

MEETING OF THE REGENERATION,
ENVIRONMENT HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY SAFETY, SCRUTINY AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL

held at The Council house, Walsall on
28th July 2004 at 6.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor I Shires (chairman)
Councillor Yasin (vice chairman)
Councillor Cassidy
Councillor Coughlan
Councillor Harris
Councillor Harrison
Councillor Johnson
Councillor Micklwright
Councillor Munir

CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

The following changes in membership were agreed for the duration of the meeting

Delete : Councillor Aslam
Substitute: Mrs Micklewright

Delete : Councillor Robinson
Substitute: Councillor Cassidy

Delete : Councillor B Tweedle
Substitute: Councillor Munir

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies submitted

The chairman welcomed all members to the scrutiny panel.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

Councillors Coughlan, I. Shires, and Yasin declared an interest in the Walsall Housing Group and Central Housing Trust.

NOTES OF MEETING

Agreed that the notes of the meeting on 17th May 2004 a copy having previously being circulated to each member of the committee, be agreed as a correct record.

The chairman acknowledged that a member of the public was in attendance at the meeting and brought forward item 10.

WINDOW MILL- UPDATE

The chairman referred to the report submitted and invited a member of the public. Mr Steve Mellor to speak. He informed the committee that disabled workers were quite happy with the contents of the report subject to the able bodied personnel having permanent jobs.

Cathy Macateer (assistant director Adult Services) advised the scrutiny panel that the able bodied staff had been assured permanent jobs and that the section were continuing to develop policies to ensure there were no threats to jobs.

The executive director Sonia Davidson Grant advised that officers were looking for another property and that the relevant process was being followed however no details were available at the meeting, she said that officers would be requested to follow this up.

In response to members comments the executive director advised that this Scrutiny Panel had received a thorough update relating to the Window Mill and that officers should now follow the normal process, any problems would be dealt with by officers. In response to further comments by Councillor Coughlan, Sonia Davidson Grant advised that a briefing note would be supplied to all members of the scrutiny panel relating to grass cutting.

AGREED

The scrutiny panel noted the contents of the up date report.

The chairman Councillor Shires advised he would be taking items 5 considerations for effective scrutiny and, 6 review of scrutiny activity 2003/2004 together.

CONSIDERATION FOR EFFECTIVE SCRUTINY AND REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ACTIVITY 2003/2004

Councillor Shires gave a brief presentation outlining the highlights of Scrutiny activity 2003/2004 and the way forward for effective scrutiny in 2004/2005. He referred to the website centre for public scrutiny and suggested that members visit the site www.cfps.org.uk

He advised members to respect each others views and said that scrutiny was not a second class service and additional effort would be required by all members to ensure effective Scrutiny.

Councillor Shires suggested to members that when reviewing the work programme for 2004/2005, they should focus on a small number of key projects to ensure the annual planning cycle would be effective.

Agreed

1. Councillor Shires agreed to circulate the presentation to all members of the scrutiny panel.
2. The scrutiny panel noted the contents of the reports.
3. To include the forward plan as a standard item on future agendas of the scrutiny and performance panel.

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2004/2005

Members conducted this item in a workshop style, facilitated discussion with flip charts for meetings key points. Members considered the work programme and key issues effecting regeneration, environment housing and community safety, and pulled together a list of key issues as follows:-

KEY ISSUES

1. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOR including:-
 - Wardens
 - Disaffected Youth
 - Linking police/ allies/anti-social behaviour unit
 - Crime and disorder strategy
2. IMPACT OF REGENERATION ON THE VISION 2008
3. HOUSING BALANCED HOUSING MARKET
4. TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE including:-
 - M6 Toll
 - M6 Roadwork Gateways
 - Investments in transport infrastructure
5. MOBILE PHONE MASTS

6. WEST MIDLANDS TRANSPORT, SPECIFICALLY THE
 - Bus strategy
7. RECYCLING STRATEGY including:-
 - Negative impact for charging on bulk items
 - PI'S
 - Budget
 - B/V Reviews
 - CPA Inspections
 - Improvement Plans

ACTION.

It was agreed that Councillor Coughlan, Councillor I, Shires and Councillor Yasin meet with the scrutiny officer to pull together the work programme for 2004/2005 to be presented at the scrutiny panel on the 22nd September 2004.

SCRUTINY TRAINING PROGRAMME 2004

Report of the executive director was submitted:- (see annexed the 5.0) outlined the report indicating that a number of training and workshop sessions have been programmed for 2004, she advised that the programmes were designed to examine the key issues crucial to the effective chairing of overview and scrutiny committees, and for members of overview and scrutiny to gain an appreciation based on research of the key elements of successful overview and scrutiny through an increased understanding of the role of Scrutiny.

ACTION

Members welcomed the training schedule and received the report. It was agreed that a letter would be circulated to establish the availability of members for the forthcoming training sessions

ENVIRONMENT SELF ASSESSMENT

Sonia Davidson Grant gave a verbal update to members advising that a dedicated workshop had been arranged to take place on Wednesday 4 August 2004 at 6.00pm to consist of a presentation and interactive session to take members through the highlights of the inspection process and seek their feedback

PART II PRIVATE SESSION

RESOLVED.

That the notes of the meeting 20th April 2004, a copy having previously been circulated be approved as a correct record.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 8.00pm.