

**MINUTES of the meeting of Social & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Rd. Hereford. on Thursday, 15th April, 2004 at 10.30 a.m.**

**Present:** Councillor A.C.R. Chappell (Chairman)  
Councillor J. Stone (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:** M.R. Cunningham, Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels, J.G.S. Guthrie, B. Hunt, P.G. Turpin and A.L. Williams.

**Co-opted Members:** G. Jones, (Tourism), Mrs E. Newman (HALC), Mr. I. Howie (NFU).

**In attendance:** Councillors Mrs. P.A. Andrews, Mrs. E.M. Bew, G. Jones, Mrs. M.D. Lloyd-Hayes, Mrs. E. Newman and R.V. Stockton (Cabinet Member – Community and Social Development).

**57. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor H. Bramer, Councillor G. V. Hyde, Councillor Mrs R.F. Lincoln, Mrs C. Jones and Mr P. Thomas.

**58. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)**

Councillor G. Lucas substituted for Councillor H. Bramer. Mr I. Howie substituted for Mr P. Thomas.

**59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs S.P.A. Daniels declared a personal interest as the Council's appointed representative on the HALO Ltd Management Board.

**60. MINUTES**

The Committee noted that in minute No 52 – Update On Progress Of The Community Youth Services Towards New Standards – the reference to a 'low resident youth population' in the opening paragraph of Mrs Lloyd-Hayes address to the Committee should be amended to read a 'high resident youth population'. The Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development) briefly reported that a business case had now been received from Close House, Hereford, and the Council would now be looking at ways of supporting the service offered by Close House.

**RESOLVED:** That subject to the substitution of "high" for "low" in minute No 52 as referred to above the meeting held 5th February, 2004 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**61. POLICY AND COMMUNITY DIRECTORATE 2003/04 FIRST TEN MONTHS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Members were informed of the performance of the non-corporate functions of the Policy and Community Directorate against their national and local performance

indicators for the first ten months of 2003/04, and received details of the main areas of activity undertaken by those services during the two months since the last report.

Information on those key local indicators, and any national Best Value indicators, where actual performance varied from the target significantly (more than plus or minus 10%) was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

During the course of discussion the following principal points were noted:

- The Committee noted that the Council's input to accredited learning would be subject to inspection by Ofsted. While many of the systems under the Youth Service Framework were in place, due to staff shortages the service was unlikely to achieve the accredited learning target. A number of Members commented about the increased administration (record keeping) the services now had to undertake.
- The Committee noted that Leominster and Ross-on-Wye were in the process of submitting their strategic action plans, which also included their local 'health check', to enable them to access further funding for regeneration projects. Funding was supported by both Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and the Countryside Agency.
- Performance had been exceeded in relation to the 'number of pupils visiting in organised school groups' to the Heritage Service. The Committee briefly discussed the range of displays now in museums and their relevance to the school curriculum.
- The Director of Policy and Community reported that the Directorate were working with the Environment Directorate on a co-ordinated approach to funding proposals to regenerate Hereford City centre.
- The Committee noted that work had commenced on the Aylestone Park Site. However, due to the discovery of heavy metals in the silt of the former Hereford to Gloucester canal, work had temporarily stopped while the discovery was investigated. The Director reported that an update on the position would be issued to Ward members.
- The Committee was pleased to note the official opening of the new Bromyard Centre incorporating the Customer Service, Library and Information service, and the resultant increase in both membership and the number of items issued.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**62. MONITORING OF 2003/2004 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
REVENUE BUDGETS PERIOD 1-11**

The Committee were advised of the actual revenue expenditure against budgets for Social and Economic Development services areas to period 11 of the financial year 2003/04.

The Director of Policy and Community referred to the agenda report and the appended monitoring report.

In the course of scrutinising the revenue budget report the following principal points

were noted:

- The proposed change to the programmed ground maintenance budget in 2004/05 would assist with budget forecasting. However, problems still existed concerning the level of commuted sums for the maintenance of land adopted under planning obligations.
- Interviews were currently under way to fill various vacant posts in the Youth Service.
- In answer to a question regarding the provision of a new Library for Hereford the Director of Policy and Community reported that the library co-occupied the building in Broad St. Hereford, with the Museum Services. While the development of a Heritage Store at Friars Street, Hereford had alleviated some of the cramped conditions at Broad St. Hereford, it was still the Council's vision to have a new library for the County. However, such a scheme would require significant additional resources being identified within the Council's capital programme.
- In response to comments regarding the possible use of under spends on youth related projects, the Director reported that the current underspend in Economic Development would be carried forward to 2004/05 to alleviate anticipated shortfalls in funding streams due to end in that period. The expected underspend in the Youth Service budget was committed to projects that would now start in 2004/05.
- The Committee noted that while there was an expectation that certain types of projects should be community led e.g. the provision of skateboard parks, this may not be the case where communities were not easily identifiable e.g. in the City. In such cases it may be expected that the Council would act as a facilitator. Issues also arose concerning maintenance costs for community facilities.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

### **63. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2004/2005**

The Committee considered a draft work programme for 2004/2005.

During consideration of the proposed work programme, copies having been circulated before the meeting, the following amendments were suggested:

- June 2004 –
  - The Chairman proposed that the meeting be held in Ross-on-Wye with the date, time and venue to be confirmed.
  - That following the report by the Festivals Review Group, considered by the Committee at its meeting on 27th November, 2003, and the subsequent submission to the Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development), the Committee should receive an update report concerning key festivals in the County. It was suggested that representatives of the festivals reviewed by the Review Group be invited to address the Committee on their proposals and any problems they envisaged for the forthcoming festival season.
  - The Chairman also proposed that the three Programme Area Cabinet Members (Community and Social Development; Economic

Development, Markets and Property and Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings) each be invited to present an annual report on their work over the last 12 months and their vision for the future.

- The proposed report on the 'Herefordshire Plan – ambitions monitoring' be delayed to the September 2004 meeting.
- September 2004 – It was proposed that the Committee receive a report on the Creative Industries Programme and Tourism Programme external funding exit strategies.

**RESOLVED: That subject to the inclusion of the above proposals the suggested 2004/05 work programme be adopted.**

The meeting ended at 11.32 a.m.

**CHAIRMAN**