

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 September 2008 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Gifford (Chair); Councillors Boad, Britland, Copping, De-Lara-Bond, Mrs Gallagher, Gill, Guest, Mrs Higgins, Mrs McFarland, Mrs Sawdon and Weed.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor White (Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services)
Councillor Kinson (Portfolio Holder for Environment)

(Councillor Guest substituted for Councillor Mrs Scarrott and Councillor Mrs McFarland substituted for Councillor Barrott)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2008, were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2008

Agenda Item number 4 - Free Swimming Programme

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report, but the Executive should be aware of the dangers of Government funding not being adequate and that there were hidden costs which were not contained in report eg cleaning, life guards etc, and those also needed to be considered

4. CALL-IN – EXECUTIVE - 23 JULY 2008

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19, of the Council's Constitution, the following items were called-in to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Councillors Boad, Gifford, Mrs Blacklock, Copping and De-Lara-Bond:

Improvement of the District. Reason: the Council faced significant financial pressures in the coming years and that the expenditure of £60,000 from the contingency budget this year was totally inappropriate given the budget risks for this year alone, and also given that there would be no contingency budget for 2009/2010 when the budget pressures were predicted to be getting worse. We believe that in the current financial circumstances it would be more appropriate for the sum of £60,000 (just short of 1% Council Tax) to remain in a contingency budget to protect against enforced cuts not resulting in savings in the required timescale.

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Proposed Change to Council Phone Numbers. Reason: moving the Council onto a 'premium' 0845 telephone number for customer contact would disadvantage many people by causing them to be charged at premium rates when contacting their Council. Many people operate inclusive calling plans for free telephone calls and many of the Council's less wealthy residents operate pay as you go mobile phones as a cheaper option than the standing charges for a fixed line telephone, both of these options charge premium rates when calling 0845 numbers. It was therefore inappropriate that the Council should be considering moving to a premium 0845 number when options of a free to the customer number would be more appropriate.

The options open to the Committee were:

- (1) refer the decisions back to the Executive on 15 October 2008;
- (2) refer the decisions to Council on 8 October 2008; or
- (3) take no further action.

RESOLVED that

- (1) Improvement to the District be referred to the Council on 8 October 2008 for discussion: and
- (2) Proposed Change to Council Telephone Numbers be referred to the Executive on 15 October 2008 for the decision to be reviewed, in light of the new information available.

5. 2008/2009 FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The Committee considered an Executive report, item 6, from Organisational Development and Performance Improvement on the first quarter performance results for 2008/09 along with the mitigations and corrective actions for those indicators that were off target.

The regular and systematic reporting of performance results against target, trended over time and compared with other authorities is a fundamental element of the Council's integrated performance management framework. The performance management framework in turn remained a key tool for ensuring the Council stayed focussed on what mattered to ensure it delivered its services efficiently and effectively.

As in previous quarters, a report relating to each Portfolio had been prepared and arranged to enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold portfolio holders to account for the performance of services within their portfolio area. The information in section 8 of the report, contained full exception, mitigation and correction actions.

When examining performance results for any given area the following points should be considered with relation to the results achieved and used to evaluate the appropriateness of any corrective action proposed:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- Result against target
- Result compared to previous results - trend over time.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. 2007/2008 YEAR END PERFORMANCE RESULTS – FEEDBACK

The Committee considered two reports on the 2007/2008 year end performance results. The first was from Councillor Kinson with additional information relating to the Key Performance Targets HA34 and PS36 which were now reported by Neighbourhood Services and within the Environment Portfolio. The second was from Councillor White with additional information relating to the Key Performance Targets HA28, PS33, and SF1 within Cultural Service Portfolio. There reports were requested by the Committee at their meeting in July 2008.

Both Councillors Kinson and White were present at the meeting to answer questions from the Committee.

During the discussion, it was highlighted that the Tree and Woodland WP had not met for a long time and there was possibly a need for it to be re-established.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the reports from Councillor Kinson and White be noted, and they be thanked for attending the meeting; and
- (2) a scoping document for the Tree and Woodland WP to completed by Councillor Mrs Sawdon and Rose Winship and be submitted to the meeting in October 2008.

7. SCOPING DOCUMENT

The Committee considered the scoping document for the Golf Working Party.

The scoping document had been submitted to the meeting in July 2008, but was deferred to enable the members of the WP to have an input.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the scoping document for the Golf Working party be approved; and
- (2) the Working Party should continue to operate as set out within the scoping document.

8. BOWLS ENGLAND – FUTURE PARTNERSHIP WITH WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

The Committee considered a report from Cultural Services and Councillor Chris White, the Portfolio Holder for this area.

The report outlined the progress made in recent months in building further relationships with Bowls England to secure their partnership with Warwick District Council up to and beyond 2012. An agreement was signed in 2007 by Warwick District Council and the newly formed Bowls England (to replace English Womens Bowls Association and the English Bowls Association) which committed to retaining the womens national events and associated major bowls events (womens) at Victoria Park bowling greens.

A similar agreement had been made to retain the equivalent mens events in Worthing and retain the headquarters of Bowls England in Worthing until at least 2012.

Officers and Councillors had subsequently been working with Bowls England to build on the excellent working relationships previously enjoyed between Warwick District Council and the English Womens Bowls Association, in order to maximise the potential for continued partnership beyond 2012.

Much of the work to date had involved informal discussions between elected members (Councillors Michael Doody, Chris White and Les Caborn), Tony Allcock, Chief Executive, and Ruth Howes Vice Chairman of Bowls England and Warwick District Council officers (Rose Winship and Pete Rourke). These discussions had covered the issues of building relationships with the new individuals involved from Warwick District Council and Bowls England, both of whom had seen significant changes in the last 12 months playing conditions of the greens, future headquarters accommodation and the major events calendar for the coming years.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. FORWARD PLAN – SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2008

The Committee considered the Forward Plan which had been published for September to December 2008.

RESOLVED that prior to the next meeting, a presentation be made to all Councillors on the Supplementary Planning Document for Sustainable Buildings.

10. 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 23 July 2008.

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.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

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 10.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Tuesday 15 July 2008, 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.

14. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the Committees' work programme for 2008/2008.

RESOLVED that the following items be added into the Committees' work programme:

- (1) scoping document for Trees and Woodland Working Party be submitted to the meeting in October 2008;
- (2) a further report on the sponsorship of roundabouts etc for Britain in Bloom be submitted to the meeting in October 2008; and
- (3) a presentation be made to all Members on the Supplementary Planning Document for Sustainable Buildings in October 2008.

15. SCRUTINY TRAINING

The Chair reported that there was a scrutiny training session called 'The Scrutiny Role of Councillors' being held for all Councillors on Monday 15 September 2008, at the Town Hall, Leamington Spa from 5pm to 8pm.

If any Councillor would like to attend, they were to contact Committee Services.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.30pm)