

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

21st June, 2006

Members Present:- Councillor Crookes (Substitute for Councillor Asif)
Councillor Duggins
Councillor Lee
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Patton
Councillor Ridge
Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Williams

Other Scrutiny Board
Member Present:- Councillor Clifford

Employees Present:- S. Aldridge (City Development Directorate)
D. Elliott (City Development Directorate)
A. Maqsood (Community Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Swann (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)
A. Townsend (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)

Apologies:- Councillor Asif

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 29th March, and 5th, 12th and 19th April, 2006, were signed as a true record.

2. Co-option of Chair of Scrutiny Board (4) (Community Services and Housing, Neighbourhoods, Equalities and Health)

The Chair briefly reported on a proposal to co-opt Councillor Clifford, the Chair of Scrutiny Board (4) (Community Services and Housing, Neighbourhoods, Equalities and Health), to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee as a non-voting member; this would give all Scrutiny Board Chairs a place on the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Chair of Scrutiny Board (4) (Community Services and Housing, Neighbourhoods, Equalities and Health) be co-opted to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee as a non-voting member.

3. Call-Ins Stage 1

The Chair reported on the following call-in that had been received:-

Proposed Capital Projects in the Non-Schools Programme

The report had been called in by Councillors Batten, Clifford and Mutton.

The reason for the call-in was, "to better understand why Canley Regeneration Budget is identified to find up to £150,000 for this move, and a breakdown of the £150,000 for this purpose".

The Committee noted that the deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 12th June, 2006, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday 23rd June, 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).

The Committee noted that a call-in had been received the previous week when no meeting of the Committee was scheduled:-

Report Back on Petition – Proposed Bus Borders in Belgrave Road

The report had been called in by Councillors M. Noonan, Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Waters.

The reason for the call-in was "to examine the implications of this decision, in particular the effect of speed reduction measures on Belgrave Road on emergency services vehicles access. Request for police accident report for Belgrave Road and Axholme Road junction, Safety Audit Level 2 and breakdown of the actual cost of bus border 173 Belgrave Road. Estimated cost scheme 90 Belgrave Road "WA06" and "WA48"."

RESOLVED that the call-ins detailed above be considered in detail by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting on 5th July, 2006 and that the relevant Cabinet Members be requested to attend for both reports.

4. Coventry Venture Capital Fund Limited

Further to Minute 206/05, the Committee considered a briefing note of the Director of City Development that set out the background to the Coventry Venture Capital Fund. The fund was originally set up in the 1980s as a vehicle for the City Council and West Midlands Enterprise Board to make venture capital investments in new and growing companies. By 1993 it had been recognised that the purpose of the fund was no longer being achieved and that the balance of the fund should be invested to create a return. It was decided that the best option was to generate an income stream for the City Council from an investment in a new building at the University of Warwick Science park. To achieve this the Coventry Venture Capital Fund was restructured and the City Council received 5,000 preference shares in the new company. The City Council's 5,000 shares in the restructured Coventry Venture Capital Fund equated to 17.5% of the company and entitled the City Council to this proportion of the profit made on the rent received from the building, an income stream of approximately £15,000 per annum. The organisation has three directors, two appointed by West Midlands Enterprise and one by the City Council, currently Councillor O'Neil.

The Committee questioned the Officer on aspects of the report, in particular the position of the City Council if West Midlands Enterprise were to no longer exist, the value of the building on the University of Warwick Science Park and the company's assets, how

the City Council's funds were protected and the balance that remained outstanding of the original £721,478 loan.

RESOLVED that the Officer be requested to draft a further briefing note to address the points raised above.

5. Swanswell Initiative – Signet Court and Orwell Court

Further to Minute 252/05, the Committee received an update on the plans to ensure that the tenants of Signet and Orwell Courts, who would be affected by the Swanswell Initiative, were adequately rehoused in the area and that suitable properties had been secured for them prior to vacating their existing properties in line with the Council resolution.

The Committee noted that Orbit Housing's planning application for the building on the corner of Raglan Street and Canterbury Street was anticipated to be submitted in two weeks time. This was later than had been previously expected due to negotiations by Planning to finalise proposals for a student housing block on an adjacent site. The Orbit Housing scheme has been redesigned to respond to this development and consequently would now be a larger building.

The Committee noted that the Compulsory Purchase Order inquiry would take place on 11th and 12th July, 2006. It was expected that objectors, both tenants of Signet Court and Orwell Court and the commercial properties affected would attend the hearing.

RESOLVED that the Officer be requested to attend a meeting in September to provide a further update.

6. Schedule for Reports Back on the Work of Outside Bodies

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services that set out a proposed schedule of reports to the Scrutiny Co-Ordination Committee on the work of outside bodies. The Committee requested that those reports that remained outstanding from the 2005/06 municipal year be added to this schedule for consideration by the Committee in August 2006.

RESOLVED that the schedule be approved with the amendment outlined above.

7. Outstanding Issues

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