



PORTFOLIO AREA: HEALTH & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Date of Meeting: 19th December 2005

Public

Key Decision: Yes/No

Recorded in Forward Plan: No

Inside Policy Framework

Title: GREYSTONE COMMUNITY CENTRE
Report of: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
Report reference: ECD.21/05

Summary:

Recommendations:

Members are recommended to consider and approve Greystone Community Centre's proposal to develop the Centre and to confirm a grant of £25,000, subject to other contributory funding being secured and that such grant be released when the Portfolio Holder for Community Activities and the Director of Community Services is satisfied that a viable scheme has been prepared

Contact Officer: R Burns

Ext: 7352

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 Following the disposal of the Community Garden site in Fusehill Street in September 2004, Council agreed that the local community should be the main beneficiaries from the sale or lease of the site and that consultations should be undertaken to establish what facilities could be provided in the area.
- 1.2 It was further agreed by the Executive (min EX205/04) that they would look very favourably on providing funding for schemes developed in consultation with the local community and any projects that the Greystone Community Association might put forward.
- 1.3 As a result, a major consultation with all the residents of the St Aidans Ward was prepared, with major input from Greystone Community Centre and Cumberland News Research Ltd.
- 1.4 Unfortunately, the consultation survey was due to be launched on 9th January 2005 and for obvious reasons, was put on hold.
- 1.5 It was not until September when it was felt that there were sufficient numbers of people back in residence in the area to make a survey viable, that the consultation was revived.
- 1.6 A copy of the survey form is available from the Community Support office or Greystone Community Centre.

2.0 SURVEY

- 2.1 2,500 copies of the survey were distributed or left at the Community Centre and 329 responses were received, giving a 95% confidence factor that the results would be representative of community opinion.
- 2.2 The survey gave a breakdown of what was already available or soon to become available in the area, including upgraded playground in Fusehill Street; all weather play area in Melbourne Park, St Martins College Sports Hall, Community Centre etc.
- 2.3 The questions in the survey were devised to ascertain what the main gaps in community provision were according to local people and what their preferences and priorities would be to address those gaps.

- 2.4 The results highlighted facilities and activities for young people and children; health and fitness activity and informal learning and training opportunities as being most important.
- 2.5 Based on this information, the Community Centre, who have been taking the lead in this exercise, supported by the City Council, prepared 3 draft proposals to extend and improve their facility, ranging in cost from £90,000 to £550,000. (attached as Appendix A)
- 2.6 Their Management Committee has indicated that ideally they would like to pursue option 3 (attached as Appendix B) but accept that they may have to develop option 1 first and reach option 3 in phases.
- 2.7 The Committee also feels that before they do much more work on developing any of the proposals, it would be helpful to know how much the City Council would be prepared to contribute as clearly, they will need to prepare options to present to other funding bodies also.
- 2.8 The immediate progression of any new development will depend to a great extent on the amount the Council feels able to contribute, but at a minimum, the Centre is committed to pursuing option 1 as soon as possible, but will continue to seek funding from other sources to enable them ultimately to fulfil option 3.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Members are recommended to consider and approve Greystone Community Centre's proposal to develop the Centre and to confirm a grant of £25,000, subject to other contributory funding being secured and that such grant be released when the portfolio Holder for Community Activities is satisfied that a viable scheme has been prepared

4.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 In order that progress can be made towards the development of the proposed extension to the Community Centre.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – support from officers of the Community Support and Buildings and Facilities teams
- Financial – the proposal to award a grant of £25,000 has been included in the provisional Capital Programme Report considered elsewhere in this agenda
- Legal –approval required to extend premises
- Corporate – n/a
- Risk Management – responsibility of Comm Centre Trustees
- Equality Issues – additional facilities will be DDA compliant
- Environmental – planning permission sought
- Crime and Disorder – additional facilities particularly targeted at young people and reducing nuisance and disorder
- Impact on Customers – improved facilities will benefit all Centre users

RB/VH

25th October 2005

Greystone

COMMUNITY CENTRE



Close Street, Carlisle, CA1 2HA Tel: 01228 625360

*This centre is owned by Carlisle City Council, managed in partnership with the local community
Registered Charity No. 701878*

For the Attention of Ray Knapton
Portfolio Holder
Carlisle City Council
Civic Centre
Carlisle

Dear Mr Knapton

Further to our discussion over the past few months I am writing on behalf of the Management Committee regarding a contribution by the City Council to Greystone Community Centre for improvements to the Centre and therefore enhanced facilities for the community.

