

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER

8TH APRIL 2009 (6:00 PM)

Present:

Councillors: Mrs H E Dyke (Chairman), J Phillips (Vice-Chairman), J Baker, A J Buckley, G H Eeles, Mrs P V Hayward, Mrs S M Hayward, C D Nicholls and K J Stokes.

Observers:

Councillors: J-P Champion, Mrs F M Oborski and Mrs T L Onslow.

CMS.83 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis and G C Yarranton.

CMS.84 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor K J Stokes was appointed as a substitute for Councillor Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis.

CMS.85 Declaration of Interests

Councillors Mrs H E Dyke and Mrs F M Oborski each declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 6, Review into the Potential Provision of Local Authority Mortgages, as they are both members of the Community Housing Group Board.

CMS.86 Minutes

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CMS.87 Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update

Members considered a briefing paper from the District Representative of the Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Discussion took place on the Foundation Trust's decision to hold its Board Meetings in private. Members noted that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not support this decision and that local authority regulations on exempt information had been explained to representatives from the Foundation Trust.

Furthermore, Members noted that the Department of Health had clarified that it was

for each Foundation Trust to decide whether it would meet in public or private.

Agreed:

- 1. The information be noted.**
- 2. Further updates from the District Representative of the County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be presented in September 2009 and April 2010.**

CMS.88 Review into the Potential Provision of Local Authority Mortgages

The Director of Resources presented a briefing paper and draft scoping form to the Committee outlining the proposal to establish a review panel to investigate the potential provision of Local Authority Mortgages. Members were advised that the item had come forward as a result of a joint budget proposal by the Liberal and Liberal Democrat Groups.

The Committee were advised that the proposal had been put forward as there was significantly less risk involved in allocating mortgages to shared ownership properties, that were underwritten by the Registered Social Landlord, than in general market conditions.

Members noted that Local Authorities used to have a key role in awarding mortgages and that Wyre Forest District Council still had 18 mortgages on its portfolio, none of which were in excess of £20,000.

Furthermore, Members were advised that Dundee City Council had recently announced that it would grant mortgages in the future, although many local authorities were investigating the option of putting mortgage rescue packages in place.

Discussion took place on the evidence the review panel would need to consider. Initial views were that all registered social landlords in the area should be contacted to ascertain their views on the proposal.

Agreed:

- 1. A Review Panel be established to investigate the potential provision of Local Authority Mortgages consisting of the following Members:**
 - i) Councillor P Dyke**
 - ii) Councillor Mrs S Hayward**
- 2. The Scrutiny / Committee Officer contact Group Leaders to ascertain if they wish to put forward any Members of their Group to participate in the review.**
- 3. The first meeting of the Review Panel take place on Monday 11th May 2009, time to be confirmed.**

Councillor JP Champion left the meeting (6:29pm)

CMS.89 Recommendations from the Alcohol & Substance Misuse Review Panel

Members considered a briefing paper from the Scrutiny / Committee Officer that detailed the findings of the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Review Panel in relation to the substance misuse element of the review process.

Councillor JP Campion returned (6:33pm)

Discussion took place on the location of 'Sharps Bins' in the district, it was noted that it was difficult to find a suitable location for these bins to maximise their usage and that Council Officers were monitoring their usage.

Furthermore, Members noted that the hospital admittance rates for the district were highest for residents from Broadwaters and parts of Greenhill.

Councillor Mrs T L Onslow left the meeting (6:41pm)

Recommended to Cabinet:

- 1. The ongoing work of partners be supported.**
- 2. The competing demands on police time with regard to substance misuse be recognised. Community leaders will identify community needs in relation to dealing and drug supply and will encourage policy to deal with local issues.**
- 3. Members Briefing Session receive a presentation from Substance Misuse Action Team (SMAT) annually to keep Members informed.**
- 4. If an issue arises from SMAT before the annual presentation, it be reported in the Members Information Bulletin.**

Councillor Mrs T L Onslow returned (6:43pm)

CMS.90 The Future Methods of Domestic Waste & Recycling Collection

Members considered a briefing paper and draft scoping paper for the establishment of a review panel to consider the future methods of domestic waste and recycling collection.

The Cabinet Member for Operational Services advised that the biggest issue to be addressed was capacity for recycling and that a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) would extend the amount of goods the Council was able to recycle.

Members noted that many residents would like to be able to recycle more materials and that it could be the case that multi occupancy properties require alternative collections to residential properties.

Furthermore it was requested that the review look at issues relating to food waste, with particular reference to Food Waste Disposers (FWD) as a way of disposing of food waste.

Agreed:

- 1. A review panel be established to scrutinise the future methods of waste and recycling collection consisting of the following Members:**
 - i) Councillor Mrs H E Dyke**
 - ii) Councillor A Buckley**
 - iii) Councillor J Baker**
 - iv) Councillor J Phillips**
 - v) Councillor Mrs P Hayward**
 - vi) Councillor Mrs F M Oborski**
- 2. The Scrutiny / Committee Officer contact Group Leaders to ascertain if they wish to put forward any Members of their Group to participate in the review.**
- 3. The first meeting of the review panel to take place on Tuesday 19th May 2009, time to be confirmed.**

CMS.91 Cabinet Decision List

The Chairman advised the Committee that recommendations had been presented to Cabinet on the utilisation of Section 106 monies to fund an additional post within Ranger Services, Members noted that the recommendations put forward had been agreed.

Agreed: The information be noted.

CMS.92 Work Programme

The Committee considered its work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan.

Members noted that the review into the potential provision of local authority mortgages and the review of methods of domestic waste collection and recycling were both to be added to the work programme.

Discussion took place on the tracking of scrutiny recommendations, Members felt that, for the first meeting of the next municipal year, it would be worthwhile examining the outcome of recommendations put forward in 2008/09.

Agreed:

- 1. The Review into the potential provision of Local Authority Mortgages and the review of methods of domestic waste and recycling collection be added to the Committee's work programme.**
- 2. Recommendation tracking be added to the work programme for the next municipal year.**

CMS.92 Press Involvement

The Leader requested that, to coincide with the completion of a review, a press release be issued at the same time as the publication of the briefing paper to ensure that balanced and accurate information was reported in the local press.

Agreed: Review panels issue a press release upon completion of the review process, to coincide with the publication of the briefing paper.

The meeting ended at 7:05pm.