

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON REGENERATION, CULTURE AND  
ADULT EDUCATION**

Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2007, at 6 p.m.  
in the Council Chamber at the Council House, Dudley

**PRESENT:-**

Councillor K Turner (Chairman)  
Councillor Crumpton (Vice Chairman)  
Councillors: J R Davies, Ms Foster, Hill, Jackson, Rahman, Southall,  
Tyler and C Wilson.

**Officers**

Assistant Director of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) (as Lead Officer to the Committee), Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services, Senior Assistant Director of Finance, Assistant Director of Economic Regeneration, Assistant Director of Culture and Community and Mr J Jablonski (Directorate of Law and Property).

**Also in Attendance**

Members of the public.

---

30                    **COMMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

---

31                    **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillors Body and Jones.

---

32                    **APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBER**

It was reported that Councillor Ms. Foster had been appointed as a substitute member for Councillor Body for this meeting of the Committee only.

---

33                    **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the Member's Code of Conduct the following Members declared a personal interest in the matters stated, as follows:-

- (a) Councillor J Davies – in agenda item No. 7 – Proposed Revenue Budget 2007/08 insofar as it relates to the activities of the Citizens Advice Bureau.
  - (b) Councillor Southall – in agenda item Nos. 5 and 6 – Public Forum and Archives Update Report in view of the possible relocation of the Archives Service which may be the subject of a planning application in that he is a member of the Development Control Committee which may consider any such application.
- 

34

### MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2006, be approved as a correct record and signed.

---

35

### PUBLIC FORUM – ARCHIVES SERVICE

Councillor Southall left the meeting prior to the consideration given to this item and for the consideration of the next agenda item in view of the personal interest he had declared earlier in the meeting.

A member of the public reiterated questions raised at the meetings of this Committee held in September and October, 2006, regarding the Archives Service and the decision made in 2004 regarding the proposed move of that service from Coseley to Kingswinford. He also read out the decisions reached at those previous meetings and considered that the content of the report submitted to this meeting of the Committee on the current position regarding the archives did not adequately address the questions asked. Therefore, whilst welcoming the proposals to safeguard the archives, as indicated in the report, he again expressed concern at the lack of a response to the issues raised and again asked that consideration be given to the detrimental effect on Coseley should the archives be moved.

In response the Chairman indicated that the emphasis at the last meeting of the Committee was on action to preserve the archives and referred to the actions taken in this regard in the report submitted to this meeting of the Committee. He also commented that the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services had only been responsible for the archives service for approximately seven months and that a lot of work had been done during that period.

He further commented that in view of changing circumstances since the decision made to relocate the archive service that this decision was currently being reviewed. Members of the public would be given a further opportunity to comment following the presentation of the report submitted on the archives.

Another member of the public commented that in his opinion the future of the building itself should receive consideration in the context of its potential for regenerating Coseley and its cultural aspects. The Chairman indicated that this was a separate issue and that the Committee may wish to include in its programme for next year consideration of regeneration issues in areas such as Coseley.

The point made by the member of the public was not fully supported by other members of the public present who considered that the archives and the building in which they were housed should be considered as a whole.

Following further comments made consideration was then given to the next agenda item.

## ARCHIVES UPDATE REPORT

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted updating the Committee on the short term and long term situation for the Archives Service and on the outcome of the recent pilot assessment of the Archives Service.

In her presentation of the report the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services commented in particular on the actions taken to improve the management of the materials held by the Archives Service and the comparative information given arising from the outcome of the recent pilot assessment of the Archives Service. It was accepted that given the low scores in relation to Sections 4a and b of the assessment relating to buildings, security and environment and preservation and conservation that future plans needed to take account of these aspects and that given this situation options were currently being reviewed for the future of the Archives and Local History Service.

The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services further commented that some of the assumptions on which the decision taken in 2004 had been made to move the Archive Service had now changed and that any changes made were not going to be on a cost neutral basis. She also reported that the purchase of 'C' block at Kingswinford had not been finalised in the light of the requirements of BS5454 national standards and that because the consideration of the options

regarding the future of the Archives Service had only recently commenced she was not in a position to comment further at this stage. It was further indicated that it would take at least approximately six months before she would be in a position to report back to the Committee on this matter.

In response to a question asked regarding the 'sold' sign at the Kingswinford site it was reported that arrangements had been made to take the sign down.

In response to a further question asked regarding the regenerative benefits to Coseley of the Archives Service it was reported that it was not considered that regeneration was contingent on the archives remaining in Coseley in that regeneration could be dealt with in a number of ways. The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services further commented that at this stage it was highly unlikely given, for example, the requirements of BS5454 that a refurbishment scheme would be undertaken as against a new build project.

Arising from these comments the Chairman again reiterated his earlier comments regarding the possibility of the Committee considering in the next municipal year the future and regeneration potential of Coseley and other townships in the borough.

Members then made a number of points and in particular asked that interested parties, such as those present at the meeting, be involved in the consideration being given to the Archives Service and invited to submit ideas and options to the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services; welcomed the information now given by the Director on the basis of which any move would be costed; suggested the need to look at all archives and museum material held in various locations in the borough; the ongoing interest in the locality for the use of 'C' block as a community facility and the need for an early decision to be made regarding any use of 'C' block by the Council.

At the conclusion of points made members of the public were given the final say and arising from this it was confirmed that the decision made in 2004 had not been reversed but was being reviewed. The wish for the archives to remain in Coseley in their current location was also reiterated.

In conclusion the Chairman and Members were also thanked for the opportunity given to raise the concerns expressed.

## RESOLVED

- .(1) That the information contained in the report submitted, on the short term and long term situation for the Archives Service and on the outcome of the recent pilot assessment of the Archives Service, be noted.

- (2) That the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee on the conclusions reached arising from the consideration given to various options regarding the future of the Archives Service.
- (3) That the issue of the future regeneration of townships such as Coseley be considered for possible inclusion in next years Committee Work Programme.

---

37

REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2007/08

A joint report of officers was submitted on the proposed Revenue Budget and Council Tax for 2007/08. It was noted that the proposals contained in the report had been approved by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.

Following a presentation of the content of the report Members asked a number of questions to which responses were given. It was also noted that Councillor Crumpton would be writing to the Senior Assistant Director of Finance with questions requiring answers from Directorates.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet's Budget proposals for 2007/08 be noted and that no observations be made on the proposals.

---

38

QUARTERLY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on performance in the second quarter of 2006/07, July to September, 2006, in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee.

Members raised a number of points on the content of the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted and in this connection the Senior Assistant Director of Finance undertook to write direct to Councillor Davies regarding his query in respect of benefits take up.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on performance in the second quarter of 2006/07 July to September, 2006, in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee, be noted.

---

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEETINGS OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted on recommendations made at meetings of the Culture and Recreation and Economic Regeneration Working Groups of this Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2006.

Following introductions by the respective Chairmen, Councillors Tyler and Rahman , comments were made in respect of the recommendation made by the Culture and Recreation Working Group and it was considered that the last seven words of that recommendation should be substituted by the following words “.... maximising commercial opportunities” .In respect of the recommendation of the Economic Regeneration Working Group regarding the Orchard Partnership it was reported that funding had been secured for the next financial year for that body.

## RESOLVED

- (1) That approval be given to the recommendation of the Culture and Recreation Working Group, as varied, referring the matter regarding the Dell Stadium currently running at a deficit to the Economic Regeneration Working Group of this Committee with a view to maximising commercial opportunities.
- (2) That approval be given to the recommendation of the Economic Regeneration Working Group that the presentation regarding the Orchard Partnership be referred to the other Select Committees, particularly the Select Committee of Children Services, with a view to its inclusion in their work programmes and receipt of the same presentation so as to generate interest and spread awareness of the good work of the Partnership.

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN