

# minutes



Meeting      COMMUNITY SERVICES STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE

Date          Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2004 (commencing at 10.30 am)

## **membership**

Persons absent are marked with `A`

## **COUNCILLORS**

	Mrs Sue Bennett		E D W Llewellyn-Jones
	Joyce Bosnjak (Chair)		R Needham
	Richard Butler (Vice-Chair)		Peter D Prebble
	John Cottee		R S Robinson
A	Alan Davison		Maureen Tewson
	Andy Freeman	A	A Woodward
	John Hempsall		

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor A Davison\*  
“        A Woodward\*

\* - denotes on other County Council business

## **MATTERS ARISING**

With regard to the matters raised at the last meeting on the Saville Restaurant, Nic Broomhead, Head of Country Parks, informed the Select Committee of the Leisure Catering Training Plan 2004/05 that was in place to address the skills gap identified amongst many of the catering staff. A copy of the plan was circulated to Members. Councillor Bosnjak thanked Mr Broomhead and asked for a report back at a later date to see how progress was being made.

The Select Committee was informed of the two recent incidents that had occurred in Nottinghamshire that had necessitated responses from the County's Emergency Planning team. Sue Storey, Emergency Planning Manager, described the level of support provided at both of the incidents and how the Authority led in the evacuation of the members of the public. Ms Storey added that the evacuations had been successful and said that lessons had been learned following full multi-agency debriefs that would be put into practise in the future. The Select Committee was disappointed at the lack of recognition given to the Council's emergency planning team. Mr Hodge pointed out that there was a media plan that would seek to raise the

awareness of Nottinghamshire County Council role in the future. It was agreed to pass the Select Committees thanks on to those staff involved.

Councillor Bosnjak also informed the Select Committee of the work that had commenced to draw up a response to the questions in the DCMS Consultation document. In doing so, she pointed out that there would be a further meeting with Councillor Butler and Councillor Needham and that she would update the Select Committee at its next meeting.

Councillor Needham asked that Mr Challan's outstanding contribution to the County Council be noted.

### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

Liz Lesquereux, Head of Communities and Partnerships, introduced the report to the Select Committee that gave an update on the progress made with the Countywide Community Strategy, its working groups and proposal for a major conference in November 2004.

It was explained that the Community Strategy was increasing in importance and that at present the County Council was still overseeing the work in the absence of a countywide Local Strategic Plan (LSP). Ms Lesquereux said that although good progress was being made there was not a lot of will for a countywide LSP and felt that without one the work would struggle.

The Select Committee was also updated on the progress made on each of the themes in the Community Strategy that the County Council was developing countywide strategic boards for. It was explained that the current framework community strategy ran until March 2005 and that it was being revised. Ms Lesquereux said that the County Council as part of developing the next strategy had commissioned MORI to undertake the bi-annual consultation with members of the public to give the County Council an opportunity to see where it has made progress in delivering on key concerns. The interim results she explained were to be shared as part of a major conference involving a wide-ranging audience, to be held on 13 November 2004 at Centre Parcs.

Councillor Bosnjak thanked Ms Lesquereux for providing clarity on a number of issues. The Select Committee shared their concerns about the lack of an LSP to oversee the process. Councillor Butler was concerned that more time might be spent discussing partnerships rather than dealing with issues. It was suggested that Members on district LSP's might be useful to contribute to the process.

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

Chris Walker, Community Safety Manager, updated the Select Committee on the Community Safety work being undertaken by the County Council through the second year of the Corporate Community Safety Strategy 2003-2005 which included a brief summary of performance measured against a number of key targets.

Mr Walker said that there was an increasing input on the wider community safety agenda in terms of Public Protection, Road Safety and Avoidable Injury reduction. This he said highlighted the way the County Council was implementing the recommendations from the Best Value Community Safety and subsequent inspection by the Audit Commission.

In terms of the crime statistics, Mr Walker pointed out that it was important to bear in mind that Nottinghamshire was not alone in seeing a reduction and that this was also happening nationally.

### **REGISTRATION SERVICE AD HOC SELECT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Bosnjak introduced the report to the Select Committee that provided an update on the activities of the Registration Service Ad Hoc Select Committee and progress on its recommendations.

The Ad Hoc Select Committee had completed its work and Councillor Bosnjak suggested that a progress report on the proposals be brought to this Select Committee in April 2005.

In terms of the Civil Registration changes, Richard Hodge, Assistant Director (Community Protection) explained that although there were no extra resources, progress was being made. The Select Committee also referred to the suitability of registration premises in terms of access and had regard to the delicate nature of registration.

The Select Committee noted and welcomed the improvements made to accommodation.

It was noted that a further report would be brought back to the Select Committee giving an update on the progress made in the preparation for Civil Registration changes following the HM Inspectors report in November 2004.

It was also agreed that a progress report be presented to the Select Committee in April 2005.

### **MODERNISING RURAL DELIVERY – THE DEFRA STRATEGY 2004**

Geoff George, the Economic Initiatives Manager informed the Select Committee of the publication of the Government's Rural Strategy "Modernising Rural Delivery". In doing so, he drew their attention to a number of key issues arising as a consequence and notably the potential impact of proposed structural changes, to ensure better clarity for DEFRA's customers and the more efficient use of its resources. Mr George explained that the strategy focused on 3 new priority areas for rural policy in England; economic and social regeneration, social justice for all, and enhancing the value of the countryside.

He pointed out that the main structural change was the creation of a new “Integrated Agency” which will bring together all of the English Nature, most of the Rural Development Service and parts of the Countryside Agency which is anticipated to be formally established in 2007 pending parliamentary approval. In addition the Countryside Agency’s role will change significantly, focussing more on policy and influence than on delivery.

In terms of a regional perspective, he said that the Government Office for the East Midlands would be taking more of a lead on the overall policy fix, while the Development Agency more of a responsibility for actual delivery from April 2005. The initial responsibility lay with the Government Office who would be taking a lead on developing a framework for rural delivery within the region.

The Select Committee had reservations with regard to regionalisation and possible tensions in the respective roles of the Government Office and Development Agency. The detail would need to be explored further and Councillor Bosnjak noted that this could be usefully pursued through the Rural Study Group.

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor Bosnjak informed the Select Committee that a report back on the Grant Aid Review would be added to the programme.

It was also noted that there would be an update at the next meeting on the progress made with the North Nottinghamshire University group.

The work programme was noted.

The meeting closed at 12 noon.

### **CHAIR**

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