

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

**From:** County Secretary's  
Department

**cc: Officers named for action  
Committee Section**

**Ask For:** Nicola Hayden

**Ext:** 25560

**My ref:**

**Your ref:**

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2 NOVEMBER 2004**

### **MINUTES**

#### **ATTENDANCE**

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

#### **Also present:**

Executive Member: I E M Tarry (Community Services)

Other Members: A M R Searing

#### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### Membership Changes

The Chairman announced that Frank Clayton had replaced Jane Hobday for this meeting only.

##### Coroner's Staff and Cruse Bereavement Care

The Chairman welcomed Edward Thomas, HM Coroner for the District of Hertfordshire, Leslie Lopez of Cruse Bereavement Care and John Lester, Coroner's Officer to the meeting.

##### Appointment of Chief Fire Officer

The Chairman congratulated Deputy Chief Fire Officer Roy Wilsher on his appointment to Chief Fire Officer and noted that he would take up this new post following the retirement of Steve Seaber in March 2005.

##### Fire and Rescue Service Award

The Chairman congratulated Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service who had received a runner up award in the Large Customer Access to Goods and Services category at the recent Disability Awards. The award was made in recognition of the Service's involvement in the production of a video entitled "The Lucky Ones" and for improvements that have been made in accessibility to the Fire and Rescue Service for people with disabilities. Special thanks were given to Divisional Officer Simon Brown and everyone who had been involved in the making of the video.

Trading Standards Exam Successes

The Chairman congratulated Susie Helliwell who had passed Part 1 of the Diploma in Consumer Affairs, Julia Beck and Jo Hayes who had passed Part 2 of the same Diploma and Nicola Heide and Neil Wickens who had both added additional papers to their full diploma's.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 June 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS**

None

**QUESTIONS**

None

**PART 1 (OPEN) BUSINESS**Scrutiny Items**1 CONTACT WITH THE BEREAVED**

[Officer Contact: Steven Charteris, Head of Coroner's Unit  
Tel 01707 897400]

- 1.1 The Committee heard from Leslie Lopez who informed them that Cruse Bereavement Care had been operational in Hertfordshire since early 2003 and supplied in the region of 30 councillors who provide a confidential, one to one service.
- 1.2 The Committee received a report that informed them of the role of Hertfordshire Coroner Service in relation to contact with the bereaved. It also examined evidence from the 'Families and Friends' survey that was conducted over a six-month period from November 2003 until May 2004 to establish the perception of the bereaved of the service.
- 1.4 **Conclusions**
- (a) The Committee thanked the Coroner, the Coroner's Officer and Leslie Lopez of Cruse Bereavement Care for attending the meeting and answering questions.
- (b) The Committee noted that this had been the first time any coroner's service within the United Kingdom had undertaken a survey to establish the perception of the bereaved of the service they receive.

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| (c) | The Committee congratulated staff within the Coroner's Service for the quality of service they had provided, which had resulted in very positive feedback from the survey and for the constructive way in which they had responded to the suggestions made to further improve the service. | Steven<br>Charteris                             |
| (d) | The Committee agreed to draw the attention of the Home Office to the way in which the Coroner's Service is organised in Hertfordshire as a model of good practice and to issue a press release publicising it's good work.   | Steven<br>Charteris<br>James<br>Odling-<br>Smee |

## 2 ENJOY! HERTFORDSHIRE

[Officer Contact: Annie Hawkins, County Cultural Officer  
Tel: 01992 556231]

- 2.1 The Committee received a report that provided information about the continuing impact of the cultural strategy – Enjoy! Hertfordshire over the last twelve months.
- 2.2 It was noted that the Access to Countryside Initiative falls under the remit of the Director of Environment and any concerns regarding public access to rights of way should be addressed to him in the first instance.

### 2.3 Conclusions

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| (a) | The Committee welcomed the report and noted the intention of officers to work with our partner organisations to strengthen the position of culture and sport in Hertfordshire to fulfil the anticipated Comprehensive Performance Assessment process.                                 | Annie<br>Hawkins    |
| (b) | It was also noted that in addition to the various partnership activities outlined in the report other departments within the County Council such as Children, Schools and Families, contribute to the development of culture through its musical, drama and other related activities. |                     |
| (c) | The Committee were pleased to note the anticipated improvement to the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies Service following the award of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to convert the catalogues of thousands of historical documents into electronic format for the web.        | Andrew<br>Robertson |

### 3 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN TOPIC GROUP

[Officer Contact: Roy Wilsher, Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
Tel: 01992 507502]

3.1 The Committee received a report that summarised the work of the Integrated Risk Management Plan Topic Group since its inception in January 2004 and noted the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 1 December 2004.

#### 3.2 Conclusions

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| (a) | The Committee welcomed the report and noted that the Topic Group would be considering the performance of the Service against current performance indicators at their next meeting. | Roy<br>Wilsher                     |
| (b) | The Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Topic Group in respect of the revised consultation arrangements for the second IRMP consultation.                                | Roy<br>Wilsher<br>David<br>Roberts |
| (c) | The Committee agreed that the Topic Group should continue its work until March 2005.   | Roy<br>Wilsher<br>Nicola<br>Hayden |

### 4 LIBRARY USER PANELS AND FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES

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

4.1 As requested at their meeting on 15 June 2004, the Committee received a discussion report that had previously been circulated at the Library Panel on 7 September 2004. It outlined the background to the development of Library User Panels (LUP) and Friends Groups and provided a number of suggestions for improving consultation incorporating LUP members.

4.2 A proposal that Library User Panels that were well supported in their local community should be allowed to continue was not adopted.

#### 4.3 Conclusions

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| (a) | The Committee noted the report and endorsed the move towards establishing a database of panel members for use in specific consultation exercises and supported the comments made by the Library Panel as to how this should be implemented. | Glenda<br>Wood |
|-----|---|----------------|

## 5 SCHOOLS LIBRARY SERVICE – SCOPING REPORT

[Officer Contact: David Moses, Head of Scrutiny  
Tel: 01992 555300]

- 5.1 As requested at their meeting on 15 June 2004 the Committee received a report that identified current issues affecting the Schools Library Service and identified a number of options the Committee could take to scrutinise the service.

### 5.2 Conclusion

The Committee noted the report and concluded that there was no need for further scrutiny of this service unless the budget monitor indicated a reversal in the current pattern of buyback.

Andrew  
Robertson  
to note

## 6 COMMUNITY SAFETY – SCOPING REPORT

[Officer Contact: David Moses, Head of Scrutiny  
Tel: 01992 555300]

- 6.1 As requested at their meeting on 15 June 2004 the Committee received a report that identified a number of options that could be pursued to scrutinise whether there was a sufficient holistic approach to promoting community safety in Hertfordshire.

### 6.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee welcomed the report and noted that a number of County Council services are actively contributing to a range of Community Safety initiatives and that the Head of Crime Reduction intends to work with other County Council officers in developing a revised Herts Together Safer Communities Action Plan to ensure the plan reflects the full spectrum of community safety issues.

Philip  
Winter

- (b) The Committee requested that an interim report detailing progress made towards the revised action plan be brought to the June 2005 meeting of the Committee.

Philip  
Winter  
Nicola  
Hayden

## 7(a) BEST VALUE REVIEW OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

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

- 7a.1 At their meeting on 1 July 2004 the Resources Scrutiny Committee concluded that progress on individual best value reviews should be referred to and considered by appropriate service scrutiny committees.

7a.2 The Committee received a report that provided them with summary information on progress with the Community Safety Best Value Review.

### 7a.3 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee noted the report and accepted that some of the recommendations had been subsumed within other initiatives.
- (b) The Committee requested that the Head of Scrutiny circulate a briefing note to all Members outlining the lessons that had been learnt from this review when working in partnership on any future best value reviews.
- (c) The Committee agreed that no further scrutiny on implementation of the recommendations was needed.

David  
Moses

### 7(b) BEST VALUE REVIEW OF LIBRARIES

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

7b.1 The Committee received a report that provided them with summary information on progress with the Best Value Review of Libraries.

### 7b.2 Conclusion

The Committee noted the report and agreed that no further scrutiny on implementation of the recommendations was needed.

