

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 3RD JUNE 2009 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Chairman), G. N. Denaro (Vice-Chairman), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, J. T. Duddy, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, R. D. Smith, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors D. L. Pardoe and C. B. Taylor

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. T. Beirne, Mr. P. Street, Mr. H. Bennett, Mr. M. Bell, Mrs. C. Felton, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman, Mr. J. Godwin, Mrs. D. Ibbitson and Ms. R. Cole.

1/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M. B. E.

2/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29th April 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

4/09 **SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 28th April 2009 were submitted.

The Cabinet was in support of the recommendations relating to the reduction of air pollution by addressing the problem of stationary vehicles with running engines (Minute No 27/08), but queried how regular communication with taxi drivers and operators could be achieved.

In relation to the recommendation relating to the implementation of a new bus station for Bromsgrove (Minute No 30/08), the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects reported that some upgrading and improvements to the existing bus station were taking place in conjunction with the work on the toilet facilities. The County Council had previously indicated support for the undertaking of a multi modal study which would have included consideration of a new bus station. Unfortunately the study had not yet received approval from the County Council.

It was reported that there was to be a meeting of the Town Centre Steering Group shortly and the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects undertook to request the Town Centre Project Manager to raise the issue of the study together with the overuse of the Taxi rank at the bus station.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the recommendations contained at Minute No 27/08 be approved subject to officers giving consideration as to how regular communication with taxi drivers and operators can be achieved effectively;
- (b) that further consideration of the issues relating to a new bus station be deferred and that an item be included on the Agenda for the next Cabinet to report the outcome of discussions to take place at the next meeting of the Town Centre Steering Group;
- (c) that the remainder of the minutes be noted.

5/09 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 18th May 2009 were submitted.

It was noted that as part of the Board's consideration of the Customer First Strategy Review, concern had been expressed regarding the proposal within the action plan to eventually close the Cash Office at the Customer Service Centre.

The Head of Finance reported that whilst it was likely the Cash Office in its existing form would be closed, there would still be the opportunity to make cash payments and that this could be through an automated facility with assistance being offered by staff where required. It was also reported that the proposed change to the existing arrangements would need to be the subject of a further report including an Equality Impact Assessment.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted and the recommendations contained at Minute No 6/09 be approved, subject to the discussion referred to above.

6/09 **LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

The minutes of the meeting of the Local Strategic Partnership held on 7th April 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

7/09 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM**

The minutes of the meeting of the Equality and Diversity Forum held on 9th April 2009 were submitted. It was noted that the Forum and the associated

Disabled Users Group were providing valuable assistance and feedback on services to the Authority.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the minutes be noted; and
- (b) that thanks be expressed to the members of the Forum for the work which they are undertaking.

8/09 **SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Shared Service Board held on 28th May 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

9/09 **COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report on the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The report included the planned actions to address the recommendations made by the Audit Commission.

During the discussion of this item the Assistant Chief Executive referred to the importance of Members gaining a full understanding of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment process. Training would be arranged on the new system and it was important that all Members attended.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Council's significant improvement in moving from a Poor rating to a Fair rating in two years be noted;
- (b) that the further improvement which is still required in order to deliver the Council's vision of "working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services" be recognised; and
- (c) that the recommendations made by the Audit Commission be noted and that the actions being taken to address these be approved.

10/09 **CUSTOMER FIRST STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed adoption of a new Customer Access Strategy to replace the existing Customer First Strategy. During the discussion of this item Members paid tribute to the improvements in the Council's customer performance which had been achieved in particular at the Customer Service Centre but also within other areas of the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the significant improvement in the Council's customer performance over the last three years, in particular at the Customer Service Centre be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that whilst process times are generally much improved, customer satisfaction and staff satisfaction remain too low;

- (c) that the proposed updated corporate customer standards be approved and that these be inserted into each service business plan and be published to customers later in the year;
- (d) that the recommendation contained in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment report that "a culture of customer focus should be fully established at all levels within the Council" be noted;
- (e) that the Strategy's priorities for the year ahead be approved, together with the detailed action plan to support the delivery of these priorities;
- (f) that the Strategy scorecard 2009/2010, including the proposed customer measures be approved and that the distance the Authority still requires to travel in order to become an excellent Council be recognised.

