

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

3rd February 2005

**PRESENT:-**

**Labour Group**

Councillor Southern (Chair), Councillor Richards (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Carroll, Isham, Lauro, Taylor and Whyman, M.B.E.

**Conservative Group**

Councillors Atkin (substitute for Councillor Mrs. Hood), Harrison and Mrs. Renwick.

**Independent Member**

Councillor Mrs. Walton.

**APOLOGY**

An apology for absence from the Meeting was received from Councillor Mrs. Hood (Conservative Group).

HCS/70. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th November 2004 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

HCS/71. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor B. Whyman declared a personal interest in the items on the Etwall Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee and a personal and prejudicial interest in the item on the Community Partnership Scheme. Councillor Richards declared both a personal and prejudicial interest in the item regarding the Community Partnership Scheme. Councillors Carroll, Isham and Taylor all declared a personal interest in the item related to the Community Partnerships Scheme.

HCS/72. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

Councillor Mrs. Walton reported that Hilton Parish had recently adopted its Village Plan. She asked for the support of the Committee in moving the plan forward.

**MATTER RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

HCS/73. **REVIEW OF POLICY AND DECISION MAKING**

Members were reminded of the actions taken arising from the Local Government Act 2000, which required all Councils to revise their political management arrangements to make decision making more open, efficient and accountable. It was reported that in February 2004, this Committee was invited to take part in a pilot project designed to review the extent to which

decision making might be streamlined further and to develop proposals to enable the Committee to perform a more strategic policy orientated role.

Members were advised that a small working group comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair and Councillor Harrison was established to manage the project. At its first meeting, it was agreed to invite the Heads of Service who regularly reported to this Committee to a meeting on 10th March 2004. A further meeting of the Panel was held on 18th March and a final meeting with the Chair of the Committee was held on 16th September 2004. It was reported that the first task to be completed was an analysis of the Committee's workload over the period May 2001 to August 2003. This analysis highlighted the following issues:-

- Members had taken the opportunity to raise a large number and a wide variety of issues under "Members Reports/Questions" which was contributing to policy development and review.
- The Committee was monitoring and reviewing only a small number of the plans and strategies for which it was responsible (a point made previously by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee).
- Performance Management was limited, for the most part, to the consideration of Service Plans.
- The implementation of Action Plans (resulting from Best Value Reviews) was not monitored on a regular basis (due to confusion over the role of Scrutiny Committees in the process).
- A large number of agenda items were solely for noting rather than a decision being required to be made by the Committee.
- A large number of presentations were being made by various bodies on a range of issues which may be adding to a 'busy' agenda.
- Few reports on Crime and Disorder and Health Improvement initiatives and projects.
- No in-year monitoring of budgets.
- A large number of service development matters had been raised and discussed.

The Committee was advised that this prompted the Working Panel to ask Officers to report back on the following matters:-

- The operation of the current Scheme of Delegation.
- The development of "a Work Programme" which could give the Committee the "time and space" to focus on planning for the future policy development and performance management.
- The way in which the Members' Bulletin was currently being utilised by Departments.

The Committee was advised that the Working Panel also reviewed arrangements for approving or amending plans and strategies. Members were advised that the Corporate Management Team (CMT) would be carrying out a risk assessment of significant County or regional plans and strategies to identify those which ought to be considered by the Council in view of their potential impact on local people, services, resource allocations etc. Councillor Harrison queried the completion date for this risk assessment and was advised that the CMT aimed to undertake this exercise following this current cycle of Committee Meetings.

The Committee was advised that the last major review of the Scheme of Delegation was undertaken in 1997. Since then, there had been a number of piecemeal changes relating for example to, new legislation or new organisational structures. Each Division responsible to the Committee was asked by the Working Panel to consider the current level of delegation to Officers and comment on whether further delegation would be desirable. The Departments of Housing, Community and Leisure Development, Technical Services and Environmental Health were of the opinion that the current Scheme of Delegation allowed for effective and efficient service provision within their respective divisions with relevant policy issues being referred to Committee for determination. It was acknowledged that changes to procedures relating to the procurement of goods, works and services might further increase the delegation to Officers, however this area would need to be considered at a later date by the Finance and Management Committee as it would apply to all service areas.

It was reported that there was a lack of clarity between the Heads of Department as to how and when the Members' Bulletin should be utilised. Currently, this was produced on an ad-hoc basis and despatched to Members when there was sufficient information to warrant its production. The Working Panel concluded that it would be beneficial to relaunch the bulletin to ensure that all Members were kept up to date with progress being made throughout the Council. This would have the effect of eliminating the need for a large number of reports being placed on policy committee agendas not for any decision making purpose but solely for the purpose of noting.

The Committee was advised that the Panel had queried why the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) needed to be considered and approved by the Finance and Management Committee when the HRA was a ring-fenced account. It was acknowledged that changes to procedures relating to the HRA would need to be considered at a later date by the Finance and Management Committee. Another area which the Panel considered needed to be reviewed by the Finance and Management Committee related to the current level of write-offs under Financial Regulation D2.4(b) which provided that sums due to the Council should not be written off except on the authorisation of the Finance and Management Committee on the recommendation of the Director of Corporate Services and Chief Executive in respect of sums in excess of £1,500.

Members were advised that the Working Panel recognised that the establishment of a Work Programme was a means of giving the Committee the time and space to focus on planning for the future, developing policy and managing performance management. It would also allow Members to have a greater role in shaping the agenda and managing the workload. It was proposed that if the Committee supported the introduction of a work programme that the Working Panel be requested to formulate a draft work programme which could be considered at Annual Council. Such a programme would cover the following five main areas of work:-

- plans, strategies and policies
- service projects and developments
- managing performance (focusing on the Corporate Plan and Service Plans)
- Committee administration (which would also include budget and responsive issues)

- 'special projects' (initiated and led by Members)

Ideally, the Programme would cover a municipal year and be reviewed on a meeting by meeting basis to allow new issues to be brought forward. It might also be linked to an annual report setting out the Committee's achievements and its plans for the future.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That a Work Programme be introduced at the commencement of the municipal year following a recommendation from the Working Panel.***
- (2) That the Corporate Management Team be requested to consider the content of the Members' Bulletin and the timetable for its production to ensure that reports are not placed on policy committee agendas unless there is a decision that is required to be taken.***

**MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**

HCS/74. **BRETBY CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Open Minutes of the Bretby Crematorium Joint Committee Meeting held on 16th June 2004 be received.***

HCS/75. **ETWALL LEISURE CENTRE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Open Minutes of the Etwall Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee Meeting held on 4th October 2004 be received.***

HCS/76. **PREPARATION FOR THE AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION AND HRA BUSINESS PLAN**

The Committee was reminded that the repairs and maintenance function of the Housing Service was to be inspected by the Audit Commission in June 2005. On the same timescale the Council was also required to produce an HRA Business Plan which, although a requirement of the Government was needed urgently to give the service strategic and financial direction in the light of the retention decision. Given the importance of the inspection regime, it was becoming standard practice amongst housing organisations to seek external, specialist assistance in the preparation. An HRA Business Plan was required to outline fully the opportunities and pressures on the service, to give strategic direction and to project the business into the future. Although no fixed deadline had been set by the Government Office for submission of the Business Plan a timescale of the first half of 2005 had been agreed. Members were advised that it was likely that even if the Housing Service was staffed fully, external assistance would be required to prepare these two critical pieces of work. However, when the workload would be at its height, a number of key posts would be vacant within the Housing Service. This situation was further compounded by the prolonged sick leave of another

member of staff. Given the importance of the two projects to be completed and the key vacancies that existed on the same timeframe, it was proposed to buy in consultancy support. It was recommended that a consultant be employed to assist in the preparations underway for the inspection process and that this be for up to four days per week until the inspection was upon the Council and that a consultant be employed to assist in the preparation of the HRA Business Plan.

It was reported that the current market rate for such consultants working in the proposed areas was £475 to £550 per day, plus expenses. It was proposed that a budget of £45,000 be approved to fund the two appointments although significant savings of approximately £20,000 would be made from the three principle officer posts which would be vacant for all or most of the preparation period. It was proposed that the shortfall on costs be funded from HRA balances. The work in preparation for the Business Plan was likely to involve 20-25 days consultancy day's support. The work on preparing for the inspection process was likely to involve around 50 days work.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That Consultants be appointed to assist the Council in preparing both for the Audit Commission inspection of the Housing Service in June 2005 and the production of an HRA Business Plan on the same timescale.***

**HCS/77. PROPOSED MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES FOR COUNCIL HOUSING 2005/06**

The Committee received a detailed report outlining the Council's proposed Work Programmes for 2005/6. The varying types of work identified to be undertaken to the Council's housing stock were proposed to be delivered through continuing both existing improvement programmes and the five year cycle Planned Maintenance Programme ensuring the Council met the Government's Decent Homes Standard and targets set for 2006 and 2010. The main aim of undertaking these contracts and ongoing reviews of the type of works to be carried out was to ensure the Council prioritised investment, targeted increases in funding on dwellings that did not meet the Decent Homes Standard, improved its properties, improved customer service and continued to provide a 70/30 split on planned/responsive works as recommended as good practice. Currently, the Council offered a choice of finishes and layout to tenants primarily of kitchen upgrades. During 2005/06 it was proposed to increase significantly the level of stakeholder involvement and choice and this would be reflected in the procurement of improvement contracts. Primarily this would mean choice in bathroom and external door replacement.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That the content of the Planned Maintenance Programme Scheme to include replacement windows be approved.***
- (2) That the Council enters into a second year of a five-year partnership contract with Harvey & Clark for the Planned Maintenance Programme based on the contractor's current rates and annual performance with an allowance for inflation on***

**labour and materials based on the model proposed by the Building Cost Information Services, division of the RICS and suspends Financial Procedure Rules (Contract Rules) accordingly.**

- (3) That the content of the Central Heating Improvements Scheme as submitted, including the upgrading of heating to the sheltered housing accommodation at Peartree Court, Etwall be approved.**
- (4) That approval be granted to enter into the second year of the five year partnership contract for central heating with the current contractor, Robert Prettie Limited, based on the contractor's current rate and annual performance, with an allowance for inflation on labour and materials based on the model proposed by the Building Cost Information Services, a division of the RICS and suspend Financial Procedure Rules (Contract Rules) accordingly.**
- (5) That the contents of the Kitchen Replacement Scheme as submitted be approved.**
- (6) That approval be granted to enter into the second year of the five year partnership contract for kitchen replacements with Harvey & Clark based on the contractor's current rates and annual performance, with an allowance for inflation on labour and materials based on the model proposed by the Building Cost Information Services, a division of the RICS and that Financial Procedure Rules (Contract Rules) be suspended accordingly.**
- (7) That for adaptations, the Committee continues to delegate responsibility and to transfer the HRA (£100,000) and MRA (£160,000) budgets to the Environmental Health Service for specific improvements to adapt properties, in accordance with Social Services' recommendations.**
- (8) That for bathroom refurbishments, approval to negotiate the 2005/06 contracts with Harvey and Clark and Robert Prettie Limited based on the contractor's current rates and annual performance, with an allowance for inflation on labour and materials based on the model proposed by the Building Cost Information Service, a division of the RICS be granted and Financial Procedure Rules (Contract Rules) be suspended accordingly.**
- (9) That approval be granted to advertise for contractors, interested in undertaking an initial five year partnering contract for bathroom refurbishments, in association with the Council's Tenant Representative Team (TACT).**
- (10) That approval be granted to use external energy grants to upgrade loft insulation and cavity wall insulation.**

#### HCS/78. SECTION 30 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT

The Committee was reminded that Part IV Section 30 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 enabled the police to disperse groups of two or more persons in any public place who had or were likely to cause any members of

the public to be intimidated, harassed, alarmed or distressed. It also permitted the police to remove young people under the age of 16 years who were unsupervised in public places between 9.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. and return them to their homes. This part of the Act applied where there had been or was likely to be, a gang causing members of the community fear, alarm or distress. Under Section 31, in order to comply with the new powers, the police had to consult and obtain local authority authorisation before they could create an area for group dispersal. Before the power was available to an Officer, an authorisation was required by a Superintendent or above, this being on the basis that the Superintendent had reasonable grounds to believe that:-

- Members of the public had been intimidated, harassed, alarmed or distressed;
- As a result of the presence or the behaviour of a group of two or more persons in a public place in the police area; and
- Anti-social behaviour was a significant and persistent problem in that area.

The authorisation allowed the powers to be exercisable for a period not exceeding six months. The power could only be used by a Constable or Police Community Support Officer in uniform. If an Officer had reasonable grounds to believe that such behaviour in a public place had resulted, or was likely to result in members of the public being harassed, alarmed etc., as required under Section 30 the Constable could:-

- Require those present to disperse immediately, or by such time and in such a manner as they so specified;
- Require those persons not normally resident in the locality or that part of it, to leave immediately or in such time and manner as specified;
- Prohibit any of those persons present from returning to that area within the period specified by them, but not exceeding 24 hours, from the time of the direction being given.

Refusal to follow the Officer's directions to disperse was a summary offence. The penalty for conviction for this offence was a fine/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both. The decision to designate an area must be published in a local newspaper or by notices in the local area, the designation could then last for up to six months. The designated area must be clearly defined, usually by a description of the street or roads bordering the area.

Members were advised that based on the experiences gained from the Section 30 in Melbourne it had been determined that there were likely to be occasions when the police needed to obtain or amend an authorisation quickly. As a result, it would be more effective for the giving of consent to be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Housing and Community Services Committee.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to give consent to proposed authorisations pursuant to Section 30 of the Anti-Social Act 2003.***

HCS/79. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTOCOL**

The Committee received a copy of the Derbyshire Domestic Abuse County Forum's Domestic Abuse Protocol. It was stated that adoption of this protocol would raise awareness of domestic violence within the local authority and improve access to services for the residents of South Derbyshire.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That Derbyshire Domestic Abuse County Forum's Joint Protocol for domestic abuse as circulated be adopted.***

HCS/80. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Committee received the regular Performance Monitoring Report for the Housing Services Department for the 6 month period to the end of December 2004.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the performance of the Housing Services department be noted.***

HCS/81. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS, FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS AND PROPOSED RENT INCREASE 2005/06****Probable Outturn 2004/5**

The Committee was advised that the deficit on the HRA was estimated to be approximately £116,000 for 2004/5. This compared with an original estimate (December 2003) that anticipated a surplus of £310,000. This equated to an adverse variance of approximately £426,000. This was mainly due to a reduction in rental income, increase in spending on repairs and an increase in the payment to the Government pool.

**Rental Income**

It was reported that budget briefing reports during the year did forecast a reduction in rental income (net of rent rebates) of approximately £175,000. This was due to the effect of previous years Council house sales reducing rental income by a greater amount compared to the original estimate.

**Repairs**

The increase in spending amounted to around £145,000. The overall spending for 2004/5 of £2.65 million was in line with that incurred during 2003/4 of £2.68 million. This increase was due to a combination of the following:-



- Additional work required in bringing about 30 long-term voids back into use.
- General demand.
- An increase in the schedule of rates charged by the Housing Maintenance DSO. These were updated as part of changing over to the new IT system, and better reflected those currently used in the building industry.

#### Payment to the Government Pool

The Committee was advised that this had increased by £100,000 due to a reduction in capital charges in the HRA, and a decrease in the long term borrowing rate that determined the amount of capital charges that were reimbursed via subsidy.

#### Estimated HRA Reserve (as at 31st March 2005)

As at 31st March 2005 Members were advised that as previously reported, the HRA showed a favourable outturn position in 2003/4, which increased the HRA Reserve balance by £400,000. This could largely absorb the deficit in 2004/5. Consequently, HRA balances at the end of 2004/5 were still anticipated to be around £1.2 million as originally estimated (the current minimum balance was £½ million).

#### Base Budget 2005/6

Members were advised that the base estimate for 2005/6 showed a virtually break even position. This was mainly due to greater rental income based on the Government's guideline increase of 4.03% for 2005/6. This included a real terms increase of 1.5% over and above the Government's inflation target. In addition, Council house sales appeared to be slowing down and the yearly figure was softening to around 85 in 2004/5. The previous two years had been well in excess of 100 and this was having an adverse effect on rental income to the HRA. This also helped to improve the situation in future years as the base position was stronger.

#### Financial Projection to 2015

The Council had recently approved the retention of the housing stock following the Stock Options Review carried out during 2004. In addition, it had also resolved to keep under review the financial projections of the HRA. Following this decision, the Council was now being directed to submit a business plan for the HRA to the Regional Government Office. This was likely to be for a period covering the next ten years. Following the more recent review of the HRA's current income and expenditure for 2004/5 and the base budget for 2005/6, the financial projection undertaken in the stock options review had been updated to 2015. Compared to the stock options review, the overall financial position appeared to have improved slightly over this forecasting period. This was reflected by the fact that the HRA was projected to fall into deficit by 2010/11, which was a year later than the previous projection. The increased level of reserves and additional rent could sustain the HRA until 2009/10 by which time reserve balances fell below the current minimum level of £½ million. However, an increase in deficit in the longer term showed that the current HRA was still not sustainable over the ten year period with a forecasted deficit of around £2.5 million by 2015. Members

were advised that clearly, and as planned, this position was being reviewed. It would be necessary for the Council to submit a Business Plan that demonstrated that the HRA was viable over this term and that service improvements could be delivered. This would involve substantial detailed modelling, in particular around the profiling of repairs expenditure.

