

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

**From: COUNTY SECRETARY'S
DEPARTMENT**

Ask for: Peter Hull

Ext: 25565

My Ref: PH/kp

Your Ref:

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION & PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 JUNE 2002**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

N E Agar, P T J Channell, M D Colne, K Emsall (Vice-Chairman), B N W Hammond, J A Hobday (Chairman), D R McManus, M H O'Neill, P A Ruffles, J A W Usher.

Also present:

Executive Members: D A Ashley (Community Information and Development), G D Game (Protection and Registration).

Other Members: R Mays, M V Bayes.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman paid tribute to Keith Emsall's excellent work as previous Chairman of this Scrutiny Committee.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 March 2002 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC PETITIONS

None

QUESTIONS

None

PART 1 ('OPEN') BUSINESS**Scrutiny Items****ACTIONS****1. RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES TOPIC GROUP - RECOMMENDATIONS**

[Officer contact: John Boulter, Principle Emergency Planning Officer
Tel: 01992 555951]

- 1.1 The Committee considered a report of the findings of the Responding to Emergencies Topic Group and recommendations designed to enhance response arrangements in particular when responding to flooding incidents.

1.2 Conclusions

The Scrutiny Committee commended to the Executive Member responsible for Emergency Planning, the following initiatives designed to meet the recommendations of the Topic Group:-

- (a) the provision of video conferencing facilities within the County Council's Emergency Control Centre (estimated cost of £6,000);
- (b) the establishment of a short term post to raise public awareness and assist in the recruitment of flood wardens (estimated cost of £21,000);
- (c) assistance with the organisation of a Flood Fare (estimated cost at £2,000);
- (d) the development of closer links between the County Council's website, Customer Service Centre and Digital TV service and the Environment Agency's Flood Line Service (estimated cost at £4,000);

and also requested that the Best Value Core Group on emergency planning ensures that adequate attention is given to the issue of 24 hour call-out arrangements.

The Executive Member Gerald Game promised to take up these issues with officers and Cabinet colleagues.

Andrew Robertson
John Boulter
David Moses to note
Peter Hull to note

2. HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF FIRE SERVICES REPORT 2001 - UPDATE ON UNWANTED CALLS

[Officer contact: Peter Hazeldine, Assistant Chief Officer, Fire Service,
Tel: 01992 507505]

- 2.1 In response to a request of the Committee in March 2002 a report was considered on an update of work within the Fire Rescue Service on the strategies for tackling hoax calls.

2.2 Conclusions

The Scrutiny Committee noted the strategies being produced to reduce the number of hoax calls within the Fire Rescue Service and requested the Chief Fire Officer to report back in six months time when it could be determined whether the strategies were working.

Requested
Steve Seaber
Peter Hull to note

3. **FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE INITIATIVES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

[Officer contact: Steven Sanders, Deputy Chief Officer,
Tel: 01992 507502]

- 3.1 In response to a request of the Committee in March 2002 a report was considered to enable the Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise initiatives with young people in Hertfordshire and other Fire Authorities, in particular innovative work undertaken by Leicester and Wiltshire.

3.2 Conclusions

The Committee agreed to constitute a short-life Topic Group to work closely with officers in the research phase of developing Fire and Rescue Service initiatives with young people and representatives from the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee be invited to join the Topic Group.

Steve Seaber Ray
Shostak
Peter Hull Julia
Harries to note

4. **INSTALLATION OF SPRINKLERS IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

[Officer contact: Peter Hazeldine, Assistant Chief Officer, Fire Service,
Tel: 01992 507505]

- 4.1 In response to the request of the Committee in March 2002 the Committee considered the report reviewing the outcomes of the seminar held on sprinklers on 23 April 2002 as a starting point for scrutiny.

4.2 Conclusions

- (1) The Scrutiny Committee decided to constitute a short life Topic Group to look at the cost / benefit analysis of sprinkler system installation at -
 - (a) new build and existing properties;
 - (b) how this might influence a corporate policy on sprinklers for Council properties;
 - (c) improving awareness and dispelling myths around sprinkler systems including "mist systems"
- (2) The Chief Fire Officer was requested to organise a seminar on fire safety in schools and;
- (3) The Chief Fire Officer was requested to continue raising the profile of sprinkler systems with District Councils.

Steve Seaber
Peter Hull to note

5. HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES (HALS) ACCOMMODATION - PROGRESS REPORT

[Officer contact: Christine Shearman, Heritage Services Manager
Tel: 01992 555100]

5.1 In response to the request of the Committee in March 2002 consideration was given to action taken to address the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) accommodation problems.

5.2 Conclusions

Future actions were noted as follows:-

- (a) instructions had been made to advisors to prepare category 3 costings adequate for preparing a capital bid later in 2002. This will be used for preparing the necessary planning permission;
- (b) project subject to a Heritage Lottery bid for a contribution towards the cost of the new building but only available to enhance the public facilities;
- (c) a solution involving the existing site was considered to be the most cost effective.

It was agreed that a further progress report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee in March 2003.

Andrew Robertson
Christine Shearman
Peter Hull to note

6. PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN LIBRARIES

[Officer contact: Glenda Wood, Head of Libraries
Tel: 01992 555610]

6.1 In response to the request of the Committee in March 2002, consideration was given to a report on ICT in libraries to enable the Committee to scrutinise this area of service delivery.

6.2 Conclusions

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) that the Committee at a future meeting scrutinise disabled access to libraries with particular regard given to access to the blind and the partially sighted.
- (b) that a progress report on all the issues raised in Paragraph 3.1 i.e. issues as to ICT provision in libraries be submitted to the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in March, 2003.

Andrew Robertson
Peter Hull to note

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

The item on " report of the Responding to Emergencies Topic Group" be reported to the County Council at its meeting on 18 June 2002.

Peter Hull
Andrew Robertson
to note

Andrew Laycock
County Secretary