

Community Services Committee – 4 May 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Community Services Committee** held on **4 May 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr K A Gibbs (Chairman)
Cllr T E Goodwin (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr R G S Choppen
Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr Mrs L Hungate

Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr C R Morgan
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs R Brown and Mrs J R Lumley.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr C A Hungate

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
S Clarkson	Head of Revenue and Housing Management
J Pritchard	Housing Manager
M Martin	Committee Administrator

215 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

216 SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME MANAGEMENT

Note: Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being the County Council's Community Care Representative.

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management, which advised Members of the results of the final survey of tenants in Sheltered Accommodation to ascertain their views on the revised management arrangements.

The Head of Service introduced the recently appointed Housing Manager to the Committee. Members noted that he would be working on the service development side, with particular emphasis on the Stock Option Appraisal Exercise and compliance with the Decent Homes Standard.

Members noted that:-

- there had been a 75% response to the survey, which had supported live-in wardens supervising paired schemes. Tenants had also highlighted their need of a handyman service.
- additional finances, supplemented by the County Council, were available in the budget for an extension of the existing, general, Handyman Service.

In response to a Member question, the Head of Service confirmed that discussions were underway to try and develop a second intermediate care flat within the District. These flats represented a heavy financial commitment from the Primary Care Trust and Social Services, but the financial outlay for the District was recoverable through the rent.

The Head of Service reported that the first two tenants had been through the Spa Court flat and further evaluation would be carried out. Members and officers were in agreement that this scheme was to be applauded as it enabled the early release of patients from hospitals.

The Committee noted that the out-of-hours service provided by Basildon Careline was working very well and enabled routine calls to be sifted from emergency calls and passed to the duty warden. It was a cost effective service that resulted in fewer wardens being employed for evening, night and weekend cover.

A Member referred to a recent occasion when a resident within their Ward had needed to make use of this out-of-hours scheme and praised the service received.

Resolved

- (1) That scheme managers work a 37-hour week supervising paired schemes during the day time.
- (2) That 'Out-of-hours' calls continue to be referred to Basildon Careline.
- (3) That new working arrangements and rotas be adopted as soon as practically possible. (HRHM)

217 RACIAL EQUALITY MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management, and noted the contents.

Responding to questions, the Head of Service confirmed that he would provide Members with fuller details on the statistics relating to Ethnic groups on the Housing Register.

218 LITTLE WHEATLEYS ESTATE – PROPOSED ADOPTION OF AMENITY SPACE

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services), which sought Members' agreement to the formal adoption of amenity space remaining from the development of the Little Wheatleys estate.

Resolved

That the Head of Legal Services completes the transfer of the amenity area at Little Wheatleys to the Council, subject to the developer funding the required accommodation works, and providing the commuted sum of £1000 for maintenance, and meeting the Council's reasonable legal costs of the transfer and such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services considers appropriate. (HLS)

219 ESSEX BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which sought Members' view on the request for the Council to become a funding member of the Essex Biodiversity Partnership.

Members applauded the work of the Partnership and hoped that more local Councils would consider becoming funding partners.

Resolved

That the Council become a funding Member of the Essex Biodiversity Partnership. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Chairman

Date