

**DRAFT MINUTES OF
SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

03 October 2002

Present: Councillor Smith (Chair), Councillors Mrs. Driver, Mrs. Holliday, Mrs Hale, Jones, Mrs. Ledoux, Mrs. Moreton (left meeting at 19:03), Morris, Seacome, Lloyd, Wheeler, Coleman, Bishop, Stennett, Surgenor
Cllr Ms Forbes substituting for Cllr Barnes, Mr Greg Howard - Youth Council, Mr Claude Bullingham - Tenants Federation,

Two new members co-opted Mr Terry Moore-Scott and Mr Tony Sygerycz,

Also present: Officers - Chris Huckle Group Director, Tim Evans, Rita Baker, Sonia Philips, Richard Levett, George Breeze, Paul Wilson, Mark Sheldon, Martin Ward, Bob Dagger, George Rowlinson, Peter Woolley, Richard Gibson, Paul Jones, Trevor Gladding, Stefan Wathan

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors Barnes and Regan.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Mrs Driver, Bishop, Morris, Hale and Mr Claude Bullingham declared an interest in the ALMO - agenda item 5b (i).

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Cllr Mrs Driver declared an interest in item 7 which had not been recorded.
Cllr Wheeler and Cllr Coleman's attendance had also not been recorded.

4. Public Questions and Petitions

None received.

5. Matters referred to the Committee

(a) by Council - none received

(b) by Cabinet

(i) Principles for the establishment of Cheltenham Borough Homes with presentation by Ernst & Young

Cllr Lloyd, (Deputy Neighbourhood and Community) introduced the report and recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Considered the aims and objectives presented as a means of delivering the Council's landlord role.

Considered the relationship to be established between the Council and its ALMO, as highlighted by the Management Agreement and Delivery Plan sections.

Considered future working arrangements with the ALMO and its Board.
A presentation was made by Mark Logan of Ernst & Young on the outline proposals for setting up Cheltenham Borough Homes, concluding with a question and answer session.

Cllr Stennett asked what the effect would be if the ALMO did not achieve 2 star status, and in response Mark Logan stated that the 2 star rating was

required before the council could access any additional government funding. If the ALMO failed to achieve this rating, it could re-apply after six months.

The chairman asked whether there were any issues that made this council different from any other.

In response Mark Logan stated that no two housing services were alike.

The chairman thanked Mark Logan and Cllr Lloyd for their presentations.

The recommendations in 1.3 of the report were accepted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(ii) Dealing with the effects of the night time economy

Cllr Surgenor (Deputy, Public and Environmental Protection) presented a report which, he said needed the support not only of the council but also of the local community.

On 24 July 2002 the cabinet had considered a report entitled "Crime & Disorder - alcohol related activities." The report had identified a range of solutions recommended by a working group of partners and stakeholders which included the police, the magistrates court, elected members, pub and club operators, the University of Gloucestershire and council officers. The cabinet agreed with the majority of the recommendations that were put to them.

The Council's Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider and adopt the range of initiatives set out in section 3.3 (1) to (7) of the report.

Questions -

Cllr Mrs Hale suggested that "promote sale of cheap non-alcoholic drinks." could be added to the last bullet point of 3.3(2)

Cllr Stennett asked how recommendations could be funded without too great an effect on Cheltenham tax payers and referred to the need to consult users of these services before any decisions were made, as set out in 3.3(4). Cllr Morris stated that he was surprised that in 3.3.(4) the problems caused with street cleaning had not been adequately addressed. He believed that operators in the night time economy made large profits and should be responsible for paying for the cleaning up of the mess caused. He suggested that the proposed working group should liaise with the existing working group, looking at the town centre cleaning issues.

Cllr Driver supported Cllr Morris' comments and asked, with reference to if night clubs were to be included in the joint working partnership. She stated that some pubs outside the central area needed to be considered as they also caused problems.

Mr Moore-Smith stated that he felt it was patronising for the report to talk about "community education aimed at reducing the perception of drunkenness etc."

Cllr Mrs Moreton stated that the town centre in late evening was very unpleasant. She said that the council had a responsibility to provide facilities

for young people and believed that the community and the council failed them.

Cllr Surgenor replied to the points raised, stating that there had to be a partnership including the council and the community, and that the Echo had a part to play in highlighting the town's good points.

For a more detailed response he referred members to George Rowlinson, Assistant Director, Public Protection, who is to lead a community based group to consider and address the broad effects of the night-time economy.

George Rowlinson outlined the likely effects of the Alcohol and Entertainment Bill. The council had to formulate a policy by 2004, and commented on the points raised by members. He introduced Trevor Gladding, Community Safety Co-ordinator, to answer other points raised.

In response to a question from Cllr Mrs Holliday, Trevor Gladding outlined the provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, , which made local authorities consider how the consequences of their decisions could impact on crime and disorder.

With regard to safe havens he stated that these would provide audio links between help points and the CCTV HQ for people who felt threatened. The CCTV cameras could then focus on the safe haven.

Cllr Mrs Moreton commented that these safe haven help points might attract misuse.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the recommendations and asked for a report back in time for a cabinet report in April 2003.

(c) by Area Committee - none received

6. Scrutiny of the NHS - update on the progress of the county working group

Cllr Ms Forbes outlined that new scrutiny arrangements for the NHS needed to be put in place and that the government had decided that these should be local authority based. The recommended model the joint working group preferred involved a permanent strategic committee made up of county councillors and representatives from the district councils. This model was being piloted by Buckinghamshire NHS Overview and Scrutiny Committee which had a similar NHS arrangement to Gloucestershire. Early experiences showed that the flexibility of the strategic model worked very well.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported, in principle, the strategic model as described and recommended it to the Cabinet.

7. Best Value Review of sports facilities and development - oral update by Richard Levett and Sonia Phillips

Richard Levett, Assistant Director Business Support, stated that work was still continuing and that an interim report would be presented to this committee on 4 November 2002.

8. Progress on Best Value review improvement plan for the Art Gallery and Museum

This report was presented by Paul Wilson, Best Value Officer, to provide members with an update on progress with the improvement plan arising from the best value review of the Art Gallery and Museum.

This report was one of a series of similar reports scheduled to come to the various overview & scrutiny committees in the coming months.

A best value review of the council's Art Gallery & Museum Service was conducted in 2000. The review concluded in December of that year when a report and related improvement plan were approved by the Best Value Forum.

In conducting the review, the council anticipated recent changes to the best value regime, in that it tried to focus upon outcomes rather than the process, and tried to deliver improvements that would be meaningful to service users. It also tried to ensure that resources were tied to priorities.

The main issues emerging from the review centred on the need to improve the premises within which the AG&M service is housed, and the need to enhance the service's collections management, education and marketing functions. Since the review ended a considerable amount of progress had been made in these:

- capital funds had been provided to take forward the initial stages of the revised development plan for the Clarence Street site;
- capital funds had been provided to improve the physical condition of storage areas, and therefore improve public access to the collections housed in them;
- revenue funds had been provided to re-launch the outreach loans service ('Museum Take-away');
- revenue funds had been provided for urgent conservation work, to parts of the collection identified by the review as being at risk of deterioration, as a result of being housed in inadequate conditions;
- a successful benchmarking relationship had been maintained with some of the Exeter group of authorities - which had helped improve the AG&M's approach to : care of collections, research enquiries, education & outreach, marketing and exhibitions.

Cumulatively, these improvements had addressed, to a considerable extent, the issues set out within the improvement plan, though given their nature, the momentum in these areas still needed to be maintained. This was particularly true of the current plans to develop the Clarence Street site.

Paul Wilson concluded by stating that the review succeeded in delivering a number of important incremental improvements to the service, as well as providing some impetus for the long-term transformational changes that were planned.

He then asked whether members had any questions for him or George Breeze about this update.

Questions -

Cllr Morris questioned the value of these progress reports.

The Chair stated these progress reports were necessary to monitor progress and ensure that actions agreed had been carried out and that the committee were made aware of any barriers.

Cllr Stennett asked what was the relevance of Charter Mark awards.

Paul Wilson in response stated that Charter Mark awards had been deemed to be an effective measure of the quality of service provision by the previous board of directors.

The Committee noted the progress made to date.

9. Budget Reviews

Mark Sheldon, Assistant Director Finance and Asset Management, outlined that the purpose of the briefing note was to provide guidance to members about the potential mechanism and protocol for review of the budgets by overview and scrutiny committees to feed into the process of setting the budget for 2003-2004.

The committee agreed to divide into three working groups to review the budgets of the different sections of the Social and Community portfolio.

Community Services

Cllr Morris, Cllr Mrs Driver, Cllr Coleman, Cllr Bishop, Cllr Mrs Hale, Mr Claude Bullingham, Mr Tony Sygerycz, Richard Gibson, Bob Dagger and Peter Woolley.

Health and Well-being

Cllr Smith, Cllr Stennett, Cllr Mrs Holliday, Cllr Ms Forbes, Cllr Wheeler, Tony Moore-Scott, Greg Howard, Paul Jones, Stefan Wathan, George Breeze, Sonia Phillips, Mark Sheldon.

Public Protection

Cllr Seacome, Cllr Mrs Ledoux, Cllr Jones, Martin Ward, Chris Huckle, Trevor Gladding, George Rowlinson.

At 19:22 the meeting was adjourned and the three sub-groups reviewed their budget areas in separate rooms. The press and public were excluded from these discussions.

The meeting reconvened at 20:30 hours when the chairperson from each group gave a short briefing on their discussions.

Community Services

Cllr Morris -

- The new homelessness statutory obligations were noted and a report to cabinet would identify additional costs.
- The contribution towards the Whaddon Neighbourhood Project should be increased by £600 to achieve equality with the Hesters Way Project.
- Part of £1,000 allocated to the Women's Forum, could be used to redress the funding difference between the two neighbourhood projects.
- A report was required to the next meeting of the committee on the use of accommodation by the voluntary sector at 14 Royal Crescent and Sandford Park Offices, and on the administration costs of the small grants and training budgets.

Health and Wellbeing

Cllr Smith -

- The SLA working group should consider the grant-funding balance between the Everyman Theatre and the Playhouse.

- Reports were required to the next meeting on the arts development operating budget, Massive delivery mechanisms, health promotion and lifelong learning.

Public Protection

Cllr Seacome -

- A potential saving of £6,800 on the home safety check scheme was noted.
- A report on potential growth bids for the air quality monitoring station (£9,000) and additional kennelling for stray dogs (£8,000) was needed for the next meeting, together with separate reports about air quality strategy and the potential funding implications of the review of the night-time economy.

10. Date of next meeting

04 November 2002

meeting closed 20:40 hours