Various options for working towards achieving a more sustainable HRA in a longer term were highlighted in the stock options report. On this issue, a proposal to set aside £1 million from the debt free receipts to supplement the HRA was currently being considered by the Finance and Management Committee. This was part of the Council's overall budget proposals for the next financial planning period. If this was approved it would sustain the HRA's balances over the minimum amount of £½ million by a further year until 2012 based on current projections. However, there would still be a projected deficit of around £1.5 million by 2015.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That a rent increase of 4.03% for 2005/06 in accordance with Government guidelines be approved and adjusted for individual tenants in accordance with the rent restructuring formula.***
- (2) That the proposed estimates of income and expenditure for 2004/05 and 2005/06 for the Housing Revenue Account be referred to the Finance and Management Committee for approval.***
- (3) That the updated financial forecast for the Housing Revenue Account to 2015 be noted.***

HCS/82. **CEMETERY CHARGES 2005/06**

Under Minute No. HCS/64 of 6th January 2005, the Committee deferred approval of the recommended charges for 2005/6 subject to the provision of further information. The Committee therefore received a report outlining in greater detail the reasons behind the fee proposals for 2005/6 and summarised what had been a fairly long term approach to levying appropriate charges for this particular service area.

Members suggested that there should be no charge levied for the burial of persons under the age of 16 years.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That there be no charge for burials for persons under the age of 16 years.***
- (2) That subject to (1) above, the proposed fees for cemetery charges 2005/06 as submitted be approved.***

**HCS/83. DEVELOPMENT OF RECREATION FACILITIES – BADGER HOLLOWS LEISURE PARK, COTON PARK, LINTON**

The Committee was reminded that it had previously given approval for Officers to work with Groundwork Erewash Valley (GEV) to deliver this project. Tenders for the main contractor were issued in February 2004 but the tenders came in higher than expected and the scale of the project was subsequently revised. A further £10,000 was also successfully secured from EMDA in light of the higher tender return. A decision was taken to split the project into two phases. Phase 1 work was hard and soft landscaping including a new car park, paths, boardwalks and a new football pitch. Phase 2 was the installation of play equipment and park furniture. Phase 1 works had been completed on schedule and to the revised budget. A competition had been held for local schools and residents organised by the friends of Coton Park to name the facility and Badger Hollows Leisure Park had been chosen as the preferred name. Officers were now working to deliver phase 2. Part funding had been secured and efforts were underway from all partners to secure the remainder of the funding needed so that work could be delivered in Spring 2005. It was reported that a pedestrian access to the site was originally intended through the proposed nearby Community Centre. Unfortunately, plans for the Community Centre had been abandoned with the property being sold off as private dwellings. Safe pedestrian access was vital to the viability of the site. It was now proposed that the footpath which currently stopped at the corner of the adjacent property was extended down the main highway to the dedicated pedestrian access for the park. Being a new footpath adjacent to the main highway, the Council was required by the Highways Authority to enter into a Section 278 Agreement which ensured that the footpath was designed in accordance with its design and safety standards. A specialist consultant had been employed, in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules to undertake this work. Once the Section 278 Agreement had been approved a main contractor would be appointed to carry out works on site. Councillor Taylor suggested that the Council could ask Derbyshire County Council to contribute towards the creation of such a footpath.

Members were reminded that it was intended to develop the site for formal recreation and as a conservation area. Currently, Officers were investigating whether this area of the site could be designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). It was not known at this stage what financial commitments could be placed upon the Council if LNR status was declared. Members would be updated once more was known on this issue.

In the interim, the ecology area of the site was to be recommended by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to be registered as a Derbyshire Wildlife site. Designation was non-statutory and imposed no legal constraints or immediate financial responsibility on the Council. The primary purpose of the designation was to protect sites from development pressures and to assist in protecting them from damage caused by work such as the laying of cables, new telephone masts etc.

The Committee was advised that since the inception of this project an important element in discussions with the Parish Council and the Friends of Coton Park had been their commitment to fully manage the site once work was complete. It was anticipated that this would be via a long term lease. The site was very much larger than normal parish council managed sites. It

was therefore proposed that financial support be offered to the parish council over a three year period to help them maintain the site. There was currently an existing recreation area in Coton Park and again, it was always anticipated that as soon as the new recreation ground was fully operational, the Council would dispose of the existing site.

The Committee was advised that in undertaking the feasibility work for the scheme, likely revenue costs of £21,720 per annum were identified. However, it was anticipated that some work would be undertaken on a voluntary basis and that the real total site management costs would be less. The report of 20th November 2003 identified that revenue funding in the region of £14,000 would be needed. Closure of the existing site would produce a saving in maintenance costs in the region of £6,000 per annum. Therefore, £8,000 in revenue funding had been allocated to cover the ongoing maintenance of the site. To support the parish council it was proposed to offer in principle financial support on a sliding scale basis over a three year period. At the end of the three period, the parish council would assume and pay for the full management of the site.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That approval be granted in principle for revenue support for the ongoing management and maintenance of the site being offered to the Parish Council on a sliding scale over a three-year period.***
- (2) That approval be granted in principle that as soon as the new recreation area is fully available for use that the existing site be disposed of subject to appropriate consideration by the Finance and Management Committee.***

HCS/84. **SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICES**

The Committee received a detailed report and presentation on the improvements and further proposals for the Sheltered Housing Service both in terms of service delivery and standards of accommodation provided.

In receiving the presentation, Councillor Isham advised that she was impressed with the Council's response to out of hours emergencies and stated that it would be useful to see the figures for all emergency responses made as a result of the Careline Centre service. Councillor Isham asked whether a room had been identified for social activity for the residents of sheltered housing following the loss of the communal room at Smallthorn Place. She suggested that the Council could investigate using the new Sure Start facility for sheltered housing social activities in Woodville.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the improvements and further proposals to the Sheltered Housing Service both in terms of service delivery and standards of accommodation provided be noted.***

HCS/85. **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS SCHEME**

The Committee was advised that the Community Partnerships Scheme for 2003/4 had continued according to the same processes and procedures as

agreed when the scheme was launched with the addition of formalised Terms of Reference. In addition to allocating grants, the scheme allowed for funding advice and project development support to the voluntary and community sector.

In total, six applications were received for the third bidding round of 2004/5 asking for £73,114 against a remaining budget for the year of £102,475.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the recommendations of the Community Partnerships Scheme Assessment Panel be approved and grants totalling £67,367 be awarded to:-***

***Aston-on-Trent Memorial Hall – Memorial Hall Upgrade - £25,000***

***Money Spider Credit Union – Administration & Outreach Services - £3,367***

***Repton Pre-School – Building for the Future - £22,000***

***Woodville Parish Council – Garden of Remembrance - £15,750***

***Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust – Bretby Art Pottery Showroom, Woodville - £1,250***

HCS/86. **AMENDMENT TO THE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Committee was advised that the current allocations policy allowed for sheltered housing property to be allocated to anyone over the age of 55 years. A recent Government Circular on properties that were likely to be exempt from the Right to Buy (RTB) clearly stated that properties allocated to those below the age of 60 would not be exempt, no matter what the circumstances or nature of the property from the Right to Buy.

The Committee was advised therefore that it was proposed to amend the allocations policy to ensure that as far as possible, sheltered housing schemes were retained for occupation by elderly persons. If properties were bought under the RTB although they may be purchased by the sitting elderly tenant they could be then sold on to any purchaser of any age.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the following urgent amendment of the Allocation Policy be approved, in order to maintain its integrity and that of Sheltered Housing schemes:-***

***Allocations to sheltered housing accommodation will normally be made to applicants who have within their households a person who is 60 or more years of age. In some locations there may be limited demand from the over 60 age group (particularly for upper floor flats) and in these cases property allocations will be considered to those in other age groups and particularly, 55-60 age groups. Any allocation outside the over 60 age group requires the express approval of the Head of Housing.***

HCS/87. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

**RESOLVED:-**

*That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.*

**MINUTES**

*The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th November 2004 were received.*

**ETWALL LEISURE CENTRE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**(Paragraph 7)**

*The Committee received the Exempt Minutes of the Etwall Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee Meeting held on 4th October 2004.*

**PROVISION OF ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR ROSLISTON FORESTRY CENTRE**  
**(Paragraphs 8 and 9)**

*The Committee agreed to invite the company outlined in the report to submit tenders to undertake detailed design work at Rosliston Forestry Centre and appoint the successful practice to deliver Phase 2.*

**REVIEW OF THE GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICE**  
**(Paragraph 11)**

*The Committee agreed a detailed course of action with regard to the Grounds Maintenance Service.*

R. W. SOUTHERN

CHAIR