

Community Services Committee - 5 February 2002

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **5 February 2002** when there were present:

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs J Hall (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R S Allen
Cllr R A Amner
Cllr Mrs R Brown
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr D F Flack
Cllr Mrs J E Ford
Cllr J E Grey
Cllr Mrs J Helson

Cllr C C Langlands
Cllr V H Leach
Cllr R A Pearson
Cllr Mrs W M Stevenson
Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllrs C I Black and P D Stebbing

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs P A Capon and Mrs L I V Phillips

ALSO APOLOGISING

Mr D Helson representing RAVS

SUBSTITUTE

Cllr T Livings

OFFICERS PRESENT

| | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| G Woolhouse | – | Head of Housing Health and Community Care |
| A Bugeja | – | Head of Legal Services |
| S J Clarkson | – | Head of Revenue and Housing Management |
| J Bourne | – | Leisure and Contract Manager |
| G Dawson | – | Senior Monitoring Officer/Parks Officer |
| A Wyatt | – | Committee Administrator |

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs M A Weir declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 13, "St Marks Community Hall", Councillor Mrs M S Vince declared a non-pecuniary interest in the same item and took no part in the debate or voting thereon.

Councillor C C Langlands declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 15 "Housing Management", 16 "Housing Strategy Best Value Review" and 17 "Tenant Involvement" by virtue of being a leaseholder of a former Council-owned property.

Councillor Mrs M S Vince declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 21 "StAR Partnership", and took no part in the debate or voting thereon.

31 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 November 2001 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

The Committee received the Schedule relating to decisions made since the previous Meeting. Outstanding issues were carried forward.

33 SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

(1) Leisure Sub-Committee – 8 January 2002

Minute 136 – Rochford Town Sports and Social Club – Application for New Lease on Pavilion at Rochford Recreation Ground, Rochford

Members were advised that the Recreation Ground had been transferred to the NPFA, although this did not include the pavilion, which remained under District Council ownership.

Resolved

That Rochford Sports and Social Club be requested to submit a full business plan outlining the aims and objectives of the future of the pavilion at Rochford Recreation Ground. Furthermore, that they be asked to clarify their constitution's aims, in particular those relating to sports. (CD(F&ES))

(2) Community Safety Sub-Committee – 15 January 2002

Minute 211 – Police Reports

Resolved

- (1) That Officers write to the Home Office and Local MPs expressing this Authority's concern relating to better control/regulation of fireworks. The following three main problems need to be addressed:-
 - (a) the extended period fireworks were available for sale which led to prolonged period fireworks were let off, to the detriment of general public amenity.
 - (b) the lack of regulation from point of sale onwards, considering fireworks were becoming larger and so contained more explosive devices.
 - (c) The increasing anti-social use of fireworks during the night and early morning.
- (2) That Officers write to Essex Police Authority, seeking justification for the decision to disband the Diving Section and reduce the Marine Division of the Police Service. In particular, they be requested to provide details of the subsequent improvements to the Services from these losses, as well as the loss of both the Motorcycle and Horseback Divisions. (CEX)

Minute 212 – CCTV Funding in Local Shopping Parades

Further to consideration of this Minute, on a Motion put by Councillor Mrs J Helson and seconded by Councillor Mrs M J Webster it was

Resolved

- (1) That the remaining £6,300 from the £40,000 be allocated to finance additional CCTV installations at local shopping parades.
- (2) That the following priority list be taken as those areas which should benefit, in order of priority, from the residual funds from the initial £40,000 made available for CCTV in local shopping parades.
 - (i) Hullbridge, The Parade at Ferry Road, between the Charity Shop and the Doctors Surgery, especially covering Dillions.

- (ii) Parts of Hockley Town Centre
 - (iii) Grove Road Shopping Parade
 - (iv) Hambro Hill Shopping Parade
- (3) That £15,000 be set aside in the Capital Programme to complete the CCTV in local shopping parades scheme, although the Grove Road site be held in abeyance pending the result of alternative sources of funding from the Police. (CEX)

(3) Housing Management Sub-Committee – 23 January 2002

Minute 157 – Mutual Exchanges

Resolved

- (1) That a Mutual Exchanges Administration fee of £135 be introduced.
- (2) That the fee level be reviewed annually as part of the budget process. (HRHM)

Minute 158 – Transfer Incentive Scheme

Resolved

- (1) That the Head of Revenue and Housing Management be authorised to make cash incentive payments of £1, 500 per bedroom forgone to those Council tenants transferring to a smaller property.
- (2) That Council consider the inclusion of a variation to the budget by the addition of £20,000 in the Housing Revenue Account for 2002/03 for the purpose of re-introducing the Transfer Incentive Scheme. (HRHM)

Minute 160 – Equity Share Property

Resolved

That the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee considers that the 25% equity share be re-purchased at valuation. (HRHM)

34 NHS SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care seeking a Member nomination to attend a Meeting on 7 February to discuss arrangements for scrutiny of the NHS.

