

West Wiltshire District Council

Minutes

- Minutes of the:** Scrutiny Committee
- Held on:** Wednesday 19 September 2007
- Held at:** Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge
- Present:**
- Councillors:** Burden, Carr, Fuller, Hawker, Hedley, Humphries, James, Jenkins, Mudge, J Osborn(Chairman), Parks, Ridout, and Walker
- Also in attendance:** Cllrs Carbin, Eaton and Fortescue
- Officers:** Chief Executive (AP), Corporate Director (TD), Legal and Democratic Services Manager (NM), Planning Policy and Conservation Services Manager (MR), Housing Services Manager (GH), Policy and Communications Service Manager (PM), Policy Officer (DK), Principal Housing Enabling Officer (KG), Member Support Officer (KH) and Democratic Support Officer (KF)

52. Apologies and Membership of the Committee

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Blakemore, Bryant, Chivers, Mounde, and Seager.

Cllr James substituted for Cllr Blakemore.

53. Declarations of Interest

Agenda item no.5

Cllr Fuller, personal interest – Board member West Wilts Housing Society.
Cllr James, personal interest – Board member West Wilts Housing Society.
Cllr J. Osborn, personal interest – Board member West Wilts Housing Society.
Cllr Ridout, personal interest – Board member West Wilts Housing Society.

54. Announcements from the Chairman

That there were no Financial and Health updates on the agenda, however the PCT had been invited to attend next months Scrutiny meeting.

That the Chairman had spoken to Inspector Dave Cullop re the 0845 contact number issues, who had arranged for the Communications Manager of the Wiltshire Constabulary to contact him. Subsequently a report – Wiltshire Police Contact Management improvement Plan has appeared, this was tabled for members and will be discussed along with Neighbourhood Policing at the October meeting.

55. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18 July 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

56. Housing Portfolio Holder – Update on Issues and Challenges

Cllr Virginia Fortescue presented a power point presentation to highlight current issues and challenges within her portfolio, (a copy of the power point presentation is attached).

Graham Hogg (Housing Services Manager) was also on hand to answer questions about staffing within the housing departments of WWDC.

AGREED

- **That Cabinet be asked to consider the impact of the Housing Green paper, and submit a response for Members perusal and then to Central Government by 15 October 2007.**
- **Members request that Cabinet investigate staffing levels within the Housing Renewal Service and update the Scrutiny Committee for its December meeting.**

57. Affordable Housing in Rural Areas – Single Dwellings – Request for Call-in

The Scrutiny Committee were required to deal with a call-in request relating to the decision of 5 September 2007 by Cabinet not to seek a commuted sum towards the provision of affordable housing where developments of one dwelling within villages are proposed.

On receipt of the request, the Chief Executive (the Proper Officer) established that the decision had not been implemented. In accordance with the constitution, officers were instructed to defer implementation until the decision has been considered by the Scrutiny Committee.

Power point presentation by Cllr Rod Eaton (Change and Integration Portfolio Holder).

A copy of the power point presentation is attached.

A debate ensued.

RESOLVED

That the Committee declined to intervene.

Cllr James requested that his vote for a call-in was recorded.

58.Update on the Local Government Ombudsman report on the former gasworks site, Bradford on Avon

This report updated the committee on any developments following the report that went to this committee on 13th June and the subsequent report to Cabinet on 4th July.

Open Forum

Mr Trevor Tees

RESOLVED

That the report was noted.

59.Change and Integration Portfolio Holder – Update on Local Government Reorganisation

Power point presentation – Cllr Rod Eaton (Change and Integration Portfolio Holder). A copy of the power point presentation is attached.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Eaton for his informative presentation.

60. Local Government Reorganisation background and issues

The Chairman presented the report which provided the Scrutiny Committee with an update on the progress towards developing an effective joint scrutiny function, and to consider the issues which are particularly pertinent to it.

RESOLVED

That the Scrutiny Committee highlight the following areas:

- **Community Leadership and Governance.**
- **Area Boards and Regulatory Committees.**
- **Frontline areas of high risk at WWDC.**

61. Performance Group Report, including April-June 2007 Quarter one performance

Cllr Pip Ridout presented a report that summarises the Council's performance in the first quarter of 2007-08.

RESOLVED

That Members request that Cabinet investigate staffing levels within the Development Control and its effect on the performance indicators, with an update for the December Scrutiny Meeting.

62. Neighbourhood Policing Teams Update

Deferred to next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

63. Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

The Forward Work Plan was accepted with additions of Neighbourhood Policing and Members IT for the October meeting.

64.DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Wednesday **17 October 2007** in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge at **7pm**.

(7.00pm – 10.05pm)

These minutes were prepared by Kevin Fielding, Democratic Support Officer who can be contacted on 01225 776655 ext 204 or email kfielding@westwiltshire.gov.uk