

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

2ND DECEMBER 2019, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Thompson (Chairman), J. Till (Vice-Chairman),
A. J. B. Beaumont, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, S. P. Douglas, M. Glass,
C.A. Hotham, S. A. Hughes, A. D. Kriss and C. J. Spencer

Observers: Councillors G. Denaro and M. Sherrey

Officers: Mr M. Austin, J Gresham, Ms. J. Pickering and Ms. A. Scarce

58/19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies were received from Cllr. P. McDonald with Cllr S. Douglas attending as his substitute.

Members discussed the number of substitutes allowed over each municipal year at Overview and Scrutiny Board. Members requested that the number of substitutes was re-visited and perhaps increased from the number permitted, which was two. Officers explained that this number was determined as part of The Council's Constitution and therefore this request would need to be taken to the Constitution Review Working Group to be considered there.

RECOMMENDED that the Constitution Review Working Group would review the number of substitutions that are permitted by each Member during a municipal year for Overview and Scrutiny Board.

59/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

60/19 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2019**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th November 2019 were submitted for Members' consideration.

It was noted by Members that there was an omission from the last set of minutes regarding the Validity of Traffic Regulation Orders discussion. Members confirmed that this had been missed and Officers agreed that this item would be added to the minutes. Members also noted that in the item Worcestershire Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee – Update, the acronym should read CAMHS rather than CAMS.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 21st October 2019 be approved as a true record.

61/19

RECYCLING - PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Environmental Services Manager, to the meeting.

The Environmental Services Manager presented first on Recycling and in doing so highlighted the following:

- Communications to residents regarding the bin collection days and what can be recycled in the green bin including leaflets, tagging for bins and social media campaigns.
- Bromsgrove District Council had the second highest level for recycling for a Council in Worcestershire for and last year 42.1% of total waste collected was recycled.
- Contamination of recycling was a growing concern and Bromsgrove District Council was working closely with Worcestershire County Council on their Joint Municipal Waste Plan.

Following the presentation, Members discussed a number of areas with the officers present in more detail, this included:

- Initiatives regarding new home owner leaflet deliveries of recycling and waste information.
- The importance of using 'brown water' instead of clean water when cleaning bins and recycling waste and encouraging the washing recyclable waste for Public Health reasons.
- The importance of consistent messaging and enforcement.

RESOLVED that the Recycling update be noted.

62/19

DOG MESS AND LITTER - A CAMPAIGN (PRESENTATION)

The Environmental Services Manager presented on the item Dog Mess and Litter and in doing so highlighted the following:

- The initiatives that are being undertaken are mostly centred around educating residents about litter including 'Adopt an Area'.
- There are low numbers of dog fouling in the District.

Following the presentation, Members discussed a number of areas with the officers present in more detail, this included:

- Place teams were responsible for monitoring the levels of dog fouling in the District and if there were any 'hot spots' they would put up the signage.
- Officers discussed that residents were encouraged to help with litter picking and that the Council were grateful for residents who took ownership of their area.
- An initiative whereby dog fouling bags were provided in the area to encourage residents to pick up after their dog.
- Enforcement of litter and what activities were currently undertaken to ensure businesses took responsibility for any litter that was generated from their business. Officers resolved to ask the Environmental Services Enforcement Officer to attend the local business referred to, to ask for continuing engagement in litter prevention in their area.
- Officers resolved to provide Members with the details on how to report a dog fouling incident.

RESOLVED that the update in respect of dog mess and litter be noted.

63/19

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - SELECT COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Members considered the Select Committee Findings and Government Guidance. The points were covered by exception as Bromsgrove District Council already undertook some of the recommendations.

Point 3

Ensuring Early and Regular Engagement between the Executive and Scrutiny (page 9 of the statutory guidance document) and the importance of formalising the engagement between the Leader and Overview and Scrutiny Board Chairman. Most Members were in favour of the more formal meetings however there was discussion regarding a more informal ad-hoc approach. Officers explained that as it was a clause in the Bromsgrove District Council Constitution it would need to be implemented. Members also discussed the large number of Motions that were received at Full Council and how these meetings could provide a genuine mechanism to manage this process more effectively. Members agreed to formalise the meeting to discuss the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Board's Work Programme as per the guidelines.

Point 9.

Communicating Scrutiny's Role to the Public (page 11 of the statutory guidance document). Members showed an interest in communicating to

residents about the role of the Overview and Scrutiny function. Officers confirmed that they would work with the Communications team to ensure the message got out there by social media, website and other communication channels.

Point 13

Conflicts of interest including familial links (page 15 of the statutory guidance document). Members agreed that this point should go to the Constitution Review Working Group and be formalised through the constitution.

Point 15

Selecting a Chair (page 16 of the statutory guidance document) Members agreed with the suggested action that the Constitution Review Working Group should review the requirements in relation to the Chairman not presiding over the scrutiny of their relatives. They did not agree however that the election of The Chairman should be carried out by secret ballot as suggested in the guidance.

Point 18

Access to Information, including Exempt Information (page 18 of the statutory guidance document). Officers expressed that there was no need to consider this point as there had never been an instance where information has been denied as Cabinet had always been flexible in the past.

Point 20

Seeking Information from external Organisations (page 19-20 of the statutory guidance document). Members expressed that it would be a good idea to be represented on the Scrutiny exercises at Worcestershire County Council which had relevance or impact on the District. Officers agreed that they would prepare a letter on behalf of The Chairman to send to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at Worcestershire County Council requesting to attend future meetings. Councillor A. Kriss agreed to attend the meeting on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Members agreed that it was important to guard the Board's independence and that the white nameplates ensured the Board remained non-political therefore should remain in place.

64/19

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

The Chairman advised that the Working Group had met once since the last meeting and considered Fees and Charges. The recommendations were tabled at this meeting and were accepted by Members.

It was discussed that as Councillor S. Douglas no longer sat on the Finance and Budget Working Group no longer sits on the group that there needed to be another member appointed. The Chairman nominated Councillor S. Colella and this was seconded by Councillor C. Hotham.

RESOLVED that Councillor S. Colella be appointed to the Finance and Budget Working Group.

65/19

TASK GROUP UPDATES

It was noted that currently there was only one task group being undertaken and that this was drawing to its conclusion. Councillor Thompson confirmed that the Bromsgrove Sporting Task Group would hopefully bring its final report and recommendations to the February meeting of the Board.

As Officers would have capacity to undertake a further task group in the new year, it was noted that following the training and work programme planning event held at the beginning of the municipal year, there were a number of areas, which had been suggested for task groups, this included the Public Transport / Bus Routes / Community Transport and Affordable and Social Housing..

As some of these areas had been covered in previous task group exercises, Members requested that reports for Previous Task Group be revisited and circulated for Members to consider before making a decision on taking these matters further. Officers agreed to action this.

66/19

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

Councillor J. Till, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) confirmed that a meeting took place on 25th November which she attended. Councillor J. Till reported that there was a focus on smoking whilst pregnant and carbon monoxide consumption in infants. It was requested that the minutes from this meeting be circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

67/19

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME - TO BE TABLED AT THE MEETING

Officers that the majority of items in this would either be considered by the Finance and Budget Working group or were already on the Board's work programme.

68/19

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor S. Colella requested that bus stops be put on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. This was seconded by Councillor S. Hughes. Officers will put this on the Work Programme for the next meeting.

Members expressed that they would like a refresh of the LTP4 task group scope, and it was agreed that Councillor S. Colella would speak to officers in this regard. Reference was also made to the Old Market Hall site. Councillor G. Denaro advised that a report in respect of this would be received in due course.

The meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

Chairman