

## **Community Services Committee – 3 February 2004**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **3 February 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr K A Gibbs (Chairman)  
Cllr T E Goodwin (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R A Amner	Cllr Mrs J R Lumley
Cllr Mrs R Brown	Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr R G S Choppen	Cllr C R Morgan
Cllr Mrs S A Harper	Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs L Hungate	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C C Langlands.

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Cllr C A Hungate

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

G Woolhouse	- Head of Housing, Health & Community Care
D Timson	- Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

### **50 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **51 ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered the report of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee on recommendations relating to the alteration of the Lettings Policy in response to the suggestion that a decorating allowance against void properties in a poor state of decoration could be reintroduced.

#### **Resolved**

That an alteration be made to the Lettings Policy, to the effect that a system of inspection and recharging for damage of temporary accommodation be made, prior to offering permanent accommodation. (HRHM)

### **52 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS**

The Committee received the Schedule relating to Progress on Decisions.

### **Caravan Site Licensing (Minute 420/01)**

Site inspections would be conducted once there was adequate staffing in place.

### **Unfit House (Minute 294/02)**

The purchaser of the property was developing proposals for the redevelopment of this site. The property was empty and the situation was being periodically monitored.

### **Unfit House (Minute 462/02)**

Officers would aim to bring a report to the next meeting of this Committee.

### **Proposed Designation of Public Places in Terms of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 and Local Authorities (Alcohol Consumption in Designated Public Places) Regulations 2002 (Minute 426/03)**

An item would be placed in the Members' Bulletin confirming that the alcohol exclusion zone orders had been published and that the schemes would be enforceable from the beginning of March.

### **Old Ship Lane Toilets – First Resolution – Approval to Demolish and Develop Car Park, Rochford (Minute 429/03)**

Responding to a Member concern relating to youth nuisance in the vicinity of North Street, officers confirmed that it would be made a condition of works that rubble should be cleared away promptly from the site.

### **Skateboard Facilities – Clements Hall (Minute 500/03)**

A meeting was scheduled on 5 February with the Excel group.

### **Post Office Closures in the Rochford District Council Area (Minute 546/03)**

The Committee was disappointed by the closure of the post offices in the District, which appeared to have been taken place despite public consultation.

## **53 CONSULTATION – CENTRALISATION OF CANCER SURGERY**

The Chairman welcomed Mr McKenny, Lead Manager, and Dr Trask, Lead Clinician, of the South Essex Cancer Network Team, to the meeting. They outlined to Members via a presentation the proposals for improving the facilities for cancer surgery. The following key points were noted:-

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- The NHS Cancer Plan was published in December 2000, providing an organisational model for improving cancer surgery.
- South Essex has one of the smallest cancer networks in the country, serving a population of around 750,000 people. It was set up in 1995 and includes representatives from Essex Strategic Health Authority, five Primary Care Trusts, two Acute NHS Trusts, palliative care, and the cancer network management team.
- National 'Improving Outcomes' Guidance has been developed by clinicians on the best way to improve services for people with cancer. This requires a single surgical centre for each specific cancer type within each cancer network. There is good evidence that morbidity rates following surgery are higher in lower volume hospitals.
- The purpose of the consultation is to explain how cancer services will be changed locally to improve care for people with less common cancers.
- Gynaecological, urological and upper gastro-oesophageal cancers are less common than other cancers, such as breast, lung and bowel, but still account for about one third of all cancers per annum. At present these cancers are treated surgically by multi discipline teams at Southend and Basildon hospitals. However, this does not meet the national guidance requirements to develop specialist cancer surgery.
- Most of the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up, except specialist surgery, will continue to be carried out at both hospitals.
- Centralisation of radical curative surgery of these individual types of cancer will cost significantly more than at present, but should help to reduce mortality rates after surgery. Concentrating the surgery in one centre will enable the specialist teams to develop expert skills.
- It is proposed that Southend Hospital will become the centre for specialist gynaecological and specialist urological cancer surgery in South Essex, and Basildon Hospital will become the centre for oesophageal and gastric cancer surgery in South Essex.
- These proposals will result in approximately 50 to 60 people having to travel for surgery each year. It could also inconvenience relatives visiting patients in the period immediately after surgery. However, the alternative would be for people to have to travel to London hospitals for the specialist surgery.

In response to a Member enquiry, Mr McKenny advised that the proposal could not be implemented until such time as there was sufficient funding to recruit the necessary world class surgeons and that there were appropriate facilities. The status quo would therefore be maintained until this was achieved.

In response to a further query, Members were advised that guidance had yet to be published on head and neck surgery; surgery would be carried out in Essex, but the specific location had not yet been confirmed.

Responding to an enquiry on the timescale for the Basildon and Southend proposals, Mr McKenny confirmed that no fixed deadline had been set. The network should, however, demonstrate that it was working towards meeting the guidelines. The recruitment of specialist staff was key.

Members thanked Mr McKenny and Dr Trask for their informative presentation and confirmed their support for the proposals.

### **54 REVISED ENFORCEMENT POLICY – HOUSING, HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CARE**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care inviting Members to consider the Enforcement Policy, which had been extensively revised to include current best practice.

Officers advised that a paragraph had been omitted in Part 7 of the Policy relating to forfeiture proceedings, and that this should be reinstated and the paragraph numbering altered.

Members thanked officers for all their hard work on Enforcement Policy.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the revised Housing, Health & Community Care Enforcement Policy be approved, subject to a paragraph being inserted on forfeiture proceedings in part 7, and paragraph numbering being adjusted accordingly.
- (2) That the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care be authorised to update or amend the divisional enforcement policy as appropriate in the future. (HHHCC)

### **55 PLAYSPLACE ROLLING PROGRAMME 2004/2005**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) providing Members with details of the Playspace Rolling Programme for 2004/2005.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the playspace in Pooles Lane, officers advised that, although parents wanted funding for a small children's play area this playspace was a low priority in terms of health and safety.

In response to a further query, officers confirmed that a letter had been sent to Great Wakering Parish Council relating to the provision of skateboarding

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facilities on the recreation ground at High Street, Great Wakering.

Officers noted a Member concern that the playspace in Hockley Woods did not now have facilities for the under 5's since it was refurbished.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That it be agreed that priority be given to replacement of the units in the designated play areas for the 2004/05 Rolling Programme as identified in section 4.3 of the report.
- (2) That the Playspace Rolling Programme for 2003/04 and 2004/05 be progressed as outlined under Section 6 of this report.
- (3) That a press release be issued with respect to the Playspace Rolling programme. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....