



**Rochford District
Council**

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1982

January - December

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**Rochford District
Council**

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL MINUTES

1982

December

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee

At a Meeting held on 2nd December 1982. Present: Councillors B. Taylor (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), C.B. Alger, W.H. Budge, L.K. Cope, B.A. Crick, E.E. Daley, M.J. Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, Mrs. J.M. Murison, J.E. Nokes, R.A. Pearson, G.J. Skinner, R.T. Stephens, C. Stephenson, and T.J. Warner.

Apologies. Councillors J.A. Sheaf, E.H. Adcock, N.R. Blyther and D.C. Wood.

Visiting: Councillors Mrs. L.M.A. Campbell-Daley and R.D. Foster.

MINUTES

693. Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of 19th October 1982 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

694. MONITORING OF PERFORMANCE - MEETINGS OF 27TH MAY AND 14TH SEPTEMBER

The Committee were satisfied that all necessary action had been taken. Minute 506/82 was carried forward. (21210) (CE)

695. BONFIRE AND CAROL SERVICE AT MAGNOLIA ROAD OPEN SPACE

The Director of Technical Services reported that the 2nd Hawkwell Scout Group had requested permission to hold a Bonfire and Carol Service at the above open space on 23rd December 1982 with entry by payment. This required the formal closure of the field for the event to take place.

RECOMMENDED That the 2nd Hawkwell Scout Group be granted permission to hold their Bonfire and Carol Service at Magnolia Road Open Space on 23rd December and that they be allowed to charge for entry to the site through programme sale. (260) (DTS)

696. SPORTS COUNCIL CAMPAIGN FOR INVOLVEMENT OF PEOPLE IN THEIR FIFTIES IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY

The Director of Technical Services reported that this campaign would be to encourage people in their fifties to take part in sport. Rochford Leisure was preparing programmes for the campaign week of 15th to 21st May and it was hoped that more people would continue to use facilities after being attracted by the campaign.

Appropriate publicity would be given to the event.

RECOMMENDED That during the week 15th to 21st May 1983 there be no charge for participation in a programmed fifties activity. (700) (DTS)

Leisure Services Committee

697. RECREATION FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

The Director of Technical Services reported on a scheme to provide leisure facilities for the unemployed. The scheme would involve all leisure activities and operate during off-peak periods i.e. from 9.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m. The charge for the unemployed would be 50p per session or activity but the facility could not be booked in advance. An identification card would be issued to all persons eligible for the scheme and the Department of Employment/DHSS had agreed to stamp the cards fortnightly when claimants called at their offices.

Members of staff would develop activities for the unemployed and encourage participation in all areas, e.g. arts and crafts, youth work etc. There would also be a member of staff available to provide coaching and instruction when necessary.

RECOMMENDED That the above scheme be introduced as soon as possible at a charge of 50p per session or activity. (21984) (DTS)

698. RECREATION FOR THE RETIRED

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Technical Services on a similar scheme to improve sports centre usage by encouraging retired persons to use leisure facilities during off-peak periods. The charge would be 50p per session or activity but the facility could not be booked in advance. All retired persons in the scheme would be given a membership card which would have to be produced at reception.

RECOMMENDED That the above scheme be introduced as soon as possible at a charge of 50p per session or activity. (21984) (DTS)

699. ROCHFORD FAIR, 1983

The Director of Technical Services reported on the arrangements for Rochford Fair which was programmed for Saturday, 23rd and Sunday, 24th July 1983 and would be held at Clements Hall Playing Fields.

The Saturday had been programmed as a quality horse show and this would most likely be supported by another small arena where local organisations would be invited to present displays and hold competitions. These arenas would also include stalls, sideshows, etc. For the evening an open air disco with a folk group and local band as added attractions was being considered. The Sunday would follow the same format as last year and, the main attraction would be Eddie Kydd, the motor cyclist stunt rider. (5745) (DTS)

Leisure Services Committee

700. CLEMENTS HALL SPORTS COMPLEX (Minute 604/82)

The Director of Technical Services circulated with the Agenda a very full and detailed report analysing the first three months that the Centre had been operating as a multipurpose sports facility.

Members were impressed with the smooth and efficient way in which Phase III had been brought into operation and the early success of the project as demonstrated by the public's use of the new facilities. This was made all the easier through the dedication and enthusiasm of the Centre's staff and the Committee asked that the staff be congratulated on their achievement. (6771) (DTS)

701. FREIGHT HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE - SCALE OF CHARGES

The Director of Finance reported that the new Freight House Community Centre was due to open on 29th January 1983. Many enquiries had been received regarding the hiring of facilities and it was therefore necessary to fix a scale of charges.

The charging periods were:-

Peak	~	Noon, Friday to Midnight, Sunday
Off-Peak	~	Monday to Noon, Friday.

The following scale of charges was proposed.-

<u>General Use</u>	<u>Peak</u> per hour	<u>Off-Peak</u> per hour	
Gt. Eastern Suite (main hall)	£10.00	£5.50	
Pullman Suite (room 2)	£ 9.00	£4.50	All Charges Exempt from V.A.T.
Carriage Room (room 3)	£ 8.00	£4.00	
Wagon Room)			
Lamp Room)	£ 2.60	£2.00	
Freight Room)			

Playschool/Playgroups

Morning Session	£6.50 per session
Afternoon Session	£5.00 per session

The Director of Technical Services mentioned that a visit was being arranged for Members prior to the opening day and the Committee noted a request that a member of the Minority Group be included on the Management Committee.

Leisure Services Committee

RECOMMENDED That the above scale of charges be adopted for Freight House. (DF & DTS) (435)

702. ROCHFORD BOWLS GREEN PAVILION AND USE BY ROCHFORD BOWLS CLUB

Note: Councillor W.H. Budge disclosed a pecuniary interest as a member of the above club and being invited to remain in the meeting took no part in the discussions or voting thereon.

The Director of Technical Services reported that the Council's Capital Programme for 1984/85 included provision of £45,000 for the replacement of the bowls pavilion at Rochford Bowls Green.

In the discussions with the Rochford Bowls Club on the charge to be made for their use of the rinks the Club had indicated an interest in being leased the Rochford Bowls Green and to assume responsibility for its development and maintenance. In this connection a local building contractor, who was a member of the club, had offered to provide a pre-cast concrete building for use as a bowls pavilion at a cost £10,000 whereas the value of the building was thought to be in the region of £20,000. The Club would require a loan to meet the cost of the building.

The funds for the Council project in the Capital Programme might therefore be re-allocated to enable the earlier provision of an artificial bowls surface at Clements Hall which would ultimately be developed as an indoor bowls centre. With the Club undertaking maintenance of the Rochford Green it would also allow the Council to improve the standards of maintenance of Freight House, Rochford Reservoir and the town centre.

It would be a condition of the lease that the Club permitted public participation in the use of the facilities.

Members appreciated the benefits arising from the arrangement but were concerned to preserve public use of the facilities throughout the period of the lease.

RECOMMENDED (1) That approval in principle be given to the Rochford Bowls Club being offered a lease of the Rochford Bowls Green for a suitable period to allow the new pavilion development and that the Club be responsible for such development and the total maintenance of the Green and surrounding area included in the lease on such terms to be agreed by the District Valuer.

(2) That the Club throughout the period of lease provide a facility for public participation.

(3) That the Finance and Personnel Committee be asked to consider a loan of £10,000 to the Rochford Bowls Club to enable them to carry out the new pavilion development. (871) (DTS, DLS & DF)

Leisure Services Committee

703. PRINCESS IDA PERFORMANCE

The Chief Executive and Director of Finance reported on the very successful performance of Princess Ida by the Rayleigh Operatic and Dramatic Society. The new Mill Hall stage and lighting facilities had been proved and justified and the Committee wished to encourage the Society to continue to use them for the three musical and two drama productions planned for each year. Additionally Members did not wish the Society to be out of pocket over the Gala Performance staged at the request of the Council to promote the enhanced facilities.

It was noted that the previous venue for the Society's production would have cost £250 but that standard charges at Mill Hall totalled £420. Whilst not departing from the Council's policy not to lower or waive charges, because of the special circumstances, the Committee thought it reasonable to recommend a grant equivalent to the difference.

RECOMMENDED (1) That the Rayleigh Operatic and Dramatic Society be requested to stage 5 productions at the Mill Hall, Rayleigh.

(2) That the Finance and Personnel Committee be requested to consider making a grant from the 1983/84 budget provision in the sum of £510 (reviewed annually in the light of charges generally).

(3) That the costs associated with the Gala Night at Mill Hall in the sum of £535 be met from 1982/83 Promotions Budget. (26646) (CE & DF)

704. CLEMENTS HALL SPORTS CENTRE - PHASE IV DEVELOPMENT

The Director of Technical Services reported that applications had been received from 23 companies of which 8 had been placed on the list of approved Contractors to tender for Phase IV development.

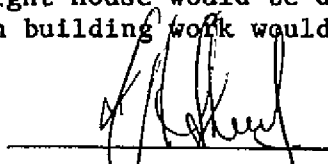
RECOMMENDED That tenders be invited from the Contractors named in the report. (6771) (DTS)

705. LEISURE PREMISES - LIQUOR LICENSING

The Vice-Chairman of the Committee reported that at the Rochford and District Licensing Committee on 1st December approval was given to a provisional licence for the bar serving the multi-functional hall in Phase IV of the Clements Hall Complex. Approval was also given to the transfer of the Park Sports Centre licence from Mr. M. Murphy to Mr. J. Foster, the Sports Centre Manager.

An application for a licence at Rayleigh Grange was adjourned to 5th January to enable discussions to take place with local residents and the application for a final licence for the Freight House would be dealt with at the 2nd February Session when building work would have been completed. (6771)

Chairman



Date

18TH JAN 1983

001037

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Development Services Committee

At a Meeting held on 7th December 1982. Present. Councillors R.D. Foster (Chairman), M.N. Anderson, T.H. Burt, Mrs. P. Cooke, B.A. Crick, T. Fawell, Mrs. P.E. Hawke, Mrs. E.M. Heath, Mrs. Jo Jones, M.J. Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, J.E. Nokes, R.A. Pearson, J.A. Sheaf, G.J. Skinner, C. Stephenson, and A.L. Tate.

Apologies: Councillors E.H. Adcock, A.J. Harvey, D.R. Helson, and D.C. Wood.

Visiting. Councillors Mrs. L.M.A. Campbell-Daley, L.K. Cope and E.E. Daley.

706. MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting of 21st October be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

707. MONITORING OF PERFORMANCE - MEETINGS OF 15TH JUNE, 6TH AND 16TH SEPTEMBER

The Committee were satisfied that all necessary action had been taken. Minutes 322, 327 and 525 were carried forward. (21212) (CE)

708. HACKNEY CARRIAGE PANEL

The Committee received the appended report of a meeting held on 9th October.

The Director of Legal Services reported that it was not legally possible to establish a temporary taxi rank in the Websters Way Car Park.

RECOMMENDED That the proposal for the extension of the existing rank in the High Street be pursued with the County Council and Essex Police.

Resolved that, with the exception of Recommendation 2 (2), the appended report and the recommendations contained therein be adopted. (897) (DLS)

709. LORRY CONTROLS

The Director of Technical Services reported on the reaction of the County Council to a Department of Transport Circular urging highway authorities to make more extensive use of their powers to control the routes that lorries are allowed to use.

Members drew attention to specific problems of lorry routing in the District, particularly along Brays Lane, Canewdon which, although only informally adopted as a lorry route, had to be accepted as the best available. (45)

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Development Services Committee

710. UNADOPTED FOOTPATHS

The Director of Technical Services reported that there were a number of strips of land throughout the District which were regularly used as paths but which were neither public footpaths nor public rights of way. Such "paths" were generally unsurfaced and lacked basic routine maintenance.

In order to ascertain if the Council should undertake to maintain such paths under Section 50 of the Highways Act 1980, a survey was to be made in 1983/84 to determine the exact numbers, lengths and conditions of the paths involved.

RECOMMENDED (1) That £2,000 be provided in the 1983/84 Estimates for a survey of footpaths not subject to other estimate provision.

(2) That the Director of Technical Services negotiate with the County Council as to the scheme generally and to acceptance of particular paths to enable the Section 50 procedure to be adopted. (46) (DTS)

711. DIVERSION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATHS 4 AND 7 (RAYLEIGH) (Minute 351/82)

The Director of Legal Services reported that detailed planning consent had been issued for the layout of sports pitches etc., and that procedural steps could now be taken to divert the two public rights of way.

It was proposed to divert Footpath 4 along the southern and eastern boundary of the playing field extension and Footpath 7 to a line parallel with the northern boundary of the playing field extension.

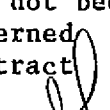
RECOMMENDED That, in accordance with Section 210 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, an Order be made diverting parts of Public Footpaths 4 and 7 (Rayleigh) along the lines now indicated. (23162) (DLS)

712. CAPITAL HIGHWAYS SCHEMES - UNDER £50,000

The Director of Technical Services set out on the Agenda the various minor improvement schemes the County Council had recently considered for the District. It was noted that most of the schemes had been requested either by the District or by Parish Councils.

Concern was expressed at the deferment yet again of the provision of a footway along Rectory Road from Ironwell Lane to opposite No. 384 and it was felt that consideration should be given to the imposition of speed restrictions along this stretch of road.

With regard to proposed improvements at Weir Pond Corner, Barling Magna, a local Member said that the work had not been asked for by the Parish Council who were indeed concerned that such improvements were unnecessary and would detract from the rural character of the area.



Development Services Committee

RECOMMENDED That the proposals be noted and the above comments made to the County Council. (45 & 11835) (DTS)

713. PROPOSED EXTENSION AND VARIATION OF WAITING RESTRICTIONS - HOCKLEY AND HAWKWELL

The Director of Technical Services set out on the Agenda the amendments the County Council were considering making.

Concern was expressed at the proposed relaxation of restrictions at Seddons Walk, Hockley where the District Council had previously asked for restrictions because parked cars had blocked the way for emergency services.

