

Executive Committee

27th January 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 Banks

Officers:

S Mullins, K Dicks, S Hanley, A Walsh, L Roberts, R Kindon, T Kristunas, G Revans and A Heighway

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

212. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

213. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

214. 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 the meeting on 3rd February 2010. Members were also informed that this report would be going out late as the Council was awaiting further information on a capitalisation request and this would not be received by the Council until 29th January.

- Initial Estimates 2010/11

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

Item 5 – Public Open Space Consultation Summary and Asset Disposal Programme Update

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Chair

215. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 2nd and 9th December 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to:

in respect of Minute 201 (Opt-in Chargeable Garden Waste Collection – Business Case – Amended Version) it being agreed that Recommendation 7 be amended to read

- 7) the Council's current collection policy relating to garden waste in grey bins be restated to coincide with the start of the new service to discourage through education garden waste being placed in grey bins.

216. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE CONSULTATION SUMMARY AND ASSET DISPOSAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The comments received as a result of the advertising and consultation undertaken in respect of the proposed disposal of various areas of Public Open Space were considered.

Approximately 2,500 individual comments had been received which had been collated by Officers. It was recommended by Officers that two sites be no longer retained in the Asset Disposal Programme, Site 8 (Hunt End Lane) and Site 10 (Moorcroft Gardens) for reasons stated in the report. Officers also commented that Site 3 (Clifton Close) was in Matchborough Ward and not Lodge Park as incorrectly stated in Appendix 1.

It was proposed by Members that two further sites be removed from the Programme, Site 2 (Brooklands Lane) and Site 6 (Harport Road), the first primarily because it formed a part of Arrow Valley Park and the second primarily because of its importance as a buffer to noise pollution from the Warwick Highway.

Site 7 (Heathfield Road) and Site 13 (Petton Close) were also discussed at some length but Members as a whole were not convinced by the arguments for not retaining them on the Programme at this stage. Site 7 was reported to have benefits in terms of car parking in particular at the present time and there was some question over the existing amenity value of Site 13.

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services stated that, in her opinion, no Members of the Planning Committee had fettered their discretion in any subsequent Planning Committee

deliberations through their involvement in the decision-making on the above matters.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the comments received regarding the proposed disposals be noted;**
- 2) **the sites in Appendix 1, with the exception of Site 2 (Brooklands Lane), Site 6 (Harport Road), Site 8 (Hunt End Lane) and Site 10 (Moorcroft Gardens), be approved for continued inclusion in the Asset Disposal Programme;**
- 3) **the site at the corner of Winyates Way and Moons Moat Drive shown identified on plan 17 in Appendix 2 be declared surplus;**
- 4) **31 Mount Pleasant identified on plan 19 in Appendix 2 be declared surplus; and**
- 5) **authority be delegated to the Property Services Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to progress and conclude disposals of assets contained in the Asset Disposal Programme.**

217. SINGLE EQUALITIES SCHEME

The Committee considered a Single Equalities Scheme setting out how the Council was promoting and taking action on the specific equality duties placed on it in respect of race, disability and gender.

The Committee welcomed the report and the measures that were proposed to bring the Council onto a more sound footing in respect of equalities. Members commented that, from a practical viewpoint, the organisation performed to a higher level than was suggested by the Council's current assessment rating in this area. However, it was noted that the Council needed to achieve improvements in terms of the equality standards process.

Officers highlighted that the Single Equalities Scheme was a living document. Work was being undertaken with bodies such as the Community Forum to ensure that the diverse communities within the town were receiving fair access to services.

There was some disquiet that the inequalities based upon educational under-achievement were not being suitably addressed as this was considered to be a significant issue within the Borough. Members requested that a report/action plan be submitted to a

future meeting of the Committee or Council detailing what the Council, as Community Leader, expected to receive in terms of education provision for the Borough and its children and young people.

RECOMMENDED that

the Single Equalities Scheme and Equalities Action Plan included at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

218. ENERGY STRATEGY

A draft Energy Strategy and Action Plan was received by the Committee. The current Strategy was out of date and needed replacing. Officers commented that the baseline data in Tables 1 and 2 would need to be amended and highlighted a number of additions to the information within Table 5, information which had not been available at the time of going to print. This new and amended information would be made available prior to the meeting of the Council.

Members welcomed the report and were keen that the Council should be a leader within the local area in the sphere of reducing energy usage and the associated carbon emissions. The majority of the projects included within the action plan were being funded with assistance from an interest free loan from Salix (part of the Carbon Trust). The rationale behind the phasing of the schemes was explained as it appeared that commencement was not based upon the projected payback period. The Committee was informed that those schemes scheduled for the current financial year were already incorporated in the existing Capital programme for other reasons.

The possibility of identifying local actions that could assist in reducing fossil fuel reliance was discussed. Officers confirmed that the Energy Saving Trust had assessed the opportunities for moving to renewable sources of energy and had concluded that the opportunities within Redditch were very limited. The Building Management System was a key scheme and Members sought confirmation that compatibility with the system already in use by the County Council would be achieved. Officers were able to reassure the Committee that discussions were taking place with the County Council.

RECOMMENDED that

the Energy Strategy and Action Plan, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted.

219. WORCESTERSHIRE ENHANCED TWO TIER (WETT) PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the proposed detailed business cases for two-tier joint working in the areas of Regulatory, Property and Internal Audit Services. These had been developed in late 2009 and the proposals would lead to audit services being hosted by Worcester City Council, regulatory services by Bromsgrove and Redditch and property services by Worcestershire County Council.

There was considerable discussion as to the merits of the proposals. Concerns were expressed that local accountability would be diminished and the governance arrangements, as much as they were known, were inadequate given the scope of the services. The level of Member involvement to date was questioned, as were the possible financial implications of the staffing changes detailed within the proposals. It was also noted that there was an extensive period of notice required and significant financial costs involved should an authority wish to withdraw at a later date from the arrangements.

Officers explained that, certainly for regulatory services, the service would continue to be delivered locally and that the relocation of staff would primarily involve the management team. Both Redditch and Bromsgrove already provided efficient regulatory services and it was anticipated that the Service Level Agreement negotiated by the Council would maintain current service standards. There were, in addition, various external drivers ensuring that standards were maintained. The use of the Hub to receive calls from the public, particularly in respect of regulatory services, was touched upon. Officers informed the Committee that the Hub was investing in new technology to improve the efficiency of the service.

It was acknowledged that the level of detail within the business cases was limited at the present time. Officers highlighted the undertaking that had been made at a recent meeting of the WETT Programme Management Group to provide further detail to the participating Councils on the detailed implementation plan and proposed service standards.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the two tier and joint working proposals for Property Services, Regulatory Services and Internal Audit presented within the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier detailed business cases referenced in this report be agreed;**

AND

subject to the agreement of the relevant councils out of Worcestershire County Council and the Worcestershire District Councils, namely Worcester City, Bromsgrove District, Redditch Borough, Malvern Hills District, Wychavon District and Wyre Forest District Councils:

A. UNIFIED REGULATORY SERVICES

- 2) a unified Regulatory Service for the Worcestershire Councils, jointly hosted by Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils (with Bromsgrove District Council as the employing authority), be established from 1st June 2010 under the auspices of a Joint Committee, on the basis set out in the Regulatory Service Detailed Business Case V10, Part 1 & Part 2 (Rev.1) and supported by the Regulatory Services, Detailed Business Case Executive Summary V3.2 at 'Appendix A' to this report;
- 3) this Council's functions in relation to Environmental Health and Licensing Services (so far as permissible in law) be delegated to a Joint Committee in accordance with Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 20 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) (Regulations) 2000;
- 4) subject to the agreement in recommendation 1) above being concluded, relevant staff from all Councils which agree to the Regulatory Services business case be transferred to Bromsgrove District Council under TUPE arrangements;
- 5) the financial arrangements for the new service as set out in the Detailed Business Case V10 be approved;
- 6) the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services be requested to draft consequent changes to the Council's Constitution to reflect the Shared Services arrangements, establishment of the new Joint Committee

B. PROPERTY SERVICES

- 7) a Shared Property Service, hosted by Worcestershire County Council, on the basis set out in the Property Services Detailed Business Case V6 and the supporting

Detailed Business Case Executive Summary V1 at 'Appendix B' to this report be established;

- 8) the transfer of staff to Worcestershire County Council as service provider be approved on the terms proposed from the Commencement Date;**
- 9) Authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Democratic & Property Services to enter into a service level agreement on the basis set out in the Property Services Detailed Business Case V6 and supporting Property Services Detailed Business Case V1 (Appendix B), as amended to reflect any final agreement made between the Partner authorities, be approved;**

C. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES

- 10) a Shared Internal Audit Service (hosted by Worcester City Council) on the basis set out in the Internal Audit, Detailed Business Case V10 and the supporting Detailed Business Case Executive Summary V2 at 'Appendix C' to this report be established;**
- 11) the transfer of staff to Worcester City Council as service provider be agreed, on the terms proposed, from the Commencement Date;**
- 12) Authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Democratic & Property Services to enter into a service level agreement on the basis set out in the Internal Audit Detailed Business Case V10 and supporting Internal Audit Detailed Business Case V2 (Appendix B), as amended to reflect any final agreement made between the Partner authorities;**

TIMELINE AND RECRUITMENT

- 13) the timeline proposed at 'Appendix D' to the report, which details the order and dates for each consultation period and decision point in relation to the detailed business case development for Internal Audit, Property and Regulatory Services, be supported.**

Agrees to the creation of and terms of reference for a Joint Appointments Committee comprising one member of each participating Council for the proposed Head of Regulatory Services.

220. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2010 TO 2013

Officers presented a report setting out the Council's Capital Strategy for the coming three years. The Committee was told that capital receipts had changed little since the previous three year period, hence there was little change to the Strategy itself since the last had been agreed in 2009.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Capital Strategy appended to the report be approved; and**
- 2) the Capital Strategy be added to the list of the Council's Policy Framework documents and incorporated as such into the Council's formal Constitution.**

221. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2010/11

A report was received that set out the initial estimates for 2010/11 and the proposed dwelling rent for the coming year. The actual average rent increase was recommended to be set at a level of 2.6% and there was reported to be scope in the Housing Revenue Account to approve all revenue and capital bids detailed within the report.

The Council's negative housing subsidy position was noted as was the recent consultation exercise undertaken by the Government which was expected to result in councils being offered the opportunity for council housing services to be 'self-financing'. The subsidy position from the Government for the current year was still to be received and could result in change should the Council's own subsidy calculations have been incorrect.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the draft 2010/11 Estimates for the Housing Revenue Account attached to the report at Appendix A, be approved;**
- 2) the actual average rent increase for 2010/11 be 2.6%;**
- 3) the Housing Revenue Account bids for revenue resources categorised as unavoidable and high set out in Appendix B be approved as follows:**

2010/11	£63,000
2011/12	£49,000
2012/13	£187,000;

- 4) the Housing Revenue Account bids for capital resources categorised as high and unavoidable set out in Appendix C be approved as follows:

2010/11	£600,000
2011/12	£730,000
2012/13	£6,020,000; and

- 5) the bid as recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved as follows:

Cleaning and maintenance of flooring at Three Storey Flats - estimated cost £6,000.

222. COUNCIL TAX BASE

The Committee received the annual report on the Council Tax Base for the following financial year which was required by the Council's major precepting bodies and parish in order to calculate their precept requirements.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area for 2010/11, as detailed in the Appendices to the report, be approved; and
- 2) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the figures calculated by the Redditch Borough Council as its tax base for the whole area for the year 2010/11 be 27,470.42 and for the parts of the area listed below be:

Parish of Feckenham:	<u>363.54</u>
Rest of Redditch:	<u>27,106.88</u>

223. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members agreed that consideration of the recommendations relating to the Former Covered Market be deferred until that matter was considered by the Executive Committee at its next meeting on 3rd February.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25th November and 16th December 2010 be noted;

and **RECOMMENDED** that

- 2) **Councillor Robin King be nominated to represent the Council as a co-optee on the Worcestershire Hub Scrutiny Group.**

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

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

225. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

It was noted that further meetings had been arranged, as follows:

Leisure Contracts Advisory panel – 1st February;
Constitutional Review Working Party – 24th February; and
Climate Change Advisory Panel – 9th March.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

226. ACTION MONITORING

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

227. 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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

Easemore Road Site – Consultation with Tenants (as detailed at Minute 228 below);

228. EASEMORE ROAD SITE - CONSULTATION WITH TENANTS

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was

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therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to provisional terms of land disposal under negotiation.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 9.39pm

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Chair