

Minutes of the meeting of the **Corporate Resources Sub-Committee** held on **Tuesday 28 March 2000** where there were present:

Cllr D E Barnes – Chairman

Cllr R Adams

Cllr G Fox

Cllr Mrs J M Giles

Cllr D Helson

Cllr Mrs J Helson

Cllr C R Morgan

Cllr V H Leach

Cllr T Livings

Cllr R E Vingoe

Cllr P F A Webster

Cllr Mrs M A Weir

### **VISITING MEMBER**

Cllr. J E Grey

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs W M Stevenson and D A Weir.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Warren – Chief Executive

R Crofts – Corporate Director ((Finance and External Services)

J Honey – Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration)

A Smith – Head of Administrative and Member Services

Mrs E Chapman – Personnel Manager

I Douce – Senior Environmental Health Officer

G Brazendale – Committee Administrator

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Mrs Chapman to this, her first Meeting of the Sub-Committee.

### **311 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

The following non-pecuniary interests were declared.

- Councillor V H Leach in the report concerning Hawkwell Village Fair (Minute 320) by virtue of being a Hawkwell Parish Councillor.
- Councillor C R Morgan on the reports concerning Hullbridge Village Fair (Minute 321) and the Open Air Concert at Hullbridge (Minute 325) by virtue of being a Hullbridge Parish Councillor and acquaintance with the applicant respectively.
- Councillor R E Vingoe in the report concerning the application to hire public open space at King George's Playing Field (Minute 318)
- by virtue of association with some of the churches involved in the proposal.

- Councillor Mrs M A Weir in the reports concerning the Hawkwell Village Fair (Minute 320) and the Rochford May Fayre (Minute 322) by virtue of being a Hawkwell and Rochford Parish Councillor respectively.

### **312 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the adjourned meeting of 25 January and of the reconvened meeting of 15 February 2000 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

The latter were discussed in further detail in the private and confidential section of the agenda. (Minute 327)

### **313 REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Chairman introduced and welcomed to the meeting Mrs Jane Elgar, Director of Strategy, from the East of England Development Agency who gave a presentation concerning the remit, role, and targets of the Agency, together with examples of various initiatives already undertaken.

It was explained that the Agency's remit was to achieve sustainable economic development for the region, with responsibility both to central government and the regional partners. Its principal role was twofold: strategic, seeking ways in which the region's' economy could be improved; and the implementation of a series of regeneration programmes, for which the budget available was £27 million. The Agency had produced a Regional Economic Strategy, comprising a ten year plan for economic regeneration and development, which would be refined and enhanced over the next two years. A vision for the region's economy and quality of life had been identified, and a key component that would contribute towards its achievement was enhancement of the knowledge/skills base of the working population.

Mrs Elgar described a number of initiatives that the Agency was currently undertaking, which included the following:-

- Regeneration projects funded from the Single Regeneration Budget, for which bids were currently being considered.
- Analysis of the opportunities for economic development associated with extension of the Thames Gateway.
- Development of a skills strategy for the region.
- Promotion of the use of new technology by offering E-Commerce awards.
- Recycling/environmental projects.
- Preparation of a programme to achieve sustainable economic development of the infrastructure, based upon analysis of similar international initiatives.

- Developing a regional observatory providing an information and intelligence service.

Nine action plans had been drawn up to implement these initiatives.

During subsequent discussion, Mrs Elgar provided the Sub-Committee with further information on the following matters:

- The structure and funding of the agency.
- The criteria for assessing bids for funding, which related mainly to measures of economic deprivation. Members were anxious to ensure that economically deprived Wards within the District would be the subject of future bids for funding, and the Chief Executive indicated that it was intended to bring a further report to the Sub-Committee concerning the bidding process.
- Measures to ensure regional co-ordination of initiatives, which included appointment to a new post specifically for this purpose, whilst at the same time ensuring that the differing identities and aspirations of sub-regional areas were reinforced and promoted
- The “Market Town Initiative”.
- Possible economic opportunities for Southend Airport as part of the Thames Gateway, the development of which was being considered in conjunction with a joint working party including Kent.
- The remit and focus of the Investment Agency.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Mrs Elgar, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, for a most interesting presentation.

### **314 MEMBER TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services which sought approval to the Council becoming a signatory to a training charter for Councillors. It also outlined the arrangements for an intensive period of training for new and existing Councillors immediately following the elections (a suggested programme for which was appended to the report) and recommended the provision of self-tuition facilities in the Members’ Lounges at Rayleigh and at Rochford. The report also explained how a Council e-mail address and internet access could be made available for Members’ use.

It was noted that the Council had received requests from the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IdeA) that a Councillor Training Charter be

adopted, and details of each organisations’ proposals were examined by the Sub-Committee. A motion by Councillor P F A Webster and seconded by Councillor R Adams that neither Charter should be adopted was, upon a vote being taken, declared lost. A motion by

Councillor G Fox and seconded by Councillor V H Leach that the LGIU Charter be adopted was, following a vote, declared carried.

The Sub-Committee was reminded that when Member training had been considered in 1999, it was suggested that training might also be made available in the use of common IT software applications such as Word and Excel and some proposals were discussed, as follows:

- Training sessions for staff currently held during the working day be opened up for Members to attend.
- Learning resources be made available within the Members' lounges at Rayleigh and at Rochford. This would involve the provision of a PC and printer in each lounge together with a self-tuition programme.

