

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE28th November 2005PRESENT:-Labour Group

Councillor Harrington (Chair) and Councillor Bambrick (Vice-Chair).

Conservative Group

Councillor Lemmon.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Mrs. Mead (Labour Group) and Councillors Mrs. Hood and Mrs. Renwick (Conservative Group).

CYS/21. MINUTES

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th October 2005 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

CYS/22. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND REPORTS"Street Scene" - Visit to Derbyshire County Council

The Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration advised Members that a meeting had been held with Derbyshire County Council to discuss the possibility of a joint view of the Street Scene and that details of the meeting would be made available to all Scrutiny Committee Members.

RESOLVED:-

That a copy of the notes of the meeting between Officers of Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire District Council in respect of the Joint Review of Street Scene issues be circulated to all Scrutiny Committee Members and that this issue be considered by the Overview Committee at its Meeting on 12th December 2005.

CYS/23. SHELTERED HOUSING

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Community Services on the provision of Sheltered Housing Services.

Following the discussions and consideration at the previous meeting, the Committee was advised that following a Best Value Inspection in 2001, the Audit Commission had delivered a report, which was critical of the Council's Sheltered Housing provision. The Council had responded to the report by remodelling its Sheltered Housing Team and service, which was now based on the Community Warden model. Members were informed that many of the critical issues highlighted in the Best Value report of 2001 had now been resolved.

Members were reminded that the Committee had resolved to investigate the provision of Sheltered Housing. As part of the scrutiny process, three sheltered housing schemes had been considered – Peartree Court, Etwall, Unity Close, Church Gresley and Newlands Close, Church Gresley. Responding to a number of questions from Members, the following information was provided:-

- It was confirmed that the shower adaptations had now been provided at Peartree Court.
- In respect of Unity Close, appropriate Fire Evacuation Procedure guidance had now been issued.
- In respect of access at the rear of Newlands Close, that appropriate Disability Discrimination Act works would be undertaken as part of the corporate process and funded accordingly.

The Chair said it was important to ensure that the leaking guttering at Unity Court was repaired and that maintenance work was undertaken as part of an ongoing process. Concern was expressed that some work regarding the provision of heating at Newlands Close had been signed off, but the work had not been completed but the contractor was then being requested to undertake further repair work.

The Head of Housing Services advised Members that the inspection process prior to work being signed off had been improved and that Wardens had been provided with standard forms for completion so that they could report easily any defects.

The Committee was advised that in order to continue to deliver improvements to the Council's Sheltered Housing Service, the following funding requirements had been identified:-

- £350,000 to upgrade warden call equipment to existing customers
- £2,150,000 to carry out physical improvements to ensure that the sheltered housing stock complies with agreed standards and relevant legislation.

Members were advised that the Housing Service was committed to securing continuous improvements in its customer service and that the Sheltered Housing Service could receive up to £888,000 from the sale of Bass's Crescent and Smallthorn Place. The Committee was informed that the sale proceeds would fall short of projected costs, if the Council achieved all the standards contained within the Vision and Standards document. Officers confirmed that a Project Board had been established to prioritise and manage the next phase of service improvements. Members were advised that in terms of progress, it was important to establish how much it would cost to deliver the Vision and Standards process.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) ***That Members note the actions completed in relation to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee site visits carried out and the anticipated plan to achieve compliance with the Sheltered Housing Vision and Standards.***

- (2) *That a Gantt Chart, together with any other relevant information (including a timetable for implementation of the Sheltered Housing Vision and Standards document) be forwarded to each Member of the Scrutiny Committee, with a view to the Overview Committee examining the matter at its next Meeting on 12th December 2005.*

CYS/24. **DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SCRUTINY VISIT – 4TH JANUARY 2006**

The Chair advised Members that a Visit had been organised to Derbyshire County Council on 4th January 2006 to see the operation of the County Council's Scrutiny Committee. It was confirmed Members would be contacted about the visit to establish their availability so that appropriate transport arrangements could be made.

Members noted the above arrangements.

CYS/25. **WORK PROGRAMME – CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

The Chair advised Members that cross-cutting issues detailed in the Committee's Work Programme would be discussed at the next Meeting of the Overview Committee to be held on 12th December 2005.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee notes that in relation to its Work Programme, cross-cutting issues would be considered at the next Meeting of the Overview Committee on 12th December 2005.

K. HARRINGTON

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 4.50 p.m.

REPORT TO: OVERVIEW COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM:

DATE OF MEETING: 12 DECEMBER 2005 CATEGORY:

REPORT FROM: Cllr K HARRINGTON OPEN

SUBJECT: DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - STREET SCENE REVIEW

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides details of the meeting with representatives of Derbyshire County Council about a review of the 'street scene' that is being undertaken by its Improvement and Scrutiny Committee.

1.2 The meeting was held on 11 November and was attended by the following:

Cllr K Lauro (Chair)	Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Sustainable Communities/Cultural and Community Services - Derbyshire County Council (DCC)
Jackie Wardle	Improvement and Scrutiny Officer (DCC)
Cllrs Harrington (Chair), Mrs Hood, Lemmon, Jones, and Mrs Renwick	Community Scrutiny Committee - South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC)
Cllrs Taylor (Chair) and Lauro (Vice Chair)	Environmental and Development Services Committee (SDDC)
Mark Alflat	Director of Community Services
Stuart Batchelor	Head of Leisure and Community Development
Marylyn Hallard	Design and Conservation Officer
Peter McEvoy	Head of Environmental Services
Sally Knight	Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration

1.3 The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the potential for this Council to join in with the county review. This fitted in with our previous expression of interest in undertaking a joint review and also by the fact that most of the Members on the County scrutiny working group represented South Derbyshire Electoral Divisions.

1.4 Cllr K Lauro chaired the meeting.

2.0 MATTERS DISCUSSED

- 2.1 Jackie Wardle gave details of the background to the review and the work that had already been undertaken by the review working group. She explained that the review had been offered by the Environmental Services Department, which wanted to make better use of resources in order to have a greater impact on the 'street scene'.
- 2.2 County Council members had visited Rotherham which had initiated a successful project called 'Street Pride'. The project involved a wide range of measures including education and publicity, prosecution and enforcement, and a 'joined up' approach to service delivery.
- 2.3 It was noted that whilst Rotherham as a unitary authority was better placed to co-ordinate services, there was some scope for joint working on the review, with a possibility of a more co-ordinated approach to street scene provision by the two Councils.
- 2.4 The meeting then went on to discuss the scope of the review - in particular, should the review cover the whole of the district or focus on a specific area, such as the urban area. It was recognised that there were important issues affecting both urban and rural areas.
- 2.5 Other matters discussed included
 - Current initiatives by this Council, including neighbourhood wardens, Customer First and links to the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership
 - The need for accurate and up to date baseline information
 - Consultation on the review
- 2.6 Finally, the meeting discussed the anticipated outcomes of the review. These included better street conditions in the selected area, added value to the services of both authorities, an enhanced service provision, a seamless interface for members of the public and, ultimately, enhanced customer satisfaction.

3.0 TAKING THE REVIEW FORWARD

- 3.1 The two main tasks, which need to be completed in order to take forward the review, are to:
 - Formally agree to participate in the joint review
 - Seek the views of the Environmental and Development Services Committee on the scope and nature of the review and how it would like to contribute to the review process
- 3.2 There will be a further opportunity of discussing the review with County Council representatives, when South Derbyshire Scrutiny members observe the scrutiny process at Derbyshire on 4 January 2006.

OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

12th December 2005

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Harrington (Chair) and Councillor Lane.

Conservative Group

Councillor Mrs. Hood.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Bladen (Vice-Chair) (Conservative Group) and Murphy (Labour Group).

OV/17. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 31st October 2005 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

OV/18. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

Councillor Harrington distributed a copy of a report entitled 'Derbyshire County Council Street Scene Review'. The report provided details of a meeting held with Officers of Derbyshire County Council with regard to a review of the street scene that is currently being undertaken by its Improvement and Scrutiny Committee. South Derbyshire District Council representatives had been invited to take part in this meeting, to discuss the potential for this Council to participate in the County Review. It was agreed that a discussion document be submitted to the Environmental and Development Services Committee on the scope of this possible project, the nature of the review and how the Committee would like to contribute to the review process.

OV/19. **SHELTERED HOUSING**

A Gantt Chart had been circulated prior to the Meeting on the Sheltered Housing Vision and Standards, showing the proposed programme for six areas of work. The Head of Housing Services provided background and explained that the Chart provided an overview. He touched on the work undertaken including reports to the Policy Committee and an outline was also given about financial issues. Members discussed the proposed programme. The Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration explained that feedback would be required from Overview to the Policy Committee. The Chair confirmed the role of the Chart relating to Overview Committee. He sought further information on the section of the Chart relating to de-classifying some of the Sheltered Housing Stock, which was duly provided. It was noted that various parts of the programme were interlinked. Officers confirmed increases to the housing waiting lists in recent months.

OV/20. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration summarised the items that each Committee was currently covering:-

- IEG Funding (E-Government) - Overview Committee
- Member Champions - joint project involving with both the Corporate and Community Scrutiny Committees
- Sheltered Housing and "Street Scene" - Community Scrutiny Committee
- Budget (Performance Linked) – Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Information on the Member Champions project would need to be circulated to Members of both Scrutiny Committees. The project would then be considered at the next Overview Committee so terms of reference could be agreed. In addition, the Director of Corporate Services would be asked to provide further information to the Overview Committee about the E-Government project.

It was agreed that an additional Scrutiny 'away day' was required to discuss further Scrutiny issues. The dates proposed were 30th January 2006 or possibly 6th February 2006.

OV/21. **SCRUTINY VISIT**

It was requested that the Democratic Services Assistant seek to contact Members to finalise details for the Scrutiny Committees' visit to Derbyshire County Council on 4th January 2006.

K. HARRINGTON

CHAIR

The Meeting closed at 4.55 p.m.

