



EXECUTIVE

Committee

26th August 2009

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:

M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

E Baker, L Brockett, S Hanley, A Heighway, R Kindon, A Marklew, S Mullins, S Skinner, Jackie Smith, L Tompkin and S Powell

Committee Officers:

D Sunman

93. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

94. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hartnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 6 (Strategic Housing – Selection of Registered Social Landlords – Preferred Development Partners) as he was a Board member of a Registered Social Landlord (Redditch Co-op Homes).

95. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following items of business, scheduled on the Forward Plan to be dealt with at this meeting, had been rescheduled to a later meeting:

- Former Covered Markets;
- Quarterly Monitoring of Budget Savings;
- Quarterly Budget Monitoring;
- Benefits Service Improvement Plan;
- Street Naming Policy; and
- Student Council – Review of Service Level Agreement with Worcestershire County Council

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The Chair also advised that she had accepted the following matter as Urgent Business:

Item 18 – Arrow Valley Social Club – Asset Management Options.

(Not meeting the publication deadline)

96. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27th July 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

97. OLDER PERSON'S HOUSING AND SUPPORT STRATEGY - MY HOME, MY FUTURE, MY CHOICE

The Committee was asked to approve the Older Person's Housing Strategy and Action Plan, attached at Appendices 1 and 3 of the report respectively, which sets the agenda and framework for the future of older person's housing and support provided by the Council over the next sixteen years.

Members were informed that these documents were reflective of both demographic change and the changing needs of older people and would deliver the strategic aims outlined in National, Regional, County and Local policies.

Officers reported that further consultation would take place with residents. Officers were also requested to arrange a visit for Members to all the Council's Sheltered Housing Schemes as part of the consultation process.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Older Person's Housing Strategy, detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved; and**
- 2) **subject to community consultation, Officers implement the Strategy for the Housing and Support of Older People as detailed in the Action Plan, attached at Appendix 3 of the report.**

98. STRATEGIC HOUSING - SELECTION OF REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS - PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Members received a report which sought approval of five Registered Social Landlords who had been interviewed by the Member and Officer Selection Panel on 30th June 2009, to be appointed as 'preferred partner' Registered Social Landlords.

Officers reported that these 'preferred partner' Registered Social Landlords would work in partnership with the Council to develop affordable housing for rent and low cost ownership on Council owned and Section 106 or windfall development sites.

Members were informed that by selecting 'preferred partner' Registered Social Landlords the Council would be able to achieve the following strategic objectives:

- a) increased affordable housing provision within the Borough;
- b) increased supply of Homes and Community Agency grant funding to support development;
- c) assist person registered as being in housing need; and
- d) development of opportunities for joint working in order to address the supply of affordable housing, assessment of housing need and formulation of Borough-wide housing policies, plans and solutions to problems.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the recommendation of the Member Officer Selection Panel held on 30 June 2009 be adopted and that the following organisations be duly appointed as Preferred RSL Development Partners of the Authority:**
 - a) **Accord Housing Association/Redditch Co-Operative Homes;**
 - b) **Festival Housing Group;**
 - c) **West Mercia Housing Association/Bromsgrove District Housing Trust;**
 - d) **Rooftop Housing Group;**
 - e) **Sanctuary Housing Association.**

- 2) **Officers and Preferred RSL Partners produce a preferred partnership agreement outlining the terms of reference of the Partnership.**

(Prior to consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillor Hartnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in view of him being a Board Member of Registered Social Landlord (Redditch Co-op Homes) and left the meeting.)

99. WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY - PHASE III

Members considered a report which sought retrospective approval of the Council's response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) - Phase 3 Revision Options document.

RESOLVED that

the response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

100. CONSTITUTION - NEW EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS / WHOLE COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

Members received a report asking them to consider a new form of governance for the Council's Executive arrangements for implementation after elections in May 2011. They were also asked to consider opting for whole Council instead of partial elections (elections by thirds) to take effect for the elections in May 2011.

Members were informed that the current leader and cabinet (Executive) model was no longer an option and that all Local Authorities operating the system would have to adopt a new governance model.

Officers reported on the only two options available:

- a) an elected Mayor and Cabinet executive (currently adopted by a small number of Authorities):
 - i) a Mayor is elected directly by the electorate for a 4-year period;
 - ii) proposals to adopt this model are subject to referendum; and
 - iii) at least 2 Councillors must be appointed to the Cabinet by the Mayor.

