

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

**18TH SEPTEMBER 2017, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), S. A. Webb (Vice-Chairman),  
C. Allen-Jones, S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, S. R. Colella, M. Glass,  
C. J. Spencer and M. Thompson

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro and Councillor K. J. May

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr D. Piper, Mr. K. Hirons, Ms C. Baxter,  
Ms. A. Scarce and Ms. J. Bayley

36/17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors C. A. Hotham and R. J. Laight and it was confirmed that Councillor S. Baxter was attending as a substitute for Councillor Hotham.

37/17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest nor of any whipping arrangements.

38/17 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August be approved as a correct record.

39/17 **DOLPHIN CENTRE - UPDATE ON THE WORK WITH DISPLACED GROUPS - PRESENTATION**

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services delivered a presentation to update the Board on the work that had been undertaken by Officers to support displaced groups as part of the move to the new leisure centre (Appendix 1). During consideration of the presentation the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- A new operator had been awarded the contract for delivering the Council's leisure services; Sport and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM) - Everyone Active.

- A number of groups that had participated in daytime and weekend sessions at the Dolphin Centre had been accommodated elsewhere.
- A lot of work had been undertaken by Council staff to ensure that as many groups as possible that used the Dolphin Centre could obtain suitable accommodation elsewhere.
- The North Bromsgrove High School site had been the subject of improvement works, with a new lift installed to ensure access for people with physical disabilities.
- The badminton group that usually met on a Monday had decided to meet in Redditch and Droitwich in future.
- The amount of circuit training would be increasing in the district following the changes.
- The Lodge Park Netball Club, which previously met on Wednesday evenings, had merged with another netball club. Their options for meeting were in the process of being considered.
- One of the two gymnastics clubs that had previously met at the Dolphin Centre had been accommodated at North Bromsgrove High School.
- Football club bookings had primarily transferred to North Bromsgrove High School.

Following the presentation a number of points were discussed in detail and the Chairman invited a local resident to sit at the table to participate in these discussions:

- The times when local groups currently met and the extent to which this was accurately reflected in the presentation.
- The contribution made by volunteers involved in local sporting groups and the potential for the Council to thank these volunteers for their efforts.
- The action that would be taken by the Council and Everyone Active to communicate any changes in the timetable and venue for local sport sessions.
- The date for the introduction of the new arrangements. The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services explained that the aim was to open the new leisure centre on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 though there was still slight potential for delay.
- The business case for the new leisure centre and the fact that this had been highlighted by the Council's external auditors as a robust document.
- The potential for Information in respect of displaced organisations to be provided for Members' consideration, as detailed in the presentation. (Councillor Bloore made reference to a number of groups and it was agreed that he would provide details of these to the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services outside of the meeting.)
- The contact that some residents involved in local groups had made with a number of Members.
- The support required by the one gymnastics group that had not been accommodated by the Council. Members were advised that

because this group met after 4.00pm it had not been possible to accommodate them at the school as this conflicted with school hours.

At the end of these discussions the Board

**RESOLVED** that the update report be noted.

40/17

**PARKING ENFORCEMENT - RESPONSE TO POINTS RAISED AT THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 26TH JUNE 2017**

The Environmental Services Manager together with a representative of Wychavon District Council's Civil Parking Enforcement Service presented a report addressing the points in relation to parking enforcement that had been raised at a meeting of the Board on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

During consideration of this item the following points were discussed in detail:

- The cost of the parking service for Bromsgrove District Council was just over £202,000. This figure covered all of the parking services, not just enforcement.
- The revenue generated by parking fees. Members were advised that £49,000 were generated from fines from on street parking and over £75,000 from off street parking.
- Income to the Council from parking was just under £1 million, when parking payments that did not involve a fine were taken into account.
- Members requested a breakdown of the finances for the service.
- The work of bailiffs involved in recovering unpaid parking fees. Members were advised that any bailiffs would be selected by Bromsgrove District Council and did not form part of the contract with Wychavon District Council.
- The current consultation taking place in respect of parking payment machines. Members were advised that this consultation process was due to be completed in November.
- The length of time vans were permitted to use to unload goods at retail premises. Members were advised that vans were permitted 10 minutes for such purposes before enforcement action would occur.
- The focus of the original Notice of Motion to Council on parking in the vicinity of schools and the potential for enforcement action to be taken in these areas.
- The potential, under the Highway Code, for drivers to stop on double yellow lines to enable children to alight or be collected and the fact that this meant enforcement action could not be taken in these circumstances.
- The problems that occurred when parents arrived early to collect their children from school. In some cases parents would park on

double yellow lines and leave their engines running whilst they waited.

- The role of the schools in educating parents about parking requirements and action that had previously been taken by local schools to address this problem.
- The role of Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in respect of undertaking enforcement action close to schools. The Board was informed that only the Police could take enforcement action in relation to blocked pavements.
- The number of parking enforcement officers operating in the district.
- The potential to raise the issue of parking problems and enforcement difficulties with Worcestershire County Council which had lead responsibility for many aspects involving public highways and local authority schools.
- The number of complaints received by Members in respect of parking violations and the need for the Council to address residents' concerns.

Following consideration of the report the Board considered action that could be taken to address this issue moving forward. There was general consensus that a Task Group review focusing on parking problems around schools should be undertaken. Members noted that there were already two scrutiny reviews taking place and a further review coming to its conclusion. In this context it might not be possible to launch this exercise until some of the other scrutiny work had been completed due to the implications for both Members' and Officers' workloads. However, a Topic proposal form, setting out proposed terms of reference, could be drafted and submitted for Members' consideration at the following meeting of the Board.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) A Task Group be established to review parking problems around schools in Bromsgrove district;
- (2) Councillor C. J. Bloore be appointed as Chairman of this review;
- (3) Non-Executive Members be invited to express an interest in participating in this exercise;
- (4) The Senior Democratic Services Officer meet with Councillor Bloore to complete a Topic Proposal form for this review; and
- (5) The Topic Proposal form be submitted for Members' consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

41/17

**CENTRES STRATEGY**

The Head of Economic Development and Regeneration presented the Centres Strategy for the Board's consideration and in so doing highlighted the following:

- The document provided was a summary of the final glossy strategy that would be presented for the consideration of Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017.
- The strategy would enable the Council to have an effective economic development policy for the 7 centres managed by the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Unit (NWEDR).
- The 7 centres had been agreed at a meeting of Cabinet in 2015 and had been selected on the basis of serving a local population in excess of 2,500.
- There were key themes underpinning work in all of the centres.
- The Centres Manager was working hard to develop constructive working relationships with business representatives in the local centres.
- As part of the work on the strategy action plans had been developed for each of the centres.
- Monitoring would be implemented to help assess the impact of the strategy and the action plan, with key performance indicators having been identified to enable this to happen.

The Board subsequently discussed a number of matters relating to the strategy in further detail:

- The amount of information provided in the summary report. The Chairman expressed disappointment that Members had not had a chance to pre-scrutinise the final report to Cabinet.
- The reasons why the 7 centres had been identified in 2015 and why this had not included Aston Fields.
- The potential to incorporate Aston Fields into the strategy in future years.
- The need for there to be appropriate capacity in order to expand the number of centres addressed at this strategic level.
- The basis of the original decision when the 7 centres had been identified. It was noted that Members had wanted to focus on those centres which were separated from Bromsgrove town centre and needed support to remain sustainable.
- The ongoing work provided by the NWEDR Unit to parts of the district not included as one of the 7 centres.
- The boundaries of the 7 centres and the town centre. Members were advised that the boundaries of the town centre were clearly defined in the local plan. Further information was requested in respect of the boundaries for the 7 centres.
- The focus of the Bromsgrove Enterprise Park.
- The events referred to in the strategy and the extent to which the Council was involved in organising events in the centres. Members noted that many events were organised by Parish Councils and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups).
- The use of A-Board by businesses and the extent to which these were encroaching on pedestrian areas and acted as a barrier to disabled access in Bromsgrove town centre.

- The number of void commercial properties in Bromsgrove town centre and the options available to the Council to encourage use of these spaces.
- The potential to introduce pop-up shows in the district.
- The availability of data for previous years against which progress could be monitored.
- The challenges with broadband access in the district and the extent to which this could be addressed by the strategy, for example in one of the Key Performance Indicators.
- The need to address the infrastructure problems impacting on Bromsgrove district, particularly in relation to travel, and the benefits of providing further information about this in the strategy.
- The potential for further economic development to be achieved through the Council working closely with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- The potential for Cabinet to withhold making a decision on the subject of the strategy until the Board had had a chance to review the content of the final strategy.

