

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW BOARD

TUESDAY, 31ST AUGUST 2010 AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella (Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. R. L. Dent, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and L. J. Turner

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. G. Revans, Mr. M. Carr and Ms. A. Scarce

21/10 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

22/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillors Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths and Mrs. C. J. Spencer declared a personal interest in the Artrix/Right of Way – Blue Light Centre (agenda item 8, item no. 1 on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions).

23/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 27th July 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

24/10 **CABINET RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL DEMOCRACY TASK GROUP REPORT**

The Board considered the Cabinet Response to the Community Involvement in Local Democracy Task Group and invited Councillor L. J. Turner, Chairman of the Task Group to comment on the Cabinet Response. Councillor Turner advised that he was disappointed with the implementation dates of several of the recommendations as the Task Group's understanding had been that many of these would be introduced prior to the elections in 2011 and work could in fact already be under way in some areas.

The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services explained that she expected as many as possible of the recommendations to be in place before the implementation date, but also had to take into account any financial constraints which may arise.

Councillor Turner asked whether consideration had been given to a member of the Task Group being on the Steering Group and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services explained that it was unlikely that the Steering Group would meet on a regular basis and that it would be more appropriate for her to report back to the Board each month on progress being made. The Steering Group consisted of a large number of partners and at the initial meeting each took away actions which they needed to carry out. The work to be done by the TRUNK was already underway and the work with schools was also in place. The Elections Team had also been pro-active over the summer promoting their work through street theatre and stalls in the High Street.

The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services was asked whether she had enough officer support to carry out the recommendations and she responded that she did not have as much as she would like, but would work within the constraints that she had to make the project as successful as possible. She also informed the Board that the Council's partners had become aware of the work that was being done due to the Task Group and were enthusiastic about it, which had enable the Council to take the lead on the work that was being carried out.

The Board thanked the Chairman, Members of the Task Group and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services for their hard work in carrying the work of the Task Group forward.

25/10 **RECYCLING QUERIES RAISED AT CLIMATE CHANGE MEETING - BRIEFING PAPER**

The Board considered the briefing paper which had been put together following queries raised by Members when they had held an informal meeting to consider the Draft Climate Change Strategy.

Members were concerned at the high rejection rate at the recycling plant and asked what had caused this. The Head of Environmental Services advised this was due to plant failure and not contamination. As it was a new plant, during the commissioning phase it was found that the "screening bed" was allowing too much material through too early in the process. This had been replaced and the rejection rate was now just over 10% (rather than the 22% reported) and this was expected to further reduce to about 5%. The Council was working with Worcestershire County Council to reduce the contamination rate, although historically this was already quite low across the county.

Members discussed the following issues with the Head of Environmental Services:

- The proportion of garden waste and how the overall percentage figures were calculated.
- That 90% of green waste in Worcestershire was being recycled.

- Encouraging people to buy products which contained less packaging and how pressure could be put on Government to take this up with supermarkets for example.
- Promotion of positive information and statistics which related to the district.

The Head of Environmental Services advised Members that many of these issues were being taken up through the Joint Waste Forum, who were lobbying Government in respect of excess packaging and promoting the reduction in the tonnage of waste collected in Worcestershire.

The Board asked the Head of Environmental Services what action was being taken in respect of the remainder of the waste produced. He confirmed that this was removed by Severn Waste, who was then responsible for its reprocessing. The website, www.envirosort.co.uk provided useful information on this process. It was also confirmed that the overall cost of recycling was less than the cost of landfill. Members also discussed the trade waste that was created by the Council buildings and the Head of Environmental Services confirmed that currently this was dealt with by Lawrences of Stourport, who guaranteed to recycle 25% of the waste removed. The disposal of trade waste was being reviewed and may be linked in with a contact being negotiated for Redditch Borough Council.

Members asked why residents living in flats were not provided with green bins and the Head of Environmental Services advised that a list of properties would be circulated shortly to Members where recycling facilities would be provided. He also confirmed that this already happened at Redditch Borough Council and was quite successful. The Council would also be working with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to look at collections from their properties and the infrastructure necessary to put this in place.

26/10 **DRAFT JOINT CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY**

The Board considered the Draft Joint Climate Change Strategy and covering report. Members were concerned that the report indicated that there was no specific budget for climate change activity. The Executive Director for Finance and Resources informed Members that she was currently looking at “invest to save” projects with the Climate Change Manager and that there was a small budget available at Redditch Borough Council (RBC) for promotional work to be carried out. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that savings made would not just be in respect of the Council’s carbon foot print but also monetary savings, which would then be re-invested. RBC had already implemented several schemes with money from the Carbon Trust. This money was paid back from any savings that were made by implementation of the schemes.

Members agreed that climate change should feed into all areas within the Council. The appropriateness of national indicators was also discussed and the possible amendments to these which may be implemented by the new Government. It was agreed that it was important that whatever elements were measured, they should make a difference. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the notes of the informal meeting on the Draft Joint Climate Change Strategy be agreed; and
- (b) that the Board recommend that Cabinet adopt the strategy.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that the Joint Climate Change Strategy be commended to Cabinet for approval;
- (ii) that the Council bring the Climate Change agenda to the forefront and act as a community leader to champion the reduction of carbon emissions;
- (iii) that the Council ensure that Climate Change is embedded in strategic planning policies, (specifically the development of the Core Strategy) and all future policies;
- (iv) that internal action to reduce the Council carbon footprint and increase recycling within Council offices be prioritised;
- (v) that the Cabinet identify and support spend to save initiatives to reduce the Council's carbon emissions;
- (vi) that information for residents on the "turn off in winter" campaign be included in the autumn edition of Together Bromsgrove;
- (vii) that the Council highlight concern over excess winter deaths through the Local Strategic Partnership and local media and support partners wherever possible in reducing this; and
- (viii) that the Council celebrate successes in projects to reduce carbon emissions and other climate change initiatives, both through the local media and to staff in the organisation.

27/10 **YOUNG PEOPLE - TASK GROUP**

Officers advised the Board that when the Young People's Task Group was agreed they had been unaware of the changes that the new Government were considering. After discussion, the Board agreed that a decision on the commencement of the Young People's Task Group should be deferred until the next meeting of the Overview Board on 2nd November 2010 when further information should be available.

28/10 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS - 1ST SEPTEMBER TO 31ST DECEMBER 2010**

Members discussed the following items on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions:

- Arts and Events Strategy 2010/11 to 2013/14
- Garden Waste Service - Future Developments (officers confirmed that this item would be considered at the next meeting of the Overview Board to be held on 2nd November 2010)
- Review of Pay-on-Foot Car Parking – Members were concerned that there had been "teething problems" with the new scheme and asked for the Portfolio Holder to be invited to the next meeting to give the Board a progress report.

The Executive Director for Finance and Resources confirmed that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board would receive a more detailed workshop on the Budget over two evenings, on dates to be agreed in October and November 2010.

Members asked why Cabinet would make recommendations to the full Council in respect of item 11, Statement of Licensing Policy. This was not clear and the Executive Director for Finance and Resources said she would look into this and advise Members accordingly.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder for Community Services be asked to provide an update report on the Pay-on-Foot Car Parking scheme to the Overview Board meeting to be held on 2nd November 2010.

29/10 **OVERVIEW BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Board considered the Meeting Schedule and it was noted that the items on Garden Waste Services – Future Developments and Implementation of the Civil Parking Enforcement proposals had been deferred until the meeting to be held on 2nd November 2010.

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman