

West Wiltshire District Council

Minutes

- Minutes of the:** Scrutiny Committee
- Held on:** Wednesday 11 October 2006
- Held at:** Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge
- Present:**
- Councillors:** Phillips OBE, (Chairman), Blakemore, Bower, Hames (part), Manasseh, Mounde, Newbury, Oakman, Payne, Rosier and While.
- Also in attendance:** Cllrs Bryant (part), Osborn (part) and Carbin (part)
- Officers:** Policy & Communications Manager (PM), Development Control Manager (DH), Sustainable Communities Services Manager (RR), Financial Accountant (AB), Member Support Officer (MS) and Democratic Support Officer (KF)

74. Apologies and Membership of the Committee

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Conley, Cunliffe-Jones, Fortescue, March and Oldrieve.

75. Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared their interests in the update from Cllr Bryant, Community Portfolio Holder, (agenda Item no.5)

Cllrs Manasseh and Newbury – members of Westbury Youth Council.

Cllr Rosier declared an interest in the Procurement update, (agenda item no.7) – He is employed by Lloyds TSB who are procurement card providers.

76. Announcements from the Chairman

The Chairman drew members attention to changes in legislation that would see the role of the Scrutiny Committee scrutinising the role of the Police during the next financial year, the Chairman empathised that resources were finite and that budgets

would have to be carefully looked at if the Scrutiny Committee were to take on the potential extra workload.

A question was raised as to the appointment of independent members to sit on the Wiltshire Police Authority. At present District Councillors are not eligible for appointment.

The Chairman asked that it be noted and that it be investigated if it were possible to change the eligibility criteria so that District Councillors could sit as independent members.

77. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, Cllr Rosier requested that it be noted that he had passed on his apologies to Member Support for his absence but these had not been minuted.

78. Update from Councillor Andrew Bryant, Community Portfolio Holder – Response to questions raised by the Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Bryant Community Portfolio Holder, presented responses to questions raised by the Scrutiny Committee.

Following Cllr Bryant's responses members raised a number of queries, which were addressed by officers. These included:

- The inclusion of an "outcomes " column to be added to the table of dates, issues and actions that was included to answer the first question in agenda item no.5, the Committee felt that it would be beneficial for all future tables to include any outcomes for clarity.
- That the Committee were interested in seeing the motion put forward by WCC regarding the LAA's.
The Chairman thought that it would be of interest to the whole of the Council.
- The Chairman requested that two or three members put their names forward to head up a task and finish group to look into district wide provisioning issues with Youth developments centres.
- The Committee also agreed on a recommendation to Council, requesting that a representative from Trowbridge Jobcentre Plus give a presentation to Council re - the recent improvements/changes to Trowbridge Jobcentre and how they impact on the district.

79. Implementing the Development Control Performance Plan

Cllr Jeff Osborn presented a report that enabled the Scrutiny Committee to review progress with the implementation of the Development Control Service Plan.

Development Control delivers a key service and is identified as one of the Council's corporate priorities. The service is responsible for the following:

- Determining planning and related applications;
- Presenting the Council's case at appeals;
- Enforcement of the planning legislation;
- Providing planning advice to members of the public and other stakeholders;
- Maintaining registers as required by the Town and Country Planning Acts.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

The Chairman and members congratulated Dave Hubbard and his staff for their efforts over the last two years.

80. Procurement Update

Financial Accountant Andy Brown presented a report which updated Scrutiny with progress on Procurement activities within the Council.

Cabinet agreed the Procurement Strategy in September 2005 and since then the Procurement Group has been working to take the Action Plan forward. The strategy is based on IDeA guidance and the requirements of the National Procurement Strategy.

Additional resources have recently been put in place within finance to support procurement issues and targets facing the council, and the procurement group met in early September to re-establish future activities and objectives.

The council continues to adopt the strategy of working closely with the County Council and other District Councils, via the Wiltshire Procurement Federation, to obtain efficiencies through joint procurement.

RESOLVED

That Scrutiny continues to comment on progress achieved and any further action to be taken, in particular:

- **To continue to pursue joint procurement projects with other councils to access the best contracts for the supply of goods and services.**

- **To continue to investigate the areas identified through the procurement group for the use of the Procurement Card.**

Noted that Cllr Rosier did not take part in the vote.

81. Effective Contract Monitoring Arrangements – possible task and finish group

Policy & Communications Manager Paul Mountford presented a report to the Scrutiny Committee with the necessary background information to decide whether to set up a task and finish group to examine the effectiveness of the Council's contract monitoring arrangements as Council had resolved on 21 June 2006 to request the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, via a task and finish group, the effectiveness of monitoring major contracts.

RESOLVED

That the Scrutiny Committee's concerns have been answered by the KPMG report and the subsequent establishment of the contract monitoring group, and noted that this group will report back to the Audit Committee.

82. Committee's Forward Work Plan

The Committee considered the forward work plan.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Plan as presented be approved with the addition, programmed sooner than later, of a report on the anticipated progress to 2008 of introducing Neighbourhood Policing Teams in West Wiltshire, with particular reference to recruiting and financial resources.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Wednesday **29 November 2006** in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge at **7pm**.

(7.00pm – 9.05pm)

These minutes were prepared by Kevin Fielding, Democratic Support Officer who can be contacted on direct line 01225 770322 or email

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