

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22nd April 2002

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Richards (Chair), Councillor Routledge (Vice-Chair) and Councillor Evens.

Conservative Group

Councillors Harrison and Mrs. Robbins.

CYS/30. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th March 2002 were received.

CYS/31. **FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN**

Councillor Evens declared an interest on this item (as he was an employee of East Staffordshire Borough Council which had raised an objection to the Local Plan).

The Local Plans Manager advised the Committee of the minimum requirements with regard to the publicity for the first deposit of the Draft Local Plan. In addition to these requirements, a press release had generated several articles in all local newspapers and an interview had been given on Radio Derby outlining where the Plan could be inspected. Notices were placed on parish notice boards, on The Delph and in Post Offices and Libraries. In addition to this, approximately 34,000 leaflets were printed and distributed with the Council Tax correspondence that was sent out approximately two weeks before the end of the consultation period. This was cost effective because the leaflet was distributed at no extra charge.

The Committee was advised that the next stage in the process involved all submissions being entered onto a database, given an ID number and an acknowledgement sent out. The Council had received some 1,180 objections and 276 representations of support. Once they had been entered onto the database the Council would issue a press release stating where they could be inspected. Negotiations would then take place with those objectors whose objections might be resolved. All statements of support and objections would then be reported to Committee with recommendations as to whether or not and how the Plan should be changed. There was then a second six week consultation period to enable objections to be made to the changes. Any unsolved objections to the first deposit and objections to the changes in the second deposit would then be considered by the Inspector at the Public Inquiry.

Members expressed a general satisfaction with arrangements to publicise the first deposit of the Draft Local Plan.

(At 5.15 p.m. Councillor Harrison arrived).

CYS/32. **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ACTION PLAN**

A copy of the Development Control Best Value Implementation Plan was circulated to Members of the Committee and the progress made on the tasks outlined.

With regard to the Delegation Agreement the Chair suggested that Policy Committees of the Council could look at this Scheme.

With regard to the average case per Planning Officer the Planning Services Manager advised that the national average for each officer was ninety cases. However, each officer at this Council had approximately three hundred cases and was still achieving government targets.

CYS/33. **CRIME AND DISORDER STRATEGY**

Members of the Committee viewed “The Tide is Turning” video which summarised the Strategy and included footage and media coverage of local issues. It was noted that the first three years of the South Derbyshire Crime and Disorder Partnership saw the progressive development of partnership working with the Police, District and County Councils leading the way in the provision of staffing and financial resources. The next three years would see partnership working embedded in local organisations with the community seeing positive work being undertaken to reduce their “fear” and direct experience of crime.

Officers outlined the partnership approach to reducing crime and reported that local crime groups were to be piloted in Willington and Melbourne. These groups would include the Community Police Officer and representatives of the Parish Council and the Youth Service. A project to light the footpath at Woodville Recreation Ground was being progressed to enable community access to the park and reduce nuisance and criminal damage. Support to local Neighbourhood Watch groups was being provided to ensure their effectiveness and enthusiasm continued.

Members were reminded that Section 17 placed a statutory duty on the Council to review the Crime and Disorder implications of policy and practice. This included the establishment of an Officer Group and the production of a Corporate Strategy. This process was designed to reduce time spent in meetings/preparing strategies and in a practical way improve community safety. Joint working/increased inter-department working was being used to facilitate the following projects:-

- (1) Sheltered Housing staff distributing mini-alarms to vulnerable sheltered housing residents.
- (2) TACT members undertaking neighbourhood risk assessments.
- (3) Play Scheme/Sports development provision targeted at youth nuisance hotspots which had been identified by park staff.

The partnership had been working within the community, developing links to involve individuals in crime prevention and reduction and reduce their fear of crime so that the perception of experiencing crime was not significantly higher than reality. The following actions were assisting with this:-

- (1) Community Police Officer in Newhall.
- (2) Supporting Neighbourhood Watch.
- (3) Provision of leisure/recreational facilities for young people.
- (4) Neighbourhood risk assessments.
- (5) House burglary reduction project (which involved the installation of burglar alarms in victim's houses, mini-alarms for vulnerable people and crime prevention leaflets distributed to every home in Newhall and Woodville).

Officers concluded their presentation by asking that the Scrutiny Committee assist the Partnership by promoting partnership working and the concept that community safety is everyone's problem and requires a community based approach. The Committee was also asked to encourage other committees to consider the crime and disorder implications of their work and also support the involvement of Members in the Action Teams that had been established to reduce house burglary, auto crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, violent crime and fear of crime.

Councillor Harrison referred to a reduction of 4% in crime in South Derbyshire and this reduction was attributed to the arrest of one individual. It was noted that 80% of crimes were drug related.

(At 6.00 p.m. Councillor Mrs. Robbins left the Meeting).

Councillor Evens queried the involvement of the Youth Service and was advised that the Youth Service was now much more involved in outreach work and was liaising with the police on crime and disorder issues.

With regard to youth shelters Councillor Harrison suggested seeking the opinions of other authorities which had installed such shelters before the Council embarked on doing so. The Leisure and Community Development Manager advised the Committee that the pilot scheme in Linton incorporating a youth shelter would involve much community consultation to establish whether the shelter was a good idea and to ascertain where it should be located. Councillor Routledge talked about large shelters sometimes being "controlled" by a minority of youths and expressed a preference for the erection of smaller shelters. The Chair talked about youth issues and referred to the previous discussion on the percentage of crimes being drug related. He advised that he would like to see a Youth Council for the area and expressed concern that young people were categorised into a "social exclusion bracket". He talked about the possibility of involving young people in future meetings.

CYS/34. **THE CLEAN TEAM – FIRST QUARTER REPORT**

The Direct Services Manager advised that the Clean Team was established following the Best Value Review. He talked about the prevention of litter problems and dog fouling for example and the need to educate people and work with schools on this issue. He advised that effective links were being

established with the Environment Agency. The statistics for the first quarter of the Clean Team's operation were circulated for Members' information.

Councillor Harrison queried whether there had been an increase in the fly-tipping of certain items since the Council had started to charge for collecting such items. The Direct Services Manager agreed to examine the database and report any trends to a future meeting. Councillor Harrison talked about the rubbish which accumulated on a particular part of the A50 and was advised that this was the responsibility of the Highways Agency. A general discussion took place as to whether this rubbish could be coming from the local landfill site.

The Direct Services Manager talked about the publicity of the Clean Team which had involved local press releases, radio interviews and information circulated to all Parish Councils. The Clean Team was to undertake a Spring Clean initiative in conjunction with the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

The Chair talked about the success of this initiative and expressed the Committee's thanks and congratulations to the staff involved. Councillor Harrison suggested that the Council issued more press releases regarding the success of the Clean Team.

CYS/35. **SOUTH DERBYSHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

The Policy and Best Value Manager advised that training on the Strategy had been undertaken and a third seminar was to be held on 16th September 2002.

CYS/36. **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION STRATEGY**

The Policy and Best Value Manager advised that Officers were currently behind schedule for the production of this Strategy but it would be produced by the end of June 2002.

CYS/37. **ANNUAL REPORT**

The Policy and Best Value Manager circulated a draft Annual Report which was to be submitted to the Overview Committee on 13th May 2002. It was agreed that any comments on this report should be submitted to the Chair of the Committee or the Policy and Best Value Manager. It was agreed to delegate the authority to produce the final report for submission to the Overview Committee to the Chair and Vice-Chair in consultation with the Policy and Best Value Manager.

K.J. RICHARDS

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 7.20 p.m.