

Policy and Finance Committee – 9 September 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Policy and Finance Committee** held on **9 September 2003** when there were present:

Cllr P F A Webster (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs M A Starke (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr J E Grey
Cllr K H Hudson
Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr C A Hungate
Cllr C J Lumley

Cllr P K Savill
Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr S P Smith
Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr D A Weir

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J R F Mason.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren	- Chief Executive
R Crofts	- Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
A Bugeja	- Head of Legal Services
S Fowler	- Head of Administrative & Member Services
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

396 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 July 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

397 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C J Lumley declared a personal interest in item 15 of the agenda by virtue of his wife working at the Anglia Polytechnic University.

Cllrs Mrs H L A Glynn and D A Weir declared a personal interest in item 13 of the agenda by virtue of being Members of Hawkwell Parish Council.

398 THAMES GATEWAY – SOUTH ESSEX PARTNERSHIP – ROCHFORD SPECIAL DELIVERY VEHICLE

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive updating Members on developments within the Partnership and seeking endorsement

to the Council establishing a special delivery vehicle to oversee projects within the District funded via Thames Gateway monies.

Resolved

That the establishment of a Working Group be agreed, as outlined in the report, chaired by Rochford District Council, to oversee the implementation of projects funded via Thames Gateway monies. (CE)

399 LOCAL AUTHORITY BUSINESS GROWTH INCENTIVES - CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) seeking Members' views in respect of the above consultation paper issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and H.M. Treasury on 4 July. Responses were required by 31 October 2003.

Responding to a Member enquiry, officers confirmed that the financial incentive to authorities would be based on business rateable values.

Resolved

- (1) That a response be made to the consultation on the basis of the report.
- (2) That the Council's agreed response be copied to the Local Government Association, Sir Teddy Taylor MP and Mr Mark Francois MP. (CD(F&ES))

400 CONSULTATION PAPER ON INDEMNITIES FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services seeking comments from Members on the consultation paper and draft order put forward by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which sought to clarify the circumstances in which indemnities could be provided. The consultation document was on deposit in the Members' Library at Rayleigh.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the limit of indemnity, officers confirmed that the limit was set at £250,000 for each individual claim.

Resolved

- (1) That the officer comments outlined in the report be submitted as this Council's response.
- (2) That copies of the Council's response be sent to the Local Government Association and both local MPs. (HLS)

401 LAND AT BROAD PARADE, HOCKLEY

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services advising Members of Hockley Parish Council's request for the formal transfer to the Parish of a small amenity area opposite the shopping parade at Broad Parade, Hockley, which the Parish had maintained for a number of years.

It was the general consensus of the Committee that there should be restrictions within the lease on any future development of the land; the land should remain an open space.

Resolved

That the amenity area at Broad Parade be transferred to Hockley Parish Council on a long lease for 125 years at a peppercorn rent, and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services deems fit. (HLS)

402 GLENCROFT PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, HAWKWELL

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services advising Members of Hawkwell Parish Council's interest in assuming responsibility for the public open space situated on the former Glencroft Nursery, White Hart Lane.

Officers advised that Hawkwell Parish Council had confirmed their agreement to the transferral, subject to landscaping works being completed.

Resolved

That, subject to Hawkwell Parish Council's agreement, the public open space on the former Glencroft Nursery site, White Hart Lane be transferred to the Parish Council on a long lease for 125 years at a peppercorn rent, and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services deems fit. (HLS)

403 TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION IN CASTLE ROAD CAR PARK, RAYLEIGH

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management asking Members to consider a request from agents to site a telecommunications mast in Castle Road Car Park, Rayleigh.

During debate some Members perceived that the Castle Road Car Park site would be preferable to other sites listed in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Mindful of officers' recommendation that the Committee should determine whether or not the land should be leased, Members nonetheless considered

that the matter should be further scrutinised by the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee, with particular reference to the siting of the mast, health and safety concerns and proper consultation. Any report should include details of the actual distances of the proposed sites for the telecommunications installation from residential areas.

On a motion moved by Cllr P K Savill and seconded by Cllr J E Grey it was:-

Resolved

That this item be referred to the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee for further scrutiny. (HRHM)

404 ANGLIA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY – APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BENFLEET CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services detailing a request from Anglia Polytechnic University (APU) for a District Council representative to be appointed to the University's Benfleet Consultative Council.

Resolved

That the Committee recommends to Full Council that Cllr C A Hungate be appointed as a representative and Cllr P A Capon as a substitute to the Anglia Polytechnic University Benfleet Consultative Council for the remainder of 2003/04. (HAMS)

405 YOUNG ESSEX ASSEMBLY

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive seeking Members' agreement to the District Council entering into a proposed partnership arrangement with the County Council on the above.

Resolved

That this initiative be supported and that this Council enter into a partnership agreement with Essex County Council, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, subject to clarification around the IT/office support required. (CE)

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 9 of

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

406 IT CONTRACTOR

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on the progress of negotiations with the Council's IT contractor.

It was noted that consideration should be given, in future major contract negotiations, to including a requirement for a guarantee from an independent insurance bondsman rather than stipulation of a parent company guarantee.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted. (HAMS)

The Meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Chairman.....

Date.....