

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th September,
2011

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), Councillor Mark Shurmer (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Andrew Brazier, Simon Chalk, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins, Alan Mason and Luke Stephens

Also Present:

M Collins, (Vice Chair of the Standards Committee).

Officers:

C Felton, S Horrobin and J Pickering

Committee Services Officers:

J Bayley and M Craggs

70. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Brenda Quinney.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

72. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16th August 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

73. ACTIONS LIST

Members considered the latest version of the Committee's Actions List.

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RESOLVED that

the Committee's Action List be noted.

74. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The Committee was advised that its recommendation from the meeting on 26th July 2011 to incorporate the previous best value performance indicator (BV84) into future performance quarterly reports had been approved by the Executive Committee on 23rd August. Members were advised that due to the reporting timetable the measure would start to be recorded in the second quarterly performance monitoring report for 2011/12.

No items were identified from the Executive Committee's minutes from 23rd August as suitable for further scrutiny and no items were selected from the Forward Plan as suitable for pre-scrutiny.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee meeting on 23rd August 2011 be noted.

75. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents.

76. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received the following reports in relation to current reviews.

a) Facilities for Disabled People – Chair, Councillor Alan Mason

Members were advised that the first meeting had taken place immediately preceding the Committee meeting. The group had identified a number of potential contacts to consult regarding disabled parking provision within the Borough. It was expected that a number of site visits to car parks would eventually be undertaken.

The next meeting was due to take place on 6th October 2011.

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b) Promoting Sporting Participation – Chair, Councillor Luke Stephens

Members were informed that the group had had a positive discussion with a representative from North East Worcestershire (NEW) College regarding the opportunities for sporting participation and volunteering that it provided. It appeared that the Council and NEW College could continue to work together to provide more opportunities.

The group was due to interview the Director of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Sports Partnership at its following meeting on 22nd September 2011.

c) Youth Services Provision – Chair, Councillor Simon Chalk

The Committee was informed that the group had recently discussed Worcestershire County Council's consultation on youth services with representatives from the County Council. The group was due to interview a number of young people in Redditch and also the Borough's own Student Council for their perspective and would be submitting a response before the deadline of 30th September 2011.

In relation to this item, Councillor Hopkins informed Members that she had met with young people in Church Hill to discuss youth services and the county consultation process. Another meeting had been arranged for 13th October. She would provide a summary of both discussions for the consideration of the group.

RESOLVED that

the update reports be noted.

77. FLY TIPPING AND PROGRESS WITH THE WORTH IT CAMPAIGN - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an annual update report on fly-tipping within the Borough and progress on the Council's *Worth It* campaign. Officers provided a verbal summary and clarified that the estimated cost for clearing fly-tipping in Redditch during 2010/11 was £41,375 and not £34,320 as stated in the report.

Members queried whether action taken through the enforcement process for fly-tipping represented a sufficient deterrent. It was suggested a stricter approach to enforcement could reduce fly-

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tipping. However, Members felt that the current practice of charging residents for disposing of certain larger scale domestic items was deterring them from doing so and was leading to increased fly-tipping. It was suggested that the issue should therefore be considered as part of the forthcoming review on improving rates of recycling in Redditch.

Having been informed that Redditch had the second highest number of fly-tips dealt with during 2010/11 of all the local authorities in Worcestershire, Members queried whether a consistent approach had been applied for identifying and reporting fly-tipping across the county. It was suggested that, if there was indeed a higher propensity for fly-tipping in Redditch, the Council should liaise with those neighbouring local authorities with the lowest rates to learn what further action could be undertaken to more effectively reduce fly-tipping and report to Members for further consideration.

Members noted that the locations in which there were higher rates of fly tipping were amongst the lowest socio-economic areas in Redditch. A number of actions had been targeted at these hot spot areas which officers agreed to circulate for Members' consideration. This included walkabouts in certain communities, which was described as being an effective method for identifying and resolving case of fly-tipping.

It was queried whether many fly-tipped items, particularly builders' rubble, had been left by a disproportionately small number of repeat offenders. No such patterns had yet been detected although the information required to form a clear picture was often difficult to obtain. It was suggested that residents should be further encouraged to report cases of fly-tipping and the build up of litter to help ensure that repeat offenders were penalised and that consideration should be given as to how reporting processes were communicated to the public.

Members commented that an amnesty could be held to give residents the opportunity to dispose of unwanted household items through the Council's collection service free of charge. This was likely to entail significant financial costs for the Council and would not correspond with targets for encouraging the reuse of household items and for reducing waste. However, Members suggested this might be a useful idea to revisit.

It was questioned whether a significant proportion of fly-tipping in the Borough may have been left by the travelling community, Officers explained that travellers' waste was dealt through another

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route and would not have contributed to the Council's figures for fly-tipping.

A suggestion was accepted by the Chair from a member of the audience that Community Groups could be allowed to use the collection service to take items on behalf of residents. Members commented that this might help people on low incomes and could lead to a reduction in fly tipping.

RESOLVED that:

subject to noting Members comments and requests for further information, the report be noted.

78. **PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE SERVICES WITHIN THE REMIT OF THE CORPORATE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO**

The Committee received a written report which detailed the performance of services within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor Michael Braley.

Members discussed issues contained within the report, including procurement; energy supplies; property services; transformation; and the promotion of local democracy. Based on these discussions the following questions were proposed for the Portfolio Holder to address in his verbal Annual Report to the Committee.

- a) The Worcestershire HUB was the subject of a recent scrutiny review. Has the Hub service subsequently improved? If so, to what extent?
- b)
 - i) What is the current position of the shared Property Services and what, if any, improvements have been made to address earlier concerns?
 - ii) Would you consider it appropriate to follow Bromsgrove District Council in taking this service back in-house? (Please explain your answer).
- c) Do you feel that maintenance of the Council's website is adequately prioritised? If not, how should this be addressed?

RESOLVED that

the content of the written performance report be noted.

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79. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

80. WORK PROGRAMME

Members were advised that the written performance report for services within the remit of the portfolio for Community Safety and Regulatory Services would now have been received at the Committee meeting of 18th October 2011. However, the Portfolio Holder would still be attending a meeting of the committee on 29th November, as arranged, to provide her response.

Members were also informed that the second meeting of the West Midlands Scrutiny Network had been scheduled for 17th November. Members were advised that another councillor from the authority could accompany the Chair.

RESOLVED that

the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.03 pm
and closed at 8.35 pm