

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

15th November 2001

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Lauro (Vice-Chair in the Chair) and Councillors Carroll, Ford, Mrs. Mead, Pabla (Substitute for Councillor Dunn), Mrs. Rose, Shepherd (Substitute for Councillor Southern), Stone, Taylor and Whyman.

Conservative Group

Councillors Douglas, Hood and Lemmon.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Southern (Chair) and Councillor Dunn (Labour Group).

CS/52. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th October 2001 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

CS/53. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

- (a) Consultation on Proposal to Establish a Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority

The Committee received a joint report from Councillor Carroll and the Head of Community Services. Members' comments were invited on a proposal to establish a new strategic health authority for Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. The Government had long-term goals for the reform and improvement of the NHS through a national framework and delivery of an NHS Plan. The Plan provided for the replacement of 95 Health Authorities with some 30 new Strategic Health Authorities. Many of the day-to-day functions of the existing authorities would be delivered by a Primary Care Trust (PCT) with staff transferred as appropriate. PCT's would become the cornerstone of the NHS, working in partnership with local authorities and their local community partners. More power would be given to frontline staff and services integrated with partnership working developed at the local level. The Government was committed to secure £100m of savings which were earmarked for reinvestment in frontline services. The proposals suggested greater economies of scale and should reduce duplication. Details were provided of the roles and functions of Primary Care Trusts and the Government's criteria for establishing strategic health authorities.

A consultation document had been produced to propose three options for the boundaries of the Strategic Health Authority. The proposed name was the 'Trent Health Authority' and the preferred option was for boundaries based on Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire (including Glossop) and Lincolnshire. This

larger boundary permitted the Strategic Health Authority to encompass the key clinical network and provided the best links and ability to handle performance management at a strategic level. Glossop had been included to meet the criteria of co-terminosity with the aggregate of local authorities. The implications of this preferred option for patients and partner organisations were reported.

In presenting the report, Councillor Carroll expressed general support for the preferred option submitted and recognition of the economies of scale provided by the proposals. There was some question over the geographic links between parts of the area proposed.

Members commented on the proposals, again recognising the benefits of the preferred option and in particular the inclusion of Glossop within the Strategic Health Authority's area. The reduction in the number of health authorities was welcomed together with the 'shifting power' principles whereby frontline services would have a greater say in service delivery. It was hoped that the review would lead to the development of further doctors' surgeries and co-ordination benefits.

RESOLVED:-

That the Council supports the preferred option submitted for the proposed boundaries for the Strategic Health Authority and the proposed name of the "Trent Health Authority".

(b) The Asian Over 60's Club

The Committee received a report from the Ticknall Ward Members seeking financial support for the Asian Over 60's Club. The Club currently received funding from Derby City Council and through the Single Regeneration Budget. This Council had been approached for financial support in 1997 but the request had to be declined at that time due to a lack of budgetary provision. The Club was established to provide a focal point for the elders of the Asian community. The SRB 3 funding of £7,000 per annum ceased after March 2002 and the Ticknall Ward Members had been involved in a number of meetings and had investigated alternative sources of finance. The loss of the SRB 3 funding could jeopardise the viability of the Club and the Members felt it provided much needed support for a disadvantaged sector of the community. Provision of £2,000 per annum was sought as a Service Development Proposal to assist this organisation.

In receiving the report, a number of Members voiced strong support given the cultural need and the lack of facilities in this part of the District. A Service Development Proposal could be considered as part of the budgetary process and officers were asked to examine other ways of assisting the Asian community in this part of South Derbyshire. A contrary view was expressed that there were many other worthy causes and this request should not be considered in isolation. Members asked about the project's exit strategy from SRB funding and felt that applications for financial support should be encouraged from other organisations.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That a service development proposal be submitted with a recommendation of support from the Committee for the establishment of budget of a least £2,000 to give financial support to the Asian Over 60's Club.***
- (2) That Officers investigate other ways of assisting the Asian community in this area of the District.***

Note:- Councillor Douglas wished it to be recorded that he was not in favour of these decisions.

CS/54. **MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE**

The Committee received a presentation from John Simmonds, Head of Operations at the County Council's Social Services Department. A Best Value Review had recently been undertaken for the Meals on Wheels Service and details were provided of the process, current service provision and key issues for the Service. Mr Simmonds explained the consultation undertaken and the gradual shift from provision of a hot meal service to the delivery of frozen meals which were heated on site. This decision was supported by statistics on the nutritional loss for food that was kept warm as compared to that that was reheated and the results of a food taste panel. Details were given of the principles agreed for the revised service and the options considered. At a meeting of the County Council's Cabinet on September 11th it had been agreed to move to a totally frozen meal service. The cost to service users would rise to £1.30 per meal and this would be used to improve the quality of meal provided.

A financial profile was provided for a three year period, detailing the initial cost increase and subsequent savings over time. Other issues considered by the County Council were contributions to Luncheon Clubs, an equity of three meals per service user and the issues for each district council which contributed to the Service.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions. The equity of meal provision was welcomed and further information was sought on the increase in meal costs, the consultation undertaken with service users and negotiations with district councils on the levels of financial contribution. Concerns had been raised through tenant consultation meetings and details were given of the special arrangements which would be made for service users, based on a needs assessment.

