

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** held on **13 July 2000** when there were present:

Cllr C R Morgan – Vice-Chairman in the Chair

Cllr R Adams  
Cllr D F Flack  
Cllr Mrs J M Giles  
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn  
Cllr J E Grey  
Cllr D R Helson  
Cllr Mrs J Helson  
Cllr Mrs S J Lemon  
Cllr T Livings

Cllr G A Mockford  
Cllr P J Morgan  
Cllr R A Pearson  
Cllr S P Smith  
Cllr M G B Starke  
Cllr R E Vingoe  
Cllr P F A Webster  
Cllr D A Weir  
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs P G Cutmore and V H Leach

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Councillors Mrs J M Giles and R A Pearson

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Warren	-	Chief Executive
R Honey	-	Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration)
R Crofts	-	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
A Smith	-	Head of Administrative & Member Services
J Bostock	-	Principal Committee Administrator

### **227 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor S P Smith declared a pecuniary interest in the item on Summer Activities – Grange & Rawreth Ward by virtue of employment at the site and left the Meeting during consideration thereof.

Councillor R E Vingoe declared an interest in the Outside Bodies item by virtue of his spouse's employment with Anglia Polytechnic University.

### **228 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 April 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 229 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference of this Committee as agreed at Annual Council.

### 230 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

During debate of contract monitoring the Chief Executive advised that arrangements would be put in place to ensure Officer contact points were identified for persons wishing to comment on recycling. The Chief Executive also informed the meeting that staffing update details would in future be included in the Members' Bulletin.

The Committee was satisfied that all necessary action had been or was being taken. Minutes 42/00, 118(4)/00, 120/00 and 131/00 were carried forward.

### 231 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PARENT COMMITTEES

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Parent Committees.

#### **Community Services - 27 June 2000**

#### **Minute 207 - Regulation of Pollsters**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services on the possibility of utilising provisions within the Essex Act 1987 to regulate the activity of "Pollsters" or the feasibility of introducing by-laws.

During debate Members agreed that it would be useful to contact the Local Government Association and the Essex Association of Councils to identify the experience of other Authorities.

Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration) advised that Officers could investigate the control of Pollster activity on the Council's own land.

On a motion moved by Councillor Mrs J Helson and seconded by Councillor Mrs S J Lemon it was:-

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That representations be made to the appropriate Government Department requesting that legislation be introduced to regulate the activities of Pollsters operating in the highway and in public places.

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

- (2) That Officers write to the Local Government Association and the Essex Association of Local Councils to ascertain whether other authorities are having similar experiences with Pollsters.
- (3) That Officers investigate the possibilities for controlling Pollsters on Council owned land and report back. (HLS)

### **Audit Services Committee – 6 July 2000**

#### **Minute 225 – Audit and Inspection Fees**

##### **Resolved**

That utilisation of the contingency provision to meet the additional cost of Audit and Inspection Fees for 2000/2001 be authorised.  
(CD(F&ES))

## **232 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

The Committee received the Minutes of the following Sub-Committees and considered the recommendations contained therein:-

### **(1) Urgency Sub-Committee – 7 April 2000**

The Chief Executive confirmed that, where meetings are convened to make urgent staffing decisions, the Chairman of the appropriate Committee would be provided with an opportunity to attend.

### **(2) Local Review Board – 4 April 2000**

### **(3) Urgency Sub-Committee – 25 April 2000**

### **(4) Contracts Panel – 16 June 2000**

#### **Minute 96 – Leisure/Best Value**

##### **Resolved**

That the implications of Best Value in respect of Leisure Services be noted, together with the Panel's views on those aspects that should be taken into account at this early stage in the Best Value Review process. (CE)

#### **Minute 97 – Leisure Consultancy**

Responding to Member questions, Officers advised that:-

- Officers would be providing an extension date to the Leisure Contract Consultation period to enable Parishes to respond.

- The Council's consultant's had indicated that they would be making every endeavour to reach those not using the facilities and would be arranging a number of Member sessions on aspects of the Leisure Contract.