Noting the detail in the report, concern was expressed at the loss of democratic accountability for the NHS given the abolition of the Community Health Councils. The Committee were advised of the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the potential for matters to be referred to the Secretary of State should the need arise. In response, Members requested a copy of the report and evidence sent to the Secretary of State concerning the Cancer Unit at Southend General Hospital. On a Motion put by Councillor Mrs M A Weir and seconded by Councillor Mrs J E Ford, it was

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson be nominated to attend the NHS Scrutiny Meeting with Essex County Council, and that travel and subsistence allowance is to be paid if appropriate.
- (2) That Officers request copies of the assessment report sent to the Secretary of State concerning the Cancer Unit at Southend General Hospital. (HHHCC)

35 HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which advised Members of the requirements of the new guidance on Local Authority Health and Safety Enforcement issued by the Health and Safety Commission. (HSC)

It was noted that a Best Value Review was due to be undertaken relating to public regulation inspection and protection which would look at the resource difficulties experienced in supporting this function. Further, Members considered that any audit undertaken on this work area should adequately reflect the amount of responsive work which had been undertaken concerning Health and Safety as well as the planned work element. On a Motion put by Councillor V H Leach and seconded by Councillor Mrs M S Vince, it was

Resolved

That the Best Value Review of public regulation inspection and protection includes consideration of options to improve performance in Health and Safety enforcement, and calculate resource implications. (HHHCC)

36 ST MARKS COMMUNITY HALL

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care, which invited Member nominations to join the Management Committee that was being formed for the new Community Hall at St Marks Field. On a show of hands, it was

Resolved

That Councillor R A Amner be nominated to the St Marks Hall Management Team. (HHHCC)

37 EASTERN REGION HOUSING STRATEGY MEETING – MEMBER NOMINATION

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care, which sought Member nomination to attend a one day meeting on the Regional Housing Strategy.

Resolved

That the Chairman of Community Services Committee and the Head of Housing Health and Community Care attend the Regional Housing Strategy Meeting and that travel and subsistence allowance be paid if appropriate. (HHHCC)

38 HOUSING MANAGEMENT – BEST VALUE REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) which gave an overview of the Best Value Review of the Housing Management function and sought approval to the proposed action plan. In agreeing the action plan, Members considered the service achieved a good percentage satisfaction with tenants and so whilst the Best Value Inspector's opinion placed Rochford in the lower quartile, it was tenant satisfaction with the landlord that mattered.

Resolved

That the action plan, as attached at Appendix 2 to the report, be agreed. (CD(FES))

39 HOUSING STRATEGY- BEST VALUE REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) which gave a synopsis of the Housing Strategy Best Value Review and sought approval for the action plan for improvement.

Resolved

That the action plan, as contained in Appendix 2 to the report, be agreed. (CD(FES))

40 APPOINTMENT OF TENANT LIAISON OFFICER

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management, which sought Members consideration of the recommendations of the Tenant Involvement Steering Group which met on 23 January 2002.

Noting the proposal arising from the Tenant Involvement Steering Group, on a show of hands it was

Resolved

That Members agree to a further detailed and costed report being made to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the appointment of a part-time Tenant Liaison Officer. (HRHM)

41 SWEYNE PARK OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which provided Members with proposals regarding the maintenance and improvements of Sweyne Park Open Space.

Noting the proposals put forward by Officers, and the current waterlogged condition of the Open Space, on a motion put by Councillor Mrs J Helson and seconded by Councillor Mrs M J Webster, it was

Resolved

- (1) That £60,000 be allocated from the Capital Programme for this project.
- (2) That the works to formally lay out the bridleways be carried out.
- (3) That the drainage in the vicinity of the childrens' play area be dealt with as a priority.

- (4) That the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee investigate:-
 - (a) the possible integration or not of the Park School area marked 'F' on the plan appended to the report.
 - (b) ways in which to develop more use/interest in the Open Space, to include the possibility of additional facilities.
 - (c) That a report be brought back before the end of the Municipal Year giving costings on all types of materials to be used within the project. (CD(F&ES))

42 SKATEBOARDING BYE-LAW (Minute 329/01)

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services which detailed a suitable bye-law initiative targeting skateboarding in specific sites which had been brought before Members for consideration prior to submission to the Home Office for preliminary approval.

Noting the bye-law related directly to Rayleigh, Members considered the designated area on the plan should be amended to clarify the matter in particular, along the length of Bellingham Way and along the length of Berrys Arcade. Further, Members questioned whether the bye-law could be extended to the rest of the District. On a Motion put by Councillor Mrs J Helson and seconded by Councillor Mrs M J Webster and subsequently amended by Councillor D F Flack and seconded by R A Pearson, it was

Resolved

- (1) That the provisions of the proposed District of Rochford (Good Rule and Government) Bye-law 2000 be agreed for submission to the Home Office for consideration.
- (2) That officers investigate and report back on whether the Bye-law initiative could be adopted in other Towns and Villages in the District. (HLS)

43 ROCHFORD CRIME & DISORDER REDUCTION STRATEGY 2002/05 DRAFT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which apprised Members of the updated sixth draft Rochford Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002/05. Noting the document was the responsibility of a partnership, concern was expressed at the changes the Police had made between drafts 5 and 6 and it was considered that

the item should be deferred to Full Council in order for drafts 5 and 6 to be scrutinised further.

Resolved

That the Rochford Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002/05 draft be deferred to Full Council for further consideration. (CEX)

44 StAR PARTNERSHIP

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, which apprised Members of the financial implications of further joint funding of the StAR Partnership.

Noting the work which had been undertaken by the partnership and the two year commitment from the Health Authority, Members considered there were no quick solutions for the area and that the District Council should be seen to support the long-term aims of the Partnership. On a Motion put by Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson, and seconded by Cllr Mrs J E Ford (referring to resolution 1 below), and amended by Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn and seconded by Cllr V H Leach (referring to resolutions 2 and 3 below), it was

Resolved

- (1) That the project be funded for a further two years and regular bi-monthly progress reports be produced by the StAR Partnership in order to continually evaluate its effectiveness.
- (2) In view of the changes to Ward Boundaries in May 2002, the remit of the StAR project be extended to cover any area within the Rochford District that the Community Development Worker, under the guidance of the StAR Partnership, sees fit.
- (3) That a report be submitted by the StAR Partnership to the next Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, detailing the views of the funding partners on this matter. (CEX)

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm

Chairman:

Date: