

MINUTES of the MEETING of
the COMMUNITY OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE held on
9 NOVEMBER 2009

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the meeting)

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| * Cllr Victor Duckett (Chairman) | Cllr Julian Hubble |
| * Cllr Mrs Nerissa Warner-O'Neill (Vice-Chairman) | Cllr Simon Inchbald |
| * Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Cable | * Cllr Dr Nicky Lee |
| Cllr Mike Causey | * Cllr Stephen O'Grady |
| * Cllr Stuart Connolly | * Mrs Jane Rawlings + |
| Cllr James Edwards | * Cllr Mrs Celia Savage |
| * Cllr Mrs Patricia Ellis | Cllr Ross Welland |
| Cllr Stephen Hill | * Cllr Mrs Liz Wheatley |
| Cllr Nicholas Holder | * Cllr Andrew Wilson |

* Present

+ Tenants' Panel Representative
Cllr Keith Webster was in attendance

34. MINUTES (Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 September 2009 were confirmed and signed.

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTES (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Causey, James Edwards, Stephen Hill, Julian Hubble, Simon Inchbald and Ms Jane Thomson. Cllrs Bryn Morgan and Mrs Gillian Beel attended as substitutes.

36. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (Agenda Item 3)

Cllr Dr Nicky Cable and Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Cable declared a personal interest against Agenda Item 11, as they are Waverley representatives for Age Concern. Cllr Mrs Gillian Beel declared a personal interest against Agenda Item 11, as she is the Waverley representative for Brightwells Gostrey Centre.

37. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 5; Appendix A)

RESOLVED that the forward programme of key decisions considered by the Executive at its meeting on 3 November 2009 be noted with no further comments.

38. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 6; Appendix B)

RESOLVED that the Committee's work programme be noted with no further comments.

39. ENERGY EFFICIENCY, CLIMATE CHANGE & HOUSING STOCK IMPROVEMENTS (Agenda Item 7; Appendix C)

The Committee agreed this was a good report. It was noted that the assessment of alternative power options was conducted by an expert company on behalf of Waverley Borough Council. The Committee asked officers to mention where expert advice had been sought in future reports.

RESOLVED that the work on Energy Efficiency, undertaken by the Council's landlord service, be welcomed and noted.

40. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME IN WAVERLEY (Agenda Item 8; Appendix D)

The Committee heard that it is anticipated the number of developments producing affordable housing available may fall during the early part of next year. This is due to the current financial climate and the quantity of land available for construction. Developers are currently delaying plans to build, awaiting an upturn in the economy. Although these factors are out of the control of the Council, it was noted that there is much work being undertaken by officers on projects that are scheduled to come online later in the year.

RESOLVED that the report on affordable housing be noted.

41. IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF WAVERLEY'S DECENT HOME (Agenda Item 9; Appendix E)

The Committee received the new membership and updated terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group. It was agreed that Mrs Jane Rawlings, Chairman of the Tenants Association remains in the Group as co-opted member and that the Vice-Chairman of the Tenants Panel also be invited to attend.

RESOLVED that

1. the membership of the Decent Homes Task and Finish Group for this Council year be agreed; and
2. the updated terms of reference for this Group be agreed.

42. IN-DEPTH REVIEW: WORKING WITH THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR – SCOPING REPORT (Agenda Item 10; Appendix F)

The in-depth review of the Council's work with partners in the voluntary sector was described as significant and timely. The Committee heard there are currently changes being made to funding via the Voluntary Grants Partnership by NHS Surrey and Surrey County Council. This in-depth review would provide an opportunity to evaluate the cost effectiveness and performance of existing collaborations and where appropriate make recommendations which

could improve future service levels. The review will also look at how the Council is represented within the local voluntary sector and how the policy of 'Improving Lives' and 'Value for Money' are being strengthened through collaborative partnership working.

The Chairman asked for volunteers to make up the new Task and Finish Group and the following nominations were agreed:

Cllr Elizabeth Cable, Cllr Victor Duckett, Cllr Patricia Ellis, Cllr Dr Nicky Lee, Cllr Bryn Morgan, Cllr Celia Savage.

RESOLVED that

1. the outline of the scoping report and the key questions to be addressed by the review be agreed.
2. membership of the Task and Finish Group be agreed and set up to undertake the detailed work and gathering of evidence required for the review.
3. the review be conducted in accordance with the outline timetable set out in the scoping report.

43. WAVERLEY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP 2009/10 INTERIM PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 11; Appendix G)

The report was welcomed and the Committee commended the work currently being undertaken by voluntary organisations within the Borough under the Community Partnership Fund.

RESOLVED that

1. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcome the achievements of each of the organisations under the remit of this Committee and funded by the Waverley Community Partnership in the first 6 months of 2009/10
2. The Committee strongly encourages the Executive to enhance their support to these organisations in view of the most valuable work they undertake working with the most vulnerable members of our community.

44. REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTING PEOPLE (Agenda Item 12)

A presentation was made by John Swanton, Head of Housing. Waverley's Community Supporting People Service is for elderly, disabled and 'vulnerable' tenants living in housing owned by Waverley Council in the towns and villages of the Borough. Through the community support officers, the Council is able to support tenants and their families to stay at home. The Committee heard that the Surrey County Council budget is currently £18.5 million with which 300 services are provided to 12,000 people in Surrey. This budget will reduce

to £17.9 million in 2010 and is anticipated to continue to reduce by 5% the following year. As a landlord Waverley Borough Council will be affected and will need to consider its response. A full report will be provided to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the next meeting.

45. IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POWERS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 13; Appendix H)

The Committee considered a report providing further information on the implementation of new powers for overview and scrutiny committees. In particular members discussed the work that is currently being undertaken by the Surrey Scrutiny Officers Group to develop a framework for local authorities in Surrey to work together to scrutinise the Surrey LAA targets and other strategic issues of concern across the County. Members also discussed how best the Committee might involve the Police Authority in its new role scrutinising crime and disorder and community safety issues at a local level. Options included co-opting a member of the Police Authority to the Committee or issuing a standing invitation for a representative to attend. It was then discussed how might the issue of crime disorder best be accommodated on the Committee's meeting schedule.

RESOLVED to

1. note the information provided on the implementation of the new powers for overview and scrutiny committees
2. offer a standing invitation to the Police Authority for one of its members to attend the meetings of the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee as an expert witness for appropriate community safety issues, and to devote the first meeting of the council year to crime and disorder issues, thereafter dealing with any crime and disorder issues as these arise;
3. recommend to the Executive that Waverley participates not only in the proposed Surrey-wide framework for collaborative scrutiny, but also explores the possibilities of working with one or more individual boroughs and districts in Surrey on the scrutiny of performance against the LAA targets; and
4. recommend to the Executive that the new arrangements should be reviewed in two years time.

46. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT, QUARTER 2 (JUL-SEPT) 2009/10

The Committee received the report and the Minutes from the Performance Sub-Committee. The Chairman of the Performance Sub-Committee reported that current figures are a good result given the current state of the housing market.

The Committee endorsed the comments and recommendations of the Performance Sub-Committee and RESOLVED that these should be forwarded to the Executive.

47. SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY 2008 – PROGRESS AND ACTION PLAN INCLUDING FINANCIAL INCLUSION APPROACH

The progress and action plan report was received. For the first time the report included a financial inclusion approach in response to the economic downturn and the Audit Commission's recommendation from last year.

RESOLVED

1. that the progress made against the Social Inclusion Strategy Action Plan be noted with no further observations to pass to the Executive on this occasion; and
2. to recommend to the Executive that the Financial Inclusion Approach and Action Plan be adopted as an essential component of the Social Inclusion Strategy.

48. RENT ARREARS MONITORING REPORT

It was noted that despite a difficult economic climate rent arrears are generally under control. The Committee commended officers for their contribution.

RESOLVED that the rent arrears monitoring report be noted.

49. PROGRESS ON AUDIT COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee learnt that the Housing team had met all three recommendations with a September deadline.

RESOLVED that

1. the contents of this report be noted;
2. officers be tasked to continue implementing the Audit Commission recommendations; and
3. officers be tasked to provide a twelve-month review in January 2010.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 p.m.

Chairman