

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

TUESDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), Dr. G. H. Lord (Vice-Chairman),
A. N. Blagg, S. R. Colella and C. B. Taylor

Observers: Councillors G. N. Denaro, S. R. Peters and
Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP

Officers: Mr. P. Street, Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. M. Bell, Mrs. C. Felton,
Mrs. S. Sellers, Mr. S. Martin and Mr. A. C. Stephens

29/08 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. M. Bunker.

30/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were received.

31/08 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 29th July 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

32/08 **COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

Consideration was given to the latest draft of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) self-assessment to be submitted to the Audit Commission by 26th September 2008.

The Executive Director - Services explained that the Audit Commission would use the final version of the self-assessment report to identify the key areas to be investigated during the CPA inspection.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the 'work-in-progress' draft CPA self-assessment document be noted; and
- (b) that it be noted that the final version of the CPA self-assessment document would be considered by Council, before being forwarded to the Audit Commission.

33/08 **SCRUTINY REQUEST - CAR PARKING FOR BLUE BADGE HOLDERS**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed a request from a member of the public in respect of the charges for car parking for 'Blue Badge' holders. The Board received additional information about the Council's Shopmobility scheme from Mr. S. Martin, Transport and Engineering Manager, who also answered several questions from Members.

Mr. Martin explained that the cost of operating the Shopmobility scheme was covered by the income from charging 'Blue Badge' holders for car parking. He stated that there were 314 registered users of the scheme and added that Shopmobility was being well used on a daily basis. It was reported that the funding for the Shopmobility scheme had been provided by the removal of the concession to allow free parking for 'Blue Badge' holders.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Board convey its thanks to Mr. L. Irving for bringing the issue to the Council's attention and highlighting the problems some members of the public may face as a result of the removal of the parking concession, and that he be sent a formal written response to explain the Board's decision; and
- (b) that, under paragraph 9.4 of the Cabinet Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive be requested to place an item for consideration on the next available Cabinet meeting agenda to re-evaluate the parking issues raised, especially in terms of the removal of the parking concession for 'Blue Badge' holders, the funding of the Shopmobility scheme, alternative methods of payment for car parking and the proposals for the regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre as a whole.

34/08 **VERBAL UPDATE ON JOINT COUNTYWIDE SCRUTINY ON FLOODING BY COUNCILLOR D. L. PARDOE**

The Chairman addressed the meeting and informed the Board that he had recently attended a meeting in respect of the Joint Countywide Scrutiny on Flooding. He explained that the final draft report had been published and would be circulated to all districts within the County in due course. He added that the Chairman of the Countywide Scrutiny on Flooding would be willing to attend a future meeting of the Board to formally present and explain the final report and respond to any questions from Members.

It was reported that the flooding which affected the Bromsgrove District in July 2007 was not quite as severe as in other parts of the County, and that most of the damage caused to property and land in the district was as a result of sudden 'flash flooding'. These "at risk" areas were now identifiable by post codes should a similar event occur again in the future.

The Chairman stated that the report did not seek to apportion blame on particular agencies or organisations, but merely to draw the attention of those bodies to possible areas at risk of flooding and to make them aware of the problems that may be caused.

Members of the Board asked a number of questions to which the Chairman or the officers present at the meeting responded.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a copy of the Report of the Countywide Scrutiny on Flooding be distributed to Members with the agenda for the next meeting of the Board; and
- (b) that arrangements be made for the Chairman of the Countywide Scrutiny on Flooding to attend the next, or subsequent, meeting of the Board to formally present the report, explain its findings and respond to any questions from Members.

35/08 **SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

The Board considered the recommendation tracker report which listed all Cabinet approved Scrutiny recommendations and the actions taken to implement them.

RESOLVED that the recommendation tracker be noted.

36/08 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to the Forward Plan which included key and non-key decisions due to be taken by the Cabinet over the forthcoming months.

The Board discussed each key decision in turn and questions raised were answered by the officers present.

In respect of the implementation of Single Status, it was reported that this had been delayed due to a recent legal ruling which had national implications.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

37/08 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered all the items included within its Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Steering Board's Work Programme be noted and be updated accordingly.

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Chairman