

Council – 26 February 2009

Minutes of the meeting of **Council** held on **26 February 2009** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr J E Grey

Vice Chairman: Cllr A Humphries

Cllr Mrs P Aves	Cllr M Maddocks
Cllr C I Black	Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr Mrs L A Butcher	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr P A Capon	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr Mrs T J Capon	Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr M R Carter	Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr J P Cottis	Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr Mrs L M Cox	Cllr S P Smith
Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt	Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr T E Goodwin	Cllr M J Steptoe
Cllr K J Gordon	Cllr J Thomass
Cllr K H Hudson	Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr T Livings	Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill	Cllr Mrs C A Weston
Cllr C J Lumley	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs R Brown, K A Gibbs, Mrs H L A Glynn and P R Robinson.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren	-	Chief Executive
R J Honey	-	Corporate Director (Internal Services)
J Bostock	-	Committee Services Manager

ALSO PRESENT

A Pike	-	Chief Executive, NHS South East Essex
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43 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2008 and the Extraordinary meetings held on 27 January and 19 February 2009 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman, subject to it being noted that it was information on potential borrowing costs and the Council's credit standing that had been sought under Minute 15/09.

44 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN/PRESENTATIONS

Notable recent engagements attended by the Chairman had included the Rayleigh Windmill 200th Anniversary celebrations and the Holocaust Memorial Service.

The Chairman was pleased to receive a Gideon Bible presented by David Fryatt of Gideons International, South Essex Branch.

The Chairman was also pleased to present a Quality Council Status Award to Hawkwell Parish Council. Joy Shepherd, County Secretary of the Essex Association of Local Councils, was in attendance for the Award, which was received by the Chairman of Hawkwell Parish Council, Councillor V Leach.

45 MEMBER QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

(1) To the Leader of the Council

Pursuant to Council procedure Rule 11.2, the following question of the Leader of the Council had been received from Councillor C I Black:-

“Were all the Council fees and charges for 2009/10 agreed by the relevant Portfolio Holders before January 27?”

The Leader of the Council responded as follows:-

“Fees and charges are agreed by Council as part of the overall budget setting report. The Council sets around 200 charges. Only where there are particular issues with charges, for example this year with car parking or bulky waste, were they discussed in detail with the relevant Portfolio Holder but the final decision on the level of charges was still made by Council on 27 January.

(2) To the Leader of the Council

Pursuant to Council procedure Rule 11.2, the following question of the Leader of the Council had been received from Cllr C I Black:-

“Does the Council have a list of landowners (i.e. freeholders) for Rayleigh Town Centre?”

The Leader of the Council responded as follows:-

“The Council does not maintain a record of land ownership in the District, details of land ownership are centrally held by the Land Registry and where the title of property is registered this information is accessible to the public. NNDR records that encompass personal details are subject to data protection and cannot be used for any other purpose.”

Cllr C I Black referred to the potential value of a list of freeholders in terms of being able to respond promptly to any issues. Cllr T G Cutmore confirmed

that on the occasions when it is necessary to establish ownership, this can be achieved through the Land Registry and/or direct communication.

46 DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR NHS SOUTH EAST ESSEX 2009-2014

Council received a presentation from Andrew Pike, Chief Executive of NHS South East Essex, on the Draft Strategic Plan. The presentation included detail on:-

- Areas that had been identified for change following a needs assessment.
- Agreed local priorities.
- The financial aspects of change.
- Proposed public health initiatives and investments.
- Specific challenges over the next five years.

During the presentation, Mr Pike emphasised the importance that is being placed on existing GP practices having the space for growth. There were no firm plans for a single large Primary Care Centre for Rayleigh, current activity being about identifying specific needs. It may be the case that, in the future, there will be scope for developing existing practices and identifying a location for a centre for outreach services. NHS South East Essex was in consultation with the District Council on dovetailing NHS related plans with Council plans relating to Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley.

Responding to questions, Mr Pike advised that:-

- It was recognised that society could stigmatise aspects of mental health. Approximately £2m expenditure was planned for improvements to psychological therapy. There were linkages between mental health and long term physical ill health.
- The Jones family practice at Hockley was being encouraged to develop a range of services, including phlebotomy. A Board meeting in March will be considering the resourcing of GP Practices where there is a clear desire to provide/re-establish services in-house.
- The Trust would work closely with the Council as the Local Development Framework develops.
- The Trust recognised the value of working with/educating young people on healthy living practices.
- Review activity has identified that customer service issues often arise at the boundary point between services. The next five years will see the introduction of electronic patient records, with integrated care being the key to addressing boundary issues. Andrew would be happy to

respond to any particular issues being experienced by Councillors in their interaction with the health service.

- The Trust was particularly mindful of the importance of ensuring that improvements to GP Practices and additional resource availability is not overtaken by population growth. Each year will see the setting aside of monies to improve the GP/patient ratio.
- The dementia challenge is significant. £½m had been identified for a new memory and mental health clinic. The National Dementia Strategy was a positive step forward and the Trust would expect significant improvement in the next five years. There can be concerns about the attitude of some GPs and other health service staff to the subject of dementia, and appropriate training in this area would be of value.
- Whilst approximately 20% of the current GP workforce was over the age of 60, overall the country was generating a high number of newly trained GPs. The Trust was not forecasting a significant reduction. In terms of planning for the impact of retirement, forecasting activity was underway with the Local Medical Committee.
- Negotiations were ongoing with GPs on the subject of longer opening hours for surgeries, including weekends. 72% of local surgeries now offered an average of 2 or 3 additional hours. There were already examples of some quite significant extension to hours and the provision of a Saturday morning service. The Trust had an objective of achieving a second out of hours Primary Care service by 2010.

On behalf of the Council the Leader extended thanks to Mr Pike for his presentation and the contributions of the Trust to the Local Strategic Partnership. It was pleasing to hear about assistance being provided to existing GP practices, notwithstanding that it can be seen that facilities often need improving.

47 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council noted the Minutes of Executive and Committee meetings held between 8 December 2008 and 16 February 2009.

48 URGENT DECISION – LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT AND ENVIRONS AREA ACTION PLAN PREFERRED OPTIONS – JOINT CONSULTATIONS

Pursuant to Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15(f), Council noted the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation on the decision that the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan Preferred Options document be published for consultation, which had been taken as a matter of urgency.

49 REPORT OF THE LEADER ON THE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE

Council received the following report from the Leader on the work of the Executive:-

“With the discussions on the 2009/2010 budget, the revised medium term financial strategy and the 2009/2010 council tax now behind us, I would, firstly, like to place on record my thanks to all you Members and also our staff, particularly those in Finance, who contributed to and supported what is, I believe, an extremely effective and inclusive budget setting process. This year the task was an extremely challenging one, factoring all the issues and pressures resulting from the credit crunch, but nonetheless, we have come through the process in an almost seamless fashion.

Looking towards our challenges for this year, I think 2009 will go down as the year in which the Council makes significant progress on the spatial planning front. There are many challenges ahead, but certainly by the end of the year most of our key spatial planning documents will have been through various stages of the process. Already in 2009 we’ve released the consultation on Hockley Town Centre and, with Southend Borough Council, are now undertaking the preferred options stage on the Joint Area Action Plan for London Southend Airport and its environs. I’ve briefly looked on our website to see how the public are responding to the Joint Area Action Plan in particular. It is interesting to see the nature and extent of the comments coming in.

Since I last reported back in December, the Executive has met formally on two occasions; one in January and again earlier this month. The January meeting considered a number of reports around our performance against key projects, services, our budget programme and our capital programme for this year. I am pleased to report that we are largely on track and in some areas, such as kerbside recycling, far exceeding our original expectations in terms of percentage recycled and reducing the amount being sent to landfill. At the January meeting we also agreed the detailed work programme for Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and the final brief for the extension of the Hall Road Cemetery. I was surprised by the press interest in the latter, which saw them meeting me on site for a photo-opportunity. It is amazing what excites their interest!! The January meeting also saw us make progress on the implementation of a Choice Based Lettings scheme.

At the Executive earlier this month, we took the decision to replace the current boundary signs with a new design, subject to the approval of the highway authority, and negotiations with the relevant Parishes and landowners on siting where appropriate. I am confident that the new design will have a positive impact on the image of the District. The February meeting considered a range of HR policies and initiatives and also agreed to a new CPA Improvement Plan for the Council, which should hopefully ensure that we make as smooth a transition as possible from CPA to CAA (Comprehensive Area Assessment), the new assessment framework which has recently been finalised and published by the Audit Commission.

The implications of CAA will impact on us all and so I have asked the Chief Executive to arrange some sessions for all Members on the new assessment regime for early in the new municipal year.

As always, I will be happy to take any questions from Members in respect of the work of the Executive since the December Council meeting. I am sure my Executive colleagues will be happy to contribute where appropriate”.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that officers were in discussion with the gas consortium on meeting the criteria for achieving consortium funding for the Rayleigh Arts Festival and other events. An update on the position would be provided at the next Council meeting.

50 KEY POLICIES AND ACTIONS FOR 2009/10

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive on key policies and actions for 2009/10.

It was noted that the projects identified against the previous year's Local Authority Business Grant Initiative Awards (LABGI) were being actioned. Separate projects could be considered against any future LABGI awards as appropriate.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme for 2009/10, as set out in Appendices A, B and C, and the public notification of its content, as outlined in the report, be agreed.
- (2) That those areas of work suggested for consideration by the Review Committee, as outlined in Appendix D of the report, be agreed.
- (3) That the programme for the monitoring of the 2009/10 budget and the development of the 2010/11 budget, as outlined in Appendix E of the report, be noted.
- (4) That the main events timetable, as outlined in Appendix F of the report, be noted. (CE)

51 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY CHANGE

Note: Cllrs C J Lumley, Mrs R J Lumley and R A Oatham each declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being Members of Rayleigh Town Council. Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest by virtue of her role as Vice Chairman of the Rayleigh Mount Local Committee and the proximity of her home address to the Rayleigh Conservation Area boundary.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, Cllr K H Hudson, presented the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation on modifying the Conservation Area boundaries for Rayleigh and Rochford.

With regard to Rayleigh, it was noted that the Plan recommended extending the southern side of the boundary to include the east side of Websters Way at the very least but, preferably, to include King George's Recreation Ground.

Responding to questions, the Portfolio Holder advised that:-

- Proposed boundary changes would not have specific implications for proposals in relation to Rayleigh Skateboard Park.
- The Council would be required to reconsider Conservation Area boundaries from time to time. Future consideration could include the border around Rayleigh Mount.
- Rayleigh Town Council had been consulted on the area appraisal and management plans prior to adoption.

The recommendation that the boundary relating to the Rayleigh Conservation Area be extended to include King George's Recreation Field was endorsed and it was:-

Resolved

That the proposed modifications to the Conservation Area boundaries for Rayleigh and Rochford, as set out in the report and accompanying maps, be approved, including extension of the southern side of the boundary for the Rayleigh Conservation Area to include King George's Recreation Ground. (HPT)

52 ARTICLE 4(2) DIRECTIONS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, Cllr K H Hudson, presented the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation on the issue of Article 4(2) directions in Conservation Areas.

It was noted that there would be a report back should there be any significant objections. Council concurred with the view of the Portfolio Holder that it would be appropriate for the Head of Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to determine confirmation of the Article 4(2) directions.

Resolved

- (1) That the issuing of /consultation on Article 4(2) directions for the Conservation Areas identified in report be agreed.
- (2) That, subject to the consideration of any representations received, the Head of Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Planning and Transportation, determine confirmation of the Article 4(2) directions. (HPT)

53 ROYAL GARDEN PARTY

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive on the appointment of representatives to attend one of the Royal Garden Parties held in July.

Resolved

That Cllrs Mrs J R Lumley and J Thomass be nominated to attend one of the Royal Garden Parties to be held in July, accompanied by one guest each, using the Civic Car and driver. (CE)

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Chairman

Date

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