RESOLVED:-

That the Presentation on the Meals on Wheels Service be received.

CS/55. **CRIME AND DISORDER AUDIT - PRESENTATION**

The Committee received a presentation from Stuart Batchelor, the Community and Leisure Development Manager. The second Crime and Disorder audit had recently been completed and an outline was given of the audit to strategy process and crime statistics with Ward profiles. The Government had established a number of Crime and Disorder Reduction

Partnerships which were “families” grouped together by such factors as demographics and crime rates. Comparative information was given on the profile for South Derbyshire and that of a neighbouring authority. Details were also provided of the suggested priorities for the South Derbyshire Crime and Disorder Partnership and feedback was sought.

In receiving the presentation, Members recognised the benefits of a partnership approach but voiced concerns over the accuracy of crime statistics. A number of Members explained the difficulties in reporting crime and there were concerns that this could skew statistics and affect the funding received. It was noted that the annual cost of crime in South Derbyshire was estimated at some £22m.

RESOLVED:-

That the Presentation on the Crime and Disorder audit be received.

CS/56. **SERVICE PLANS**

The Committee gave consideration to the Service Plans for the Housing Services, Community and Leisure Development, Technical Services and Environmental Health Divisions. Service Plans provided an important part of the Council’s performance management framework and details were provided of those other elements of this framework. The form and content of Service Plans had been reviewed as part of the Best Value Review of Financial Planning and Control and work on the Corporate Plan. The aim had been to show clearly the scope and nature of the services provided by each division, how resources were used and how performance was to be monitored and measured. Details were provided of the sections contained within each service plan. All plans had been developed on the basis that there would be no change in the level of resources devoted to that service area. Proposals for service developments or reductions would be considered through a separate mechanism and incorporated into the service plan at a later date.

Members were also invited to highlight issues stemming from service plans that might need to be included in the budget process or other proposals for savings or growth on revenue or capital schemes. A special meeting would be convened to consider all those proposals submitted and to prioritise them in accordance with the available resources. Members could also bring further proposals and ideas to the attention of the relevant divisional manager as part of this process.

With regard to the Housing Service Plan, the Leader of the Council stressed the importance of this service area, recognising the needs of tenants and referring to the recent Best Value Review of the Sheltered Housing Service. He felt that the progress made on that review could provide a model for the whole Housing Division. The Leader welcomed the corporate task of promoting a “right first time” ethos and the customer care initiatives. He questioned the monitoring of ‘let’ properties to ensure they were actually occupied. In response it was reported that the Best Value Review of the Housing Service had now commenced. Following discussions with the inspectors it had been agreed to phase this review over a two year period, concentrating initially on the homelessness, advice and enabling functions. The review of the remaining service areas would commence in December 2002.

Under the departmental key tasks an update was provided on the Supporting People initiative. Questions were submitted on the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, particularly the need to improve base data following the stock condition survey. Problems with the current information technology systems were explained. Members discussed the service key tasks and welcomed proposals to introduce a Repairs Appointment System. The integration of the Housing Advice, Tenant Liaison and Sheltered Housing functions was also considered, particularly with regard to improving the environment and shared accesses and cleaning of communal areas.

With regard to the performance indicators and targets, Members questioned the average weekly costs for repairs and management of the Council's housing stock. The provision of a Domestic Violence Refuge within the urban area of the District and the average time taken to complete adaptations to dwellings were also discussed.

Note:- At 8.00 p.m. Councillor Douglas the Meeting.

Consideration was given to the Community and Leisure Development Service Plan. A Member commented on the funding provided by Derbyshire County Council for the Youth Information Shop. It was questioned whether this Council could offer some financial support and details were provided of the Communities Against Drugs initiative which would be considered later in the Meeting. Members accepted that this service area was at present underfunded and there was a wish to secure more play areas and equipment throughout the District. Reference was made to the Community Partnership's Scheme and the endeavours to access additional resources through the New Opportunities Fund wherever possible. Cultural development was a further key task discussed. Following the resignation of the Arts Officer alternate arrangements would need to be made to deliver existing commitments and utilise the current funding under this Single Regeneration Budget Scheme. Financial support was requested for the Trent Valley Racial Harrassment Forum under this Service Plan, as a development proposal.

Consideration was given to the Technical Services Plan. Key service tasks reported, concerned major projects at Eureka Park, proposals to improve the district's play areas and the possibility of utilising Groundwork Erewash Valley for the future maintenance of the Swadlincote Woodlands Site.

A Member had requested a service development proposal to fund the reopening of the Willington public toilets. It was agreed to refer this matter to the Overview Committee which was to consider the financial aspects of public toilet provision. A further reported problem concerned noise nuisance over the weekend period and it was noted that there was no out-of-hours provision for this service area.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Service Plans for Housing Services, Community and Leisure Development, Technical Services and Environmental Health Divisions be approved as the basis for service delivery over the next 12/18 month period.***

- (2) That those service development variations requested by Members be submitted through the budget process.**

CS/57. **ETWALL LEISURE CENTRE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 8TH OCTOBER 2001**

The Open Minutes of the Etwall Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee Meeting held on 8th October 2001 attached at Annexe 'A', were received.

