

Minutes

Meeting of : Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Meeting held in : The Meeting Room, City Hall, Salisbury
Date : Tuesday 20 June 2007
Commencing at : 6.00 pm

District Councillors:

Councillor J A Cole-Morgan (Chairman)
Councillor B M Rycroft (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Ms J V Broom, R J Clewer, Mrs S L Dennis, Mrs I M Evans, Mrs J A Green, M A Hewitt, D J Luther, C G Mills, I M Mitchell, Ms C J M Morrison, and M J Osment.

Councillor Dalton, Portfolio Holder for Community Initiatives and Councillor Tomes, Portfolio Holder for Housing was also in attendance.

Tenants Panel:

Mr J Hinnis, Mr Edwards, Mr T Watkins, Mrs D Jewell, Mr Loggie and Mrs J Fazackerley

Apologies:

Present - Officers:

Lindsay Mertens (Democratic Services Officer), Tom Bray (Democratic Services Officer), Robin Townsend (Head of Community Initiatives), Alison Kay (Community Safety Projects Manager), Graham Gould (Head of Marketing Economic Development and Tourism), and Derek Streek (Head of Housing Management)

4. Public Questions / Statement Time

There were none.

5. Councillor Questions/Statement Time

There were none.

6. Minutes:

Resolved: that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on 14th March 2007 and the Special meeting held on 21st May 2007(both previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Declarations of Interests:

There were none.



Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



8. Chairman's Announcements:

The Chairman informed Members that he was looking forward to his new role and hoped the work of the Panel would be satisfying and interesting for all members of the Panel. The Chairman stated that the aim of the Panel was to improve the level of service provided by Salisbury District Council, and he hoped the role of the Panel would be both critical and constructive.

9. Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework: Consultants final report and consultation process:

The Panel considered the previously circulated report of the Policy Director and Head of Marketing, Economic Development and Tourism, who then gave an overview of the Salisbury Vision outlining some of the key projects and areas requiring review. He stated that further widespread consultation will be carried out, particularly aimed at the groups that are most affected by the Vision.

The Chairman informed the panel that there were additional papers for the Vision to be considered that came in as late correspondence. He then asked the Panel if there were any elements of the Vision that they would like to look at as a scrutiny review.

Councillor J Hinnis (Wilton Parish Council) stated that he had very limited time to reply to the consultation on the Land Availability study. He requested an extension to the consultation to allow sufficient time to reply.

Resolved:

- (1) that the following comments be submitted to the Cabinet:

General

- that the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel confirms its support for Vision in principle at this stage subject to results of public consultation.

Consultation

- The consultation period should be extended to allow adequate time for a proper considered response from all interested parties.
- That the impact of the vision on other areas of the District should be stressed during the consultation period.

The overall Salisbury Vision final report as presented by the consultants

- The Vision appears overly focused on the ability of Salisbury to compete with other regional settlements in terms of retail, when there are other major selling points for the City in terms of tourism, culture and heritage. These aspects should be more balanced in the Vision.

The aim of the Vision projects

• **Project 2: Public Transport**

The Vision should have regard to and address the issues for those living in the transport catchment area.

The Vision should recognise that many elderly and rural residents are dependent on the use of cars and will need access to the City centre.

• **Project 3: The Station Interchange**

The Vision should highlight the important link between the Station Interchange and the proposed redevelopment of Churchfields.

Park and ride time tables will need to be synchronised with the railway timetable to facilitate enable more commuters to use the service.

• **Project 6: Central car park and The Maltings**

The impact of development in the floodplain will need to be addressed.

The extent of major new retail development should take account of the potential impact on other retail areas in the City.

- **Project 16: The Friary**
Tenants of The Friary should be notified of any information before it goes public.

The detail of the Vision as detailed in the final report

No comments at this stage pending the outcome of consultation

The proposed consultation arrangements for the Vision

The use of radio, especially Spire FM and BBC Radio Wiltshire in the consultation process will be very important in order to reach the whole of South Wiltshire.

That this Panel be given an opportunity to comment further after the close of the consultation period.

- (2) that the Panel should look at the proposals of the Vision in more detail as a panel and in the meantime a sub-group comprising Councillors Mitchell, Osment and Evans established to be formed to examine all aspects of the Vision and report back to the next meeting with its conclusions.
- (3) that an Arts and Culture Subgroup be set up comprising of Councillors Cole-Morgan, Green and Rycroft to look at the art and culture proposals in the Vision and report back to the next meeting with its conclusions.

10. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan:

The Panel received a presentation from the Head of Housing Management on progress with preparation of the HRA Business Plan. The Chairman expressed concerns that had been no meetings of the HRA project board since the elections. He also expressed concerns about the balanced 30-year business plan, in that there had been no member-led debate around the alternatives that could be put to the tenants, sheltered housing tenants and leaseholders. He also queried the availability of new sources of revenue and savings included in the accounts.

The Panel pointed out the need for effective consultation to be scheduled as soon as possible due to the implications for the Housing Revenue Account. The Panel also drew attention to the fact that although there were potential revenue and capital savings documented in the project plan, there is also potential for delay due to the need for staff training.

In connection with this item, Councillor Hinnis congratulated the Housing Department for retaining their Charter mark.

Resolved:

- (1) that Cabinet be informed that this Panel is concerned about the timescales relating to this project and requests that they be reviewed as soon as possible; and
- (2) that Councillor Cole Morgan be nominate to serve on the HRA Business Plan Board.

11. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour:

The Panel considered the previously circulated report of the Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Officer. A number of comments and queries were raised by members in relation to the report, which included the following:

- Members felt that funding for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was particularly important. The Head of Community Initiatives confirmed that there is no dedicated budget in relation to ASBO's at present but that funding can be sought within existing budgets if required.
- Introduction of the ASB reduction officer had brought about excellent results
- Members enquired as to the review, detailed in the report, which looks to take account of the overall successes and failures of ASB orders. In relation to the timescale of this review, the Community Safety Projects Manager clarified that reviews take place after each individual order to evaluate its success. Members felt that it would be useful if they could receive periodic overviews of this information.

- Members addressed the issue of ASB leaflet distribution. In response to concerns over the previous distribution of the leaflets the Portfolio Holder for Community Initiatives suggested that a leaflet be included with the Council Tax demands. The Portfolio Holder agreed to take this point up with the officers.
- Members raised the issue of Bemerton Heath Library Project. The Head of Community Initiatives confirmed that a bid for funding had been submitted and the result was expected by September 2007. Members supported the bid but expressed some concern regarding the long term sustainability of funding.
- Members requested that they be informed of who is the Beat Team in their respective ward and sought information about what were considered priority crimes in their areas in order for a comparison to be made with the police targets.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) that the Cabinet be requested to include budget provision for the continuation of the Anti Social Behavior Officer post in Community Initiatives Unit; and
- (3) that the new Anti-Social Behavior Order Protocol be brought before this Panel when it available.

12. Cabinet Forward Plan:

The Panel considered the report of the Scrutiny Officer and the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Resolved –

- (1) that the following matters be brought before this Panel for consideration in due course:
 - (a) Review of Management of Leisure Facilities
 - (b) Service Charge Review for Council Housing
 - (c) Choice Based Lettings
 - (d) Produce Revised HRA Business Plan Following Consultation
 - (e) Revise and Publish Homelessness Strategy
 - (f) Gypsy and Travellers Housing Needs Survey
 - (g) Safeguarding Children (members sought clarification as to the subject of this report and nominated Councillor Osment to liaise with officers in order to determine the level of involvement that the Panel will have); and
- (2) that Members should delegate to Chairman to decide on the level of detail to be brought in relation to the items listed above and delegate to officers to organise meeting dates to take into account the Cabinet timetable.

13. Performance Management Report:

The Panel considered the previously circulated report of the Performance Improvement Officer and the Principal Democratic Services Manager.

Agreed –

- (1) that in order for the Performance Management Report to be scrutinized, Members require further information on all 87 indicators relevant to Community and Housing. Members would like to receive a written guidance note with each of the graphs presented in the report.
- (2) That Members would like to see complaints analysis that relates to Community and Housing on a quarterly basis therefore highlighting significant problems.

14. Scrutiny Review Programme:

The Panel acknowledged the work done by previous Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panels and noted that at the next ordinary meeting members would be invited to select issues for scrutiny review programme. Members were encouraged to identify issues for inclusion in the programme and submit them to Steve Milton in the Democratic Services Unit.

15. **Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the Chairman would liaise with members regarding a possible date for an extra meeting prior to the next Cabinet meeting.

*Meeting closed at 8.55pm
Members of the Public: 0*