

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET

Wednesday, 3rd January 2007 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Executive Leader), Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Deputy Executive Leader), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., B. L. Fuller C.B.E., Q.F.S.M., Mrs. M. A. Sherrey J.P., Mrs. C. J. Spencer, Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor and P. J. Whittaker.

Observers: Councillors Miss D. H. Campbell, Mrs. A. E. Doyle, P. M. McDonald and N. Psirides J. P.

125/06 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 6th December 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

126/06 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

With reference to Minute No. 106/06 (BDHT Scrutiny Report), it was queried whether any progress was being made with regard to resolution (b). The Head of E-Government and Customer Services advised that a rent collection service had been provided in the past at the Customer Service Centre (CSC) but had not been well used. The Acting Chief Executive indicated that the possibility of providing a wider housing service at the CSC would be explored with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust of which rent collection would be one element.

(Note: Councillor Mrs. C. J. Spencer declared a personal interest in this item as a member of the BDHT Board).

127/06 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 5th December 2006 were submitted.

With reference to Minute No. 77/06 (Closure of Rural Post Offices), the Chairman of the Scrutiny Steering Board referred to the subsequent discussion on this matter which had taken place at the meeting of the Board on 2nd January 2007. The Corporate Director (Services) had undertaken to contact Post Watch Midlands to obtain background information including the definition of a Rural Post Office and the number of Rural Post Offices within the district in order to facilitate future discussions.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted.

128/06

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 15th December 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be noted and the recommendations be approved.

129/06

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Further to the report on the Medium Term Financial Plan considered at the meeting of the Cabinet on 6th December 2006, Members received an update on the draft budget summary for 2007/08 to 2009/10.

The Head of Financial Services referred to work which had been carried out since the previous discussions which had led to further savings being identified for salaries and wages, the Improvement Plan and the implementation of Single Status. In addition, the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management had agreed the inclusion of a target income of £10,000 for sponsorship of traffic roundabouts and had collated a comprehensive ten year vehicle renewal programme for inclusion in the Capital Programme which would preclude the need for provision for repairs/renewals in the Medium Term Financial Plan. Further work would be ongoing with regard to opportunities for shared/partnership working, identifying further savings and income generation. It was pointed out that the draft budget did not include any provision for Haybridge and Woodrush Sports Centres or the Museum.

Earlier in the meeting the Chairman of the Scrutiny Steering Board had referred to the Board's view regarding the need to inform the public about the future position of the Haybridge and Woodrush Sports Centres. The Leader indicated that this would be dealt with in due course.

The Leader thanked the efforts being made by officers in order to achieve a balanced budget.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

130/06

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/08 – 2009/10

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed Capital Programme for 2007/08 to 2009/10. During the discussion concern was expressed at the proposal to exclude the Dolphin Centre and leisure related schemes whilst alternative ways of exploring such services were explored. It was felt there should be some capital provision for improvements to the fabric of the Dolphin Centre and for the Museum. It was acknowledged that if such provision was made, other schemes would have to be excluded in order to achieve a Capital Programme limited to £1million per annum. Members also felt that they needed to give further consideration as to which schemes should be given high priority ranking and to Section 106 schemes.

It was therefore

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the proposed Capital Programme for 2007/08 to 2009/10 be deferred and considered together with the Medium Term Financial Plan at the special meeting of the Cabinet to be held 21st February 2007;
- (b) that, in the meantime, officers provide advice on the appropriate level of possible capital funding for the Dolphin Centre and the Museum and that Cabinet Members have further discussions on priority rankings and Section 106 schemes.

131/06

VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a proposed Value for Money Strategy which set how the Council intended to improve Value for Money in the delivery of its services. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Value for Money Strategy be approved.

132/06

POLICE UPDATE

The Leader introduced former Chief Inspector Hill to the meeting who briefly addressed the Cabinet on police activity and performance. He in turn introduced his successor, Chief Inspector Love who spoke about his background. The Leader expressed his thanks to former Chief Inspector Hill for all his efforts and joint working with the Council and looked forward to working with Chief Inspector Love.

133/06

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Having considered a proposed Asset Management Plan for 2006/07 to 2009/10 which set out the high level actions required to embed effective asset management within the Council, it was

RESOLVED: that the Asset Management Plan 2006/07 – 2009/10 be approved.

134/06

IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT OCTOBER 2006

Consideration was given to the updated Improvement Plan Exception Report as at the end of October 2006. The full Improvement Plan would no longer be reported formally to the Cabinet but would be made available as background information to Members in a number of ways. At the request of the Leader, relevant Portfolio Holders and officers explained the position with regard to the red tasks (over one month behind target) and the actions being taken to address these. The Corporate Director (Services) advised that as there would not be a separate inspection of Culture and Community Services due to the forthcoming Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the tasks related to the inspection should be withdrawn from the Improvement Plan. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the corrective action being taken for red and amber tasks as set out in the report and updated at the meeting be noted;
- (b) that the Improvement Plan be amended:
 - (i) to delete the tasks related to the inspection of Culture and Community Services; and
 - (ii) to reflect that having agreed a revised target for the Workforce Plan, progress should be reported against this new target and shown as green not red.

135/06

COUNTYWIDE STRATEGIC HOUSING PRIORITIES – LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

Consideration was given to a report which informed Members of the progress made in the development of three key countywide housing priorities for the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA), namely:

1. The use of public sector land for affordable housing.
2. The development of a programme of renewable domestic energy systems across Worcestershire.
3. A countywide scheme for the release of capital from private housing to improve housing conditions and maintain people's independence.

During the discussion Members expressed concerns about the equity release scheme, the potential financial implications for the Council of priorities 2. and 3., and at the proposal for the Worcestershire LAA to agree targets for these priorities. It was therefore

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the housing priorities set out in 1. and 2. above endorsed, but that priority 2. be subject to the budget limitations set out in the financial implications section of the report;
- (b) that the relevant targets and outcomes be agreed by the Strategic Housing Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environment;
- (c) that priority 3. only be endorsed for people in need and not the whole population who can easily obtain equity release from the private sector.

136/06

CODE OF PRACTICE RELATING TO LICENSING MATTERS

Consideration was given to a report which presented a revised code of practice in relation to licensing matters which had been amended to include reference to the Gambling Act 2005. It was

RECOMMENDED: that the revised code of practice in relation to licensing matters, as set out in the appendix to the report, be approved.

137/06

SCHEME OF DELEGATION – GAMBLING ACT 2005

Having considered a report on proposed delegations to the Licensing Committee, Licensing Sub-Committee and officers for the determination of applications received under the Gambling Act 2005 which was based on guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the table of delegations set out in the appendix to the report be approved.

138/06

SUBMISSION OF COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT SELF ASSESSMENT

Having considered a report on the need and timescale for the submission of a self assessment document in connection with the forthcoming Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of the Council it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Acting Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with group leaders, to agree the CPA self assessment.

139/06

LOCAL PROTOCOL ON RELATIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS

Consideration was given to a proposed local Protocol which sought to facilitate good working relationships between Members and Political Groups represented on the Council, to help Members perform effectively and to provide guidance on the procedure to be followed when things went wrong. The Protocol would form part of the Council's Constitution.

The Leader proposed a number of amendments to the contents of the document and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED: that the Local Protocol on Relations between Members, as now amended, be approved and adopted.

140/06

COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2007/08

Having considered a report which presented the proposed Committee Timetable for 2007/08, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Committee Timetable for 2007/08, as set out in the appendix to the report, be approved.

141/06

ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION ACT 2006

Having considered a report which highlighted the key principles and main implications of the Electoral Administration Act 2006, it was

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

142/06

COMMUNITY INFLUENCE/NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT PILOT

The Cabinet considered a report which presented proposals for the development of community influence/neighbourhood management in the district which, through the creation of local area committees, would seek to make services more relevant and reflect local priorities, to improve service standards and to provide a mechanism that would enable local people to become more involved should they wish to do so. The Leader referred to the need to amend the diagram set out in Appendix 2 of the report to depict that such committees would be led by the District Council.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that neighbourhood committees be piloted in two areas, namely Waseley/Beacon and Alvechurch;
- (b) that subject to the agreement of the 2007/08 Council Budget, a budget of £8,000 be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive to support the associated administrative costs for the pilot phase.

143/06

LONGBRIDGE – APPROVAL FOR JOINT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency as a decision was required thereon before the next ordinary meeting of the Executive Cabinet).

It was reported that it was a statutory requirement for authorities wishing to prepare joint Development Plan Documents such as the Longbridge Area Action Plan to have full council approval to this effect. The approach to the Longbridge Area Action Plan would require this approval as it was intended to prepare one document covering the whole of the site area which would then be adopted formally by both Bromsgrove District Council and Birmingham City Council. This approach would enable the delivery of a more cohesive plan for the regeneration of the entire site as opposed to looking at different parts of the site in isolation. It was

RECOMMENDED: that Bromsgrove District Council and Birmingham City Council work jointly to prepare a Development Plan Document in relation to the Longbridge Area Action Plan.

144/06

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED: that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the items of business the subject of the following minutes on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of “Exempt Information” as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant paragraph of that part, in each case, being as set out below:-

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>
145/06	7
146/06	1

145/06 **WRITE-OFF – HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT**

Following consideration of the report, it was

RESOLVED: that the Housing Benefit overpayment of £9,827.03 be written-off as irrecoverable.

146/06 **PERFORMANCE & DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES – CHIEF EXECUTIVE/ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Following consideration of the report, it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the proposed Performance Development and Review (PDR) process for the Chief Executive as outlined in the report be approved;
- (b) that the proposed PDR process for the Acting Chief Executive as outlined in the report be approved and that responsibility be delegated to the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development in consultation with the Leader of the Council to ensure that agreement to vary the Acting Chief Executive's current contract of employment is reached through a proper process of consultation with him;

RESOLVED: that the new PDR procedure for all other employees as outlined in the report be noted.

(Note: Mr. K. Dicks declared a personal interest in this item).

The Meeting closed at 8.56 p.m.

Chairman