Note:- In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.9, which provided that the duration of a Meeting should not exceed two hours and thirty minutes, Members agreed that the rule be suspended to allow the Meeting to continue.

CS/58. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN**

Further to Minute No. CS/23 of 23rd August 2001, it was reported that a workshop was held to explore the detail of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan on 1st October 2001. The programme, content and outcomes from the workshop were appended to the report.

Interest was expressed from both Members and tenants to continue the joint working to develop the Business Plan through a smaller group. Subsequently, two staff workshops and a Members' briefing session had been held. Feedback had also been received from the Government Office for the East Midlands. This confirmed that ongoing work between tenants and Members, to develop the Business Plan and in particular consider the investment options was important. It was therefore proposed to establish a Member and Tenant Group and the proposed composition, terms of reference and workplan for the Group were reported.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That a Group of Members and tenants be established to develop further the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and the Council's Strategic Objectives.**
- (2) That membership of the Group comprises the Chair of the Community Services Committee, Councillors Hood, Taylor and Whyman and four members of the Tenants Advisory and Consultation Team.**
- (3) That the Group's terms of reference be "to develop objectives for Housing Services and to examine and appraise the options available to the Council to meet these objectives".**

CS/59. **FORMER BRITISH COAL STOCKING SITE (WEST), COTON PARK**

Under Minute No. LS/52 of 12th April 2001, the former Leisure Services Committee approved a Recreation and Conservation Project on the former British Coal Stocking Site at Coton Park, Linton. It was agreed to submit the necessary funding applications and in principle to allocate the sum of £10,000 as the Council's contribution to the scheme. However, authority was not sought at the time to submit the required planning application.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee submits a planning application for the change of use of this site.

CS/60. **COMMUNITIES AGAINST DRUGS**

It was reported that in May, the Government announced the “Communities Against Drugs” scheme (CAD) to tackle problems of drug use in England and Wales. The scheme’s objectives were reported and to achieve these, each Crime and Disorder Partnership had been allocated funding on a formula basis. For the South Derbyshire Partnership the allocation was £71,400 per annum for three years. In years two and three this allocation was likely to increase if the Home Office applied the same formula to the total budgets available.

The conditions relating to the CAD scheme were reported and the projects that had been agreed included an Outreach Youth Work Programme, a Theatre Residents Group, a Police Operation, a Community Project Fund, Community Consultation and the appointment of a Community Drugs Officer. A number of further projects were available for delivery if the Home Office increased the funding allocation in years two and three. If the same level of funding was received in years two and three, the Crime and Disorder Partnership would have to fund a shortfall on those projects with ongoing commitments. It was expected that the allocation would be increased and detailed financial costs were appended to the report.

The Council’s commitment to employ the Community Drugs Officer would be covered fully by the CAD funding other than office equipment and telephone support required. Members welcomed the report, this initiative and the funding allocation received.

RESOLVED:-

That the Council supports this initiative through the employment of a Community Drugs Officer and the provision of office accommodation within the Community and Leisure Development Team.

CS/61. **ACTIVE SPORTS YEAR 2**

It was reported that the Active Sport programme was a lottery funded scheme aimed at giving young people the opportunity to reach their full potential in sporting performance. The former Leisure Services Committee had approved the selection of cricket and basketball as Active Sports for Year 1 of the Scheme. An application to the Derbyshire and Peak Park Sports Forum was successful and coaching activity and support had been delivered across the District.

In Year 2 of the Scheme the sports of girls football and hockey had been proposed. The selection process for the sports to be delivered in South Derbyshire remained the same as Year 1. This comprised an analysis of the “readiness factors” for a sport followed by an application to the Sports Forum for approval. Taking these factors into consideration, it was recommended that swimming be added to the existing sports of basketball and cricket.

Girls football would still receive support in the form of club and coach development and hockey would be introduced in Year 3.

The Sports Forum had decided to appoint three Active Sports Officers to assist districts in the delivery of the Active Sports Programme. Each Officer would be attached to three authorities and South Derbyshire would share its Officer with Derby City and Erewash Councils. It was hoped that the Officer could be provided a desk and support within the Community and Leisure Development Division of this Council.

With regard to the financial implications, if the sports identified were selected, it would result in some £26,000 of funding for delivery of the project. The Council's contribution for 2001/02 was £10,311.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Committee approves an application to the Derbyshire and Peak Park Sports Forum for the addition of swimming and girls football as active sports in South Derbyshire.***
- (2) That the Council provides office accommodation for the officer supporting Active Sport in South Derbyshire.***

CS/62. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th October 2001 were received.

ETWALL LEISURE CENTRE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 8TH OCTOBER 2001 (Paragraph 7)

The Committee received the Exempt Minutes of the Etwall Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee Meeting held on 8th October 2001.

SERVICE OF NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SEEK POSSESSION (Paragraph 3)

The Committee received an update and details of proposed action to be taken regarding neighbour problems in respect of a tenancy in Newhall.

M. LAURO

CHAIR