

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Safety Sub-Committee** held on **13 September 2001** when there were present:

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn – Chairman

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr Mrs R Brown
Cllr J E Grey
Cllr D R Helson

Cllr V H Leach
Cllr R A Pearson
Cllr Mrs W M Stevenson
Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

OFFICERS ATTENDING

P Warren	Chief Executive
CAFTomas	Emergency Planning and Health & Safety Officer
A Wyatt	Committee Administrator

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs J E Ford.

188 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr D R Helson declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in item 7 – “The District Emergency Plan” (Minute 191) by virtue of being a Member of Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Services.

189 MINUTES

During consideration of the Minutes of the previous meeting the following issues were noted: -

Minute 183 – Hullbridge Recreation Ground

Members noted that the site visit to Hullbridge recreation ground in Pooles Lane, Hullbridge, had taken place earlier in the week and that the matter would now go forward to an all-party Member meeting with the Parish Council, Essex County Youth Service and the Police to discuss the way forward.

It was agreed that the Member representation from the District Council would be 1 Member from each Political Group, plus the Chairman of the Community Safety Sub Committee.

Minute 186: Youth Issues – Rayleigh High Street

Members noted that a comprehensive report was being brought to the Community Services Committee on the issues surrounding skateboarding within Rayleigh High Street and throughout the District.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2001 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

190 C A F THOMAS

Members wished to formally congratulate Charles Thomas, the Council's Emergency Planning and Health and Safety Officer on his recent appointment to Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Essex.

191 EMERGENCY PLANNING NATIONAL REVIEW

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive concerning a consultation paper from the Government on a National Review of Emergency Planning procedures.

Noting the reasons behind the Government's suggested review of the Emergency Planning System, Members made the following observations:-

- emergencies could not be prevented, indeed by their very nature they were unavoidable; a duty of prevention was therefore onerous;
- the proposed new system for dealing with emergencies did not give adequate direction on leadership;
- the current system for financing emergency planning would need considering further. Any new demand on Local Authority resources should attract adequate funding from Central Government.

RECOMMENDED

That the above views be considered as this Authority's response to the National Emergency Planning Review. (CEX)

192 THE DISTRICT EMERGENCY PLAN (Minute 132/01)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive presenting the Final Draft of the District Emergency Plan for Members' approval.

In approving the current Emergency Plan, Members noted that the document would remain fluid and would be subject to minor changes such as personal contact details for officers as and when the need arose.

RECOMMENDED

That the Draft District Emergency Plan be approved, published and distributed in accordance with the distribution list. (CE)

193 UPDATE ON CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION STRATEGY

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which updated Members on the progress made in implementing the District's Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and suggested a way forward for a new Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. Noting the points outlined in the report and also those raised within the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy Schedule, the following points were made:-

Appendix 1

7.2 – Speed Reduction and Related Matters

It was considered that the issue of speeding was still high on the public agenda and should be carried forward in to any new schedule. It was further considered that any new schedule should highlight those matters which were task and finish and those that were part of a rolling programme.

7.3 – Drug and Alcohol Related Abuse

It was considered appropriate for advertising to be made available relating to the Council's function for the removal and disposal of drug related paraphernalia.

7.5 – Fear of Burglary

Members considered that the proposals relating to CCTV in sheltered accommodation should be included on the Schedule. Further to consideration of this security measure, Members were of the opinion that the open doors within sheltered housing schemes were still a concern. It was noted that a constant ringing bell system attached to doors could be a way of resolving this matter.

Mention was made of the Pets in Sheltered Scheme Initiative which had taken place in previous years and it was requested that a report on this matter be brought back to Members in due course.

7.6 – Domestic Violence

A domestic violence incident was mooted by a Member, with the Police advising that all domestic violence cases reported to the Police were dealt with in a specific fashion irrespective of sex. The issue of the lack of interest in domestic violence presentations from primary schools was met with surprise by Members and it was agreed that all Councillors should be written to on this issue.

Appendix 2

It was considered that the proposed way forward was to be endorsed however, the issues of speeding and domestic violence relating to Primary Schools should be carried forward.

Appendix 3

Noting the Minutes of the Rochford District Crime and Disorder Partnership, Members were pleased to note that the Probation Service review was now complete and they should be attending meetings of the Partnership in future.

194 THE GOVERNMENT'S REPORT OF A REVIEW OF THE SENTENCING FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive apprising Members of the content of the Government's report of a Review of the Sentencing Framework for England and Wales.

Noting the background to the Review the following points were made:-

The Principles of Sentencing

Considering the UK had proportionally a higher number of criminal records per head of population than other European countries, Members were of the opinion that punishments should better suit the crime, seeking to deprive liberty whilst not overloading the system. It was felt that the current system did not work, furthermore that there was a need for the Government to recognise that there were too many entrants into the current criminal records system. A more creative of sentencing was required.

Short Sentences

It was considered that work with offenders in the community should be under strict supervision.

Intermediate Sanctions

Members questioned how enforceable house detention was. The Dutch approach, with loss of liberty at evenings and weekends but with the offender able to work during weekdays to support family was mooted as a possible alternative to current procedures. It was considered resource/training were key to any new approach, together with ensuring that any new initiative was enforceable.

Non-Custodial Sentences

Members considered that there should be more powers available to Magistrates and the suggested generic community sentence, made up of a menu of specific elements was to be welcomed. On the matter of the probation service being able to vary the content of a non-custodial sentence, Members considered that the probation service should be able to make recommendations however Magistrates should have the final say. There was concern as to the various resources/capacity of these organisations to carry out any new initiatives.

Sentence Management

It was felt that increasing the role of Courts in sentence management would have positive benefits.

Implementation

Members considered that the Government needed to properly resource any new initiatives/changes introduced, however, it was mooted that one cost in one area could bring greater savings on a number of other areas.

RECOMMENDED

That the above form the Council's response to the Government's report on the Review of the Sentencing Framework for England and Wales, 'Making Punishment Work'. (CE)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive apprising Members of funding being made available under the Government's 'Communities against Drugs Initiative'.

Noting that a sum of £59,300 had been allocated to the Rochford Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to disrupt the drugs market, tackle drug-related crime and strengthen communities, Members were advised that the matter would be subject to a more full report at the next meeting of Community Services.

RECOMMENDED

That the report be noted and a further report be presented to the Community Services Committee on 2 October 2001. (CE)

196 SECURITY ISSUES – CLEMENTS HALL LEISURE CENTRE

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which informed Members of the concerns of Essex Police surrounding security issues at Clements Hall Leisure Centre.

Noting the total number of crimes committed at Clements Hall Leisure Centre in relation to the number of people passing through the Leisure Centre in a year, it was considered that the matter should be noted as a monitoring exercise and that any security measures to be undertaken at Clements Hall should be undertaken by the new Leisure Contractor.

RECOMMENDED

That the report be noted and that no further action be undertaken on this matter. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Chairman _____

Date _____