### **Resolved**

That the proposals put forward by PMP Consultancy for undertaking public consultation in relation to the review of leisure be endorsed.  
(CD)(F&ES))

### **(5) Structural and Procedural Review Working Group – 20 June 2000**

#### **Minute 55 – The Modernising Agenda – An Update on the Local Government Bill – Implications for the District Council**

During debate on Working Group recommendations, some Members expressed concern that the public were being steered towards particular models rather than being provided with an opportunity to comment on other democratic possibilities. Other Members referred to the background to the current position which meant the Council was required by statute to give consideration to three specific models and to the value of momentum.

Responding to Member questions, Officers advised on the limited timescale available for undertaking the required consultation and confirmed that the external Auditors would be monitoring the Council's progress via the Management Letter.

A Motion was moved by Councillor D F Flack and seconded by Councillor D A Weir that, in consulting the public, the Council's documentation should indicate that, of the three models available one was least unacceptable but the Council still preferred a proper democratic model for Rochford. The Motion was lost on a show of hands and it was:-

### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That the Leader with Cabinet option be adopted as the Council's preferred option of the three model structures, with appointment to the Cabinet to be agreed by Full Council.
- (2) That a suggested organisational structure, excluding a partnership Committee, be as shown at the Appendix to the Minutes.
- (3) That public consultation on the three options be undertaken by means of "Rochford District Matters".

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

- (4) That the Chief Executive be delegated authority to establish an independent panel to review Members remuneration once further guidance is available. (CE)

**NOTE:** Councillor D F Flack wished it to be recorded that he had voted against the above decision.

### **(6) Corporate Resources Sub-Committee – 4 July 2000**

#### **Minute 333 – Community Legal Service**

##### **Resolved**

That the proposed partnership arrangement with Castle Point Borough Council be undertaken and a further report be brought back to Members in six months' time outlining progress with the scheme's implementation. (HLS)

#### **Minute 334 – Citizens Advice Bureau Service for Rochford District**

##### **Resolved**

- (1) That the plan of action as identified be agreed.
- (2) That an additional one-off grant of £4,000 be agreed for 2000/01.
- (3) That the additional grant in respect of staffing support for 2000/01 of £2,000 be agreed.
- (4) That the additional financial implications of the indicative staffing structure be approved in respect of 2001/02.
- (5) That the Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration) be authorised to vary any existing agreements necessary as a result of these proposals.
- (6) That the Council's representation on the new CAB comprise one Officer and one Councillor. (HFS)

#### **Minute 335 – Inter-Authority Supportive Work Assistance Scheme**

##### **Resolved**

That the Council supports the initiative and joins the Inter-Authority Supportive Work Assistance Scheme. (HFS)

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

### **Minute 336 – Support Services for Members**

Members agreed that it would be appropriate to introduce digital locks to improve Civic Suite security with immediate effect. The Head of Member and Administrative Services advised on approximate costs (£75.00 per lock) and proposed arrangements for lock number issue.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That three digital locks be introduced at the Civic Suite, Rayleigh with immediate effect on the basis reported by the Head of Administrative and Member Services.
- (2) That consideration of the support services to be provided for Members be deferred until after the Council's new political structure has been established. (HAMS)

### **Minute 337 – Photocopying for Town and Parish Councils and Voluntary Organisations**

#### **Resolved**

That a photocopying service continues to be provided to local town and parish councils and to voluntary organisations at a revised charge of 5p per copy (including VAT). (HAMS)

### **Minute 338 – Rayleigh Civic Society: Planning Services Agenda/Minutes**

#### **Resolved**

That the request by Rayleigh Civic Society to reduce the cost of Planning Services Committee Agendas, Minutes and the Schedule of Planning Applications to £40.00 per annum be agreed. (HAMS)

### **Minute 339 – East of England Local Government Conference - Rochford Council Membership**

#### **Resolved**

That consideration of the Council's membership of the East of England Local Government Conference be deferred, pending a presentation by the Regional Director to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee. (HCPI)

### **Minute 340 – Staff Leave arrangements/closure of Council Offices between Christmas 2000 and the New Year**

#### **Resolved**

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

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That staff be granted flexibility to take the additional day's leave on either Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 or Friday 29 December 2000, with the Council's offices remaining open to the public on all 3 days.  
(HAMS)

### **Minute 341 – Grants to Outside Bodies – Rayleigh Operatic and Dramatic Society (RODS)**

#### **Resolved**

That the application for grant assistance from Rayleigh Operatic and Dramatic Society be refused. (HFS)

