

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26th July 2004

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Harrington (Chair), Councillor Bambrick (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Mrs. Mead and Mulgrew.

Conservative Group

Councillors Hood and Lemmon.

In Attendance

Councillors Murphy and Taylor (Labour Group).

APOLOGY

An apology for absence from the Meeting was received from Councillor Martin (Conservative Group).

An apology was also received from Councillor Southerd (Labour Group) who had been invited to attend the Meeting as Chair of the Environmental and Development Services Committee to discuss the car parking issue.

CYS/6. MINUTES

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th June 2004 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

CYS/7. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND REPORTS

The Chair circulated a document "Guidance for Commissioning a Scrutiny Review". Feedback on the document was requested from Scrutiny Members as soon as possible in order that measures could be implemented to guide and assist Policy Committees in commissioning reviews from scrutiny committees.

CYS/8. CAR PARKING STUDY

The Chair welcomed Councillor Taylor (Vice-Chair of the Environmental and Development Services Committee) who was in attendance at the Meeting by invitation to discuss the car parking study. The Chair advised Councillor Taylor that the Scrutiny Committee was seeking guidance from the Environmental and Development Committee as to the scale and nature the Community Scrutiny Committee should pursue a car parking review.

Councillor Taylor talked about the Environment and Development Services Committee's responsibility with regard to car parking and advised that he understood this issue was last visited in 1999. He stated that the Swadlincote town centre continued to change and suggested that the new Morrisons development might be creating more car parking spaces, which he assumed would be free. The Chair suggested that the arrival of Morrisons could alleviate the current situation or it could promote a car parking

problem. The Chair referred to previous discussions with Officers of Derbyshire County Council who had offered their assistance to undertake a car parking study in the urban core.

Councillor Taylor advised the Meeting that he was not sure that any detailed review of car parking had ever been done and suggested that there were other related issues which needed to be looked at, such as sustainability, public transport, cycling policies etc. Councillor Taylor agreed to take this issue and pursue it through the Environmental and Development Services Committee. He talked about the staffing related issue and the need to identify resources to assist with such a review, should the offer from the County Council be pursued.

The Chair advised Councillor Taylor that the Community Scrutiny Committee would prepare a report to the Environment and Development Services Committee asking for a remit and brief for the Study, if it wished Scrutiny to take this further. The Chair also drew Councillor Taylor's attention to the safety issues identified by the Crime and Disorder Partnership's Police Liaison Officer with regard to the Council's urban car parks.

Councillor Lemmon suggested that Etwall would be an ideal area to conduct a mini car parking survey.

To conclude, Councillor Taylor advised the Meeting that the issue of car parking needed to be looked at in the light of other policies and strategies of the Environmental and Development Services Committee and advised that he would pursue this matter accordingly.

CYS/9. PLAY EQUIPMENT AND URBAN PARKS

This item was deferred to a future Meeting.

CYS/10. WORK PROGRAMME

A general discussion took place regarding the Committee's future Work Programme.

The Committee expressed a need to look at health scrutiny and to talk to Derbyshire County Council to ascertain its current programme of health scrutiny. Councillor Mrs. Mead suggested that the Committee could look at the problems of obesity in schools. Councillor Murphy suggested that an ideal topic would be to explore whether health services in the District were co-ordinated and joined-up and whether they were 'client centred'. Accordingly, it was agreed to invite Derbyshire County Council and the Primary Care Trust to a future meeting when this matter was to be discussed. The Council's Policy and Best Value Manager advised that the Committee could also look at the related issue of "Supporting People". She also advised the meeting that communication and consultation was an important issue for both scrutiny committees and the Committee could consider this matter at the same time as looking at the scrutiny of health. Councillor Murphy suggested that the Committee could look at how inclusive the Council's consultation processes were and a discussion took place regarding consultation with 'Hard to Reach' groups. The Council's Policy and Best Value Manager advised that the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership was currently undertaking work on consultation with hard to reach groups which the Committee might find of interest.

Councillor Bambrick supported undertaking work on the scrutiny of the co-ordination of environmental enforcement such as litter, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles. It was suggested that the Community Scrutiny Committee could work with the Crime and Disorder Partnership and look specifically at the issue of community wardens. The Meeting was advised that the Director of Community Services was currently undertaking some research with regard to community wardens and a request was made that the findings of this study be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

A discussion also took place regarding the closure of rural post offices and Members indicated a wish to pursue this issue.

Following a detailed discussion, the Committee agreed the following list of priorities:-

- (1) Housing (Supporting People/sheltered housing)
- (2) Communication and consultation
- (3) Rural proofing
- (4) Health
- (5) Community Strategy (October meeting)
- (6) Housing Strategy – Progress report on stock options (September Meeting)

The Committee agreed to visit Peartree Court, Unity Close and Newlands Close sheltered housing accommodation prior to the September Meeting and to invite TACT to attend the September meeting of the Committee when the issue of sheltered housing would be discussed. The Committee also agreed to ask Derbyshire County Council about its programme for the scrutiny of health with a view to discussing this at its October Meeting.

K. HARRINGTON

CHAIR

The Meeting closed at 5.20 p.m.