

## **Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 26 February 2004**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held on **26 February 2004** when there were present:

Cllr T Livings (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs T J Capon (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr C J Lumley  
Cllr P K Savill  
Cllr D G Stansby

Cllr Mrs M A Starke  
Cllr Mrs M S Vince  
Cllr P F A Webster

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

J Bourne                      Leisure & Contracts Manager  
M Martin                     Committee Administrator

### **ALSO ATTENDING**

Steve Leverett                      Head of Strategic Partnerships, Essex County Council  
Louise Simpkin                    Youth Development Officer, Warehouse Centre  
Phillip Smith                        Trustee, Warehouse Centre.

### **101 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2004 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **102 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Mrs M S Vince declared a personal interest by virtue of being a member of the StAR Partnership who use the Warehouse Centre as a venue for some activities.

Cllr T Livings declared a personal interest by virtue of being the Council's representative on the Warehouse Centre and Chairman of the District's Youth Strategy Group.

### **103 REVIEW OF POLICIES AND SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN THE DISTRICT**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Leverett, Ms Simkin and Mr Smith to the meeting.

Members noted that in respect of the decision at the last meeting to investigate the feasibility and costs of producing a young person's edition of Rochford District Matters, the Leisure & Contracts Manager would shortly be meeting with a representative from Holmes Place and the Council's Corporate

Communications Officer to consider the various options. The outcome of these discussions would be reported back to the Committee.

### **Essex County Council**

Mr Leverett provided Members with a précis of the planning and commission of integrated services to children and young people in Essex through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnerships (CYPSP's)

Members noted that:-

- The County Council as the lead authority for children and young people has sought to develop close working relationships with partner authorities and agencies; in particular the District/Borough Councils, Primary Care Trusts and Police, together with the voluntary sector.
- A two-tier structure is, therefore, formed which can be locally owned and delivered by local partners.
- It is widely recognized that the statutory services do not have the capacity to provide these services without support.
- The Government's Green Paper "Every Child Matters" has led to a radical review of how services are delivered.
- Particular issues that the County Council, together with its partners, seeks to address are those of youth nuisance, youth offending, under achievers and to put in place clear strategies for early intervention.
- The only long-term solution is to have a clear coherent strategy from the early years.
- The CYPSP's exist across three age groups; 0-5 years, 5-13 years and 13-19 years.
- In the 0-5 age range, the Council's Leisure Client Officer is an active member of the Early Years Child Care Partnership.
- In the 13 + agenda, the Youth Strategy Groups work closely with the District Council; the Chairman being Cllr Livings.
- The 5-13 agenda is looking at ways forward which might involve physically extending the hours during which schools remain open. This would enable partners organizations to work through the schools to deliver extra services and for schools to become an integral part of the local community.
- The setting up of the Essex Youth Assembly was as a result of a move by Central Government to promote civic renewal and encourage young people to take responsibility for the environment.

In response to Member questions, Mr Leverett advised that:-

- The CYPSP's recognize that there is a need to encourage young people to take responsibility for their own actions and to recognize that they have choices, rather than imposing views on them.
- Some schools currently offer breakfast clubs and homework clubs to meet particular needs, but would lack the capacity to open for extended

hours. Any scheme around extended schools would need to be managed at the local level.

- It was recognised that the proximity of many schools to residential areas would need to be considered, but if managed well could lead to improved relationships between different sectors of the local community.
- Significant problems were caused by inappropriate parenting and the County works with adult education colleges to provide parenting programmes to support those who are struggling.
- It is not logistically possible to consult parents directly; a variety of mechanisms are therefore used, such as schools, Head Teacher Associations, Teaching Unions, and the Essex Federation of Parent Teacher Associations. A pilot survey could be conducted by Essex County Council.
- Schools are targeted by the Council's Leisure Section as the primary place to promote activities through handouts.
- A Sports Festival had taken place the previous week to which there had been an estimated number of 350 young people in attendance, taking part in a variety of sports ranging from badminton to scuba diving; with the minority activities being well supported.

Members were reminded that the PACT network would be launched on 20 March at the Freight House, Rochford, which aimed to bring together volunteers and professionals and provide a better network of information. A list had been compiled of 200 organisations operating across the District involved in young people's work. It was planned to hold these meetings three or four times a year. Members requested detailed feedback on this.

### **Warehouse Centre**

Ms Simkin provided Members with a handout outlining the work of the Centre, which runs as a charity and a business. Members applauded the quality of the handout and requested that, where possible, information provided by presenters might be supplied to Members in advance of the meeting, in order to give them time to assimilate the information.

Members noted that the principal aim of the Centre was to provide a safe place for young people to go, where they can take place in leisure activities, art, drama and sports and where they can just be themselves.

The Warehouse Centre makes use of a large industrial unit to house a range of activities, including the support and funding of its use by young people on a subsidised or free of charge basis. A laser arena, sports hall, multi gym and conference facilities exist as a separate business with the proceeds going back to the charity, Active Christian Trust.

The main work of the charity centres around a youth club, running five nights a week for individual age groups and with approximately 200 young people attending between the ages of 8 and 17. The charity employs one full time

youth worker and one part time worker. A committed group of volunteers ensure that this facility continues.

Over 50's groups also use the Centre and several table tennis clubs are based there. Football clubs hire the sports hall for training. Members had noted at a previous meeting that the StAR Partnership works in partnership with the Centre to run the Dads 'n Kids' Club, which is regularly supported by over 30 families from varied backgrounds.

New initiatives are being considered, but the Centre is constantly looking for new volunteers and offers of finances. Whilst the Warehouse Centre itself does have some involvement with the District Council, many of the 200 organisations previously mentioned remain totally unsupported.

Members were shown examples of the type of leaflets and postcards which are distributed by the Warehouse Centre to publicise their activities. One of the main ways of doing this is through attendance at assemblies held in schools. Members encouraged the Warehouse's Youth Development Officer to make greater use of publicity for the work of the Warehouse Centre through the Council's newspaper and on noticeboards throughout the District.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That a report be brought back to this Committee detailing the outcome of the initial meeting of the PACT Network being organised by the StAR Partnership. (CD(F&ES))
- (2) That details of the 200 organisations across the District involved in young people's work be widely publicised, to include the issue of a press release, details to be printed in the Council's newspaper, Rochford District Matters and a list to be sent to all schools and youth organizations. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 3.10 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

