

Community Services Committee – 1 July 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **1 July 2003** when there were present:-

Cllr K A Gibbs (Chairman)

Cllr Mrs R Brown
Cllr R G S Choppen
Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr C C Langlands
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr C R Morgan
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr Mrs M S Vince

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R A Amner, TE Goodwin and Mrs L Hungate.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr P F A Webster

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Clarkson	- Head of Revenue and Housing Management
G Woolhouse	- Head of Housing, Health & Community Care
D Timson	- Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
P Colwell	- Housing Projects Officer
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

302 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2003 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

303 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Mrs S A Harper and Mrs M S Vince declared a personal interest in item 10 by virtue of being members of the 57 South Street Management Committee.

Cllr C R Morgan declared a personal interest in item 10 by virtue of being Chairman of the Local Strategy Committee.

Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in item 16 by virtue of being the County Council Deputy Portfolio Holder for Community Care.

Cllr C C Langlands declared a personal interest in item 14 by virtue of being the leaseholder of a former Council property and declared a prejudicial interest in item 18 and took no part in the discussion of that item.

Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins declared a personal interest in item 11 by virtue of being a member of Great Wakering Parish Council.

304 ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

(1) Private Sector Renewal Policy

The Committee considered the report of the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 12 June 2003.

On a motion moved by Cllr P F A Webster and seconded by Cllr Mrs S A Harper, it was:-

Resolved

That, subject to the following amendments, the policy on private sector housing renewal assistance appended to the report be agreed for immediate implementation for the financial year 2003/2004, and that this be reviewed for the financial year 2004/2005:

- Paragraph 7 – amend the wording to read “The prior residence requirement... applications under 6(e) and (g) above”.
- Paragraph 8 – amend the first sentence to read “In order to make a valid application for grant, the applicant must submit the following documents, as appropriate.”
- Paragraph 8 – include an additional point (to read “Proof of responsibility for a child/proof of pregnancy.”). (HHHCC)

305 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Committee received the Schedule relating to Progress on Decisions.

CCTV Funding in Local Shopping Parades (Minute 132/02)

Officers advised that they believed this work had been completed but that an item would be included in the Members’ Bulletin if that was not the correct position.

Proposed Designation of Public Places in Terms of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 201 and Local Authorities (Alcohol Consumption in Designated Public Places) Regulations 2001 (Minute 285/02)

Officers confirmed that an item would go into the Members' Bulletin clarifying what was meant in the resolution to this Minute by "restricting" the consumption of alcohol.

Concern was raised that youths from other towns were congregating in Rochford Market Square in the belief that the Police would not take any action.

Members noted that the Police had confirmed that they would not support any restriction on the consumption of alcohol in the area surrounding Clements Hall Leisure Centre, Rochford Market Square and Magnolia Park.

On a motion moved by Cllr Mrs M J Webster and seconded by Cllr Mrs R Brown it was:-

Resolved

That a letter be sent to the Police Authority expressing disappointment at the lack of police support for this initiative. (CE)

Playspace Rolling Programme 2002/2003 (Minute 392/02)

Work was due to be completed on Hockley Woods within the next week or so, following which a letter would be sent to the parish councils seeking their views.

Members suggested that the parish councils should be invited to respond by 30 September.

Petition – Infant Facilities – Playspace, Pooles Lane, Hullbridge (Minute 393/02)

The progress should read "Parish Council proposing to extend playspace at the present time".

Falls Collaborative (Minute 429/02)

Members would receive, in due course, a copy of the Primary Care Trust report on various Falls Collaborative initiatives currently being trialled.

Letting Policy (Minute 459/02)

A Choice Based Letting model was a Government initiative aimed at giving tenants more choice in the properties offered to them. A further detailed

report would be considered by the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee in January 2004.

Unfit House (Minute 462/02)

A repair notice had been served on the owner but no work has yet been carried out. Officers were now obtaining estimates for the work to be carried out and were investigating the best way for this Authority to get the work done.

Former Play Area at Tylney Avenue, Rochford (Minute 527/02)

Complexities had arisen with respect to the arrangements for the transfer of land. Proposals would be brought to this Committee in September.

CCTV Cameras – Rochford Town Centre (Minute 5/03)

Officers would confirm in the Members' bulletin whether installation was completed by 30 June.

British Telecom Review Number of Street Telephone Boxes (Minute 102/03)

Members were dissatisfied with the BT response relating to the removal of a telephone box at 141 Ferry Road, Hullbridge; this should be actively pursued by Officers.

BT had now reinstated a telephone box at Percy Cottis Road/Ormond Avenue, Rochford which had been removed without any prior consultation.

