

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 July 2009 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Barrott, Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Coker, Copping, Gill, Mrs Higgins, Mrs McFarland, Mrs Mellor, Mrs Sawdon, White and Wilkinson.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Bunker (Portfolio Holder for Environment); and Councillor Mobbs (Portfolio Holder for Finance)

(Councillor Barrott substituted for Councillor Weed)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gifford and Ms De-Lara-Bond.

13. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED that Councillor Boad be appointed Chair for the meeting.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

Minute Number 19 – Forward Plan

Councillor White subsequently declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item. He declared an interest and left the room during this item because the Committee began discussing the report on the expansion of the bio mass programme, and he had been involved with the potentially linked issues relating to the management of Oakley Wood when he was a Portfolio Holder and a member of the Executive.

15. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 9 June 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

16. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 15 JULY 2009

The Committee considered the following items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 15 July 2009.

Agenda Item Number 5 - Proposed Changes to the Council's Discretionary Assisted Travel Scheme

The Committee noted the procedure for dealing with this called-in item.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

Agenda Item Number 9 - Admin of Concessionary Travel

The Committee did not agree that the most appropriate form of administration of the scheme was a centralised one, and felt that it should be administered by the County Council.

The Committee was also concerned that only two members had been involved in the consultation process and felt that all members should have been consulted, so there was a representative view from the whole District.

Agenda Item Number 10 - Place Survey Results

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report but would also like the Portfolio Holders statements to state which results from the survey had been taken into account and included within their statements and also a geographic split of the results, by ward, would be useful to members.

Agenda Item Number 12 - Programme for Warwick Town Centre Area Action Plan – Addendum to Local Development Scheme

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

17. **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 paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

18. **EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 15 JULY 2009**

The Committee considered the following items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 15 July 2009.

Additional Item - Fees for Legal Case Warwick Castle

The report was noted.

19. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the Forward Plan. The current Forward Plan was attached as appendix 1 to the report.

The Forward Plan was published on a monthly basis and sets out the key decisions, and some non-key decisions, to be taken by the Executive.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

The Committee considered the Forward Plan and looked at the up-coming Executive decisions. The Committee were mindful that any work undertaken would be done so without the need to change the timescales. However, there were not any items within the Forward Plan which the Committee would like to have an input at the moment.

The Committee were informed that the report to the Executive on the Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 3 Options (Forward Plan ref 202) would probably be slipping back to September 2009. Members had concerns that they needed more information on this subject before the report was submitted to the Executive. Therefore, it was suggested that a presentation be given to all Members on the on Strategy as soon as possible.

The Deputy Chief Executive also reported that the report to the Executive on the Council's Business Continuity Policy and Plan (Forward Plan ref 134) had been delayed because a lot of officer time had recently been spent on plans for the swine flu pandemic. However some of the work which had been completed impacted upon the Council's Continuity Plan anyway and would form part of the report.

There was concern that the report on the Gypsy and Travellers site had still not been produced, and the Committee requested an update report to their next meeting.

The Deputy Chief Executive gave the Committee an update on the expansion of the bio mass programme. He confirmed that it was still intended to bring a report to the Executive, but the name of the report would be 'Future Energy Options' as this was now more appropriate.

The Chair also highlighted that a report on the Management of Oakley Wood was to be submitted to the Executive in August and this would need to be looked at by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at this time.

Members also asked that officers be reminded that they should be stating the reasons why their reports were delayed so this could be included in the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report and verbal updates be noted;
- (2) it be re-iterated to officers that they should be stating the reasons why their reports are late, so this can be included in the Forward Plan;
- (3) a report be submitted to the Committee in August 2009 on the Gypsy and Traveller Sites; and
- (4) a presentation to made to all members on the Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 3 Options before a report is submitted to the Executive.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

20. 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 10 June 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, all Councillors were emailed asking them to contact Committee Services, by 9.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Tuesday 9 June 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. The Committee noted that there was not a response to their comments on the Memorandum of Understanding for Waste Collection/Disposal and asked that an email be circulated after the meeting to provide an update to members.

The Committee also examined the decisions of the Executive, detailed in appendix 1 to the report, for possible scrutiny of those decisions. However, the Committee did not wish to scrutinise any Executive decisions at this time.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) Members be emailed an update on the progress which has been made with the Memorandum of Understanding for Waste Collection and Disposal.

21. 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 9 June, it was agreed that in addition to standard items on the agenda, the Committee would receive the following reports in July 2009:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- (1) Local Area Agreements/ Local Strategic Partnership
- (2) Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)

The reports on DFG's and Local Area Agreement was not submitted in June or July 2009 because of a lack of officer resources, and these would now be submitted to the August meeting of the Committee.

With regard to Maintenance of WDC Trees Task and Finish Group, the first meeting had been scheduled for 21 July 2009.

The Royal Spa Centre Task and Finish Group had now had numerous meetings and an officer working group had also met to supply some information to the Task and Finish Group. Their final report would now be submitted to the Executive in October and not June as originally planned. This was because of the level of detailed work which has been involved in the scrutiny review.

The Expenditure on Tourism Task and Finish Group had met on three occasions and future meetings had been scheduled.

At each meeting, the Committee considered their work programme and made amendments where necessary, and also made comments on specific Executive items, where notice has been given by 9am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Committee also received a report detailing the response from the Executive, on the comments the Committee made on the Executive agenda in the previous cycle.

On a quarterly basis, the Committee received performance reports and had previously received the Forward Plan on this basis too. However, to ensure the Forward Plan was used effectively to allow the Committee to become involved in the Executive decisions to be taken, this was now a standard item on each agenda.

For information, at each meeting of the Executive, there would be a report on their agenda detailing the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

In the absence of Councillor Gifford, the Deputy Chief Executive reported that the scoping document on housing adaptations, would be submitted to the Committee at a later date, if it was deemed appropriate, after a meeting between Councillor Gifford, Councillor Mrs Grainger and the Head of Housing and Property had been held.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report and verbal updates be noted;
- (2) the delayed reports on DFG's and LAA/LSP's be submitted to Committee in August 2009;

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- (3) a report on Gypsy and Traveller Sites be submitted in August 2009; and
- (4) a report on HomeChoice be submitted in September 2009.

(The meeting ended at 7.30pm)