

# Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel

6.00pm, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2003  
Committee Room 1, The Council House  
Salisbury

## Minutes

### Present

Councillor Mrs M I Evans (Chairman), P J Leo (Vice Chairman), Mrs P J Bissington, Mrs P Brown, Mrs J A Green, Mrs J M Greville, M A Hewitt (substituting for P V H Paisey), M J Osment, L Randall (substituting for B M Rycroft), and I C West (substituting for B E Dalton)

Councillor Fear was in attendance and spoke in connection with Agenda Items 5 (minute 21 refers) and 6 (minute 22 refers).

Apologies – Councillor E A Chettleburgh

### Cabinet Members

Councillor A G Peach (Deputy Portfolio Holder, Community and Housing)

### Tenants Panel

Mr D Edwards, Mrs J Fazackerley, Mr J Hinnis, Mr D Illsley and Mr A Southey

Apologies Mr A Drake, Mr J Smith and Mr T Watkins

### Officers

David Crook (Policy Director), Arabella Davies (Democratic Services Officer), Andrew Reynolds (Head of Strategic Housing), Lesley Waller (Head of Community Initiatives), Mark Wareham (UNISON Branch Administrator)

## Minutes

**18. PUBLIC QUESTION/STATEMENT TIME** – There were no public questions or statements.

**19. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** –

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2003 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations of interest or whipping arrangements.

**21. BEST VALUE REPORT OF SERVICES TO OLDER AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE**

Consideration of this item was deferred from the last Panel meeting.

The Panel received a presentation from the Policy Director. Mr Crook explained that the services provided to older and vulnerable people by the Council represented a “basket” of services, i.e. all these services interrelate. All are of high quality and all have associated cost problems.

The Supporting People Grant Regime has shifted some of the control of finances away from Salisbury District Council to Wiltshire County Council. Under this regime, over the next 4-5 years, Wiltshire County Council will determine which services are supported. As a result, there may be a gap between funding and the actual cost of the services provided. In order to preserve the level of services

provided, innovative management changes, together with identifying new funding now need to be considered.

Bearing these points in mind, the Panel considered the Executive Summary of the Best Value Review.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the following recommendations be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> October:-
  1. **Community Alarm Centre:-**  
The Council should urgently seek to resolve its costs. A review of the potential merger with CCTV should be undertaken and if the merger proves impractical or yields inadequate savings, this matter should be looked at again.
  2. **Lifeline Service:-**  
The Council should attempt to secure funding through the Supporting People process to deal with the consequences of marketing the service vigorously. If this is not possible, this matter should be looked at again.
  3. **Community Wardening:-**  
The Council should negotiate the funding of a comprehensive district wide service with partners. If this is not possible, this matter should be looked at again.
  4. **Floating Support:-**  
The Council should explore the establishment of a consistent district wide scheme with funding through the Supporting People Regime. If this is not possible, the issue should be considered again.
  - 5, **Disabled Adaptations:-**  
The Council has a partner organisation (Anchor Staying Put) which is an Home Improvement Agency, which deals with private sector grants. In the interests of a consistent and efficient service the Council should enter into negotiations with Anchor to consider the transfer administration of public sector grants to it.
  6. **Modernisation Work:-**  
To continue as present.
  7. **Shopmobility:-**  
The service should be retained but consideration given to substantial charge increases offset by the Council's Wisecard to give discounts to users on low incomes. Any consideration given to charging should not be radical in nature.
- (2) That a Working Group of the C & H Panel be formed to ensure that the options as detailed in the above recommendations are fully explored, thereby increasing Members' awareness as to why some options fail and others are successful.

This Working Group to comprise of the following members (unless the Democratic Services Officer is notified to the contrary):-

Councillors Dalton, Mrs Evans, Mrs Green, Osment, Paisey  
Mark Wareham, UNISON Branch Administrator  
Mr Edwards, Tenant Panel.

- (3) That the Chairman write to the Chief Executive on behalf of the Panel, requesting an explanation as to why the Executive Summary Report does not appear to reflect the Best Value Report of Services to Older and Vulnerable People. This letter shall be copied to the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Community and Housing. The response received shall then be circulated to all Members of the Panel

## **22. CALL IN OF CABINET DECISION – MANAGEMENT OPTIONS REVIEW OF LEISURE SERVICES**

The Chairman of the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel informed Members that she had called in the Cabinet's decision taken on 24<sup>th</sup> September in relation to the Management Options Review for Leisure Services. The decision concerned part of minute 119, "that a company limited by guarantee be selected as the preferred management structure".

The Chairman explained that her reason for the call-in was that she believed the Cabinet had taken a decision which did not accord with one of the principles of decision making as set out in the Constitution, namely "explanations of options considered and reasons for the Cabinet decision".

The Chairman then invited Councillor Fear to speak in relation to this matter. Councillor Fear supported the Chairman's reasons for the call-in, adding that the debate of opting for a company limited by guarantee (CLG) or an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) was a fundamental issue that went to the root of public service and required further detailed exploration. At this stage, the CLG seemed to be the preferred option however, there were a number of associated flaws in terms of democracy and stakeholder involvement. The IPS on the other hand would provide opportunities for the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders.

Councillor Peach, Deputy Portfolio Holder for Community & Housing informed the Panel that the Cabinet had based its decision on the Consultant's report. The Cabinet supported the CLG option because it was a proven model, which had been recommended by the Consultants and the Charities Commission.

**RESOLVED** – That the Cabinet be requested:-

- (a) to reconsider its decision of the Management Options Review of Leisure Services with a view to keeping an open mind in relation to the IPS model;
- (b) to explore and consider more fully the advantages and disadvantages associated with the CLG option and the IPS option; and
- (c) to note that the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel is willing to work with the Cabinet in relation to (b) above.

(NOTE: in spite of the above recommendations to Cabinet, the Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel is not at this stage endorsing Trust Status for the District's Leisure Facilities).

## **23. CHILD PROTECTION SEMINAR**

The Chairman informed Members of the Panel that the launch of the Child Protection & Vulnerable Adult Policy would be held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm in the Alamein Suite, City Hall, Salisbury. Information would be sent to all Panel Members in due course.

The meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.