

Executive Committee

2nd December 2009

Notice of Decisions

Present:

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

Also Present

Councillors K Banks, R King, J Pearce, D Enderby and M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

J Bayley, D Riley, S Hanley, S Mullins, A Marklew and A Baldwin

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

186. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Brunner.

187. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

188. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that the following item of business, attached as Item 5 to the agenda for that evening's meeting, be deferred and re-scheduled to a later meeting:

- Single Equalities Scheme.

She also advised that she had accepted the following matters as Urgent Business:

Item 4 – Neighbourhood Groups Task and Finish Group Recommendations;

Item 6 – Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09;

Item 7 - Council Tax and Business Rate Recovery Policy; and

Item 8 – Procurement Strategy and Corporate Procedure Rules.

189. NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUPS TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Neighbourhood Groups are not now fit for purpose and should be discontinued in their present form;**
- 2) following consultation with the Police, the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) group meetings should be re-launched and delivered as an equal partnership arrangement;**
 - a) Redditch Borough Council should work with the Police and other local agencies participating in Partners and communities Together (PACT) to agree funding and administration for PACT meetings;**
 - b) a protocol should be jointly developed outlining the roles and responsibilities of all agencies in the re-launched Partners and Communities Together Groups;**
 - c) the Chairs of all Partners and Communities Together meetings should be independent members of the community;**
 - d) promotion of the re-launched Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings should be appropriately targeted towards clarifying the meaning of the new arrangements for residents living in areas where PACT and Neighbourhood Group meetings currently only take place on the same night;**
 - e) the existing Neighbourhood Groups Hire of Premises budget (0630 3551) be retained and made available for the re-launched Partners and Communities Together groups to be spent as considered appropriate for the arrangement of ad hoc meetings;**

- 3) to supplement the new arrangements a further variety of methods that will enable Redditch Borough Council to inform and consult more effectively with local residents should be considered;

these alternative methods should include the following:

- a) subject to a successful revenue bid, the Council should publish quarterly editions of Redditch Matters during the year to inform residents about local public services, activities and Council business;
- b) Redditch Borough Council should continue to host road shows throughout the Borough;
- c) Redditch Borough Council should embrace the Worcestershire Viewpoint Citizens Panel and use every opportunity to work with the Panel to consult with residents over local issues;
- d) the Council should promote web based systems, such as the Worcestershire Hub and FixMyStreet, that can be utilised to resolve residents' individual issues;
- e) social networking should be used by the Council to inform and consult with residents in appropriate circumstances;
- f) the use of Councillor Calls for Action be promoted in order to be used to resolve local neighbourhood issues;
- g) more effort should be made by the Council to advertise the fact that residents should resolve individual issues through direct contact with Councillors, Officers and the One-Stop-Shops;
- h) the Council should work in equal partnership with the Police and other local agencies to advertise Street Briefings and Environment Visual Audits to local residents;

- 4) **Redditch Borough Council should continue to seek ways to better engage and consult with a more diverse range of residents;**
- 5) **the Council should have a robust monitoring system in place to assess the effectiveness of each of the mechanisms used to inform, engage and consult with local residents;**
- 6) **the Community Forum and similar groups which engage and consult with local residents should report to the Executive Committee;**
- 7) **the Council should have a central electronic database which would be used for the purposes of consultation with key partners in the Borough; and**
- 8) **the February round of Neighbourhood Groups be the last in their current format; and that the intention is to re-launch the revised Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings from the beginning of the new municipal year.**

(It was agreed that the re-launched PACT meetings should not be provided with budgets to be spent at the discretion of the Groups as, previously, the Neighbourhood Groups were not considered to have been an effective means of disbursing Council funds. It was agreed that suitable funds be provided to allow for the organisation of ad hoc meetings in localities as considered appropriate.

It was noted that the present recommendations represented the start of a number of processes and that any savings or re-allocation of funds would be dependent on the outcomes of further detailed discussion over what was to replace the Neighbourhood Groups in their current form.)

190. SINGLE EQUALITIES SCHEME

This item was deferred.

191. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR) - APRIL 2008 TO MARCH 2009

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Annual Monitoring Report 2008/90 (as attached at Appendix A to the report to the Committee) be approved for submission to the Government Office for the West Midlands and for subsequent publication; and**
- 2) from the 2009/10 Annual Monitoring Report period onwards, Officers submit the Annual Monitoring Report subject to there being no indications that policies need to be reviewed.**

(Officers informed the Committee that the delay in the preparation of the Core Strategy had been as a result of an extended period of public consultation imposed externally and that this had been noted and accepted by the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM).

192. COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATE RECOVERY POLICY

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates Recovery Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report to the Committee be approved; and**

RESOLVED that

- 2) the use of a second referral bailiff company to take action in the cases determined in accordance with the Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates Recovery Policy be approved.**

193. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND CORPORATE PROCEDURE RULES

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the draft Procurement Strategy for 2009-2012 attached at Appendix 1 to the report to the Committee be adopted; and**
- 2) the draft Contract Procedure Rules attached at Appendix 2 to the report to the Committee be adopted.**

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

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.52 pm