

Community Services Committee – 4 April 2006

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **4 April 2006** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr S P Smith

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr K A Gibbs
Cllr Mrs L Hungate
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R A Amner, Mrs H L A Glynn and J Thomass.

OFFICERS PRESENT

G Woolhouse	- Head of Housing, Health & Community Care
S Clarkson	- Head of Revenue & Housing Management
D Timson	- Property, Maintenance & Highways Manager
M Martin	- Committee Administrator

114 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

115 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

(1) Application by Rayleigh Police Division – Renewal of Dispersal Powers (Minute 216/05)

Members noted that the draft report had now been passed to senior officers in the recently re-structured division who would be looking at the effectiveness of the dispersal powers together with future proposals, before reporting to Members.

Members were also keen to learn more about how re-structuring would impact on the local community and requested that a senior officer be invited to an appropriate Committee as early as mutually possible.

Resolved

That a senior ranking Police Officer be invited to a meeting of an appropriate Committee to advise Members on how the new policing arrangements will affect the local community. (CE)

(2) Report of the Windmill Sub-Committee (Minute 321/05)

Members noted that at the meeting of the Windmill Sub-Committee held on 31 March 2006 a number of issues had been considered. It had been recommended that the opening of the Windmill take place on 1 June 2006. This had been planned with a view to not coinciding too closely with the opening of the new Rayleigh Leisure Centre, so that maximum publicity could be given to both. A package of one-off events had been arranged within the Windmill, both before and after the opening date.

The Property, Maintenance & Highways Manager reported that, on behalf of the Council, he would be collecting a heritage award for the Windmill in this year's Green Apple Awards. Members noted that this was a national body and that publicity for the Windmill would be gained through their website.

In respect of the Council's application for a wedding licence for the Windmill, further investigation would be undertaken by the Management Group. The main obstacle was that the ground floor room, which would be used for such ceremonies, had to be able to accommodate at least 25 people, but a recent risk assessment had resulted in the setting of a limit of 18 people.

Resolved

That the official opening of The Windmill, Rayleigh, take place on 1 June 2006. (CD(ES))

(3) Development of Council Owned Land (Minute 363/05)

Members were advised that notice had been received from the Housing Corporation that funding had been approved for the development in Twyford Avenue and a range of other projects. It was a good settlement and the Head of Service would be advising Members in due course of the details.

(4) Consultation – Skateboard Half Pipe, Clements Hall Recreation Ground (Minute 366/05)

Members were advised that over 100 properties in the area adjacent to the site had been consulted in respect of this project, of which 15 had responded. Officers would continue to work closely with the local youth of the area to determine the final design.

116 HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME – LIFTS IN SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management advising Members of proposed changes to the Housing Capital Programme agreed in January 2006 following receipt of a consultant's report on the lifts in a number of sheltered housing schemes.

In response to questions, Members were advised that:-

- the transfer of money would result in a slight deferment of the kitchen replacement programme.
- temporary accommodation would be provided during the time of the lift installation for two residents who would not be able to manage without a lift.

Resolved

That the HRA Capital Programme item for kitchen replacements be reduced by £62,000 to accommodate lift replacements at Britton Court and Chignal House. (HRHM)

117 LAND AT HARTFORD CLOSE, RAYLEIGH

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management seeking agreement for the valuation and subsequent disposal of a piece of land to the owner of 16 Hartford Close, Rayleigh.

Officers advised that both Ward Members were in agreement to the disposal of this piece of land.

Resolved

That the Council seeks valuation of the land and that the Head of Legal Services arranges for the sale to the owner of 16 Hartford Close, Rayleigh on terms to be agreed. (HHHCC/HLS)

118 RACE EQUALITY MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management providing details of current applicants on the Housing Register.

In noting the report, Members were advised that applicants were required to identify their Ethnic Group on their completed form against a list of 17 statutorily defined categories including the term 'other – please specify'. The groups listed in the officer's report reflected their responses.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business on the grounds that exempt information as disclosed in Paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

119 CARAVAN SITE LICENCE CONDITIONS - UPDATE

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care relating to the breaches of caravan site licence conditions.

Members were advised that a letter had been received from the Essex Fire and Rescue Service commenting that, as the units had been in place for some considerable time, it would be reasonable for them to remain. However, in the event of the replacement of a mobile home or change of occupancy full compliance with the conditions would be required.

Officers advised that the site licence holder would be notified of the requirement, and that a record would remain on the files and be monitored on a regular basis. If full compliance was not achieved at the appropriate time, then it was anticipated that the fire authority would support enforcement of the licence conditions.

Resolved

That, having regard to the advice received from Essex Fire and Rescue Service, no prosecution be taken regarding the breaches of caravan site licence conditions detailed in the exempt report but that the site licence holder be advised of the need to ensure full compliance at such time as each mobile home is replaced or there is a change of occupier, and that compliance and any changes to site conditions be monitored during inspections. (HHHCC)

The meeting closed at 7.57 pm.

Chairman

Date