

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 – COMMUNITY AND HOUSING held at  
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN AT 7.00 pm on  
18 JUNE 2003**

Present:- Chairman - Councillor A R Row.  
Councillors D Corke, M A Gayler, R T Harris, S C Jones,  
A J Ketteridge, E D Tealby-Watson, A M Wattedot and  
P A Wilcock.

Also present at the invitation of the Chairman:- D W Gregory.

Officers in attendance:- R Haylock, S McLagan and I Orton.

**S1.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Jones declared an interest as a member of Uttlesford Sports Forum.

**S1.2 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2003 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**S1.3 BUSINESS ARISING**

**(i) Minute S1.46 – Mobile Police Station**

Members discussed the Mobile Police Station. Councillor Wilcock suggested it would be beneficial to invite Chief Superintendent Sue Harrison to a future meeting to discuss the Mobile Police Station and rural policing in Uttlesford. Members agreed this was a good idea and said they would be interested in the crime statistics.

**(ii) Minute S1.53 - (ii) - Best Value Review of Day Centres – Progress Report**

Members considered the above report. Councillor Gregory informed Members that a Member Reference Group (MRG) had been appointed of which he was the Chairman. The Group had met with officers and the scope of the review and a programme of work to enable the review to be concluded by November 2003 had been confirmed.

Members expressed concern with regard to the names of the Day Centres. They considered that if the name were changed the centre might be more successful in attracting a wider variety of people to use the Day Centres. Councillor Ketteridge reported that the Saffron Walden Day Centre had attempted to overcome this problem by renaming the Day Centre “The Garden Room”. Councillor Tealby-Watson suggested that each Day Centre be given a specific localised name.

Councillor Gregory reported that a voluntary Management Committee managed each Day Centre. The Council received 50% of the income achieved in hiring the Day Centres. The Management Committee organised fresh cooked lunches and light entertainment to be provided on a “drop-in” basis to local residents who were over 60 or disabled. Takeley Day Centre was hired by Essex County Council Social Services to provide day care services. Members expressed concern regarding levels of charging at the Day Centres and agreed there was a need to review financial aspects.

Following the Challenge Events in July, officers would consider the suggestions that had emerged for improvements to the Day Centre services. The MRG would then consider the information and discuss the work that needed to be undertaken to develop it into options for consideration by the Committee in September.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes progress made and that the comments are considered by Members as part of the review process.

#### S1.4 **SCRUTINY PROCESS – MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Members welcomed the opportunity for training and development. It was agreed that the Performance Manager would arrange training in due course.

#### S1.5 **WORK PROGRAMME 2003/04**

Members considered the Work Programme Report which gave an officer perspective on the key issues facing Scrutiny Committee during 2003/04. The scrutiny of health within the district continued to be a major challenge. In addition Scrutiny Committee would continue to scrutinise the work of the Leisure (PFI) Board. The Head of Community and Leisure informed Members that the PFI Board would be dissolved once the Leisure Centre had been officially opened in October, but there would continue to be a scrutinising role for the Committee. Councillor Wilcock commended the PFI Board for all their hard work.

Members discussed whether the Committee should consider the PFI procurement process, but it was considered that this issue was more appropriate for consideration by the Scrutiny 2 Committee. It was agreed that the Performance Manager would raise this matter with that Committee.

Members discussed the Council’s tendering policy and expressed concern that contracts were not always being properly carried out by contractors. Councillor Corke suggested that rather than implementing a costly checking system, it would be better to have a more effective system of reaction to complaints.

Councillor Wilcock expressed concern that the current “call in” process was disadvantageous to opposition parties. The Performance Manager suggested that it might be helpful to Members if he supplied a flow chart to show how the existing process for “call in” worked.

RESOLVED that the following are included in the work programme for 2003/04 as follows:-

The Community Plan for the District.  
The partnership process within the District.  
Monitoring of the PFI Leisure Contract  
Comprehensive Performance Assessment.  
Leisure and Cultural Strategy for Uttlesford  
Contracts Management  
Budget Monitoring  
Review of relevant policies  
Port Health – including a visit to the Airport  
Monitoring of Quarterly performance information and referral of comments on performance to the appropriate parent committee.  
Scrutiny of minutes and administering of the call-in procedure.  
Themes or service areas selected for examination by the Committee from the workload of the committees it scrutinises  
Service and Financial Planning  
Community Safety  
Council House Repairs  
The role of the Police within the district  
Any additional areas that may develop during the year

**S1.6 PFI PROGRESS REPORT**

Members noted the PFI Progress Report. The Scrutiny Committee had received updates on the progress of the project starting with a verbal report on 12 June 2002 and written reports to later meetings.

Nine capital payments had been made by the Council amounting to £4,494,375 in accordance with the agreed payment mechanism. The Performance Manager reported that the work was on target to achieve completion on 25 August for the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre, 18 August for Stansted and 9 June for the Lord Butler Leisure Centre.

**S1.7 LEISURE BV INSPECTION**

The Head of Community and Leisure Services informed Members that this report would be submitted to the Community and Leisure Committee later in the year.

**S1.8 MATTERS ARISING FROM HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE**

There were no matters arising from the last meeting of the Health and Housing Committee.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMUNITY AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

*(Councillor Tealby-Watson declared an interest in this item by reason of her husband's employment and as a patron of Saffron Walden Choral Society).*

**(i) Minute CL48 - Young Musician of the Year Festival**

Members were informed that the Council had not received a written guarantee of £3,000 funding for this event. Members considered that this was a very worthwhile event and that it would be a shame if it did not proceed due to lack of funding. Councillor Ketteridge reported that he had attended the previous year's festival and he had been very impressed with the high standard of performance. Members agreed that if the funding was not secured before 30 June then the event could not proceed this year, but that there should be a commitment to the event being held as part of the Thaxted Festival in 2004.

RESOLVED that

- 1 this Committee acknowledges the hard work which has been put into the preparation of this Festival
- 2 a letter be sent to Councillor R P Chambers requesting that the sponsorship be secured by Monday 30 June 2003
- 3 Members agreed to assist with the sponsorship process during the week of 23 June 2003
- 4 the officers begin the preparation for next year's Young Musician of the Year Festival at an earlier stage

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm.