

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17th September 2008

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Jones (Chairman), Councillor Mrs. Farrington (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Mrs. Hood and Mrs. Plenderleith.

Labour Group

Councillors Bambrick and Mrs. Mead.

In Attendance

Councillor Grant (Conservative Group), I. Hickman (Forestry Commission), C. Keble (National Forest Company) and W. and D. Chesterman (Aurora Country Developments).

APOLOGY

An apology for absence from Meeting was received from Councillor Lane (Labour Group).

OS/7. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th June 2008 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

OS/8. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Grant declared a personal interest in respect of the item on the Rosliston Forestry Centre, as the Council's representative on the Rosliston Forestry Centre Management Executive.

OS/9. **REVIEW OF BROADBAND IN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE**

The Scrutiny Committee received a progress report and was reminded of the background to the review of broadband in South Derbyshire. Reports had been submitted to the May and June Meetings and the detail of the report focussed on the progress since the last Meeting. By 31st August 2008 the Council had received 129 case studies or comments on the broadband infrastructure in South Derbyshire, all of a negative nature. Further work had been carried out on the case studies to clarify and provide specific information, to enable it to be presented to British Telecom. On 27th August 2008 Mr. Hamilton, the BT Regional Manager for the East Midlands met with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and the Review Officer. The report set out the actions BT proposed to take in relation to the case studies. An email was sent thanking those people who had responded to the press articles and a further press release was planned to highlight the impact that the lobbying had achieved.

Mr. Hamilton advised that British Telecom considered this feedback to be exceptional and they were looking at this in depth, but it was accepted that

some issues were unlikely to be resolved. Mr. Hamilton had offered to provide further feedback by October and it was therefore proposed to defer the final consideration of this review until the next Meeting. At that time, a draft review report could be submitted. The publicity arrangements were also discussed. The Chairman explained the national interest in this subject, which might ultimately result in this area being considered by a Government Select Committee.

It was agreed:-

- (1) That a further report be presented on the broadband review to the Meeting on 29th October 2008, to include the feedback from Mr. Hamilton of British Telecom and a draft report on this review area, for approval by the Committee.**
- (2) That the circulated email appended to the report be published on the Council's web site.**

OS/10. **ROSLISTON FORESTRY CENTRE**

The Chairman welcomed visitors to the Committee and invited the Head of Leisure and Community Development to lead a presentation on the work of the Rosliston Forestry Centre. Background was provided on the development of the Centre, particularly the site and its leisure facilities. Most recently, these comprised a new visitor centre, 5 log cabins and a performance arena. The Officer referred to the Centre's strategy, produced in 2005 and outlined the themes within it.

Ian Hickman spoke of the Forestry Commission's involvement in this partnership, recognising the delivery of achievements. He spoke of the repeat sponsorship secured from organisations such as the East Midlands Development Agency and Rolls Royce. He praised Aurora Country Developments for their hard work over the years, the value for money achieved from this site and the woodland themes.

Clive Keble spoke of the National Forest Company's enabling role and the increased forest coverage in this area. He explained his role within the organisation and how Rosliston had contributed to the aims of the National Forest Company. He praised the environmental education scheme, also referring to the arena, the North West Leicestershire youth hostel and the Caravan Club site. He estimated that the National Forest Company's contribution of £350 – 400,000 over 10 years had levered in funding over £3 million. He acknowledged that there were running costs with any centre, but felt these were minimised at Rosliston.

A Member asked about the bike hire scheme. The Head of Leisure and Community Development then outlined the various projects delivered from the Forestry Centre. Comparative financial performance was provided in terms of the cost per numbers of visitors. This compared the Rosliston Forestry Centre to other leisure centres in South Derbyshire, the Sharpe's Heritage Centre and similar facilities in neighbouring authority areas. It showed that even well established facilities still had some annual costs. Next, the Partnership and Development Manager gave an outline of the Centre's 5-year business plan. He explained the strategic and operational co-ordination and the budget monitoring arrangements. The Head of Service

spoke about the marketing of the Centre, for which the current budget was £11,000 per annum. He explained the rate of return on marketing elsewhere, which might provide similar yield for Rosliston. The Officer explained the quality assurance approach and the various awards secured by the Centre. He explained the overall satisfaction levels, which were higher than other comparable facilities. An outline was given of possible future developments. The presentation concluded with the wider benefits that Rosliston brought to the area in terms of tourism income, social inclusion and job creation.