11/09 **PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE (PPG17) - OUTTURN**

The Cabinet considered a report on the operational implications arising from the PPG17 assessment in relation to the delivery of services within the Parks and Open Spaces section. The report sought to establish a set of key principles in respect of the planning, implementation, funding and delivery of the services affected by the review.

There was detailed discussion of the recommendations contained within each section of the report relating to various types of open space within the district.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the recommended actions relating to Parks and Gardens contained within section 3.6 of the report be approved;
- (b) that the recommended actions relating to Amenity Green Spaces contained within section 3.7 of the report be approved;
- (c) that the recommended actions relating to Provision for Children and Young People contained within section 3.8 of the report be approved;
- (d) that the comments in respect of the recommended actions relating to Outdoor Sports facilities contained within section 3.9 of the report be noted;
- (e) that the recommended actions relating to Allotments contained within section 3.10 of the report be approved;
- (f) that the recommended actions relating to Cemeteries and Churchyards contained within section 3.11 of the report be approved, but that the work to be undertaken in respect of the first action also include the investigation of alternative possibilities such as cremation facilities;
- (g) that the recommended actions relating to Civic Space contained within section 3.12 of the report be approved; and
- (h) that in view of the significant volume of work to be undertaken over a period of time in relation to the implications arising from the PPG 17 study, a Work Programme be produced for consideration at a future meeting.

12/09 **SPORTS HUB PROVISION**

Consideration was given to a report on the proposed allocation of capital funding relating to the provision of Sports Hubs within the district. It was noted

that the report was linked to the Playing Pitch Strategy review contained within the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG17) assessment. It was also noted that the proposed expenditure was already contained within the approved Capital Programme.

Detailed consideration was given to the schemes within the report and it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the proposed schemes and projects as listed in section 3.15 of the report be approved;
- (b) that officers be requested to review the sections of the PPG17 report which relate to Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Facilities and to develop appropriate action plans to address the issues contained therein prior to the 2010/2011 football season. The review should include where appropriate the inclusion of additional funding bids within the forthcoming business planning cycle and the review of the Medium Term Financial Plan;
- (c) that the introduction of a "Bromsgrove First" approach to the pitch allocation and booking system be deferred to enable further consideration to be given to the possibility of avoiding any detrimental impact on Teams within the district; and
- (d) that the officers be requested to report separately on the possibility of undertaking work to improve the facilities at Boleyn Road.

13/09 **HEALTH AND SAFETY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

The Cabinet considered a report on the need to raise the awareness of Members of their role in relation to Health and Safety issues following the newly issued guidance from the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). During the discussion it was suggested that consideration be given to the possibility of listing Members' statutory responsibilities, including Health and Safety, within the description of Members' Roles and Responsibilities.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that all Members be required to attend a mandatory training session based on the new IOSH guidance;
- (b) that Councillor R. D. Smith be appointed as the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Champion; and
- (c) that in accordance with the guidance from IOSH, a section addressing Health and Safety considerations be included within the standard Cabinet report format.

14/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (MARCH 2009)**

Consideration was given to the Improvement Plan Exception Report for March 2009, together with the corrective action being taken.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report together with the corrective actions being taken be noted and approved; and
- (b) that it be noted that for the 102 actions highlighted for March within the plan, 80.4 percent of the plan was on target (green), 3.9 percent was one month behind (amber) and 2 percent was over one month behind (red). In addition the actions which had been reprogrammed were listed in the report.

15/09 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following minute on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part being as set out below and that it is in the public interest to do so.

Minute No
16/09

Paragraph
3

16/09 **SITE AT SHERWOOD ROAD**

Consideration was given to a report on land at Sherwood Road, Bromsgrove. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the proposed assignment of the leasehold interest in the property situate at Sherwood Road, Bromsgrove be approved;
- (b) that that the proposal to enter into a conditional contract relating to the surrender of the existing lease and the grant of a long lease with a third party developer be approved and that this be on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and the Head of Finance; and
- (c) that the proposal to enter into a long lease with a third party developer be approved and that this be on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and the Head of Finance.

(During the consideration of this item there was a short adjournment to enable the Monitoring Officer to advise Members).

The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman