

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**HELD: 5 FEBRUARY 2009**

Start: 7.30pm

Finish: 9.25pm

**PRESENT**

Councillor Bailey (Chairman)  
Fowler (Vice Chairman)

Councillors	Mrs. Atherley	Griffiths
	Baldock	McKay
	Mrs. Blake	Nolan
	Cotterill	O'Toole
	Cropper	Rice
	Mrs. Evans	G.M. Roberts
	Furey	Vickers
	Gartside	

In Attendance Councillors:	Grant	Leader of the Council
	Forshaw	Portfolio Holder- Planning and Transportation
	Westley	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Performance Management
	R A Pendleton	

Officers Executive Director Housing and Property Maintenance Services  
Chief Accountant  
Interim Policy Services Manager  
Policy & Performance Manager  
Group Accountant  
Property Services Manager  
Business Development Manager  
Legal Services Manager  
Senior Member Services Officer (SG)

**58. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mawdsley.

**59. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillor Pope and the appointment of Councillor Mrs. Atherley for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

**60. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

**61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It is noted that the Code of Conduct in relation to personal and prejudicial interests of Cabinet Members when they have taken a decision is overridden by Section 21(13) of the Local Government Act 2000.

1. Councillors Mrs. Atherley, Baldock, Mrs. Blake, Cropper, Mrs. Evans, Fowler, Grant, G.M. Roberts, Vickers and Westley declared a personal interest in item 16 on the agenda 'Medium Term Capital Programme' in view of their membership of Parish Councils. Councillor Cotterill declared the same interest in view of his wife's membership of Bickerstaffe Parish Council.
2. Councillor Fowler declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 15 on the agenda 'Revenue Budget' in relation to his appointment on the West Lancs. Community Leisure Trust Board and indicated his intention to leave the Chamber if discussion on the Trust's activities ensued.

**62. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of a party whip.

**63. CALLED IN ITEMS - NOT VALIDATED**

Consideration was given to the called in items – not validated as circulated and contained on pages 665 – 674 of the Book of Reports.

**64. PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT IN BICKERSTAFFE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which provided details of a called in decision but not validated in relation to minute no. 102 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 20 January 2009 regarding Public and Community Transport in Bickerstaffe, which at the Chairman's request had been placed on the agenda.

Members noted the reasons for the decision being called in together with the reasons for the call in not being validated.

During the ensuing discussion a Member referred to the specific public and community transport needs/opportunities in the Bickerstaffe Ward and at the invitation of the Chairman the Portfolio Holder Planning and Transportation indicated that the route of the potential demand-responsive employment bus service could possibly encompass Bickerstaffe.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**65. MERSEYSIDE RAIL ROUTE UTILISATION STRATEGY (RUS)**

Consideration was given to the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which provided details of a called in decision but not validated in relation to minute no. 111 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 20 January 2009 regarding Merseyside Rail Route Utilisation Strategy (Consultation draft) which at the Chairman's request had been placed on the agenda.

Members noted the reasons for the decision being called in together with the reasons for the call in not being validated.

During the ensuing discussion a Member proposed that the two options referred to within the Cabinet report be referred for inclusion in the Council's response to the consultation.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Portfolio Holder Planning and Transportation responded that the Council's response to the consultation proposed the best option for Skelmersdale.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**66. MINUTES**

During consideration of the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee it was proposed that, in future, officers names and titles be included within the attendance list.

RESOLVED: (A) That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 December 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(B) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the appropriateness of recording officer names within the minutes.

**67. KEY DECISION FORWARD PLANS 1 JANUARY - 30 APRIL AND 1 FEB - 31 MAY 2009**

There were no items placed on the agenda from the above-mentioned key decision forward plans.

**68. RELEVANT MINUTES OF CABINET**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 January 2009 as circulated and contained on pages 681-690 of the Book of Reports.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of Cabinet held on 20 January 2009 be noted.

