

Council 27 February 2001

Minutes of the meeting of **Council** held on **19 December 2000** when there were present:

Cllr Mrs W M Stevenson

Chairman

Cllr R Adams

Cllr C C Langlands

Cllr R S Allen

Cllr V H Leach

Cllr R A Amner

Cllr Mrs S J Lemon

Cllr C I Black

Cllr T Livings

Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr P A Capon

Cllr G A Mockford

Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr P J Morgan

Cllr D F Flack

Cllr R A Pearson

Cllr Mrs J E Ford

Cllr Mrs L I V Phillips

Cllr G Fox

Cllr S P Smith

Cllr K A Gibbs

Cllr M G B Starke

Cllr Mrs J M Giles

Cllr P D Stebbing

Cllr J E Grey

Cllr R E Vingoe

Cllr Mrs J Hall

Cllr Mrs M J Webster

Cllr D R Helson

Cllr P F A Webster

Cllr Mrs J Helson

Cllr D A Weir

Cllr A Hosking

Cllr Mrs M A Weir

Cllr Mrs L Hungate

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs D M Ford, Mrs H L A Glynn and C R Morgan.

OFFICERS PRESENT

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| P Warren | - | Chief Executive |
| R J Honey | - | Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration) |
| R Crofts | - | Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) |
| G Woolhouse | - | Head of Housing, Health and Community Care |
| A Smith | - | Head of Administrative and Member Services |
| J Bostock | - | Principal Committee Administrator |

436 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 24 October 2000 and Extraordinary Meeting of 22 November 2000 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

437 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A number of engagements had been undertaken. The Chairman wished to extend specific thanks to:-

- Father Dorricot and his colleagues for all their assistance at the Civic Carol Service.
- Councillor T G Cutmore for his Chairman's charity fundraising activity.
- All Members who had made donations to the Chairman's charity in lieu of sending Christmas cards and who had and supported the recent murder mystery evening.

The next fundraising event would be the Kids Choir 2000, commencing at 8.00 pm on 13 January 2001 at Mill Hall, Rayleigh.

438 MINUTES

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to any amendments below, the Minutes of Committees be received and the recommendations contained therein adopted.
- (2) That the common seal of the Council be affixed to any document necessary to give effect to decisions taken or approved by the Council in these Minutes.

| | Committee | Date | Minute No. |
|-----|---|------------------|------------|
| (1) | PLANNING SERVICES | 26 October 2000 | 351-358 |
| (2) | TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES | 16 November 2000 | 359-376 |

Minute 369 – Review of Car Park Charging Policy

The Proper Officer reported that, pursuant to Standing Order 18(6), a requisition had been received in the names of Councillors P F A Webster, R A Pearson and J E Grey requiring that Minute 369 be referred to Full Council for decision.

In addressing the Minute, Councillor P F A Webster indicated that it was considered appropriate for all Members of the Council to have the opportunity to comment on the decision. Reference was made to previous meetings when charging had been discussed in the absence of some Members as well as the contributions of the political groups to the decision making process.

Some Members wished to emphasise that decisions to date had been made by the Council as a whole and not by any one political group. Reference was made to background factors associated with the decision making process.

Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) confirmed that it had been previously recommended to Council that car parking charges be increased as part of the budget process. A Member commented that it would be iniquitous to have different charging policies within the District.

Resolved

- (1) That no further action be taken to revise the overall car park tariff at present.
- (2) That the Hockley Car Park tariff be brought in line with the rest of the District. (HRHM)

| | Committee | Date | Minute No. |
|-----|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| (3) | COMMUNITY SERVICES | 21 November 2000 | 377-392 |

Minute 380 – Best Value – Presentation by Essex Police

The presentation by Essex Police was received later in the meeting.

Minute 389 – Recycling Banks at St John Fisher Playing Field – Update Report

The Proper Officer reported that, pursuant to Standing Order 18(6), a requisition had been received in the names of Councillors V H Leach, Mrs J Hall and Mrs H L A Glynn requiring that Minute 389 be referred to Full Council for a decision.