Consultation by Essex County Council on the Qualifying Distance for the Transport to School of Children of Primary School (Minute 104/03)

The wording of the resolution should be amended to read "change" instead of "reduce" the qualifying distances.

Officers would pursue a response from Essex County Council.

Woodlands Strategy (Minute 165/03)

Officers would pursue the final document.

306 57 SOUTH STREET

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) seeking Members' views on the continuation of support in respect of 57 South Street, Rochford.

On a motion moved by Cllr P F A Webster and seconded by Cllr Mrs S A Harper, it was:-

Resolved

That support of the project until expiry of the lease in July 2007 be continued.
(CD(F&ES))

307 PLAYSPLACE ROLLING PROGRAMME 2003/2004

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) providing Members with details of the Playspace Rolling Programme for 2003/2004.

During debate it was perceived that the majority of people using playspace facilities would come from the parish within which the playspace lay and that, as such, Parish Councils should pay half the associated playspace costs.

On the other hand, however, it was felt that some Parish Councils might not be able to afford these costs.

On a motion moved by Cllr K A Gibbs and seconded by Cllr P F A Webster, it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the playspace rolling programme 2003/2004 be considered by the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee, particularly with respect to refurbishment, maintenance and contributions by the parish councils and that parish councils be invited to attend that meeting.
- (2) That a report be brought back to this Committee in October.
(CD(F&ES))

308 HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care inviting Members to approve the Health and Safety Service Plan.

Responding to a Member enquiry, Officers confirmed that the target number of inspections for 2002/2003 was 40, but that the actual number of inspections achieved was 84, the majority of which were high risk premises.

Resolved

- (1) That the Health and Safety Service Plan be approved.

- (2) That a copy of the approved plan be sent to the Health & Safety Executive. (HHHCC)

309 FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care inviting Members to approve the Food Safety Service Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the Food Safety Service Plan be approved.
- (2) That the plan to complete the production of all food law enforcement documents and to implement a peer review system by April 2006 be confirmed. (HHHCC)

310 TENANT PARTICIPATION COMPACT REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management asking Members to review the Tenant Participation Compact Action Plan which has been updated following actions taken.

In response to a Member enquiry Officers confirmed that the Government had provided £13,000 for this initiative in 1999, and £6,500 in 2000. In subsequent years it had been funded by tenants through the housing revenue account.

Some Members felt that tenants had raised very few issues and appeared to be happy with the management of their properties. However, it was hoped that the Tenant Participation Officer would succeed in involving tenants with new initiatives.

Resolved

That the amended Tenant Participation Compact Action Plan be noted. (HRHM)

311 RACIAL EQUALITY MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management setting out the results of racial equality monitoring for 2002/2003.

Resolved

That this report be noted. (HRHM)

312 INTERMEDIATE CARE SCHEME

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management asking Members to consider proposals to work in partnership with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to provide intermediate care facilities at Spa Court, Hockley.

Addressing Members' concerns about costs, Officers confirmed that there would not be any ongoing costs associated with this scheme and that the initial cost of £9,400 would be more than offset by the rental income generated by letting the vacant flats. An update report would be brought to this Committee after 6 months' operation of the scheme.

Officers confirmed that the admission criteria for the scheme had been set by the Primary Care Trust on the basis of clinicians' advice.

Resolved

- (1) That the creation of two intermediate care units from the former wardens' accommodation at Spa Court, Hockley be agreed.
- (2) That works for conversion proceed in advance of the major refurbishment works and be met from additional rental income and the small balance from slippage in the 2003/2004 HRA Capital Programme.
- (3) That a 6-monthly update be brought to this Committee. (HRHM)

313 RACIAL EQUALITY IN RENTED HOUSING

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management inviting Members to consider the adoption of the ODPM's Code of Practice for Social Landlords.

Resolved

- (1) That the ODPM's Tackling Racial Harassment: Code of Practice for Social Landlords be adopted.
- (2) That the Housing Manager be charged with the responsibility for implementing the overall and component parts of the policy.
- (3) That racial incidents associated with tenancies be reported on an annual basis. (HRHM)

314 LEASEHOLD MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management seeking Members' agreement to adopt a Leasehold Management Policy.

Resolved

That a Leasehold Management Policy be adopted. (HRHM)

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

315 LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management asking Members to consider the Ombudsman's report and agree a one off payment to a complainant, as recommended.

Resolved

That the findings of the Ombudsman's report be accepted and that the complainant be paid the suggested settlement, as outlined in the report. (HRHM)

The meeting closed at 9.07 pm.

Chairman

Date