

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25th July 2005

**PRESENT:-**

**Labour Group**

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

**Conservative Group**

Councillors Mrs. Hood and Lemmon.

**APOLOGIES**

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

CYS/5. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th June 2005 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

CYS/6. **FEEDBACK FROM POLICY COMMITTEES**

Car parking study (Environmental and Development Services Committee 30th September 2004)

The Committee was advised that further to Minute No. EDS/31 of the Meeting held on 30th September 2004, which was duly circulated, no response had been received from the Environmental and Development Services Committee regarding car parking. The Deputy Chief Executive had spoken to the Direct Services Manager who had confirmed that some work had progressed on this matter. The Council's Facilities and Development Manager advised that work was currently being undertaken on car park shrub beds but agreed to report back to the Committee on the specifics of the work being undertaken and whether it concurred with the recommendations made previously by Eileen Banton, a former Police Liaison Officer. The Facilities and Development Manager referred to the recent reorganisation of the Grounds Maintenance Team and stated that improvements in this service should soon become apparent. The Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration agreed to pursue the outstanding issues with the relevant Officers.

Housing and Community Issues (Housing and Community Services Committee – 21st April 2005)

The Committee was reminded that some of the discussion held at the Meeting on 21st April 2005 focused on the ownership of play areas. There had been particular debate at both Hartshorne and Melbourne about the ownership of land. The Committee was advised that Officers were now

clarifying ownership and responsibilities when new play equipment was being installed and the play sites upgraded. Councillor Jones asked for a copy of the agreements made in respect of the play areas at Hartshorne for information. The Facilities and Development Manager agreed to write to all Parish Councils clarifying the ownership and responsibilities of play areas and copy such letters to the relevant local ward members.

The Chair expressed disappointment at a lack of attendance by Officers from the Housing Department and accordingly it was agreed to send a letter asking for a representative of the Housing Department to attend the next Meeting.

The Deputy Chief Executive gave an update on neighbourhood wardens and the service delivery options appraisal required by the Corporate Management Team from the Heads of Service regarding service development proposals. He advised that the Management Team had met with the Divisional Police Commander recently to discuss the service delivery associated with neighbourhood wardens and a report would be submitted to Members of the Council when more information had been received from the Police on the practicalities of an out of hours service etc. The Management Team were looking at making arrangements with the Police for a responsive service but also incorporating a planned service for Community Networking. The Police did not have sufficient resources to undertake all the Council required and the Council needed to work with the Police in this regard.

CYS/7. **PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTE 17 (OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION) STUDY – UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

The Council's Facilities and Development Manager circulated a copy of the PPG 17 Survey Project Brief to the Committee for information. He advised that Knight, Cavanagh and Page had been appointed to undertake this study. The scope of the study was outlined. The Committee was advised that the quality of the initial report from the consultants had proved unsatisfactory and had been referred back to the consultants accordingly for further work to be undertaken. The project brief included a provision requiring the consultants to report to Members and it was suggested that the consultants attend a Full Council meeting. Members of the Committee requested that the PPG 17 Report be submitted to them in advance of the Council Meeting allowing them to read and digest it properly before meeting with consultants.

Councillor Bambrick requested more sign-posts for specific walks within the District and suggested that new literature encouraging walking within the District should be produced. The Council's Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration advised that this area of work was contained within the Footpaths Agency/Economic Development Section in terms of responsibility. She reminded Members that the Council had recently approved the retention of the Footpaths Agency and accordingly Officers were progressing recruitment to this section currently.

CYS/8. **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

The Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration advised that the Committee needed to start thinking about the next Corporate Plan and the engagement of various partners. She stated that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had already undertaken some work on linking Council plans and strategies. She

asked the Committee to consider what issues it wished to include within the Corporate Plan and stated that this Committee would have a significant role in supporting consultation. She referred to the consultation recently undertaken prior to the production of the Community Strategy and also stated that finance had been agreed for the publishing of a newsletter. The Committee was advised that if it wished to use the 2006-2009 Corporate Plan to shape budget planning then it needed to consider relevant issues now. The Deputy Chief Executive emphasised the need to ensure that the Council did not overlap on the consultation undertaken by the Local Strategic Partnership but stated that it could try to consult more in depth on similar topics. The Chair suggested that an informal meeting be held to consider the issue of community consultation and the Committee was advised that it would need to look at how to organise a focus group. It was agreed to hold an informal meeting on Monday the 8th of August 2005 at 3:30 pm accordingly.

CYS/9. **REPORT ON SCRUTINY EVENT HELD ON 7TH JULY 2005**

The notes of this event were circulated to the Committee. Members were reminded that two issues arising from this event were:-

- (a) The emphasis on the need for the two Scrutiny Committees of the Council to work together and,
- (b) For the scoping of reviews to be undertaken to determine the outcomes required.

The Chair advised that a scrutiny review paper should now be completed prior to any review being started. He suggested that the Committee could look at some of the issues being addressed by Derbyshire County Council and advised that he was currently in negotiations with the County Council's Chief Scrutineer in order for this Committee to become involved in some of the County Council's scrutiny work. The Head of Policy and Economic Regeneration suggested that a further scrutiny event should be held during October/November 2005 (Councillor Jones requested that the event be held during half term in October to allow him to attend). The Chair advised that he was keen to look at the area of procurement, working in partnership with Derbyshire County Council.

CYS/10. **WORK PROGRAMME**

It was agreed that the priority issue for the work programme was the abovementioned topic of Community Consultation, which would be the subject of an informal meeting on the 8th August 2005. Cross-cutting issues with Derbyshire County Council would also form the basis of the work programme (the Deputy Chief Executive suggested having individual Members attending Derbyshire County Council review meetings and reporting back to the Scrutiny Committee accordingly).

Councillor Lemmon expressed concern regarding the decline in patient led health services for the area. The Chair referred to the Improving Access to Health scrutiny review being undertaken by Derbyshire County Council. The Deputy Chief Executive referred to Derbyshire County Council being the lead Authority for the scrutiny of the health service and talked of the limited resources at District level to undertake such a large issue. He suggested that the scrutiny of patient led health services could be placed on the Local

Strategic Partnership agenda. Following the discussion it was agreed to obtain further details of Derbyshire County Council's scrutiny work programme.

K. HARRINGTON

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 5.00 p.m.