At the end of these discussions Members discussed a number of options available moving forward. The suggestion was made that the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development the Town Centre and Strategic Partnerships could circulate the final report electronically amongst Members of the Board and an extra meeting could be held to enable pre-scrutiny of the document if considered appropriate. However, concerns were expressed that this would not be a practical solution in the time available before the Cabinet was due to consider the matter on 4<sup>th</sup> October. Alternatively it was suggested that Cabinet could be asked to postpone making a decision on this item, though concerns were raised that this might delay progress with economic development in the district. Suggestions were also made that the Board could recommend changes to the strategy to ensure that broadband connectivity and an extension to the number of district centres covered by the strategy was taken into account, but Members also expressed reservations about taking this approach when they had not had a chance to view the final strategy which might provide further information on these points. Without consideration of the Board's concerns and attempts being made to provide Scrutiny Members with sufficient access to the strategy in advance of a decision being taken the Chairman noted there was a risk that this matter could be the subject of a call in.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Centres Strategy is not approved in its current form until further information has been provided for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny board on the subject.

### **ARTRIX SLA ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT**

The Chairman reminded Members that an annual report from the Artrix was part of the service level agreement and that previously the Board had received a detailed presentation. It had been agreed this year that a written report be received with the option to invite Members of the Artrix

to attend a future meeting should there be any areas within the report that Members wished to consider in more detail.

Following a brief discussion the Board gave it's thanks to the Atrix for providing such a detailed report and requested that, when available, the most recent accounts be provided for further information. These would be circulated to Members outside of the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the Artrix SLA Annual update Report be noted.

43/17

**FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

The Chairman of the Finance and Budget Working Group, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett, advised that there had been one meeting of the group. During this meeting Members had discussed the allocation of costs within shared services, the number of desks and the amount of time spent by senior officers on work for the different local authorities in the shared service. Heads of Service were now undertaking an exercise investigating their allocation of time; this was focusing both retrospectively on action that had been taken and on potential future action.

44/17

**MEASURES DASHBOARD WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

The Chairman noted that no meetings of the Measures Dashboard Working Group had taken place since the last meeting of the Board. The next meeting of the group would take place on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

45/17

**TASK GROUP UPDATES**

CCTV Short Sharp Review

Councillor Colella, Chairman of the CCTV Short Sharp Review requested an extension of time. It was explained that whilst no additional meetings would be needed, the Review Group had asked for additional information which would take some time for the officers to prepared. It was also hoped that interviews would be arranged with a number of witnesses including the Police and Crime Commissioner, or a representative from his office, a representative from the Police together with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Social Media Task Group

Councillor Thompson provided an update on behalf of the Chairman. He advised that at the Group's previous meeting it had interviewed the Head of Communications at Worcestershire County Council and further discussed potential recommendations and areas to be covered within the final report. It was confirmed that the Group was still on schedule to bring this report to the October meeting of the Board.

Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group

Officers advised that Cabinet had received this report at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> September and whilst accepting the recommendation, had declined the offer of the relevant Portfolio Holder attending staff briefings and being involved in the formulation of the next staff survey, as it was felt that this was something which was more appropriate for the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff to carry out.

Members were also asked to confirm that they were happy for Councillor Colella to act as the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff from Bromsgrove and that he had been invited to attend a meeting in the near future in respect of the forthcoming staff survey.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor S. R. Colella be appointed at the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff for Bromsgrove District Council.

46/17

**CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered the content of the Cabinet Work Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

The Chairman commented that the content of the Cabinet Work Programme was shorter than the previous month and largely focused on the meeting of Cabinet due to take place on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The Commercialism and Financial Strategy was already due to be considered by the Finance and Budget Working Group and the Industrial Units Investment Outline Business Case was scheduled for pre-scrutiny by the board later in the year.

Members noted that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Implementation of Provisions) item might be of interest to the Board in relation to their role as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee. However, it was unclear, from the title, whether this would be relevant and therefore Members requested further information in respect of this item to enable a decision to be taken as to whether this should be subject to pre-scrutiny.

47/17

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Officers advised that the Board's work programme would be updated to incorporate all of the items that had been added during the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

Chairman