

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

**TUESDAY, 6TH MARCH 2007 AT 6.00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Miss D. H. Campbell JP (Chairman), C. J. K. Wilson (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. J. M. Boswell, Mrs. R. L. Dent, Mrs. A. E. Doyle, J. T. Duddy, W. R. Newnes, S. R. Peters, N. Psirides JP, S. P. Shannon and C. J. Tidmarsh

**Observers:** Councillors G. N. Denaro, Mrs. K. M. Gall and Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP

**Officers:** B. Roots, P. Street, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs. S. Sellers and Miss D. McCarthy

106/06 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A. J. Dent.

107/06 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

In relation to agenda item 5 (Car Parking Scrutiny Report), the following declarations of interest were made:

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Mrs. J. M. Boswell	Personal. Entitled to a concessionary bus pass.
Miss D. H. Campbell JP	Personal. A concessionary car permit holder.
Mrs. A. E. Doyle	Personal. Entitled to a concessionary bus pass.
N. Psirides JP	Personal. Entitled to a concessionary bus pass.
C. J. Tidmarsh	Personal. Entitled to a concessionary bus pass and wife is a Blue Badge holder.
C. J. K. Wilson	Personal. Entitled to a concessionary bus pass.

No whipping arrangements were made.

108/06 **MINUTES - 6TH FEBRUARY 2007**

The minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 6th February 2007 were submitted.

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

109/06 **MINUTES - 15TH FEBRUARY 2007**

The minutes of the Special Meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 15th February 2007 were submitted.

The Board took the opportunity to thank the Corporate Director (Services) for the letter he had sent to the Department of Trade and Industry on behalf of members.

Members also noted the list of post offices located in the Bromsgrove Constituency which had been provided by Postwatch Midlands stating which were classified as rural and which were urban. It was noted that some post offices that were previously classified as urban had been reclassified as rural.

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

110/06 **CAR PARKING SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Chairman of the Car Parking Task Group, Councillor G. N, Denaro, presented the Car Parking Scrutiny Report to members of the Board.

There was a discussion on the report and the Chairman of the Task Group answered all the questions put to him by the Board and clarified points as requested. It was confirmed that the figures within the report had been provided by the Council's Transport and Engineering Officer and had been checked by Financial Services.

It was stated that the Budget approved at the recent Council Meeting might impact on some of the recommendations contained within the report.

Members thanked the Chairman of the Task Group for all his work.

**RESOLVED**: that the report be approved and submitted to the Executive Cabinet requesting recommendations be approved and implemented.

111/06 **WATERCOURSES SCRUTINY REPORT**

Councillor Miss D. H. Campbell JP, Chairman of the Watercourses Task Group, presented the Watercourses Scrutiny Report to members of the Board. It was pointed out that the Task Group had mainly concentrated on the Bromsgrove Town Centre.

The Chairman reminded members that a bid for funding for improvement and maintenance work on watercourses had been included in the Medium Term Financial Plan as a medium pressure; however, at the Executive Cabinet Meeting on 21st February 2007, it was recommended that only unavoidable and high pressures be approved which had subsequently been agreed at the recent Meeting of the Council.

Various suggestions were made by members of the Board which included emphasising to the Executive Cabinet that as the town centre was one of the Council's priorities, funding could be made available for the maintenance of the brook situated in the town centre. Other suggestions included working in partnership with an organisation from the voluntary sector which could be eligible to apply for a grant for a project such as maintenance of watercourses and working in partnership with local schools.

It was highlighted that there was some concern that previous reports had not been acted upon and this had been referred to in the last recommendation within the report.

It was put to the Board that it might be possible that some recommendations could be implemented by officers and would cost officer time only.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that a further recommendation be included in the cover report to the Executive Cabinet that officers be requested to devise an action plan on how recommendations contained within the report could be implemented using officer time only and built into their work programme; and
- (ii) that, subject to the inclusion of (i) above, the report be approved and submitted to the Executive Cabinet requesting recommendations be approved and implemented.

112/06 **SCRUTINY PROPOSALS**

Members of the Board considered the two scrutiny proposals relating to refuse and recycling which had been submitted. It was pointed out that in a meeting with the Corporate Director (Services) and the proposers, wording to encompass both scrutiny proposals had been agreed as stated in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

A discussion ensued on the various options outlined within the report on the way forward. Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Waste Management and Chairman of the Advisory Group for the Service, was invited to speak to inform the Board of the remit of the Advisory Group.

**RESOLVED:** that the composite scrutiny proposal stated in paragraph 3.3 of the report be considered by the Board at its first meeting after the Local Elections which is scheduled to be held on 5th June 2007.

113/06 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the future work of the Scrutiny Steering Board.

A copy of the Scrutiny Report compiled by Worcestershire County Council's Highways Scrutiny Task Group was distributed to members for their information. Members were informed that the Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor Mrs. E. B. Tucker, would be attending the next meeting of the Board.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that, if after reading the scrutiny report distributed, members had any questions to put to the Chairman of Worcestershire County Council's Highways Scrutiny Task Group, they forward them to the Committee Services Officer by Friday 23rd March 2007; and
- (ii) that the following Work Programme be approved –

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Date of Consideration</b>	<b>Other Information</b>
Health Scrutiny Update	Quarterly (March/June/Sept/Dec)  <i>Next report delayed until 3rd April 2007</i>	Councillor D. McGrath, as this Council's representative on Worcestershire County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to provide an update report.
Worcestershire County Council's Highways Maintenance Scrutiny Task Group	3rd April 2007	Chairman of the Worcestershire County Council's Highways Scrutiny Task Group to attend to provide information to the Board on the work carried out by the Task Group.
High Hedges Legislation	3rd April 2007	Report relating to the cost incurred by other local authorities. The service at BDC to be reviewed in April 2007.
Refuse and Recycling Scrutiny Proposal	5th June 2007	As agreed at the Board Meeting in March, the composite scrutiny proposal relating to refuse and recycling be considered by the Board as an area to be scrutinised.
Culture and Community Services – Task Group Review	June 2007	Task Group to reconvene for a review meeting June 2007.
Use of Consultants – Task Group Review	July 2007	Task Group to reconvene for a review meeting July 2007.
BDHT – Task Group Review	December 2007	Task Group to reconvene for a review meeting December 2007.

114/06 **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE CABINET**

Consideration was given to the items on the agenda for the Executive Cabinet meeting which was scheduled to be held on 7th March 2007.

**RESOLVED:** that no comments be put forward by the Board on any items due to be considered by the Executive Cabinet at its next meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm

Chairman