

## **Council – 27 October 2005**

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Minutes of the meeting of **Council** held on **27 October 2005** when there were present:-

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

Cllr R A Amner	Cllr C J Lumley
Cllr C I Black	Cllr Mrs J R Lumley
Cllr Mrs R Brown	Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr P A Capon	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr Mrs T J Capon	Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr T E Goodwin	Cllr P R Robinson
Cllr K J Gordon	Cllr P K Savill
Cllr J E Grey	Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr Mrs S A Harper	Cllr S P Smith
Cllr K H Hudson	Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr A J Humphries	Cllr Mrs M A Starke
Cllr C A Hungate	Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr Mrs L Hungate	Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr T Livings	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R G S Choppen, Mrs H L A Glynn and Mrs J A Mockford

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

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

### **418 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **419 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

#### **Quality Council Status Award to Rochford Parish Council**

The Chairman was pleased to present the Quality Council Status Award to representatives from Rochford Parish Council. In conjunction with the presentation Joy Sheppard, County Secretary of the Essex Association of Local Councils, outlined the nature of the Quality Council Scheme and the

work undertaken by Rochford Parish Council and its Clerk to achieve the Award.

### **Rochford District Council Design, Heritage and Conservation Awards 2005**

The Chairman was pleased to present the District Council's Design Heritage and Conservation Commendation Awards. The Awards had been established to enable the Council to recognise developments and schemes that were of high quality and that made a positive contribution to the appearance and character of the District. The Chairman had already visited the winning entry, St Andrew's Church in Rochford, to present the Award at a special Church service.

The Awards made at the meeting were as follows:-

<u>Scheme/Development</u>	<u>Award</u>
New dwelling at Crouch Valley Fish Farm, Rawreth	Commended
Improvement works at Magnolia Nature Reserve	Highly commended
Internal and External Alterations to No. 18, Hockley Road, Rayleigh	Highly commended
Residential Care Home, Rosedale Court, Rayleigh	Highly commended
Rochford Parish Sign	Highly commended
Four new town houses, Spa Road, Hockley	Highly commended
New Hawkwell Baptist Church Building, Rectory Road, Hawkwell	Highly commended
Illumination of St. Andrew's Church, Ashingdon	Specially commended

### **Castle Road Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre, Rayleigh**

The Chief Executive reported on a communication that had just been received from Essex County Council indicating that the County's Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre at Castle Road, Rayleigh would be closed on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout November 2005 for essential surface repair work.

### 420 PUBLIC QUESTION ON NOTICE

The Proper Officer reported that, pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10, the following question of the Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee had been received from Mr D Atheis, 108 Downhall Park Way, Rayleigh, Essex:-

“We understand that two of the Council’s principal aims are to ‘Improve the quality of life’ and ‘Maintain and enhance our local heritage’. Given these aims, with such a significant increase in graffiti recently in the Rayleigh area we would like to know why action is not being taken promptly to remove such.”

The Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee, Councillor T G Cutmore, responded to the question as follows:-

“Despite what Mr Atheis may believe, the Council is only duty bound to remove graffiti from those buildings under its control. However, this Council is keen to ensure that the District is as clean, green and safe as we can make it, and therefore has taken it upon itself to remove graffiti, especially of an offensive nature, from other buildings. In this context, it seeks to work with private owners and other public bodies.

Last month, we launched a ‘Keep Rochford Cleaner, Greener and Safer’ environmental initiative campaign. This aims to tackle issues such as dog fouling, litter, fly-tipping and graffiti. Three volunteer groups, including two church groups under the ‘Love Rochford’ initiative in Ashingdon and Hawkwell, have already signed into that campaign and are actively addressing environmental concerns in their areas. If Mr Atheis would like more details of that campaign to join us, the Council can certainly provide them.

We already operate a graffiti protocol and in that context, we fund an outside contractor to fast track graffiti removal. In September, for example, some 15 sites were cleaned of graffiti. Ten of these were in Rayleigh.

The Council have responded to a growing national problem by working with Essex Probation and the Police to prevent and deter further graffiti. Together with Essex Probation, we are utilising an unpaid workers scheme whereby offenders, as part of their sentence, are involved in the cleaning and removal of graffiti. Two of the District’s most prolific ‘tagging’ offenders have been arrested and charged with over 200 offences. As part of their sentence, they will be cleaning up sites in Ashingdon and Canewdon.

As well as the ‘stick’ approach, work is ongoing to engage known offenders on educational and lawful art projects in a positive fashion.

