

**To: All Members of the County Council
All Chief Officers**

**From: COUNTY SECRETARY'S
DEPARTMENT**

**cc: CI&P officers)
Officers named for action) e-mail
Committee Section)**

**Ask for: Joan Blake
Ext: 5560
My Ref: /jb
Your Ref:**

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION & PROTECTION SELECT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2000**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

P T J Channell, M D Colne, D J Drake, B P Hall, J Taunton, J A Hobday,
S J Mills, J R Morton, J W A Usher, B Wing

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

G D Game (Protection & Registration)
J M Pitman (Community Information & Development)

Other Members in Attendance

D A Ashley, K J Coleman, D B Lloyd, R Mays, J T Metcalf, G F Wenham

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Community Information & Protection Select Committee meeting on 11 October 2000, as circulated, copy annexed, action was taken or decisions were reached on individual items as recorded below.

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIRMAN

J A Hobday was elected Chairman of the Select Committee and took the chair.
P T J Channell was elected Vice-Chairman of the Select Committee.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

J Taunton had replaced B N W Hammond for the meeting.

QUESTIONS

M J Hobday asked the Executive Member (Community Information):

"On what day did the computer providing full internet access to Welwyn Garden City library cease working, on what date is it expected to be operational and can you make a statement on the delay?"

J M Pitman responded:

"The computer ceased working on Friday 15 September and the fault was reported to ITnet the same day. On Monday 18 September ITnet sent an engineer to assess the fault. The fault was diagnosed as hardware related and the call passed to Selection Services who are the contractors for PC hardware maintenance.

On Tuesday 19 September a Selection Services engineer declared the pc unserviceable and obsolete. In similar situations in the past it has been possible to revive so-called 'obsolete' machines by deleting and reorganising files. Community Information ICT staff therefore undertook extensive testing, expecting to put the pc back into service quickly. However, the tests confirmed that the computer was indeed beyond repair and needed to be replaced.

A new pc was ordered by County Supplies on Wednesday 27 September from Dell. The lead time for delivery is normally 7-10 working days and the computer will be installed as soon as it has arrived.

It is regrettable that the public were inconvenienced in this instance but there should be no more delays of this kind because we are bringing a lot more computers into all libraries"

M J Hobday asked the following supplementary question:-

"I am grateful for the apology and the assurance that more computers will be provided. Can she assure us she will do all she can to ensure computer repairs do not in future take over a month to be put into effect?"

and received the following reply:-

"The answer is yes. In this case it was not a question of repair but of replacement which can take a bit longer. It's not possible to keep a store of computers as they soon become obsolete."

PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

ACTIONS

2. FUNCTIONS AND REMIT OF THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION & PROTECTION SELECT COMMITTEE

[Officer contact: Joan Blake Tel 01992 555560]

- 2.1 Members considered a report outlining the functions and remit of the Select Committee.
- 2.2 It was noted that, in paragraph 3.1 of the report, sport and recreation was included in 'culture' (first line) and repeated again in its own right in line 4. Members were advised sport and recreation had been a separate item in the past but was now encompassed within the culture remit and it was AGREED County Council should be asked to remove the reference in line 4 when the Constitution was reviewed.

R Coxall
to note

- 2.3 In view of the committee's wide-ranging functions and remit, it was AGREED a members' seminar (open to all members) should be held, at which officers could provide information on their own individual service. A further report on this item was requested for the next meeting of the Select Committee.
- J Blake to arrange
J Blake to note.
- 3 ESTABLISHMENT OF PANELS**
- [Officer contact: Joan Blake Tel: 01992 555560]
- 3.1 The committee considered their requirements for panels and agreed the following be established:-
- (a) Gateway Panel (8 members)
(b) Community Fire Safety Panel (5 members)
(c) Fire Service Equal Opportunities Panel (3 members)
- J Blake to note
- 3.2 Conservative Group members would be as shown below, with chairmen as indicated (Opposition members to be advised):-
- (a) Gateway Panel
- M V Bayes, P T J Channell (Chairman), K J Coleman, D E Lloyd, R H Smith
- (b) Community Fire Safety Panel
- P T J Channell, D J Drake (Chairman), A K Gray
- (c) Fire Service Equal Opportunities Panel
- P T J Channell, J R Morton (Chairman)
- 3.3 B Wing proposed the establishment of a topic group to scrutinise matters in relation to next year's budget. P T J Channell considered this was unnecessary as there would be opportunity to discuss cabinet budget proposals at the committee's January meeting. The Chairman questioned the timescale that would be available for cabinet budget proposals to be considered and concurred the need for a topic group.
- In view of the complexity of the committee's budget, it was AGREED officers should include an explanation of budget issues in the presentations given at the seminar to be arranged.
- A Robertson
S Seaber, D Moses
T Hawkyard
I McLachlan
C Sweeney
- 4 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**
- 4.1 The Labour Group had put forward two items which they wished the committee to consider for possible scrutiny.
- 4.2 (a) **Fire Safety Education for School Age Pupils**
- [Officer contact: Stephen Sanders Tel: 01992 507503]

- | | | |
|-------|--|-------------------------------|
| 4.2.1 | In introducing this item, J A Hobday outlined her concern as to whether the fire service education currently provided to school age children met the National Curriculum standards and whether it would stand up to possible OFSTED inspection. | |
| 4.2.2 | A number of issues were discussed, including:-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the effectiveness of current initiatives - the level of teacher involvement - the importance of uniformed firefighters providing the teaching - the likelihood of an OFSTED inspection - the inclusion of pre-schools in teaching programmes | |
| 4.2.3 | The committee AGREED to refer this item to the Community Fire Safety Panel for scrutiny and requested a report be brought back to the meeting of the select committee on 13 March 2000. | T Standing
J Blake to note |
| 4.3 | (b) Trading Standards Inspection Programme

[Officer contact: Ian McLachlan Tel: 01727 813825] | |
| 4.3.1 | J A Hobday introduced a brief report detailing inspections of goods and services carried out by the Trading Standards Department. The report included information on national targets laid down for food standards inspections and Audit Commission performance indicators for visits to premises. | |
| 4.3.2 | Whilst there was general agreement that there were a number of possible issues for scrutiny, members were advised that the Food Standards Agency's expectations of local authorities had recently been published, as a result of which the County Council was required to produce a food inspection programme. It was likely this would be reported to Cabinet in January 2001 and referred to the select committee for comment. | J Blake to note |
| 4.3.3 | It was therefore AGREED that further consideration of scrutiny should be deferred pending receipt of the Cabinet report. | |
| 4.3.4 | It was requested that the subject of inspections be included in the report from Trading Standards at the members' seminar. | I McLachlan |

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Item 3 was referred to the meeting of the County Council on 28 November 2000.

J Blake to write
R Coxall to note

Andrew Laycock
County Secretary