RECOMMENDED That, subject to a re-appraisal of Seddons Walk, Hockley, the County Council be advised that this authority has no objection to the proposals as reported. (933) (DTS)

714. ASHINGDON ROAD CAR PARK (Minute 624/82)

The Director of Technical Services reported that the delay caused by land acquisition difficulties had enabled a re-evaluation of the scheme at Oxford Parade shops. The original proposal had been for a temporary construction car park with 19 spaces and permanent provision for 6 parking spaces outside the shops at a tender price of £15,000.

The carriageway serving the shops was in urgent need of repair including new drainage and an extended footpath to Ashington Road and the grassed area outside the shops, used for parking, was in an unsightly condition. With the provision of additional parking, the grassed area would be better replaced by a shrub area. The cost of the above works, including the car parking, was estimated at £36,000 of which £21,000 was provided in the 1982/83 Capital Estimates. Because of the land acquisition difficulties it was now unlikely that the scheme could be completed in the current financial year.

RECOMMENDED That £36,000 be provided in the 1983/84 Capital Estimates for the car parking scheme at Oxford Parade. (18957/A) (DTS)

715. ADDITIONAL OPEN-AIR MARKETS - ROCHFORD DISTRICT

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Town Planning and Director of Legal Services on enquiries about markets at the Ferry Road/Pooles Lane Car Park, Hullbridge, the Ashington Memorial Hall Car Park, Rayleigh Market and a Sunday Market at Back Lane Car Park.

Members considered that markets had an undesirable effect particularly on existing shopkeepers. They made no contribution to the General Rate of the District and in a time of recession it was felt that further markets would create unnecessary competition in an area which had already been hit by the hypermarkets of the adjoining areas.

001040

Development Services Committee

With regard to Hullbridge, the Committee appreciated the concern of the residents and whilst they could not justify refusal on the grounds of the potential of the land for housing they felt that it would be wrong to tie up the future of the land bearing in mind the scope of Hullbridge for leisure development and the heavy use of the car park in the summer months by yachtsmen. The Committee could not support a market on the car park.

There was no support at all for a Sunday market at Back Lane Car Park.

See Minute
758

RECOMMENDED That no further action be taken on proposals to provide additional markets at Hullbridge, Ashingdon, Rayleigh or Rochford. (884) (DTP)

716. COMPUTERISATION OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL SYSTEMS

The Committee noted a report of the Director of Town Planning and the Computer Manager on the computerisation of administration in the Directorate of Town Planning which, by allowing access to information not hitherto easily available, would improve performance, accountability and efficiency. (158)

717. DISTRICT PLAN WORKING PARTY

The Committee noted the appended report of a meeting held on 25th October 1982.

Resolved that the report be adopted.

718. ESSEX COAST PROTECTION SUBJECT PLAN

RECOMMENDED That the appended report and the recommendation contained therein be adopted.

719. WICKFORD DISTRICT PLAN (Minute 717/81)

The Director of Town Planning reported that a copy of the deposited plan had been received for comment.

The Committee had previously objected to policies in the draft plan which would allow the erection of new houses (including replacements) in Green Belt areas, including some plotlands, in conflict with Structure Plan Policy S9.

Such policies were still contained in the deposited plan and it was noted that the Department of the Environment had lodged a formal objection against the policies, details of which were set out on the Agenda.

RECOMMENDED That the Basildon District Council be informed that this Council greatly regrets the continued inclusion in the Wickford District Plan of policies permitting infilling

Development Services Committee

and replacement of dwellings in Green Belt areas, including plotlands, despite representations to the contrary at the draft plan stage but does not wish to make a formal objection thereto. (TP 25E) (DTP)

720. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT SHOT FARM, WICKFORD (Minute 618/82)

The Director of Town Planning reported that Basildon District Council had consulted this authority on application BAS/1499/82 for 40 acres of residential development. The site covered part of the land already the subject of appeals to be heard on 11th January 1983. The new application had been called in by the Secretary of State and would be dealt with at the forthcoming Inquiry.

RECOMMENDED That the Basildon District Council be informed that this Council objects to application BAS/1499/82 on the following grounds.-

1. The site is outside any area allocated for development and is within the Metropolitan Green Belt in the Approved Review Development Plan.
2. The site does not form a logical or desirable planned extension to the township of Wickford and would intrude undesirably into the open area of Green Belt between, Wickford and Rayleigh which Green Belt provides visual relief between the townships and prevents their coalescence.
3. The site is visually prominent, particularly when viewed from the high ground at Rawreth to the east and has become more exposed with the realignment of the A129 and construction of the Battlesbridge by-pass.
4. The proposals conflict with the Local Plan for Wickford which has recently been published.
5. No provision is made for landscaping the eastern boundaries of the site. (TP 25E) (DTP)

721. IMPACT OF M25 MOTORWAY - REPORT BY THE STANDING CONFERENCE ON LONDON AND SOUTH-EAST REGIONAL PLANNING (Minute 617/81)

RECOMMENDED That the appended report and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

722. WAITING RESTRICTIONS - MEADOW WAY AND SPA CLOSE, HOCKLEY (Minute 619/82)

The local Ward Member reported little support from residents for waiting restrictions in these roads. It was however suggested that restrictions could usefully be extended to the Spa Road junction with Meadow Way.

RECOMMENDED That the matter be raised with the County Council. (45) (DTS)

Development Services Committee

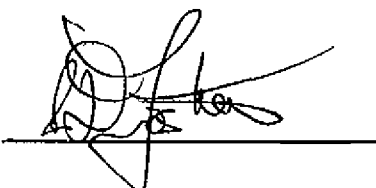
723. MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

The Director of Legal Services reported that a meeting was to be held at County Hall on 14th December to discuss how the resources available for the management and protection of public rights of way could best be applied.

The County Council had suggested the appointment of one Member and one officer but, in view of the importance of footpaths and bridleways for leisure in Rochford it was felt that the County Council should be asked to accept two Member representatives.

RECOMMENDED That the Chairman of the Development Services Committee or his nominee and Councillor J.A. Sheaf and the Director of Legal Services be appointed as the Council's representatives. (45) (DLS)

Chairman



Date

20.1.83

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 7TH DECEMBER 1982

REPORT NO. 2 OF THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE PANEL

At a meeting held on 9th November 1982. Present:-
Councillors A.L. Tate (Chairman), Mrs. P. Cooke, M.J. Jones
and D.C. Wood.

Apologies: Councillors R.D. Foster, Mrs. Jo Jones and
C. Stephenson.

2. RAYLEIGH TAXI RANKS (Minute 572/82)


The Director of Legal Services and Mr. Clark reported that following the decision to appoint the temporary taxi stand at the junction of Bellingham Lane as a formal rank for six taxis and to abandon the proposals for the appointment of a rank in the High Street by Berry's Arcade, discussions had been held with representatives of the Rayleigh Taxi Drivers as to any other locations in the Rayleigh central area where additional taxi rank facilities might be provided.

The Drivers representatives had indicated that ideally they required a rank for 14 taxis at a single location. It was explained to them that the only possibility would be to extend the existing rank by re-aligning the lane markings and in addition to set back the kerb line at the opposite end of the rank to Bellingham Lane. Both alternatives had been canvassed unsuccessfully with the Highway Authority in the past but as no alternatives existed, the District Council had been asked to raise the matter with the Highway Authority again.

The drivers were concerned that implementation of the formal rank would lead to operational difficulties as the Police would be restricting the use of the rank to 6 taxis only and no official arrangement existed for taxis to queue nearby while waiting for space on the formal rank. They asked, therefore, that while the fresh approaches were made to the Highway Authority, whether temporary rank facilities could be provided in Websters Way Car Park.

Taxi provision in the car park was suggested some years ago, although this was not acceptable to the taxi drivers at the time. Whilst the drivers were now willing to use such a facility temporarily, it might be that this proposal would provide a long term solution to this problem although further investigation was necessary.

The Panel noted that control of the Council's car parks was a matter for the Finance & Personnel Committee and that if the Websters Way proposal was to be pursued, it would be necessary to seek their concurrence.



RECOMMENDED (1) That fresh approaches be made to the Highway Authority with regard to the realignment of the lane markings and/or setting back of the kerb line in order to extend the formal rank.

(2) That further consideration be given to the provision of a temporary rank in Websters Way Car Park.

3. TRANSFER OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCES

Resolved that approval be given to the following transfer of licences:-


- (a) Licence (Plate) No. 9 from Mr. T.F. Von Ranken to Mr. P. Richmond
- (b) Licence (Plate) No. 38 from Mr. B.N. Bettell to Mr. A. Davis.
- (c) Licence (Plate) No. 27 from Mr. J. Fagence to Mr. K. Mortis.

4. APPOINTMENT OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Resolved that with effect from 3rd January, 1983 John J. Corfield (Chief Trading Standards Officer) and John R. Muzalewski (Deputy Chief Trading Standards Officer) of the Southend Borough Council be appointed as authorised officers of this Council for the purposes of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing.

5. HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER'S LICENCE NO. 186

The Panel noted a report on this driver.



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE 7TH DECEMBER 1982

Report of the District Plan Working Party

At a meeting held on 25th October, 1982. Present.-
Councillors R.D. Foster (Chairman), L.K. Cope, T. Fawell,
Mrs. Jo Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, J.E. Nokes,
R.A. Pearson and D.C. Wood.

Apologies: Councillor A.J. Harvey.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN.

Resolved that Councillor R.D. Foster be appointed Chairman of the Working Party.

2. TITLE OF THE WORKING PARTY (Minute 480/82)

Members were of the opinion that, although constituted as the Structure Plan Working Party, the title should reflect its work more accurately.

Resolved that the title be "The District Plan Working Party".

3. THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT PLAN

The Director of Town Planning reminded Members of the approved Forward Plan Programme giving, inter alia, a target date of July 1983 for preparation of the District Plan. In modifying the Draft Essex Structure Plan to call for an additional 750 housing units in the District, the Secretary of State had made plain that the extra sites were "to provide some flexibility in meeting housing needs in the South-east policy area, for Southend has reached the limit of its potential for development."

The Director was of the view that the allocation should not be a simple target but used to give flexibility and to achieve positive planning ends, i.e. to satisfy local needs, provide community benefit, strengthen and support other policies and solve local planning problems. Only some sites could meet all these criteria but those selected should satisfy most of them if the imposed duty was to be turned to any advantage.

The selection of the sites was the keystone of the District Plan because e.g. Green Belt boundaries could not be drawn or industrial sites identified until housing sites were allocated.

The Working Party gave preliminary consideration to a number of sites, rejecting some but concluding that it was essential for proper judgement that Members should inspect each location.

Resolved that the Director of Town Planning prepare a programme of site inspections for Members. (158)(DTP)

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001046

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Development Services Committee - 7th December, 1982.

Report of the Director of Town Planning.

Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan.

The County Council has made available for public deposit the Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan which defines the precise limits of the area to which the Coastal Protection Policy (Structure Plan Policy NR 18) will apply. This policy replaces the Interim Coastal Protection Policy which was adopted in 1966 in response to Government concern about the undeveloped coastline, and which remains in force until formal adoption of this Subject Plan. The interim policy applied Metropolitan Green Belt policy to the coastal areas with a proviso that even recreational development would not automatically be acceptable. The boundaries were drawn too generously (up to 5 miles inland) and the interim policy had not been particularly successful in preventing coastal recreational development on appeal.

The Structure Plan presented an opportunity to revise the policy area boundary and incorporate the coastal policy within the statutory development plan system. The Coastal Protection Policy is now identified as a proposal in the Subject Plan:-

"The County Council's Coastal Protection Policy states:-

"There shall be the most stringent restrictions on development on the rural and undeveloped coastline outside built-up areas and any development which is exceptionally permitted shall not adversely affect the open and rural character or wildlife."

The Coastal Protection Policy shall be applied to that precise area shown on the proposals map of this Subject Plan. This area shall be known as the Coastal Protection Belt. "



The new boundary was drawn from first principles, taking into account factors such as nature conservation, landscape features and views of the coast. Urban coast, larger towns, petro-chemical installations and other significant areas of land committed for development on existing plans have been excluded from the Coastal Protection Belt. Developed land which remains predominantly open, e.g. mineral workings or landfill operations has been included in the Coastal Protection Belt. Proposals for new development within the Coastal Protection Belt over and above permitted development limits will be considered in the context of the Coastal Protection Policy.

Whilst the area shown on the proposals map is a reflection of the value of the coast both as landscape and for wildlife, it must be remembered that the rural coast is considered as a special resource in its own right and therefore requiring protection.

Relationship with Other Plans.

The Coastal Protection Belt overlaps with rural areas policy in North and Mid-Essex, and with green belt policy in South Essex, including Rochford District. These policies are included as an Appendix to the Subject Plan. Activities which are normally acceptable in the Green Belt, including recreation, may well be inappropriate in the Coastal Protection Belt, and development which may be appropriate in rural areas could damage the special character of the open coast.

The Subject Plan is closely related to the supplementary planning guidance on Coastal Water Recreation in Essex which examines the opportunities for future recreational development. This document will be published at a later date.

There will also be an overlap with the Countryside Conservation Plan and the Minerals Subject Plan prepared by the County Council, and various local plans prepared by the Districts. The County Council expects the Coastal Protection Boundary to endure largely unaltered over a long period of time, with only minor changes proposed in District Councils' Local Plans.



Implementation will be through the development control process, but the County Council also intends to undertake a project to establish the likely impact of development and activity on the coast and wildlife. The effects of water recreational development on the structure and ecology of the coast will be closely monitored and the information gained should increase understanding of the dangers of various pressures exerted on the rural coast.

Monitoring will be undertaken by the County Council through their Development Progress System. The Plan concludes that its implementation will not impose any additional staffing or capital costs on either the District and Borough Councils or the County Councils.