A number of Members felt that the recycling banks should be retained at the Playing Field site. It was acknowledged that when deciding on the location of recycling facilities, it was not always possible to please all those that may be affected. However, reference was made to previous actions of the Transportation and Environmental Services Committee in working to ameliorate problems at the St. John Fisher

site and to the cost consequences of relocation. It was also important to be mindful of the possibility that only a minority of persons in the vicinity of the site had made objections.

Other Members referred to the importance of peace and tranquillity for local residents, many of the reported problems being related to vandalism. The existence of petitions relating to the site was an indication that it was more than just a minimal number of residents expressing concern.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Health, Housing & Community Care advised that 43 tonnes were expected to be recycled at the site during the current year (approximately 20 of paper/20 of glass and 3-4 of textiles) and that users may well come from beyond the local vicinity. Although the site was relatively well used, the recycling tonnage was small in the context of recycling for the District as a whole.

On a requisition pursuant to Standing Order 24(2) a recorded vote was taken on the Resolution under Minute 369 as follows:-

For (18)

Councillors R Adams, R A Amner, Mrs R Brown, P A Capon, T G Cutmore, K A Gibbs, J E Grey, Mrs L Hungate, C C Langlands, T Livings, G A Mockford, P J Morgan, R A Pearson, Mrs L I V Phillips, S P Smith, M G B Starke, Mrs M J Webster, P F A Webster.

Against (16)

Councillors R S Allen, C I Black, Mrs J E Ford, G Fox, Mrs J M Giles, Mrs J Hall, D R Helson, Mrs J Helson, A Hosking, V H Leach, Mrs S J Lemon, J R F Mason, P D Stebbing, Mrs W M Stevenson, R E Vingoe, Mrs M A Weir.

Abstain (2)

Councillors D F Flack and D A Weir.

Resolved

That the recycling banks be removed from St John Fisher Playing Field. (HHHCC)

| | | | |
|-----|----------------------|------------------|---------|
| (4) | PLANNING SERVICES | 23 November 2000 | 395-402 |
| (5) | AUDIT SERVICES | 30 November 2000 | 403-405 |

(6) FINANCE &
GENERAL
PURPOSES

7 December 2000

406-424

**Minute 411(3) Relating to Corporate Resources Sub Committee
Minute 376 – Consultation with Chambers of Trade.**

The Proper Officer reported that, pursuant to standing order 18(6), a requisition had been received in the names of Councillors D R Helson, Mrs J Helson and Mrs H L A Glynn requiring that the part of Minute 411(3) relating to the provision of additional CCTV cameras in Rayleigh Town Centre be referred to Full Council for decision.

A motion was moved by Councillor D R Helson and seconded by Councillor G Fox amending Committee Resolution (2) to provide for implementation of CCTV cameras in the Town Centre and prioritisation of fund allocation.

Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) confirmed that £10,000 was currently available (£5,000 from last year and £5,000 budgeted for this).

Reference was made to the intention of the Council that budget provision be available for the purposes of addressing appropriate Chamber of Trade proposals. In that proposals for CCTV could be considered appropriate, there was a moral case for proceeding. It could also be recognised that, whenever possible, all Chambers should be provided with the opportunity to benefit from allocation of funds. It could be argued that deterrent aspects of CCTV are immeasurable. A Member made reference to the reduction in vandalism and theft associated with the introduction of CCTV in Hockley.

Some Members felt that the Committee decision had not precluded further consideration being given to the provision of additional cameras and that there was a need to ensure value for money is achieved.

The Motion was agreed on a show of hands and it was:-

Resolved

That the provision of additional CCTV cameras in Rayleigh Town Centre be implemented in consultation with the Rayleigh Chamber of Trade and Rayleigh Town Council to supplement the existing network.

Noting the financial arrangements for joint initiatives with the Chambers of Trade, any requests from the Rochford and Hockley Chambers of Trade will be given priority for consideration from the remaining allocation of funds. (CDF&ES)

Minute 422 - IT Infrastructure Recabling

A Member commented on the high costs that can be associated with cable installation projects and the need to undertake careful review of tenders.

