



**Scrutiny Panel - Call-in**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Panel - Call-in** held in **Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes** on **08 December 2006** at **09:30** .

**Present:**

J H Webber (Chair on election), R C S Brown, A M Craven, H B Livings, J A Ost

**Officers Attending:**

David Feintuck – Committee Officer/Scrutiny Secretary

**Also in Attendance:** false485true487

Councillors A C De Vecchi and N R Turner  
Mr A Denyer – Secretary, Dove 2000 Ltd  
Mr J Eccles – Sussex Express

	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Election of Chair</b>	
	<u>Resolved</u>	
	<b>1.1</b>	That Councillor Webber be elected Chair for the meeting.

**2 Disclosure by councillors of personal interests in matters on the Agenda (including whipping declarations, if any), the nature of any interest and whether the councillor regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct**

Councillor Ost declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as a Newhaven resident and member of Newhaven Town Council, which had supported Dove in the past. Councillors Brown and Webber declared personal, non-prejudicial interests as members of Seaford and Lewes Town Councils respectively, each of which had supported Dove in the past.

All Panel councillors declared there were no whipping arrangements in place.

**3 Call-in - Cabinet 23 November 2006, Minute 108 - Proposed Award of Grant to Dove 2000 Ltd**

**1 Call-in – Cabinet 23 November 2006, Minute 108 – Proposed Award of Grant to Dove 2000 Ltd**

The Panel considered Report No 262/06 which provided background information to support the call-in procedure.

At the request of the Chair, the Scrutiny Secretary outlined the procedure defined in Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 (Appendix A to the Report). The Committee considered the Report presented to Cabinet on 23 November 2006, together with the information provided by Dove to that meeting (Appendix B) and Resolution 108.4 (within Minute 108 at Appendix C), the subject of the call-in. The Panel considered in detail the reasons for the request for a call-in (Appendix D).

In discussion, councillors made the following points:

- The Director of Finance and Community Services had received no accounts from Dove, whose circumstances may have changed since the Cabinet resolution
- There had been recent press reports of a high court action involving Dove
- Although no annual accounts were possible as the company was only formed in May 2006, the Cabinet could request to see interim accounts
- Councillors were at variance as to whether the conditions attached to Resolution 108.4 gave sufficiently strong protection to the Council to mitigate against any possibility of unintended use of

public money


- The Chair reported that the Director of Finance and Community Services was content that the conditions attached to Resolution 108.4 were sufficiently stringent
- The Council supported Dove's aims
- Although it was apparent from Cabinet Minute 108 that Dove was in deficit, it was not unusual for campaigning groups to need to incur expenses beyond their budget
- Were Dove's finances not in good order, it might prove impossible for the company to call on the grant because of the conditions already imposed within Resolution 108.4
- "Political purpose" in Resolution 108.4 (d) was not, in the opinion of some councillors, sufficiently clearly defined

### Resolved

**1.1** That the matter be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration; and

**1.2** That, should the Cabinet be minded to reaffirm Resolution 108.4, the Cabinet be requested to take into account:

- (i) Any changes of circumstances to Dove's finances since Resolution 108.4 on 23 November 2006;
  - (ii) The robustness of "political purpose" in Resolution 108.4 (d);
- and
- (iii) The recommended addition of a condition 108.4

(f):  "That the Council be provided with interim accounts (such as a statement showing funds promised and funds banked and receipted invoices paid) which are considered acceptable by the Director of Finance and Community Services before the costed proposal, referred to in Resolution 108.4 (a), is agreed by the Lead Councillors for Environment and Planning."

The meeting ended at 10.35am

The meeting ended at **11:30** .

**J H Webbertrue488** Chair