

## **Review Committee – 17 April 2007**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Review Committee** held on **17 April 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr K J Gordon  
Cllr Mrs S A Harper  
Cllr T Livings

Cllr Mrs J R Lumley  
Cllr P K Savill  
Cllr P F A Webster

### **VISITING MEMBER**

Cllr P R Robinson

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs R Brown, Chief Inspector J Walker, J Zammit - Essex County Council Partnership Co-ordinator

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Warren	-	Chief Executive
P Gowers	-	Overview and Scrutiny Officer
J O'Brien	-	Committee Administrator

### **123 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **124 ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR REVIEW**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Project Lead, Cllr K H Hudson.

During discussions, it was noted that:-

- Mrs C Napier Assistant Chief Constable of the Essex Constabulary would now be the point of contact on this subject.
- Notwithstanding that it was disappointing a meeting had yet to be successfully arranged with the Chief Constable or Assistant Chief Constable of the Essex Constabulary to discuss Neighbourhood Policing, officers had now received communication with proposed dates for the end of May 2007. Officers would follow this up and the Chairman recommended that it would be of benefit to accept the offer for the meeting to take place on police premises.
- The Chairman agreed with sentiments of Mr D Carling, Essex County Council Road Safety Officer in that a lot of officer and Member

resource appeared to be directed towards the topic of anti social behaviour with limited results.

- This topic appeared to be a continual and growing area of concern for communities on the whole.
- The Committee acknowledged that its work was important in investigating and highlighting issues and to express the opinions of constituents. It was hopeful that the findings would have a positive impact and help build a healthy environment.
- It is recognised through legislation that Councils have an overall responsibility for crime and disorder. Rochford is one of the safest Districts in the country and the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) is one of the most successful in the region.
- Parenting skills are considered to be an area of concern and it is important that children are raised appropriately for today's culture and society to develop constructively.
- The CDRP funds initiatives such as anger management and parenting schemes.
- Provision for the youth is imperative in addressing issues and targeting needs, and could be seen as a positive step towards improvement. The Committee appreciated that young people themselves are key to this and any provision would require participation from other outside parties.
- Hockley Parish Council were now proceeding with an anti social behaviour review. There would be merit in officers approaching them with regard to the work already being carried out by this Committee and to invite them to work with the Committee on the final stages of this review.
- Subject to any additional findings from the fore-mentioned meeting with the Essex Constabulary and potential involvement from Hockley Parish Council, the project report was near to completion. Officers welcomed any provisional recommendations before the report would be finalised and put before the Committee.

### **125 MONITORING OF THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM**

The Committee considered the final report of the project team on the review of the Monitoring of the Committee System.

The following observations were made:-

- The reviewing of Policy Committees had provided positive findings that these were operating successfully.

- Notwithstanding that the number of responses received on the Member questionnaires were disappointing, the general consensus from the information that was gathered had been that the Committees were operating under an improved structure for the 2006/07 municipal year.
- The team had been asked to investigate the role of Member Champions within the existing process and further to consider what implications there may be within any proposed new decision-making structure.
- The Member Champion role could assist in sharing the workload and would identify individuals with specific areas of expertise.
- It was anticipated that the Member Champion would be a direct point of contact for Members and/or public and have a specific interest in their knowledge subject. However, it would be important for the Member Champion not to duplicate efforts or cause any potential confusion with responsibilities, especially concerning external communication with outside bodies.
- It could be considered 'best practice' for the Council to retain a Benefits Member Champion. Also, introducing a Champion for Housing Issues may be more important now with the imminent transfer of housing stock for 2007 (under the LSVT process), and Recycling continues to be a priority area for focus. There would therefore be merit in adding the topics of Benefits, Housing Issues and Recycling to those considered worthy of being championed within the final report. The list would now read as:-

Benefits  
Historic Environment  
Housing Issues  
Local Business Community  
Recycling  
The Elderly  
Web Development and E Government applications  
Young Persons

- The new procedure for placing documents in the Members Library had appropriate measures to ensure that all items are routed through the Committee Section for documenting and filing.
- Paragraph 7.2.16 should have the topics of 'Benefits', 'Housing Issues' and 'Recycling' added to the list considered worthy of being championed.
- Paragraph 9.2 and recommendation no.2 should have the word 'new' removed from the sentence (this reflected that the document could be kept live irrespective of the agreed structure for 2007/08).

- Recommendation no.3 should have the word ‘new’ removed from the sentence. Furthermore appendix 1 should be adjusted to:-
  - remove item 5
  - amend item 6 to read ‘Communicate on behalf of their interest group and the Council to gather information from outside bodies, Members and the Public - to bring that knowledge/information back to the Council/Executive’
  - amend item 7 to read ‘Keep up to date with developments in the champion area and look at best practices and procedures within their area of interest.’
- Paragraph 9.7 and recommendation no.5 should have the word ‘policy’ removed from the sentence.
- Paragraph 9.8 should be removed in its entirety.

The Committee concurred with the Chairman that the project team had produced a thorough report, and were thanked for their efforts.

### **Resolved**

That, subject to the above amendments, the final report and recommendations be agreed and elements submitted to Full Council and the Standards Committee as appropriate.

## **126 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee considered the draft annual report of the work carried out by the Review Committee in 2006/07 and ongoing projects and proposals for 2007/08.

The Chairman observed that overall the Committee had made successful recommendations in 2006/07 that were a positive reflection of the work carried out by Members. Thanks were extended to Cllr T Livings for the bus services review and it was encouraging that there was an ongoing dialogue with Essex County Council. Additionally, it was also good to hear that there was a proposal by Essex County Council to introduce a new subsidised community bus service within the District.

The Committee endorsed the report with no amendment.

### **Resolved**

That the annual report be agreed and submitted to Full Council.

**127 PROPOSED CLOSURE OF GP SURGERIES IN HAWKWELL AND ROCHFORD**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chairman, Cllr K H Hudson.

The Chairman advised that the South East Essex Primary Care Trust (PCT) had reached the decision not to close the general practitioner surgeries in Hawkwell and Rochford at this time. This was a positive result and met the concerns raised by many patients, Members and officers.

In recognition of the fact that this was the last meeting to be held in the Current municipal year, the Chairman extended thanks to the Committee for its hard work during 2006/07.

The meeting closed at 9:05pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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