

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15 July 2008 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Caborn (Portfolio Holder for Customer Business and Improvement).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Coker, Mrs Higgins and Mrs Scarrott.

## 245. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

## 246. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 May, 3 June and 16 June 2008, were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## 247. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2008

### Agenda Item Number 4 - Retail Development in Leamington – Developer Selection – Chandos Street Site – Part A & Part B

The Committee considered the Executive report from the Head of Planning on the developer selection for the retail development in Chandos Street, Leamington Spa.

Steve Tebby addressed the Committee on behalf of Local Residents, the Leamington Society and CLARA, with their concerns in relation to the project.

The Committee then received a presentation from John Archer, Head of Planning, giving details of the development and answered questions from members.

## 248. 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

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

### **249. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2008**

The Committee made the following comments for forwarding to the Executive, in relation to Executive items 4 (non confidential) & 20 (confidential):

#### **Agenda Item Numbers 4 & 20 - Retail Development in Leamington – Developer Selection – Chandos Street Site – Part A & Part B**

The Committee were happy with the scheme and the Executive should continue to progress it. The Committee would also like to see further modifications to minimise the effect on residents in Clarendon Avenue, and sustainability standards should also be taken into account.

The members of the public were then invited back into the room.

### **250. YEAR END PERFORMANCE RESULTS**

The Committee considered a report from Organisational Development and Performance Improvement on the year end performance results. The report submitted to the meeting on 3 June 2008, included year end performance results for only those indicators which were to be carried forward into 2008/09.

Performance in relation to all indicators recorded had not been available on 3 June, due to technical difficulties and a full report was not presented to Executive either. These problems had now been overcome and the appendices to the report, represented the full year end results for all indicators as produced by the Councils Performance Management System. A full report detailing these results and collating exceptions was also being presented to Executive on 23 July 2008.

The regular and systematic reporting of performance results against target, trended over time and compared with other authorities was 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.

Councillor Boad brought to the attention of the Committee various concerns which he had in relation to some of the targets which had not been met, and also some of the reasons given for these. There was particular concern with regard to the following:

HA28 - % Leisure Services that could be delivered electronically which were being delivered electronically - As the target of 100% had been met, which services were not able to be delivered electronically?

HA34 - Number of risk inspections carried out on trees - why had this target not been achieved, and the result for 2007/2008 was half the result of 2006/2007? Also, please explain what 'walkover inspections' were?

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

PS33 - % of young (<20years) trees under WDC management as a proportion of all trees - why had this target not been achieved?

PS36 - Amount of income generated for parks and open spaces from sponsorship and partnership - why had only £5172 been generated?

SF1 - Number of people from target groups taking part in sports development activities - why was this target set so low?

The Committee agreed that they would like the Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services to attend the next meeting.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services be asked to attend the next meeting to address the issues mentioned above; and
- (2) if possible, within each performance report, the appropriate Portfolio Holder be added to clarify responsibilities.

## **251. RENT ARREARS PERFORMANCE**

The Committee considered a report from Housing and Property Services on the rent collection and arrears recovery performance indicators, highlighting the factors that contributed to the failure to meet targets during 2007/08 and detailing the steps being taken to ensure performance was improved during 2008/09. The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Mrs Grainger, was also in attendance to answer questions from the Committee. This item had been requested by the Committee at their last meeting.

The report detailed how rent collection and arrears recovery was managed and the reasons why some of the performance targets had not been achieved. A number of factors had been identified as to why performance had been affected and an improvement plan for 2008/2009 was also set out.

The Committee highlighted particular concerns with the levels of rent arrears and Councillor Boad suggested ways forward for helping to reduce them. Councillor Mrs Grainger addressed the queries the Committee had and would take on board the suggestion which were made.

Councillor Mrs Gallagher left the meeting during this item.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Portfolio Holder for Housing be thanked for attending the meeting; and

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

- (3) a further housing services performance report be submitted to the Committee in February 2009, highlighting the progress made within the areas which were below target.

### **252. SCRUTINY OF FLOODING**

The Committee considered a report and presentation from Councillor Boad, the Chair of the Flooding Scrutiny Group.

The report detailed the work undertaken by a joint Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council Scrutiny Committee. The Committee was set up to review the services provided to householders (including vulnerable people), businesses, and the impact to transportation routes following the severe weather of June and July of 2007, which led to the flooding of homes and businesses in Warwick District.

The Committee considered what could be done to lessen the impact of similar severe weather in the future and if services provided by key utilities e.g. electricity sub stations, water treatment would need additional measures to protect these in future.

The Committee thanked Councillor Boad for his presentation, and also the scrutiny group and officers for their hard work on the project.

Alwin McGibbon from Warwickshire County Council reported that she would be keeping a check on all of the recommendations which the group had made to ensure they were carried out and follow up those which were not.

**RESOLVED** that the final report, attached as appendix 1 to the report, be noted and submitted to the Executive for approval.

### **253. SCOPING DOCUMENTS**

The Committee considered three scoping documents with regard to CCTV, Engaging Young People and the Golf Working Party.

The scoping documents for CCTV and Engaging Young People in our Decision Making Process had been completed at the special meeting of the Committee, on 16 June 2008, and the Committee were asked to approve them and if necessary, to also appoint the Task and Finish Groups (T&FG). The Golf Working Party already had a membership, and the scoping document was submitted for information, and requested one additional Councillor be added to the Group.

