

Council – 22 December 2005

Minutes of the meeting of **Council** held on **22 December 2005** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr P F A Webster
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs M J Webster

Cllr R A Amner	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr C I Black	Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr K A Gibbs	Cllr P K Savill
Cllr T E Goodwin	Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr K J Gordon	Cllr S P Smith
Cllr J E Grey	Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr K H Hudson	Cllr Mrs M A Starke
Cllr A J Humphries	Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr T Livings	Cllr J Thomass
Cllr C J Lumley	Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs R Brown, P A Capon, Mrs T J Capon, R G S Choppen, Mrs H L A Glynn, Mrs S A Harper, C A Hungate, Mrs L Hungate, J R F Mason, and D Merrick.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren - Chief Executive
R J Honey - Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration)
R Crofts - Corporate Director (Finance and External Services)
M Martin - Committee Administrator

523 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Cllr T G Cutmore, Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee was thanked for the response he had made to the public question, indicating the Council's on-going commitment to graffiti removal wherever possible.

524 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

At this point in the meeting, the Chairman was pleased to receive a Gideon Bible presented by David Isles of Gideons International, South East Essex Branch.

525 COMMITTEE MINUTES AND REPORTS

Council received the Minutes of Committees and considered Committee Reports as follows:-

Committee	Date	Minute No.
(1) Community Overview & Scrutiny	1 November 2005	423-425
(2) Community Overview & Scrutiny	3 November 2005	426
(3) Community Services	3 November 2005	427-432
(4) Standards	8 November 2005	433-436
(5) Environmental Services	10 November 2005	437-447
(6) Policy & Finance	15 November 2005	448-460

(a) Review of Overview and Scrutiny – Consideration of Proposals

Council considered the report of the Policy and Finance Committee on the Review of Overview and Scrutiny.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to Committee documentation produced during the transitional period providing an indication that the Development Control Committee was formerly named the Planning Services Committee and that the term 'Town and Country Planning regulation' includes the granting of planning permission, the Council's Committee structure (including the names, size and terms of reference of Committees) be on the basis set out at the Appendix to the Committee report with effect from the new Municipal Year 2006/07.
- (2) That the Council consider a revised Constitution to take account of these changes. (CD(LPA))

Committee	Date	Minute No.
(7) Appeals	17 November 2005	461-463
(8) Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny	17 November 2005	464-465
(9) Community Overview &	22 November 2005	466-468

(10)	Scrutiny Planning Services	24 November 2005	469-471
(11)	Appeals	30 November 2005	472-474
(12)	Community Services	1 December 2005	475-484
(13)	Appeals	5 December 2005	485-487
(14)	Licensing	6 December 2005	488-490
(15)	Environmental Services	6 December 2005	491-494

(a) Groundwork Trust – Nomination of Member Representative

Council considered the report of the Environmental Services Committee on the nomination of a Member representative to become a Board Director/Trustee of the Groundwork Trust for South Essex.

Resolved

That Cllr T G Cutmore be nominated to become a Board Member/Trustee of the Groundwork Trust. (CD(F&ES))

Committee	Date	Minute No.
(16) Policy & Finance	7 December 2005	495-506

(a) Members' Allowances

Council considered the report of the Policy and Finance Committee on Members' Allowances.

Resolved

- (1) That the Members Allowance scheme comprise:-
- A Basic Allowance of £3,800.
 - The existing cascade system and percentage allocations of Special Responsibility Allowances.
 - The introduction of an Allowance for Chairmen of Sub-Committees.
 - The maintenance of the Co-optees' Allowance at £300 per annum.
 - Travel and subsistence to be paid at the same rate as for officers as at 1 April 2006 subject to a maximum of 40p per mile. The

Allowances for a passenger, motorcycle and bicycle to be retained at the same rate.

- The upper figure for overnight stays in hotels to be £120 (£180 in Central London).
- That Allowance should not be pensionable.
- That indexing linking should not be applicable.