The published plan is essentially the same as the Draft Plan which was considered by the Development Services Committee on 9th June, 1981. The only changes are as follows:-

1. The Coastal Protection Policy is now identified as a proposal.
2. The boundary has undergone minor revision, although no changes are made to the boundary within Rochford District. The main revisions are the inclusion of Hythe Marshes, south of Colchester, and Bowers and Pitsea Marshes in Basildon District.

Appendices to the plan show the relationship of the Plan to other approved Local Plans and the various relevant Structure Plan policies relating to the green belt, rural areas, farmland, wildlife habitats, landscape and special landscape areas.

RECOMMENDED: That the County Council be informed that this Council has no objections to the Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan and that the Plan will be incorporated into the Rochford District Plan and adopted for the purposes of development control. (TP. 51)



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 7TH DECEMBER, 1982REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TOWN PLANNINGTHE IMPACT OF THE M.25 MOTORWAY - REPORT BY THE STANDING CONFERENCE
ON LONDON AND SOUTH-EAST REGIONAL PLANNING (Minute 617/81)

At the Meeting of this Committee on the 27th October, 1981, consideration was given to a study by the Standing Conference entitled "Commuting in South East England". One of the recommendations of the Committee on this report was that Standing Conference should undertake a detailed study on the implications of the M.25 i.e. the motorway ring around London. This study has now been completed and considers the possible planning effects especially for industry and commerce consequent upon the completion within the next 5 years of the M.25.

The initial impact of this new road is likely to be felt in Essex in the near future, when the section through the County is completed before the Summer of next year. Members' views are therefore requested on the M.25 report. The implications of the new Motorway are summarised below, together with some initial comments which it is hoped can provide the Council's response to Standing Conference.

There can be no doubt that the M.25 will bring improvements in communications in and around London, particularly to the relatively inaccessible and disadvantaged areas east of London. With the completion of the section through Essex during 1983, there will be continuous Motorway via the Dartford Tunnel between the A.1 at South Mimms (west of Potters Bar) and the A.20/M.20 at Swanley in Kent. The effect of this will be to provide a continuous dual carriageway standard road from within the Rochford District to the A.2 and M.20/A.20 in Kent to the M.11, A.10 and A.1 in West Essex and Hertfordshire, and also, via the A.6 and M.10 to the M.1 Motorway in the vicinity of Hemel Hempstead.

However allied to this substantial improvement in the transportation network around London, is the fact that the M.25 will present economic opportunities, and be a focus for development pressures particularly in the vicinity of the many junctions of the M.25 linking with the existing major roads of the region. Standing Conference recognises that such pressures for development will be strong, and since the Motorway will run almost entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt, special efforts should be made to accommodate such pressures in suitable locations, normally within Greater London itself or in existing major centres within or on the outer limits of the Green Belt, such as Southend, Basildon and Chelmsford. Current planning policy seeks to achieve this and the Standing Conference Report shows that there is a considerable degree of existing commitment to industry warehousing, offices and shopping particularly within South Essex and in Chelmsford Borough.

Nevertheless, it must be expected that there will be considerable development pressures within the immediate vicinity of the Motorway itself, and its feeder radial routes. In particular, pressure is likely to arise for industrial, warehouse and freestanding retail developments close to M.25 junctions with the main radial roads, the majority of which already lie within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Although such development pressures will be somewhat removed from the Rochford District, it should be noted that such pressures will occur within the Green Belt, and Standing Conference is of the opinion that the Green Belt is not only

particularly vulnerable along the main transport corridors, but that erosion here could undermine the confidence in the permanence of Green Belt planning, even in other less vulnerable areas.

The channelling of development pressures to inner London and other suitable areas of planned expansion in existing major settlements in accordance with approved planning policies therefore assumes greater importance not only to protect the Green Belt within the immediate vicinity of the M.25 but also to support the entire concept of the Green Belt.


There is no doubt that with the completion of the M.25 there will be increased potential for industry and commerce in the Rochford District, and other Towns relatively remote from the Motorway, to benefit from the improvements in communications to and around London. To realise this potential benefit, it will be of vital importance to ensure a high standard of feeder link roads to the Motorway, in order that these Towns may share fully in the opportunities which the new road may bring, and are not to be disadvantaged in comparison with other areas such as Basildon, which are closer to the M.25. In this respect as far as Rochford District is concerned, the current lack of investment in and improvements to the A.127 and the A.13 east of the Orsett Cock, is of some concern. The A.127 offers the greatest potential for the District except for some poor junctions notably at Rayleigh Weir and at the Fortune of War, Laindon, where lack of traffic capacity causes delay at peak times. There is a growing need for improvements which will make the route more commodious and safer.

It is therefore considered that the following conclusions should be forwarded to the Standing Conference and Essex County Council as this Council's response to the M.25 Impact Study:-

RECOMMENDED (1) That development pressures resulting from the M.25 should be directed towards the centres of planned expansion in accordance with the Essex Structure Plan, and restraint policies should be maintained elsewhere, particularly with regard to the preservation of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

(2) That it is essential if Rochford and neighbouring Districts are to benefit fully from the opportunities presented by the construction of the M.25, that adequate high standard feeder link roads to it are provided, with a high priority being given to improvements to the A.127 and A.13, particularly the grade separation of junctions including Rayleigh Weir.

(3) That Standing Conference should continue to examine the effects of the Motorway on development and its location, and the impact of the M.25. should form a part of the Structure Plan monitoring exercise to be carried out by the Essex County Council.



ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee

At a Meeting held on 9th December, 1982. Present:

Councillors J.A. Gibson (Chairman), R.H. Boyd, W.H. Budge, T.H. Burt, Mrs. L.M.A. Campbell-Daley, E.E. Daley, T. Fawell, R.D. Foster, A.J. Harvey, D.R. Helson, P.J. Himfen, R.H. Holman, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, Mrs. J.M. Murison, J.E. Nokes, R.T. Stephens, A.L. Tate, J.P. Taylor, T.J. Warner, E.S. Whitworth and D.C. Wood.

Visiting: Councillor L.K. Cope.

724. MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th October, 1982 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

725. MONITORING OF PERFORMANCE - MEETINGS OF 17TH JUNE AND 21ST SEPTEMBER

The Committee were satisfied that all necessary action had been taken. (21210)

726. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Committee noted the appended report of the Director of Finance.

RECOMMENDED That the action of the Director of Finance in paying the accounts detailed in paragraph 1 of his report be confirmed.

727. SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL ESTIMATES -

- (a) Site Investigation - School Site, Great Wakering - Schemes for the Provision of 2 Bedroomed Council Dwellings (Minute 580(5)/82)

RECOMMENDED That a supplementary capital estimate in the sum of £2,000 be approved. (7767) (DF)

- (b) Fencing, Nobles Green Culvert (Minute 676(2)/82)

RECOMMENDED That a supplementary capital estimate in the sum of £2,000 be approved. (715) (DF)

728. MANPOWER STATEMENT (Minute 534/82)

The Committee noted the appended report of the Chief Executive.

Members referred to the half-yearly report on manpower expenditure submitted to the last Meeting of the Committee and the confusion arising from the use of different staff groupings and headings from the present report. It was

Finance and Personnel

also suggested that in future, the two reports should be submitted together.

Resolved that the "establishment" in the "recreation, parks and baths" service be amended to read "109" and the total of that column be amended to "407".

RECOMMENDED That on future occasions the half-yearly report on Manpower expenditure be submitted at the same time as the Chief Executive's Quarterly Manpower Statement and the headings on each be amended to be comparable. (5145) (CE)

729. JOINT WORKS AND SAFETY PANEL (Minute 661/82)

The Committee received the appended report of a Meeting held on 3rd November, 1982.

RECOMMENDED That the report and recommendations contained therein be adopted. (CE)


730. EMPLOYMENT, INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT - INITIATIVE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY (Minute 340/82)

The Committee received the appended report of the Director of Finance. It was felt that it would be wrong to consider the problems of Rochford in isolation from the problems of other areas and that Authorities should not be competing to attract industries away from each other.

South-East Essex had the highest unemployment in South East England and Members considered that priority should be given to aiding existing industry rather than attracting new. The Committee noted the deliberate actions of some firms to avoid the burden of rates on empty premises. Whilst the Committee would not wish to see a reduction in the domestic rate relief it did feel that there was room for improvement in the system to aid industry.

Appreciating that the County Council were already actively involved in promoting industry and employment, the Committee noted that there was little they could do alone and asked for further information and discussions with other Authorities and industries. Meetings had already been held with the County Council and would continue as and when appropriate.

The Director of Finance was also pleased to report that the County Council had agreed to contribute two thirds of the cost of the Matchbox loan. Members thought that the cost effectiveness of this local authority initiative was as high as anything ever achieved, or likely to be achieved, in Rochford.

 RECOMMENDED (1) That the report be noted and the matter be further investigated, including discussions with other Authorities and industry as appropriate.

(2) That the possibility of organising a Seminar on the subject be considered. (28025) (CE & DF)

Finance and Personnel

731. CONDITIONS OF CONCESSIONARY BUS/RAIL PASSES

The Director of Finance reported that certain ladies over the age of 60 were being excluded from applying for a concessionary bus/rail pass because their husbands were under 65 years old and were not in receipt of State Retirement Pension.

RECOMMENDED That condition 2 of the Council's scheme be amended as follows:-

"Men aged 65 and over or women aged 60 and over who are in receipt of Rate/Rent Rebate, Supplementary or other housing benefits." (4486) (DF)

732. ALARM SYSTEMS TO AGED PERSONS SCHEMES (Minute 592/82)

RECOMMENDED That the following virement be approved:-

<u>From</u>	<u>to</u>	<u>Amount</u>
House Purchase	Aged Persons Alarm	£50,000
Loans	Schemes	

(313) (DF)

733. MEALS-ON-WHEELS (Minute 444/81)

The Director of Finance reported that the County Council was to increase the grant from 30p to 32p per meal. At the same time, the County Social Services Department were to increase the cost of meals supplied by Swayne Court from 55p to 75p per meal and based on the current meal charge of 35p it was estimated that this would increase expenditure in the current financial year by £570 and by £2,420 in a full year.

In order to avoid an overspend in the current year, an increase of 5p per meal would be necessary, to take effect from 4th January, 1983.

The Committee noted that the Rochford Old People's Welfare Committee were providing a limited Meals-on-Wheels service in Hockley, Hawkwell and Ashingdon on Christmas Day and congratulated the persons responsible.

In view of the large increase in the price now proposed by Swayne Court, Members considered that the Director should investigate, as a priority, alternative means for the provision of meals - either by other outside sources or direct by the Council itself from Clements Hall or Mill Hall.

RECOMMENDED (1) That the Director of Finance be authorised to recommend to the Area Organisers that the charge to recipients of meals be increased from 35p to 40p per meal with effect from 4th January, 1983.

*See Minute
758*

L. Cole

Finance and Personnel

(2) That the Director of Finance investigate alternative means for the provision of meals and report further thereon. (5144) (DF)

734. THE APPROACH CAR PARK

The Director of Technical Services reported on improvement works necessary to the above car park to enable more effective management.

Members demurred at the cost of these improvements and questioned the viability of a car park at this location.

RECOMMENDED That the Director of Technical Services report further on improvement works to the above car park, giving details of its viability as such, costings and the suggested scheme. (6119) (DTS)

735. SEASON TICKETS - THE APPROACH CAR PARK

The Director of Technical Services reported a scheme to introduce weekly season tickets for the above car park to counteract a steady decline in the number of users.

Members questioned the effective management of the car park and, as with the previous item, were concerned at the costs associated with the introduction of such a scheme. They asked that the weekly tickets only be introduced, the estimates for publicity and improvement works to the attendant's hut to be discussed in the further report to be submitted in respect of Minute 734 above.


RECOMMENDED (1) That the Council undertakes the issue of weekly season tickets at The Approach Car Park, Rayleigh.

(2) That the charge for such a ticket be set at £1.75 including V.A.T. based on the current car parking charges.

(3) That the Director of Technical Services be authorised to arrange to sell such tickets direct to the public at the car park on Monday mornings between 6.30 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. or at such other times as he considers necessary.

(4) That the Director of Technical Services be authorised to introduce the scheme as soon as the necessary arrangements have been completed. (6119) (DTS)

Chairman



Date

27.1.88

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 9th DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. Accounts Paid

Accounts amounting to £5,373,399.05 were paid during October 1982. The Committee's confirmation of payment is requested.

2. Capital and Revenue Estimates 1982/83

a) Expenditure Control 1982/83

To review the Capital Expenditure to date with the planned expenditure for the year.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 1982/83

Committee	Estimate 1982/83	Estimate to 31/10/82	Actual to 31/10/82	Comparison of Actual to Estimate to 31/10/82	
	£	£	£	£	%

Planning Services
Conservation Grants

50,000	29,000	11,299	17,701-	39
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50,000	29,000	11,299	17,701-	39
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FINANCE & PERSONNEL

House Purchase Loan	400,000	233,333	54,700	178,633-	14
Car Parks	18,000	500	202	298-	40
Loans to Outside Bodies	25,000	25,000	23,488	1,512-	94
Grants to Outside Bodies	1,000	-	-	-	-
Vehicle Plant & Equip.	98,000	98,000	97,784	216-	100
Staff Car Loans	60,000	35,000	20,916	14,084-	60

602,000	391,833	197,090	194,743-	50
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Health & Housing

Public Conveniences	11,000	-	-	-	-
Sewerage General	20,000	5,000	2,412	2,588-	48
Provisions of New Dwellings	551,000	144,250	51,375	92,875-	36
Improvements & Repairs	256,000	79,483	76,535	2,948-	96
Land	80,000	-	-	-	-
Improvement Grants *	100,000	58,333	83,682	25,349+	143
Home Insulation Grants	25,000	14,583	16,909	2,326+	116
Delayed Schemes	-	-	14,603	14,603+	-

1,043,000	301,649	245,516	56,133-	81
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* Supplementary Estimate Approved £60,000 (Minute 530/82)

601056

Committee	Estimate 1982/83	Estimate to 31/10/82	Actual to 31/10/82	Comparison of Actual to Estimate to 31/10/82	
	£	£	£	£	%
<u>Leisure Services</u>					
Sports Halls & Swim Pools	364,000	284,000	291,422	7,422+	103
Community Centre	308,000	161,000	156,053	4,947-	97
* Public Halls	92,000	34,000	43,391	9,391+	128
	764,000	479,000	490,866	11,866+	102
* Supplementary Estimate Approved £10,000 (Minute 338/82)					
<u>Policy & Resources</u>					
Rochford Computer Centre	84,000	49,000	67,499	18,499+	137
	84,000	49,000	67,499	18,499+	137
<u>Development Services</u>					
Land & Property Purchase	140,000	81,667	43,527	38,140-	53
Highways General	6,000	-	-	-	-
	146,000	81,667	43,527	38,140-	53
Grand Total all Committees	2,689,000	1,332,149	1,055,797	276,352-	79

b)	<u>Supplementary Estimates Approved</u>	<u>Capital</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Minute Ref</u>
	Mill Hall alterations	10,000	-	338/82
	Leisure Directorate	-	14,100	455/82
	Street lighting - Rayleigh High Street	5,000	-	531/82
	Meals on Wheels - Rayleigh	-	2,400	537/82
	Restoration - Dutch Cottage	33,000	-	550/82
	Improvement Grants	60,000	-	530/82
	Christmas Lights - Rayleigh High Street.	-	5,000	661/82

3. Insurance

a) Claims

To report the claims made, settled and outstanding. There have been 12 claims made and 19 claims settled since the last report.