I trust that from the above Mr Atheis will agree that the Council is undertaking a broad variety of actions to respond to the graffiti problem. However, as with most issues of this type, responsibility rests with the youngsters themselves to recognise their responsibilities to the wider community and for parents to contribute to this process through accepting their role and responsibilities for their offspring.”

### 421 COMMITTEE MINUTES AND REPORTS

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

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>
(1) Planning Services	25 August 2005	315-317
(2) Community Services	1 September 2005	318-323
(3) Environmental Services	6 September 2005	324-328
(4) Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny	8 September 2005	329-331
(5) Policy and Finance	13 September 2005	332-341

#### **(a) Review of Financial Regulations (Minute 339/05)**

Council considered the report of the Policy and Finance Committee on the review of Financial Regulations.

#### **Resolved**

That the changes to Financial Regulations, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report to the Committee, be agreed. (CD(F&ES))

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>
(6) Planning Services	15 September 2005	342-345
(7) Environment Overview and Scrutiny	20 September 2005	346-349
(8) Community Overview and Scrutiny	22 September 2005	349A-350
(9) Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny	22 September 2005	352-355

### (a) Closure of Accounts 2004/05 (Minute 355/05)

Council considered the report of the Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Closure of Accounts 2004/05.

The Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) advised that both the works account and income variance figures should be shown in brackets. There should be no brackets for the verification framework variance figure.

### Resolved

That the budget amendments identified in the report be agreed. (HFS)

Committee	Date	Minute No.
(10) Planning Services	29 September 2005	356-358
(11) Community Services	4 October 2005	359-371
(12) Environmental Services	11 October 2005	372-376
(13) Community Overview and Scrutiny	12 October 2005	377-378
(14) Policy and Finance	12 October 2005	379-392
(15) Community Overview and Scrutiny	13 October 2005	393-397

### (a) Progress on Decisions – Report of the Playspace Sub-Committee (Minute 394/05)

It was noted that the references to funding under this item related to the Sutton Road Playspace, Rochford.

Committee	Date	Minute No.
(16) Environment Overview and Scrutiny	18 October 2005	398-402

### (a) Waste Management and Recycling Sub-Committee (Minute 399/05)

One a motion, moved by Councillor T G Cutmore and seconded by Councillor P K Savill, it was:-

### Resolved

That Councillor Mrs J A Mockford be appointed to the vacancy on the Waste Management and Recycling Sub-Committee. (HAMS)

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>
(17) Policy and Finance	19 October 2005	403-404
(18) Planning Services	20 October 2005	405-407
(19) Community Overview and Scrutiny	25 October 2005	408-411
(20) Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny	25 October 2005	412-417

### **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 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

### **422 ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW**

Council considered the exempt report of the Chief Executive in relation to the Council's organisational structure. It was acknowledged that key staff would be retiring in 2006 and that it was important to maintain a structure which, in organisational terms, remained effective, efficient, as economical as possible and capable of delivering the agenda faced by the Authority.

Responding to Members' questions, the Chief Executive advised on:-

- The organisational structure proposed for operation from April 2006
- The type of organisational structure the Council should be aiming for by April 2008, although it was acknowledged, given the ever changing environment and pressures placed upon the Authority, that this should be viewed in aspirational terms rather than as tablets of stone.
- The influences which shaped his organisational proposals and the contacts made prior to finalising their detail.
- The grading proposals for management staff.
- The pressure points in the organisation and the staffing proposals being put forward as part of the 2006/07 budgetary process.
- The reasoning behind those staffing proposals, acknowledging that more supporting detail would be required as part of the 2006/07 budgetary process.

- The reasoning behind employing consultants for the top level vacant posts and the costs involved.

Cllr T G Cutmore moved an amendment that the Council's structure should be considered annually within the context of the Council's budgetary process. This was seconded by Cllr PA Capon. The amendment was agreed.

Members then considered the main proposals, as outlined, and unanimously it was:-

### **Resolved**

- (1) To implement the structural changes outlined in the Chief Executive's report to give an organisational structure from April 2006 as outlined in Appendix 1.
- (2) To agree to move towards the organisational structure as outlined in Appendix 2 by April 2008
- (3) To implement the results of the Hay Evaluation exercise for management with effect from 1 October 2005
- (4) To advertise the replacement posts of Corporate Director (External Services) and Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management.
- (5) To endorse the use of recruitment consultants to facilitate (4) above, to ensure that the Council maximises the opportunity to fill both key posts.
- (6) To undertake an annual review of the organisational structure as part of the yearly budgetary process.
- (7) To consider the additional posts outlined in paragraph 4.9 of the Chief Executive's report as part of the 2006/07 budget making process. (CE)

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....