

Executive Committee

20 May 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:

Councillors A Clayton and Field

Officers:

C Flanagan, E Hopkins, R Kindon, T Kristunas, G Revans, J Staniland, E Storer, A Teepe, J Walker and D Wright

Committee Services Officer:

D Sunman

295. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence from members of the Executive Committee.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Smith as it had been his intention to be present for Item 10, Housing Mutual Exchange Task and Finish Group – Recommendations.

296. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hartnett declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Item 8 - Easemore Road – Sale of Land and Consortium Update, as a member of a Registered Social Landlord (Redditch Co-op Homes).

297. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Item 11 – Referral from the Member Development Steering Group.

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Chair

298. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings held on 1 April and 22 April 2009 be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

299. ANNUAL CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

Members considered a report outlining the work undertaken on Health and Safety during 2008/09 together with the work programme for the 2009/10 municipal year.

RESOLVED that

the work on Health and Safety be noted and the Health and Safety work programme outlined for the following year be endorsed and supported.

300. HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION AND AFFORDABLE WARMTH

The Committee considered a report on the introduction of National Indicator 187 (NI 187) with effect from April 2008. Officers reported that NI 187 had been included in Worcestershire County Council's Local Area Agreement (LAA) and, therefore, the Council would be obliged to identify those people living in fuel poverty in poor housing conditions. Monitoring of performance in tackling fuel poverty would be required from April 2009.

Members were informed that applications to three schemes would be managed as follows:

Over 60's Scheme

Applications be limited to the first 200 installation measures at an approximate cost to the Council of £40,000 in total.

Landlord's Scheme

Applications be limited to the first 100 installation measures at an approximate cost to the Council of £20,000 in total.

Town Centre Scheme

Applications be limited to a budget of £40,000.

Officers reported that the British Gas Council Tax Insulation Scheme would continue in 2009/10 and that the Government's

Warmfront Grant scheme was ongoing. The results of a heat imaging project would be available in June 2009 and would provide information to target areas more effectively.

Members suggested that the scheme be publicised through the Council's Climate Change website.

RESOLVED that

- 1) applications be invited from house owners in the Borough aged 60 or over, living in a Council Tax band A to D property and not in full time employment or in receipt of benefits, to have loft and / or cavity wall insulation installed in their homes;**
- 2) applications be invited from accredited private landlords in the Borough, owning tenanted properties in a Council Tax band A to D, to have loft and / or cavity wall insulation installed free of charge; and**
- 3) applications be invited from the owners of pre-1919 houses in the Town Centre area to apply for lifetime loans, to enable their homes to be adequately insulated and heated, on a non-means tested basis covering 50% of the cost of the work.**

301. PAOLOZZI MURAL TRUST

The Committee received a report which required them to consider what actions would be required to regularise the Council's Trusteeship of the Paolozzi Murals and the Paolozzi Mural Fund.

Officers suggested that this could be achieved by registration as a charity and appointment of Trustees. The Trustees would then be able to consider what actions were required to fulfil the primary objectives of the Trust, namely to promote the viewing of the Murals, their maintenance and safety. Members were informed that interest accrued to the Mural Fund might be used to support the Visual Arts in Redditch. The Charity Commissioners, on request, might also allow the use of capital.

Members were asked to consider the name under which the Trust would be registered and the appointment of Trustees.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) authority be delegated to the Legal Services Manager to take all necessary steps required by law to register the**

Trust as a charity with the Charity Commission;

- 2) **the Trust be registered as a charity with the name “Redditch Paolozzi Mural Trust;**
- 3) **the Leader of the Council and the Council’s Chief Finance Officer be appointed by the Council to perform the Council’s Trustee role for the Trust; and**
- 4) **the Trustees report any recommended spend to Executive Committee before distribution of funds.**

302. EASEMORE ROAD - SALE OF LAND AND CONSORTIUM UPDATE

Members were advised of the current position regarding the sale of land at Easemore Road and approval was sought for a revised consortium.

RESOLVED that

the Council lead the consortium and progress a sale of the combined site, for open market or affordable housing on the best terms possible, in agreement with the other members of the consortium.

(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, but not prejudicial interest in view of him being a Member of Registered Social Landlord (Redditch Coop Homes).

303. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members received the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 April 2009. There were no matters for the Executive Committee’s decision.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 April 2009 be received and noted.

304. HOUSING MUTUAL EXCHANGE TASK AND FINISH GROUP - RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Field attended representing the Housing and Mutual Exchange Task Group.

A report was presented from the Housing and Mutual Exchange Task Group, which had reviewed the Council's Housing Mutual Exchange and Home Swap procedures. The Task Group had concluded that the current procedures operated by the Council were satisfactory and that no further scrutiny was required. However, the Task Group recommended that existing inspection practices should be more explicitly stated in the Council's Housing Mutual Exchange Policy and Procedure to ensure that the process was transparent.

RESOLVED that

subject to suitable rewording by Officers the following details be incorporated into the Council's Housing Mutual Exchange Policy and Procedure:

“The Repair and Maintenance Officers should be employed to make the initial checks on each property to establish that no unauthorised alterations have been made to the properties and whether any rechargeable works need to be undertaken.

Any defects should be photographed and the details placed on file together with written reports concerning both properties.

Electrical tests for both properties should be arranged by Repairs and Maintenance.

The Tenancy Officer who is responsible for the mutual exchange together with the tenants involved should be advised in writing of any works required to be undertaken by them or the Council.

Normal Housing Mutual Exchange and Home Swap procedures should commence after the actions listed above have been completed satisfactorily. (i.e. the Tenancy Officer responsible for the exchange should visit both properties with both tenants).”

305. MINUTES / REFERRALS - MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP 6 MAY 2009

The Committee was asked to consider a range of recommendations arising from a meeting of the Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) regarding Member Development and Members' Support budgets for 2009/10

RESOLVED that

- 1) **in the light of recent Council budget decisions, the Member Support budget be divided to now provide £300 for each Member's individual support needs and £200 x 29 = £5,800 to be held centrally for Member Development purposes;**
- 2) **individual Members' existing commitments above £300 (and up to £500) be honoured at the present time;**
- 3) **the budgetary situation be reviewed at half year;**
- 4) **no new IT equipment be provided to Members until the question of funding is settled; and**
- 5) **consideration be given to the baseline provision of equipment to Members, and how this might be established, with a view to its implementation in May 2010, subject to the Council's approval of the necessary bids.**

(This report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business - 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 powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree 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 to provide clarification of an earlier Council decision and allow officers to allocate money from these budgets.)

306. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL ESTABLISHMENT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Council's establishment and the number of vacant posts as at 31 March 2009. Officers agreed to provide information on employment of Agency staff to Councillor Hartnett.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

307. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members considered an up-date report on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

308. ACTION MONITORING

Members noted the Action Monitoring Sheet.

The Meeting commenced at 7.06 pm
and closed at 9.07 pm

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Chair