

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 19TH JANUARY 2010 AT 4.00 P.M.

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

Observers: Councillor P. M. McDonald and Councillor Mrs. C. M.
McDonald

Officers: Mr. H. Bennett, Mrs. S. Sellers, Mr. M. Carr and Ms. A. Scarce

50/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. N. Blagg and R. J. Deeming.

51/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were received at the start of the meeting. During the meeting Councillor C. R. Scurrall declared a personal interest in the Call-in – Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (Minute No 52/09 refers) as a parish councillor for Belbroughton Parish Council.

52/09 **CONSIDERATION OF CALL-IN - LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIPS**

Councillor P. M. McDonald requested that it be noted in the Minutes that he was unhappy with the 4.00 p.m. start time of the meeting.

The Board's attention was drawn to the decision taken by the Cabinet on 2nd December 2009 in relation to Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs), namely:

- (a) all Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (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 2010/11 and £120,000 in 2011/2012;
- (c) 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) the Charford LNP be closed with immediate effect and the resulting 2009/10 revenue saving of £10,000 be direct to the Trunk;

- (e) £25,000 of the annual revenue saving for 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13 be used to fund the shortfall in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Council's Scrutiny Procedure Rules provided that the Chief Executive should call in a decision for scrutiny by the Board if so requested by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Board, any three Members of the Scrutiny Board or any five Members of the Council who were not Members of the Cabinet. The call-in would be considered by the Scrutiny Board at either the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Board, or a special meeting of the Scrutiny Board to be convened by the Chief Executive within 10 working days of receipt of the request to call-in, or such other date as agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the author of the call-in and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Board. Such a request had been submitted by five Members of the Council who were not Members of the Cabinet on 9th December 2009, and accordingly, Members were requested to consider the call-in request. A report on the matter was submitted for consideration.

The Chairman invited Councillor P. M. McDonald to address the Board as to the reasons why he and the other four Members, Councillors Mrs. C. M. McDonald, E. J. Murray, S. P. Shannon and C. J. K. Wilson, had requested that the decision be called in.

The Board then heard from the Assistant Chief Executive who had prepared the report to the Board and who had also been the author of the report to Cabinet from which the call-in had arisen. The Board had expected the attendance of Councillor R. Hollingworth, the Executive Member with responsibility for LNPs. However, he had been unavoidably delayed following an earlier meeting and was not able to attend.

The Board Members asked a number of questions and discussed the issues relating to the decision to close the LNPs including consideration of the following areas:

- the Council's duty to consult
- the implications of the closure with reference to the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules and the Medium Term Financial Plan
- the merits and financial implications of Local Neighbourhood Partnerships
- the decision making process and options available to Cabinet

During the ensuing discussions Members raised a number of questions to which officers responded, whereupon it was

RESOLVED that the call-in be dismissed.

The meeting closed at 4.50 p.m.

Chairman