

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20 October 2009 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Gifford (Chair); Councillors Barrott, Boad, Coker, Copping, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Mrs Higgins, Mrs McFarland, Mrs Mellor, Weed, and Wilkinson.

(Councillor Barrott substituted for Councillor Gill)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Mrs Sawdon and White.

## 44. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute Number 50 - (Confidential Items and Reports) – Wednesday 21 October 2009 – Future of Newbold Comyn Golf Course

Councillors Barrott, Ms De-Lara-Bond and Mrs Mellor declared a personal interest because they were members of the Golf Working Party.

## 45. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2009, were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## 46. **SCRUTINY OF THE ROYAL SPA CENTRE**

The Committee considered a report from the Royal Spa Centre Task and Finish Group on their scrutiny review of the service.

The report was presented to the Committee by the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Coker.

The review had been undertaken by Councillors Coker, Ms Dean, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Gifford and Mrs Knight and they had met on many occasions between January and October 2009. This included interviewing various witnesses, internal and external to the Council. Councillor Mrs Gallagher had also been a member of the Group until she became Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services in May 2009.

The full report from the Task and Finish Group contained 4 recommendations for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to approve, for forwarding to the Executive.

The Committee had a full debate about the report and although members would not like to lose the Royal Spa Centre, it was recognised by the majority that its continuing losses could not be sustained by the Council.

Councillor Coker and the Committee also recognised the excellent work done by Theresa Goss and Lucy Elrick in supporting the Task and Finish Group.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the recommendations in the Task and Finish Group report be approved for forwarding to the Executive; and
- (2) the Executive should take into account the necessity for consultation with the users and the staff, as well as the full effect of the cultural quarter coming on stream. Following that consultation the Executive should take time to consider the results before it makes a final decision on the future of the Royal Spa Centre.

(Councillor Coker left at the conclusion of this item)

#### **47. CCTV TASK AND FINISH GROUP – UPDATE ON THE PROGRESSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services which informed the members of the progress which had been made with regard to the recommendations from the Scrutiny of CCTV Task and Finish Group.

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 July 2008, a Task and Finish Group was appointed to scrutinise CCTV. Their remit was 'Is the service delivering an effective and value for money service for the community?'

The members of the Task and Finish Group were Councillors Boad, Ms Dean, Edwards, Illingworth (Chairman), Mrs McFarland and Pittarello.

Their final report was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2009. The Executive approved the recommendations in March 2009, however, this was subject to funds being available within existing budgets to complete them.

The responsibility for CCTV now fell within the remit of Community Protection rather than Neighbourhood Services. The Head of Service for Community Protection was Roger Jewbury and the Portfolio Holder was Councillor Kirton.

Appendix 1 to the report stated the recommendations, the Officers and Portfolio Holder responsible for each recommendation and the progress which had been made.

The report was presented to the Committee by the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Illingworth. He went through each recommendation in turn and amplified and commented on the progress of each one.

It became clear to the Committee that the majority of the recommendations had not been progressed and this was mainly due to the lack of funding which was available. The Committee was concerned about this situation and requested that the Portfolio Holder for Community Protection, Councillor Kirton, attends the next meeting of the Committee to discuss it.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Portfolio Holder for Community Protection, Councillor Kirton, be requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

(Councillor Illingworth left the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

#### **48. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON- CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2009**

##### **Agenda Item Number 6 – Portfolio Holder Statements**

The Committee noted the Portfolio Holder Statements

##### **Agenda Item Number 8 - HRA Review – Consultation Response**

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report, but highlighted the risk attached to potential future kerbs on public sector borrowing.

#### **49. PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

#### **50. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2009**

##### **Agenda Item Number 12 - Future of Newbold Comyn Golf Course**

The Committee supported the recommendations but recommended to the Executive that the successful contractor should hold a public consultation exercise with the users of the golf course, prior to the submission of a planning application.

The Committee was pleased that the public access was to be retained and was reassured that the inert landfill would be completely safe.

(At the conclusion of this item the public and press were no longer excluded)

#### **51. SCRUTINY OF FLOODING – UPDATE ON THE PROGRESSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee considered a report from Councillor Boad updating members on the progress which had been made with the implementation of the recommendations agreed by the Executive in September 2008, following the

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

conclusion of the Scrutiny of Flooding undertaken by this authority jointly with Warwickshire County Council (WCC).

A joint panel of Councillors from Warwick District Council (WDC) and Warwickshire County Council had been established following the severe weather of June and July 2007 to investigate whether it was possible to lessen the impact of severe weather conditions in Warwick District.

This investigation had been completed and the recommendations were agreed by Warwick District Council's Executive in September 2008. One of these recommendations was that a progress report be submitted back to the WDC Overview & Scrutiny Committee in February 2009.

When officers from Members' Services started contacting County Council officers with regard to progress of the recommendations they were informed that the WCC Cabinet were not due to consider the final report until 8 January 2009. Therefore the final report had not yet been sent to all the parties who had had an input into the scrutiny review.

In addition on reviewing the original report there was not a clear definition of who should be responsible for each outcome and what the desired impact of that outcome was.

The report to WCC Cabinet on 8 January 2009 explained that the "Community Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Panel's report should be passed on to Cabinet when the outcome of the Pitt Review was known".

The Cabinet agreed the recommendations in the report and in doing so asked the Warwick Area Committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations the County Council was responsible for. In addition the Cabinet commended the report and the work of the two Councils and asked that this be passed to other authorities in Warwickshire as an example of good practice in resolving flooding matters.

The WCC Warwick Area Committee received a report in September 2009, from Manager of the Emergency Planning Unit, updating them on the progress of the actions and how WCC officers had progressed these.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the report be noted and the reasons why there had been a lack of progression with the Task and Finish Group recommendations; and
- (2) it be noted that all the actions within the control of Warwick District Council had been fulfilled.

## **52. FORWARD PLAN NOVEMBER 2009 TO FEBRUARY 2010 – THE EXECUTIVE'S WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan which had been published for November 2009 to February 2010.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan be noted.

### **53. COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the response the Executive gave to the Committees' comments on the reports submitted to the Executive on 28 September 2009.

The report was produced to create a dialogue between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and it ensured that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were formally made aware of the Executive's responses.

As part of the new scrutiny process, the Committee were no longer considering the whole of the Executive agenda.

On the publication day of the agendas for the previous meetings of the Executive and Overview & Scrutiny Committee, all Councillors were emailed asking them to contact Committee Services, by 10.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Monday 28 September 2009, to advise which Executive items they would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to pass comment on.

As a result the Committee considered the items as detailed in appendix 1 to the report, and the response the Executive gave was also shown.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **54. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the Committees' work programme for 2009/2010.

At the Committees' meeting on 20 October 2009, it was agreed that the reports as listed in appendix 1 to the report, would be submitted to the meeting in October 2009.

Progress with Task and Finish Groups was as follows:

- (i) Royal Spa Centre Task and Finish Group – The final report was a separate item on the Committees' agenda. The report is being considered by the Executive in November 2009.
- (ii) Maintenance of WDC Trees Task and Finish Group – The Group will be submitting their report to the November meeting of the Committee and the December meeting of the Executive.
- (iii) Expenditure on Tourism Task and Finish Group – The Group submitted their report to the October meeting of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee, and it is to be considered by the Executive in November.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted and the following items be added into the Committees' work programme:

- (1) Preparation for Climate Change Adaptations – December 2009.

(The meeting ended at 8.30pm)