

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held in the Council Chamber, Browfort, Devizes on Tuesday, 3rd April, 2007 at 2.15 pm

PRESENT: Councillor C.P.G. Hoddinott - Chairman

Councillor B.G. Ashley	Councillors Mrs. N.G. Rawlins
Councillor N.D. Carter	Councillor P.N. Veasey
Councillor R.T. Parsons	Councillor Mrs. P.M. Winchcombe
Councillor J.D. Percy-Caldwell	Councillors A.S. Wood

7. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 5th December, 2006, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were none.

9. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The chairman referred to the recent accident that had befallen the Leader of the Council whilst on holiday.

The committee extended its sympathy to Councillor Humphries and wished him a speedy recovery.

10. INVESTMENT REVIEW SCRUTINY

The committee considered a report by Councillor Caldwell, chairman of the Scrutiny Team which reported back on the findings of the review team, in respect of the investment review scrutiny.

The committee considered a report in detail and both Councillor Caldwell and the officers answered questions relating to the content. It was stressed to the committee that there were constraints on what form of investments district councils could make and that it was not generally possible to make long-term investments due to the nature of the local authority. In particular it was pointed out that the item indicated as "lost" interest was not in fact lost as such it was a notional amount that could have been made in different circumstances. Some of the assumptions and interest targets had become unrealistic during the term of an investment.

RESOLVED:

THAT Resources Executive Committee be

RECOMMENDED to

- 1) consider the retention of a core capital sum to sustain investment income;
- 2) consider a guaranteed rate of return target to ensure strategic financial requirements are met;
- 3) consider an additional aggressive rate of return target to ensure regeneration of capital;
- 4) consider the diversification of the types of investment to optimise return and to minimise risk;
- 5) consider the use of third parties to provide independent guidance on investment opportunities and their associated risk.

(Note: the chairman and Councillor Caldwell thanked the officers for their hard work in the preparation of this report.)

11. CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The committee received a presentation from the Environmental Protection and Housing Services Manager and Chief Inspector J. Tapper of Wiltshire Constabulary and the crime statistics for the Kennet District Council area and their method of recording.

It was pointed out to the meeting that the statutory Best Value performance indicators required to be produced by Kennet District Council were recorded in a different way than those required by the police. It was however the function of the police to provide the information to the council which then translated it into the preferred option for the BVPI's. The council collected information and published it has a proportion of crime per 1000 households or 1000 of population. The police were not required to do so in this manner.

Most district councils were required to have a target for reducing crime of 15% by the year 2008 although in view of the very low crime rates in the Kennet District Council area the Government Office for the South West had agreed that this target should be 12.5% in Kennet.

Chief Inspector Tapper and the Environmental Protection and Housing Services Manager presented to the committee various statistics with regard to criminal activity reported in the district but stressed that Kennet was a very low crime area.

Chief Inspector Tapper and the Environmental Protection and Housing Services Manager answered a series of questions from members on the statistics provided and the methodology of collection. It was clear from the statistics where resources had to be concentrated and the police and District Council will be concentrating on reducing woundings and criminal damage.

Finally it was stressed to the committee that the Community Safety Partnership with its other partners also undertook work of crime prevention and of providing sanctuary for victims of domestic violence.

The chairman thanked Chief Inspector Tapper and the Environmental Protection and Housing Services Manager for their presentation.

RESOLVED:

THAT the report be noted.

12. WORKLOAD FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2007/2008

The committee received report C/07/07 by the Corporate Services Manager setting out a work plan for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for the forthcoming municipal year with a view to the board selecting topics which it wished to consider in detail.

It was suggested by officers that in addition to those items listed under the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board it might like to consider the Draft Waste Minimisation and Recycling Strategy 2007/2010.

In addition members requested that the following items should be added to the list of subjects for consideration: --

- a) climate change;
- b) building control activities;
- c) Council procurement;
- d) litter bin policy;
- e) homelessness and affordable housing.

RESOLVED:

THAT The Board

- i) approves a review of the Kennet and Avon Canal and its impact on the district
- ii) approves a review of building control
- iii) approves a review of planning policies as set out in paragraph 3.5.2 of the report
- iv) approves a review of the Draft Waste Minimisation and Recycling Strategy 2007/2010

v) agrees that the items listed by members should be included in a full list of matters to be considered at the meeting of The Board to be held on the 5th of June 2007 in order that a list of priorities may be selected.

Chairman
5th of June 2007

