

minutes



Meeting **COMMUNITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE**

Date Monday, 18th July 2005 (commencing at 10.30 am)

membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

A Y Davidson (Chair)
Richard Butler (Vice-Chair)(In the Chair)

A	Reg Adair	Edward Llewellyn-Jones
	Peter Barnes	Jim O'Riordan
	Jen Cole	Mrs S Saddington
A	Alan Davison	Mark Spencer
	Albert Haynes	Brian Wombwell

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor M M Brandon-Bravo
Councillor Joyce Bosnjak

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Select Committee held on 13th June 2005 were confirmed and signed by the Chair, subject to Councillor Wombwell's presence being noted.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Peter Barnes
" Yvonne Davidson
" Alan Davison

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Personal

Councillor Richard Butler declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 6 – Adult and Community Learning Services Inspection and Improvement Plan.

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Partnerships, Councillor Joyce Bosnjak, gave an insight to members on the County Council's new portfolio. In doing so she explained the reason behind the creation of the dedicated portfolio and referred to its top priorities which included:-

- Tackling alcohol related issues
- Anti social behaviour
- Partnership working
- Support for countywide neighbourhood watch network effective enforcement

In terms of its budget, Councillor Bosnjak explained that a lot was already committed before she was given responsibility for this portfolio.

The Select Committee heard about the plans and key issues in relation to its future work. In terms of emergency planning, Councillor Bosnjak explained that there was to be a risk assessment carried out on all of the elected member districts. It would also look at what was expected as an elected member and their responsibilities. A package would be put together based on the outcomes. There was discussion regarding the relationship between the Select Committee and Cabinet. Councillor Bosnjak hoped the relationship would be rewarding and assured members that she did not regard the select committee as subordinate in any way. Richard Hodge explained how some regulatory functions came under the Planning and Public Protection Committee rather than cabinet.

Councillor Bosnjak outlined her priorities for the budget remaining and agreed to provide Members with a detailed report on the portfolio.

TRADING STANDARDS PEER REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Richard Hodge updated the Select Committee on the Improvement Plan that had been drawn up following the recent peer review of the Trading Standards Service. In doing so, he explained that the purpose of the process was for each Trading Standard Service to assess how well it is performing and to identify areas for improvement. The Authority was the second within the East

Midlands Region to have taken part in the Department of Trade and Industry's Peer Review process which is part of the National Performance Framework for Trading Standards. The Select Committee were informed of the process involved in the review. Mr Hodge highlighted some of its findings and referred to a number of areas identified for improvement.

Mr Hodge promised to provide the Select Committee with an update on the milestones as and when they happened.

The Select Committee asked a number of questions in relation to the New Consumer Direct East Midlands. Mr Hodge explained that all calls for the first tier of consumer advice had been transferred into the call centre. The initiative was being governed by a management board.

Following a meeting of its management board in June 2005, Mr Hodge was pleased to report that it was handling initial calls well and offering consumers sound, first tier advice. The more involved, complex complaints were referred to Trading Standards Advice Services for investigation.

In response to a question from Councillor O'Riordan, Mr Hodge also explained that in the main it was telephone contact and that it would not replace existing services.

After further discussion and clarification, the Committee noted the report.

ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICE INSPECTION AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Celia Morris, Adult and Community Services introduced the report that informed the Select committee of the outcome of the recent Adult Learning Inspection (ALI) of the Adult and Community Learning Service (ACLS) and the actions arising from it. In doing so, she explained that the ACLS had been established in order for the County Council to secure funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to enable continued delivery of all adult education service to Nottinghamshire residents. The ACLS was one of the first services to undergo inspection against the revised Common Inspection Framework (CIF).

It was explained that the inspection was similar to that of ofsted in schools. It had focused on 5 areas of learning. The overall effectiveness of the service had been graded inadequate. It was pointed out that although the grade was disappointing it was encouraging to find that strengths had been identified, including the quality of teaching. Also that the self-assessment had been robust and expressed confidence that the service has the capacity to make the improvements required. The service was also working hard to address those areas of weakness found by the inspectors.

It was also pointed out that the service would be addressing the key challenges referred to in paragraph 11 of the report over the coming months.

Sue Green, Adult and Community Services Learning Manager said that the Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) would be with the inspectors in early August and that there would also need to be discussions with the Learning and Skills Council to ensure that they are happy with the proposals.

In terms of funding Ms Green explained that whilst officers were still waiting for the final details of the LSC's revised funding and planning proposals it was expected that they would be recommending a reduction in the amount of funding spent on personal development courses such as art and yoga. The service would need to respond to this change in direction and recognise that there would be a detrimental impact on some learners.

In response to a question from Councillor Spencer, Ms Green said that the issue was to do with the quality of what was taking place and not the quantity. The services ability to put on classes would depend a lot on the LSC.

Councillor Llewellyn-Jones wondered how officers had coped with their changing role. Ms Green explained that that a lead inspector would be appointed to carry out a series of visits to assess the team's progress against the PIAP prior to re-inspection.

Councillor O'Riordan felt that officers had been given a hard task in having to go into colleges where he believed that many of the teachers were feeling isolated and poorly motivated.

The Select Committee commented on the requirement placed upon tutors and students in particular in relation to personal development courses and form filling.

The Select Committee noted the report.

WORK PROGRAMME

David Ellis introduced the report on the proposed work programme for the forthcoming year. Following discussion it was agreed that a report be presented at its next meeting on the Community Safety Initiatives.

The Select Committee noted the proposed programme of work.

The meeting closed at 12.20 pm.

CHAIR

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