

## **Minutes of a Meeting of the Employment and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 March 2005**

Present: Councillor Ron Cockings (Chair)  
" Sarah Boad  
" Anne Forwood  
" Chris Holman (Vice Chair)  
" Katherine King  
" Philip Morris-Jones  
" Chris Saint  
" Sid Tooth  
" John Vereker

Officers: Bill Basra, Corporate Review Team  
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Diane Johnson, Youth Offending Team  
John Lyons, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Arun Kang, Corporate Policy Adviser (Race Equality), Chief Executive's Dept.  
Greta Needham, Deputy County Solicitor, Chief Executive's Dept.  
John Ridgley, Regeneration Projects Manager, PTES  
John Scouller, Head of Social and Economic Regeneration, PTES.  
David S Williams, Economic Development Officer, PTES

### **1. General**

#### **(1) Apologies.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Brassington (Portfolio holder for Supporting Communities), Bryan Levy, Frank McCarney and Helen McCarthy.

#### **(2) (a) Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2005**

Resolved that the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2005 be agreed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendments in respect of –

- (1) Minute 1 (2) (b) (ii) Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy – delete the words "over £1,000,00" and replace with "under £100,000".
- (2) Minute 1 (3) (1) – amend the spelling of the word "Eliot".
- (3) Minute 1 (3) (2) - amend the spelling of Councillor Vereker's name.

- (4) Minute 6 (b) Forward Plan Items – amend the date of the County Council meeting to read 15 March 2005.

**(b) Matters Arising**

(i) Minute 1(a) Youth Offending Team.(YOT)

Councillor Saint explained that his question at the previous meeting related to the request for an explanation about the YOT revenue estimates, which included a figure of £39,000 for the transfer of staff services from Rugby to the new Criminal Justice Centre (CJC), Nuneaton. Members had been concerned because they believed that the Home Office would finance the cost of establishing a northern CJC, including YOT. If this was the case why was there a growth of £39,000 in the revenue budget?

In response Diane Johnson referred Members to the briefing note circulated at the previous meeting where it was explained that the capital cost of the new CJC building was being funded by central government. The figure of £39,000 represented an apportionment of the annual running costs between all users, and the subject of rigorous negotiations, resulting in YOT paying a 5% contribution. As a member of the YOT partnership, the County Council paid 75% of any budget growth, with other partners – the Police, Probation and Health funding 25%. This figure was agreed by the Youth Justice Management Board and reflected figures nationally.

In response to a further question Diane Johnson explained that, when the YOT first became operational in 2000, there were insufficient staff to make 3 bases available and premises were, therefore, identified for staff in Rugby and Leamington. A presence in Nuneaton was considered desirable, however, because 40% of the YOT caseload lived with that area. The creation of the new CJC enabled the YOT to relocate staff from Rugby to undertake the work in the Nuneaton area.

(ii) Minute 6 Future Work Programme – Jaguar Cars

Members expressed concern about the impact of the closure of the Jaguar plant on support services and subcontractors and they asked to be kept informed as to where the remaining manufacturing work was being relocated.

**(3) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

Councillor Sid Tooth declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest, in agenda item 3, Regeneration Strategy – Action and Improvement Plans as a member of the Nuneaton Camp Hill Urban Village Board.

**(4) Public Participation.**

None.

## **2. Rural Policy and Rural Services**

John Ridgley presented the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy which outlined the Cabinet's decision on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2003 that the approach of the Council to policy and the delivery of services in rural areas should be reviewed by the Environment and Rural Affairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group on 11 January 2005 agreed a Draft Programme for 2005/06, which suggested that this scrutiny should be carried out jointly with the Employment and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Environment and Rural Affairs Committee considered the report on 15 February 2005 and agreed the proposals, in principle, but deferred the appointment of Members to the Working Group to the first meeting after the start of the new Council year.

Discussion followed during which Members commended the report and expressed support for the recommendation made by the Environment and Rural Affairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee to defer the appointment of Members to the Working Group until after the elections.

Members considered Appendix A, the breadth of the Council's activities in rural areas, and highlighted the need to address the following issues –

- HGV routing and the Freight Quality Partnership – Members expressed concern about the lack of progress to address the damage caused by HGV's travelling through small villages.
- Transport in rural areas – Members considered that this issue was of major concern and should be listed under a separate heading.

During discussion reference was made the work currently being carried out by the Access to GP Surgeries Panel and that of the Review of Services for Older People Reference Group and the need to ensure that this work was not duplicated.

Resolved to –

- (1) agree the principle of identifying a working group of Members from this Committee to join a similar group from the Environment and Rural Affairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider what a joint scrutiny of rural policy and rural services should cover, how it should be carried out and, if appropriate, to undertake the scrutiny and report back to the two Committees.
- (2) defer, until after the May elections, the identification of Members and the setting up of the first meeting of the Working Group.

### 3. Regeneration Strategy – Action and Improvement Plans 2004/05

David S Williams presented the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy, which reviewed the results of the success of the Council's Regeneration Strategy that was approved by Cabinet in December 2001, and updated the action plan. The improvements, which were the outcome of the Best Value Review, were built into the action plan and the Strategy itself would be reviewed later in the year.

Discussion followed during which Members –

- said that the target to complete 50 more new dwellings as part of the Phase 1 housing development on Camp Hill appeared to be low
- suggested that the word “destination” should be deleted from page 3 of 3 of Appendix B, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point to avoid confusion
- expressed concern about the number of people being employed at the Arena Centre and the impact this employment had had on Social Services staff employed in the “caring” services. Concern was also expressed about job losses created elsewhere and the detrimental impact on other shopping centres as a result of the Arena Centre development;
- asked for more information as to how many of the jobs created within the Regeneration Zone would be sustained, page A1 of Appendix A. More details were requested on the information presented on job seekers and the numbers entering employment, page 2 of Appendix A.

In reply to questions and concerns John Ridgley and David S Williams said that –

- The intention was to direct the promotion of the Eliot Park Innovation Centre to proven innovative businesses but market forces would impact on the lettings;
- North Warwickshire and Hinckley College was using the premises as a teaching centre for its logistics course. 10 of units were managed by the County Council and one of these involved training for truck drivers;
- The 300 business engaged in IT related to employees taking part in IT training;
- The estimation of the 3,000 new job created in the Arena Centre related to when the whole site was opened;
- A report was to be presented to the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sub-regional Forum on the establishment of a Visitor Economy Forum and he the Committee would informed of the outcome.

Following further discussion the Committee:

- (1) Noted the achievements in 2004/2005 and that the recommendations arising from the Best Value Review of Economic Regeneration and the planned improvements arising from it have been built into the Regeneration Strategy Action Plan.

- (2) Endorses the Regeneration Strategy Action Plan for 2005/2006 and the recommendations it contains which refer to the improvements arising from the Best Value Review of Economic Regeneration.

#### **4. Race Equality Scheme - Progress**

Members noted the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive outlining the progress on developing the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

#### **5. Projected 2004/2005 Revenue Net Spend as at Quarter 3**

Members noted the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive, which outlined the projected 2004/2005 Revenue Net Spend as at Quarter 3.

#### **6. Provisional Items for Future Meetings and Forward Plan Items Relevant to the Work of this Committee**

##### **(a) Provisional Items for Future Meetings**

Members considered the provisional items for the Committee's future work programme.

Referring to the draft work programme the Chair proposed that, in order to keep the agenda manageable for the first meeting after the election and to allow for a briefing for new members on the work of the Committee, that –

- the report on Management of the Economic Regeneration Portfolio should be deferred to September
- the Employment Opportunities for Hard to Reach Group should be deferred to the July meeting.
- The follow-up to the Regeneration Strategy – Action and Improvement Plan (minute3 above) should be scheduled for the September meeting and include information on the Jaguar situation.
- More Focused Performance Indicators be deferred to the July meeting.

Members also noted that the Review of Services for Older People should also be scheduled for inclusion in the future work programme.

##### Cross-cutting Issues – Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Chair expressed concern about scrutiny topics that crossed over the responsibilities of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee and suggested that the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group should be sought as to the way forward. Other Members supported this proposal and Greta Needham undertook to provide a briefing note to the next meeting of the Co-ordinating Group on the 5 April 2005.

Members agreed the draft work programme with the amendments proposed.

**(b) Forward Plan**

Members noted the Forward Plan item relevant to the work of this Committee.

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Strategic Review of Older People Stage 1

**7. Any Other Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 4:05 p.m.