

**SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE****18th January, 2006**

- Members Present:- Councillor Duggins  
Councillor Mrs. Johnson (Substitute for Councillor Ridge)  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Patton  
Councillor Sawdon (Chair)  
Councillor Williams
- Cabinet Member Present:- Councillor Arrowsmith (Cabinet Member (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning))
- Other Members Present:- Councillor Batten (for Minute 164/05 below)  
Councillor Mrs. Harper
- Employees Present:- S. Bennett (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)  
D. Elliott (City Development Directorate)  
C. Hinde (Director of Legal and Democratic Services)  
R. Hughes (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
N. McChesney (City Development Directorate)  
J. Russell (City Development Directorate)  
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
- Apologies:- Councillor Clifford  
Councillor Mrs. Dixon  
Councillor Ridge  
Councillor Mrs. Lacy (for Minute 164/05 below)

**164. Student Accommodation**

Further to Minute 143/05, the Committee considered a report of the Director of City Development, which had previously been considered by the Cabinet (their Minute 172/05 refers), and which had been called in by Councillors Batten, Mrs. Lacy and Patton. The report detailed the findings of a study into student accommodation in the City and sought Cabinet endorsement to an appropriate course of action.

The Cabinet Member explained why it was proposed that the policy issues should be dealt with in the Local Development Framework rather than through the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document. It was proposed that the issue of housing should be looked at in its entirety. The Cabinet Member also indicated that some Cities had tried to deal with issues relating to student accommodation through the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents and were being challenged on this point.

The Committee questioned the Cabinet Member and officers on aspects of the report and the Committee outlined their concerns in relation to the effect that student accommodation can have on residents and the community. It was noted that some of the

concerns raised would be addressed by the use of anti-social behaviour measures and with the co-operation with the two Universities. The Committee also discussed what action the City Council could take in relation to imposing conditions on planning permission to ensure that there are no contraventions of planning control.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That the Committee concur with the decisions of the Cabinet.**
- (2) That a report be submitted to Scrutiny Board (3) within three months to address the concerns now raised by the Committee and that in the meantime, the Director of City Development be requested to ensure that appropriate conditions are imposed on relevant planning permissions.**

**165. Call-In Stage 1**

The Committee noted that no call-ins had been received yet this week. The deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 9th January, 2006, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday 20th January, 2006. Any call-ins received after this meeting and before the deadline would be considered for validity by the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services (Paragraph 5.4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

**166. Swanswell Initiative – Signet and Orwell Court**

Further to Minute 149/05, Councillor Mutton indicated that despite best efforts it had not been possible to arrange a meeting with residents. Councillor Mutton indicated that he now intended to write to all 12 tenants individually to try and set a meeting up.

The Director of City Development referred to a summary note which outlined the grounds of objection which had been received from two residents in relation to the Compulsory Purchase Order. The Committee noted that discussions were currently being held with Orbit in relation to the design of the project and that a further report would be submitted in due course.

**RESOLVED that the summary note regarding the grounds of objection be circulated to all Members of the Committee.**

**167. Report on the Work of Scrutiny Boards – Scrutiny Board (1) (Policy and Governance, Finance, Area Co-Ordination, Equalities and Corporate and Customer Services)**

The Committee received a report which outlined the work of Scrutiny Board (1) from October to December 2005. The report detailed work carried out in the following areas:-

- Finance and Audit
- Human Resources
- ICT
- Review work

In relation to Audit, the Committee gave consideration to the establishment of a separate Audit Committee, to include co-opted members with relevant local government expertise, to ensure that the Audit function was given a higher priority and which would carry out planned rather than reactive work.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That the report to be submitted to Cabinet on the work of Scrutiny include a recommendation that a separate Audit Committee, including co-opted members with relevant local government expertise, be established and that the report included estimates of the costs involved.**
- (2) That the officers be requested to check the figures contained in the Corporate Performance Assessment self-assessment relating to Benefits Improvement Plan.**

(NOTE: In the absence of the relevant Chairs, the report on the works of Scrutiny Boards (2) and (3) were deferred to the next meeting.)

**168. Outstanding Issues**

The Committee noted that the report on the Local Strategic Partnership would be considered at the end of February 2006.

**RESOLVED that officers be requested to chase the report back from Councillor Arrowsmith on University Square.**

**169. Work Programme 2005/06**

The Committee noted the Work Programme for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee for the year 2005/2006.

**170. Whitefriars Housing Group**

The Chair, Councillor Sawdon, referred to the following issues that were raised by Councillor Nellist at the meeting of the City Council on 17th January, 2006:-

- The closure of the Whitefriars local office which serves St. Michael's Ward
- Changes in the criteria for inclusion on the Whitefriars Housing Register

The Committee noted that the annual report on the work of Whitefriars would be considered by this Committee in the near future.

**RESOLVED that a letter be sent to Howard Farrand, Chief Executive of the Whitefriars Housing Group, the City Council's representatives on Whitefriars and Councillor Matchet (Cabinet Member (Health and Housing)), inviting them to attend a meeting of the Committee when the annual outside bodies report on Whitefriars is considered to discuss the two issues outlined above.**