

Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 8 December 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held on **8 December 2004** when there were present:

Cllr T Livings (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs M A Starke (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Mrs R Brown
Cllr Mrs T J Capon
Cllr C J Lumley
Cllr P K Savill

Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr P F A Webster

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr M G B Starke

OFFICERS PRESENT

G Woolhouse	- Head of Housing, Health & Community Care
N Khan	- Solicitor
J Bradley	- Solicitor
M Martin	- Committee Administrator

530 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

531 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Committee received the Schedule relating to Progress on Decisions and in response to Member questions the following was noted:-

De-Regulation of Francis Walk, Crown Hill, Clarence Road and Tendring Avenue, Rayleigh

The Head of Service confirmed that Members had previously requested that no action be taken to change the status of these schemes prior to consideration by the Sub-Committee. In response to a question about the term 'equity release', Members were advised that the officer's report would give greater clarification. (HRHM)

GP Provision within the District

Members expressed concern at recent articles in the local press which had suggested that the creation of Primary Care Medical Centres could result in closures of existing GP surgeries.

The Head of Service confirmed that:-

- at the previous meeting of this Committee the representatives from the Castle Point & Rochford NHS Primary Care Trust had not given any indication that recommending the former Park School as a suitable site for such a centre might endanger any existing facilities.
- he would write to the Primary Care Trust advising them of Members' concerns, and copying the letter to members of the Joint Health Partnership Board with Castle Point, so that this issue could be raised at the meeting to be held next week.
- Council had agreed to talk to transport providers about improving the public transport provision to the former Park School site, in view of the significant developments due to take place there.

Outstanding issues would be carried forward.

532 STAR PARTNERSHIP

Members were advised that Russ McLean, the STAR Partnership Co-ordinator, was unable to attend the meeting due to ill health.

In response to a Member question, the Head of Service advised that the Council is not the only funding body to the STAR Partnership and that there are other large funding partners.

On a Motion moved by Cllr P F A Webster and seconded by Cllr D G Stansby, the Committee agreed to recommend that, as the Council is a large financial provider for this partnership, consideration be given to changing the name to Rochford District Council STAR Partnership.

It was agreed that, in the absence of Mr McLean it would be wise to defer further consideration of his report to a future meeting of the Committee.

Recommended to the Community Services Committee

That given the level of funding provided by the Council, the Community Services Committee be requested to consider asking the STAR Partnership to change its name to the Rochford District Council STAR Partnership. (CE)

533 DRAFT ANIMAL WELFARE CHARTER

The Committee deferred consideration of this item to Full Council.

Recommended to Council

- (1) That, subject to any changes made by Council, the draft Animal Welfare Charter be approved.

- (2) That Council policy on pets be altered so that tenants in sheltered housing schemes should not be treated differently from those in other Council accommodation, with regard to the keeping of pets.
- (3) That a letter be sent to the County Council requesting that emergency planning arrangements should include farm livestock at risk from flooding and that contingency arrangements in rest centre planning take account of domestic pets.
- (4) That a letter be sent to the local branch of the National Farmers' Union urging them to identify measures that could be taken to avoid animals drowning in the event of flooding, so as to avoid health risks from carcasses.
- (5) That a leaflet be produced and made available on the safety of animals in emergency situations.
- (6) That Members of Parliament be lobbied on the following:
 - The range of animals listed on the schedule of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 should not be reduced.
 - Large snakes over eight feet long should also be licensed.
 - The potential hazards to wildlife from the development of wind farms needs to be properly taken into account in the evaluation of proposals.
 - The development of alternative methods of research not involving animals.
 - That animal cruelty and wildlife crime be made recordable for Police forces because of strong linkages with other crime and the Home Office lobbied on this.
 - That stronger controls be introduced on the tethering of horses.
- (7) That an article appear in Rochford District Matters advising residents that:-
 - Work is identified within the Local Plan on wildlife and conservation issues, together with guidance relating to the sensitive treatment of tree felling associated with planning applications.
 - The felling of trees, hedges and ditch clearance and associated works should be discouraged during bird nesting times.

- (8) That other Local Authorities be advised of the value of appointing an ecologist, both in terms of arboricultural, as well as planning issues and particularly where the introduction of an animal welfare charter was under consideration.
- (9) That consideration be given to the possibility of extending the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and of developing wildlife walks at Foulness with observation posts in order to encourage greater appreciation of wildlife, particularly given aspirations to develop Rochford as a centre of leisure and tourism within the Thames Gateway South Essex.
- (10) That the Minutes of all Animal Welfare Charter Sub-Committee meetings be attached to all distributed copies of the Animal Welfare Charter, to include all those organisations that gave evidence to the Sub-Committee and to all other animal welfare agencies, MPs, Essex County Council, Essex Police Authority, libraries, primary schools and veterinary surgeries.
- (11) That the Animal Welfare Charter be reviewed in 12 months' time.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business on the grounds that exempt information as disclosed in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

534 HOUSING CARE AND SUPPORT STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN ROCHFORD

The Committee agreed that this exempt item be deferred to the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee, in order that it could be afforded more detailed consideration. The Head of Service advised that relevant officers would also be invited to attend the meeting of the Sub-Committee.

Members agreed that for discussion of this item only the Sub-Committee be increased by one to include a Member from the Liberal Democrat group.

Resolved

- (1) That consideration of the draft Housing, Care and Support Strategy for Older People be deferred to the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee and the recommendations be reported back to the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee during the early part of 2005.

Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 8 December 2004

- (2) That, for the purposes of discussion of the Housing Care and Support Strategy for Older People in Rochford, the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee be increased by one to include a Liberal Democrat Member. (HHHCC)

The meeting closed at 8 pm.

Chairman

Date