

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
POLICY DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
ON 20 APRIL 2004 AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J O Ranger (Chairman).
Councillors K Barnes, E J Cain, A D Dodd,
G Francis, Mrs M H Goldspink, D L E Hollebon,
G McAndrew, H Penson, D Richards,
T K H Robertson, J D Thornton, N Wilson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor P Ballam

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Rachel Stopard	- Executive Director (Marketing)
Linda Bevan	- Committee Secretary
Andrew Holley	- Cultural Strategy and Museums Officer
Will O'Neill	- Head of Community Development and Housing
Mary Orton	- Assistant Director (Policy and Performance)
Paul Pullin	- Acting Head of Economic Development

764 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of
Councillor D Clark.

765 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that there would not be an extra meeting in May as the business of the Committee could be dealt with by the meetings already programmed.

766 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Councillors declared personal interests as follows:-

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Minute</u>	<u>By virtue of:</u>
D Richards	M769 - (Future development of the Cultural Strategy with regards to Rivers Orchard and Pishiobury Park, Sawbridgeworth)	Involvement with voluntary group. Living in house backing on to park.
A D Dodd	M769 - (Future development of the Cultural Strategy with regard to SNAP Theatre and Eastern England Arts)	Involvement with SNAP Theatre and East of England Arts.

RESOLVED ITEMSACTION767 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2004 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

768 HOUSING REGISTER AND ALLOCATIONS POLICY

It was reported that the Housing Register and Allocations Policy adopted by the Council in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002 had been in operation for a year. Consultations had been carried out and a number of

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amendments had been suggested. Members considered the revisions and suggested a number of further changes.

RESOLVED – that the Executive be informed that the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee considered the amendments to the Housing Register and Allocations Policy as set out in Appendix ‘A’ of the report submitted to the Committee should be adopted together with the following further amendments:-

- (a) page 4 – (i) – second paragraph – after “vulnerable” add “according to the Homelessness Act 2002”;
- (b) page 5 – (iii) – (c) – to read “where an applicant from another authority is fleeing violence and is owed a homeless duty by this Council but has no local connection with this Authority”;
- (c) page 5 – (v) – second paragraph – 2.2.1 – to read “at least 5% of all general needs vacancies in rented accommodation to which the Council has nomination rights will be to key workers”.

769 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL STRATEGY

Members of the Committee were asked to consider the future development of culture in the District beyond the end of the current cultural strategy in March 2005.

The Council’s strategy provided a framework for cultural development; an opportunity to consult with the local community on cultural issues; and assisted with development of partnerships. It demonstrated the Council’s role in promoting cultural well-being and fed into the community strategy.

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Members agreed culture could improve the quality of life, promote social cohesion and contribute to economic development in the District. The strategy could also encourage lifelong learning including the personal development of young people. Some of the achievements of the strategy were given in Appendix 'B' of the report submitted to the Committee. A summary of the flourishing cultural sector in the District was given in the report. This included arts, sports, heritage, outdoor recreation and tourism. Members thought a separate strategy should be maintained because of the thriving nature of this sector in East Herts. This could also help the Council to resist unwanted urban development in the area as East Herts would provide an area for leisure activities for surrounding growth areas.

The Council had identified a need to improve swimming pools and Castle Hall and Members considered other projects which could be suggested as part of the strategy such as improved leisure facilities in towns and villages, encouraging tourism and improving parts throughout the District. Members also considered the future format and lifespan of the strategy.

RESOLVED – that the Executive be informed that the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee considers the Council should:-

- (a) adopt the existing policy objectives in the cultural strategy to support a future strategy;
- (b) align the future cultural strategy with the community strategy to ensure the economic, environmental and social well-being of the community; encourage the re-emergence of a county-wide tourist industry and work by the private sector (by continuing grant aid to small organisations);

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- (c) adopt a new strategy which should last until 2015 (with a review every three years), be renamed “Cultural and Leisure strategy” and include Community Voice meetings in consultations;
- (d) adopt a new format outlined in paragraphs 5.7 a. to g. of the report submitted to the Committee;
- (e) investigate the following outcomes from its work in cultural development over the extended period -
 - (i) a significant leisure development with indoor and possibly outdoor facilities in the east of the District to meet more demand in the area with the appropriate facilities subject to appropriate siting;
 - (ii) investigation of possible use of Castle Hall for a small multi screen cinema in Hertford and, if suitable, possible operators;
 - (iii) a centre of excellence and more courts throughout the District for tennis;
 - (iv) investigation of the possible extension of the Lee Valley Park;
 - (v) improvement of park areas such as the site adjoining Rivers Orchard, Sawbridgeworth, Pishiobury Park, Sawbridgeworth, Grange Paddocks, Bishop’s Stortford and north west of Bishop’s Stortford and acquisition of land for future park areas; and

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- (vi) encouragement of the tourism industry for Hertfordshire through the County Council and Parish/Town Councils.

770 MARKETS LICENSING POLICY

The Assistant Director (Policy and Performance) submitted a report setting out a proposed overall markets policy for East Herts. This covered farmers' markets, commercial markets and other non-commercial markets.

Farmers' markets had been considered by the Policy Development Panel of the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee and there had been wide consultation on this matter. The policy for farmers' markets which had been produced had been refined by officers to ensure that it was practical and could be implemented.

Members were asked to comment on proximity of markets to each other, exemptions from licences and fee structure.

Members considered the policy and agreed some amendments which should be recommended to the Executive for approval.

RESOLVED – that the Executive be informed that the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee considers that:-

- (a) all markets operating within the District must be licensed, with the exception of non-commercial markets which fall within the criteria specified in paragraph 3.1 (a) and (b) of page 26 of Appendix 'C' of the report submitted to the Committee;

ACTION

- (b) with regard to markets a licence should not normally be provided where it is less than three miles from and wishes to operate on the same day as an existing market eg charter market;
- (c) page 25 – paragraph 2.2 should be amended to read “therefore, the Council will act to encourage the incorporation into its general retail (charter) markets of farmers’ markets and other themed markets in the town centres of the District”;
- (d) references to parking should read “on or adjacent to the market site”;
- (e) an annual fee of £100 should be agreed for farmers’ markets;
- (f) any proposal for a new market should be the subject of full consultation with Parish and Town Councils;
- (g) disputes over licences should be resolved by the Licensing Committee; and
- (h) the markets policy as amended above should be sent to Parish and Town Councils and Town Centre Management Boards for comments before being approved by the Council.

771 FORWARD PLAN FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee Chairman submitted a Forward Plan for the work of the Committee. He explained that the item on decriminalisation of parking had been expanded to include car parking enforcement policy (8 June 2004).

ACTION

RESOLVED – that the Forward Plan for the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Appendix 'D' of the report submitted, be approved as amended.

The meeting closed at 10.20 pm