

Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 12 February 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held on **12 February 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr T G Cutmore (Chairman)

Cllr P A Capon
Cllr K A Gibbs
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn

Cllr T Livings
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs S A Harper and Cllr C R Morgan.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr Mrs M S Vince and Cllr M A Starke

OFFICERS PRESENT

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|----------|-------------------------|
| P Warren | Chief Executive |
| A Bugeja | Head of Legal Services |
| M Martin | Committee Administrator |

76 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2004 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

77 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

Town and Parish Councils (Minute 531/03)

Members noted that the first meeting of the Parish Liaison Sub-Committee had been held and that once it had completed its deliberations, a report would be brought back to this Committee outlining the Sub-Committee's recommendations. (HFS)

Outstanding issues would be carried forward.

78 RAYLEIGH MARKET CAR PARK

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services which updated Members on the feasibility of maintaining some public car parking

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within the car park on market days following the Council's review of the current market arrangements earlier last year.

Members noted that a number of options had been examined in detail, but overwhelming practical difficulties with public safety and traffic circulation were envisaged if public car parking were to be combined with market use.

Members were, nevertheless, pleased that the feasibility of combined usage had been investigated, but felt the need to make provision within the new licence for the arrangements to be reviewed, should there be some material change in circumstances.

On a Motion moved by Cllr T G Cutmore and seconded by Cllr P A Capon it was:-

Recommended to the Policy and Finance Committee

That the licence with the current operator, Rayleigh Chartered Market, for the use of the market car park be renewed for a term of 7 years at a market rent and:-

- (1) on condition that the arrangements be reviewed should there be some material change in circumstances.
- (2) together with such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services considers appropriate. (HLS)

79 CPA 2005 – THE WAY AHEAD – A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, which detailed proposals put forward by the Audit Commission for changes to the framework for Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) from 2005.

Members noted that included within the proposals was the recommendation that the method of calculating the final rating would change from formula-driven to rule-driven. In general, it was felt the proposals through placing more emphasis on the availability and use of resources, and value for money issues might be more advantageous to the Authority, given its low levels of grant support and expenditure.

However, it was noted that our feedback to this consultation would not be able to take account of issues that might be identified during this Council's forthcoming CPA inspection.

Resolved

That the responses detailed in Appendix A to the report be agreed. (CE)

80 DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Committee received the report of the Chief Executive, which updated Members on progress in drafting the Community Strategy for the District prior to the strategy being finalised and approved by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

During discussion Members noted that:-

- Whilst the District had taken a lead role in the production of the strategy document, it was owned by the LSP.
- The LSP had agreed further amendments at its meeting held the previous week, but these were relatively minor in nature.
- Essex County Council had indicated that they had been unsuccessful in persuading Southend Borough Council to end its charging policy at civic amenity sites, for those living outside the Borough.
- Those actions assigned to the District Council would be fed into the budget process and would be reviewed with the annual monitoring of the Strategy.

Resolved

To note the progress made on the strategy to date and offer no further amendments/comments at this stage. (CE)

81 COMMUNITY SAFETY ACCREDITATION SCHEME

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, which apprised Members of a document concerning a community safety accreditation scheme that Essex Police were consulting on.

Members noted that this document had been discussed at a meeting of the Local Strategic Partnership the previous week, alongside discussion on the emerging Community Strategy. Concerns raised at that meeting had centred around costs, training and clarity around the rules. Partners had also commented that the Police appeared to be moving away from their civic role at a time when the public were already critical of the lack of Police presence.

During Member debate, the following points were noted:-

- Details around costs of fees for accreditation and training were not yet available.
- Essex Police would undertake the training and the accreditation.
- A rigorous vetting process would need to be followed.
- Concern that this could lead to accusations of vigilantism.
- Legislation specifically relating to terrorism was currently going through Parliament.
- The Council, as the employer, would need more details around insurance aspects.

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- The Council would need to identify those officers who might be considered for such an initiative.
- The Chief Executive would report back to Members once more details became available.

Resolved

That the officer comments outlined in the report be supported, with emphasis given to the following:-

- (1) vetting procedures
- (2) insurance aspects
- (3) manpower issues. (CE)

The meeting closed at 8.44 pm.

Chairman

Date