001057

<u>Risk</u>	<u>Total No. of Claims</u>	<u>Settled Claims</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Outstanding Claims</u>
Motor Vehicle	4	8	£2081.47	20
Third Party	8	3	£ 181.73	47
Other	-	8	£1067.10	11

b) Accidents to Motor Vehicles

To report the accident involving Council Vehicles which have been notified to the Insurance Company since the last report.

<u>Date of Accident</u>	<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Estimated amount of damage</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
14.10.82	GVX 470T	£40	Council freighter hit by overtaking T.P. vehicle.
17. 9.82	LPB 605P	Nil to Council vehicle T.P. unknown.	Alleged that Council freighter hit parked T.P. vehicle.
6. 7.82	UPD 314X	Nil to Council vehicle T.P. unknown.	Council freighter struck guttering whilst reversing.
9.11.82	UPD 314X	Nil to Council vehicle T.P. unknown.	Council freighter struck parked car whilst reversing in car park r/o shops.

4. Rating & Valuation

(a) Rateable Value

The rateable value of the district has remained unchanged at £10,296,959 since the last meeting of the Committee.

(b) Rate Recovery, Magistrates Court and Bailiff Action

To report the number of cases for the recovery of the General Rate taken up to 26th November 1982.

<u>No. of Summonses</u>	<u>No. of Distress Warrants obtained</u>	<u>No. of Distress Warrant passed to to Bailiff</u>	<u>No. of Applications for Committals Outstanding</u>
798	472	122	3

(c) Collection of General Rates for period to 19th November 1982

<u>1982/83</u>		<u>1981/82</u>	
<u>Total Collected £</u>	<u>% of Rate Billing Debit</u>	<u>Total Collected £</u>	<u>% of Rate Billing Debit</u>
9,246,341	70%	8,036,221	71%

(d) Rate Rebates Granted 1982/1983

As a result of the Government's pension increases from 22nd November 1982 and the amendments to the needs allowances all rate rebates are being recalculated at the present time.

The statistics from the recalculations will be reported to the next Committee meeting.

(e) Rent Rebates & Allowances Granted 1982/1983

As with rate rebates a recalculation is necessary to all rent rebates and allowances.

The statistics, together with details of the cases transferred from the DHSS under the new Housing Benefit regulations will be reported to the next Committee meeting.

5. Income

To report the income received (excluding General Rates) over the main heads.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Income 1.4.82 to 31.10.82</u>
	£
General	1,331,574
House Purchase Loans	1,070,639
Housing Rents	1,594,245
Government Grants	2,722,958
Invested Loans Repaid - Principal	4,070,000
- Interest	3,216
Loans Raised	21,620,350
	<hr/>
	£32,412,982
	<hr/>

6. Loans Pool

(a) Loans Pool Transactions

Interest rates have continued to ease since the last Committee report and it is anticipated that Funding, i.e. longer-term borrowing, will become a viable alternative to short-term temporary loans that have been the recent trend within the statutory limits. In particular, Public Works Loans Board Funds have been very competitive with rates in the commercial sector and the possibility of realising the Council's full allowance from the PWLB is under review.

(b) Loans Held in Loans Pool as at 18th November 1982

	<u>£</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Average Rate of Interest</u>
<u>MORTGAGE</u>			
PWLB	10,680,565	47.79	10.68
Other	261,225	1.17	5.93

BONDS

Mortgage	5,750,000	25.73	13.10
Local	2,191,400	9.81	13.15

<u>STOCK</u>	1,000,000	4.48	12.00
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<u>TEMPORARY</u>	2,464,000	11.02	9.88
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	<u>£22,347,190</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>11.46</u>
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7. Assisted Car Purchase Loan Scheme

In accordance with Minute 200/74 the following Car Purchase Loans have been approved since the last Committee meeting and are reported for information:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Amount</u> £
A.J. Meredith	Environmental Health Officer	1,575.36
P.C. Clark	Planning Assistant	1,880.00

8. Stores Stocktaking

In accordance with Minute 213/82 the results of the continuous stocktaking carried out by the Director of Technical Services for the second quarter of the current Financial Year are reported below:-

No. of items checked	201
No. in surplus	35
No. in deficit	17
Variances as a % of total cover	25.87%

Of the 52 items having a difference between actual and expected levels, 42 (80.8%) had a value of £15 or less.

The three largest surpluses and deficiencies were:-

<u>Surpluses</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Value</u> £ p
Glass pieces	20 packets	134.20
Hardwood w/cills	14 metres	70.70
Plywood	9 square metres	57.42

Deficiencies

Insulation board	9 square metres	27.90
Prepacked aggregate	12 lbs	19.68
2" x 2" pp wood	16 metres	11.84

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 9TH DECEMBER, 1982

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Manpower Statement

In accordance with Minute 524/81 details of the Council's manpower levels, incorporating the Quarterly Joint Manpower Watch Figures for the quarter ending 12th September, 1982 are attached.

The following notes relate to the tables:-

1. Increase in establishment due to the opening of Clements Hall Phase III and addition of Bar and Cafeteria - full time, part time and casual staff.
2. One extra post - due to Unified Housing Benefits (Minute 341/82 refers).
3. Transfer of one post between departments.

Service	Full-time Inpost			Part-time Inpost			Total Inpost	Changes in		Establishment	Notes Ref.
	Non-Manual	Manual	Total	Non-Manual	Manual	Total		Prev. Quarter	Total Inpost Year		
Construction	-	11	11	-	-	-	11	-	-7	12	1
Recreation, Parks & Baths	21	43	64	14	31	45	109	+16	+21	132	
Environmental Health	14	6	20	-	-	-	20	-1	-1	21	
Refuse Collection	1	34	35	-	1	1	36	-1	+1	37	
Housing Department	31	-	31	7	-	7	38	+1	-1	38	
Town & Country Planning	29	-	29	-	-	-	29	+1	-	29	
Central Services:											
Chief Executive	7	-	7	2	-	2	9	+1	+4	8	2
Finance	45	-	45	-	-	-	45	+5	+4	42	3
Secretarial	29	-	29	-	4	4	33	-2	+1	35	
Legal	6	-	6	-	-	-	6	-	-	6	
Engineering	31	24	55	-	2	2	57	+1	-1	55	3
Architectural	5	-	5	-	-	-	5	-	-	5	
Computer Services	10	-	10	-	-	-	10	+2	+5	10	
Management Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	229	118	347	23	38	61	408	+23	+26	430	

MANPOWER LEVELS AND ESTABLISHMENTS AS AT 11th September 1982

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE JOINT WORKS AND SAFETY PANEL

At a Meeting held on 3rd November, 1982. Present:

Representing the Council Side:-

Councillors A.J. Harvey (Chairman), J.A. Gibson and R.H. Holman.

Representing the Works Side:-

Messrs. J. Campbell, R. Cunningham, J. Dowie, K. Hodgson,
M. Mackey and T. Wright (representing N.U.P.E.)

15. MINUTES

The Panel approved the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd September 1982.

Arising from this item reference was made to the drivers' supplement (Minute 6) and the fitters standby arrangements (Minute 7). The Council Side Members undertook to consider further all supplementary payments when the next annual review of bonus levels was carried out for implementation from April 1983.

16. NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Dowie introduced Mr. R. Cunningham representing the craftsmen section and Mr. K. Hodgson representing leisure services.

17. IMPLEMENTATION OF 39 HOUR WEEK (Minute 8 refers)

Reference was made to previous discussions and the Council Side reaffirmed their preference for a distribution of the one hour reduction over the working week by delaying start of work by 15 minutes from Tuesday to Friday.

The Works Side similarly reaffirmed their preference for a reduction of one hour on the Friday afternoon, bringing forward the lunch break period on that day in order to ensure that a worthwhile working period was left following the lunch break. The Members Side could not accept the objections raised by Works Side to the later working start and pointed out the difficulties of reducing the working arrangements to what would, in effect, be a four and a half day week.

Further discussion then ensued as a result of which reference was made to the possibility of an arrangement being reached which would at least enable the Council to achieve some saving on the additional expenditure which would necessarily be incurred by the reduction of the working week by one hour on a Friday afternoon. It was suggested that the introduction of direct credit payments, initially on a weekly basis, would produce some economies to offset the cost of the reduced working week although this would have to be applied to all Works Staff, with no exceptions.

After some discussion, independently, agreement was reached, in principle, to reduce the working week by one hour on Friday afternoons and, in order to offset the additional expenditure, to consider introduction of a direct credit payment system to all Works Staff.

It was recognised that there were a number of matters of detail relating to the direct credit arrangements which would have to be resolved and that there might be employees who would require special arrangements and assistance in the initial period. It was agreed that the detailed mechanics of the scheme would be further discussed and resolved by Management Team in consultation with the Works Side representatives.

RECOMMENDED That the Council agree in principle:-

- (i) to the reduction of the working week by one hour, to be taken at the end of the Friday working day, and, in order to offset the cost of the reduced working week, the arrangements be subject to Works Side representatives of the Joint Works and Safety Panel recommending to the men, and to the men agreeing, to the introduction of a direct credit payment system, on a weekly basis.
- (ii) to any necessary amendments to existing working arrangements, and special arrangements for individual employees to adapt to direct credit payments being agreed between Management and Works Side representatives.

18. PARKING AT ROCHFORD DEPOT

The Works Side drew attention to the lack of car parking spaces within the Depot to accommodate all of the employees and suggested that some consideration be given to the relocation of a number of items of materials which are at present stored on parking areas.

RECOMMENDED (1) That the matter be reviewed with a view to relocating stored materials within the Depot and that, in the meantime, a maximum of 8 parking spaces be made available within the Back Lane staff car park for use by Depot staff.

(2) That a further report be submitted by the Director of Technical Services to the next meeting of the Panel.

19. STANDARDS OF CLEANSING

Reference was made to the very poor standard of cleansing within the Depot administrative and canteen areas. The Council Side Members accepted the points raised and

RECOMMENDED That the Director of Technical Services carry out, as a matter of urgency, a review of the existing cleansing arrangements within the Depot with a view to achieving an immediate improvement in cleansing standards and report further to the next meeting of the Panel.

20. WORK EXPERIENCE

The Chief Executive referred to work experience schemes which were used extensively within the administrative offices and sought agreement to the introduction of similar arrangements on the Works Side.

Works Side representatives indicated that they would have no objections to the introduction of such a scheme.

RECOMMENDED That approval be given to the implementation of work experience schemes, as considered appropriate, within the Works Side.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Panel would be held on Wednesday, 15th December, 1982 at the Depot.

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 9 DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

EMPLOYMENT, INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT - INITIATIVE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY (Minute 340/82)

On 17 June 1982 this Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive regarding initiatives the Council could take to promote industrial and commercial development in this area together with ways in which help or assistance could be provided to existing employers. This included:-

1. assistance to industrial and commercial ratepayers in difficulty with rate payments.
2. the promotion for Government consideration of an industrial/commercial Rate Rebate scheme or the re-introduction of industrial and commercial de-rating.

These points might be considered separately as the former proposal is a local policy matter and the latter proposal one which needs to be considered on a national basis.

Since the June report was discussed the Council has, of course, gained first hand experience of a practical situation of "aid to industry", i.e., the Matchbox arrangements. The considerations relating to the decisions made in respect of the three-year rate deferment and interest-free loan took into account a number of special factors, viz, Lesneys were the largest single employer in the District and the new company were looking actually to extend activity in Rochford as a result of closing their Hackney plant. Nevertheless, a number of principles were established which could usefully be applied elsewhere.

The following paragraphs give some detailed consideration to the areas identified previously.

i. Assistance with Rate Payments

Until recently the law provided that only domestic ratepayers were entitled to pay the Rate by monthly instalments, but the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 introduced this facility to other types of ratepayer as long as the rateable value of the property concerned did not exceed (in this area) £2,000. However, as far as this District is concerned the general policy has been for several years now that instalment facilities be made available to all classes of ratepayer. Indeed, approximately 35% of non-domestic ratepayers already elect to pay either 10 or 12 monthly instalments, and a further 5% by quarterly payments.

Further more, this Council remains one of the 24 local authorities in England and Wales who still offer a discount for the prompt payment of the General Rate. The 2½% discount offered by this Authority has an annual equivalent of approximately 12% and a good number of ratepayers who recognise this and take advantage of the discount scheme occupy commercial or industrial properties.

