

**COMMUNITY, ARTS AND SOCIAL PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE****9 March 2004****Attendance:**

Councillors:

Porter (Chairman) (P)

Berry (P)  
Fothergill (P)  
Goodall (P)  
Johnston (P)  
Love (P)Merritt (P)  
Pearce (P)  
Pines (P)  
Stallard (P)  
Watts (P)**Others in Attendance:**

Councillor Evans (Portfolio Holder for Community Services)

---

**1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

**2. MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 20 January 2004 be approved and adopted.

**3. OPEN SPACE FUNDING - PRESENTATION**

During the presentation by the Director of Community Services the following information was provided to Members:

- The Open Space Fund was an amount of money collected from developers and held by the Council to provide additional outdoor facilities for recreation; play equipment for children and sports facilities for adults.
- The Fund could also be used for land purchase, planning application costs, drainage, car parking and fencing when related to play or sport facilities.
- The Council was aiming to achieve the Local Plan standard of 2.8 hectares of open space in each Parish.
- Applications for use of all or part of the Fund must be submitted by the Parish Council. Joint applications from neighbouring parishes may be accepted.

During discussion, Members were unsure how aware Parish Councils were of the detailed workings of the scheme. Therefore, it was suggested and agreed that two or

three Parish Council representatives be invited to a future meeting to give their opinions of the scheme.

4. **COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2004-05**  
(Report CAS23 refers)

Councillor Pines declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item as Chairman of the Winnall Rock Group. He explained that he would have to leave the meeting if this item was specifically discussed. (This item was not discussed and therefore Councillor Pines remained in the room for the duration of the meeting.)

Members queried the exclusion of some objectives such as Heritage and a Youth Strategy. The Director of Community Services explained that although some issues had not been identified as key corporate priorities at this time, the new format of the Plan assumed a degree of background activity. He also explained that although some target dates were included in the Plan, it would not be meaningful to include them for all services.

Whilst the Committee was impressed with the key aims and objectives within the Plan, several Members were concerned that although the Business Plan gave an anticipated outcome, it did not detail clear targets or finish dates. It was generally agreed that the document ought to develop over time to show progress and targets achieved at regular periods.

The Director of Community Services explained that his Department did not have Government set performance indicators and, as such, it was difficult to measure how satisfied or pleased its customers were, even with regular surveys. He continued that targets could be set for some areas, although others could not be determined until the project was underway. He agreed to look again at the relevant sections of the Plan and to endeavour to include more specific and measurable targets where possible.

Overall, Members considered the current format of the Business Plan would not enable them, as a Performance Improvement Committee, to effectively monitor progress. However, they emphasised that this was a criticism of the design of the Plan and not of the work of the Community Services Department.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet be informed that the content of the Business Plan be received and noted.
2. That Cabinet be further informed that this Committee has serious concerns about the format of the Business Plan.

5. **GUILDHALL PRICING POLICY REVIEW**  
(Report CAB788 refers)

The Director of Community Services explained that the two key changes proposed were an option to charge VAT on all lettings, and an increased discount for Charities. He did not expect this to have a significant impact on customers as corporate users would re-claim VAT, and individuals using the Guildhall for weddings or similar were already charged VAT due to the inclusive service element. However, the proposed charging of VAT might cause problems for Charities and therefore it was suggested that the discount, currently 10%, be increased to 30%.

Some Members were concerned that the smaller unregistered Charities may not be eligible for the discount. In response, the Director of Community Services assured Members that the Guildhall Manager would ensure that all charities would received the discount.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to policy summarised in paragraph 5 of the above report and also the scale of hire charges for 2004/05 outlined in Appendix 4 be noted.

6. **COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT – REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES**  
(Report CAS22 refers)

The Director of Community Services confirmed that some activity costs were higher at the Meadowside Centre due to the limited number of space within the sports hall, therefore, an activity using a large space would prevent other activities occurring at the same time.

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposed savings of £30,000 from additional income be forwarded to Cabinet for approval and inclusion in the 2004/05 budget.

2. That the fees and charges to be implemented for 2004/05 be noted.

7. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2003/04**

Following the recent meeting of the Bapsy Bequest Informal Group, it was agreed that in order to save time a report be prepared direct to Cabinet, rather than via this Committee. This Committee would, however, continue to monitor progress.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Scrutiny Work Programme 2003/04 be noted.

2. That the Director of Community Services prepare a report direct to Cabinet following comments made by the Bapsy Bequest Informal Group at its last meeting.

8. **VOTE OF THANKS TO CHAIRMAN**

As this was the last meeting in the current Municipal Year the Committee thanked the Chairman for her support over the last 12 months. The Chairman reciprocated appropriately.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.20pm

Chairman