

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER 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. J. Dyer M.B.E.,
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, Mr. D. Hammond, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Pitman,
Ms. D. Poole, Mr. J. Godwin, Mr. A. Coel and Ms. R. Cole.

111/09 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

112/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R. D. Smith declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (Choice Based Lettings Scheme) as an employee of a housing association.

113/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 4th November and 18th November 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record in each case.

114/09 **SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 27th October 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

115/09 **OVERVIEW BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 3rd November 2009 were submitted.

The Leader referred to the recommendations of the Board relating to the Communications Strategy Review. Whilst these had been considered at the previous Cabinet meeting, he stated that the Portfolio Holder for Community

and Customer Engagement would be considering the recommendations further and reporting to the next meeting if appropriate.

RESOLVED that subject to the above the minutes be noted.

116/09 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 16th November 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted, including the recommendation that Portfolio Holders continue to work with Heads of Service to ensure overspend is managed and brought back into line with the budget.

117/09 **TO RECEIVE VERBAL UPDATES FROM THE LEADER AND/OR OTHER CABINET MEMBERS ON ANY RECENT MEETINGS ATTENDED IN AN EX-OFFICIO CAPACITY**

The Leader reported on three meetings he had recently attended:

- Joint Commissioning Board for New Children's Trust
- Meeting on Areas of Highest Need for Funding
- Central Technology Belt Board meeting

Councillor G. N. Denaro reported on an Award Ceremony he had attended together with the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services in relation to the Member Development Charter. Reference was also made to an additional award presented in recognition of the success of a recent procurement project undertaken jointly with other Districts, which had resulted in a significant saving in insurance costs.

Councillors R. D. Smith and Mrs M. A. Sherrey JP reported that they had attended a meeting of the Bromsgrove Arts Centre Operating Trust.

Councillor Mrs M. A. Sherrey JP reported that she had attended a meeting of the Citizen' Advice Bureau.

Councillor P. J. Whittaker reported that he had attended a meeting on Climate Change.

The Leader confirmed that Portfolio Holders would be able to answer questions from other Members on the meetings they had attended and that further information would be placed in the Members' Room where appropriate.

118/09 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN REVIEW (DRAFT REVENUE BASE BUDGET)**

The Cabinet considered a report on the current position with regard to the Medium Term Financial Plan 2010/2011–2012/2013. The Portfolio Holder and the Head of Financial Services also gave a verbal update.

RESOLVED that the current position be noted and Heads of Service be requested to continue to review the budget with a view to presenting a balanced budget to the Cabinet meeting in January 2010.

119/09 **SCRUTINY BOARD REPORT ON HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Scrutiny Board on Hot Food Takeaways. The Leader welcomed the Chairman of the Scrutiny Board, Councillor D. L. Pardoe to the meeting. Councillor Pardoe briefly introduced the report and highlighted some key points. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that in relation to Recommendation 1, the Strategic Planning Section be requested to scope the extent to which the issues identified in the report contribute to the negative impact on a sense of community and well being and the environment and how these issues can be addressed by the adoption of a Supplementary Planning Document on Hot Food Takeaways, with a report detailing the findings and the draft policy being submitted to the Cabinet;
- (b) that in relation to Recommendation 2, consideration of the adoption of a draft Supplementary Planning Document on Hot Food Takeaways be referred to the Local Development Framework Working Party to be considered at the next possible meeting of the Working Party;
- (c) that in relation to Recommendation 3, officers be requested to carry out further research into healthy eating and healthy lifestyles and the means by which through working with partners in the Local Strategic Partnership, the Council could contribute to the delivery of services to address the Local Area Agreement targets on obesity in children, mortality rate from circulatory diseases for under 75s, adult participation in sport and children and young people's participation in high-quality PE and sport. It was requested that the report be submitted to Cabinet by June 2010.

120/09 **CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME - UPDATE**

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed the progress made during the first year of operation of the "Home Choice Plus" Choice Based Lettings Scheme for the allocation of social housing across the District.