The same Act of Parliament which introduced instalments for non-domestic ratepayers was also the instrument which set up Enterprise Zones. These are a new experimental approach to stimulating economic activity. Within selected areas of a few hundred acres, controls over commerce and industry are relaxed or their applications speeded up, and certain tax burdens are removed. The idea is to give the private sector greater freedom to get on with the job of wealth creation without attempts by central or local Government to favour particular types of economic activity. Encouraging private sector involvement is the whole point of the Enterprise Zone.

Within the Zones commercial and industrial enterprises are exempt from local rates and development land tax. They also have 100% tax allowances for capital spending on buildings. The areas created are in the severely depressed parts of the country.

There does exist under Section 137, Local Government Act 1972, the provision to earmark the equivalent of a 2p rate for projects in the interest of the area or any part of it, for all, or some of its inhabitants. A neighbouring authority is operating a scheme to attract new business to its area by offering, subject to certain qualifying criteria, a grant equal to 50% of the firms rent and Rate expenditure for the first three years of operation. The Council fund these grants by providing a certain sum set aside from each Rate levy. It would be possible, if the Council thought fit, to operate such a scheme in this District, although in Rochford's case the financial restriction of approximately £200,000 per annum must be recognised bearing in mind the commitment to Matchbox over the next three years. It has also been suggested that such inducements do little to create new employment but merely encourage "boundary hopping" by entrepreneurs in surrounding areas who will transfer existing businesses. Clearly there would need to be suitable safeguards to avoid this.

On the pure Rating aspect the Director of Finance has delegated powers to make, with specific ratepayers, arrangements for the discharge of the General Rate and uses these powers regularly when faced with the day to day problems of non-payment. Finance Directorate staff have instructions to avoid the necessity to instigate legal proceedings for the recovery of the Rate if at all possible. In a number of cases this means the acceptance of weekly or fortnightly payments but in each case close monitoring of the payments is essential. The advanced computer system now in use, with the early reminder being sent to a potential defaulter, acts as a "warning sign" to alert the staff of possible problems in later months. By the adoption of such a system (Minute 84/81 refers) it is possible to "head off" potential Summons cases with an arrangement to settle the debt and so avoiding the unpleasantness and associated costs of Magistrates Court action.

Delegated powers are also used to provide relief under Section 25, General Rate Act 1967 where it appears that a property included in the Valuation List is being used only in part. At the request of the Director of Finance the Valuation Officer will ascribe a value to the part which is used and the Rate charge will be reduced accordingly. This provision is intended for use for short term unoccupancy only (say six months) and is rarely used in cases other than when repairs, replacement or building works are involved.

/contd.

11. National Scheme for Rate Relief

It is recognised by many that commerce and industry has arguably reached an all time low and whilst the current trend in interest rates may go some way in helping companies keep away from the doors of the Official Receiver's Office it must be borne in mind that in good times, when profits are high, the Rate bill represents a small percentage of turnover and has little or no significant effect on profits. However, when profit levels shrink or disappear altogether that same bill is seen as an item of expenditure totally outside the control of company management which could force the firm into liquidation.

In 1929 when industry was last faced with similar problems the Government thought it appropriate to relieve freight transport and industry of 75% of the Rate burden and bear the cost itself by way of Government grant. This concession subsisted for a further 30 years eventually to be phased out in the early 1960's. To reinstate such de-rating would require new legislation.

In the mid-1960's the pendulum swung and it was the domestic ratepayer who was said to be in need of Rate relief and so it was that domestic Rate relief was born. In its infancy the assistance was a modest 5d (a fraction over 2p) in the £ but it grew annually until in 1976 it was "frozen" at 18.5p. This means today that, whatever the Rate levy in a particular area, domestic ratepayers pay 18.5p in the £ less than non domestic ratepayers. It also means that the larger the rateable value of a house, the greater is the relief for the householder concerned. The cost of this relief is met by a 90% Government subsidy.

One of the easiest and simplest ways, without the need for any legislation, to relieve industry of part of the Rate liability would be to reduce domestic Rate relief or abandon it altogether and move the related grant saved into block grant which would have the effect of shifting some of the Rate burden back to domestic ratepayers.

Another possible scheme to relieve industry and commerce of the burden of the Rate would be the introduction of a non domestic rebate scheme which could possibly be based on the audited accounts of a company. This again would involve legislation and might possibly prove difficult to administer, particularly with large national companies or those with several branches in a number of rating districts. However, the problems would not be insurmountable but the scheme itself may be open to abuse.

Whatever the remedy to the current problems of commerce and industry it must be recognised that, within its powers, Rochford assists wherever possible and that further help may only be achieved through a major change in policy or Government legislation.

The Committee's instructions in relation to this report are requested.

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

At a meeting held on 14th December 1982. Present:
Councillors A.J. Harvey (Chairman), R.H. Boyd, W.H. Budge,
Mrs. L.M.A. Campbell-Daley, L.K. Cope, T. Fawell,
R.D. Foster, J.A. Gibson, D.R. Helson, R.H. Holman,
Mrs Jo Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett,
Mrs. J.M. Murison, R.A. Pearson, J.A. Sheaf, C. Stephenson,
A.L. Tate, B. Taylor, T.J. Warner and D.C. Wood.

Apologies: Councillor E.H. Adcock.

Visiting: Councillor E.E. Daley.

736. Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the 2nd November and the special meeting of the 16th November be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

737. MONITORING OF PERFORMANCE-

(A) POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - MEETINGS OF 22ND JUNE AND 5TH OCTOBER

(B) COUNCIL - MEETINGS OF 18TH MAY, 6TH JULY, 5TH OCTOBER AND 12TH OCTOBER

The Committee were satisfied that all necessary action had been taken. Minute 550 was carried forward. (21210)(CE)

738. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The Committee received the following Minutes:-

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Minute Nos</u>
Health & Housing	23rd November	663 - 685
Planning Services	30th November	686 - 692

Land rear of Council Offices, Rochford (Minute 691)

It was noted that this item would be further discussed later in the meeting.

Leisure Services	2nd December	693 - 705
Development Services	7th December	706 - 723
Finance & Personnel	9th December	724 - 735

739. PANEL REPORTS

The Committee considered the following appended reports:-

<u>Panel</u>	<u>Date</u>
Appointments	2nd November
Community Centres	4th November
Essex Games 1984	10th November
Appointments	18th November
Chairmans	22nd November

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RECOMMENDED (1) That the Essex Games Steering Committee for 1984 report the re-entitled "Report of the Essex Games Inaugural Committee".

(2) That, in item 10 of the Report of the Chairmans' Panel, "recommended" be substituted for "agreed" in the 4th line of the 2nd paragraph and for the word "suggested" in the 7th line of the same paragraph.

(3) That the appended reports, as amended, and the recommendations therein be adopted. (MT)

740. PASTORAL MEASURE 1968 - ASHINGTON AND SOUTH FAMBRIDGE, PROPOSED UNION OF PARISHES

The Chief Executive reported that the Diocesan Pastoral Committee was considering proposals for the union of these two ecclesiastical parishes.

The Committee had no comments on the proposed union.(1) (CE)

741. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RECOMMENDED (1) That the Council side of the Freight House Management Committee be Councillors A.J.Harvey, Mrs. J.M.Murison, J.A.Sheaf and D.C.Wood.

(2) That the Council side of the Rayleigh Grange Community Centre Management Committee be Councillors A.J.Harvey, R.H.Holman, M.J.Jones, Miss B.G.J.Lovett and J.A.Sheaf.

(3) That the Council representative on the Southend Health Authority be Councillor D.C.Wood.

(4) That attendance at Meetings of all the above bodies be regarded as an approved duty.

(435,21535 and 26609) (DLS)

742. ROCHFORD COMPUTER PANEL

Appended to the Agenda was a report of the Panel setting out its Revenue Budget for 1983/84 and its Capital Programme for 1983/85.

RECOMMENDED That the appended Revenue Budget and Capital Programme be incorporated in the Draft Estimates for 1983/84.(1652) (DF)

743. MAKING THE RATE 1983/84 (Minute 730/81)

The Chairman of the Committee made the following statement:

"Before I ask the Members to consider the target figure which Management Team should be set for next year's district rate I should like to paint a brief picture of events leading up to our deliberations for 1983/84.

Since the current rate was first considered in December last year, there have been a number of encouraging signs within the national economy which have had a beneficial impact on

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Rochford's finances. The considerable slowing down in the rate of price increases as reflected in the Retail Prices Index has been a most welcome feature during recent months. The reduction in interest rates reflects the desire of the Government to get industry moving again and also has the effect of cutting the cost of financing the Council's capital investment programme. Pay rises have also been on a downward trend and for a labour intensive service like local government the benefits to the ratepayer are clear.

On the other hand, however, the Government continues to take a very strong line in its determination to reduce the volume of public expenditure. Its main method of influencing local government over its spending decisions is through the operation of the Rate Support Grant. In the last two years the proportion of the cost of running local authority services which is met by the Government has been reduced and the plans for 1983/84 will include a further reduction. Grant penalties have been introduced and those authorities who have not been prepared to operate services more efficiently have been forced to pay the price through massive rate increases. Here in Rochford we have always attempted to follow Government guidelines - regardless of which party is in power. Our staff restructuring exercise two years ago has enabled us to keep rate increases to a minimum and yet continue to expand our services.

On rate increases generally, the Council's record is an enviable one and comparisons with retail prices over a period of years produce an interesting statistic. Between March 1975 and March 1982 retail prices increased by 148%, but the Rochford district rate went up from 10.7 pence in the pound to 14.3 pence - an increase of just 34%. All this at a time when Council services were expanding at an unprecedented rate.

The low level of rate increase has been achieved through careful financial management and a commitment to forward planning. It would be easy to go for a nil rate rise in one year only to be followed by a massive increase the following year. This is not the Rochford way! The target system which has operated so successfully relies on a forecasting exercise which covers not one, but three years ahead. In this way the Council's services can be planned sensibly and at a reasonable cost to the ratepayer.

I should now like to turn to the 1983/84 rate and MOVE from the Chair, that the target be set so as to increase the rate by a maximum of 7% over the current figure. Let there be no illusions about this - it is a tough target. The Council continues to provide new facilities within the district, the costs of which must be met. The exciting Freight House Community Centre will open at the end of January 1983. The Mill Hall in Rayleigh has been improved; the third phase of Clements Hall is operating most successfully and the tenders

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for Phase IV will be received shortly. When the Government invited local authorities to submit additional bids for housing capital investment Rochford was there at the front of the queue and the Council's programme for 1983/84 will provide for schemes in all parts of the district costing more than £3 million. Taking all these factors into account I would suggest that a rate increase of 7% which amounts to a "standstill" bearing in mind the current level of inflation represents a good deal for the ratepayer.

In addition, I should like to incorporate a recommendation on charges for Council services for next year within this agenda item. In view of the rate target already mentioned I MOVE that, with one exception, charges for various Council activities be increased by a MAXIMUM of 7% from April 1983, rounded up to the next 5 pence in appropriate cases, or such LOWER percentage as considered reasonable by the officers depending on the level of demand in particular areas.

The one exception to this increase concerns car parking charges. Daily prices have not increased since charges were introduced in November 1980. If no adjustment is made in 1983/84 the car park revenue account will be running at a loss - to the tune of about £15,000. This situation is totally unacceptable and I therefore MOVE that the following charges be introduced in April 1983 or as soon as possible thereafter:-

Daily charges

Up to 2 hours - 20p

2 - 4 hours - 30p

Over 4 hours - 50p

Weekly ticket - £2.20

(All these charges to include VAT)

Season Tickets

Monthly - £ 7.00

Quarterly - £17.00

Annual - £50.00

Town Centre Permits - £50.00

All these charges are subject to VAT at the standard rate.

This scale is estimated to yield an additional £25,000 in a full year and put the car park revenue account back into a small surplus.

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The main change relates to the introduction of a 20 pence charge for a 2 hour period compared with the current 10 pence for the first hour and 20 pence for over 1 hour and up to 3 hours. The major criticism since charges were introduced concerned the shortness of the first period. It is hoped that the introduction of a 2 hour charge will meet that criticism, although I realise the imposition of any increase in car parking charges will always stir the emotions. As a result of the proposed charging structure, there will also be some users who will actually pay less, because the present cost of parking for between 3 and 4 hours is 40 pence compared with my proposal of 30 pence, and a number, who presently park for 2 hours and pay 20 pence will still only pay 20 pence from next year.

But I must make the overall position absolutely clear, without an increase in charges the revenue account will fall into deficit and I find it unacceptable to ask the general body of ratepayers to subsidise the motorist.

To summarise - I MOVE the following recommendations:-

1. The 1983/84 rate target be set so as to increase the district rate by a maximum of 7% over the current figure.
2. The scale of charges for various Council activities be increased from April 1983 by a maximum of 7% rounded up to the next 5 pence in appropriate cases, or such lower percentage as considered reasonable by the officers depending on the level of demand, with the exception of -
3. Car parking charges - where the scale which I have just described shall apply from April 1983 or as soon as possible thereafter."

Without dissent, Members applauded the intent to contain the rise in the General Rate within the level of inflation projected for the coming year and noted that this was being achieved alongside an ambitious programme of not only maintaining but substantially improving Council services and facilities.

Some Councillors felt the raising of car parking charges a retrograde step which might be detrimental to local shopkeepers but the majority were unconvinced, believing the rises were modest and should be borne by the motorist not the general ratepayer. It was pointed out that there would need to be an amended Traffic Regulation Order, that the procedural steps were lengthy and might not be completed before 1st April next although every effort would be made to do so.

The Committee were convinced that the proposals showed the right way forward and that they would be supported by the majority of ratepayers.

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The Chairman stressed that it was his intention that the revised charges once increased would not be altered for at least two years.

RECOMMENDED (1) That the 1983/84 rate target be set so as to increase the District Rate by a maximum of 7% over the current figure.

(2) That the scale of charges for various Council activities be increased from April 1983 by a maximum of 7% rounded up to the next 5 pence in appropriate cases or such lower percentage as is considered reasonable by the Officers depending on the level of demand.