### **Minute 342 – Hullbridge Motor Project**

#### **Resolved**

That Hullbridge Parish Council be informed that the District Council is not prepared to make a further substantial contribution towards the start up costs of the Motor Project. (HCPI)

### **Minute 343 – Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Services (RAVS) – Grant**

#### **Resolved**

That the previously approved grant of £1,500 be released to RAVS.  
(CD(F&ES))

### **Minute 344 – Application for Waiver of Theatres Act Licence Fees – Open Air Plays, Rayleigh Mount**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That a 100% waiver of the fee due for a Theatres Act Licence be granted.
- (2) That the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) be given delegated power to waive 100% of the licence fee for all future waiver applications received from the Rayleigh Mount Local Committee, on condition that the format and objectives of holding the plays remain largely unchanged. (HHHCC)

### **Minute 345 – Compulsory Purchase Order for land at Etheldore/Wood Avenue, Hockley**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services on the need for a formal resolution to the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of residual unassembled land at

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

Etheldore/Wood Avenue, Hockley. The Order would facilitate comprehensive re-development of the site in accordance with the Planning consent and the Development Plan Policy for the area.

The Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration) outlined the current legal position and confirmed that a Compulsory Purchase Order would not be implemented until absolutely necessary. The Chairman of the Planning Services Committee referred to public meetings which had been held about the site, current activity on the site and how Compulsory Purchase proposals were not intended to dispossess or disadvantage.

The Committee endorsed a suggestion that a meeting should be arranged with the developer to ensure abidance with the spirit of Compulsory Purchase Order procedure. On a motion moved by Councillor R E Vingoe and seconded by Councillor Mrs J Helson, it was:-

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Head of Legal Services completes an agreement with Countryside Residential Ltd relating to the acquisition and transfer of the residual areas of land to the Company at no cost to the Council and on such other terms and conditions as agreed by the Head of Legal Services .
- (2) That the Council makes a Compulsory Purchase Order pursuant to the powers contained in Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of those areas of land at Etheldore/Wood Avenue shown hatched on the plan attached to the report which Countryside Residential Ltd has not acquired, in order to secure the carrying out of the approved development.
- (3) That the developer be asked to meet with the Chief Executive, the Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration), Local Ward Members and representatives of the Residents Association to promote compliance with the spirit of the S106 Agreement. (HLS)

### **Minute 346 – Appraisal of the Chief Executive**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That a Member Appraisal Panel, comprising the Chairman of the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee and the four Group Leaders, or their nominees, be re-established for the remainder of the 2000/01 municipal year to oversee the appraisal of the Chief Executive.



## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

- (2) That no substitute membership of the Panel be permitted during the municipal year.
- (3) That a special meeting of the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee be convened prior to the Chief Executive's appraisal taking place, to discuss and agree those issues to be taken up by the Member Appraisal Panel with the Chief Executive as part of the appraisal process, with those Chairman of the main service committees not already on Corporate Resources Sub-Committee being invited to the Sub-Committee specifically for this item. (CEX)

### **Minute 347 – Land at Beckney and Wood Avenues, Hockley**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the land between Beckney and Wood Avenues, Hockley which is surplus to requirements be offered in the first instance to Hockley Parish Council.
- (2) That should that Council express no wish to obtain the sites then a further report be brought back to this Sub-Committee. (HLS)

### **Minute 348 - Land at Wood Avenue, Hockley**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That site 'A' on the plan attached to the Head of Legal Services' report be sold to the owner of the adjoining property on the basis outlined above, and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services deems necessary, including selling the land at market value, with a further report on the details of the disposal being brought back to this Sub-Committee.
- (2) That the request to purchase the larger area of land (shown 'B' on the plan attached to the report) be refused. (HLS)

### **Minute 349 – Asset Review – The Freight House, Rochford**

#### **Resolved**

That the offer to purchase the freehold of the Freight House, Rochford be declined at this point in time. (HLS)

### **Minute 350 – Land at Laburnum Grove, Hockley**

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the disposal of the Laburnum Grove Play Area in Hockley should not be pursued.
- (2) That Hockley Parish Council be approached to discuss whether it would take over the site.
- (3) That a report concerning the use of the play area by youths, and the associated crime and disorder implications, be considered by Community Safety Sub-Committee. (HLS/HCPi)

### **Minute 351 – Asset Review – Malvern Road Open Space, Ashingdon**

#### **Resolved**

That the Open Space in Malvern Road be offered to Ashingdon Parish Council on terms and conditions deemed necessary by the Head of Legal Services. (HLS)

### **Minute 352 – Relocation Expenses**

#### **Resolved**

That the proposals as set out in Appendix 2 to the minutes of the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee meeting held on 4 July be adopted as Rochford District Council's scheme of relocation expenses for non Member appointments with immediate effect. (CD(F&ES))

### **Minute 353 – Building Control – Quality Management**

#### **Resolved**

That a new post of Team Clerk (Building Control) be created at Scale 2/3. (AHPS)

### **(7) Member Budget Monitoring Working Group – 5 July 2000**

### **Minute 81 – Treasury Management.**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That Treasury Management Advisers be appointed through the tendering process for a period of 5 years (notice of 3 years).

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

- (2) That a further report be submitted on the appointment of a Cash Fund Manager together with the criteria for investments following the initial work of the consultants. (HFS)

### **Minute 82 – Draft Regional Planning Guidance for the South East**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That a sum of up to £12,000 be allocated for the appointment of consultants to produce an Urban Capacity Study
- (2) That reports on other planning associated objectives and the associated staffing resource within the Corporate Policy and Initiative's division be submitted to the Planning Policy Sub-Committee in the first instance.(HCPI)

### **Minute 83 – The Windmill, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That work be undertaken to establish the possibilities for setting up a Trust arrangement for the Windmill capable of meeting funding criteria.
- (2) That arrangements be put in hand to open the Windmill to all Councillors between 6pm and 7.30pm before Council on 25 July 2000
- (3) That the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group meet with the Rayleigh & District Antiquarian Society to discuss the future of the building with a report back to Finance & General Purposes Committee in due course. (HLS)

### **Minute 84 – Town & Country Financial Issues Group and Shire District Initiatives (SDI) progress Report**

#### **Resolved**

That the following be this Council's comments on the SDI proposals:-

- That support is given to TACFIG proposals for plan based funding based upon the community plan.
- The view that there should be a predetermined control total of the grant payable to Shire Districts fixed for 5 years with annual inflation updates is not an unreasonable concept.
- The proposed simplified formula for distribution to individual Shire Districts could be supported in principle, but more detail would be required.

- Support cannot be given to the proposal that the distribution of the control total to individual authorities should be determined by Shire Districts themselves operating as a self-regulating community.
- The proposal that there should be a real term increase in the aggregate sum available to Shire Districts could be supported. (CD(F&ES))

### **Minute 86 – Asset Review – Land near the Civic Suite, Rayleigh**

#### **Resolved**

That Officers investigate and report further to the Group on possible operational uses for the site. (HLS)

### **Minute 87 – Land at Highfield Crescent, Rayleigh**

That the matter be reconsidered following further investigation. (HLS)

### **Minute 88 – Administrative and Member Services – Staffing**

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the sum staffing resource position be reported to the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group in the first instance to enable it to be placed in financial context. (CE)
- (2) That post 23500 be regraded from scale 3-4 to scale 5 with effect from 1 October 2000. (HAMS)

## **233 ELECTORAL REVIEW WORKING GROUP**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on the outcome of the Working Group's review of Local Government Commission Draft Recommendations.

During debate it was noted that Rayleigh Town Council would be communicating with the Commission on the basis that the original options contained in the District Council's original submission to the Commission should be maintained. A number of Members referred to their desire to see the Commission change its draft recommendation for Deepdene Avenue so that the whole of that road might be represented within a single District Council Ward.

### RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the following form the basis of the Council's response to the Local Government Commissions' draft recommendations for the future electoral arrangements in Rochford: -
  - (a) That this Council concurs with the recommendation that Rochford District Council should be represented by 40 Councillors in 20 Wards and that elections should take place by thirds.
  - (b) That whilst this Council is broadly happy with the boundaries which have been set for the Rayleigh wards, with the exception of the area surrounding Deepdene Avenue, it is extremely concerned that in other areas the recommendations have been based on a desire to achieve electoral quality alone and unlike the District Council's proposals had not given adequate account to the other statutory criteria of community identity, and effective and convenient local government.
  - (c) That it be re-iterated to the Commission that the consequential changes in the Parish Council election arrangements should not take effect until the date of the first next ordinary date of election after 2002. (HAMS)
- (2) That a letter be sent to the Chairman and Clerk of every Parish/Town Council offering to give assistance in drafting a letter of response to the Local Government Commission. (HAMS)
- (3) That the local press be invited to give publicity to the Local Government' Commissions recommendations. (HCPI)

### 234 THE BEACON COUNCIL SCHEME

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which brought attention to Round 2 of the Beacon Council Initiative and sought views as to whether to apply.

