

# minutes



Meeting	COMMUNITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE
Date	Monday, 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2004 (commencing at 10.30 am)

## membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

## COUNCILLORS

A Joyce Bosnjak JP (Chair)  
Richard Butler (Vice-Chair) (In the Chair)

Mrs Sue Bennett		R Needham
John Cottee	A	Peter D Prebble
Alan Davison		R S Robinson
Andy Freeman		Maureen Tewson
John Hemsall	A	A Woodward
E D W Llewellyn-Jones		

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak  
“ A Woodward\*

\* - denotes on other County Council business

## MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Select Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2004 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

## CORPORATE SAFER COMMUNITIES AND PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE STRATEGIES

Mr Dudley Development Officer introduced the report that advised members on the progress in developing the new 3-year Nottinghamshire County Council Safer Communities and Prevention of Substances Misuse Strategies, which will run from April 2005 to March 2008.

In terms of the Safer Communities Strategy he said that its drafting would be guided by the identification of priority themes through local audits and

community partnership consultation and that consideration would also need to be given to the developing national situation. It was explained that the targets agreed between partners would then drive the allocation of the budgets. He added that a programme of Strategy Development meetings was being planned at which Member input would be welcomed.

With regard to the Substance Misuse Strategy, Mr Dudley said that the new strategy was in its early stages of development and initial meetings with the Drug, Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) was underway. He explained that through its work with partners it had responsibility for delivering the Government's national drug strategy at a local level. It was hoped that the draft document would be available for consultation in early March 2005.

In response to a question from Councillor Davison, Mr Dudley explained that it was too early to say whether or not there had been a reduction in crime due to the countywide strategy although there had been a reduction in domestic burglary. Mr Dudley said that he would pass information on to Councillor Davison on his local area.

The Select Committee felt it important and beneficial to have member input on local issues on the ground and to look at whether any of the anti-social behaviour was a result of substance mis-use. Mr Dudley pointed out that the longer-term plan was to improve behaviour and seek to reintegrate offenders back into society.

The Select Committee noted the report.

### **DRUG SCRUTINY SEMINARS**

Mr Dudley introduced the report to the Select Committee that gave a summary of the second Drug Scrutiny Seminar held at the International Clothing Centre on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2004. In doing so, he said that presentations had been heard from the Criminal Justice Workers, the Courts, the Probation and the Youth Offending Service and had provided an opportunity to consider how far the range of services dealing with substance and drug issues was making a difference in the County. The seminar had focused on early intervention and had emphasised the impact in relation to cost and the likely long term re-offending of young people if they were allowed to become embedded in a life involving crime.

Mr Dudley reiterated that the Youth Inclusion and Support Programmes had been created to divert young people away from the Courts and to deliver diversionary activities and other early interventions. He also pointed out that its work with the young family as well as the young person was critical.

Mr Dudley was pleased to report that although there were some frustrations there was a growing confidence in Nottinghamshire that the services were moving in the right direction and that better shared planning and information sharing was making a difference.

Members of the Select Committee commented that they were unaware of services available in their area and asked Mr Dudley for the information to be made available to them.

The Select Committee noted the report.

### **THE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE**

Karl Phillips, the Acting Head for the Youth Offending Service gave a presentation to the Select Committee on the work undertaken by the Youth Offending Service in respect of the crime reduction agenda. It was explained that there was current pressure being faced by the service in delivering services within a nationally prescribed framework. He pointed out that although the service performs well in some key areas such as Restorative Justice (young offenders facing up to their crimes by meeting their victims) there were concerns regarding the reconviction rate of the most prolific offenders.

Mr Phillips also pointed out that the service's management structure suffered due to the fact that it was the largest Team in the region and had the smallest management structure. In relation to the development of the Children's Trust he said that although the guidelines were not very prescriptive, it was hoped that it would strengthen and contribute to the work of the service.

In response to a question, Mr Phillips said that some of the preventative measures were working although this was only an anecdotal measure and that it would be a matter of time before the service would know with some certainty.

In response to a question from Councillor Davison regarding the Youth Offending Team office at Dale House, Mr Hodge explained that the Department was working towards finding more suitable offices.

Councillor Needham expressed his concern at the service not being able to cope if the police were to increase their detection rate by 50%. Mr Phillips explained that the police were on the case of prolific offenders and that the agencies were picking up offending youngsters.

The Select Committee noted the report.

### **PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTHORITIES CONFERENCE**

Tony Cook Principal Libraries Officer introduced the report to the Select Committee which gave an update on the themes and issues explored at the annual Public Library Authorities (PLA) Conference held over 12 to 15 October 2004 and had been attended by Councillors C J Bromfield and J Cottee. It was reported that much had been gained from the sessions and from networking including an increased knowledge of the proposed national indicators.

Councillor Needham felt that there was a need for library staff to be able to engage with young people. It was recognised that some clients were put off by some of the disruptive behaviour displayed by young people in and around some of the library premises.

The Select Committee noted the report.

### **FURTHER REPORT ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY**

Richard Money introduced the report that updated the Select Committee on the situation regarding the potential way forward for the County Council and the Nottingham Trent University and gave an oral update on the meeting held at County Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004.

In doing so, he reminded the Select Committee of the initial approach made by Nottingham Trent University to discuss their future plans for delivery of education and developing better links to regeneration activities within the county.

It was pointed out that a number of officer discussions had taken place during the summer months and that it had not been possible for the University's Vice Chancellor Professor, Peter Jones and Gail Dixon, Business Manager to meet representatives from the Higher Education Study Group until 2 December 2004, when Councillors Bosnjak and Llewellyn-Jones finally discussed issues of common interest with them.

He explained to the Select Committee that the University was keen to know how it could co-operate with the County Council to serve the needs of the people in Nottinghamshire and to be more involved. He reported that Professor Jones had highlighted what the University had been doing with other institutions and said that its longer-term vision was to create a hybrid establishment bringing together the best features of further and higher education systems.

Mr Money also said that there was discussion regarding the university's role in getting graduates into work. In this respect he said that the university had good relations with some of the large employers.

Councillors Needham and Llewellyn-Jones also underlined the University's commitment to closer work with the County Council and with the County's communities.

Richard Money said that it had been agreed to hold further meetings in the New Year to explore some of the local opportunities.

The Select Committee noted the report and the oral update of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004.

## **GRANT AID**

Mr Hodge updated the Select Committee on the progress made towards implementing the recommendations made by the Grant Aid Select Committee. The report was noted and it was agreed that a further report be presented back to the Committee.

## **TRADING STANDARDS BEST VALUE AND PEER REVIEW**

Mr Hodge, Assistant Director of Culture and Community updated the Select Committee in relation to the Best Value and Peer Review currently being undertaken within Trading Standards.

Mr Hodge reminded Members that the Peer Review process was designed around the European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM) whereby authorities were required to do a self-assessment using a specially developed website.

In terms of the authority's self-assessment he was pleased to report that significant progress had been made using the SOCTSO webtool. He said that the team would be meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Select Committee and the Deputy Leader upon which he would report the outcome back to this Committee. It was hoped that the Peer Review process would take place in Nottinghamshire in early March 2005.

The report was noted and it was agreed that a progress report be brought back to the Select Committee in 6 months time.

## **COMPLETION REPORT OF THE POST OFFICE CLOSURES STUDY GROUP**

The Select Committee received an update on the completion of the work of the Post Office Closures Study Group. It was explained that the areas of work set up as part of the recommendations would deal effectively with the recommendations in the final report and that the work of the Study Group was therefore complete. The Select Committee acknowledged what a useful and worthwhile piece of work it had been.

The final report was noted.

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor Cottee asked for more information on the Destination Management Partnership.

It was agreed that a report would be presented to the Select Committee on the 13 key performance indicators relating to the Youth Offending Team.

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm.

## **CHAIR**

