

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 8 June 2004, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Mrs Compton, Copping, Hatfield and Sandhar.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Begg (Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services) and Councillor Holland.

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davies, Gill, Short and Smith)

77. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Compton be appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 88 – Executive Agenda (Non Confidential Items and Reports) - Warwick Town Centre Traffic Management Scheme – Preferred Option of Consultation.

Councillors Mrs Compton declared a personal prejudicial interest because she was a member of Warwickshire County Council and left the room while this item was considered.

79. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 2 and 30 March 2004 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

80. SCRUTINY ROLE & METHOD OF OPERATION

The Committee considered a report from Policy and Performance on the future role and method of operation.

Following the work carried out by the Scrutiny Chairmen with the Corporate Management Team at their away day, and the discussions at subsequent joint meetings, (supported by the feedback from the CPA Peer Assessment Team), it was necessary to consider additional changes to the role and way of working to achieve improved overview and scrutiny. Details of the roles of scrutiny, as set out in the Constitution, were contained in the report.

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In response to the feedback from the Peer Assessment Team and the Committee's own consideration of future ways of working, research had been carried out amongst local authorities who were said to be good at overview and scrutiny, although this had revealed that they were not doing things very differently to Warwick District Council.

Warwickshire County Council had adopted a set of approaches to scrutiny which were set out as an appendix to the report.

A suggested work plan for the Committee was circulated at the meeting, detailing the possible approaches to each item.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the work plan and approach to each of the scrutiny topics, be approved; and
- (2) as part of the end of term reports, the effectiveness and appropriateness of the approaches in relation to the topics scrutinised, be reviewed.

81. CREATING A SAFER ENVIRONMENT

The Committee considered a report from Community Safety and Sustainability seeking guidance on how the Committee wished to undertake the scrutiny of community safety within Warwick District.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the preliminary findings of work groups one and two be noted;
- (2) an additional meeting of the Committee in Select Committee mode be held on 29 June 2004; and
- (3) the draft survey from work group 3 be approved for distribution, with a report back to the July meeting of the Committee on its findings.

82. CAMPAIGN FOR A TAX ON PLASTIC BAGS IN WARWICK DISTRICT

The Committee considered a report from Action 21 which sought recommendations to the Executive on the proposed campaign for a tax on plastic bags.

The report followed a notice of motion proposed to Council on 25 February 2004 by Councillor Mrs Margaret Begg, as set out below:

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"That this Council agree due to the environmental damage which plastic shopping bags generate in their production and lifetime, to launch and lead a vigorous campaign for the introduction of a tax on plastic shopping bags similar to that which has been successfully introduced in other countries and that revenues generated be used to finance work to protect and enhance the environment."

The motion was referred to the Executive, on 5 April 2004, which asked that a report be submitted to this Committee from Action 21, proposing a campaign for the introduction of a tax on plastic bags.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the content of the report be noted; and
- (2) the Local Government Association, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Environment Minister, be contacted to see what, if any, proposals are in place for the introduction of a tax on plastic bags nationally.

83. ACTION 21 ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the Annual report of Action 21

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (2) Action 21 be praised for their profit of £7,313 for the year ended 31 March 2004.

84. REVIEW OF FLOOD ALLEVIATION MEASURES

The Committee considered a report from Planning & Engineering informing them of the progress made to date on the Watercourse/Flood Management Work Programme for September 2002 to June 2005.

The Committee also discussed their tour along the St Johns Brook in Warwick on 22 May 2004 and what steps to take next in the review.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Watercourse/Flood Management Work Programme for September 2002 to June 2005 be noted; and
- (2) A tour of the Tanyard Stream in Kenilworth, be undertaken in August 2004.

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85. REVIEW OF THE WARWICK DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

The Committee considered a report from Planning & Engineering updating them on the current position with regard to the emerging Warwick District Local Plan.

RECOMMENDED that the report be noted

86. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – FULL YEAR RESULTS 2003/04

The Committee considered a performance report from the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder relating to the Corporate Strategy and BVPI results for 2003/04.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee supports the recommendations in the report but wished to highlight the following to the Executive:

- (1) the Council should no longer monitor its own performance on the provision of refuge homes, as the Council has agreed not to provide this service because there were other service providers within the district; and
- (2) the Executive should investigate further why the Council is failing to achieve DS30 “% of Council Buildings open to the public – all areas suitable & accessible to disabled people” and also seek assurance that the Council will be fully compliant by the time the Disability Discrimination Act comes into operation.

87. EXECUTIVE MEETING – MONDAY, 5 APRIL 2004

The Committee considered the minutes of the Executive meeting held on Monday, 5 April 200 and 10 May 2004 which came within its remit.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes be noted.

88. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)

The Committee considered the items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 14 June 2004 which came within the remit of the Committee. As a result the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

Item No. 4. Approval of Accounts 2003-2004

The Committees supported the recommendations in the report.

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Item No. 9. Warwick Town Centre Traffic Management Scheme – Preferred Option Consultation

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

(Councillor Hatfield was appointed Chairman of the Committee for this item)

Item No. 10. Planning Development Grant

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and congratulated the Planning department on their grant which was the third highest award for the shire districts within the West Midlands.

Item No. 11. Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item No. 12. Performance Management – Full Year Results 2003/04 – Including Resident Satisfaction Results Report

The Committee supports the recommendations in the report but wished to highlight the following to the Executive:

- (1) the Council should no longer monitor its own performance on the provision of refuge homes, as the Council has agreed not to provide this service because there were other service providers within the district; and
- (2) the Executive should investigate further why the Council is failing to achieve DS30 “% of Council Buildings open to the public – all areas suitable & accessible to disabled people” and also seek assurance that the Council will be fully compliant by the time the Disability Discrimination Act comes into operation.

Item No.13.Adoption of A Plan For Environmental Management

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report, but questioned the apparent lack of member involvement, as the EMAS working party has not met for over 12 months. The Committee also requested that regular update reports are submitted to it so that a close scrutiny of the plan can be undertaken.

Item No.14. Corporate Community Safety Strategy

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

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Item No.15. Agreement To New Powers Of Dispersal - Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item No.16. Delegated Authority Re : Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Dispersal Of Groups)

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item No. 20. Public Nuisance at Railway Bridges in Leamington Old Town

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item No. 22.General Report (C) Tendering for the supply of Natural Gas & Electricity

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

89. PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

90. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)

The Committee considered the items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 14 June 2004 which came within the remit of the Committee. As a result the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

Item 16 – Kenilworth Town Centre

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

(The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.)

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