

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY
12 JUNE 2012, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor G McAndrew (Chairman)
Councillors R Beeching, S Bull,
Mrs D Hollebon, Mrs D Hone, J Mayes,
N Symonds, M Wood and C Woodward

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Mekhola Ray	- Community Projects Team Manager
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services

62 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor R Beeching and seconded by Councillor C Woodward that Councillor S Bull be appointed as Vice Chairman for the Civic Year 2012/13.

RESOLVED – that Councillor S Bull be appointed Vice Chairman for the Civic Year 2012/13.

63 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor T

Herbert.

64 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

65 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked Councillors E Buckmaster, P Moore and P Ruffles for their contribution to Community Scrutiny Committee during the last civic year. He welcomed new Members of the Committee and substitutes.

The Chairman referred Members to the Members' Information Bulletin for week ending 25 May 2012 which contained a progress update from the Citizens' Advice Bureau. Copies were available on request.

The Chairman informed the Committee that the report on Hertford Theatre would be presented to Members on 28 August 2012 to allow time for figures to be based on audited accounts.

66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Hone declared a personal interest in Minute Number 67 - Report of the Health Engagement Panel, by virtue of the fact that she was a Member of the East and North Herts NHS Trust.

67 REPORT FROM HEALTH ENGAGEMENT PANEL

Councillor D Hone, former Chairman of the Health Engagement Panel, provided a summary of the recent work of the Panel. The Minutes of the Health Engagement Panel held on 6 February 2012 were also submitted for information. These were noted by the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Councillor D Hone for Chairing the

Health Engagement Panel and urged Members to attend future meetings. He acknowledged Councillor N Symonds as the new Chairman of the Panel.

The Committee received the report and noted the Minutes.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 6 February 2012, be noted.

68 END OF YEAR SERVICE PLAN REPORT 2011-12

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted a report which provided a summary of the 2011/12 Service Plan actions for four services which had been achieved and those which required revised completion dates, the detail of which was set out in the Essential Reference Papers now submitted. He stated that Corporate Management Team (CMT) had commended the work of Heads of Service and staff for their work during a year which had presented a particularly challenging environment.

Members praised the work which had been achieved.

In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching, the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services explained how the target for affordable homes was calculated.

Councillor M Wood praised the efforts of Revenues and Benefits staff for their efforts in the light of an increasing workload. It was noted that new claims were currently being processed within a 4-5 day turnaround.

The Chairman referred to the numerous challenges and difficulties faced by staff over the last two years and praised all staff for their efforts.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the revised completion dates

against the 2011/12 Service Plan actions be noted; and

(B) the comments made by Corporate Management Team in congratulating staff, be endorsed.

69 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY CORPORATE HEALTH CHECK -
JANUARY - MARCH 2012 AND 2011/12 PERFORMANCE
OUTTURNS

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted a report on the performance of key indications relating to Community Scrutiny Committee for the period January to March 2012 and the performance outturns. He asked Members to note minor amendments to the recommendations.

In response to a query from Councillor N Symonds regarding response times to Anti Social Behaviour complaints, the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services stated that he would ask the Head of Licensing, Community Safety and Environmental Health to provide a written response.

In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching regarding a revised target of £0.47p (net cost subsidy per visit swim and gym) the Chief Executive and Director of Community Services explained that the figure should be viewed in the context of having reduced from over £7 since the start of the contract. The contractual arrangement between the Council and SLM was explained. In response to a question whether further major investment was appropriate, he suggested that any further major investment would be best considered after the contract's natural end.

The Chairman urged Members who were not familiar with Covalent to contact Officers so that training could be organised.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) performance for the period

January to March 2012 be received;

(B) outturns for 2011/12 as detailed in Essential Reference Paper “C” of the report submitted, be received;

(C) the revised targets of £0.2p for 2012/13, £0.16p for 2013/14 and £0.47p for 2014/15 for EHPI2 – Net cost subsidy per visit (swims and Gym) be supported; and

(D) the revised targets to maintain performance achieved in 2011/12 for the next three years for EHPI 3a to 3c – Usage; number of Swims and EHPI 4a to 4b (Usage: Gyms; be supported.

70 EAST HERTS SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY: 2009 - 2024 REVIEW OF PROGRESS

The Communications and Engagement Manager submitted a report on the East Herts Sustainable Community Strategy (2009 to 2024) and of the progress made. The Engagement and Partnerships Team Leader provided the background to the report, including the work of the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and the subsequent launch of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) in 2009.

The LSP has focused its priorities as:-

- Promoting economic wellbeing;
- Supporting vulnerable people; and
- Community safety.

In response to a question about performance reward grant, the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services explained the background in terms of the Government’s initial funding of LSPs, Local Area Agreements and how the grant funding had been allocated between the District and Hertfordshire County Council. Bids which had been supported by the LSP and which met specific criteria, were detailed in the Essential Reference Papers, attached to

the report now submitted.

Councillor N Symonds expressed concern regarding the absence of “Dial a Ride” in villages. The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services stated that the facility was provided by the County Council and suggested the Member might wish to discuss this further with their County Council representatives in attendance.

The Committee received the report and endorsed the Strategy’s priorities.

RESOLVED - that (A) the progress made by the Local Strategy Partnerships (LSPs) on the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) be supported; and

(B) the LSP’s three priorities as detailed in the report now submitted, be endorsed.

71 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report outlining the future work of Community Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Officer referred to the possible review of taxi licensing processes and procedures, and the rationale for this. She explained that Licensing Committee had devolved powers in terms of any recommendations which might be made by a Task and Finish Group. Members supported the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review the processes and procedures.

Members considered the possibility of Housing Associations reporting back to Community Scrutiny. Following a lengthy debate on the advantages and disadvantages of having each of the key associations attend a future meeting of Community Scrutiny Committee, Members were reminded of what other avenues existed for Members to scrutinise the actions of Housing Associations, rather than have key officers attend meetings.

Members considered the suggestion that a report on the

Housing Stock (Transfer of Residual Undertaking) Annual Statement and the Action Plan to support the new East Herts Housing Strategy (including how the “Ageing Well” theme might be integrated into housing matters, be reported to Members. This was supported.

Members were reminded that the report on Hertford Theatre would also be reported to the next meeting of Community Scrutiny Committee.

Members received the report and supported the amendments, as proposed.

RESOLVED – that the work programme as amended, be agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Chairman
Date