

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

31ST July, 2002

Present: Councillor Smith (Chairman), Councillors Barnes, Ms. Bishop, Mrs. Driver, Mrs. Holliday, Jones, Mrs. Ledoux, Mrs. Moreton, Morris, Mrs. Regan, Seacome and Stennett.
Miss Vicki Patton, Mr. Claude Bullingham.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors Coleman, Mrs. Hale and Wheeler.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Co-Option

The Committee was reminded it had confirmed the co-option of a nomination from Housing Forum (Mr. Claude Bullingham) and also co-opted Miss Vicki Patton from the Youth Council.

The Chairman now proposed the co-option of Mr. Tony Sygeryez, Vice Chairman of Disability Action, Cheltenham.

The Group Director (Social and Community) also informed the Committee that Mr. Terry Moore-Scott had been a co-opted member of the former Cultural, Economic and Land Use Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a particular interest in arts development.

It was considered appropriate that Mr. Moore-Scott should be co-opted to the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee although it would be necessary to seek the Council's consent as the Council's constitution only provided for three co-optees.

Resolved, that, subject to the agreement of Council to increase the number of co-optees to four, Mr. Tony Sugeryez, Vice Chairman, Disability Action, Cheltenham and Mr. Terry Moore-Scott, be co-opted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

Resolved, to recommend that Council grant consent to the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee to increase the number of non-voting co-optees to four to enable Mr. Terry Moore-Scott and Mr. Tony Sugeryez to be co-opted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th June, 2002, were circulated and approved as a correct record.

The Chairman requested minutes should more fully reflect questions and answers.

5. Public Questions and Petitions

No public questions or petitions had been received.

6. Matters referred to the Committee

(a) By Council

None.

(b) By Cabinet

The Chairman indicated that Cabinet had referred the Housing Management Best Value review to the Committee. This had therefore been included in the work plan for the Committee.

The Group Director Social and Community informed the Committee of the recent government announcement that additional funding for housing repairs and improvements would in future be dependent upon the Arms Length Management Organisation achieving a 2-star inspection rating, rather than the previous requirement for a 3-star rating.

(c) By Area Committee

None.

7. Work Programme

The Group Director Social and Community had produced a work programme that attempted to set out a work plan through to December, 2003.

The work plan was based on the overall plan approved by Council on 22nd July.

The work plan had been devised to meet the priorities as agreed through the recent away days and to enable officer resources to be used efficiently and effectively.

It was recognised that the plan would need to be flexible to take account of emerging issues and revised priorities and it was likely to be revisited at each meeting. Future meetings of the Committee would include a presentation; scrutiny of an external organisation, best value reviews; policy development and reviews, as well as the forward plan and budget issues.

Having looked at the proposed work programme some members queried how the work groups, set up at the last meeting, would operate within the work plan.

The Chairman indicated that, as agreed at the previous meeting of the committee, he intended to format the meeting into distinct sections including provision of an hour where individual work groups could take advantage of the presence of appropriate officers and organisations to ask detailed questions. The Chairman was of the view that this would enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to achieve the work plan it had set for itself.

Concerns were still expressed by Councillor Morris that working groups could find it difficult to operate within the stated work plan, particularly where the work groups had already established their working arrangements. The Chairman made it clear that where working groups needed to amend the work plan to fit their own priorities, they would be free to do so.

Councillor Mrs. Regan also queried if this committee was the appropriate body to review the grant funding of the Everyman Theatre. The Chairman explained that in his view issues to do with arts development and community access to the arts fell within the committee's remit.

The Group Director was asked to meet with members of the working group set up to review funding of external organisations to resolve any outstanding practical issues. In the main however, the Committee was prepared to operate along the lines set out by the Chairman at future meetings.

The work plan as circulated, was agreed as a basis for future meetings.

8. Date of next meeting

9th September, 2002 when the agenda would include

- Presentation by the Everyman Theatre
- B.T. Payphones
- Three groups to look at Housing Management, Best Value Improvement Plan, Art Gallery and Museum Development Plan and the Everyman Service Level Agreement.

In concluding the meeting the Chairman indicated that this would be the last meeting that Miss Vicki Patton would be attending and on behalf of the Committee he wished her well for the future.

Duncan J. Smith
Chairman