

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW BOARD

2ND FEBRUARY 2010

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS TASK GROUP

Responsible Portfolio Holder For Overview and Scrutiny	Councillor G. N. Denaro – Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Resources
Responsible Head of Service For Overview and Scrutiny	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

1. SUMMARY

1.1 At the last meeting, the Overview Board established a new Task Group on community involvement in the democratic process.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) agree the membership of the Task Group
- (b) agree the terms of reference of the Community Involvement in the Democratic Process Task Group (as set out in 3.6 of this report);
- (c) request the Task Group to commence its investigation as soon as possible and report back on 30th March 2010.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At the previous meeting of the Overview Board on 3rd November 2009, the Community Involvement in the Democratic Process Task Group was established in response to a scrutiny proposal submitted by Councillor S. Colella.

Membership

3.2 Under the Constitution, up to seven Members of the Council may participate in a Task Group. As requested by the Board at its last meeting, Task Group Membership Forms were sent out to all Members (with the exception of Members of the Cabinet) inviting anyone who had an interest in becoming a Member of the Task Group to complete a membership form.

3.3 Group Leaders were informed of the new Task Group and were asked if they could encourage their Members to complete a membership form if they

had an interest in the topic and/or had relevant skills and knowledge which would be useful for the investigation.

- 3.4 Seven Councillors have shown an interest in joining and are proposed as the Members of the Task Group:
- Cllr Les Turner (Chairman)
 - Cllr Mrs June Griffiths
 - Cllr Helen Jones
 - Cllr Mrs Jean Luck
 - Cllr Dave McGrath
 - Cllr Mrs Caroline Spencer.

Chairman

- 3.5 At the previous meeting of the Overview Board on 3rd November 2009, Councillor L. Turner was appointed as Chairman of the Task Group.

Terms of Reference

- 3.6 The proposed terms of reference for the Community Involvement in the Democratic Process Task Group are:

Aim

To consider ways to improve community involvement in the democratic process and preparations for Democracy Year 2010 – 2011.

Objectives

- i. To review the information provided to the local community on how local governance works and what councils and councillors do,
- ii. To review the ways in which the Council and its community partners facilitate more active civic participation and community involvement in the democratic process,
- iii. To review the ways in which the Council promotes local democracy, the role of councillor, how to become a councillor and the activities of elected members to the general public,
- iv. To review the arrangements for Democracy Year 2010-2011.

Length of investigation

- 3.7 Members are reminded that when setting a timescale for a Task Group, it is usually expected that a Task Group will conclude its investigation within four months from the date of the first Task Group meeting. However, the Board can decide that certain topics require more time to ensure complex issues are properly scrutinised.

3.8 It is anticipated that the first meeting of the Task Group will take place on 12th January 2010. It is anticipated that the Task Group will report back to the Overview Board on 30th March 2010.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications directly relating to this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications directly related to this report.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- Council Objection Three – Sense of Community and well being.
- CO3 – Sense of Community

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Improved resident satisfaction with the Council.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no implications directly relating to this report for the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policies.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None for the purposes of this report

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues - None
Personnel Implications - None
Governance/Performance Management - None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - None
Policy - None
Environmental - None

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards.

14. APPENDICES

None.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Michael Carr, Scrutiny Officer
E Mail: m.carr@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881407