

minute book 9

Council

Monday 19th April
2010
7.00 pm

Council Chamber
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk



Council

29th March 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Malcolm Hall (Mayor), Councillor Kath Banks (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors P Anderson, M Braley, J Brunner, M Chalk, G Chance, A Clayton, B Clayton, J Cookson, D Enderby, A Fry, C Gandy, W Hartnett, N Hicks, G Hopkins, D Hunt, R King, W King, C MacMillan, P Mould, W Norton, J Pearce, M Shurmer, D Taylor and D Thomas

Also Present:

D Andrews (Chair, Standards Committee) and M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

K Dicks, C Flanagan, H Halls, S Hanley, S Skinner and J Staniland

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

117. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

118. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Quinney and Smith.

119. COUNCILLOR JACK FIELD

The Mayor introduced a tribute to a former colleague, Councillor Jack Field, whose death had come as a shock to all at the Council earlier in the month.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Field's daughter, Jane and other members of the family to the meeting and expressed the Council's deepest condolences to them. Members of the Council were invited to offer up words they might wish to offer in memory of Councillor Field and of his services to the Borough.

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MAYOR, in the Chair

The Leader of the Council commenced the tributes to Councillor Field, noting that he had been justifiably proud to become Mayor of the Borough, having been born and brought up in the town. Councillor Field's wish to see the Mercian Regiment honoured through being conferred with the Freedom of the Borough was also highlighted. The Leader of the Minority Group then led other Members in expressing their thoughts on the character and achievements of Councillor Field.

Dr Jane Yeomans thanked the Council on behalf of the family for the tributes that had been paid to her late father, commenting that the liberal democracy for which his generation had fought was an important legacy for the current generation to uphold.

RESOLVED that

the Council formally record its gratitude to Councillor Field for his service to the Council and to the community.

120. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Banks, Chance, B Clayton, Taylor and Thomas declared personal and prejudicial interests in Items 7 (Executive Committee) and 8 (Regulatory Committees) as detailed separately at Minutes 123 and 124 below. Previous declarations of interest on these Items were detailed separately within the papers for the Council meeting.

121. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 1st February and 22nd February 2010 be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

122. COMMUNICATIONS AND MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor's communications and announcements were considered under the following headings:

a) Mr Neil Bromley

The Mayor paid tribute to Mr Neil Bromley, Principal of NEW College, reading out the contents of a letter to be forwarded to Mr Bromley on the occasion of his retirement at the end of the month. The Leader of the Council led other Members in adding their tributes to Mr Bromley and thanking him for his considerable achievements during his period as Principal.

RESOLVED that

the Council place on record its gratitude to Mr Bromley for his achievements while Principal of NEW College.

b) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor advised that, since the last meeting of the Council, he had attended various functions, including: the Mayor's own Cabaret Evening and Charity Auction, Girl-Guiding Worcestershire's Centenary Thinking Day Service, the Mayor's Charities Street Collection Day, the Inner Wheel Club of Redditch Fellowship Lunch, a Bank launch at Tenacres First School, the Young Fire Fighters' Association passing-out Parade, the funeral of local artist Norman Neasom, the annual Fellows Lecture at Worcester University given by HRH Duke of Gloucester, the West Midlands Ambulance Services Awards Ceremony, the Sea Cadet of the Year Awards, the visit of HRH the Countess of Wessex and the Mercian Regiment Return Home and Freedom of the Borough Parade, followed by the Mayor's own Civic Dinner.

The Mayor thanked a number of individuals and organisations who had contributed to the tremendous success of the Mercian Regiment Return Home and Freedom of the Borough Parade.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Banks for stepping in to take on engagements he had been unable to attend.

c) Forthcoming events

The Mayor advised that forthcoming events included his hosting of a play list session with Kingfisher FM and the Mayor's own Variety Spectacular evening on 10th April at the Palace Theatre.

d) Urgent Business

The Mayor advised that he had not accepted any items of Urgent Business.

123. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members received the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 27th January, 3rd February, 17th February and 22nd February 2010 and the decision notice of the meeting held on 10th March 2010.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 27th January 2010 be received and adopted;**

- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 3rd February 2010 be received and all recommendations approved;
- 3) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 17th February 2010 be received and all recommendations approved;
- 4) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 22nd February 2010 be received and adopted; and
- 5) the decision notice of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 10th March 2010 be received and all recommendations approved, subject to:

in respect of Minute 265 (Home Improvement Agency) it being recorded, in accordance with Standing Order 16, that Labour Group Members abstained from voting on the printed recommendations during the voting on these matters.

(Prior to consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillors B Clayton and Thomas declared personal and prejudicial interests in view of their positions on the management board of the Redditch Citizens' Advice Bureau (Councillor B Clayton) and as a staff member of Redditch Carers' Careline (Councillor Thomas) – (Minute 269 – Voluntary Sector Grant Applications 2010/11).)

124. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council received the minutes of recent meetings of the Licensing and Planning Committees.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 25th January 2010 be received and adopted; and
- 2) the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 2nd February and 2nd March 2010 be received and adopted.

(Prior to consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillors Banks, Chance, and Taylor declared personal and prejudicial interests in view of their membership of the Management Board of Redditch Co-operative Homes (Banks and Chance) and personal relationship to staff members of Redditch Co-operative

Homes (Taylor) (Planning Committee Minute 104 – application for a residential development on the former Marlfield Farm First School Site, Redstone Close, Church Hill).)

125. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL AND BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL - SHARED SERVICES

RESOLVED that

- 1) the existing Officer Employment Procedure Rules be replaced by the Model Officer Employment Procedure Rules as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- 2) amendment be made to the Redditch Borough Council Scheme of Delegation to Officers by the addition of the following words under Section A “General Delegations”:

“To exercise the various delegations defined hereunder– (All employees of Bromsgrove District Council seconded to Redditch Borough Council under Shared Service arrangements)”.

126. WETT REGULATORY SERVICES – JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management be appointed to represent Redditch Borough Council on the Joint Appointments Committee; and
- 2) the Terms of Reference for the Joint Appointments Committee as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report be approved.

(On Labour Members’ requisition and in accordance with Standing Order 16, it was recorded that Labour Group Members voted against the printed recommendations during the voting on these matters.)

127. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The Leader of the Council announced that the identities of those Members who were to fill the various vacancies that had arisen on the death of Councillor Field would be reported to Officers following the meeting, where required.

RESOLVED that

the oral report be noted.

128. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no Urgent Business decisions under Standing Order 36 for consideration at this meeting.

129. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no separate items of Urgent Business for consideration at this meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 8.59pm

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MAYOR, in the Chair



Executive Committee

10th March 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), and Councillors P Anderson, J Brunner, B Clayton, W Hartnett, N Hicks, C MacMillan and M Shurmer

Also Present:

Councillor R King and M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

S Hanley, C Flanagan, A Walsh, H Bennett, T Kristunas, K Cook, J Godwin, D Taylor, E Hopkins, D Wheeler, M Bough and J Divala

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

257. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Braley.

258. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Anderson and B Clayton declared personal and prejudicial interests and Councillor Gandy declared a personal interest in Item 13 (Voluntary Sector Grant Applications 2010/11) as detailed separately at Minute 269 below.

259. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader announced, with great regret, the passing that afternoon of Councillor Jack Field. Those present were invited to respect a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Field and his service to the Council and local community.

The Chair advised that the following items of business, scheduled on the Forward Plan to be dealt with at this meeting, had been removed from the Forward Plan:

- Enforcement Policy; and
- Shared Electoral Services

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Chair

The Chair also advised that she had accepted the following matters as urgent business:

Item 4 – Executive Committee Minutes, 22nd February 2010;

Item 14 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes, 3rd February 2010;

Item 15 – Shared Services Board Minutes, 1st March 2010; and

Item 20 – REDI Centre – Procurement of Alternative Service Provider – Update

260. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 2nd February, 17th February and 22nd February be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

261. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 3, OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2009

The Committee received the latest quarterly report on the Council's performance against a range of local and national indicators.

It was reported that, generally, the indicators were demonstrating that the Council was performing relatively well. For those areas where targets were not being met recovery plans had been put in place to address under-performance.

Members expressed a particular interest in several of the targets. There was concern once again at the validation of the claims made in respect of concessionary journeys and questions raised around the use of smart card technology by the bus companies concerned.

Levels of detritus were an area where the Council was reported to be failing to meet targets. Members noted that that this may in part be the result of a lack of action by the Highways Authority in maintaining drains and that there were significantly fewer complaints about littering from local residents than had been the case.

Officers undertook to provide:-

- i) Councillor Hartnett with additional information on the numbers of concessionary journeys per year (ET 015) following the meeting;
- ii) Councillor Anderson with an update on the projected year end figures for the number of working days lost to the local authority due to sickness absence per FTE staff member (BV 012) following the meeting; and
- iii) Councillor MacMillan with additional information on the impact of fraud on Housing Benefits overpayments (BV 079b (iii)) following the meeting.

RESOLVED that

the update on key performance indicators for the period ending December 2009 be noted.

262. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3, SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009

Officers reported that the Council was set to exceed the target for savings by £127,000 in the current year to bring the total savings for the year to around £800,000.

Anticipated income from a number of areas had failed to meet expectations during the current financial year, including that from the commercial hire of the Civic Suite and income from the imposition of off-street parking charges.

A significant variation from predicted income had occurred in respect of the Council's Leisure Centres and other sporting facilities. Income was higher than in the previous year but was failing to meet the enhanced projections that had been made for 2009/10. The under-achievement primarily resulted from the poor weather experienced during the winter which had had a particularly significant impact on outdoor facilities. The introduction of free swimming for under 16s and over 60s had also resulted in a loss of income to the Council. On a more positive note, it was expected that income during the fourth quarter would surpass that achieved during the first three quarters of the year.

Officers reported on a number of measures that were being initiated to maximise the use of the sports facilities and generate additional revenue, particularly during off-peak periods. It was anticipated that matters would be brought in hand by the summer to ensure that income targets were achieved for 2010/11.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

263. QUARTERLY MONITORING OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS - QUARTER 3, SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009

A report was received that provided an update on the performance of the Council in the handling of complaints. The key issues to arise from the report were that improvements were being experienced in most areas and the direction of travel was generally positive.

Officers undertook to speak to Councillor Shurmer following the meeting in respect of problems concerning the disabled blue badge scheme about which he had been notified by a number of residents.

RESOLVED that

the update on complaints and compliments for the period October – December 2009 be noted.

264. QUARTERLY MONITORING OF THE BENEFITS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - QUARTER 3, SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009

Members considered a report setting out the performance of the benefits service during the third quarter of the year and against the Benefits Service Improvement Plan. Officers reported that progress against the targets set out within the Plan was positive. Among the achievements were the expectation of receiving a 100% subsidy, a reduction in the numbers of appeals and work that was being carried out with the third sector in respect of the take-up strategy.

Officers within the Benefits team were commended for the work that had been undertaken to reach the present position.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

265. HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

A report was received setting out proposals for the re-commissioning of the current Care and Repair agency services in partnership with Worcestershire County Council, Supporting People, the Worcestershire PCT and the six District Councils.

The risk to the Council in not proceeding with this course of action was spelled out to Members, with a decrease in the amount of central Government money being made available to fund the service within Redditch and, therefore, local residents receiving a poorer service than the remainder of the County. This was the outcome of the Supporting People contract being provided county-wide from 2010/11, replacing the existing arrangements whereby contracts were in place for both the north and south of the County.

The practical implication of the proposals was the expansion of the present service and a transfer of existing staff under TUPE arrangements to Festival Housing Group. There were ten staff currently employed by the North Worcestershire Care and Repair Service, based in Redditch, who would be affected. The team would be located in Redditch for the time being.

Members noted that the proposed contract with Festival Housing Group was for a three year period, with the option of a two year extension, at the expiry of which the contract would be subject to a tendering exercise.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Council agree the commencement of the new Countywide Home Improvement Agency (HIA) from April 2010 provided by Festival Housing Group;**
- 2) **the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services finalise and enter into the necessary legal arrangements to implement the transfer and commencement of the new service; and**

RESOLVED that

- 3) **the new HIA be supported through the use of revenue and capital base budget contributions that are committed to the current service arrangements with the North Worcestershire Care & Repair Agency.**

266. REDDITCH HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS REVIEW AND ENHANCED HOUSING OPTIONS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Committee received the outcome of the review of the Redditch Homelessness and Housing Advice Review which considered current services, identified progress made since the Redditch Homelessness Strategy was published in 2003 and highlighted the lessons learned during the initial stages of the two-year 'Trailblazer Initiative'.