Resolved

- (1) That replacement of the IT network infrastructure be agreed in principle, a final decision to be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee via the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee once the outcome of the tender process is known.
- (2) That the tender process includes identification of costings for introducing appropriate cabling/infrastructure to the meeting rooms at the Civic Suite, Rayleigh.
- (3) That an additional provision of £50,000 be made for network recabling within the Council's capital programme.
- (4) That the action taken by the Corporate Management Board to invite tenders for the replacement of the IT network be affirmed.
- (5) That regular IT review reports be submitted to the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee. (HAMS)

439 NOTICES OF MOTION

(1) From Councillor J R F Mason

The Motion from Councillor J R F Mason relating to parking charges at the Southend Road Hockley Car Park was withdrawn in view of the matter having been considered earlier in the meeting.

(2) From Councillors V H Leach and Mrs H L A Glynn.

The Proper Officer reported on a Notice of Motion received from Councillors V H Leach and Mrs H L A Glynn. Pursuant to Standing Order 9(11), it was agreed that the Motion be considered at this meeting.

The Motion, together with amendment to the first part, was moved by Councillor V H Leach and seconded by Councillor Mrs J Helson and it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That with effect from 1 April 2001 all bus passes are to be renewed annually between April and September for the Financial Year 2001/2002 and that a report be submitted to the Transportation and Environmental Services Committee at its first meeting after August 2001 with a view to implementing future renewals during the first month of each subsequent Financial Year.
- (2) That any bus passes falling due for renewal during the 2001/2002 Financial Year be dated until the end of that Financial Year, so that future renewals conform to (1) above. (CD(F&ES).

(3) From Councillors Mrs M J Webster and J E Grey.

The Proper Officer reported on a Notice of Motion received from Councillors Mrs M J Webster and J E Grey. Pursuant to Standing Order 9(11), it was agreed that the Motion be considered at this meeting.

In endorsing the Motion it was agreed that, in addition to the County Council, the five County Council Representatives within the District should be separately informed of this Council's request.

Resolved

That Council notes with regret that Albert Jones Court will not be used again for residential care. Consequently, Rochford District Council requests Essex County Council to establish Albert Jones Court as a community based resource centre, in conjunction with the Primary Care Group, to provide facilities for the local community based on the experience of the Tyrells Centre in Castle Point. (HHHCC)

440 BEST VALUE – PRESENTATION BY ESSEX POLICE

Council welcomed Superintendent Jim Noakes of Essex Police and Mr David Westaby (Essex Police Best Value Consultant) who were in attendance to present details of Essex Police's Best Value Structural Review and to receive the observations of the Council.

In presenting Review details, Superintendent Noakes covered the following areas:-

- Alignment of force structures
- Aims
- Concerns
- Areas not affected
- Current position

- Options
- Decisions which are awaited

It was confirmed that a final decision on the Review was due to be taken by the Police Authority in February/March 2001. The Police Authority Panel had felt that, as no changes were proposed to the theatre of operation, consultation could be undertaken via the Police Consultative Groups. Essex Police currently favoured option 3 (Seven Basic Command Units each with two Local Authorities), as did Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies.

Responding to Member questions, Superintendent Noakes confirmed that the number of additional police for Rayleigh that would result from the implementation of Option 3 was minimal.

Following the presentation and during debate, Members expressed a number of concerns including that:-

- Proposals to move senior Police Officers to Southend-on-Sea could lead to a concentration of resources in that area.
- Change seemed inappropriate given a minimal increase in the number of policemen.
- The policing needs of Rochford are very different to those of Southend.
- In that the Police Authority was an unelected body which relied on the support of householders in the District for financial support, the consultation process appeared cosmetic. Full public meetings should be held. The February/March 2001 timeframe seemed far too short for effective consultation and the use of consultative groups could also be questioned in that very often only a narrow cross section of the community attend.
- The current structure had facilitated inter-agency working (the Rochford and Castle Point Drug Reference Groups being an example of this.) None of the proposed alternative structures reflected the working arrangements of other agencies in this part of Essex.
- In that Best Value should not just be about cost savings, there should perhaps be more of an emphasis on a properly resourced police service capable of restoring community based policing and improving quality of life.
- A reduction in senior management may have implications for career path and duration in what is a vocation.

