

## **Executive Board – 7 November 2007**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Executive Board** held on **7 November 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr T G Cutmore  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr K J Gordon  
Cllr J M Pullen  
Cllr C G Seagers  
Cllr D G Stansby

Cllr M G B Starke  
Cllr Mrs M J Webster  
Cllr P F A Webster

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Warren	- Chief Executive
R J Honey	- Corporate Director (Internal Services)
G Woolhouse	- Corporate Director (External Services)
S Scrutton	- Head of Planning & Transportation
R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
Y Woodward	- Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management
J Bostock	- Principal Committee Administrator

### **372 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **373 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor D G Stansby declared a personal interest in the item of concessionary bus travel by virtue of both himself and his spouse being bus pass users.

Councillor Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in the item on the Draft Regional Economic Strategy by virtue of membership of the Eastern Regional Employment and Skills Panel.

Councillor J M Pullen declared a personal interest in the item on concessionary bus travel by virtue of being a bus pass holder and a personal interest in the item on South East Essex Primary Care Trust – Attendance at Board meetings by virtue of a daughter being employed by the Trust.

### **374 REPORTS OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SUB-COMMITTEE**

#### **(1) Urban Capacity Study**

The Board considered the report of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee containing recommendations relating to the adoption of the Urban Capacity Study 2007 as part of the evidence base for the Council's Local Development Framework.

### Resolved

- (1) That, subject to further consultation with land developers, land-owners and agents, the Urban Capacity Study 2007 be adopted as part of the evidence base for the production of the Council's Local Development Framework.
- (2) That scenario K be adopted as the most realistic assessment on which to base calculations for green field housing requirements.
- (3) That further work be undertaken to align the Urban Capacity Study with the new Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment methodology. (HPT)

### (2) Rochford Core Strategy – Preferred Options Consultation

The Board considered the report of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee containing recommendations relating to the preparation of a revised Core Strategy Preferred Options document.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate for a press release to be issued stressing to residents that the demand for new homes in the District is from people who have grown up in the District and want to remain; it is not in order to accommodate an influx of newcomers to the District.

Reference was made to the fact that a high amount of land is unavailable for housing due to factors such as use designation and being of special scientific interest. Reference was also made to the value of including a detailed map identifying land availability issues within any future public consultation exercises.

### Resolved

- (1) That a revised Core Strategy Preferred Options document be prepared, having regard to the results of recent community involvement and an improved evidence base.
- (2) That a press release be issued stressing to residents that the demand for new homes in the District is from people who have grown up in the District and want to remain; it is not in order to accommodate an influx of newcomers to the District. (HPT)

## 375 PERFORMANCE REPORT TO MEMBERS FOR THE PERIOD JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2007

The Board considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on statistical performance data.

### Resolved

- (1) That the performance achieved for the key indicators for the second quarter of 2007/08 be noted.
- (2) That the summary of statistical performance data for the first half-year of 2007/08 be reviewed at the next meeting on 27 November 2007. (HFAPM)

### **376 CORPORATE PEER REVIEW**

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive on the recommendations emanating from the recent Improvement and Development Agency Corporate Peer Review.

During discussion of delivery through work with partners such as the business community it was recognised that there needs to be a proactive approach from all involved.

It was agreed that the Peer Review had been a valuable exercise and that a structured action plan should be developed.

### Resolved

That a structured action plan now be developed for consideration by the Executive Board around the key areas of vision/ambition, Member training/development, customer knowledge/access/communication (internally and externally) and management. (CE)

### **377 JOINT LIAISON WITH SOUTHEND BOROUGH COUNCIL AND CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive detailing progress on joint liaison and seeking agreement to a liaison framework.

The value of developing dialogue was endorsed and it was:-

### Resolved

That the arrangements for Joint Liaison between Rochford District Council, Castle Point Borough Council and Southend Borough Council, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be agreed. (CE)

### **378 SAFER COMMUNITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND THE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PROCESS**

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive on recent guidance issued by the Home Office relating to the crime and disorder reduction agenda, partnership working and the local area agreement process.

### Resolved

- (1) That the changes to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership structure, functions and operation as set out in the regulations and guidance, and the wider implications of those changes, be noted.
- (2) That the Member and officer commitments and inputs that will be required in terms of the changes outlined be recognised.
- (3) That there be a review of the Council's Partnership Guidance, with any amendments reported back into the Audit Committee for approval. (CE)

### **379 LAND ACQUISITION – CHERRY ORCHARD JUBILEE COUNTRY PARK**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Legal Services seeking approval to make a compulsory purchase order to acquire areas of land for the development and improvement of the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.

It was noted that the planning permission granted for the Park included the areas set out in report proposals. Reference was made to the value of a Member site visit to the Park to see progress that had been made.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to make a Compulsory Purchase Order under section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the two areas of land to the west and east of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park public open space Blatches Chase, Eastwood, as identified on the plan appended to the report as Site A and Site D, and to take all necessary steps to secure confirmation of the Order.
- (2) That the Order be named the Rochford District Council (Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park) Compulsory Purchase Order 2007.
- (3) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to negotiate terms for the acquisition of the sites by agreement or consequent upon the making of the Compulsory Purchase Order. (HLS)

### **380 CAPITAL STRATEGY – 2008/09 (FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE 13/07)**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management seeking approval of the Capital Strategy.

Members endorsed the previously set key priorities and targets.

#### **Resolved**

That the key priorities and targets for the Capital Programme identified in the report and the Capital Strategy, as appended, be agreed. (HFAPM)

### **381 CAPITAL PROGRAMME – MONITORING REPORT**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on the financial progress in completing the General Fund Capital Programme for 2007/08.

#### **Resolved**

That the contents of the report on the General Fund Capital Programme for 2007/08 be noted. (HFAPM)

### **382 BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on material items of income and expenditure in the 2007/08 budget for the second quarter of the year.

With regard to housing benefit it was noted that there were currently approximately 4,200 claimants, the number having risen by approximately 5% per year.

Members agreed that officers should be congratulated for their work, particularly the activity in publicising the housing benefit claim facility.

#### **Resolved**

That the contents of the Budget Monitoring Statement, as attached to the report, be noted. (HFAPM)

### **383 DRAFT REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND 2008-2031**

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive on the Draft Regional Economic Strategy, which was currently out for consultation.

#### **Resolved**

That the comments outlined in the report form the basis of the District Council's response to the Draft Regional Economic Strategy. (CE)

### **384 RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEMES**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Planning & Transportation on whether there was a need to introduce a residents parking scheme within the District.

It was observed that the report was very objective. Members noted that Planning Officers across the County were considering and developing recommendations on the issue of parking standards.

### Resolved

- (1) That a Residents Parking Scheme be not introduced within the District at the present time.
- (2) That the options for amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders or the introduction of new Traffic Regulation Orders in the areas identified in appendix 1 to the report be discussed with the Essex County Council Highways Section. (HPT)

### 385 CONCESSIONARY BUS TRAVEL

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive on arrangements for the introduction of the national bus pass and whether additional travel concessions should be retained.

Some concern was expressed that the Authority did not yet know how much grant funding it is likely to receive in 2008/09.

### Resolved

- (1) That the statutory minimum off peak travel from 9.30am to 11pm weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays be the preferred option reported to Essex County Council for Rochford.
- (2) That Companion passes continue to be offered to eligible residents of the District that require assistance when travelling and that it be noted that, at this stage, the Authority does not know how much grant funding it is likely to receive in 2008/09. (HPT)

### 386 PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE CHASE POST OFFICE, RAYLEIGH

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive on a proposal to close the Chase Post Office, Rayleigh.

Members were particularly concerned at the proposal. Reference was made to the clear social need for a post office facility at this location and to the poor fit of the proposal with the concept of access to services. The Chase building had seen high levels of investment to ensure that it was fit for all sectors of the community and it provided much needed goods.

It was agreed that a copy of the Council's response to the proposal should be supplied to the Local Member of Parliament.

### Resolved

That the Council object in the strongest possible terms to the closure of the Chase Post Office, Rayleigh, as set out in Post Office Ltd's latest consultation on post office closures and outreach services, given the value of the service provided to the local community. A copy of the Council's objection to be supplied to the local Member of Parliament. (CE)

### **387 CROUCH HARBOUR AUTHORITY – APPOINTMENTS PANEL**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Information & Customer Services on an appointment to a panel.

#### **Resolved**

That the appointment of Councillor J Archer to the Crouch Harbour Authority Appointments Panel be confirmed. (HICS)

### **388 SOUTH ESSEX PRIMARY CARE TRUST – ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board considered the report of the Head of Information & Customer Services on an invite from the Chairman of the South Essex Primary Care Trust for a Member to attend Board meetings.

#### **Resolved**

That Councillor K J Gordon (Councillor K A Gibbs to substitute) be the appointee designate pending confirmation at Council on 20 December. (HICS)

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

#### **Resolved**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

### **389 PURCHASE OF LAND**

The Board considered the exempt report of the Head of Environmental Services on the purchase of some land.

Detail on the discussion is set out in the exempt appendix to these minutes.

#### **Resolved**

That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to negotiate terms and acquire the area identified as A1 in the exempt report. (HLS)

### **390 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S APPRAISAL**

The exempt note of the Chief Executive's Appraisal had been circulated.

#### **Resolved**

That the exempt note of the Chief Executive's appraisal be received. (CE)

## Executive Board – 7 November 2007

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The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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