Members agreed that given the need to balance the benefits of applying under the Beacon Council Initiative against the resources available to the Council and its eligibility to meet all the specified criteria outlined in the application submission, an application would not be appropriate at this time.

### Resolved

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

That an application not be submitted to Round 2 of the Beacon Council Initiative. (CE)

### **235 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL – CONSULTATIVE DRAFT GUIDANCE ON COMMUNITY PLANNING**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive on Draft Guidance recently published by Central Government.

#### **Resolved**

That the contents of the Draft Guidance on Community Planning be noted and that the comments set out in the report of the Chief Executive be this Authority's response to the Draft. (CE)

### **236 REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR OMBUDSMEN IN ENGLAND – CONSULTATION**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive on a public consultation exercise into the future organisation and operation of Public Sector Ombudsmen in England.

Responding to Member questions the Chief Executive referred to the potential value of the Ombudsman Service being one overarching body with similar procedures and regulations. It was recognised that inter-ombudsmen communication could be improved. A collegiate approach/the introduction of common procedures would help.

#### **Resolved**

That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to respond to the Consultation Document on the above basis. (CE)

### **237 CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on revision to the Council's complaints procedure.

During debate the Committee agreed that the present response target for responding to complaints of 5 working days be continued. The Committee also agreed that a dedicated "complaints hotline" be introduced with a normal direct dial telephone number, this number to be publicised widely within the District.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the following be adopted as the Council's complaints policy  
"The Council aims to deliver first class service. However, it recognises that on occasion things may go wrong. The Council

therefore maintains a complaints procedure that enables customers to make their complaints known and that will ensure all complaints are handled speedily and effectively. In cases where a complaint is found to be justified, an apology will be given and, wherever possible, the complaint remedied.”

- (2) That the remaining recommendations set out in paragraph 5.1 of the Head of Administrative and Member Services report, together with the staff procedure for customer care and complaints attached as an appendix to that report, be adopted. (HAMS)

### **238 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATING – DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management on three applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

During discussion a number of Members referred to the value of having more detailed information on the financial circumstances of applicants in line with that furnished for grant applications. Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) advised that:-

- Whilst guidance from Central Government is that there should be a policy relating to types of organisation, every case must, nevertheless, be considered on its merits.
- It would be possible to provide full details of the Rochford Rugby Club accounts for the next the meeting of Full Council.

A motion was moved by Councillor P F A Webster and seconded by Council G E Grey that, in view of the high proportion of membership within the Rochford District, support be given to the application by the Rochford Hundred Rugby Football Club but not to the Essex Rochford and District 4 x 4 Club or the Westcliff Rugby Football Club. An amendment that the application from the Rochford Hundred Rugby Club be referred to Full Council to enable the provision of the accounts was moved by Councillor Mrs J Helson and seconded by Councillor D F Flack and it was:-

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the applications from the Essex Rochford and District 4 x 4 Club and the Westcliff Rugby Football Club be refused.

- (2) That the application for the Rochford Hundred Rugby Football Club be referred to Full Council to enable provision of full accounts. (HRHM)

### **239 U.K. YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on whether a grant should be made towards the formation of a Youth Parliament or one or more delegates should be sponsored.

During debate a Member made reference to the possibility that the local senior schools which had contributed to the Council's Citizenship debate should be invited to send a delegate (perhaps on a rotational basis). Comment was made to the value of having more detailed information on the Youth Parliament's total costs of £500,000 given that delegates are already sponsored.

#### **Resolved**

That this matter be referred to the next Meeting of Full Council to enable the provision of further information on the financial aspects. (HAMS)

### **240 PROJECTION EQUIPMENT FOR THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on the acquisition of new projection equipment for the Council Chamber. It was noted that Councillors, Fox, Mrs Glynn and Livings had viewed potential equipment that might be suitable for the Council's requirements at a demonstration organised by a possible supplier.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Administrative and Member Services outlined the background to the formulation of current proposals and confirmed that, under Standing Orders, the Authority would be required to invite tenders for the equipment. The Committee noted that if the Council was to purchase all the equipment previously viewed by Members, the present budget of £30,000 was likely to prove insufficient.

During debate the Committee recognised that some Members may have knowledge of modern projection equipment which could provide a valuable contribution to the specification process.

The Committee endorsed the view of a Member that it would be appropriate to include provision of a hearing loop within the specification. It was also agreed that earlier specification development work remained appropriate to the Council's requirements.



## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

On a motion moved by Councillor J Helson and seconded by Councillor Mrs J M Giles it was:-

### **Resolved**

- (1) That Officers consult with Members in finalising a cost effective specification for projection equipment in the Council Chamber based on the requirements previously identified. A further report on specification to be submitted to the Committee should it appear necessary to recommend significant departure from the current specification.
- (2) That companies be invited to tender on the finalised specification in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and the tenders received brought back to a future meeting of this Committee so that in the event that the tenders exceed the budgetary provision, consideration might be given as to whether the budget for the project should be increased. (HAMS)

### **241 THE ESSEX GALLERY**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) detailing a proposal to build a public art gallery in Essex and asking whether Members would be prepared to support the project in principle.

It was noted that no financial commitment was requested at this stage.

### **Resolved**

That support be given in principle to the proposals for the establishment of a Essex Gallery. (CD(F&ES))

### **242 MEALS ON WHEELS**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) on the current consultation exercise being carried out by Essex County Council in respect of providing frozen meals.

During debate Members expressed concern at the proposals and agreed that, in line with previous decisions, they should be opposed. On a motion moved by Councillor J Helson and seconded by Councillor D A Weir it was:-

### **Resolved**

That this Council is totally opposed to the proposals being considered by Essex County Council for:-

- a). Block supply of “meals on wheels” to the elderly.
- b). These meals are to be delivered frozen.

We believe that if these proposals are put into effect that some of our residents may find difficulties in storing the meals in a safe and hygienic manner, and that the dangers surrounding the re-heating of frozen meals properly far outweigh any perceived benefits. This Council therefore urges in the strongest possible terms that the County Council abandons these proposals immediately.” (CD(F&ES))

### **243 BENEFIT, COUNCIL TAX, BUSINESS RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTORS – WRITE-OFFS**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management on items written off under delegated authority and items which needed to be written off.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That items written off under the Corporate Directors delegated authority be noted.
- (2) That items shown in Appendix B of the report be now written off in the accounts of the authority. (HRHM/HFS)

### **244 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on the nomination of representatives to outside bodies.

#### **Resolved**

That this item be referred to Full Council to enable submission of nominations from all Group Leaders. (HAMS)

### **245 SUMMER ACTIVITIES – GRANGE AND RAWRETH WARD**

**Note:** (1) The Chairman accepted this item as urgent in view of the need to identify a timetable prior to the summer break.

- (2) Councillor S Smith left the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives seeking approval to arrangements sporting activities

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

during the summer for youngsters within the Grange and Rawreth Ward.

The Committee concurred with the view of a Member that it would be appropriate for consideration to be given to making use of the Council's own facilities where possible and it was:-

### **Resolved**

That Officers consult with Members as appropriate in finalising proposals to include usage of Council accommodation where possible, a report to be submitted to the next meeting of Full Council if necessary. (HCPI)

## **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

### **Resolved**

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraphs 9 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

### **246 PARK SCHOOL WORKING GROUP**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Chief Executive on the outcome of recent meetings of the Park School Working Group.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the uses outlined under the detailed considerations section of the report be the basis of further negotiations with the County Council on the future use of the site.
- (2) That agreement be given, in principle, to the possible use of part of the site for a new St. Nicholas Church of England primary school. (CE)

### **247 REDUCTION ON PERMISSION OF BUSINESS RATE LIABILITY**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management on two applications for the remission of Business Rate liability in accordance with Section 49 of Government Finance Act 1988.

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee 13 July 2000**

---

### **Resolved**

That the Business Rate liability for the Davesave Store be remitted in full and the application for remission from Essex Boatyards Limited be refused under the provisions of Section 49 Local Government Finance Act 1988 in respect of the financial year 2000/2001. (HRHM)

The meeting closed at 9.56pm

Chairman

Date