On publication of the agenda, all Councillors had been asked to express their interest to Committee Services, if they wished to be considered as part of the T&FG for CCTV or Engaging Young People, if the Committee decided to appoint them. Six Councillors had expressed an interest in being part of the CCTV T&FG and four Councillors in Engaging Young People in our Decision Making Process.

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

Following consideration of the scoping documents, the Committee agreed that T&FG's should be appointed for both topics and an additional member also be appointed to the Golf Working Party.

The Committee expressed some concern that the Golf Working Party scoping document had not been seen by the members of the Working Party, and it was felt that they should have an input. Therefore, it was agreed not to approve the scoping document and that it be submitted to the next meeting of the Golf Working Party for their consideration, and re-submitted to the next meeting of this Committee on 2 September 2008.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the scoping document for CCTV be approved, and Councillors Boad, Ms Dean, Edwards, Illingworth, Mrs McFarland and Pittarello be appointed to the Task and Finish Group;
- (2) the scoping document for Engaging Young People in our Decision Making Process be approved and Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Britland, Gifford and Mrs Knight be appointed to the Task and Finish Group;
- (3) Councillor Mrs Sawdon be appointed to the Engaging Young People in our Decision Making Process Task and Finish Group, if no other members from the Conservative Groups wish to be involved;
- (4) The Golf Working Party scoping document be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Party and the Committee consider it again on 2 September 2008; and
- (5) Councillor Guest be appointed to the Golf Working Party.

### **254. 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 4 June 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 3 June 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.

The Executive also asked that a further report be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Staging of Major Events. This had been programmed in for the September meeting, due to Committees' heavy agenda in July.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **255. REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAMME**

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

At the Committees' meeting on 3 June 2008, it was agreed that the Committee would receive the following reports in July:

- Housing rent arrears, with the Housing Portfolio Holder in attendance
- Full performance targets
- Section 106 agreements – this was put back to September with the agreement of the Chair, because of the Committees' heavy agenda in July
- Final report on the scrutiny of flooding

The Executive made the following recommendation with regard to Staging of Major Events:

'Resources in the Cultural Services Unit be allocated to allow support of Bowls England and the continuing negotiations leading up to decisions regarding the future of bowls in the District from 2012 and Councillor White report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on how this can be achieved'

This report was due to be submitted in July but again, this was put back to September with the agreement of the Chair, because of the Committees' heavy agenda.

At the special meeting on 16 June 2008, it was agreed that the July meeting of the Committee would receive the scoping documents with regard to CCTV and young people, with a view to appointing task and finish groups. A scoping document for Newbold Comyn Golf Course/Golf Working Party would also be considered with a view to redefining the terms of reference for the group. The scoping document for the Royal Spa Centre was completed at the special meeting, but would be considered in December. Waste management was also deferred to December to allow for the service to settle down and for the

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

completion of the Audit & Resources Scrutiny Committee review of the contract with Sita.

At each meeting, the Committee considered their work programme and made amendments where necessary, and also made comments on specific Executive items, where notice had been given by 9am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Committee would also receive 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 will receive performance reports and the Forward Plan.

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 Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) Councillor Crowther be appointed as the Councils' representative on the county-wide scrutiny group looking at the Public Service Board (PSB); and
- (3) the following amendments be made to the work programme:
  - (a) the Cultural Portfolio Holder to attend the September meeting of the Committee;
  - (b) a revised scoping document for the Golf Working Party be submitted to the meeting in September;
  - (c) a further report be submitted to the Committee on housing rent arrears targets with the Portfolio Holder to attend in February 2009; and
  - (d) a further report be submitted to the Committee in February 2009, on how the recommendations from the scrutiny of flooding had been implemented.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

### 256. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2008

The Committee made the following comments for forwarding to the Executive:

#### Agenda Item Number 10 - Post Office Closure Programme in Warwickshire

The Committee were unhappy about the proposed Post Office closures as this would have a big impact on local communities within the District. There was also concern about the consultation meeting being scheduled for a Thursday lunchtime when the majority of people would be at work and unable to attend. Concern was also expressed that the MP for Warwick and Leamington did not discuss the arrangements he was making for a Public Meeting with the Council, as this would have avoided confusion.

#### Agenda Item Number 14 - Improvement of the District

The Committee were concerned about £60,000 being used from the contingency budget for this project, and the money should be kept in the contingency budget in case it was needed to fund existing projects.

There would be no Liberal Democrat representatives on the group, and although the Labour party were not happy about the money being spent in this way, they would have representatives on the group so they could have an input into how this public money would be spent on the whole district.

#### Agenda Item Number 17D - Proposed Change to Council Phone Numbers

The Committee were unhappy about the change as it would cost significantly more for some people to ring the Council and would be detrimental to the public. Further investigations were needed as the options presented were not satisfactory and a more cost effective alternative was needed to keep the cost of calling the Council to a minimum. Could the Council have another 01926 number?

### 257. 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.



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

**258. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) –  
WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2008**

The Committee made the following comment for forwarding to the Executive:

Agenda Item Number 22 - Spencer Yard Phase 2 Funding Application  
Progress Report

The Committee supported all of the recommendations in the report and would encourage the Executive to continue with the project.

(The meeting ended at 7.50pm)