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Minutes of the meeting of the **Housing Management Sub-Committee** held on **15 March 2001** when there were present:

Councillor Mrs M A Weir (Chairman)

Cllr P A Capon  
Cllr T G Cutmore  
Cllr Mrs J Hall  
Cllr C C Langlands  
Cllr Mrs S J Lemon

Cllr T Livings  
Cllr C R Morgan  
Cllr R A Pearson  
Cllr Mrs L I V Phillips  
Cllr Mrs W M Stevenson

The Adviser from Rayleigh and Rawreth Tenants Association was also present.

### **VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillors Mrs J M Giles and P D Stebbing.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

S Clarkson	Head of Revenue and Housing Management
A Coulson	Housing, Client & Strategy Officer
J Bostock	Principal Committee Administrator

### **121 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor C C Langlands declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a lease-holder of a former Council property.

### **122 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2001 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **123 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2001/02**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the formulation of the Capital Programme for 2001/02 now that available funding had been determined. Around £1million would be available for the next year, which would permit an ambitious programme.

The Head of Revenue and Housing Management advised that the provision of £30,000 for recarpeting of sheltered housing should not be included in the Capital Programme as, technically, it is part of Repairs and Maintenance. It was noted that this meant £30,000 would be

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available for a reserve scheme and that the Chief Executive had suggested it could be applied to closed circuit television in the foyer area of sheltered housing schemes. At this stage, Members felt it would be useful to have fuller information on the CCTV aspect as it was understood monies for this were available in the Crime and Disorder budget.

## **RECOMMENDED**

That subject to the identification of a reserve scheme to replace the original provision for recarpeting of sheltered housing, the Capital Programme, as set out in the Appendix to these Minutes, be approved. (HRHM).

## **124 COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the possibility of a change in policy to gradually deregulate difficult to-let flats. Deregulation would have strategic advantages for Rochford and reduce rent loss through voids.

The Head of Revenue and Housing Management tabled a schedule of current designated pension stock.

Responding to Member questions, Officers advised that:-

- A decision to deregulate would not necessarily lead to immediate change. It may be up to 20 years before a property becomes available.
- Situations already exist whereby younger persons live above the elderly resulting from earlier "rights to buy" sales. No undue problems had been experienced.
- As a proportion of overall Right to Buy activity, only a small number of tenants acquire flats.
- Officers would use the Council's Urgency Procedure should any future urgent decisions be required on applications for elderly persons accommodation where the applicants do not meet the Council's age criteria.

During debate, Members felt that there was merit in taking a cautious approach, perhaps only identifying properties which may be suited by virtue of location/circumstances in the first instance. The Sub-Committee was mindful that it was important not to encourage unwanted outcomes, such as losing more properties via the Right to Buy.

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On a Motion moved by Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson and seconded by Councillor D A Weir, it was

**Resolved**

That a low key, cautious approach be taken with the following schemes deregulated at this time and a progress report back to the Sub-Committee in six months time:-

Cagefield Road, Stambridge.  
Rochefort Drive, Rochford  
Old Hall Court, Great Wakering.  
St Johns Road, Great Wakering (HRHM)

**125 STORAGE FOR “PAVEMENT BUGGIES”**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the determination of a policy for the storage of “pavement buggies”.

On a Motion moved by Councillor Mrs S J Lemon and seconded by Councillor T G Cutmore, it was:-

**Resolved**

That, subject to the introduction of appropriate warning signage for "buggie" users and enforcement, there be no change to the current policy for storage of pavement buggies at the Council Sheltered Housing accommodation. (HRHM)

**126 PAYMENT FOR TENANT REPRESENTATIVES**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the possibilities for payment of tenant representatives to secure a more active tenant participation in the management of social housing in Rochford.

Members felt that the principle of introducing payment could be accepted and that, in the interests of democracy, levels could perhaps be akin to that available to Councillors.

It was recognised that detailed consideration would need to be given to the implications of introducing payment. For example, account would need to be taken of the implications for interested tenants who may find involvement has an adverse impact on their benefit payments.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Revenue and Housing Management advised that:-

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- The Government would fund any payment through the HRA allowance for tenant participation and the greater involvement of tenants would probably improve the general level of funding received from the Government if Rochford was to be given other than a "below average" ranking..
  - A feature of tenant participation compacts is that tenants should be involved and be able to make decisions. A proper constitution would need to be drawn up for any arrangements, to include a mechanism for election of tenant representatives.
  - Officers could further explore the question of payments (including voucher possibilities)

**Resolved**

That the principle of payment of tenant representatives be endorsed and that further detailed consideration of all aspects be referred to the Tenant Involvement Steering Group in the first instance. (HRHM)

**127 COUNCIL PROPERTY – INVESTIGATION OF BUILDING ACTIVITY**

Note: The Chairman admitted this item of business as urgent due to the need for early investigation.

A Member reported on the concerns of a resident within their own Ward on works being undertaken at a Council-owned property.

The Head of Revenue and Housing Management outlined his understanding of the situation relating to the property and confirmed that it would be possible to bring a full written report to the next meeting.

**Resolved**

That the Head of Revenue and Housing Management report in full to the next Meeting of the Sub-Committee on this matter. (HRHM)

The Meeting closed at 9.11pm.

Chairman

Date

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**APPENDIX****CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2001/02**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Essential £</b>	<b>Necessary £</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<b><u>Window Replacement</u></b>				
Shoebury Road	6	13,800	-	-
St John's Road	6	13,800	-	-
Pearsons Avenue	6	15,000	-	-
Cheapside West	6	15,000	-	-
Weir Gardens	10	25,000	-	-
Glebe/Morrins Close	39	85,000	-	-
Little Wheatleys	140	300,000	-	-
Pearsons Farm	45	100,000	-	-
<b><u>Central Heating</u></b>				
Rayleigh (Partial to Full)	68	142,800	-	-
<b><u>Boiler Replacement</u></b>				
Rayleigh/Rochford	80	80,000	-	-
<b><u>Electrical Upgrades</u></b>				
Rayleigh/Rochford (Pre 1960 properties)	100	50,000	-	-
<b><u>Area Regeneration</u></b>				
Survey/design/works to flats in Rochford Garden Way	20	130,000	-	-
Scheme to be Identified		30,000		-
<b><u>Roofing</u></b>				
Station Road	11	-	35,000	-
Pearsons Avenue	7	-	22,000	-
Southend Road	2	-	6,000	-
Rochford Garden Way	30	-	96,000	-

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Door entry Systems

<b>Project</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Essential £</b>	<b>Necessary £</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Sudbury Close	16	-	8,000	-
Shepherds Court	8	-	4,000	-
Station Road	6	-	3,000	-
Hatfield Road	8	-	4,000	-
Bardfield Way	26	-	13,000	-

Asbestos/Artex Survey

Various properties for pre 1986 works	-	25,000	-
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Refurbishments

## Flat Conversions

The Lavers	19	-	-	315,000
Britton Court	13	-	-	315,000
Spa Court	23	-	-	525,000
Hardwick House	26	-	-	735,000
		<u>1,001,200</u>	<u>246,000</u>	<u>1,890,000</u>
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