We are currently investigating a number of proposals:

Option 1 – Alterations to existing building – 90K estimated

Alterations to internal layout and general refurbishment of fixtures and fittings in order to:

- Provide a children's play area
- Improve kitchen facilities
- Relocate coffee bar and existing office space
- Install internal sliding doors to improve use of halls

This option will improve facilities for children, provide extra meeting rooms, enhance the general look and feel of the building but not necessarily provide any more income

Option 2 – Option 1 plus Single Extension to East Side of building – £465K estimated

This will provide:

- All of the above in Option 1
- Newly furnished kitchen/coffee bar situated in the new wing
- Youth facilities in new wing and a wider hall space

This option will improve facilities for youth, as provision will be provided separate to the rest of the Centre, giving them more freedom. Revenue will be increased from coffee bar taking, as well as income from services provided for young people.

Option 3 – Two new wings to the front of the building - £550K estimated

This will provide:

- Newly refurbished kitchen/coffee bar situated in east wing
- Youth facilities in new wing and a wider hall space
- Existing kitchen converted into extra meeting room
- Additional room in west wing to provide enhanced nursery provision and a small area of the main hall will be converted into a sleeping area for children
- The kitchen would also allow for the provision of hot meals which would be necessary in order to provide wraparound care

This will allow for a wider range of services to Centre users of all ages from young children (wrap around care), young people (youth wing) and our older residents (provision of services such as chiropodist and other health issues). We also have plans to consult with local ethnic groups and employers of foreign workers, as we would like to provide services such as a bi-lingual advice point with information on local services and provide English classes.

This option will greatly increase revenue and is the preferred option for the long-term sustainability of the Centre.

We enclose initial outline plans and costing and would be grateful if we could have an early indication of any sum we can expect from City Council so that we can prepare funding applications to other funders.

We thank you once again for your consideration of this matter, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

J E Ackerley
Centre Manager
For and on behalf of
Greystone Community Association Management Committee

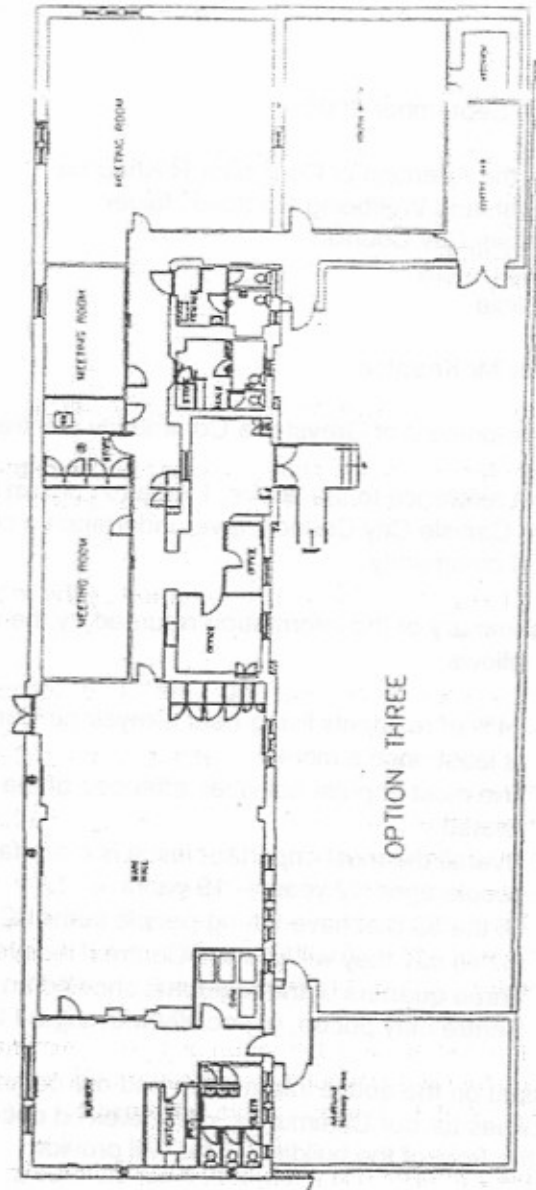
cc. Rob Burns – Community Support Manager