### 7(c) BEST VALUE REVIEW OF FIRE SERVICE PROCUREMENT

[Officer Contact: Jim Wallace, Fire and Rescue Service Assistant Chief  
Officer (Management)  
Tel: 01992 507508]

7c.1 The Committee received a report that provided them with summary information on progress with the Best Value Review of Fire Service Procurement.

### 7c.2 Conclusion

The Committee noted the report and agreed that no further scrutiny on implementation of the recommendations was needed.

**8(a) LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT 1 (LPSA 1) – TRAFFIC LIGHT MONITOR FOR 2004-2005**

[Officer Contact: Geoff Brown and Peter Stanley  
Tel: 01992 55370 and 01992 555306]

8a.1 The Committee considered a report that provided the latest data for the LPSA, which included the estimated end of year (outturn) positions based on the latest available data.

**8a.2 Conclusion**

The Committee noted the report but did not identify any items for scrutiny at this stage.

**8(b) LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT (LPSA)**

[Officer Contact: Keith Shephard and Chris Strickland  
01992 555368 and 01992 507550]

9b.1 The Committee considered a report that provided information about the target within the Council's Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) which falls within their remit:

LPSA Target 11      Reduction in the number of deliberate fires

**8b.2 Conclusion**

The Committee noted the report but did not identify any items for scrutiny at this stage.

**9 COUNCIL PROMISES – TRAFFIC LIGHT MONITOR FOR 2004-2005**

[Officer Contact: Geoff Brown and Peter Stanley  
Tel: 01992 55370 and 01992 555306]

9.1 The Committee considered a report giving the latest data for the promises monitor 2004/05 to enable Members to identify any issues that they wished to scrutinise.

**9.2 Conclusion**

The Committee noted the report but did not identify any further items for scrutiny.

**10 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITOR TO AUGUST 2004**

[Officer Contact: Andrew Nightingale, Assistant Finance Director  
Tel: 01992 555331]

10.1 The Committee considered a report on the budget monitor to 31 August 2004 to enable Members to identify any issues that they wished to scrutinise.

10.2 Members were advised that all PCSO's would be in post, ahead of target, by the end of December 2004.

**10.3 Conclusion**

The Committee noted the report but did not identify any further items for scrutiny.

**11 SCRUTINY UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2004/05**

[Officer Contact: Nicola Hayden, Committee Administrator  
Tel: 01992 555560]

11.1 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.

**11.2 Conclusions****(a) Tourism**

The Committee endorsed the business case for additional tourism funding and invited the Executive Member for Resources to consider the proposals during the annual budget setting process.

Executive  
Member for  
Resources  
Chris  
Sweeney

**(b) Police Community Support Officers**

1. The Committee noted the initial, favourable analysis of the results of the MORI survey into work of Police Community Support Officers and were advised that:

- 27% of people who were consulted knew who their local PCSO was along with their contact details – twice the amount of people who knew the details of their local police constable.
- As the level of awareness rises so do feelings about levels of safety.
- 84% of respondents felt fairly safe or better in areas where PCSO's are in post.

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The level of awareness of PCSO's in areas where there are none in post was nearly as high as the level of awareness in areas where PCSO's are in post.</li> <li>• 42% of those people who were aware of their PCSO had been in contact with them.</li> <li>• A large number of people who have had contact with PCSO's is outside of the area in which they live.</li> </ul> | <p>All County Councillors</p>        |
| <p>2. The Committee recommended that all County Councillors encourage district councils to give further financial support for the provision of PCSO's.</p>  | <p>James Odling-Smee</p>             |
| <p>3. The Committee agreed to issue a press release that would draw attention to the results of the MORI survey.</p>  | <p>Ian Mclachlan<br/>David Moses</p> |
| <p>(c) The Committee requested that a scoping report on the County Council's animal health responsibilities be brought to the January 2005 meeting.</p>   | <p>Nicola Hayden</p>                 |
| <p>(d) Following earlier discussions the Committee confirmed that an update report on Community Safety in Hertfordshire would be added to the work programme for the June 2005 meeting.</p>   |                                      |

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

### Item 1 – Contact with the Bereaved

Andrew Laycock  
County Secretary