The report also suggested that Members consider the possibility of introducing a charging mechanism for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) who wish to advertise their properties through the Scheme.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the success of the Home Choice Plus Scheme in raising awareness of the Housing Register and the 14% increase in the number of applicants registered since the implementation of the Scheme be noted;
- (b) that the introduction of a charging mechanism for RSLs who make use of the Scheme be approved in principle; and

- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, the Section 151 Officer and the Head of Strategic Housing to determine the level of charges for all RSLs, subject to separate arrangements being agreed in respect of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust, in view of its role as a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer organisation and its partial funding of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

121/09 **COUNCIL TAX BASE CALCULATION 2010/2011**

The Cabinet considered the Council's Tax Base Calculation for the financial year 2010/2011. The Head of Financial Services circulated an amended appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the Council's Tax Base for 2010/2011, assuming a collection rate of 99%, be calculated at £36,416.56 for the area as a whole, with individual Parishes as shown at the amended Appendix 1 of the report.

122/09 **LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIPS - TERMS OF REFERENCE AND BUSINESS CASE**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Business Case for Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs).

It was felt that the operation of the three existing pilot LNPs covering Alvechurch and Beoley, Rubery and Hagley and Rural had proved to be costly in terms of finance and of officer time. It was noted that the LNP in Charford had been agreed but had not "gone live". In view of the change in the economic climate and the Council's current financial position together with the reduction in the level of attendance at the LNP meetings, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that all LNPs be closed as at 31st March 2010;
- (b) that it be noted that the closure will produce a revenue saving of £90,000 in 2010/2011 and £120,000 in 2011/2012;
- (c) that it be noted that the continued expansion of the LNPs would have resulted in a saving of £150,000 in 2012/2013 if the LNPs had continued to expand at a cost of £30,000 per annum (the existing Medium Term Financial Plan runs until 2011/2012);
- (d) that the Charford LNP be closed with immediate effect and the resulting 2009/2010 revenue saving of £10,000 be directed to The Trunk;
- (e) that £25,000 of the annual revenue saving for 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 be used to fund the shortfall in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

123/09 **CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY (CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS)**

The Cabinet considered a report on a draft safeguarding Policy for Children Young People and Vulnerable Adults. It was recognised that it was essential

that the Council had suitable arrangements and procedures in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the draft Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy as attached as an appendix to the report be approved;
- (b) that in the context on a Shared Services Corporate Management Team, an appropriate Senior Officer be nominated as the Corporate Safeguarding Officer and that they receive appropriate training;
- (c) that those staff who have regular and on-going contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults receive appropriate training in respect of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

124/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (OCTOBER 2009)**

Consideration was given to the Improvement Plan Exception report for October 2009 together with the corrective action being taken.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception report together with the corrective action being taken be approved;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 94 actions highlighted for October within the plan 74.5 percent were on target (green), 9.6 percent were one month behind (amber) and 2.1 percent were over one month behind (red). In addition it was noted that 13.8 percent of actions had been reprogrammed or suspended with approval.

125/09 **PERFORMANCE REPORT (OCTOBER 2009)**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's performance as at 31st October 2009 (period 7).

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 68 percent of Performance Indicators were stable or improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 73 percent of Performance Indicators that had a target were meeting their target as at the month end and 89 percent were projected to meet their target at the year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for October 2009 as set out in the report be noted;
- (d) that the particular areas of improvement as set out in section 3.5 of the report be noted;
- (e) that the particular areas of concern as set out in section 3.6 of the report be noted.

126/09 **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 item of business the subject 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.

Paragraph

127/09

7

127/09 **COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES WRITE OFFS**

The Cabinet considered a report on a request to write off a number of debts in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates.

RESOLVED that the Council Tax and Business Rate debts listed in the appendix to the report be written off as irrecoverable in accordance with the Council's Write Off Policy.

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman