

# minutes



Meeting SOCIAL SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2006 (commencing at 10.30am)

## Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

## COUNCILLORS

Steve Carroll (Chair)  
Joe Lonergan MBE (Vice Chair)

	John Allin	A	Rod Kempster
A	Steve Carr		John Knight
	Jen Cole		Pat Lally
	Jim Creamer		Sheila Place
A	Keith Girling		Lynn Sykes

## MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Select Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2006 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Keith Girling  
“ Rod Kempster

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

## RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE SERVICES – PROGRESS REPORT

Helen Ryan, Assistant Director, Children – Commissioning introduced the report on developments in residential child care services, following the review completed in 2004. Councillor Lonergan regarded the achievements as a success story for the Select Committee, with a significant change in thinking leading to an improved service for all residential homes. He asked about the input from the Education Department. Ms Ryan replied that the Education Department participated in the multi-disciplinary children in public care team and were committed to their involvement. In reply to a further question from Councillor Lonergan, she explained that the closure of Springteen would put some additional pressure on the system. However there was another unit in the County where the service bought places, and

the Department was developing arrangements for supported accommodation. She stated that the closure should not result in out of county placements.

Councillor Allin asked whether the matter should be retained in the Committee's work programme until Springteen had closed. Councillor Carroll agreed there was a need to be flexible if issues arose. He asked about the continued availability of funding for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Ms Ryan replied that PCTs had some CAMHS Grant in addition to a county-wide CAMHS Grant for this work. Ms Ryan confirmed that whilst there is no guarantee of continued funding there is commitment to maintain this service in the future. Councillor Lally referred to the high cost of residential places. Councillor Carroll responded that the previous administration had decided to have smaller residential units because they were more effective. He believed it was difficult to put a cost on the service, which the Authority was obliged to provide.

It was agreed to remove residential child care services from the Committee's programme of work, as all the recommendations of the Study Group have now been implemented, with the flexibility to consider any outstanding serious issues if necessary.

## **REVIEW OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES 2005/06**

Tony Wardle, Service Head, Supported Employment introduced the report on the various activities undertaken by his team. The Committee adjourned from 11.00 – 11.30 am to view displays about the service and talk to employees and service users.

In reply to Councillor Knight, Mr Wardle outlined the origins of supported employment and the development of the various County Council services. He explained that 2005/06 was the first year that the service had not broken even, this being due to lower sales of meals and furniture. Councillor Lonergan emphasised that the intention was not to make a profit, and that in the past, surpluses had been used to improve the service.

In reply to Councillor Cole, Mr Wardle explained that the delegation of budgets to schools had made the marketing of furniture more difficult. Sherwood Industries had to demonstrate the benefits of paying more for a higher quality product. Councillor Knight believed there was a dependence on the County Council, and wished the service to market more to the private sector. Mr Wardle responded that there would be a need to identify markets and bear the additional costs of sales and marketing, while also recognising the extra distribution costs when delivering outside Nottinghamshire. He referred to the existing sales and marketing function at Sherwood Industries, which he believed could be more effective.

Councillor Lonergan asked a number of questions about aspects of the service. Paul McKay, Assistant Director, Direct Services – Adults, explained the differences between chilled and frozen meals. He intended to review the service to see if users or their friends were able to heat a frozen meal. While he acknowledged that while the lunch service did give social contact, this could be provided by other means. Mr Wardle explained that the county supported three places at Portshel, which was the commercial side of Portland Training College, and gave other support as well. In relation to developments, he explained that £0.5m of developments had been

identified, but without reserves to pay for them. However a number of projects had been prioritised and would be going ahead. He explained that the Government provided grant towards each placement on the Workstep programme.

Councillor Carroll suggested that the Supported Employment Steering Group considered the issue of marketing, and that he write on behalf of the Select Committee to the Corporate Procurement Unit to remind them of the Supported Employment Service's activities.

### **FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME**

In relation to the work programme, the Committee agreed with the Chair's suggestion that he, the vice-chair and officers reconsider the agendas for the next two meetings, with priority to be given to information from the Director and Cabinet Member on plans for the service.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm.

### **CHAIR**

M\_20feb06