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CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

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Greystone

COMMUNITY CENTRE



Close Street, Carlisle, CA1 2HA Tel: 01228 625360

*This centre is owned by Carlisle City Council, managed in partnership with the local community
Registered Charity No. 701878*

22nd September 2005

For the Attention of Councillor R Knapton
Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Carlisle City Council
Civic Centre
Carlisle

Dear Mr Knapton

Development of Greystone Community Centre

With reference to the above, I write to confirm that Greystone in partnership with Carlisle City Council have undertaken a consultation exercise with the local community.

A summary of the information returned by the residents who were consulted is as follows:

- 24% of residents living near Greystone Community Centre use the Centre at least once a month
- The most popular activities attended at the Centre are ante-natal/child related
- Overall the most important issue is more facilities and activities for young people aged 12 years – 19 years
- Of the 58 that have young people in the 12 – 19 age range, just over half (52%) say they will use the Centre if it develops its facilities for them
- Three quarters of the residents showed an interest in the courses that the Centre may put on, especially with regard to computers and yoga

Based on the above information and our commitment to providing enhanced facilities for our Community, our preferred option is option 3 – Two new wings to the front of the building. This will provide:

- Newly refurbished kitchen/coffee bar situated in east wing
- Youth facilities in new wing and a wider hall space
- Existing kitchen converted into extra meeting room

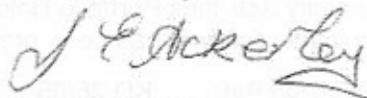
- Additional room in west wing to provide enhanced nursery provision and a small area of the main hall will be converted into a sleeping area for children
- The kitchen would also allow for the provision of hot meals which would be necessary in order to provide wraparound care

This will allow for a wider range of services to Centre users of all ages from young children (wrap around care), young people (youth wing) and our older residents (provision of services such as chiropodist and other health issues). We also have plans to consult with local ethnic groups and employers of foreign workers, as we would like to provide services such as a bi-lingual advice point with information on local services and provide English classes.

This option will greatly increase revenue and is preferred for the long-term sustainability of the Centre.

We hope that you will look upon us favourably when you decide how to invest the income generated from the lease of the Fusehill Street site, and as stated in your letter to Greystone dated 7th April, we share your concerns that this issue seems to have dragged on rather longer than everyone thought at the start.

Yours sincerely



Joyce Ackerley
Centre Manager
For and on behalf of
Greystone Community Association



Cc Rob Burns – Community Support Manager ✓

Decision Ref No:

Subject Matter:

GREYSTONE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Director of Community Services submitted Report ECD.21/05 concerning proposals from the Greystone Community Association Management Committee to develop their Centre.

Following the disposal of the former community garden site in Fusehill Street in September 2004, the City Council had agreed that the local community should benefit from the sale or lease of the site and that consultation should be undertaken to establish what facilities could be provided in the area.

A consultation exercise had now been carried out and had highlighted facilities and activities for young people and children, health and fitness activity and informal learning and training opportunities as being the most important improvements which could be made in the area.

The Greystone Community Association has subsequently drafted proposals to extend and improve their Centre, ranging in cost from £90,000 to £550,000. The Executive was requested to consider providing grant assistance towards the cost of the work.

Decision:

That a grant of £25,000 be awarded to Greystone Community Association towards the cost of developing their Centre, subject to other contributory funding being secured and such grant be released when the Health and Community Activities Portfolio Holder and Director of Community Services are satisfied that a viable scheme has been prepared.

Key or Non-Key Decision: Key Decision Ref:

Portfolio:

Who made decision:

Date:

Reports and Background Papers considered:

Reasons for Decision:

The provision of a grant will enable progress to be made towards the development of the proposed extension to the Greystone Community Centre.

Summary of Options rejected:

Interests declared

Date published

Urgent decision not subject to call in

Consent of Chairman/ Deputy Chairman of Council to Urgency:

Deadline for call-in:

Implementation date if not called-in:

3 January 2006

Relevant Overview and
Scrutiny Committee:

Community, Corporate Resources

Call-in notified to and date notified:

Approved for implementation on:

**COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
SPECIAL MEETING**

TUESDAY 10 JANUARY 2006 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Boaden (Chairman), Councillors Aldersey (as substitute for Councillor Farmer N), Bowman S, Earp, Hendry, McDevitt, Parsons and Rutherford K.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Bloxham, Environment, Housing, Infrastructure and Transport Portfolio Holder
Councillor Knapton, Health and Community Activities Portfolio Holder
Councillor Geddes, Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder
Councillor Prest

Councillors Patrick, Quilter and R Watson, St Aidans Ward Councillors

COS.001/06 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Committee in 2006 and wished all those present a happy New Year.

COS.002/06 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors N Farmer and Mitchelson (Leader of the City Council), the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, and the Deputy Chief Executive

COS.003/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Patrick, Quilter and R Watson declared personal interests in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of the business to be transacted. The Councillors stated that their interests were in respect of the fact that they were independent Members on the Greystone Community Association Management Committee.

COS.004/06 AGENDA

A Member commented that it would have been beneficial if the meeting had been held at Greystone Community Centre which would have afforded Members the opportunity to view the facilities currently available as opposed to the proposals put forward by the Greystone Community Association Management Committee.

The Chairman acknowledged that that had been a missed opportunity which should be noted for the future.

COS.005/06 CALL-IN OF DECISION – EX.260/05 – GREYSTONE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee had called-in for scrutiny Executive Decision EX.260/05 concerning Greystone Community Centre. The Executive decision in EX.260/05 (copies of which had been circulated to Members) was:

“That a grant of £25,000 be awarded to Greystone Community Association towards the cost of developing their Centre, subject to other contributory funding being secured and such grant be released when the Health and Community Activities Portfolio Holder and Director of Community Services are satisfied that a viable scheme has been prepared.”

Members had also received a copy of Report ECD.21/05 – Greystone Community Centre, which the Executive had considered on 19 December 2005 before making the decision.

The reason given by the Chairman for the call-in was to allow scrutiny of the adequacy of the grant award proposed by the Executive in light of development proposals made by Greystone Community Association Management Committee to extend and enhance community facilities.

The Chairman had invited the three St Aidans Ward Members to the meeting in order that they may comment on the matter.

The Chairman began by explaining that in dealing with a call-in the Committee could -

- (i) refer the matter back to the decision making body, in this case the Executive, for reconsideration setting out in writing the nature of its concerns;
- (ii) refer the matter to full Council;
- (iii) not refer the matter back to the decision making body, in which case the decision would take effect from the date of this meeting.

He noted that the date contained within Report ECD.21/05 was 25 October 2005 and sought clarification of the reasons for the delay in reporting the matter to the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny.

In response, the Director of Community Services apologised that a delay had occurred. It was, however, only when he became Director following the recent reorganisation of the City Council that the issue was discussed and it became apparent that a commitment had not been included as part of the Budget process. The purpose of Report ECD.21/05 submitted to the Executive on 19 December 2005 was to ensure that a commitment was included within the formal Budget process.

The Chairman referred to the background to the matter, particularly the call-in of Executive decision EX.193/04 dealing with the proposed disposal of land at Fusehill Street Community Gardens by Members of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 October 2004 (Minute CROS.142/04 refers).

