

Community Services Committee – 1 April 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **1 April 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr K A Gibbs (Chairman)
Cllr T E Goodwin (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R G S Choppen
Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr Mrs L Hungate
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

Cllr C R Morgan
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R A Amner and Mrs R Brown.

Note: The Chairman wished to send best wishes on behalf of the Committee to Cllr Mrs Brown, who had been unwell recently.

SUBSTITUTES

C A Hungate

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
J Bourne	Leisure & Contracts Manager
M Martin	Committee Administrator

152 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

153 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C R Morgan declared a personal interest in Item 8 of the Agenda by virtue of being a member of the Youth Strategy Management Committee.

154 ISSUES ARISING FROM COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the report of the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee which recommended that a young person's edition of Rochford District Matters be published on an annual basis at no additional cost to the Council.

Members noted that a list of activities planned by various organisations including the Council would be put out with the Summer edition of the newspaper, although it was noted that production of an 8-page document would not be possible at that time.

Resolved

That a young person's edition of Rochford District Matters be published on an annual basis at no additional cost to the Council. (CD(F&ES))

155 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Committee received the Schedule relating to Progress on Decisions and in response to Member questions the following was noted:-

Caravan Site Licensing (Minute 420/01)

The site inspection had been delayed due to staff vacancies, together with the fact that existing staff had been concentrating solely on reaching the Government's bed and breakfast target. This had now been achieved.

Unfit House (Minute 294/02)

The house had been sold and the new owner would be working up proposals for the property.

Unfit House (Minute 462/02)

Preliminary work had been carried out and the delay had been caused for the same reasons as those stated under 'Caravan Site Licensing' above.

Old Ship Lane Toilets (Minute 429/03)

Approval to demolish had been received.

Skateboard Facilities – Clements Hall (Minute 500/03)

Meetings had taken place and some progress had been made. More details were awaited around the nature and size of the facility and projected costs prior to consultation taking place.

Rayleigh Windmill Heritage Lottery Bid (Minute 6/04)

A response from the Museums Services was expected in May 2004.

Playspace Rolling Programme (Minute 55/04)

A Press Release would be issued following the meeting of the Playspace Sub-Committee to be held on 8 April 2004.

Outstanding issues would be carried forward.

156 WOODLANDS STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services), which provided Members with an update on the initiatives outlined in the approved Woodlands Strategy.

Officers reported that confirmation and acceptance of the Woodland Grant Initiative had been received back from English Nature and were able to inform Members that this would be for a complete 5 year period.

Members were pleased to note that:-

- the Woodlands Assistant post had been filled by someone who had originally been part of the Unemployment Initiative based in Hockley Woods.
- the grant applied for under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme would either be a “one-off” payment or an amount “per hectare”. Officers were hopeful that confirmation would soon be received.

Members wished to congratulate officers on:-

- the excellent progress that had been made in respect of the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.
- the work done to date in clearing up the mess in Kingsley Wood, following the pruning of trees that had interfered with cables. It was noted that still more work was required and officers agreed to investigate.

In response to Member questions it was noted that:-

- officers were fairly confident that funding would be available for an Environmental Liaison officer via English Nature. The issue of funding would need to be re-considered if this was not successful.
- damage to recently planted trees had been caused by a mixture of vandalism and failure to grow. However, it was noted that this was not extensive.
- The grant from Thames Gateway was in addition to that applied for from DEFRA.
- Health and Safety regulations would be fully complied with by staff and visitors to the Park.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress being made on the initiatives detailed in the Woodlands Strategy be noted with pleasure and that a further report be received in 6 months' time.
- (2) That officers be congratulated on their hard work in achieving such good progress. (CD(F&ES))

Community Services Committee – 1 April 2004

The meeting closed at 7.47 pm.

Chairman

Date