
REPORT OF THE FINANCE & PROCEDURES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 JULY 2003

1 DISPOSAL OF OLD SHIP LANE PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND CAR PARK – FURTHER ISSUES

- 1.1 This item of business was referred by the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22 July to Council with the recommendation that the Old Ship Lane public convenience be demolished and redeveloped for car parking purposes. A copy of the officer's report is attached as Appendix 1 (page 7.16.5).
- 1.2 The Committee noted the strength of feeling from local residents and other interested parties over the potential loss of car parking spaces.
- 1.3 The Committee considered that taking into account the recent enhancement of the market square in Rochford, together with the fact that Thames Gateway were seeking to promote Rochford as a centre for arts and crafts, this placed a greater importance on providing adequate car parking facilities within the town centre.
- 1.4 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**
- (1) That the Old Ship Lane public convenience be demolished and redeveloped for car parking purposes to provide a total of approximately 10 spaces to the rear of the Old Ship public house.
 - (2) That the car park be brought within the Council's Car Parking Order and that the spaces be designated as paying spaces, with a maximum permitted stay of 2 hours.
 - (3) That the above be financed from within the existing Capital programme. (CD(F&ES))

2 FINANCE BEST VALUE REVIEW

- 2.1 This item of business was referred by the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22 July to Council with a number of recommendations. A copy of the officer's report is attached as Appendix 2 (page 7.16.19).
- 2.2 The Committee congratulated officers on the quality of the report. They were pleased to note that the outcomes of the review would lead to various

improvements and that benchmarks provided a useful checklist against performance.

2.3 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

- (1) That the action plans set out in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 to the report be agreed.
- (2) That officers be instructed to initiate negotiations with regard to forming a partnership for the delivery of the national non domestic rates service.
- (3) That the Head of Financial Services be instructed to report in December with proposals for improvements to the payroll and personnel services. (CD(F&ES))

3 CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

3.1 This item of business was referred by the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22 July to Council with the recommendation that the annual assessment of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance be agreed. A copy of the officer's report is attached as Appendix 3 (page 7.16.62).

3.2 The Committee noted that it would be necessary to appoint an officer to co-ordinate officer and Member training and development to gain Investor in People accreditation and carry forward the Organisational Development Plan in line with the objectives set out in the Code at section (c) of Dimension 4.

3.3 It is proposed that the Council **RESOLVES**

- (1) That a Training & Development Support Officer be appointed. (CD(LP&A))
- (2) That the annual assessment of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance be agreed. (CD(F&ES))

4 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

4.1 This item of business was referred by the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22 July to Council with several recommendations. A copy of the officer's report is attached as Appendix 4 (page 7.16.98).

4.2 The Committee noted details of the responses to the questionnaire which had been circulated to Members about the operation of the Committee structure and the Member training programme in 2002/03 together with proposals for improvement for Members' consideration.

4.3 In particular, Members welcomed the introduction of a scoping form for use, when appropriate, by Overview & Scrutiny Committees. This could be used as a checklist for policy development/review to ensure that the discussion stays focussed.

4.4 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

- (1) That the use of scoping form be introduced at the start of each policy development/review.
- (2) That each Overview & Scrutiny Committee should consider the most appropriate venue for its work.
- (3) That the use of site visits and expert witnesses be considered as appropriate.
- (4) That the broadcasting of Council meetings on the website be pursued when cost-effective technology can be identified.
- (5) That further training in Overview & Scrutiny be arranged for Members.
- (6) That specific budget provision of £5,000 for Overview & Scrutiny be considered as part of the draft 2004/05 budget.
- (7) That all internal audit reports be considered by the Finance & procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the first instance.
(HAMS)

5 SIGNAGE IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

5.1 This item of business was referred by the Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22 July to Council with the recommendation that improved signage be purchased for the Council Chamber. A copy of the officer's report is attached as Appendix 5 (page 7.16.108).

5.2 The Committee congratulated officers on the excellent cost-effective proposal, which would achieve a more professional looking image. Members had noted that as the signs could be hooked over the rail of the dais, this would not involve any alteration to the woodwork.

5.3 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

That improved signage, as detailed within the report, be purchased for the Council Chamber. (HAMS)

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Background Papers:

None

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