



Meeting	OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
Date	Wednesday, 19 th March 2003 (commencing at 10.30 am)

membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Roy R J Barsley (Chair)
M M Brandon-Bravo OBE (Vice-Chairman)

	Chris Baron		Tom Pettengell
	Mrs Sue Bennett	A	D E Pulk
	Joyce Bosnjak JP		Mrs Nellie Smedley
	V H Dobson	A	Mrs S M Smedley
A	John M Hemsall		Martin Suthers OBE
	Joe Lonergan MBE		
	J T A Napier		

Added Members - With Voting Rights

A Mr K Daly
A Mr P Read
Mr D Richards
1 Vacancy

Trade Union Representatives (Non-Voting)

A Mr V Baines
A Mr C Tansley (represented by Mr A Birchenough)

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 5th February 2003 having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor John M Hemsall (on other County Council business)
" D E Pulk
" Mrs S M Smedley

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

PROPOSED ACCOMMODATION CENTRE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

Councillor Barsley introduced the report.

Heather Dickinson from the Legal Department explained that the inquiry into the proposed accommodation centre at RAF Newton was a Crown matter and was not a normal planning matter. She stated that advice had been taken from the barrister who would be representing the County Council at the inquiry. She pointed out that the Study Group had met a range of people but that because of the pace of change there was a risk that the information may become historical. She emphasised that there was a need to ensure that the evidence at the public inquiry was as up to date as possible. This was why the Study Group's notes had been shared with those preparing evidence for submission to the Newton public inquiry and, where appropriate, they would be assimilated in the formal evidence of the County Council's witnesses who would be giving evidence to the public inquiry. She pointed out that at the Bicester inquiry the Home Office was making new statements during the inquiry which needed an immediate response.

Councillor Barsley indicated that when the report had been considered Cabinet had thanked the Study Group Members for their hard work in dealing with the complex issues in the short timescales which had been available.

Councillor Brandon-Bravo thought that this work was a good example of how scrutiny should operate. He thought that it had been a first class job in the timescale.

Councillor Napier referred to the new flu viruses and an increase in TB and asked for reassurance that a full health audit would be carried out on asylum seekers so that the Primary Care Trusts could be aware of the health issues. Councillor Baron referred to the Mansfield Community Health Team which had carried out a review of mental health which seemed to show that second generation immigrants were prone to mental health problems. Councillor Sue Bennett explained that one of the concerns was that the mental health problems would not be identified until the asylum seekers had settled.

It was agreed to note the report and the Overview Select Committee's thanks were extended to the Study Group Members and participants for their hard work in dealing with complex issues in a short timescale and meeting the terms of reference set out by this Committee.

GRANT AID REVIEW - PROGRESS

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak stated the Ad Hoc Panel had met on three occasions and were collecting raw data on grant aid and other forms of financial support to the voluntary and community sector. She added that this was not a review of the voluntary sector but that they were looking at the amount of funds going to voluntary organisations. They were also considering issues of universal application form, common monitoring, cost cutting through economies of scale. She commented that the

Select Committee were experiencing some difficulties in obtaining information. She stressed that the purpose was not to recommend grant aid cuts. She suggested that October 2003 be agreed as the target date for the completion of the review. Councillor Brandon-Bravo wondered whether audit should be involved in assisting the review and Councillor Joyce Bosnjak agreed to look at this suggestion.

It was agreed that the current progress be noted and that October 2003 be agreed as the target date for the completion of the review.

REPORT OF THE TELECENTRE STUDY GROUP

Councillor Brian Smith, the Chair of the Study Group, introduced the report. He thanked the other Members of the Study Group and indicated that he had appreciated the assistance from Nigel Stevenson from the Policy and Resources Department. He indicated that there were 6 people who worked in the Telecentre but that 2 were seconded temporarily to do work for the County's website development. He referred to an article in the Nottingham Evening Post in which Councillor Winterton, the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, had stated that 20 businesses could be picked to be helped to provide information on the web. He hoped that the Telecentre could be given consideration for this work. He pointed out that the staff had been loyal to the County Council and that this work could be carried out anywhere providing there was a computer and electricity supply.

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak stated that when the scheme had been established it was about regenerating deprived areas. She thought there was a need for a proper exit strategy. She thought there needed to be more support from the County Council when limited companies were established. In response to a question from Councillor Napier, Councillor Smith stated that the original idea was that work would be provided in coal mining areas. He stated that there was a lot of regeneration going on but that businesses tended to want to locate in larger places which meant that people had to travel.

Councillor Brandon-Bravo wondered whether the title of Warsop Telecentre was a problem. Councillor Brian Smith thought that IT Centre would be a better description.

Mr Birchenough on behalf of UNISON welcomed the report from the Study Group. He stated that the people employed in the Telecentre had all previously been unemployed and given basic training to do overflow work from the County Council. This was successful and then they started to do internet work which had led to 2 of the workers leading technically on the development of the web. He pointed out that they were not included in the new corporate site and that should have happened. He felt that there could be a future for the Telecentre as more information would be going onto the web and that more people and training would be needed. He pointed out that he did not want the work transferring from the existing staff and new posts created, whilst the Telecentre staff were made redundant. He felt that new work could be put to the Telecentre which would guarantee their future. Councillor Pettengell thought that the Telecentre had never been properly marketed when it became part of Design and Print. Councillor Sue Bennett welcomed the recommendations and hoped that something positive would come out. Mr Perry Holmes from Legal Services who was co-ordinating the Freedom of Information project stated that he would take on board the possibility of the Telecentre being involved.

It was agreed that the Study Group's report be forwarded to the Cabinet with a request for a response from the Deputy Leader within 2 months.

OVERVIEW AND SCUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Baron reported that a special meeting of the Social Services Select Committee had considered the Climbie Inquiry report earlier that week and that there was a Members' Seminar on 24th March. The issue would be considered at the next meeting of the Social Services Select Committee when a decision would be made about what action to take next.

Councillor Baron reported that a report would be brought to the next meeting proposing that the completion date for the School Improvement Services Best Value Review be put back until later in the year. Councillor Barsley suggested that the Chairs needed to look at the work programme for the next 12 months with a view to producing a plan.

It was agreed to note the current work programme.

PROPOSED NEW AREAS OF SCRUTINY FOR THE CORPORATE STRATEGY AND CO-ORDINATION STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE

Approval was given for the Corporate Strategy and Co-ordination Standing Select Committee to review in more detail:-

- Progress on the Strategic Plan.
- Targets on Sickness Absence.
- Access to Buildings for people with a disability.
- A Call Centre approach for access to County Council services.

The meeting closed at 11.35 am

CHAIR

OVERVIEW/M_19march03