications;*
- (d) that a request be made to the appropriate authority to alter the traffic signals on the A38 North into Bromsgrove (*including the possibility of part-time signals*) to reduce exit blocking and improve traffic flow near the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and that the area be monitored by the Environmental Health Team and the appropriate external agencies before and after the alterations;
- (e) that the Environmental Health Team be requested to monitor the AQMA before and after the amendment of the yellow box markings on the roundabout at M42 junction 1 at gridlock to investigate whether there has been an reduction in air pollution *and that the police be requested to monitor the misuse of the yellow boxes;*
- (f) that the Highways Agency be requested to monitor the area of the M42 Westbound to M5 to find out if the scheme involving changes to signage and road markings has been successful in reducing the number of incidents;
- (g) that the Town Centre Redevelopment Steering Group (LSP Theme Group) be requested to consider air pollution caused by traffic congestion when looking at redeveloping the town. This to include considering the possibility of vehicles accessing The Strand from Birmingham Road and investigating, in partnership with the County Council, whether it may help decrease traffic congestion and therefore lower air pollution at this location;
- (h) that the County Council be requested to review the timing of the traffic signals located at the top end of the High Street near the Strand with a view to reducing the build up of stationary traffic and, that if this is agreed, the County Council and the Environmental Health Team be requested to undertake monitoring of the position before and after the alteration in respect of traffic congestion and air quality respectively;
- (i) that the Head of Planning and Environment be requested to consider the best ways of discouraging development within an AQMA and to produce an air quality guidance note to try to control and mitigate the impact of property development on air quality;
- (j) that there be ongoing communication with local residents who own and/or reside in a property located within an AQMA to ensure they are fully aware of the situation and the County Council be requested to erect a sign in the AQMA (i) informing the public that it is an AQMA and that the District Council is working with other agencies to reduce air pollution in the vicinity; and (ii) posing the question “Is your journey necessary?” to encourage the public to think about their travel habits and the impact on air pollution;

- (k) that the Environmental Health Team be requested to update the Air Quality information on the Council's website and to ensure it is regularly updated in future;
- (l) that the Environmental Health Team be requested to work in partnership with Worcestershire PCT (and local GP's surgeries) to ensure they are kept up to date on the areas which have poor air quality to assist with the further investigation of the correlation between poor air quality areas and illnesses such as asthma and that Worcestershire PCT be requested to work closely with GPs to ensure the criteria used for diagnosing and recording data relating to asthma is standardised wherever possible to enable the analysis of data to be more meaningful;
- (m) that the Environmental Health Team be requested to actively discourage bonfires (with the exception of social events on and around 5th November) through promotion, similar to that undertaken by Birmingham City Council including ensuring that members of the public are aware of how to report bonfires which are a nuisance;
- (n) that the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be requested to further investigate and assess options available (such as the use of bio fuel in refuse and recycling vehicles) which could assist the Council in contributing to improving air quality;
- (o) that the newly established Energy Efficiency Project Group be requested to progress the Council's Staff Travel Plan as a matter of urgency and to work together with the LSP Better Environment Theme Group;
- (p) that training be offered to all Members and all staff on air quality and other green issues to improve their awareness of the impact their behaviour at home and at work can have on air quality, the training to include the showing of the film "An Inconvenient Truth" at the Council House and that specific training be provided to refuse and recycling crews relating to the parking of refuse vehicles in locations which do not lead to traffic congestion with engines turned off during breaks;
- (q) that the Licensing Section be requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at the taxi rank;
- (r) that car parking spaces be reserved for those Council staff who join the County Council Car Sharing Scheme, that the Communications Team ensure that staff are frequently reminded and encouraged to join the Car Sharing Scheme as well as using alternative ways of travelling to work such as walking, cycling or public transport and that the numbers joining the Scheme be monitored;
- (s) that further investigations be carried out by the Human Resources Section into the possibility of establishing a pool of Council owned environmentally friendly cars for essential and casual car users or a loan/lease scheme to assist and encourage staff to convert their own car to alternative fuel;
- (t) *that investigations be undertaken into the revision of the current car allowance pay scales to include the possibility of paying a flat rate for all users regardless of engine size ; and*
- (u) that the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development be requested to report to Corporate Management Team on the

Development of a Home Working Policy to reduce staff travel between home and workplace.

(Note: where the Cabinet's decision differs from the recommendation of the Task Group this is shown in italics)

123/07 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2008/09 TO 2010/11**

Consideration was given to the Medium Term Financial Plan (revenue budgets) and to the Capital Programme for 2008-2009 to 2010-2011. Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the budget pressures identified as unavoidable and high in Appendix A of the report be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan as follows:

2008-2009	£1.670m
2009-2010	£2.265m
2010-2011	£2.264m

- (b) that the recommended savings/additional income generation identified in Appendix A of the report be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan as follows:

2008-2009	£1.424m
2009-2010	£1.803m
2010-2011	£1.881m

- (c) that officers undertake a review of alternative methods of service delivery to achieve savings as identified in Appendix A;
- (d) that the Capital Programme for 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 be approved comprising all existing schemes and new "High" priority as detailed in Appendix G. In addition the programme be increased as follows:

2008-2009	by £360,000 to £9.166m
2009-2010	by £100,000 to £2.153m
2010-2011	by £100,000 to £1.557m

- (d) that authority be delegated to the Head of Financial Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the appropriate Heads of Service, to release capital funds subject to the receipt of a robust business case and an option appraisal demonstrating that value for money is being achieved;
- (e) that the capital scheme to replace the hot water system at the Dolphin Centre in 2007-2008 at a cost of £45,000 as set out in 16.3 of the report be approved; and
- (f) that the cost in respect of early retirement and redundancy be funded from balances.

124/07 **COMMITTEE PROGRAMME 2008/09**

Consideration was given to the draft programme of Council and Committee meetings for 2008-2009. It was reported that it was intended to make recommendations to Council on the Medium Term Financial Plan at the Cabinet meeting on 7th January 2009 and therefore there would not be a requirement for a special meeting of Cabinet on 18th February 2009.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee Programme for 2008-2009, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved subject to the deletion of the special Cabinet meeting on 18th February 2009.

125/07 **CONCESSIONS POLICY FOR USERS OF COUNCIL SERVICES**

Consideration was given to a report on the standardisation of concessions offered by the Authority on a range of services. It was reported that consultations with groups involved had been undertaken and the possibility of free car parking for those in receipt of mobility allowance had been raised. Additional representations had subsequently been received from Age Concern. Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that Option 3 set out in the report be approved;
- (b) that officers be requested to investigate further the possibility of extending parking concessions to those in receipt of a mobility allowance, those who are unable to access public transport and to address the issues raised by Age Concern;
- (c) that a further report be submitted in due course.

126/07 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (OCTOBER 2007)**

The Cabinet considered the updated Improvement Plan Exception Report for October 2007, together with the corrective action being taken.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exceptions report and the corrective action being taken be noted and approved; and
- (b) that it be noted that of the 167 actions highlighted within the Plan for October 2007, 85% of the Plan was on target (green), 9.6% was one month behind (amber) and 1.8% was over one month behind (red). 3.6% of actions had been rescheduled or suspended with approval.

127/07 **DOLPHIN CENTRE AND HAYBRIDGE SPORTS CENTRE**

The Cabinet considered a report on the latest position regarding the transfer of the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre to the Wychavon Leisure Community Association Limited (WLCAL). Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the progress made towards the transfer of the Dolphin Centre and Haybridge Sports Centre to WLCAL as detailed in the report be approved;

- (b) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects, the Section 151 Officer and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Culture and Community and Finance, to take all actions and decisions required to ensure the transfer of the centres to WLCAL subject to the finalisation of a satisfactory business case and transfer agreement;
- (c) that the delegation set out in (b) above may only be exercised on the basis that the overall savings to the Council as included in the Medium Term Financial Plan are exceeded or met.

RECOMMENDED that in respect of the transfer, the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules relating to procurement issues be suspended.

128/07 **MARKET HALL REDEVELOPMENT**

Consideration was given to a report on the redevelopment of the Bromsgrove Market Hall site and adjacent areas together with the transfer of the market itself to an outdoor venue. Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Market Hall site be redeveloped as an initial element of the town centre regeneration;
- (b) that the Market Hall site be developed as a prime retail site focusing on a style of design and quality of retailer capable of setting the tone for future regeneration of the town centre;
- (c) that redevelopment option model 3 be pursued as it is considered to be the most appropriate to the Council's capacity and needs;
- (d) that the consultants previously engaged to prepare the Market Hall brief in 2004 be requested to support the Council in refreshing the brief and to undertake the work involved in bringing the site to market;
- (e) that the sum of £90,000 be released from Capital receipts in 2008-2009 to bring the site to market;
- (f) that authority be delegated to the relevant officers to undertake the appropriate procurement exercise to identify a developer to carry out the work associated with the redevelopment of the Market Hall site;
- (g) that the market hall business be transferred to an outdoor venue and that £17,000 be included in the revenue budget for 2008-2009 as part of the review of the Medium Term Financial Plan;
- (h) that authority be delegated to the relevant officers to enter into negotiations with the County Council to enable the market stalls to be relocated to an outdoor site in the High Street.

129/07 **LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN - SUBMISSION**

Consideration was given to the report on the Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP). A slightly amended version of the AAP was submitted together with a Consultation Statement Technical Summary. It was reported that Birmingham City Council had now approved the AAP and that the provision of sound attenuation measures in Rubery (and on other sections of the A38 if necessary) had been included. Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Longbridge AAP together with the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal be approved and submitted to the Secretary of State; and
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects to make any minor textual changes to the documents.

The meeting closed at 8.06 pm

Chairman