

Minutes of the meeting of the **Partnership Sub-Committee** held on 20 July 2000 when there were present:

Cllr R S Allen
Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr Mrs J Hall
Cllr G A Mockford

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs M J Webster and Mrs M Morgan representing Hawkwell Parish Council.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr T A Livings
Cllr Mrs M A Weir (Hawkwell Parish Council)

Representing Essex County Council: Cllr Mrs T Chapman

Representing Town and Parish Councils: Mrs M R Beckers (Rawreth Parish Council), P A Beckers (Rayleigh Town Council), Mrs H Allen (Barling Magna Parish Council), Mrs L Campbell Daly (Hullbridge Parish Council), M Ewers (Rochford Parish Council), Mrs S Merton (Rawreth Parish Council), Mrs P M P Pearse (Rayleigh Town Council), Mrs J Smith (Canewdon Parish Council), Mrs J Smith (Canewdon Parish Council), Mr P D Stebbing (Great Wakering Parish Council), Mr B Summerfield (Sutton Parish and Barling Parish Council – Clerk), Janice Rigby (Stambridge Parish Council), Ian Rook (Hawkwell Parish Council) and Mrs M S Vince (Rochford Parish Council)

Some of the members present served at more than one tier.

94 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor R S Allen was appointed chairman of the Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year.

95 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

96 ITEM OF PARISH PARTNERSHIP NATURE RAISED BY THE TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS

An item was raised by Canewdon Parish Council concerning what it believed to be a breakdown of communication between the three tiers of Local Government in recent months. Having heard examples of the breakdown from District to Parish and County to Parish, Members were reminded of the Rochford parish consultation code and charter which had been agreed between the District and Parish Councils some time ago. The County Council's commitment to consultation with other tiers of local government was also reiterated. Following discussion, it was considered appropriate, for the parish code and charter to be brought before the next Meeting of the Sub-Committee for further consideration and specifically to identify if improvements might be made.

During debate, the Head of Administrative and Member Services made reference to the proposed new duty on local authorities to produce a community plan. This proposal was included within the Local Government Bill 1999 and, if implemented, would require local authorities and other agencies coming together to produce a common vision for the future development of Rochford. All the agencies would then be expected to produce their own action plans aimed at delivering the agreed vision, including where appropriate, arrangements for joint working. It was recognised that Parish Councils had a significant contribution both to the formulation and subsequent implementation of a community plan in the District and it was therefore agreed that Community Planning should be subject to further discussion at the next Meeting.

97 PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW – DRAFT RECOMMENDATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services which invited Members to consider the Local Government Commission's draft recommendations for the future electoral arrangements in the Rochford District.

Noting the District Council's consideration of the matter and its proposed response, the Sub-Committee concurred with the District Council's view considering the Commission had concentrated solely on equality of elector numbers per Councillor without sufficient regard for the District's historical or community ties.

Examples were discussed of instances where the Commission's proposals affected specific Parish areas, in particular the possible split of community identity and the danger that the new District Ward boundaries might be used as a basis for changes to civil parish boundaries at any future review of those boundaries.

It was considered prudent for as many responses to the draft recommendations to be sent to the Local Government Commission in order for the Commission to be made aware of local concerns. Linked with this, the Sub-Committee requested that the Chief Executive or another senior responsible Officer from the Local Government Commission should be invited to meet with the District Council and Parish Councils, prior to the 4 September deadline for receipt of comments, in order for an explanation of the Commission's rationale on its proposals and for them to be made aware of the level of opposition to the draft recommendations.

RECOMMENDED

- (1). That the Partnership Sub-Committee supports the Authority's response to the periodic electoral review draft recommendations from the Local Government Commission.
- (2) That the Chief Executive or a senior responsible Officer from the Local Government Commission be invited to attend a future Meeting of the Partnership Sub-Committee to discuss the matter further. (HAMS)

The Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Chairman

Date