

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

15th February, 2006

Members Present:-
Councillor Mrs. Dixon
Councillor Duggins
Councillor Field
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Ridge
Councillor Sawdon (Chair)
Councillor Williams

Cabinet Member Present:-
Councillor Foster (Cabinet Member (City Services))

Other Members Present:-
Councillor Gazey
Councillor Mrs. Stone

By Invitation:-
Helen Shankster (Coventry Partnership)

Employees Present:-
P. Barnett (Chief Executive's Directorate)
D. Elliott (City Development Directorate)
C. Hinde (Director of Legal and Democratic Services)
R. Hughes (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. Townsend (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)

Apologies:-
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Patton

182. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Sawdon declared a personal interest in the matter the subject of Minute 188/05 below, relating to "Report on the Work of Outside Bodies – Coventry Airport Consultative Committee" as he lived in the vicinity of the airport. The interest was not regarded as prejudicial and he remained in the meeting during consideration of this matter.

183. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th January, 2006, were signed as a true record.

184. Call-In Stage 1

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services reported on the following call-in that had been received:-

Consultation Paper on Planning Gain Supplement

The report had been called in by Councillors Gazey, Mrs. Griffin and Mrs. Maskell.

The reason for the call-in was, "Noting the recommended rejection of the proposals in this paper, to understand better the likely effect on local SMEs and to explore what further evidence they should input to the intended objectives of this consultation organised by the ODPM and HM Treasury."

The Committee noted that the deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 6th February, 2006, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday 17th February, 2006. Any further call-ins received after this meeting and before that 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 4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

RESOLVED that the call-in detailed above be considered in detail by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting on 22nd February, 2006 and that the Cabinet Member (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning) be requested to attend.

185. Swanswell Initiative – Cygnet Court and Orwell Court

Further to Minute 172/05, the Committee received an update on the plans to ensure that the tenants of Cygnet and Orwell Courts, who would be affected by the Swanswell Initiative, were adequately rehoused in the area and that properties had been secured for them prior to them vacating their existing properties.

Councillor Mutton reported that work was progressing to identify a date for a meeting with the tenants and that once a date had been set he would advise Councillor Sawdon and the appropriate Cabinet Members of this.

A response was still awaited from Orbit Housing on the site for dedicated new build accommodation; the Committee noted that the Officer would be meeting with Directors from Orbit Housing the following day where this would be discussed in more detail. Once it was clear that this scheme would proceed, a draft programme would be worked up in order to identify a date for the submission of a planning application. The Committee noted that City College required possession of the site in February, 2007, talks were ongoing with the College to establish if it would be possible to adjust the programme and extend this deadline should any delay be experienced with the replacement properties.

RESOLVED that the Officer be requested to attend the meeting on 1st March, 2006 to provide a further update.

186. Scrutiny Board (2) Review – Academies

With reference to Minute 47/05, the Committee considered a report of the City Academy Review Group. Councillor Field, the Chair of the Review Group, went on to outline the process that the review had taken, external third parties that had been involved and the majority view of the group. The Committee noted that the involvement of third parties was felt to have been particularly beneficial to the review.

The Committee questioned the Chair of the Review and officer on aspects of the report, in particular the funding agreement, the level of influence exerted by the Sponsor over the Grace Academy in Solihull, the approach the Academy would take to exclusions and funding associated with excluded pupils.

The Committee enquired as to the letter to the DfES referred to in Paragraph 3.2 of the report submitted and requested that the Cabinet be made aware, when they consider the report, if a response to this had been received. Officers were requested to contact the sponsor to establish if he felt that the report accurately reflected his contribution to the review; the Committee further requested that the report be amended so that point 6 to Appendix 3 (page 16) be amended to read, "...who confirmed that **to date** he was left to manage....".

RESOLVED that Officers be requested to follow up those issues identified above prior to the Cabinet's consideration of the report.

187. Local Strategic Partnerships – Government Consultation

With reference to Minute 150/05, the Committee considered a report of the Head of Corporate Policy and received a short presentation that outlined a consultation document received from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister entitled "Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their Future". A draft response was included as an appendix to the report.

The Committee went on to debate the role of Scrutiny in relation to Local Strategic Partnerships and strongly supported the introduction of a statutory requirement for Local Strategic Partnerships to be accountable to Scrutiny, they also supported the proposal that Members be involved in scrutinising the Community Strategy. The Committee emphasised that Local Strategic Partnerships were responsible for the allocation of public funds and therefore felt that public accountability was crucial; although City Council representatives were present on the Local Strategic Partnerships as a group the other groups represented could out-vote them.

RESOLVED that the Officers be requested to draft a response to the Government on the consultation document reflecting the views outlined above for clearance by the Chair of this Committee prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

188. Report on the Work of Outside Bodies – Groundwork Trust (Coventry)

The Committee considered a report of Councillor Mrs. Rutter which set out details of the work of Groundwork Trust (Coventry) over the previous twelve months and included attendance records for the City Council's representatives at meetings of the organisation.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to make appointments to Groundwork Trust (Coventry).**

- (2) That a copy of the report be forwarded to the relevant group whips so that they may be made aware of the attendance records of the nominated representatives.

189. **Report on the Work of Outside Bodies – Coventry Airport Consultative Committee**

The Committee considered a report of Councillor Mrs. Dixon which set out details of the work of the Coventry Airport Consultative Committee over the previous twelve months and included attendance records for the City Council's representatives at meetings of the Board. Councillor Mrs. Dixon indicated that she was disappointed that the Consultative Committee had found out that the lease of the airport had been sold via the local press and that a briefing session had not been set up for the Consultative Committee.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to make appointments to the Coventry Airport Consultative Committee.
- (2) That the Officer be requested to write to the Airport Company expressing the Committee's concerns that no briefing had been held for the Consultative Committee regarding the sale of the lease.

190. **Report on the Work of Outside Bodies – Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company – Shareholders' Panel**

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member (City Services) which set out details of the work of the Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company Shareholders' Panel over the previous twelve months and included attendance records for the City Council's representatives at meetings of the Panel.

The Committee questioned the Cabinet Member on aspects of the report including the impact on the company of the City Council's recent decision to extend the recycling scheme, and the performance of the plant in terms of emissions.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommends that the City Council continue to make appointments to the Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company Shareholders' Panel.

191. **Coventry Venture Capital Limited**

Consideration of this report was deferred so that it may be considered in conjunction with the report on the work of West Midlands Enterprise Limited.

192. **Outstanding Issues**

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services which identified those issues on which further reports had been requested in order that Members could monitor progress.

193. **Work Programme 2005/2006**

The Committee considered and noted the work programme of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee for 2005/2006.

194. **No Smoking Policy**

With reference to Minute 155/05, the Committee noted that in response to the Committee's suggestion that support be given to other types of addiction, the Council's policy on alcohol misuse was being revised to include all substance misuse.