(3) That the Director of Legal Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to revoke the District of Rochford (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 1980 and make a new Traffic Regulation Order to

a. Give effect of the revised charges detailed in the preamble hereto

b. Make car park tickets transferable between all Council car parks within the hours pre-paid

c. Exclude payment of charges on Public Holidays.

(759) (MT)

744. CROUCH HARBOUR AUTHORITY (Minute 378/81)

Appended to the Agenda was a copy of a report submitted to the County Council detailing the history and functions of the Harbour Authority and explaining that, even with economies made and planned, its finances were in a parlous state requiring a subsidy of £4,500 p.a. if it were to continue. If it were not to continue, its functions would fall on local authorities at a far greater cost than at present.

Maldon District Council and Chelmsford Borough Council jointly and the County Council singly were prepared to pay one third each of the required subsidy.

The Council representative on the Authority spoke again of his disenchantment saying that he was opposed to sending more good money after bad but other Members thought that current proposals indicated a new approach which should be supported.

RECOMMENDED That provision be made in the Estimates for the next three years in the sum of £1,500 as this Council's contribution to the costs of the Crouch Harbour Authority.

(4588) (DF)

745. CONFERENCE - CONTRACTING OUT (Minute 653/82)

The Chief Executive submitted a Local Government Chronicle report on the conference which had been well-attended with delegates agreeing that there were cases for and against contractors and Direct Labour Organisations.

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RECOMMENDED That, it being noted that the Conference Organisers had met the expenses of the Chief Executive as a speaker at the Conference, the Officer be permitted to retain any fee payable. (218 and PF) (CE)

746. AUDIT AND THE POLICY MAKER

The Chief Executive submitted the appended report.

RECOMMENDED That the report be received and the recommendation contained therein adopted. (228)(CE)

747. LAND REAR OF COUNCIL OFFICES (Minute 691/82)

The Chairman of the Committee made the following statement:-

"Members will have read the report of the Chief Executive dealing with this item.

I do not intend to allow discussion upon the planning merits of the South Street Application because under our present system that is a matter which should properly be dealt with by either the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, or its Planning Committee.

At this point I think it is important that I should remind Members that it is the full Council which is the Local Planning Authority and whilst through the exercise of delegated powers a Committee or, indeed, a Chief Officer can commit the Council, no Committee is or can be more powerful than the full Council. If the Council should decide to review a decision and as a result of that review come to a different decision to that of one of its Committees it is perfectly entitled to do so. To have any other situation would offend the basic principles of Administrative and Constitutional Law.

Indeed it has been the practice of the Authority since its constitution in 1974 that all Committees report through the Policy and Resources Committee. The Policy and Resources Committee has authority to review the recommendations of Committees and in accordance with Standing Order 34.2 where the recommendation of a Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee are at variance the Committee's decision shall "be of no effect".

I deliberately do not ask Members to consider the Planning Issues tonight although I believe it would be possible for me to do so. The reason why it would be possible for this Committee and Council to debate the matter is because the decision of the Planning Services Committee has not yet in law taken effect. It will not take effect until the decision notice is issued. I have in consultation with the Chairman of the Council given instructions that the decision notice should not be issued until after the Council meeting next week.

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I have taken this unprecedented decision because I believe that Members should have time to reflect upon the conclusion they arrived at last week and I intend to move from the Chair that the Council be Recommended to ask the Planning Services Committee to reconsider its decision on this application at a Special Meeting to be held on 5th January 1983.

Reconsideration of a decision is not without a precedent, indeed earlier this year the Planning Services Committee reconsidered its decision on "Franelle" at Rawreth following a request from the applicant.

My reasons for asking this Committee to approve such a recommendation are as follows:-

- 1) the Council has already arrived at a general policy on the land in question as explained in the Chief Executive's report.
- 2) the Committee's attention was not in my view adequately drawn to its earlier general policy.
- 3) the Committee's attention was not drawn to the provisions of Circular 9/80 - "Land for Private Housebuilding":-

" 2. Housebuilding provision is determined by structure and local plans. But to meet the dwelling production that those imply, local authorities need to ensure that adequate supplies of suitable land are actually available at all times. This can only be done if authorities carry out, with builders, detailed examinations of potential sites. The Secretary of State requests the active co-operation of local authorities in doing this."

or 22/80 - "Development Control - Policy and Practice" and I quote Circular 22/80 as follows:-

"3. The planning systems should play a helpful part in rebuilding the economy. Development control must avoid placing unjustified obstacles in the way of any development especially if it is for industry, commerce, housing or any other purpose relevant to the economic regeneration of the country. It is, and should be seen to be, part of the process of making things happen in the right place at the right time. Local planning authorities are asked therefore to pay greater regard to time and efficiency; to adopt a more positive attitude to planning applications: to facilitate development: and always to grant planning permission, having regard to all material considerations, unless there are sound and clear-cut reasons for refusal.



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They are also asked to ensure that their planning policies and practices create the right conditions to enable the house building industry to meet the public's need for housing.

11. The Government want to make sure that the planning system is as positive and as helpful as it can be to investment in industry and commerce and to the development industry. ...authorities are now asked to pick out for priority those applications which in their judgment will contribute most to national and local economic activity. These may or may not be the large developments and authorities should bear in mind the vital role of small-scale enterprises in promoting future economic growth."

4) the reasons for refusal lack substance in that the County Surveyor raises no objections on highway grounds; the County Planner raises no objections on Structure Plan grounds; in accordance with the terms of Circular 23/81 "the absence of a local plan or the fact that one is in the offing is not of itself sufficient reason for refusing planning permission"; the District Council in the Structure Plan is charged with the duty of determining the inner boundary of the Green Belt, that boundary should last for a period beyond the Structure Plan period. The residents of Grested Court will only be moved with their full agreement.

For all these material reasons, which I do not believe were properly aired at the Committee, I move the recommendation."

A Member suggested that the proposal was prompted by political motives but was convinced by the Chairman's interjection that this was not the case. Indeed, the Chairman went on to say that, because of his long residence and passionate interest in Rochford, he had been upset because certain information had not been given to the Planning Services Committee and, not being able to be present on the first occasion, he pleaded, purely personally, for an opportunity to put his points to the proposed Special Meeting.

The Chairman of the Council believed the decision to have been mistaken and that detailed information had not been supplied because it had not been envisaged that the Planning Services Committee would upset Council policy that had previously been consistently supported from all sides.

Several Members spoke in support of reconsideration, believing that exceptional circumstances justified making an exception to Council practice concerning the delegated functions of the Planning Services Committee.

Other Councillors disputed that inadequate information had been given and drew attention to the advice that had been offered and the volume of the written report of the Director

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of Town Planning. Concern was expressed about the way in which the rules of the Council were being used in this instance and it was contended that the correct approach would be the submission of a revised application. It was argued that there had been changes in the make-up of the Council since earlier decisions had been made and that, in any case, those decisions had been made without the benefit of public response to consultations on the application.

Another Member suggested that the proper way to deal with the matter was for the application to be referred to the District Plan Working Party but all agreed that any debate or discussion should be open to the full glare of publicity and should not be undertaken by a private and confidential Working Party however well-intentioned was that proposal.

Voting on the motion was recorded thus:-

For the motion (14) Councillors L.K.Cope, R.D.Foster, J.A.Gibson, A.J.Harvey, R.H.Holman, Mrs. Jo Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J.Lovett, Mrs. J.M.Murison, R.A.Pearson, J.A.Sheaf, A.L.Tate, B.Taylor and D.C.Wood.

Against the Motion (5) Councillors R.H.Boyd, Mrs. L.M.A.Campbell-Daley, T.Fawell, D.R.Helson and C.Stephenson.

Abstaining (2) Councillors W.H. Budge and T.J.Warner.

RECOMMENDED That the Planning Services Committee be requested to re-consider application ROC/62/82.(ROC/62/82) (DLS)


748. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL INITIATIVES AND EMPLOYMENT

The Chief Executive reported on his attendance at seminars and related discussions and suggested a programme for a local seminar which the Council might sponsor in 1983 say in the month of March.

RECOMMENDED That the Chief Executive be authorised to organise the suggested seminar and stage a relevant exhibition. (28025) (CE)

749. OFFICE EQUIPMENT - WORD PROCESSORS

The Director of Legal Services reminded Members that the centralised Word Processing Unit had been highly successful, that the workload had expanded enormously and that there was a need to purchase an additional word processor. A word processor and keyboard with printer, sheet feed, discs and manuals would cost £7,860 provision for which existed within the Vehicle, Plant and Equipment Replacement Fund.



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RECOMMENDED That the Council do acquire a new word processor and essential equipment at a cost not exceeding £8,000.
(21741) (DLS)

750. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (Minute 652/82)

RECOMMENDED That, subject to amendment of the first asking price to £26,250 and substitution of "paragraph 2" for "paragraph 3" in recommendation (1), the appended report be received and its recommendations adopted. (881) (DLS)

751. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Resolved that standing order 1.8 be suspended to allow completion of the remaining business.

752. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - BRAMERTON ROAD AP SITE

The Director of Legal Services reported on the cost value ratio of the above land acquisition under the local authority's housing project control procedure.

RECOMMENDED (1) That the necessary documentation be submitted to the Department of the Environment.

(2) That, subject to Department of the Environment approval, the Director of Legal Services be authorised to acquire the site. (4267) (DLS)

753. REGISTER OF PUBLIC BODIES LAND (Minute 515/82)

The Management Team reported that County Council owned land to the rear of Brooklands, Rayleigh was a prime residential site likely to command a price in excess of that reasonable for municipal housing of any sort.

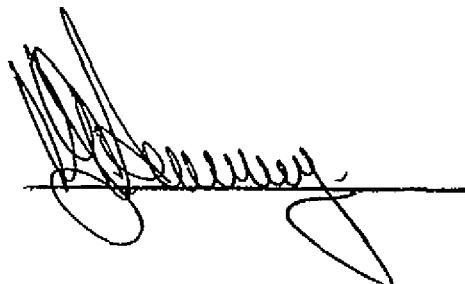
RECOMMENDED That the County Council be informed that the District Council does not wish to purchase this site.(841) (DLS)

754. MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSION - AREA MANPOWER BOARDS

The Chief Executive reported that the Essex County Branch of the A.D.C. would have one nomination for the new Manpower Board for Essex.

RECOMMENDED That the nomination of Councillor Mrs. J.Selby of Castle Point District Council be supported.(7152) (DLS)

Chairman



Date

1-2-83.

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ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENTS PANEL

At a Meeting held on 2nd November, 1982. Present: Councillors

A.J. Harvey (Chairman) L.R. Cope, R.D. Foster, J.H. Gibson, F.B.G. Jopson,
Miss B.G.J. Lovett, J.A. Sheaf, B. Taylor and D.C. Wood.

3. APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF LEISURE - SHORTLIST

The Chairman reported that there were 33 full applications received which, because of the very size of the content and detail enclosed with each, it would be too onerous a task to endeavour to circulate a copy of every application to every member of the Panel as had previously been agreed.

The Chairman explained that, in the circumstances, he and the Chief Executive had, quite independently, studied each application in detail and had selected their own provisional shortlist of applicants to be interviewed. Upon comparison of the lists they were found to be, with one or two minor exceptions, almost identical and a final list of seven applicants was agreed.

The Panel were unanimously of the opinion that in view of the large number of applications received, and the volume of paperwork involved, that it would not be practicable for each member of the Panel to be supplied with all applications and that they were happy to rely upon the judgment of the Chairman and the Chief Executive. It was agreed however that in the

unlikely event of an appointment not being made from the shortlisted applicants then the Panel would look to the remainder of the applications before considering re-advertising the post.

The Panel were advised that, in arriving at a shortlist consideration was given to candidates in the higher age bracket, although of course not precluding younger ones, bearing in mind the existing age structure within the Department, a mix of private enterprise and local government candidates and a multiplicity of management disciplines.

Finally, it was agreed that a list of the relevant details of all applicants who had not been shortlisted would be circulated to each member of the Panel.

A handwritten mark, possibly a signature or initials, consisting of a vertical line with a loop at the bottom and a diagonal stroke crossing it.

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRES PANEL

At a Meeting held on 4th November, 1982. Present:
Councillors D.C. Wood (in the Chair), L.K. Cope, R.D. Foster,
A.J. Harvey, R.H. Holman, and J.A. Sheaf.

Visiting by Invitation: Councillor C.B. Alger.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Panel not being present at the commencement, it was

Resolved that Councillor D.C. Wood be elected Chairman for the meeting.

2. THE FREIGHT HOUSE

The Chief Executive reported that Rochford Parish Council had formally written withdrawing from the scheme and requesting repayment of the £25,000 it had advanced. The Parish Council argued that there had not been any contract between it and the District Council but that, if there had, it had been vitiated by the subsequent actions of the District Council.

The Director of Finance said that the failure of the Parish Council to make the promised £50,000 payment would add to revenue expenses £7,300 p.a. in loan charges for 40 years. There would also be a relatively small impact on the Capital Programme.

The Panel welcomed the news from a Member, who was also a Hawkwell Parish Councillor, that his Parish Council was sticking to its bargain if for no other reason than that it saw it as a fine investment for the future.

Members thought that there was a strong moral duty on the Rochford Parish Council to stay in the scheme and that the Parish Council was misguided in its present attitude but Councillors saw little point in recrimination and sincerely hoped that a future Parish Council would view the matter differently and re-join the consortium.

RECOMMENDED (1) That the Chief Executive prepare a press release rebutting the present arguments of the Rochford Parish Council.

(2) That the Rochford Parish Council be informed that the District Council accepts with regret the decision to withdraw from the consortium.

(3) That the Director of Finance be authorised to return on 30th March 1983 the Rochford Parish Council payment of £25,000 it being noted, for the avoidance of doubt, that there was no question of interest being payable.

See Minute 758

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(4) That the District Council place on record its hope that a future Rochford Parish Council will re-join the consortium and take its part in the management of the Community Centre.

(5) That the proposals in paragraph 3 of the report of the Panel meeting on 28th July 1982 be amended as under:-

(c) In the first instance, membership of the Management Committee to be 7 - 4 District Councillors and 3 Hawkwell Parish Councillors.


(e) Hawkwell Parish Council to be offered free use of suitable accommodation for up to 3 council meetings each month.

(6) That a calendar of meetings of the Management Committee be prepared. (435) (CE & DF)

3. COMMUNITY CENTRE, GREAT WAKERING - REDUNDANT SCHOOL BUILDING

The Chief Executive reported that investigations since the last report to the Panel on 28th July showed that a far better scheme could be achieved by demolishing the building, developing the whole site for municipal housing and including a Community Centre as at Rayleigh Grange. The Department of the Environment was cautious but not discouraging.

RECOMMENDED That the new scheme be welcomed and Officers instructed to develop it further with a view to including the proposal in the 1983 programme. (2379) (MT)



ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER 1982

INAUGURAL

REPORT OF THE ESSEX GAMES STEERING COMMITTEE FOR 1984

See Min 739

At a Meeting held on 10th November 1982. Present:
Councillors J.A. Sheaf (Chairman), J.A. Gibson, A.J. Harvey,
Miss B.G.J. Lovett and D.C. Wood.

Also Attending: Representing Rochford District Sports
Council: Messrs. A. Day and G. Bailey and Mesdames M. Bailey
and J.M. Murison.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Resolved that Councillor J.A. Sheaf be elected Chairman of
the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

2. EVENTS TO BE STAGED

The Director of Technical Services reported that by September
1983 it would be necessary to produce the final list of
approximately 20 sports that were to be staged.

To allow for later selection, the following 27 sports were
listed.

Archery	Life-saving
Athletics (including road-relay)	Orienteering
Angling	Riding (show-jumping)
Badminton	Rugby
Bowls	Squash
Cycling	Shooting
Cricket	Swimming
Darts	Trampolining
Football	Table-tennis
Golf	Tennis
Gymnastics	Tug-of-war
Hockey	Volleyball or Basketball
Netball	Weightlifting
Karate	

3. CIVIC LUNCHEON

It was agreed that the practice of a formal luncheon took time
that the civic dignitaries would rather spend in watching and
encouraging the sportsmen and that the 1984 arrangements should
be based on a buffet luncheon.

4. FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Whilst wishing to stage a creditable show, the Committee was
conscious that accurate costing of both materials and labour was
essential and the Director of Technical Services was to produce
estimates and a report of the effect on staffing of the officer-
involvement in the preparation for the Games.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that a Meeting be held when the report of the Director
of Technical Services is available. (28247) (DTS)

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ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENTS PANEL

At a Meeting held on 18th November, 1982. Present:- Councillors A.J. Harvey (Chairman), D.C. Wood, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, L.K. Cope, J.A. Sheaf, B. Taylor, R.D. Foster and F.B.G. Jopson.

Apologies: J.A. Gibson.


APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF LEISURE (Minute 455/82)

From 139 initial enquiries for this post a final 39 complete applications were received. This number was finally reduced and a shortlist of seven compiled. Of those shortlisted, one withdrew before interview and one withdrew on the day.

Interviews were held throughout the whole of the day and after very careful consideration and much discussion it was unanimously.

Resolved (1) that Mr. Peter C. Johnson be appointed.

(2) that the appointment be subject to:-

- (a) Salary scale Fulcrum +4.
 - (b) Three months notice of termination of the appointment on either side.
 - (c) Such terms and conditions as may be agreed nationally by the Joint Negotiating Committee of Chief Officers of Local Authorities and as may be implemented and supplemented by the District Council from time to time. A copy of the Scheme of the Conditions of Services is available for inspection in my office should you wish to see it at any time.
 - (d)
 - (i) household removal expenses including insurance subject to the production of two tenders and the acceptance of the cheapest;
 - (ii) lodging allowance of £15.00 per week for a period not exceeding three months;
 - (iii) travelling expenses, limited to two journeys per month;
 - (iv) relocation expenses in respect of legal and estate agency fees, carpets, curtains and other necessary expense subject to the production of receipted invoices and not exceeding £2,000.
- 

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN'S PANEL

At a meeting held on 22nd November 1982. Present: Councillors A.J. Harvey (Chairman), M.N. Anderson, L.K. Cope, T. Fawell, R.D. Foster, J.A. Gibson, R.H. Holman, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, R.A. Pearson, J.A. Sheaf, B. Taylor and D.C. Wood.

1. EASTERN COUNCIL FOR SPORT AND RECREATION

The Panel noted with pleasure that Councillor B.Taylor had been appointed as a Government Representative on the Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation.

2. DIRECTOR OF LEISURE

The Chairman reported that the Appointments Panel had appointed Mr. Peter Johnson, at present employed by the Borough of Broxbourne, to this new post and he would take up his duties on 10th January 1983.

3. COUNCIL CYCLE ENDING 21ST DECEMBER 1982

The Panel noted that the following reports would be made to Committee in the current cycle:-

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Report</u>
Health & Housing Services	23rd Nov.	(1) Buying-in for rent, Sutton Court Drive.(DLS) (1i) Tenders for sewerage schemes - Hullbridge. (DTS) (1ii) Supermarket trolleys.(DTS&DLS)
Planning Services	30th Nov.	(1) Land at rear of South Street,Rochford. (DTP) (1i) M.A.F.F. land off Victoria Road, Rayleigh. (DTP)
Leisure Services	2nd Dec.	(1) Quarterly report on Clements Hall.(DTS) (1i) Scale of charges - Freight House.(DF)
Finance and Personnel	9th Dec.	(1) Aid to Industry generally.(DF)
Policy and Resources	14th Dec.	(1) Rate making 1983/84 (DF)

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4. PROGRESS CHARTS

The Panel received the progress charts on the Council's land transactions; contracts; planning and enforcement appeals; enforcement action; court work and litigation and Council house sales.

The Director of Legal Services mentioned that negotiations were proceeding on the Grange land and he hoped to report shortly on the final position as to the Purdeys Car Breaking site.

It was also reported that action was being taken under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations in respect of the Rose Garden, Aldermans Hill, Hockley.

The Director also stated that recent delays in the completion of the house purchase sales and transfer of house purchase loans had unfortunately been due to shortage of staff but he hoped to fill the vacant posts at an early date.

5. OTHER COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Members were reminded that the Chairman of the Council's Carol Service would be held on Sunday 12th December at Mill Hall, commencing at 6.p.m.

The Director of Legal Services stated that the Hearing of the undermentioned liquor licence applications would be on 1st December 1982:-

Transfer of Licence - Park Sports Centre

Transfer of Provisional Grant - Freight House

Provisional Grant - Clements Hall Phase IV

On Licence - Grange Community Centre

6. CLEMENTS HALL PHASE IV (Minute 437/82)

The Director of Technical Services reported that following approval in principle of a one-way circulatory route for traffic movement within the complex site as part of the Phase IV works, the detailed design had now been completed. The proposed re-alignment of the tennis courts to allow the introduction of the one-way system would involve a slight diversion of Footpath 14 and a formal diversion order would need to be made at the appropriate time.

RECOMMENDED That in accordance with Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1976 application be made for the re-alignment of the tennis courts to allow revised vehicular access to the main parking area. (6771) (DTP)

7. HIGHWAYS AGENCY (Minute 145/82)

The Chief Executive reported that the claim for a full Highways Agency had now been made to the County Council and the Panel noted with interest the Council's submission. (copy attached)

Members were also made aware of the difficulties which had been experienced in maintaining the time-table agreed with the County Council.

The Council's full and total commitment for the grant of a highway agency was reiterated and Officers were asked to take all necessary steps to gain maximum local support to this end.

RECOMMENDED That the Chief Executive seek the support of local County Members when the submission was under consideration by the County Highways Committee and that County be asked to receive a Member deputation to speak at the County Committee when this matter is before them. (45) (CE)

8. ROCHFORD BOWLS GREEN PAVILION AND USE BY ROCHFORD BOWLS CLUB

The Panel considered the appended report of the Director of Technical Services on an offer to the Rochford Bowls Club to provide at a substantially reduced price a precast concrete building for Members' use. Subject to the Council leasing the bowling green to the Club and making it a loan to cover the cost of the building, it would be possible to relieve the Council from the responsibility of providing a new pavilion whilst at the same time assuring continued public use of the facility.

Members generally expressed their agreement with the proposal which would allow the re-allocation of monies reserved for the project in the capital programme.

RECOMMENDED (1) That proposals for a lease and loan to the Club, as outlined above, be approved in principle.

(2) That the Director of Technical Services report accordingly to the Leisure Services and Finance and Personnel Committees. (871) (DTS)

9. PROVISION OF A COURTESY BUS - ROCHFORD

The Director of Technical Services submitted the appended report on behalf of the Management Team in which the possibility of the Council providing a courtesy bus service, principally to Clements Hall, was discussed. The Director of Finance reported that the estimated annual running costs were in the region of £16,700 although this took no account of potential advertising revenue or additional income that might be generated at the Sports Centres by increased use and publicity. The Panel favoured the introduction of such a service and noted that it would have to be provided free of charge to users.

RECOMMENDED That the Council do acquire a double-decker bus for the provision of a courtesy bus service for Rochford Leisure and that the Officers report further on the schedules that might be operated. (21984) (MT)

10. DIRECTOR OF LEISURE

The Chairman referred to his earlier report on the appointment of Director of Leisure and advised that it was necessary to place the

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new Officer on the minimum of the Salary Scale Fulcrum + 4, a scale used for all other Chief Officers except the Computer Manager.


See Min 739
The Chairman advised that Mr. Stanton had more than achieved the objectives set by the Computer Panel and was now able to assume full Management Team responsibilities. He suggested, and it was unanimously ~~agreed~~ ^{RECOMMENDED}, that Mr. Stanton should be given the same salary terms as other Chief Officers and that he be re-graded and re-designated Director of Computer Services commencing at the minimum of the scale. It was also ~~suggested~~ ^{RECOMMENDED} that the Deputy Computer Manager be re-graded from P02 (1-5) to P02 (2-6) and re-designated Principal Assistant, Computer Management.

A report to this effect would be submitted to the Computer Panel with a recommendation that the re-gradings and new Conditions of Service should take effect from 1st December 1982.(PF)(CE)

11. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

During discussion of the preceding item, it was

Resolved that Standing Order 1.8 be suspended to allow completion of the business.



POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE ROCHFORD COMPUTER CENTRE PANEL

REVENUE BUDGET 1983/84, CAPITAL PROGRAMME 1983/85


This report sets out the Computer Centre's estimated requirements for revenue and capital provision.

The following notes relate to the reference number shown on the Revenue Budget for 1983/84:

1. Pay and price increases have been anticipated up to and including 31 March 1984.
2. Employees estimates are based on an establishment of ten posts, namely Computer Manager, Deputy Computer Manager, Analyst/Programmer, Programmer, Trainee Programmer, Operations Supervisor, Computer Operator, Control Clerk/Data Prep Operator, 2 Data Prep Operators. The reduction in 1983/84 relates to a decrease in overtime provision.
3. Provision is made in 1983/84 for additional software licences of £11,700.
4. The estimates make provision for the additional office requirement arising from the filling of all established posts.
5. Leasing costs are based on an interest rate of 12½% and a capital cost of £121,300.
6. The 1983/84 budget makes provision for the cost of replacing items shown in the capital programme for that year.

RECOMMENDED

That the revenue budget and capital programme as detailed in Appendices I and II are incorporated in the Council's draft budget to be considered at the Policy and Resources Committee in February 1983.



	R E F	1981/82	1982/83		1983/84
		Actual	Estimate	Revised	Estimate
		£	£	£	£
<u>ROCHFORD COMPUTER CENTRE</u>	1				
EMPLOYEES					
Salaries and Wages	2	46,120	108,700	95,900	103,200
Training Expenses		1,248	4,400	5,300	5,700
Interview & Appointment Expenses		1,346	1,000	100	400
RUNNING EXPENSES					
Supplies and Services:					
Equipment Tools & Materials	3	29,279	44,800	44,800	55,700
Transport & Plant:					
Car allowances		1,064	3,500	1,600	1,900
Establishment Expenses:					
Printing, Stationery, Adv., Etc.		670	6,200	6,100	7,200
Central administration		2,000	3,600	3,600	4,000
Travel, Subsistence & Conference expenses		307	700	500	600
Apportionment of Admin. Buildings	4	3,900	6,000	7,000	10,000
Insurance		444	700	600	700
CAPITAL FINANCING CHARGES					
Leasing costs	5	12,108	20,800	23,900	23,900
Replacement provision	6	-	11,900	12,800	30,400
		98,486	212,300	202,200	242,700
LESS Income					
SALES					
Sale of Computer time		-	1,000	400	1,000
Expenditure charged to General Administration		98,486	211,300	201,800	242,700

ROCHFORD COMPUTER CENTRE - CAPITAL PROGRAMME 1983/85

	TOTAL COST £000	1983/84 £000	1984/85 £000
Purchase of Software Systems	49	30	19
Installation of Visual Display Units and Printers	89	60	29
Enhancement to Central Processor and Disc Drives for Data Base	54	54	-
	192	144	48

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER 1982

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

EXTERNAL AUDIT AND THE POLICY MAKER

A Seminar on the subject "External Audit and the Policy Maker" was recently held at the Institute of Local Government Studies at Birmingham University and attended by the Chief Executive. The Seminar discussed the future of local government in the light of recent and impending legislation. It was considered that the Local Government Finance (No. 2) Bill 1982 would prove to be of particular importance in this respect.

Part III of the Bill which is concerned with local government audit could well prove to be the most significant and enduring of the proposals, despite the inclusion in the earlier parts of the abolition of supplementary rates and the imposition of block grant penalties. Part III re-enacts most of the relevant provisions contained in the Local Government Act 1972 and in addition proposes fundamental changes to the audit system and the respective influence of central and local government upon it, several clauses being of particular interest.