On a Motion moved by Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson and seconded by Councillor P F A Webster it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That option A (retaining current geographical size and command team structure) be this Council's preferred outcome of the Best Value Review.
- (2) That Essex Police be asked to undertake full public consultation in both the Rayleigh and Rochford areas via the forum of public meetings, these meetings to be arranged by this Council if necessary. (CE)

441 STRUCTURAL AND PROCEDURAL REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the Minutes and recommendations of the Meeting of the Structural and Procedural Review Sub-Committee held on 5 December 2000.

Minute 70 – Local Government Act 2000

Resolved

- (1) That suggested new Committee structure (E) be the favoured model of this Council, subject to appointment to the Policy and Finance Committee providing for the widest possible political representation within pro rata rules.
- (2) That consultation on new political structures involve the widest possible number of mechanisms. (CE)

442 MEMBER BUDGET MONITORING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the Minutes and recommendations of the Meeting of the Member Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee held on 12 December 2000.

Minute 112 - Leisure Contract – Best Value and Consultant's Report

In discussing Minute 112, Council agreed with the view of a Member that work should include a review of corporate pricing arrangements and that innovative proposals should provide for both ends of the age spectrum. New arrangements should include consideration of community use arrangements for Mill Hall and the Freight House.

Resolved

That the above comments, together with those set out in the Sub-Committee Minute, form the basis of the future arrangements for the management of the Council's leisure facilities. (CE)

Minute 114 – Budget Strategy (Capital Allocations)

Resolved

- (1) That the capital programme for 2001/02 be guided by the statement set out in the Minute.
- (2) That officers be authorised only to approve current year applications for private sector renewal grants where deemed necessary.
- (3) That officers report back at the earliest opportunity detailing the position in connection with private sector renewal grants and the potential for further capital receipts. (HFS)

Minute 116 – Sheltered Housing Scheme Management

Resolved

That Options (C) and (D) be investigated further and then reported on to the Housing Management Sub-Committee and, subsequently, the Community Services Committee. (CD(F&ES))

Minute 117 – Park School/Blatches Farm

Resolved

That F P D Savills be instructed to undertake negotiations with the County Council on behalf of this Authority in respect of the options relating to the land and to report back. (CD(LP&A))

443 ELECTORAL REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Council considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services on the outcome of the Electoral Review Working Group's review of the Local Government Commission's revised draft proposals.

Resolved

- (1) That the Local Government Commission be informed that the Council is prepared to accept the Commission's further recommendations for electoral change in Rochford, but asks

that:-

a) the District Ward boundary for the proposed Hockley North Ward be redrawn to follow the western boundary of Greensward School and Plumberow Primary School rather than the eastern boundary as presently proposed.

b) (subject to the support of Great Wakering Parish Council being forthcoming) the boundary of the proposed central and west wards of the Parish of Great Wakering be redrawn in the area of Alexander Road to follow the rear curtilage of the properties numbered 95 to 101, 113, 115, 173 to 177 and 166 to 176.

c) the consequential changes in the electoral arrangements of town and parish councils be introduced at the first following ordinary elections of those councils in or after 2002.

- (2) That re-appointment of the Electoral Review Working Group in the next Municipal Year to consider the implementation of any changes in the District Council's electoral arrangements be agreed in principle, the matter to be further discussed at the Annual Meeting of Council in 2001. (HAMS)

444 57 SOUTH STREET – JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD

Council considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) on progress to date with 57 South Street and the appointment of representatives to the Joint Management Board.

Four nominees were put forward for appointment to the Board. Whilst the legal agreement for the future management of the property provided for a membership of two representatives from the District Council, it was felt that consultation should be undertaken to ascertain the possibility of allowing all members of the Council representing Rochford to be appointed to the Board.

Resolved

That the other parties be consulted on the possibility of the District Council appointing four Councillors (RA Amner, DM Ford, MGB Starke and DA Weir) to the 57 South Street Joint Management Board.

The Meeting closed at 9.39pm

Chairman.....

Date.....