The Chairman thanked the contributors for the presentation who then left the Meeting.

Members were asked to read the circulated presentation documents prior to the next Meeting. Consideration was given to the way forward and Members were reminded of the scope of this review. There was a discussion about the financial break-even of this Centre, which could remain a longer-term aim. It was also suggested that a further update on the Rosliston Forestry Centre could be submitted to the first Meeting of the next municipal year.

Note: At 7.15 p.m., Councillor Mrs. Farrington left the Meeting.

It was agreed:-

- (1) That the Committee notes the presentation on the Rosliston Forestry Centre partnership and business plan.**
- (2) That a draft review report be submitted to the Meeting on 29th October 2008, with a view to this being approved and submitted to the Housing and Community Services Committee Meeting on 27th November 2008.**
- (3) That a further update be sought on the Rosliston Forestry Centre at the first Meeting of the 2009/10 municipal year.**

OS/11. **SCOPING OF REVIEWS**

The Committee was asked to consider the scope of two reviews on the work programme. These concerned Flooding – Household Drainage and the Swadlincote Health Centre – Out of Hours Service. The draft-scoping documents had been circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting, to enable input. The Chairman reminded Members of the feedback received and the suggestion of a Member to extend the scope of the Swadlincote Health Centre review. He explained those areas that could not be considered as part of this review. On the Household Drainage review, it was proposed to seek a contribution from the Council's Environmental Protection Manager.

The Committee agreed the scope of the reviews of Flooding – Household Drainage and Swadlincote Health Centre – Out of Hours Service, subject to the inclusion of the Council's Environmental Protection Manager as a contributor for the Household Drainage review.

OS/12. **BRIEFING NOTE - NHS DENTAL PROVISION IN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE**

The Scrutiny Committee received an update on this review. Background was provided on the implemented reforms to NHS dental provision, together with the additional responsibilities and resources for Primary Care Trusts. In planning new dental services, PCT's had to ensure they provided equality of access across their area. South Derbyshire covered an area of approximately 340 square kilometres and had a population of 91,200. The report stated South Derbyshire's fast growth and about a third of the population lived in and around Swadlincote. The Derbyshire County PCT was responsible for the majority of South Derbyshire, with the Derby City PCT being responsible for the Melbourne area. The report provided details of the 6 NHS dental practices in South Derbyshire. There were 89 practices located within a 15-mile radius of Swadlincote and a table provided further details. The report concluded by considering the impact of the changing NHS framework.

It was suggested that the next Meeting focus on the health scrutiny reviews and that consideration be given to a suitable venue, possibly the new Health Centre in Civic Way.

It was agreed:-

- (1) That the Commissioning Manager – Dental for Derbyshire County PCT be invited to the Meeting on 29th October 2008, to outline the services currently provided, those proposed and to respond to Members questions.**
- (2) That a list of potential questions be compiled and agreed in advance of the Meeting.**
- (3) That in view of the proposal to invite another officer from the PCT regarding the Out of Hours Service, the Committee invites the PCT to outline their current structure and how the community of South Derbyshire is served by the NHS.**
- (4) That an approach be made to the County PCT to see if it is willing to host the next Scrutiny Meeting at the new Swadlincote Health Centre in Civic Way.**

OS/13. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee reviewed its work programme. This included an update on the Public Transport Review, which had been submitted to the Environmental and Development Services Committee. That Committee had received the review document and agreed to send a letter to all relevant bodies, expressing its concern over the lack of interest from public transport agencies with regard to participation in consultation, with particular reference to the growing village of Hilton and links to other parts of the District, particularly Etwall and the reduction of services at Willington Station.

The Committee was reminded of the self-scrutiny review exercise and Members were asked to give initial thought to the CFPS Self Evaluation Framework. It was acknowledged that this document was more suitable for councils operating under executive arrangements. However, the principle of

holding a six-monthly review was supported. Officers also suggested having an external review of scrutiny in South Derbyshire, prior to concluding the Annual Report for the current municipal year. Again, this was supported in principle.

The Committee received the Work Programme Report.

C. JONES

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 7.40 p.m.