

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER 2009 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), C. B. Taylor (Vice-Chairman),
R. J. Deeming and C. R. Scurrall

Observers: Councillor Mrs. R. L. Dent, Councillor Mrs. J. D. Luck and
Councillor E. C. Tibby

Invitees: Mr. S. Baker, Crime Risk Manager, West Mercia Constabulary
and Ms. L. Altay, Consultant, PCT

Officers: Mr. P. Street, Mr. M. Bell, Mr. J. Godwin, Mrs. S. Sellers and
Ms. A. Scarce

23/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A. Blagg.

24/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were received.

25/09 **MINUTES**

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

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

26/09 **SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION PROPOSAL - HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS -**

The Chairman welcomed P.C. Stan Baker, Crime Risk Manager, West Mercia
Constabulary.

P.C. Baker gave a verbal presentation, from a police perspective, to Members
on the policing issues relating to hot food takeaways. Primarily these were
related to incidents of crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour taking
place in or around hot food takeaways late at night. P.C. Baker explained that
hot food takeaways were often in close proximity to public houses and clubs
which could create a mass of people in a street very quickly, leading to 20-30
people at each takeaway at anyone time. These people were often high
spirited after consuming alcohol or recreational drugs, which in turn could lead
to a high build up of tension very quickly, in a small area. Staff within the hot

food takeaways could be subject to hate crime, and assaults and drink related incidents often then occurred whilst people were queuing at the hot food takeaways. P.C. Baker went on to say that this led residents to have a fear of crime and feeling unsafe and afraid to go out at night. The increase in the night time economy of just one street could give a negative feel to an area, which was not good for the image of Bromsgrove.

P.C. Baker went on to explain that the police had objected to planning applications in the past. Unfortunately these applications had been overturned on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate; there are difficulties in that these type of objections do not always constitute material planning considerations. Based on crime reporting statistics it was difficult to prove a link between crime and disorder and hot food takeaways. P.C. Baker expressed that in his opinion adoption of an SPD (Supplementary Planning Document) on hot food takeaways may provide a stronger platform for objections to be made. He further commented that there was a danger that residents felt that they were not being supported and this did not give a positive impression of either the police or the Council.

Members put a number of questions to P.C. Baker on police consultation on planning applications, closing times of licensed premises and general problems with anti-social behaviour late at night and a general discussion followed around the best way forward and the need for input from the planning department.

The Chairman welcomed Ms. Liz Altay, Consultant, Public Health Team, Worcestershire PCT.

Ms. Altay gave a verbal presentation on obesity at national, county and district levels, including statistical information. Ms. Altay advised that 1 in 6 meals were eaten outside the home and that obesity had increased enormously in the last 20 years. Government statistics indicated that unless this issue was tackled now, 90% of adults and 66% of children will be obese by 2050. The Government had put in place a national Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives programme. The Local Area Agreement had set targets and developed action plans to promote healthy food, healthy eating and exercise, particularly in children.

Ms. Altay advised that there was a link between obesity and deprivation and that obesity had a huge impact on health issues; 58% of Type 2 Diabetes and 10% of heart disease was due to obesity for example. The cost to the NHS and wider economy was astronomical. Members were informed that the Healthy Food Code introduced by Government for retailers and manufacturers in respect of food labelling was going to be introduced into restaurants and takeaways.

Members discussed the overall issues of eating habits and educating children about healthy options and exercise. It was noted that whilst there was no evidence or research to show that the number of hot food takeaways led to obesity, the density of outlets in an area were likely to have an impact. Ms.

Altay agreed to provide a report summarising the information she had provided to the meeting.

RESOLVED that the report provided by Ms. Altay be circulated to Members.

27/09 **WALTHAM FOREST VISIT**

The Chairman provided Members with a factual note prepared by Mr. P. Street, Executive Director, Partnerships and Projects, on the fact finding visit to Waltham Forest on its hot food takeaway policy. Mr. Street then presented the slides which had been provided by the London Borough of Waltham Forest at the visit on 11th September and answered questions from Members. Members were encouraged by the action taken at Waltham Forest and the outcomes to date.

Board Members commented on the importance of involving the planning department. It was suggested that the planning department should start looking at the Waltham Forest information as soon as possible. Mr. Street confirmed this could be done and reminded Members that Strategic Planning had already been consulted and that an officer from the relevant team had attended on the Waltham Forest visit. With reference to timescales, Mr. Street advised that if Members wished to move the matter forward in line with actions taken by Waltham Forest, and consider a supplementary planning document, then this would need to go to consultation in the first instance. There was further discussion regarding inviting a planning officer to attend the meeting on 27th October 2009.

RESOLVED that a senior planning officer attend the next meeting of the Scrutiny Board.

28/09 **SHOPMOBILITY**

As requested by Members during the meeting of the Scrutiny Board in July 2009, the Head of Street Scene and Community had provided a short report on the usage and running costs of the Shopmobility scheme. Mr. M. Bell, the Head of Street Scene and Community gave background information on the scheme and answered questions from Members regarding the revised opening times of the scheme, the increased demand and the 10 year rolling programme. Mr. Bell also advised that consideration was being given to running the scheme in conjunction with that at Redditch Borough Council.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

29/09 **WORK PROGRAMME / PLANNING**

The Chairman reminded Members and requested their attendance at the Overview & Scrutiny Planning Workshop to be held on Tuesday 6th October 2009. He also asked them to note in their diaries a training event to be held on 19th November 2009. This training would update all Members on new legislation and changes.

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Councillor C. R. Scurrrell left the meeting at 7.35 p.m. As the Board was no longer quorate the meeting closed.

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman