

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 30TH JULY 2008, AT 6.00 P.M.

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., Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, R. D. Smith, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Mr. J. Edwards (Lead Official), Councillors P. M. McDonald and E. J. Murray

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mr. H. Bennett, Mr. D. Hammond, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Mrs. D. Warren, Mr. A. Coel and Ms. R. Cole.

33/08 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

34/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

35/08 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2nd July 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

36/08 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 1st July 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

37/08 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 15th July 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the minutes be noted;
- (b) that whilst the Board's recommendation to focus on performance relating to the areas listed in minute 26/08 (Annual Financial and

Performance Report 2007/2008) be approved, the Assistant Chief Executive be requested to give detailed consideration to these areas and to ensure that either the corporate set of performance indicators for 2008/2009 is amended if necessary, or to ensure that the relevant Heads of Service and Portfolio Holders are continuing to focus on the improvement of performance in these areas, whichever is the most appropriate in each case;

- (c) that the recommendation contained at minute 27/08 (Improvement Plan Exception Report – Care and Repair Agency) be approved and it be noted that discussions are also taking place on a County-wide level relating to the review of the Care and Repair Agency;
- (d) that the recommendation contained at minute 28/08 (Monthly Performance Report – Customer Service Centre) be approved and it be noted that whilst performance has improved, the Portfolio Holder and relevant Officers are already evaluating and reviewing procedures at the Customer Service Centre on an on-going basis.

38/08 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

The minutes of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 3rd July 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting be noted.

39/08 **SIDEMOOR - LAY- BYS AND DROPPED KERBS**

The Cabinet received the following motion submitted by Councillor E. J. Murray:

“Will the Leader of the Council agree to consult his Cabinet and seek agreement to write to the County Council urging them to take steps to create lay-bys and dropped kerbs in Sidemoor in an effort to preserve grass verges and to generally improve the environment within which residents live in this area.”

Councillor Murray confirmed that he had also been in contact with the Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust in an attempt to achieve some improvement in the situation.

The Cabinet felt that a similar problem existed in a number of other areas within the District and that it would be helpful to ascertain whether the County Council was willing to assist in resolving the issue.

RESOLVED that the County Council be requested to take steps to create lay-bys and dropped kerbs in Sidemoor in an effort to preserve the grass verges in the area.

40/08 **BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT - PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report which updated members on progress made on aspects of the Town Centre regeneration project. It was reported that the public consultation by way of the Issues and Options process had commenced.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

41/08 **SPONSORSHIP OF ROUNDABOUTS AND OPEN SPACES**

The Cabinet considered a report on the introduction of a policy to cover the sponsorship of and advertising on roundabouts and open spaces. The draft policy had been developed by officers as part of the work of the Celebratory and Sponsorship Group. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the policy on sponsorship and advertising on roundabouts and open spaces as set out in appendix 1 to the report be approved; and
- (b) that the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be authorised to revise the wording of the sponsorship agreement contained within appendix 1 as appropriate to ensure that it is expressed in clear language and that the legal position of the Council is protected in the event of termination of the agreement.

42/08 **TRAVEL PLAN**

The Cabinet considered a report relating to the production of a Travel Plan to encourage and promote sustainable travel habits to and from Bromsgrove District Council Offices.

It was recognised that with increasing acceptance of the significance of reducing carbon emissions as part of addressing climate change, both Central Government and the community in general were expecting Local Authorities to play a part in limiting the impact of carbon emissions and the production of an updated Travel Plan would contribute towards this. It was noted that assistance was available at no cost through the County Council to enable the necessary survey work to be undertaken.

RESOLVED that the Travel Plan be refreshed and updated, including a survey of modes of transport to and from the Council Offices employed by Members, officers and visitors.

43/08 **AUDIT COMMISSION RE-INSPECTION OF STRATEGIC HOUSING SERVICES**

Consideration was given to a report which addressed the recommendations of the Audit Commission following the re-inspection of the Council's Strategic Housing Services in February 2008. The re-inspection had resulted in a one star rating with promising prospects for improvement and it was recognised that this was a significant improvement from the previous inspection in March 2006.

The report included an Action Plan which contained proposed actions to address the areas identified by the Audit Commission as requiring further improvement.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report and recommendations of the Audit Commission following the re-inspection of the Strategic Housing Section be noted;
- (b) that the Action Plan as set out in appendix 1 to the report containing Corporate, Strategic Planning and Strategic Housing actions to address the recommendations be approved; and
- (c) that thanks be expressed to the Head of Strategic Housing and all his team for their efforts in achieving such a significant improvement in the service since the previous inspection.

44/08 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (MAY 2008)**

Consideration was given to the updated Improvement Plan Exception Report for May 2008, together with the corrective action being taken.

The Portfolio Holder for Customer Care and Service reported that he was satisfied that measures were in place to address outstanding actions contained within the 2007/2008 Improvement Plan prior to the introduction of the new Improvement Plan 2008/2009.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report and the corrective action being taken be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 106 actions highlighted within the Plan for May 2008, 81.1 percent of the Plan was on target (green), 3.8 percent was one month behind (amber) and 7.55 percent was over one month behind (red). 7.55 percent of actions had been rescheduled or suspended with approval; and
- (c) that the progress made against all actions scheduled within the Improvement Plan 2007/2008 be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.05 p.m.

Chairman