

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 June 2003 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa, at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Compton (Chairman); Councillors Ashford, Mrs Blacklock, Chander, Cockburn, Copping, Davies, Evans, and Mrs Hodgetts.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Begg (Portfolio Holder for Environment Services); and

Councillor Tamlin (Portfolio Holder for Development Services).

133. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 139 - Executive Agenda Item 17 - St. Mary's Lands Proposals and the Hill Close Garden Scheme, Warwick

Councillors Mrs Begg, Mrs Compton and Mrs Hodgetts each declared a personal and prejudicial interest because they represented Warwick District Council on the Hill Close Gardens Board and left the meeting room when the item was considered.

Councillor Copping declared a personal interest in this item because he was a friend of Hill Close Gardens.

Minute Number 139 - Executive Agenda Item 19 - Cultural Quarter Proposals, Spencer Yard, Leamington Spa

Councillor Evans declared a personal interest in this item because he represented Warwick District Council on the Regenesi Board.

134. PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee considered a report from the Monitoring Officer on the proposals to be submitted to the Standards Committee and Council to effect constitutional changes in respect of areas of responsibility for Portfolio Holders and terms of reference for the Scrutiny Committees themselves.

Details of the revised responsibilities for the Council's Portfolio Holders, with accompanying confirmation as to the responsibilities of the corresponding Scrutiny Committee were attached to the report. Also attached to the report was a revised Article 6 from the Constitution, reflecting the appropriate changes to the terms of reference for the Committees themselves.

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Continued)

RESOLVED that the following comments be recommended to the Standards Committee on 24 June 2003:-

- (1) under the services covered by the Environment Services Portfolio and Environment Scrutiny Committee recycling and Action 21 be included;
- (2) the Scrutiny Committee names be changed to Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- (3) in Article 6 Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Economic, the comma be removed between 'Transport and Plans'; and
- (4) in future, all scrutiny committee members should sit in alphabetical order and not as political parties

RECOMMENDED that a work plan for the Committee be defined after the Council meeting on 9 July when all Committees are clearer of their roles

135. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FUNCTION - A CASE STUDY

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Directors on a case study as a practical example of how to develop the role of the Scrutiny Committee in a practical way.

A copy of the presentation given by KPMG prior to the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committees was circulated with the report.

A copy of the Smart guide to overview and scrutiny prepared by the West Midlands Local Government Association, was also attached as appendix to the report. It presented, in bullet point formats, some initial thoughts of the principle of better scrutiny around which a debate on the issues might be framed.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) when considering reports and projects in the future, the Committee should take no single stance but should be open to providing different ways of approaching the scrutiny of each case; and
- (2) when scrutinising the work of outside bodies that the Council are affiliated to, the Committee should look into the possibility of their work duplicating work of other groups and encouraging liaison between these groups.

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Continued)

136. CAR PARK INCOME AND USAGE FIGURES 2002/03

The Committee considered a report from Leisure and Amenities updating Members on the car park income and usage data for the full financial year 2002/03.

Overall income for the year had fallen slightly below the estimate although there was a large increase in the level of 'paid for' tickets being used across the district.

Season ticket income finished behind last year due to the move of some businesses out of the town centre who had previously issued season tickets to members of staff.

The level of excess charge notices issued also ran behind last year due to the introduction of a clearer signage within the car parks as highlighting in the Best Value Improvement Plan, and the service operating on one less car park Inspector.

Income from the excess charge notices was up due to one off VAT refund received during the year.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the overall usage of car parks in 2002/03 and the estimates for 2003/04, be noted;
- (2) in the future reports be made quarterly to the Committee; and
- (3) the Car Parks Team be congratulated on their outstanding achievements during last year.

137. EXECUTIVE MEETING - TUESDAY, 27 MAY 2003

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday, 27 May 2003, which came within the remit of this Committee.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes be noted.

138. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON-CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)

The Committee considered the items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 23 June 2003 which came within the remit of the Committee. As a result the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

Item No. 2. Approval of Accounts 2002 – 2003

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Continued)

Item No.3 Financial Strategy and Budget Setting Timetable

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report

Item No. 4. Corporate Strategy

The Committee could not reach a consensus on this item, although they did not object to any of the content

Item No. 5. Capital Programme 2003 – 2004

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report

Item No. 9. Performance Management - Full Year Results 2002 – 2003

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report but expressed concern about the practical difficulty with meeting the target for affordable housing due to the lack of adequate sites.

139. **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 items, by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraphs 8 and 9 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

140. **EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)**

The Committee considered the confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 23 June 2003, which came within their remit. As a result the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

Item No. 15. Proposals for Kenilworth Town Centre

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report

Item No. 17. St Mary's Lands Proposals and the Hill Close Gardens Scheme, Warwick

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report

Item No. 19. Cultural Quarter Proposal, Spencer Yard, Leamington Spa

The Committee supported the recommendation in the revised report.

(The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.)