

## **COUNCIL – 19 December 2000**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **21 November 2000** when there were present:

Cllr Mrs M A Weir – Chairman

Cllr R S Allen

Cllr R A Amner

Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr P A Capon

Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr Mrs J E Ford

Cllr D F Flack

Cllr K A Gibbs

Cllr J E Grey

Cllr Mrs J Hall

Cllr C C Langlands

Cllr V H Leach

Cllr Mrs S J Lemon

Cllr R A Pearson

Cllr Mrs L I V Phillips

Cllr Mrs W M Stevenson

Cllr Mrs M J Webster

### **VISITING MEMBERS**

Cllrs R Adams and D R Helson

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr DM Ford and Mrs J Helson

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Cllrs Mrs H L A Glynn and D A Weir

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

S Clarkson – Head of Revenues and Housing Management

D Deeks – Head of Financial Services

S Scrutton – Head of Planning Services

G Woolhouse – Head of Housing, Health and Community Care

L Lapite – Solicitor

J Bourne – Leisure and Contracts Manager

A Wyatt – Committee Administrator

### **377 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members' interests were received as follows:-

Cllr. R S Allen declared a non pecuniary interest in the item "Notice of Motion from Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn" (Minute 382) by virtue of having children at the school mentioned in the report, Cllr Mrs HLA Glynn declared a non pecuniary interest in the same item by virtue of having grandchildren at the school.

Cllr C C Langlands declared a non pecuniary interest in the item “Revised Housing Capital Programme 2000/01” (Minute 389) by virtue of being a leaseholder of a former Council owned property.

### 378 MINUTES

The Committee considered the Minutes of the previous meeting and noted that, at Full Council on 24 October 2000 it was agreed that the first line only of Minute 309 (relating to the establishment of a Primary Care Trust – Consultation) be referred back for clarification.

It was noted that the resolution as printed in the Minutes was an accurate record of the decision made at the previous meeting, however Members considered that the preamble to the Minute should be strengthened to better reflect Members concern about the formation of a Primary Care Trust with another District/Borough, including the inadequacy of GP provision in this district, inadequacy of some surgery premises, lack of services, concern over the allocation of resources between the areas in a PCT and the need for a balance of lay members from the two areas on the PCT board. Furthermore some Members felt the decision was a foregone conclusion.

Subject to this amendment the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 October 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 379 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Members were advised that, in relation to “Halcyon Caravan Park – application to change Site layout” (Minute 27/00), the preliminary motion heard by the Court had been won by this Authority. Noting the Legal Officer’s update information relating to the case, Members considered that Officers should co-operate with the appellants and their intention to undertake a survey of the diseased/damaged trees on the site, with the Authority’s Woodlands Officer and an independent Arboricultural consultant being employed by the Council to provide an unbiased independent view on the condition of the trees on the site.

On a motion put by Cllr Mrs W M Stevenson and seconded by Cllr R A Pearson it was

**Resolved** that the Authority’s Woodlands Officer and an independent Arboricultural consultant participate in the tree survey being undertaken by the appellants in relation to change of site licence conditions for Halcyon Caravan Park in order for the Court to be presented with an unbiased independent view on the matter. (HPS)

### **380 BEST VALUE – PRESENTATION BY ESSEX POLICE**

Members were advised by Superintendant Noakes that the Police Authority would be considering their report on the Best Value Review of the Police Service on 23 November 2000 and this Authority would be consulted on the matter soon after.

Noting this information, Members considered that any consultation undertaken on the Best Value Review should be full public consultation with at least one meeting towards the eastern and one meeting towards the western parts of the Rochford District. Furthermore, on a Motion put by Cllr Mrs M J Webster and seconded by Cllr R A Pearson it was

#### **Resolved**

That the matter of Best Value – Presentation by Essex Police be put to Full Council on 19 December 2000.

### **381 PRESENTATION BY COUNTY LEARNING SERVICES ON THE SCHOOLS' OPERATIONS PLAN**

Members welcomed Nigel Hunt and Brenda Richards from Essex County Council Learning Services Department who had been invited to attend the Meeting to give a brief presentation on the Schools Organisational Plan. It was noted that the plan was one of many that was produced by the County Council and its intention was to be the framework for the supply of school places throughout the County.

In reality, parents did not have a choice where children attended schools however parental preference was of course taken into account when allocating school places.

The plan was drawn up through comparisons of pupil numbers year on year, birth rates and the known capacity of existing schools. It was not the intention for the plan to suggest expansion or reduction of school places, more a guide for the Local Education Authority to use when allocating school places. Following Members' consideration of the projection for primary and secondary school places in the District Mr Hunt advised Members of the following points:-

- Housing Developments were taken into account in drawing up the plan however migration of families both to and from the County could not easily be quantified and so the comparison number of pupils year on year were used to calculate this.
- Under provision of school spaces at any one particular school did not necessarily mean expansion was needed. The Local Education Authority looked across all schools trying to balance under/over provision in accordance with Government guidelines.

- Special needs pupils were integrated into mainstream schools or Special Needs schools at the request of parents.
- On the matter of the provision of a secondary school in Great Wakering, Members were advised that there would need to be a proven case for 900 additional school places in the area. It would not be the case that pupils could be taken from other schools to make up the numbers.
- Whilst the County Council were responsible for the provision of Bus services, they did not provide late buses for pupils attending after school activities.

Members thanked Mr Hunt and Miss Richards for their presentation.

### **382 NOTICE OF MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MRS H L A GLYNN**

The following Notice of Motion standing in the name of Councillor Mrs H L A Glynn was referred by Council on 24 October 2000 to this Committee for consideration.

- (1) That this Council considers an alternative access for King Edmund's School, Rochford at the next Meeting of Community Services.
- (2) That the Officers prepare a report for Community Services Meeting in respect of item 1

The Committee considered the report of Head of Planning Services which provided the background in relation to the Motion on the provision of a new access for King Edmund's School from Brays Lane.

Members noted that the case for the provision of an alternative access to King Edmund School had been rehearsed when considering the matter as part of the formation of the Rochford District Local Plan and its First Review, and considered that the matter should now be referred to the Planning Policy Sub-Committee and subsequently the Transportation and Environmental Services Committee for consideration of the planning aspects of the case which fell outside the purview of this Committee.

### **Resolved**

That the matter be referred to the Planning Policy Sub-Committee and subsequently the Transportation and Environmental Services Committee for further consideration. (HPS)

### 383 SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

#### (i) Community Safety Sub-Committee – 8 November 2000

**Minute 161** – Update on Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy

##### **Resolved**

That the report be noted and update reports be submitted to future Meetings of the Community Safety Sub-Committee. (HCPI)

**Minute 162** – Castle Point and Rochford Drug Reference Group Update Report

##### **Resolved**

- (1) That the work of the drug reference group be noted.
- (2) That the Council continues to support the work of the Drug Reference Group and make available the sum of £1,000 from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy Budget for this purpose. (HCPI)
- (3) That the Finance & General Purposes Committee be requested to consider the inclusion of Outside Body Members' names on all Council reports relating to the work of Outside Bodies for reference purposes. (All)

**Minute 163** – Reference from the Meeting of Community Services Committee held on 10 October 2000.

During consideration of the Minute relating to the activity of Pollsters, Members were advised by the Police that they had very few powers to control this activity.

On the issue of harassment, alarm and distress and recent examples given by some Members present, the Police advised that it was for the aggrieved to report the incident to the Police in the first instance. The matter would then be investigated and dealt with accordingly. Without such statements the Police were unable to move people along as had been the case previously. On the matter of obstruction Members noted that this was a matter that was difficult to prove and so act effectively upon.

In answer to Members' questions Committee noted the following:-

- (1) Town and Parish Councils could not adopt the Essex Act 1987.
- (2) The activity of pollsters was not for charitable gain and so could not be regulated by similar means to that used for street collections.

Members were disappointed to note progress on this matter to date considering there should be some sort of control afforded to this activity. It was considered that Officers should investigate signage used in other towns and cities to advise members of the public of the activity of pollsters with a view to its discouragement.

### **Resolved**

That Officers investigate the signage used by other towns and cities warning of the activity of pollsters and report back to Members for approval of the wording of the signs to be used. (HLS)

### **384 NOTICE OF MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR J R F MASON**

The following Notice of Motion standing in the name of Councillor J R F Mason was referred by Council on 24 November 2000 to this Committee for consideration.

“Acknowledging that dog fouling is unpleasant and a nuisance with additional associated health issues that are of particular concern with regard to children and users of recreational spaces, that this Council considers adoption of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, Council refers such proposal to the Community Services Committee to obtain a report to be submitted to Full Council within 3 months,”

Members noted the holding report provided by Officers and

### **Resolved**

That a detailed report will be made to the next Community Services Committee on this issue. (CD(F&ES))

### **385 NOTICE OF MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR D R HELSON**

The following Notice of Motion standing in the name of Councillor D R Helson was referred by Council on 24 October 2000 to this Committee for consideration.

1. “That the informal five-a-side football area in Fairview Playing Field, Rayleigh be surfaced and laid out as a five-a-side football pitch.
2. In addition, two basket ball goals be sited within this area from the bid made to the English Basketball Association under Minute 81 of the Leisure Services Sub-Committee held on 13 June 2000 and Minute 196 of the Community Services Committee held on 27 June 2000”.

Members noted the holding report that was provided by Officers and

### Resolved

That a detailed report will be made to the next Community Services Committee on this issue. (CD(F&ES))

### 386 REVISED HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) on additional housing capital schemes for 2000/01 in view of funds being released as a result of reduced tenders. Noting the reasons for additional monies being available, Members endorsed the Officers proposals for:-

(a)	Remaining fire prevention works	£120,000
(b)	Window replacement – Lavers	£ 40,000
(c)	Window replacement – Britton Court -	<u>£ 60,000</u>
	Total	<u>£220,000</u>

to be brought into this year's Capital Programme and on a show of hands it was

### Resolved

That the above three schemes be included in the 2000/01 Housing Capital Programme. (HRHM)

### 387 DISPERSED ALARM SYSTEMS – CARELINES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the future arrangements for the administration of Carelines in the District and the options for units purchased by the Council. Noting the history of the Careline Scheme and the proposal to hand back responsibility for the scheme to Chelmsford Borough Council, Members endorsed the suggestion by Officers considering that the remaining units supplied by this Authority should continue to be funded whilst the owners fitted the criteria set in 1995 and that as units were handed back, they should be returned to Chelmsford Borough Council. On a show of hands, it was

### Resolved

- (1) That the administration of Carelines be transferred to Chelmsford Borough Council.
- (2) That a one off grant of £500 be made towards transport costs.
- (3) That unused units be returned to Chelmsford Borough Council.

- (4) That the remaining units continue to be funded for as long as the current owners remain within the criteria set for distribution of the Carelines in 1995. (HRHM)

### **388 ACCESS TO GROVE NURSERY GROUP VIA GROVE WOODS**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) following a formal request from Grove Nursery Group for permission to construct a short service footpath within Grove Woods from an existing route to give the Group access to this site. Noting the details of the report, Members considered that it should stand deferred for a Members' site visit.

#### **Resolved**

That a site visit be arranged. (HAMS)

### **389 RECYCLING BANKS AT ST JOHN FISHER PLAYING FIELD – UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which addressed the issues raised by a Ward Member at the last Community Services Committee Meeting regarding alleged incidents at the recycling banks at the St Fisher Playing Fields.

Noting the update information provided at the Meeting by both Officers of the Council and the Police, Members were divided as to the most appropriate way forward on the matter. A number of Members considered that the banks should remain in their current position whilst other Members were of the opinion that the banks should be removed from the site altogether

A Motion put by Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson and seconded by Councillor D A Weir for the banks to remain in their current position with the new anti-climb fence was lost on a show of hands.

#### **Resolved**

That the Recycling Banks be removed from St John Fisher Playing Field (HHHCC)

### **390 SUMMER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which apprised Members of this year's Summer Holiday Play Schemes and sought Members approval for monies to be set aside in 2001/02 budget for the schemes to continue into Summer 2001.



### **Resolved**

- (1) That success of the schemes in 2000 be noted.
- (2) That the swimming and summer day camp initiatives continue next year and that the sums of £10,000 and £8,600 respectively are included in the draft budget for that purpose. (HLCS)

### **391 MEALS ON WHEELS**

The Chairman admitted this urgent item of business on the grounds that a response to Essex County Council was required without delay. The Committee considered the report of the Head of Financial Services which advised Members of correspondence received from Essex County Council following a review of the Meals on Wheels service across the County.

It was noted that the letter and report received from the County Council were preliminary proposals and the matter was due for full consideration at Essex County Council on 13 December 2000. Members wished to raise the following initial points relating to the report.

“This Council welcomes the idea of a seven day, 52 week a year service and approves the meals identified in the report. However, this Authority would raise concern at the costs of providing a fully employed, liveried vehicle based, uniformed wearing service as opposed to the voluntary service which has worked for so many years.”

### **Resolved**

- (1) That should Essex County Council invite a representative from this Council to a Member level visit to Nottinghamshire ,that the representative should be an appropriate officer from either the Housing Health and Community Care Division or the Financial Services.Division
- (2) That Officers call a meeting of the existing Meals on Wheels organisers to ensure they inform the proposals and to obtain any comments they wish to submit to the Authority or to Essex County Council.
- (3) That the above comments be forwarded to Essex County Council on the preliminary report. (HFS)

### **392 CENTURY HOUSE**

The Head of Housing Health and Community Care advised Members that Group Leaders had been invited to nominate Members to attend

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an open day at Century House, Westcliff-on-Sea – a homelessness unit to which this Authority had nomination rights.

The Committee, in noting that there were places available for the visit, considered that attendance should be an approved duty.

### **Resolved**

That the visit to Century House by Members on 13 December be an approved duty, for attendance and travelling allowance purposes.  
(HHHCC)

The Meeting closed at 10.30pm.

Chairman

Date