Members were delighted at the impact resulting from the change of emphasis within the service. The fall in the number of Statutory Homeless Acceptances had fallen very significantly during the previous 18 months and was continuing.

It was reported that the numbers of successful preventions had increased tremendously. Officers worked to process those cases where there was the greatest risk of homelessness, employing a triage system to prioritise those who were the most vulnerable.

Officers were commended for their work in improving the effectiveness of the service.

RECOMMENDED that

subject to community consultation and Members' comments, the Enhanced Housing Options Strategy be approved and implemented.

267. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2010/11 TO 2012/13 AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY

Members considered proposed limits to be set under the Prudential Code for borrowing which the Council was required to agree before the start of the 2010/11 financial year. Members' approval was also being sought for the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2010/11.

The meeting was informed that the Council was currently a net payer of interest which was a reflection on the present spending on the Council's Capital Programme. It was noted that the prevailing financial conditions could result in restrictions on borrowing and restrictions on future capital spending. In response to concern raised at the possible impact of constraints on future borrowing, Officers clarified that local authorities had the discretion to borrow in anticipation of capital schemes, but the implications for the Council's existing base budgets were highlighted. It was acknowledged that this was an issue that might be considered as an issue going forward.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Prudential Indicators as set out in the report be approved; and**
- 2) the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2010/11 be based on the estimated life of the assets financed from borrowing.**

268. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The Committee considered a report setting out a Treasury Management Strategy for 2010/11. It was reported that the Strategy was largely unchanged from that in use at the present time.

Officers highlighted an amendment that was to be made to the Strategy, as printed, this being the reduction of the maximum amount placed with any single institution from £1 million to £500,000 [Appendix A, Paragraph 7.1 - Specified Investments – Monies placed on call or for less than 3 month]

RECOMMENDED that

the Treasury Management Strategy for 2010/11 be approved.

269. VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANT APPLICATIONS 2010/11

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Grants Assessment Panel in awarding grants to voluntary sector organisations for 2010/11.

Members who had been on the Grants Assessment Panel commented that the new Policy had proved difficult to operate and a recommendation had, therefore, been made to the Committee requesting that this be referred for further review. Officers highlighted that the most significant issue was with the Shopping element of the Policy, resulting in it not being implemented in time for the current funding round. The Giving element had also proved difficult for Members to implement. It was anticipated that an improved process would be in place for the 2011/12 funding round.

Officers commented that the Shopping element of the Policy would cover those larger organisations from whom the Council could expect, in future, to procure services, whereas the Giving element would represent a much smaller portion of the overall budget and, consequently, very much smaller individual grant donations.

Members wished to clarify that the figure of £10,000 in paragraph 5.7 had been incorporated as a purely indicative figure and did not represent a financial limit imposed by the Council.

RESOLVED that

- 1) grants be awarded to voluntary sector organisations as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of this report, subject to Council approval of the budget;**

- 2) **£3,000 be donated to Redditch Arts Council, for 2010/11; and**
- 3) **the policy on funding the voluntary and community sector organisations be reviewed.**

(Prior to consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillors Anderson and B Clayton declared personal and prejudicial interests in view of their involvement in local voluntary sector organisations, and withdrew from the meeting. Councillor Gandy declared a personal interest in view of her spouse's nominal financial interest in a local voluntary sector organisation.)

270. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd February 2010 be noted.

271. MINUTES / REFERRALS - SHARED SERVICES BOARD, 1ST MARCH 2010

The Committee considered the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Shared Services Board.