Following its consideration of that call-in the Executive had decided "2. That as the capital receipt which would accrue to the Council from the sale of the Fusehill Street site was, at present, uncertain, the Executive was unable to identify the definitive amount that would be transferred into the central pot. During the Budget process, the Executive would, however, look very favourably to provide funding for schemes developed in consultation with the local community to improve facilities at the children's play area, enhancements to the community garden, any properly costed projects the Greystone Community Association might wish to put forward to improve youth provision at the Greystone Community Centre and any scheme put forward to upgrade outdoor facilities for young people at Melbourne Park."

The Chairman's main concern was the sum of money involved and he questioned whether details of the amount received following disposal of the land was in the public domain.

The Director of Community Services advised that normally details of land transactions were confidential.

It was therefore moved, seconded and

RESOLVED – In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following verbal statement involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the 1972 Local Government Act.

The Community Support Manager then provided Members with details of the amount secured following disposal of part of the land at Fusehill Street Community Gardens.

The meeting then returned to public session.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure and Transport stressed that the intention had been that a contribution from the proceeds of sale would be made available as recorded in the Minute, rather than all of the proceeds. At no time was it stated that the money was to go towards buildings.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Activities added that, on 5 October 2004, the Head of Finance had advised that Council policy was clear and that any monies would be reinvested into the Council's priorities wherever that may be. It would therefore have been against Council policy to earmark such money to a specific project.

In scrutinising Executive decision EX.260/05, Members raised and commented on the following issues:

(a) A Member referred to Report ECD.21/05, paragraph 1.1 which stated "Following the disposal of the Community Garden site in Fusehill Street in September 2004, Council agreed that the local community should be the main beneficiaries from the sale or lease of the site" He sought clarification as to whether that statement was correct.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Activities stated that it was not since that would go against Council policy.

(b) Referring to paragraph 2.2 of the Report, Members questioned the Council's financial input and whether the Doctors' Surgery was contributing towards the play area.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Activities advised that –

- upgraded playground in Fusehill Street - was currently out to tender, but a sum in the region of £65,000 - £70,000 was to be spent;
- all weather play area in Melbourne Park - would largely be funded from grant, the Council's contribution being £20,000;
- St Martins College Sports Hall – was nothing to do with the City Council.

In addition, there would be ongoing improvements to Melbourne Park when the flood defence works were complete. The Doctors would provide the community garden.

The Director of Community Services added that (excluding the Community Centre) the total Council contribution figure was in the region of £90,000.

(c) Referring to the 329 responses received from the consultation survey, and the information returned by the residents consulted – of the 58 that had young people in the 12 – 19 age range 52% said they would use the Centre if developed its facilities for them, a Member queried whether a grant of £25,000 was justified.

The Community Support Manager replied that gave a 95% confidence factor that the results would be representative of community opinion.

(d) A Member noted that no information had been provided as regards past investment in Greystone Community Centre. He had visited the Community Centre which was beautiful, with first class staff. It was his opinion that the local community was very fortunate to have the Centre when no such facilities were available in the Castle Ward for example.

The Director of Community Services indicated that he could arrange for that information to be provided.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure and Transport expressed some disappointment that the Committee had not been supplied with all of the background information necessary to allow it to make an informed decision on the matter. Such information would have answered some of the questions being posed by Members.

The Chairman then invited the St Aidans Ward Councillors to speak on the matter.

Councillor Quilter reported that the understanding of the Community Association was that a percentage of money raised from the sale of the land (which had been contentious) would be reinvested to address youth issues and improve provision for young people. The award of £25,000 was therefore very disappointing, particularly bearing in mind the amount of work which had gone into preparation of the plans.

Councillor R Watson stated that there had been a clear lack of understanding at what happened. The land at Rydal Street had been sold for housing and £69,000 promised for the play area in Grey Street. When the Fusehill Street site was put up for sale it resulted in a number of petitions and people expected the "lions share" from that sale.

The City Council should be honest and say if it only wished to spend £25,000 or, alternatively, look at the matter again and come up with a reasonable proposal.

Even if the Community Association was awarded the "lions share" they still had to attract other funding. They were very disappointed.

Councillor Patrick reiterated what had been said, commenting that the Council had a moral obligation to satisfy those disconcerted at the loss of the land. £25,000 did not show confidence or commitment to the area. The issue was youth provision and there were not the facilities to do it. A substantial grant was needed to allow the Community Centre to expand and it was the moral obligation of the Council to do it.

(e) A Member questioned what the Community Centre was used for, reiterating the point made concerning lack of information provided.

Councillor Quilter replied that the Centre was heavily used each day by a wide range of bodies from youth clubs to pensioners.

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager circulated copies of the Minutes of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 October 2004 and the Executive on 13 October 2004 by way of background information.

The meeting then adjourned at 10.39 am in order to allow Members time to read that documentation, reconvening at 10.45 am.

(f) Referring to Minute CROS.142/04 which stated that the Portfolio Holder hoped that "the Executive could be generous in the amount given", a Member asked whether the Executive felt that £25,000 was a generous award of grant.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure and Transport replied that when making that statement he had been speaking in a personal capacity. It was his belief that the amount being spent in the area was generous.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources commented that, as an Executive Member, she felt that money should go back into the community as a whole and not just the Community Centre.

Another Member stressed that the substance and tone of the Minute referred to above led people to expect an element of generosity. He felt very strongly that it was within the resources of the City Council to increase grant award to the Community Centre, thereby giving a feeling that their goals were achievable. Members were looking for some movement in order to come closer to the aspirations of local people.

He added that democratic engagement would not be helped if an agreement could not be reached and suggested that the Portfolio Holder should reconsider the matter.

(g) A Member noted that the proposals put forward by the Greystone Community Association ranged in cost from £90,000 - £550,000 and questioned whether the City Council had been involved in assisting the Association with its proposals. He asked whether the grant of £25,000 from the City Council would be of assistance in securing other funding bids, and where that sum sat in relation to past capital schemes for the Community Centre.

In response the Community Support Manager advised that the Community Support Team and Building Surveyors had been involved. Clearly Option 3 would achieve the greatest impact, particularly for young people. The work could be done incrementally, but the Community Association was ambitious and was looking to develop the full scheme.

A grant of £25,000 would be of little assistance in securing additional funding since it was a requirement of most funding bodies (e.g. the Lottery) that half of the necessary finance had already been acquired.

He added that over the past fifteen years the Council had developed Yewdale, Greystone, Brampton and Petteril Bank Community Centres.

The Director of Community Services further clarified that Options 2 and 3 were substantially more expensive than Option 1 because they contained an element of new building which was reflected in the cost.

In response to a question, the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Activities acknowledged that it was fair to say that the level of grant awarded was a reflection of the difficult financial position which the Council found itself in. That was coupled with the fact that the Council had recently completed a condition survey of all Council owned Community Centres, the finding of which was that essential maintenance in the region of £560,000 was required over a short period of time. The essential maintenance requirement for Greystone Community Centre was £47,000 and he was doubtful whether new build at the Community Centre was prudent in light of the above.

A Member stressed that essential maintenance requirements should be scrutinised in future and the Portfolio Holder advised that the matter would come before the Committee.

RESOLVED – (1) That Executive Decision EX.260/05 be referred back to the Executive, as the decision making body for re-consideration due to the Committee's concerns that the grant of £25,000 awarded to Greystone Community Association towards the cost of developing their Centre is inadequate to support the aspirations of the Association and the expectations encouraged by the Executive decision in Minute EX.205/04 that during the Budget process the Executive would look very favourably to provide funding for schemes developed in consultation with the local community.

(2) That it is the hope of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the Executive will reconsider the matter in the context of the clearly expressed statements by the Ward Members and the Executive's words of support in response to the original call-in in October 2004 (Minute EX.205/04 refers).

[The meeting ended at 11.06 am]