

Council – 31 July 2007

Minutes of the meeting of **Council** held on **31 July 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr K A Gibbs
Vice-Chairman: Cllr J E Grey

Cllr Mrs P Aves	Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr C I Black	Cllr K H Hudson
Cllr Mrs R Brown	Cllr C J Lumley
Cllr Mrs L A Butcher	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr M R Carter	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr J P Cottis	Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr Mrs L M Cox	Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr J Thomass
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt	Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn	Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr T E Goodwin	Cllr Mrs C A Weston
Cllr K J Gordon	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R S Allen, P A Capon, Mrs T J Capon, T Livings, Mrs J R Lumley, J R F Mason, R A Oatham, P R Robinson, S P Smith, D G Stansby and M G B Starke

OFFICERS PRESENT

R J Honey - Corporate Director (Internal Services)
G Woolhouse - Corporate Director (External Services)
Y Woodward - Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

273 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2007 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 26 June 2007 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

274 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To date the Chairman had attended 39 events and had met numerous unsung heroes. A notable event had been attendance at the inauguration of a new charity for rheumatoid arthritis that is to be based in purpose built environmentally friendly premises at Rocheway.

275 MEMBER QUESTION

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.4(b), the following question of the Leader of the Council had been received from Councillor C I Black:-

‘Many residents in Rayleigh and Rawreth suffered disturbed sleep from an open air party that lasted from 9 pm last Saturday evening until 4 pm Sunday afternoon. I have received complaints from residents living well over a mile from the party, and no doubt other Councillors have been contacted as well.

In the event of such a party being repeated next Saturday or on another weekend over the summer, what action can the Council take to remedy the situation, and who should residents contact outside office hours?’

The leader of the Council, Councillor T G Cutmore, responded to the question as follows:-

‘I am sure all Members will join with me in sympathising with residents who live in the locality who it seems had to put up with a totally unacceptable level of disturbance over last weekend.

I understand that the Police twice attended the property where the party was being held following calls they received on Sunday. Four calls were also made to the Councils out-of-hours service about the party on the Sunday morning. Where there has been a noise nuisance which might be repeated the Council can serve a notice prohibiting a recurrence and officers are currently considering the information which is available about this party to decide if such a notice should be served. If the Police request assistance from the Council because there is a rave or similar event-taking place then officers will respond, but I understand that this was a private party.

The Council has on several occasions considered whether it should fund an out-of-hours responsive noise service to deal with this type of complaint. Such complaints are not common in this District and each time the Council has considered whether to provide a responsive service it has concluded that there are other higher priority calls on our limited funds.

If Members wish to consider this type of service for the future, then we could look at it again as part of our priority setting and budget making process which will be starting in the Autumn.’

276 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council noted the minutes of Executive Board and Committee meetings held between 16 May 2007 and 23 July 2007.

277 REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Council received the report of the Chairman of the Executive Board on recent activity, including the by-election for the Hockley North Ward, the Peer Review and work undertaken towards the large-scale voluntary transfer of housing. The Executive Board had focussed on a number of areas including:-

- The Annual Audit and Inspection letter.
- An updated work plan associated with revenues and benefits.
- Changes to taxi licensing conditions.
- Endorsing the approach of the Contracts Sub-Committee in progressing contracts around waste collection, including recycling, grounds maintenance and street cleansing.
- Health and safety, food safety and contaminated land.
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding on waste management.
- Approval of an Asset Management Plan and a Play Strategy.

278 ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – BACKWARD LOOK 2006/07

Council considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management on the Annual Efficiency Statement – Backward Look 2006/07.

Responding to questions, the Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management advised that:-

- Land charges transactions are demand led. If workload volumes reduce savings levels may not be sustained.
- The Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 was awaited. This would give an indication of efficiency targets for the next three years. The current indications are that targets will increase from 2½% to 3% per annum and that the 3% will need to be in the form of cashable savings, possibly linked to grant availability. At the present time half need to be cashable, and half can be non-cashable.
- A press release on the Statement would be issued the following week. Consideration would be given to including a lead item in the next edition of the Council's newspaper, Rochford District Matters.
- Information was awaited on Government intentions with regard to the floors and ceilings aspect of the Rate Support Grant. Officers would lobby on this aspect as appropriate.

It was agreed that authority should be delegated to the Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management, in consultation with the Leader of the Council,

to make any final adjustments that are considered appropriate prior to final Statement submission of a statement.

Council concurred with the observation of the Leader that officers should be thanked for their diligence in producing the Statement.

Resolved

That the annual Efficiency Statement – Backward Look 2006/07, as summarised in the report, be agreed with authority delegated to the Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any final adjustments that are considered appropriate prior to final submission. (HFAPM)

The meeting closed at 7.52 pm.

Chairman

Date

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