

JOINT MEETING OF AUDIT & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the joint meeting held on Monday 22 December 2008 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Barrott, Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Britland, Copping, Crowther, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Ms Dean, Dhillon, Malcolm Doody, Edwards, Mrs Gallagher, Gifford, Illingworth, Mobbs, Pittarello, Rhead, Mrs Sawdon and Weed.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Coker, Davies, Mrs Higgins, Mrs Knight, MacKay, Mrs Mellor, Mrs Scarrott and Mrs Tyrrell.

(Councillor Crowther substituted for Councillor Gill)

701. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Gifford be appointed Chair for the meeting.

702. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 703 – Executive Agenda (Non confidential item & report)

Councillor Mobbs declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 Responding to the Credit Crunch because he was the Managing Director for Work First Ltd and was prime co-ordinator to the Department for Work and Pensions (Job Centre Plus) in Coventry and Warwickshire. He was also Managing Director for Outsource Plus Ltd, where he was the approved provider to Business Link West Midlands.

703. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEM AND REPORT)

Agenda Item Number 4 – Responding to the Credit Crunch

The Committee considered a report on the Executive agenda for 22 December 2008 from Economic Development and Regeneration & Revenues and Customer Services detailing how the Council could undertake a leadership role to support local communities and businesses during the uncertainty created by the economic downturn and the financial 'credit crunch'.

The Committee were of the opinion that the Council needed to target where the resources were needed most and did not feel that distributing a leaflet across the whole of the District was the best way to spend the money. It was noted that maybe the Council could consider using local newspapers or advertising on buses for example as an alternative, more cost effective way of sending out the information. It was suggested that some funding could be given to the

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Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to aid them in dealing with the increasing numbers during the economic downturn.

The Committee felt that the weaker businesses should be targeted using the databases available and were also minded not to exclude the businesses based within the rural areas of the District.

Congratulations were passed to the Officers of the report because it showed that the Council was taking the matter seriously and acting as co-ordinators.

After discussing the report, the Committee put forward the following comments to the Executive for consideration:

1. The Executive be asked to consider whether it is the best way to spend the money on distributing the leaflet District wide. The Council should be targeting where our resources are going and in the initial stages, should be directing them at businesses;
2. The Executive consider making an offer to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) of £30,000 to aid their services during the economic downturn; and
3. The Executive be asked to consider further ways of saving money so that future funding may be released to aid those affected by the credit crunch.

(The meeting ended at 7.20pm)