- b) a 'new style' Leader and Cabinet executive:
 - i) a Leader is appointed by the Council for a 4-year period;
 - ii) at least 2 Councillors must be appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader; and
 - iii) Councils can choose whether to adopt procedures to allow the removal of the Leader during the 4 years.

Members were informed that if the Council did not make a decision on governance by the end of December 2010 it would, by default, have to adopt the new style Leader and Cabinet model to take effect after the 2011 elections and could be so ordered by the Secretary of State.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the legislative position regarding the governance models for executive arrangements from 2010 be noted;**
- 2) **subject to approval of the recommendations below by the full Council, a further report be received to consider the outcome from the consultation at 3) below and to draw up the Council's proposals for a change in governance; and**

RECOMMENDED that

- 3) **authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services to consult electors and other interested parties in respect of the two potential governance models and a change to whole council elections;**
- 4) **a report be received at a specially convened meeting of the Council on 14th June 2010 to determine proposals for a change in the Council's governance model and make the necessary formal Resolution for this to take effect from the 3rd day after the 2011 local elections; and**
- 5) **a report be received at the specially convened meeting of the Council on 14th June 2010 to consider, subject to the consultation outcomes, whether or not to opt for whole- council elections, to take effect for the 2011 local elections.**

101. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS - ADOPTION OF WRITTEN MEMBER ROLES

Members were asked to consider the adoption of written Member Roles.

Officers reported that the written Member Roles identified various positions on the Council ranging from the core role of all Councillors to the role of the Leader of the Council. Each role included a description of the key duties of that role together with suggested skills and knowledge which were likely to enable Members to fulfil the role.

It was noted that the aim of the written Member Roles was to describe the potential range of activities which Member might find they were asked to undertake rather than prescribing what they must do. The skills and knowledge identified within the written Member Roles would be used to form the basis of the Member Development Programme.

Officers were requested to amend the Members' Roles, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, as suggested.

RECOMMENDED that

the draft Member Roles, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be adopted.

102. IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS - MARKET KIOSKS

Members received a report which asked them to consider writing off six cases of irrecoverable debt and not pursuing a further seven cases within the Council's accounting system.

Officers reported that a number of lessons had been learnt and action had been taken for the future management and monitoring of outstanding debts. These included:

- a) Procedures reviewed and changes implemented;
- b) Review of all sundry debts;
- c) Review of all other Service areas where local billing and cash payments are received.

Members expressed concern at the amounts involved but were reassured that in future outstanding debts would be closely monitored.

Officers were asked to investigate whether the information in Appendix 2 of the report could be made available to the public.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the debts totalling £44,560.03 detailed in Appendix 1, attached to the report, be written off as irrecoverable.**
- 2) **the debts of £26,595.63 detailed in Appendix 1, attached to the report, be not pursued.**

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was, therefore, agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any further debate on the grounds that information might be revealed that related to an individual or which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual; and the financial or business affairs of particular persons (including the authority holding that information.)

There is nothing exempt, however, in this record of the proceedings.)

103. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the Minutes of a recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 July be received and noted;**
- 2) **the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) guidance for the Council be approved; and**

RECOMMENDED that

- 3) **the Council establish a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel to undertake the scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Partnership; and**

104. FLAG FLYING POLICY - REFERRAL FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members were asked to consider a referral from the Planning Committee in relation to Planning Members' request for a review of the Council's current Flag Flying Policy.

RESOLVED that

the amendments to the Council's Flag Flying Policy, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

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

There were no minutes of referrals under this item.

106. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received the latest update report on the activities of the Council's Advisory Panels, Working Groups and similar bodies. It was noted that a briefing on Abbey Stadium would be made to the Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel on 15th September 2009 at 5.30pm. It was also noted that a meeting of the Church Hill District Centre – Members' Panel had been arranged on 2nd September 2009.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

107. ACTION MONITORING

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

108. 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 matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

Item 10 – Irrecoverable Debts – Market Kiosks; and

Item 18 – Arrow Valley Social Club – Asset Management Options.

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109. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES / REFERRALS (IF ANY)

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

110. ARROW VALLEY SOCIAL CLUB - ASSET MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Members received a report which outlined the current status of the lease of Arrow Valley Social Club and the options available to protect a Council owned asset.

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was, therefore, agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any further debate on the grounds that information might be revealed that related to an individual or which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual; and the financial or business affairs of particular persons (including the authority holding that information.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.05pm
and closed at 10.00pm.

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Chair