

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD: 31 MARCH 2011

Start: 7.30pm

Finish: 8.35pm

PRESENT: O'Toole (Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs Blake	Hennessey
	Coyle	Moran
	Cropper	Nolan
	Mrs Evans	R A Pendleton
	Furey	Pope
	Gibson	G M Roberts
	Gartside	Tattersall
	Grice	

In attendance:

Councillors: Westley (Portfolio Holder – Finance & Performance Management)

Officers:

- Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services (Mr B Livermore)
- Interim Head of Planning and Policy (Mr I Gill)
- Deputy Treasurer (Mr M Kostrzewski)
- Estates and Valuation Manager (Ms R Kneale)
- Legal Services Manager (Mr T P Broderick)
- Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

73. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mawdsley.

74. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

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

75. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Cropper and O'Toole as members of the Lancashire County Council (LCC) declared personal interests in the event of any reference to LCC during consideration of the business of the Committee.

77. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of a party whip.

78. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

79. CALLED IN ITEMS

There were no called-in items.

80. KEY DECISION FORWARD PLANS - 1 MARCH 2011 TO 31 JULY 2011

There were no items under this heading.

81. RELEVANT MINUTES OF CABINET

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15 March 2011. A member raised questions/comments in relation to:

Minute 145 (Strategic Asset Management Project – Outcome of the Pilot Project) – publication of report. It was noted that this item was listed for consideration as the last item of business.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15 March 2011 be noted.

82. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

Consideration was given to the report of the Director Designate (Council Secretary and Solicitor) as circulated and contained on pages 597 to 603 of the Book of Reports which provided a projection on the financial position on the General and Housing Revenue Accounts to the end of the financial year.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised questions/queries relating to:

- Benefit expenditure
- Subsidy System
- Higher benefits payments related to exempt accommodation
- Concessionary travel – financial changes related to transfer to LCC.
- Council Tax freeze.

The Deputy Borough Treasurer responded to questions referencing details contained in the report and at the invitation of the Chairman the Portfolio Holder responded to comments on the strategic obligations related to housing finance, particularly rents and services charges.

RESOLVED: That the financial position of the Revenue Accounts be noted.

83. CAPITAL MONITORING 2010/11

Consideration was given to the report of the Director Designate (Council Secretary and Solicitor) as circulated and contained on pages 605 to 614 of the Book of Reports which provided an update on the current position in respect of the 2010/11 Capital Programme.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised questions/queries relating to:

- Capital Expenditure against Budgets
- Rights to Buy sales/legislation
- Introduction of the 'self-financing' housing model

The Deputy Borough Treasurer responded to questions referencing details contained in the report.

The Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services explained that a cross-party Landlord Services Committee Cabinet Working Group had been established whose membership included tenant representatives and that the Working Group's terms of reference also included consideration of the preparation to manage the introduction of 'self financing' investment in the housing stock. He further confirmed that representations had been made to Government relating to the proposed pooling arrangement under Right To Buy, whereby the Government will receive 75% of Right To Buy sales remitted to them.

RESOLVED: That the current position of the 2010/2011 Capital Programme be noted.

84. LDF CORE STRATEGY - PREFERRED OPTIONS PAPER FOR CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to the report of the Acting Executive Manager Planning which detailed progress on the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) for the West Lancashire Local Development Framework (LDF), particularly in relation to the proposed Preferred Options Paper on the Core Strategy for public consultation as contained on pages 615 to 624 and pages 631 to 830 of the Book of Reports which sought agreed comments, if any, of this Committee prior to the document being issued for public consultation.

Members discussed the comments raised at a previous meeting of the Committee in relation to the rejected Option A and the profile of this option in the Preferred Options Paper going out for consultation.

The Interim Head of Planning and Policy responded to questions and queries and explained that representations can be put forward at the consultation phase on any rejected options, including Option A, or any other options that had previously been discarded. He then went on to explain the consultation arrangements, the various ways those consulted would be able to make comments, the documentation being issued and the various on-line communication methods also being used to assist the public consultation process.

RESOLVED: That the Core Strategy Preferred Options Paper and consultation arrangements be noted.

85. LDF CORE STRATEGY EVIDENCE BASE - DRAFT GREEN BELT STUDY

Consideration was given to the report of the Acting Executive Manager Planning which detailed progress on the Draft Green Belt Study, as contained on pages 625 to 630 and pages 831 to 904 of the Book of Reports. The report explained that the Study forms a key plank of evidence within the West Lancashire Local Development Framework (LDF) Evidence Base. Agreed comments, if any, of this Committee were sought on the draft prior to the document being issued for public consultation.

The Interim Head of Planning and Policy gave an overview of the purpose of the Green Belt Study, the three stages of that study and the methodology of the public consultation exercise.

RESOLVED: That the Draft Green Belt Study document be noted.

86. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 (Financial/Business Affairs) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act and as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

87. STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PROJECT - OUTCOME OF THE PILOT PROJECT

Members considered the request put forward by a Member whether to ask the Executive Manager Regeneration and Estates or the Council to make the report Strategic Asset Management Project – Outcome of the Pilot Project as contained on pages 905 to 938 of the Book of Reports, considered by Cabinet on 15 March and to be considered by Council on 13 April 2011, available to the public.

On behalf of the Executive Manager Regeneration and Estates, the Estates and Valuation Manager attended the meeting and answered questions on the report and gave an explanation in relation to the recommendation to maintain the exemption by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED: That the position be noted.

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Chairman