**69. LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ATTENDANCE AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

Further to minute no. 51 of the meeting of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 December 2008 and minute no. 101 of Cabinet on 20 January 2009, in relation to the above-mentioned item, it was

RESOLVED: That the minute no. 101 of Cabinet on 20 January 2009, be endorsed. For clarification, there would be no expectation that Portfolio Holders will routinely attend save items that have been called in.

**70. TRANSITIONAL HOUSING CAPITAL RECEIPTS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Consideration was given to the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor referring to minute no. 100 of Cabinet on 20 January 2009 in relation to the appointment of a co-opted Labour member on the Affordable Housing Cabinet Panel.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

**71. CORPORATE SUITE OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2009/10**

Consideration was given to the above-mentioned report of the Assistant Chief Executive as circulated and contained on pages 707 – 718 of the Book of Reports on which she sought the comments of the Committee to be submitted to Council for consideration.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised the following questions/comments in relation to:-

- BVPI 8 - % of invoices paid on time
- BVPI 12 - sickness absence
- NI 199 - children and young peoples satisfaction with parks and play area
- NI 14 - avoidable contact

RESOLVED: A That Council be requested to

- i) Identify long and short term sickness absence within BVP1  
12
- ii) Identify and include suitable indicators relating to Value for  
Money

**72. DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) ESTIMATES 2009/10**

Consideration was given to the above-mentioned report of the Executive Manager Housing & Property Maintenance Services as circulated and contained on pages 719 – 746 and 869 of the Book of Reports and sought agreed comments/views for consideration by Council on 25 February 2009. He further circulated comments received from the Tenants and Residents Forum on the proposals contained within the report.

RESOLVED That the Draft HRA estimates set out in the attached report be noted and no comments be made.

**73. PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING CAPITAL INVESTMENT SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMED WORKS PROJECTS - 2009/10 INCORPORATING DECENT HOMES UPDATE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN REVIEW**

Consideration was given to the above-mentioned report of the Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services as circulated and contained on pages 747 – 814 and 871 – 875 of the Book of Reports and sought agreed comments/views for consideration by Council on 25 February 2009. A letter received from the Department of Communities and Local Government inviting bids for bringing forward planning major repair expenditure from 2010-11 to 2009-10 was circulated at the meeting.

Members raised question/comments in relation to:-

- Type of heating
- Professional fees
- Competitiveness of tender prices
- I.T./Kitchen/bathroom upgrade
- Welcome proposals of T&R Forum regarding environmental improvements

During the ensuing debate Members raised comments in relation to the appropriateness of allocation of expenditure in the 16 main areas of the Capital Investment Scheme outlined in the report particularly in relation to kitchen/bathroom upgrade, and the appropriateness of “spot checking” particular individual contracts.

RESOLVED A. That the Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services be requested to provide information to Members in relation to those properties that have not benefited from capital investment schemes, particularly in relation to kitchen/bathroom improvements.

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- B. That the Internal Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when assessing their work programme for next year, be requested to consider undertaking a review of expenditure on relevant contracts.

**74. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2009/10**

Consideration was given to the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor as circulated and contained on pages 815 – 844 of the Book of Reports in which she sought agreed comments/views for consideration by the Portfolio Holder for Finance prior to the meeting of Council on 25 February 2009.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised comments/questions in relation to:-

- Low 0.5% settlement figure
- Reserves/balances
- Precepting of non-Parished areas
- Investment Centre income projections
- Split for employee expenses Legal/Member Services
- Legal Services expenditure on external services

RESOLVED: That the Revenue Estimates 2009-10 be noted and no comments made.

**75. MEDIUM TERM CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the above-mentioned report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor as circulated and contained on pages 845 – 859 and 877 of the Book of Reports in which she sought agreed comments/views for consideration by the Portfolio Holder for Finance prior to the meeting of Council on 25 February 2009.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised comments/questions in relation to:-

- Investment in Tawd Valley Park
- Teenzone
- Appley Bridge Station
- New office accommodation
- Distinction between external funding/private sector funding.

RESOLVED: That the Medium Term Capital Programme be noted and no comments made.

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CHAIRMAN