RESOLVED that

the following targets be approved:

- a) **Cohesive Single Management Team.**
- b) **Achieve the savings targets associated with Shared Services / Joint working included within the Medium Term Financial Plan of both Councils.**
- c) **Ensure effective financial management arrangements are in place for shared service arrangements (Activity Based Costings).**
- d) **Ensure changes to the management structure / implementation of shared services are seamless from a customer perspective (to be monitored by self assessment and complaints and commendations).**
- e) **Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions.**
- f) **Implement medium term business cases – CCTV / Lifeline and ICT.**
- g) **Produce business case for North Worcestershire Shared Economic Development Unit and implement if agreed.**
- h) **Complete recruitment to the Single Management Team.**

- i) **Develop programme for consideration of further shared services between Redditch and Bromsgrove.**
- j) **Further implementation of shared services programme between Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils.**
- k) **Implementation of Regulatory Services.**
- l) **Ensure delivery of performance and financial aspects of agreed shared services.**
- m) **Ensure effective performance monitoring of shared service arrangements.**

272. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members received an update on the activity of the Council's Advisory Panels and other bodies. It was reported that the next meeting of the Church Hill District Centre Members' Panel would take place in April.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

273. ACTION MONITORING

Members considered the latest Action Monitoring report. It was reported that the visit by Members to the swimming pool in Coventry was scheduled to take place on 10th April 2010.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

274. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

REDI Centre – Procurement of Alternative Service Provider - Update (as detailed at Minute 275 below);

275. REDI CENTRE - PROCUREMENT OF ALTERNATIVE SERVICE PROVIDER - UPDATE

(During the consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with a labour relations matter between the authority and employees of the authority.)

(This report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not on the Forward Plan and not having met the publication deadline – and was considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Chair, in accordance with the Council’s constitutional rules and the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were that the information, which was not available at the time of the agenda going to print, was required to be considered at the present meeting in order to provide the maximum opportunity for Officers to explore possible options and secure funding for adult education services at the facility.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 9.03pm

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Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Executive Committee

31st March 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), Councillor Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors P Anderson, J Brunner, B Clayton, W Hartnett, N Hicks, C MacMillan and M Shurmer

Also Present:

Councillor W Norton (Chair – Local Strategic Partnership Task and Finish Group)

Officers:

C Flanagan, K Dicks, S Hanley, A Marklew, E Baker and L Brockett, J Bayley

Committee Services Officer:

D Sunman

276. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

277. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

278. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that the following item of business, scheduled on the Forward Plan to be dealt with at this meeting, had been rescheduled to a later meeting of the Committee:

- Business Centre Review;
- Church Green Improvements;
- Redditch Borough Council Logo; and
- Provision of New Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Show People.

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Chair

279. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10th March 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

280. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME NO 4

The Committee considered a report that outlined the timescales for the production of a range of Development Plan Documents for the Local Development Scheme (LDS) No 4.

Officers were congratulated for their professionalism in the production of the LDS No 4.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the timescales detailed within the Local Development Scheme No. 4 for a range of Development Plan Documents be agreed; and**

RECOMMENDED that

- 2) Local Development Scheme No.4 be submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) for approval.**

281. PREFERRED DRAFT CORE STRATEGY

Members considered a report which sought endorsement of the Officer responses to the Preferred Draft Core Strategy consultation.

Officers were asked to ensure that all Members of the Joint Planning Advisory Panel (JPAP) be made aware when further discussion would take place on specific sites and that a further report be made to Executive Committee following that meeting.

RESOLVED that

the Officer responses to the Preferred Draft Core Strategy be approved.

282. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2010 - 2013

The Committee considered a report which sought approval of a Communications Strategy and Action Plan for 2010 to 2013.

Officers reported that the Communications Strategy was needed to provide effective internal and external communications for the Council and that the Action Plan would be updated annually. Members were informed that a separate Community Engagement Strategy would be produced jointly by Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.

Members felt it important to measure and assess the value and success of communications.

RECOMMENDED that

the Communications Strategy 2010 – 2013 be adopted and added to the Council's policy framework from April 2010.

283. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24th February be noted; and**

RECOMMENDED that

- 2) **Councillor J Pearce be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.**

284. REFERRAL FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK AND FINISH GROUP - INTERIM REPORT

Councillor Norton, Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Group, presented an Interim Report to the Committee.

He explained that the recommendations that had been suggested by the Task and Finish Group on Engagement and Accountability, if approved, could be implemented for the new municipal year.

Members were informed that the recommendations had been designed to increase local Councillors' familiarity and involvement with the Redditch Partnership.

A further report that would include recommendations for improving performance management of the Redditch Partnership would be made to the Executive Committee in June 2010.

RECOMMENDED that

the recommendations listed below be referred to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for consideration at its next meeting:

Engagement

- 1) following pre-scrutiny by the LSP Task and Finish Group, the proposed format and content of the Redditch Partnership's revamped website coverage, to be hosted by Redditch Borough Council, be endorsed;**
- 2) an event, along the lines of the 'We are Redditch' exhibition, be held every year in a form determined appropriate by Officers;**
- 3) the Redditch Partnership and appropriate partners publicise their work and invite public reaction by providing regular updates in Redditch Matters;**
- 4) the Redditch Partnership hold and advertise an Annual Meeting, as required by the terms of the Partnership's protocol, which partners, potential partners and members of the public be positively encouraged to attend;**

Accountability

- 5) a copy of the minutes of the LSP Board's minutes be attached to the full Council agenda as part of Leader's Items to deliver regular updates on the work of Redditch Partnership;**
- 6) the Leader of the Council formally provide an Annual Report to the last scheduled full Council meeting of the municipal year covering the work of the Redditch Partnership by formalising the current practice of delivering an annual "State of the Borough" address;**
- 7) information about the Redditch Partnership and LSPs be provided to for Members' consideration as part of the Member induction process; and**
- 8) a training event focusing on LSPs be provided as a standard part of the Member training programme each year.**

Executive Committee

31st March 2010

285. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS, NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUPS ETC.

There were no minutes of referrals.

286. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members received an update on the activity of the Council's Advisory Panels and other bodies.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

287. ACTION MONITORING

Members considered the latest Action Monitoring report.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

288. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES / REFERRALS (IF ANY)

There were no confidential minutes or referrals.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.40 pm



Audit & Governance

Committee

21st January 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Robin King (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors M Braley, G Hopkins and W Norton

Also Present:

David Evans, Elizabeth Cave (Audit Commission)

Officers:

S Hanley, B Haycock, T Kristunas and S Morgan

Committee Services Officer:

T Buckley

35. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor M Hall.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

37. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

38. EXTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

Members considered the Audit Commission's Annual Audit Letter. This summarised the findings from the 2008/09 audit, commented on issues arising from the audit of the Council's financial statements and gave results of work undertaken to secure value for money in the Council's use of resources.

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Chair

Audit & Governance Committee

21st January 2010

Members were advised that a full version of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) for the Council was available on the Audit Commission's OnePlace website.

Members noted that although overall there had been no improvement over last year, action had been taken in accordance with Audit Commission comments; the lack of recorded improvement had been due to the goal posts being moved. There would also be a separate report on use of resources to a later meeting of the committee. The external auditors advised Members that this year there was a new regime, in line with their recommendations, which was broader, with less emphasis on pure finance and including a new area of workforce planning.

Members noted that in order to improve from 2 to 3 the Council's current score for managing its finances, evidence had to be provided as to how improvements were being delivered, for example that resources were being redirected to key priority areas. The external auditors confirmed that a review was being undertaken in Finance to bring about this improvement and that they would be revisiting workforce planning shortly to check that progress was being made.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the report be noted;**
- 2) the auditors' recommendations 1 to 4 within that report be agreed and implemented;**
- 3) the recommendations be monitored and progress reported back to a future meeting of the committee.**

39. EXTERNAL AUDIT - PROGRESS REPORT

Members received the external auditors' Progress Report. This summarised progress and provided information on the 2008/09 and 2009/10 audits. Members noted that the 2008/09 audit was complete and that pre-statement work was ongoing for the 2009/10 audit, although the plan to review project management processes in place at the authority in 2008/09 had been carried forward to 2009/10 as a result of the delay in the Abbey stadium project.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

Audit & Governance Committee

21st January 2010

40. EXTERNAL AUDIT - FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Members received the Financial Statements Report from the External Auditors and noted the recommendations contained within their report. Key messages from the Auditors were:

1) General processes

Some processes required streamlining to make them more efficient, working papers required further attention to support the income and expenditure and balances within the Financial Statements; closedown arrangements had to be sufficiently robust to ensure the accounts met statutory requirements and financial reporting standards and gave a true and fair view of the Council's position.

