

Corporate Resources Sub-Committee 17 January 2001

Minutes of the meeting of the **Corporate Resources Sub-Committee** held on **17 January 2001** when there were present:

Cllr R Adams
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr Mrs J M Giles
Cllr Mrs J Helson

Cllr Mrs S J Lemon
Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr D A Weir
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C R Morgan (Chairman)

SUBSTITUTES

Councillor G Fox (in the Chair for the meeting)

385 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 November 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

386 BUDGET PROPOSALS – 2001/02

Members welcomed to the Meeting the following representatives from the Chambers of Trade:

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| Eric Jobson | - | Rochford District Chamber of Trade and Commerce |
| John Sheaf | - | South Essex Chamber of Commerce Trade & Industry |
| Ken Wickham | | Regional Chairman Federation of Small Businesses |
| Mike Street | - | Rayleigh & District Chamber of Trade |

The Sub-Committee had before them the report of the Head of Financial Services which dealt with the determination of the following:

- (i) the level of Council Tax for Rochford District Council
- (ii) the revenue budget for 2001/02
- (iii) the virement approvals arising from the 2000/01 revised revenue estimates
- (iv) fees and charges
- (v) Housing Revenue Account rents and charges
- (vi) Capital Programme both general fund and housing

It was noted that the report was due for consideration at Council on 23 January 2001 and that the purpose of this meeting was for the Chambers of Trade to have an input into the budget setting process.

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With the aid of a hand-out the Head of Financial Services briefly advised the Sub-Committee of the reasoning which could be associated with an increase in Council Tax. Further to this the Chairman took questions from both Members and representatives of the Chambers of Trade to which the following observations were made:-

Concessionary Fares

The Sub-Committee was advised that the system for concessionary fares was now related to usage.

Recycling

It was noted that there is no provision for the Hawkwell Recycling Trial in the draft budget for 2001/2 and £96,300 was included for the provision of additional recycling facilities throughout the District.

Contracts

It was noted that the contracts recently awarded to Serviceteam would be honoured given recent announcements that the company had been taken over by Cleanaway.

Car Parking

It was noted by Chambers of Trade that charges for car parks in Hockley had been brought into line with the rest of the District and that there was no proposed increase in charges for the next financial year for which the Chambers of Trade were happy.

House Renovation Grants

Members were advised that there was no bias offered for listed buildings when dealing with grants.

Mill Hall Car Park

It was noted the completion of the Mill Hall Car Park was scheduled for February 2001.

Inward Investment

A Member suggested that it could have been of value if the Economic Regeneration Officer for Rochford District Council had attended this meeting. The Sub-Committee was advised of projects and partnerships currently under way to seek to promote inward investment and economic regeneration to the District as a whole.

CCTV

The Sub-Committee was advised that the £5,000 set aside at the previous meeting for Rayleigh Chamber of Trade's proposed additional CCTV in Rayleigh High Street had been approved at Council in December. Furthermore, the Head of Financial Services undertook to discuss the proposals with the Chamber of Trade as appropriate.

Balances

Members and representatives were advised that, although balances were below the £650,000 minimum, the current budget strategy does not seek to replace this deficit.

Increased level of Council Tax

On the calculations of the Chamber of Trade it was noted that a 17pence a week rise on Council Tax from the District Council was the equivalent of a 50% rise on the precept from the Town Council. It was, however, pointed out that the Rochford Council Tax covered the whole District.

Taxi Licensing

The Sub-Committee was advised that Essex County Council undertook health and safety and lifting training for all taxi circuits involved with school runs. It was considered appropriate if this was the case for the budget provision to be reduced.

Concern was further expressed that the increased fees and charges for Hackney Carriage Licensing and it was questioned whether the taxi firms had been consulted on the charges. In addition, there is no provision in the next financial year for support of wheelchair taxis.

Mechanical Sweeper

It was questioned whether the new refuse collection contract allowed for a mechanical sweeper for the exclusive use of Rayleigh High Street with another sweeper being used for the rest of the District.

Pigeons

Members were advised that the issue of pigeons had been considered at Rayleigh Town Centre Monitoring Panel earlier in the week with the matter being investigated by Officers. Members requested a full report, including the potential for bylaws, to the relevant Committee.

Further to this debate, concern was expressed by Members of the lack of consultation with the local business community, particularly relating to CCTV, the Mill Hall Car Park and taxi licensing fees and charges.

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Members requested that these matters be investigated as a matter of urgency.

The Chairman confirmed that Officers would respond on the above points to all Members.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Chairman _____

Date _____