

Monday 29 January 2007
at 6pm



Scrutiny Committee

MEMBERSHIP:-

Councillor Mrs BANNISTER (Chairman) Councillor MARSDEN (Deputy Chairman),
Councillors Mrs GOODALL, LACEY O.B.E, TAYLOR, WALLIS (as substitute for Tester)
and Miss WOODALL.

An apology for absence was reported from Councillor Tester.

22 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2006.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2006 submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

23 Declarations of Interest.

None

24 Best Value Review of the Feasibility of a Single Joint Waste Organisation / Partnership.

The committee considered the report of Joint Scrutiny Board regarding the Feasibility of a Single Joint Waste Organisation / Partnership.

Members were advised that Rother, Lewes, Wealden, Eastbourne and Hastings appointed members to sit on the review board, which also included three members from the County Council.

The report outlined the methodology and approach for carrying out the review which included presentations, information regarding relevant policy reviews including the Governments consultation document on England's Waste Strategy, the Lyons review and consideration of various other authorities addressing the establishment of a single organisation. During the review the Board sought various sources of evidence regarding cost and operational implications and the benefits and problems associated with a single Joint waste authority.

The report outlined the findings of the Board, good practice that existed in joint working in East Sussex, how other authorities were working together on tackling waste management and the potential benefits and reasons for

not having of a Single Joint Waste Organisation and the changes that were needed and finally the conclusions drawn from the review.

Councillor Tutt presented the report to the Committee on behalf of the Review Board. Councillor Taylor also presented his views regarding the Review to the Committee.

Councillor Marsden advised that it was important that no district or borough should lose control if a joint waste authority was formed.

RESOLVED: that the County Council be advised that all Authorities in East Sussex including Brighton and Hove, should continue towards better working relationships, and that the creation of a consortium of all Authorities should be explored.

25 Budget 2007/2008.

The Committee considered the report of the Director's Group regarding the detailed budget proposals for 2007/2008 covering General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue, Capital Expenditure and Treasury Management for recommendation to full Council on 21 February 2007. In each area the report sets out the budget position in relation to the previous year and any implications for future years, the resources available for 2007/08, feedback from consultation with the public and other stakeholders, 2007/2008 budget proposals, risks contingencies and reserves and the outlook for 2008/2009 and beyond.

Councillor Goodall sought clarification on the concessionary fare scheme. Councillor Goodall also enquired about the money received from the sale of the Coach and Lorry Park and whether the additional money would go towards debt repayment and reinvestment. Councillor Goodall was advised that the money would go into the Capital Resources fund.

Councillor Marsden sought information on the grant available from the County Council and was advised that the amount year on year was not known, however the County could retain part of the grant as it was the Government's remit to encourage two-tier working through Local Strategic Partnerships. Councillor Marsden also raised the issue regarding Housing Benefit recruitment and retention of staff and the additional £40,000 requested to fund additional posts, and was advised that the funds would be allocated from the Contingency fund to cover the cost of agency staff.

Councillor Lacey sought clarification on the increase in income from Corporate Property and market rental increases, and the varying costs in affordable housing for the units for key workers and the units in Prideaux Road, Councillor Lacey was advised that the costs per unit varied due to structure and foundations and the differing costs in rebuilding and refurbishing units. Councillor Lacey congratulated the Council on the £1.4 million in savings identified in the Budget for 2007/08. Councillor Lacey also raised the issue regarding replacement windows for 1 Grove Road and the expected savings on energy as a result. Councillor Lacey was advised that it would be an investment for the future as 1 Grove Road was seen as a permanent base for the Council; the savings would be realised year on year.

Councillor Lacey also raised the issue of Housing Benefits staff and asked if young people in Eastbourne were being encourage to come and work for the Council, and was advised that the Council were currently examining the potential of pooling staff across the County, as many staff were travelling between the districts and boroughs.

Councillor Wallis asked if exit interviews were carried out with staff to find out the reasons for leaving, and was advised that Human Resources carry out an exit interview for every member of staff leaving the authority which, amongst other things, seeks to determine the reason for leaving.

RESOLVED; That Cabinet be advised of the Scrutiny Committee's comments in relation to the Budget 2007/2008.

The meeting finished at 7.30 pm.

**Councillor Mrs Bannister
Chairman**