2) Staffing

Where one person had been responsible for a variety of jobs all at the same time, this had been revised and reallocated across 3 accountants to facilitate a smoother process and iron out bottlenecks.

3) Action Plan

The external auditors' recommendations and the action plan arising from them and as agreed by Council officers, would be monitored by this Committee at future meetings.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the report and its recommendations and action plan be noted; and**
- 2) the action plan to be monitored regularly by this Committee.**

41. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Members received a report updating audits completed by the Internal Audit Team since the previous progress report to this Committee on 26 May 2009. In response to questions, Officers confirmed that once the initial audit had been completed, all reports were then followed up to ensure compliance with audit requirements.

Audit & Governance Committee

21st January 2010

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

42. INTERNAL AUDIT OUT-TURN STATEMENT - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2009

Members received a report from Internal Audit regarding the use of their resources in the first six months of 2009/10 and providing the Half Yearly Outturn Statement. Members noted that a temporary staff appointment had been made to cover long term sickness of one member of staff which had impacted on the work throughput of such a small unit.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

43. INTERNAL AUDIT - MEMBER SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AUDIT ACTIVITY

Members were invited to suggest areas for inclusion in next year's Audit Work Programme.

One suggestion for consideration was Gas Maintenance – central heating contract – monitoring of job ticket issues, miscalls, access to properties, safety issues.

RESOLVED that

Members advise the Internal Audit Manager within the next two months, of any further areas they would like to be audited.

44. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS

Members received a report advising them of the impending introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards.

Key areas which might impact the Council's Statement of Accounts were outlined in the report and noted. Finance Officers across Herefordshire and Worcestershire were working together to ensure a consistent approach, and an International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) project plan had been set up to ensure that targets were met for the adoption of IFRS by 31 March 2010 and for the production of IFRS compliant accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2011.

Audit & Governance Committee

21st January 2010

RESOLVED that

the Council's preparations for the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards be noted.

45. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Members were provided with an update on the Council's risk management arrangements in line with the corporate risk management framework, together with an update on risk management developments and activity.

The Risk Management Monitoring Group had reviewed the Corporate Risk Register which contained 21 corporate risks and had added Workforce Planning, in line with the comment contained within the Audit Governance Report 2008/09. In addition, 113 operational risks had been identified, 23 of which were considered high, across a number of service areas, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

46. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2009 - 2011

Members considered and accepted the Audit & Governance Committee Work Programme for 2009/11 as provided to them.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the report be noted; and**
- 2) the Auditors' recommendations 1 to 4 contained within the Annual Audit Letter be included in the Work Programme for monitoring by the Committee.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 8.15pm

.....
Chair



Planning Committee

30th March 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Michael Chalk (Chair), and Councillors P Anderson (substituting for Councillor Smith), K Banks, M Braley, D Enderby, W Hartnett, N Hicks, D Hunt and R King

Also Present:

M Collins (Vice-Chair – Standards Committee)

Officers:

R Bamford, C Flanagan, A Rutt, S Skinner and S Williams

Committee Services Officer:

J Smyth

109. APOLOGIES / WELCOME

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Smith.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Braley as a newly appointed member of the Committee.

110. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

111. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2nd March 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair,

subject to it being noted that:

- a) **Councillor Anderson had been present at the meeting as a substitute for Councillor Smith and the record being so amended, and**

.....
Chair

- b) in respect of Minute 104 (Planning Application 2009/271/FUL), and further to Councillors Banks' and Hartnett's declared interests as Board Members of Redditch Co-operative Homes, they had been unaware, as they had already withdrawn from the meeting when the matter arose, that the applicant details had been amended to 'Accord Housing'; and they therefore made retrospective declarations of personal and prejudicial interest in respect of that body to.

112. APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

The Committee considered and determined five Planning Applications as detailed in the subsequent minutes below.

Officers tabled an update report detailing any late responses to consultation, changed recommendations, further conditions and any additional Officer comments in relation to each application. This report was further updated orally at the meeting as appropriate to each application.

Public speaking was permitted in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures, in relation to four of the applications being considered.

113. PLANNING APPLICATION 2010/008/FUL – LAND AT HEWELL ROAD, BROCKHILL

14 dwellings, access road and public open space provision
Applicant: Persimmon Homes

Mr J Murphy, Agent for the Applicant, addressed the Committee under the Council's public speaking rules.

