

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

**From: County Secretary's
Department**

Ask For: Nicola Hayden

Ext: 25560

My Ref: NH/CIP030610

Your Ref:

**COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
10 JUNE 2003**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

N E Agar, P T J Channell, M D Colne, G D Game (Vice-Chairman), B N W Hammond, J A Hobday (Chairman), M H O'Neill, P A Ruffles, J W A Usher, P A Webb

Also present:

Executive Members: I E M Tarry (Community Services)

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership Changes

The Chairman announced that Gerald Game had replaced Keith Emsall as Vice-Chairman of this Committee and that Ann Webb had replaced David McManus.

The Chairman congratulated Keith Emsall on his recent appointment as Chairman of the Council and welcomed Iris Tarry to the meeting as Executive Member for Community Services.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2003 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC PETITIONS

None

QUESTIONS

None

PART 1 (OPEN) BUSINESS**Scrutiny Items****1 REMIT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

[Officer Contact: Clare Kaye, Scrutiny Support Officer
Tel 01992 555300]

- 1.1 As requested by the Chairman, the Committee received a report updating them on the revised remit of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee following recent changes made at County Council on 1 April 2003.

1.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee formally accepted the revised remit subject to the specific mention of Heritage Services in the portfolio. | Clare Kaye

2 UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2003/4

[Officer Contact: Clare Kaye, Scrutiny Support Officer
Tel 01992 553100]

- 2.1 As agreed by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel, the Committee received a report that updated them on recommendations made to the Chief Officer at the last meeting, informed them of progress made on previous scrutiny items and confirmed the work programme for forthcoming meetings.

- 2.2 The Committee received a verbal update from Councillor Bryan Hammond on progress made by the Fireworks Topic Group. He advised that the topic group had met on two separate occasions, received over 150 written responses and heard oral evidence from a retailer, a police representative and a voluntary group. It was noted that the overwhelming majority of respondees sought controls on the noise levels and the times at which fireworks could be used.

2.3 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee agreed that recommendations made by the Fireworks Topic Group could be approved by the group spokespeople and sent via the Executive Member to the Government and LGA before their next meeting in October 2003. | Ian Mclachlan
- (b) The Chairman urged members to bring forward agenda items through their group spokesperson. | All to note

3 SUMMARY OF THE LIBRARY BEST VALUE REVIEW

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

3.1 As requested at their meeting on 14 January 2003, the Committee received a report summarising the Library Service Best Value Review.

3.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee congratulated library staff on the work done and the good results awarded by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
- (b) The Committee requested a further update report in 12 months time.

Andrew
Robertson

4 UPDATE ON PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN LIBRARIES

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

4.1 As requested at their meeting on 11 June 2002, the Committee received a report that provided updated information on the main priorities that are being addressed in taking forward Community Information's ICT strategy.

4.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee welcomed the report and the progress made but expressed concern over the length of time taken to resolve problems with front line PC's in libraries and asked the Chief Officer to investigate this further.
- (b) The Committee requested a further report on this issue at a future meeting.

Andrew
Robertson

Andrew
Robertson

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

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

5.1 The Committee received a report updating them on action taken to address HALS' accommodation problems since the last meeting in March 2003.

5.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee agreed there was a need to reach a speedy and best value solution to the continuing problem. However concerns were raised over the accessibility and fire resistant qualities of Room 424 in County Hall which Members would wish to be satisfied about before continuing with this option.

Andrew
Robertson

6 THE PROVISION OF A RURAL WARDENS SCHEME FOR HERTFORDSHIRE

[Officer Contact: Philip Winter, Head of Crime Reduction Unit
Tel 01992 588719]

- 6.1 The Committee considered a report that updated them on the scheme so far.
- 6.2 The County Secretary provided an oral update for Members by informing them that approximately 400 enquiries have been received requesting application packs, and over 100 completed applications have been received to date. He further advised that short listing for the vacancies would begin towards the end of June 2003 with an anticipated start date of middle – end July 2003 for the successful applicants. He also confirmed that the PCSO's would be using hand held technology to record their activities which should give a more accurate and up to date record of what they were doing.

6.3 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee welcomed the intention to improve safety in rural areas but felt that more information was needed about the scheme.

They requested that the County Secretary organise a seminar for all members of the Committee and the Crime Reduction Panel to introduce the scheme fully at a time that would allow sufficient detail to be given. Seminar to include:

- Outcome of a similar scheme in Kent
- Input from an existing PCSO
- Police input on clarification of powers for PCSO's

Update – Seminar has been arranged on Monday 6 October 2003 at 10.00am in Committee Room B.

Andrew
Laycock

All to note

- (b) The Committee expressed concern regarding how the success of the scheme would be evaluated and measured. They requested a further report that would:

- Explore the data and criteria that would be used to evaluate the scheme
- Agree the information that would be presented to the

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Committee to enable them to take a view on success

- (c) The Committee asked for the questions and answers that Councillor Nigel Agar had previously received to be circulated to all members of the committee with the minutes.

Nicola
Hayden

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

None

7 Exclusion of the Press and Public

“That under Section 100(A)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public shall be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information.”

PART II (CLOSED) AGENDA

1 RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

[Officer Contact: John Boulter, Principal Emergency Planning Officer
Tel 01992 555951]

- 1.1 As requested by the Committee at their previous meeting on 11 March 2003, Members received a report that informed them of activities undertaken by the emergency services and partner organisations within HESMIC (the Hertfordshire Emergency Services Major Incident Committee) in response to a raised state of alert to terrorist activities.

1.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee welcomed this informative report in a difficult area.

(Note: Full details of the Conclusions are in the separate Part II minutes).

Andrew Laycock
County Secretary