(2) That a Carer's Allowance be not introduced. (CD(F&ES))

Committee	Date	Minute No.
(17) Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny	8 December 2005	507-509
(18) Environment Overview & Scrutiny	13 December 2005	510-512
(19) Environment Overview & Scrutiny	14 December 2005	513
(20) Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny	15 December 2005	514-520
(21) Planning Services	20 December 2005	521-522

526 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE 2006/2007

Council considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) relating to the determination of the tax base for each individual Parish or Town Council area within the District.

Resolved

- (1) That the method of calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the year 2006/2007 be agreed.
- (2) That pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992 the amount calculated by the Rochford District Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2006/2007 shall be in the following parts:-

ASHINGDON	1210.78
BARLING MAGNA	618.65
CANEWDON	542.28
FOULNESS ISLAND	67.25
GREAT WAKERING	1957.94
HAWKWELL	4500.06
HOCKLEY	3795.87
HULLBRIDGE	2338.89
PAGLESHAM	104.58
RAWRETH	428.33
RAYLEIGH	12017.77
ROCHFORD	2840.40
STAMBRIDGE	231.71
SUTTON	52.75

30707.27

527 ROCHFORD DISTRICT REPLACEMENT LOCAL PLAN – INSPECTOR’S REPORT

Council considered the report of the Head of Planning Services relating to the conclusions of the Local Plan Sub-Committee in respect of the recommendations made by the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector on the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan.

Some Members reiterated the concern expressed at the meeting of the Sub-Committee around Policy TP9 on car parking standards and in particular the need to adopt a maximum benchmark for the number of car parking spaces required for new developments. Officers confirmed that the Local Plan should comply with PPG13, which clearly stated “maximum level of car parking”.

Members agreed that it would not be wise to delay the progress of the Local Plan adoption on this issue alone.

Resolved

- (1) That, the decisions on the Inspector’s report be as outlined in Appendix 2 to the report, together with the inclusion of the following recommendations of the Local Plan Sub-Committee:-
 - The Council’s vision for Cherry Orchard Country Park being fully explained in paragraph 6.26 of the Plan;
 - The Ancient Woodlands in the district being shown on the Proposals Map;

- The boundaries of the town centres, (Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford) being shown on the Proposals Map.
- (2) That arrangements be made to publish a notice of the Council's intention to adopt the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan. (HPS)

(**Note:** Cllr R A Oatham asked that it be recorded that he remained opposed to the inclusion of a maximum car parking benchmark within the Local Plan).

528 MEMBER INTERVIEW PANEL FOR CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EXTERNAL SERVICES) AND HEAD OF FINANCE, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive inviting Members to agree the composition of the Member Interview Panel in connection with the appointments to each of these posts.

Cllr C I Black, as Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group wished to nominate Cllr Mrs J R Lumley as his substitute, should he be unavailable due to work commitments.

Officers advised that the process suggested was similar to that followed by other authorities within Essex and that followed by the Council in the past. It was recognized that an interview panel comprising all Members of the Council would not be a workable solution, but Members, nevertheless, wished to be reassured that the process would be as robust as possible, particularly as these were posts of such importance within the authority.

On a Motion moved, by Cllr T G Cutmore and seconded by Cllr K A Gibbs, it was agreed that, in order to ensure that the process was as inclusive as possible, the candidates should be required to make a presentation to Members as part of the process. This would be followed by a short period of questioning, thus providing the opportunity to hear from the shortlisted candidates prior to the interview stage. Members' views could then be passed to the Interview Panel.

Resolved

- (1) That the composition of the Member Interview Panel for the Corporate Director (External Services) and Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management comprise the Leader of the Council, the Chairman of the Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Leaders of the two minority parties.
- (2) That the shortlisted candidates be invited to make a presentation to all Members, prior to the final interview stage.

528 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) PROGRESS REPORT

Council received the Audit Commission's Progress Assessment Report dated December 2005. The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council thanked Members and officers for the work undertaken to ensure that good progress had been made in priority areas. The Chief Executive advised that re-assessment of the Council's CPA score might take place as early as Autumn 2006 under the new CPA regime for Districts, although that had yet to be agreed.

Members noted the comments made in respect of the Council's Planning Committee and that the review currently being undertaken would need a robust evidential base to support its conclusions.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Chairman

Date