

Corporate Resources Sub-Committee – 18 September 2001

Minutes of the meeting of the **Corporate Resources Sub-Committee** held on **18 September 2001** when there were present:

Cllr D R Helson – Chairman

Cllr R Adams
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr Mrs J Helson
Cllr V H Leach
Cllr T Livings

Cllr P J Morgan
Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr D A Weir
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C R Morgan.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr P D Stebbing.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren	-	Chief Executive
J Honey	-	Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration)
R Crofts	-	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
J Bostock	-	Principal Committee Administrator

423 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2001 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

424 EASEMENT – 2 ANCHOR LANE COTTAGES, CANEWDON

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services on a request for an easement to enable vehicular access to be gained to the rear of 2 Anchor Lane Cottages, Canewdon.

RECOMMENDED

That the Head of Legal Services completes a Deed of Grant of Easement with the owner of 2 Anchor Lane Cottages, Canewdon, for the purposes of vehicular access and parking for up to three cars within that property, on such terms as are agreed by the District Valuer and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services thinks fit. (HLS)

425 LAND PART OF 67 QUEENS ROAD, RAYLEIGH

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services on a request from the proposed purchaser of 32 Bull Lane, Rayleigh to purchase land from the adjoining Council property.

Whilst recognising that this request related to a small area of land, Members felt that the report process should be revised so that local Ward Members are aware of any requests for land purchase at the earliest possible stage and can input any views based on local knowledge.

Any requests for purchase would continue to be reported to the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee when all salient factors can be considered.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the transfer of an area of land measuring approximately 13 metres in depth on the north-east and 12 metres in depth on the north west, with a width of approximately 11 metres (as shown edged with a thick black line on the plan attached to the report) to the proposed purchaser of 32 Bull Lane, Rayleigh at value and subject to a restriction as to its use and on such other terms as the Head of Legal Services considers appropriate be agreed.
- (2) That the purchaser meets the Council's legal and valuation fees at his own expense and erects a suitable fence to be agreed by the Council along the new rear boundary of 67 Queens Road, Rayleigh.
- (3) That the appropriate local Ward Member/s are made aware of any future requests for land purchase at the earliest possible stage. (HLS)

426 LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) on working with Essex County Council in respect of possible Local Public Service Agreements.

The Corporate Director advised that this subject had been discussed at the last meeting of the Town & Country Financial Issues Group (TACFIG). TACFIG was taking the view that Local Public Service Agreements could be seen within the context of community planning. TACFIG had been in consultation with the Local Government Association to identify how the concept of Agreements could be rolled out to District Councils. It appeared that the Government considers

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that such roll-out would prove cumbersome at the current time. There is currently an experiment involving Districts working together within the County of Kent.

Referring to resources, the Corporate Director advised that any monies placed with an unsuccessful scheme would be lost and that the formulation of Agreements could involve a fair amount of senior officer time. The Government had indicated that, should one Authority fail, others signing up to the Agreement would be penalised. Informal work was being undertaken with a view to allocating responsibilities specifically to Counties and Districts.

During debate a Member expressed some reservations about target setting aspects in the light of the Council's experience with the Best Value process. There is a possibility that potentially unobtainable targets could be set or measurements used which are skewed against the Authority. An important element should be that an Authority can be clearly identified as responsible for any targets set. As discussions continue, it will be important for the Authority to identify both the benefits and potential losses (particularly in monetary terms) which can flow from arrangements.

Responding to Member questions, Officers advised that:-

- In consulting with the County Council on determining the appropriateness of Local Public Service Agreements, it should be possible to develop precise ideas of what targets will be and areas of responsibility.
- This is a Local Government Association initiative, being seen by the Association as a way forward .
- Once committed, the Authority would be involved for a term of 3 years. It was unlikely initial work would take more than 5 working days involving Corporate Director/Heads of Service. More time would be involved at detailed negotiation stages.
- From current indications the County Council would be expected to develop Agreements on all 12 areas of activity identified in the report.
- Whilst it was not currently possible to identify the amount of monies associated with pump priming activity, a figure of approximately £100,000 could be associated with the Revenue Support Grant.

RECOMMENDED

That Officers determine the appropriateness of working with the County Council on Local Public Service Agreements and report back to this Sub-Committee should additional resources be required. (CD(F&ES))

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved

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

427 STAFFING MATTERS

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt report of the Chief Executive on the current position regarding staff vacancies and long-term sickness absence.

The Chief Executive advised that a number of vacancies were currently to be found within the Corporate Policy Unit and Sheltered Housing Scheme Management. The Chief Executive answered Members questions with regard to individual posts and the progress made to date on these.

Resolved

- (1) That the Chief Executive's report be noted.
- (2) That the terms of the Audit Officer post 10510 be extended from 33 hours to 37 hours a week. (CE)

428 LANDS TRIBUNAL

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) on action taken to date with regard to a Lands Tribunal case and the considerable level of personal time spent by the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on this matter.

In agreeing his action in permitting the Head of Revenue and Housing Management to attend an Institute of Rating Revenues and Valuation conference on 9/12 October 2001, Members accepted the suggestion

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of the Chief Executive that a review should be undertaken of the Staff Reward Scheme with a report back to this Sub-Committee later in the year.

Resolved

- (1) That the action of the Chief Executive as outlined be ratified
- (2) That a report be presented to a future meeting of the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee on the Staff Reward scheme. (CE)

The meeting closed at 8.33pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____