

SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 December 2004 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Falp (Chair); Councillors Coker, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Doody, Harris, Ms Hirsch, Kinson, Kundi and Sandhar.

Rachel Hodgetts (Warwick District Federation of Tenants and Residents' Association (Federation 2000));

Jim Miller (Tenants Business Planning Group); and

George Dunkley (Warwick District Federation of Tenants and Residents' Association (Federation 2000))

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Boad (Portfolio Holder for Housing Services); and

Councillor Mrs McFarland (Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services)

(Councillor Coker substituted for Councillor Mrs Bunker)

552. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 557 – Executive Agenda (Non Confidential reports and items).

Councillor Mrs Falp declared a personal prejudicial interest in item 11, Locations for Pilot Phase of One Stop Shops, because she worked for the Library Service and left the room.

Councillor Mrs McFarland declared a personal interest in item, 22(G), Grants to Voluntary Organisations, because she was a trustee of The Gap Community Project.

553. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 October 2004 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

554. UPDATE ON WARWICKSHIRE WELFARE RIGHTS BENEFIT TAKE UP CAMPAIGN

The Committee considered a report from Revenue and Customer Services updating the Committee on the Warwickshire Welfare Rights Benefit Take Up Campaign.

SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee on the progress of the Campaign in 2004/2005 and to report on additional gains arising from work started, but not completed in 2003/2004.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) Meg Bond (a voluntary worker at Bath Place) be invited to a future Scrutiny Committee to give a presentation on her work within the District.

555. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – HALF YEAR RESULTS 2004/2005

The Committee considered a report from Housing and Customer and Community Services Portfolio Holders.

The report provided results for the period July to September 2004 for all Corporate Strategy, Best Value and Service Area Plan Dash Board Indicators that had been identified for quarterly reports.

The report also ensured that the Committee had the necessary information to effectively challenge the Portfolio Holders regarding the performance of their areas of responsibility and make comments to the Executive.

The Committee was pleased with the overall results in both Portfolio Areas.

RESOLVED that;

- (1) the report be noted and the Committee expressed its pleasure with the overall results in both Portfolio Areas; and
- (2) comments on this item will be considered under the item relating to the Executive agenda.

556. EXECUTIVE MEETING – MONDAY 25 OCTOBER 2004

The Committee considered the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 25 October 2004, which came within its remit.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes be noted.

SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

557. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)

The Committee considered the items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Monday 20 December 2004, which came within its remit.

As a result, the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

Item 3 - Approval of General Fund Base Estimates 2004/2005 Revised and 2005/2006 Estimates

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report. However they expressed concern at the recommendation for a reduction in the budget for small grants to voluntary organisations as the work of the Scrutiny Working Party has not yet been completed. This Working Party was expected to bring forward proposals to promote applications from voluntary groups so the money may be needed.

Item 4 – Approval of Housing Revenue Account Base Estimates 2004/2005 Revised and 2005/2006 Estimates

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 5 – Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 7 – Performance Management – Half Year Results 2004/2005

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and hoped that with the changes in staffing in the near future a reduction in rent arrears will be seen. The Committee was also pleased with the overall results in both Portfolio Areas.

Item 8 – Feedback from 2004 Consultation and Consultation Programme for 2005

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 11 – Locations for Pilot Phase of One Stop Shops

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 12 – A New Comprehensive Equality & Diversity Policy Statement, Plan and Action Plan

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and commented that this was a first class piece of work and it was hoped that members would "own" this in the future.

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Item 21 – Disabled Facilities Grant – Funding 2004-2005

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 22(A) – Grants to Voluntary Organisations

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 22(B) – Rural Initiatives Scheme Applications

The Committee supported the recommendations in the main report. With respect to the additional report the Committee felt that Whitnash should be entitled to monies from the Rural Initiative Scheme, and a minimum of 50% of the cost of the application should be awarded. In respect of all applications where Equal Opportunities Polices are not present this Council be willing to give advice where required.

Item 22(C) – Planned Maintenance to Council Dwellings

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 22(D) – Review of Guidance for Developers

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 22(E) – Housing Anti Social Behaviour Policy

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 22(F) – Review of the Warwick District Housing Partnership Agreement

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 22(G) – Contract for the Repair and Decoration of Empty Properties

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

558. **PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraph 8 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

559. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)

The Committee considered the confidential items and reports which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Monday 20 December 2004 which came within its remit.

As a result, the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

Item 29 – Progress on the Implementation of the St. Mary’s Lands Scheme, Warwick

The Committee noted the recommendations in the report and that there are no implications for the provision of social housing.

(The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.)