RESOLVED that

- 1) having regard to the Development Plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Acting Head of Planning and Building Control to GRANT planning permission; subject to:
 - a) a Planning Obligation to ensure that Redditch Borough Council is paid appropriate contributions in relation to the development for pitches and play areas and that the on site open space provision be transferred to the Council with a maintenance contribution; and

b) the conditions and informatives summarised below:

- “1) Time limit for commencement of development
- 2) Limited hours of work during construction
- 3) Contaminated land – what to do if discovered
- 4) Bin storage details to be submitted, agreed and provided before occupation
- 5) Hard surfaces to be permeable
- 6) Remove PDRs for rear garden structures
- 7) Approved plans specified
- 8) Landscape scheme to be implemented prior to occupation
- 9) Boundary treatment to be implemented prior to occupation
- 10) Provide parking prior to occupation
- 11) Compost bins / water butts to be provided prior to occupation
- 12) Highways details as requested

Informatives

- 1) Secured by design accreditation should be sought by applicant
- 2) Affordable housing quota likely to be carried forward into later phases of development
- 3) NB S106 planning obligation associated with this consent
- 4) Any highway informatives requested.”

2) in the event that the Planning Obligation cannot be completed by 21st April 2010:

- a) authority be delegated to the Acting Head of Planning and Building Control to REFUSE the application on the basis that without the Planning Obligation, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy and therefore unacceptable owing to the resultant detrimental impacts it could cause on community infrastructure by a lack of provision for their improvements, and that none of the dwellings could be restricted to use for affordable housing in line with current policy requirements; and
- b) in the event of a refusal on this ground and the applicant resubmitting the same or a very similar Planning Application with a completed legal agreement attached, authority be delegated to the Acting Head of Planning and Building Control to GRANT Planning Permission, subject to the conditions and informatives summarised at 1b) above.

**114. PLANNING APPLICATION 2010/013/FUL –
'CAMARAT', DARK LANE, ASTWOOD BANK**

Single-storey side and rear extensions,
replacement pitched roof over kitchen,
conversion of garage into living area,
rebuild of porch and new single storey garage
Applicant: Mr A Murphy

Mr P Simpson, an Objector, addressed the Committee under the Council's public speaking rules.

RESOLVED that

consideration of this Planning Application be DEFERRED to allow for a Member Site Visit to take place.

**115. PLANNING APPLICATION 2010/026/FUL –
THE STABLES FARM SHOP, ASTWOOD LANE,
ASTWOOD BANK**

Retrospective erection and installation of freezer, store, two timber sheds, WC's, porch, conservatory, canopy, patio and change of use of agricultural land for extension to existing car park
Applicant: Mr J Cockburn

Mr C Bates, an Objector, addressed the Committee under the Council's public speaking rules.

RESOLVED that

having regard to the Development Plan and to all other material considerations, Planning Permission be **REFUSED** for the reasons stated in the report.

**116. PLANNING APPLICATION 2010/040/COU –
OSPREY HOUSE, ALBERT STREET, REDDITCH**

Change of use from Clas B1 to D1
to enable education and training to
take place on the first and second floors
Applicant: NEW College

Councillor C MacMillan, supporter, addressed the Committee under the Council's public speaking rules.

RESOLVED that

having regard to the Development Plan and to all other material considerations, Planning Permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions summarised in the main report.

**117. PLANNING APPLICATION 2010/041/RM –
LAND ADJACENT TO 17 CHAPEL STREET,
ASTWOOD BANK**

Reserved Matters application for a detached dwelling with garage
Applicant: Mr R Parr

RESOLVED that

having regard to the Development Plan and to all other material considerations, Planning Permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions and informatives summarised in the main report.

118. PLANNING CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE - REVISIONS

With the agreement of the Chair, this matter was **DEFERRED** to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

119. INFORMATION REPORTS

The Committee received information relating to the outcome an appeal against a Planning decision.

Planning Committee

30th March 2010

The appeal, which had been ALLOWED, was in respect of a proposal to erect a detached dwelling within part of the garden area of 2 Hennals Avenue, Webheath.

RESOLVED that

the information item be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.46 pm

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CHAIR