General Powers and Duties of the Auditor

1. The Code of Audit Practice, previously non-statutory, will now be made binding. This includes the duty to consider "the possibility of loss due to waste, extravagance, inefficient financial administration, poor value for money, mistake or other cause" and, if necessary, make a report. Difficulties could however arise in that many such matters likely to prove exceptionable may be due to conscious policy decisions based upon a range of factors. The auditor however will only be concerned with the financial aspects involved or, alternatively, will try to weigh up the merits of other factors. In either case, this could be construed as political interference in the authority's policies.
2. The auditor is given power to make an immediate report, rather than waiting to the end of the audit.
3. The auditor is now placed under a duty to satisfy himself that the local authority "has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources". This again could cut straight across the local authority's policy decisions.

Power to Take Action

The auditor has a power to apply to the Courts "where it appears to him that any item of account is contrary to law". In the past it has been argued that on occasions this has been used to override otherwise legitimate and lawful policies. On the face of it this power is desirable. However, one effect of this, unprecedented and unparalleled anywhere in the public or private sector, is the possible consequence of surcharge and/or disqualification of Councillors.

Another difficulty lies in the grounds upon which expenditure can be declared unlawful, one of which is where it has arisen from an unreasonable exercise of discretionary power. This again could give rise to allegations of interference in policy. It does not however mean that the auditor or the Courts could substitute their favoured policy for that of the local authority.

Policies can therefore be defeated if formulated for improper reasons. However, determination of what considerations are relevant and irrelevant and the weighting of these is not simple, reliance being made upon an extensive body of non-statutory rules and criteria for interpreting statutes and for assessing the broad context in which local authorities function.

The Audit Commission


External auditors to each local authority will be appointed by the Audit Commission, membership of which will be determined, after consultation, by the Secretary of State, who will also have the power to direct the Commission as to the discharge of its functions. This thus represents not only a reduction in the Council's powers to determine its own affairs but an indirect accretion of power to the Government through the Secretary of State.

Comment

Although the above points may initially be thought alarmist and far-fetched, the gradually increasing influence of central over local government should be considered as should be the fact that the powers once enacted are unlikely to be significantly amended by any other government.

As will now be obvious the Seminar was extremely interesting and thought-provoking and the implications of such potential significance that the subject warrants a wider audience. INLOGOV on a previous occasion conducted a seminar in Rochford for Members and Officers which proved very successful, and to which representatives from other Essex authorities were also invited. It is considered that similar arrangements could be made for a seminar on this subject.

RECOMMENDED That the Chief Executive be authorised to negotiate with INLOGOV with a view to arranging a seminar on the basis suggested.



ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 14TH DECEMBER, 1982

REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Housing Investment Programme (HIPS) (Minute 657/82)

1. Introduction

In November the Council adopted the recommendations of the Management Team to reduce the underspending on the HIPS allocation for the current financial year and on a number of new initiatives on housing proposed by Government Ministers. Negotiations on the projects to reduce the underspending are proceeding satisfactorily but it is necessary to seek further instructions on the implementation of the decisions with regard to the new initiatives.

2. New Initiatives

The District Valuer has been instructed to negotiate on the Council's behalf for the acquisition of the following schemes/premises. All of the expenditure in 1982/83 can be met from the existing Allocation save for the homeless families accommodation which will have to be acquired under General Rate Fund powers using Housing Capital Receipts. The one scheme in 1983/84 would also have to be met from Housing Capital Receipts.


<u>Scheme/Premises</u>	<u>Year of Acquisition</u>	<u>Asking Price</u>
2 Elderly owner/occupier hardship cases.	1982/83	C £20,000
53 to 57 High Street, Gt. Wakering 2 properties for equity sharing	1982/83	C £50,000
216 Hockley Road, Rayleigh Homeless Families Accommodation	1982/83	C £22,000
295 Eastwood Road, Rayleigh Homeless Families Accommodation	1982/83	C £18,000
Sutton Court Drive 9 Flats for Rent	1983/84	C £223,000

12 two bedroomed flats have been offered to the Council at Hartford Close, Rayleigh, for £276,000 exclusive of kitchen and bathroom fittings. The development which will be completed early in the New Year (1983) adjoins an existing Council estate and the Director of Health & Housing would welcome the acquisition of these units for rent to reduce the Waiting List. Approval in principle to the acquisition would be needed before asking the District Valuer to negotiate a price on the Council's behalf. Expenditure would probably fall in 1982/83.

The total cost of the new initiatives listed above amounts to £386,000 in 1982/83 and to £223,000 in 1983/84 although the District Valuer is still in negotiations as to the actual prices he could recommend to the Council.

RECOMMENDED (1) That authority be given to the Director of Legal Services to proceed with the purchase of the properties listed in paragraph 3 at the District Valuer's valuation and subject to such other terms and conditions as the Director considers necessary. (881)

(2) That approval be given to the acquisition in 1982/83 of the homeless families accommodation from Housing Capital Receipts.



ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council

At a Meeting held on 21st December 1982. Present:

Councillors D.C. Wood (Chairman), E.H. Adcock, C.B. Alger, R.H. Boyd, W.H. Budge, T.H. Burt, Mrs. L.M.A. Campbell-Daley, Mrs. P. Cooke, L.K. Cope, B.A. Crick, R.D. Foster, A.J. Harvey, Mrs. P.E. Hawke, Mrs. E.M. Heath, D.R. Helson, P.J. Himfen, R.H. Holman, Mrs. Jo Jones, M.J. Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, Mrs. J.M. Murison, J.E. Nokes, R.A. Pearson, J.A. Sheaf, G.J. Skinner, R.T. Stephens, C. Stephenson, A.L. Tate, B. Taylor, J.P. Taylor, T.J. Warner and E.S. Whitworth.

Apologies: Councillors M.N. Anderson, N.R. Blyther and J.A. Gibson.

755. COUNCILLOR E. H. ADCOCK

Members warmly applauded the attendance of Councillor E.H. Adcock after his illness.

756. MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 16th November 1982 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

757. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman of the Council congratulated Mr. Colin Holden of the Finance Directorate and presented him with a Certificate for having passed the Final Part of the professional examination for membership of the Rating and Valuation Association (ARVA).

The Chairman also congratulated Mr. Martin Girvan, a part-time Recreation Attendant at Clements Hall, on winning a Silver Medal at the Commonwealth Games held in Australia and presented him with a mounted cartoon.

The Chairman reported with pleasure that Councillor B. Taylor had been appointed as a member of the Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation on the nomination of the Department of the Environment.

758. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

Resolved (1) that the Minutes of Committees be received and the recommendations contained therein adopted subject to the amendments shown.

(2) that the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to any documents necessary to give effect to decisions taken or approved by the Council in these Minutes.

Council

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Minute Nos.</u>
Health & Housing Services	23rd November	663 - 685

Local Authorities Mortgage Interest Rates (Minute 681/82)

Note: Councillor B.A. Crick disclosed a pecuniary interest in this item as a holder of a Council Mortgage and being invited to remain in the Meeting, took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Planning Services	30th November	686 - 692*
Leisure Services	2nd December	693 - 705
Development Services	7th December	706 - 723

Additional Open Air Markets - Rochford District (Minute 715/82)

Two Members were of the view that there was a large public demand for the establishment of a market at Hullbridge and reported that a petition to this end had been signed by many local residents.

Resolved that the following be substituted for the recommendation in Minute 715:-

"That the matter be referred back for further consideration and the Rochford and Rayleigh Chambers of Trade be consulted." (884) (DTP)

Finance & Personnel	9th December	724 - 735
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Meals-on-Wheels (Minute 733/82)

Resolved that the third paragraph in the preamble to this Minute be amended to read as follows:-

"The Committee noted that a limited Meals-on-Wheels service on Christmas Day was being provided in Hullbridge by Mr. and Mrs. Moody and in Hawkwell and Hockley by Miss Buckland-Evers and congratulated these persons for their public-spirited efforts."

Policy & Resources	14th December	736 - 754
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Panel Reports - Community Centres - 4th November - The Freight House (Minute 739/82)

The Chairman of the Committee read a letter from the Rochford Parish Council requesting repayment on 31st December, 1982 of the £25,000 it had advanced.

Council

Resolved that the following be substituted for recommendation (3) in the report of the Community Centres Panel of 4th November, 1982:-

"(3) That the Director of Finance be authorised to return on 31st December, 1982 the Rochford Parish Council payment of £25,000, it being noted that there was no question of interest being payable." (435) (DF)

Land Rear of Council Offices, Rochford (Minute 747/82)

758
Having received confirmation from the Chairman of the Planning Services Committee that Minute 691 of the Meeting held on 30th November was accurate, a Member criticised the decision of the Policy and Resources Committee suggesting that the fact that one Councillor was not present at the Planning Services Committee was insufficient reason for application ROC/62/82 to be reconsidered. The Member warned that a bad precedent had been set and suggested that the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee had now attained the right to veto decisions of any Committee and complained that politics had now entered the planning arena.

Another Member echoed these criticisms whilst reminding Members that many people in Rochford were opposed to the development.

One or two other Members expressed similar views and proposed that the Planning Services Committee decision should stand.

The Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee vehemently rejected the criticisms of the earlier speakers expressing the view that the application deserved further examination.

One Councillor who had been very ill recently and who was independent of any political affiliation said he had made every effort to attend the Council Meeting in order to support the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee. He had been involved in planning matters for over 50 years and was firmly of the view that the application should be reconsidered because just as any business must change if it is to grow, no town could afford to stand still. Saying that if Rochford did not grow it would die.

Other Members concurred with his remarks believing the proposal, if approved, would bring life back into the town. In their view it was crucial to the future of the area.

The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee explained why he had asked that Committee for an opportunity to debate the application again, expressing his concern at some of the blatant misunderstandings which were apparent from reports he had received of the Planning Services Committee's debate.

He reaffirmed that if the application was approved nobody would be moved from Grested Court who did not wish to leave.

Council

He drew attention to former residential units within the town which had become offices. He mentioned the various schemes afoot to revitalize the town of which the provision of residential units formed a part. He emphasised that all he was asking for was an opportunity to debate the matter further.

Before taking the recorded vote requested by Members the Chairman of the Council reminded the Council that the decision they were being asked to make was set out in the recommendation to Minute 747 and, if approved, would merely allow a further, full and wide-ranging debate to take place at the Special Meeting of the Planning Services Committee on 5th January, 1983. He went on to say that even if the Committee supported the development at that Meeting the application must be treated as a departure and a full public inquiry was bound to follow. The Chairman then put the recommendation to the Council and voting thereon was recorded as follows:-

For the Motion (22) Councillors E.H. Adcock, T.H. Burt, Mrs. P. Cooke, L.K. Cope, R.D. Foster, A.J. Harvey, Mrs. P.E. Hawke, Mrs. E.M. Heath, P.J. Himfen, R.H. Holman, Mrs. Jo Jones, M.J. Jones, F.B.G. Jopson, Miss B.G.J. Lovett, Mrs. J.M. Murison, R.A. Pearson, J.A. Sheaf, R.T. Stephens, A.L. Tate, B. Taylor, J.P. Taylor and D.C. Wood.

Against the Motion (9) Councillors C.B. Alger, R.H. Boyd, W.H. Budge, Mrs. L.M.A. Campbell-Daley, B.A. Crick, D.R. Helson, J.E. Nokes, G.J. Skinner and C. Stephenson.

Abstaining (1) Councillor T.J. Warner.

Resolved that the Planning Services Committee be requested to reconsider application ROC/62/82. (DLS)

*Minute 691 was further discussed at the Policy and Resources Committee of 14th December, 1982 (Minute 747).

759. PURCHASE OF 31, SOUTH STREET, ROCHFORD (Minute 813/80)

It was reported that in accordance with Minute 813/80, which authorised the Chief Executive to negotiate for the acquisition of any available properties along South Street (East side), discussion had taken place with the owners on the purchase of this property. It was intended that the building be used temporarily to provide office accommodation for the Director of Leisure's staff. The District Valuer's advice had been sought and a price had been agreed subject to contract. If considered appropriate prior to completing a structural survey would be carried out.

Resolved (1) that the Director of Legal Services be authorised to acquire 31, South Street, Rochford at the District Valuer's valuation and subject to any other conditions he considers appropriate.

Council

(2) that in accordance with Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1976 application be made to use 31, South Street as office accommodation temporarily. (774) (DLS & DTP)

760. UNIFIED HOUSING BENEFITS - DELEGATION (Minute 572/82)

The Director of Finance reported that the Social Security and Benefits Act 1982 provided for authorised Officers to make decisions on behalf of an Authority in the operation of the scheme.

Resolved that the Director of Finance be authorised to make decisions on behalf of the Council in the operation of the Housing Benefits Scheme on the following items:-

1. Determination of claims generally. (Regulation 44)
2. Consideration of representations against any decision and notification to the applicants of the outcome. (Regulation 46)
3. The benefits payable on the two homes for a period not exceeding 4 weeks. (Regulation 5 (2))
4. Persons eligible for benefit. (Regulation 6 (b) and 7 (i) (b))
5. Assessment of earnings outside gainful occupation. (Regulation 14 (4))
6. Persons occupying a dwelling larger than is reasonably necessary. (Regulation 17(a))
7. Reductions due to unreasonably high rent or rates. (Regulation 17(b) and (c))
8. Additional housing benefits due to exceptional circumstances. (Regulation 22)

Council

9. Benefits by reference to another person's income. (Regulation 24)
10. Dates from which benefit is payable. (Regulation 25 (2))
11. Interim payment of rent allowance. (Regulation 35)
12. Withholding of payment. (Regulation 38)
13. Deductions in respect of charges for fuel and services, and in respect of rent, for the purposes of computing eligible rent. (Schedule 3)
14. Such other decisions that are required for the proper administration of the housing benefits scheme.

(18855) (DF)

Chairman

[Signature]

Date

8/2/82