These proposals, and additional measures to allow Members to make greater use of the Council's I T network and facilities, were welcomed by the Sub-Committee. The Head of Administrative and Member Services indicated, in response to a Member question, that the Civic Suite was being examined to ensure secure storage of the additional I.T. equipment.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That the LGIU Training Charter for Members be adopted.
- (1) That self-tuition facilities in the Members' lounges at Rochford and at Rayleigh including the acquisition of two PCs and training materials at a cost of £3,000, be provided.
- (1) That Members of the Council be allowed to make use of the Council's I.T. facilities, including email addresses and internet access, in support of their duties as Councillors. (HAMS)

#### **315 MANAGING VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE – CODE OF PRACTICE NO. 1**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services which sought agreement to the adoption of a Code of Practice on Managing Violence in the Workplace. A draft version of the Code of Practice was appended to the report.

It was noted that the comments of individual staff members and UNISON had been taken into account in preparing the draft, and that the document had generally been welcomed.

A Member expressed concern about the security of the Authority's reception staff in certain locations, and the Head of Administrative and Member Services confirmed that this issue was being examined as part

of the review of the Council's reception services currently being undertaken. A further report on this matter would be presented to a future Meeting of the Sub-Committee. Members requested that a number of textual changes be made to the Code of Practice, as follows:

- Revision of the document's title.
- Police involvement (paragraph 4.6). Contact with the Police should, if agreed, be made through an individual's line manager, as suggested elsewhere in the document.
- Visiting clients at home (paragraph 7.3). It was considered important that staff should both follow rather than precede the client, and ensure that the door is not locked behind them.
- General guidance on violent situations (paragraph 8). It was agreed to delete examples of violent body language.

### **RECOMMENDED**

That the Code of Practice for Managing Violence in the Workplace (a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes) be adopted, subject to the amendments as listed above, and be included in the Staff Handbook. (HAMS)

### **316. COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) which gave details of the new Community Legal Service, to be introduced on 3 April 2000. It was noted that the new Service would seek to provide:

- A network of quality suppliers which should include the range of advice providers
- Support by co-ordinated funding
- A service based on need

A number of seminars had been organised regionally and locally in order to promote the service. In addition Officers from Castle Point Borough Council and Rochford had met with CAB representatives from the two Council areas and the Regional Planning and Partnership Manager of the Legal Aid Board Eastern Region.

Whilst Local Authority participation would be entirely voluntary, it was anticipated that when authorities carry out best value reviews on the funding of advice giving services over future years, they would be expected to have given serious consideration to embracing the scheme.

Members noted that the scheme would seek to forge partnerships between funders, providers and consumers, called Community Legal Service Partnerships (CLSP's). It was likely that local authorities would

be the prime movers in establishing the partnerships and carrying out the necessary preliminary work, with consequent staffing and financial costs. Possible collaboration with Castle Point Borough Council, in order to lessen these costs, was therefore considered. Members were disappointed to note that, other than a small amount of “pump – priming” funding, there would be no additional finance for Local Authorities to develop the scheme, and requested that the likely costs to this Council of implementing the proposals be included in a future report to the Sub-Committee. It was also suggested that the possible provision of a comprehensive advice service by the Council itself on a wide range of the services it provides including, for example, housing could be examined as part of a future strategy.

Draft guidance was anticipated to be available in April, with a final document published in July.

On a Motion by Councillor V H Leach and seconded by Councillor C R Morgan, it was:

### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That following publication of the draft guidance, Officers investigate the proposal further in collaboration with Castle Point Borough Council and report back to this Sub-Committee.
- (1) That when the above report is submitted, the Regional Planning and Partnership Manager of the Legal Services Commission be invited to give a presentation on the subject. (CD(F&ES))

### **317 ASSOCIATION OF ESSEX COUNCILS (AEC) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which sought Member nominees to attend an AEC Economic Development Seminar on 14 April 2000.

The purpose of the seminar was to explore the implications for economic development activity in Essex of the changes caused by both

the Government’s modernising agenda and the establishment of the Regional Development Agency.

### **RECOMMENDED**

That one Member be nominated from each Group plus the Chairs of Finance and General Purposes and Corporate Resources Sub-Committee (or their nominees) to attend the AEC Economic Development Seminar on 14 April 2000. (HCPI)

### **318 APPLICATION TO HIRE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AT THE KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD, ASHINGDON**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which sought Members' views upon an application by the Churches of Rochford and District to hold a six day Millennium celebration event at the King George V Playing Field, Ashingdon. Details of the event's organisation, management and the facilities to be provided were received.

The Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) reported that, since preparation of the report, the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) in whose control the field lay, had indicated that closure of much or all of the park to the public for six days, would be unacceptable. In addition, a market rent would, under the Charities Act (1993), need to be charged. The Sub-Committee was, however, keen to support the application and therefore suggested that a specific area of the park could be made exclusively available to the Churches in order to avoid complete closure of the field; and that a grant equal to the market rent for hire of the field be awarded to the Churches' organisation from the playing field maintenance budget.

The Sub-Committee was also informed that the proposed event could require a public entertainment licence, which would be the subject of a separate application.

On a motion by Councillor D E Barnes and seconded by Councillor R E Vingoe, it was

### **RECOMMENDED**

That the Churches' request be agreed, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) That the playing field be kept open, and an area marked out exclusively for the Churches' use.
  
- (2) That the Churches apply for a public entertainment licence for the event, if required.
  
- (2) That a market rent for the field's hire be levied, but a grant of a corresponding sum be awarded from the playing field maintenance budget. (HLCS)

### **319 APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE FEES – BARN DANCE, NEW HALL FARM, LAMBOURNE HALL ROAD, CANEWDON**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care which gave details of an application for the waiver of Public Entertainment Licence fees relating to a barn

dance being organised by Canewdon Community Association. A copy of the application, together with the Community Association's audited accounts were appended to the report.

Members noted that it was intended to use funds raised from the event for the upkeep and maintenance of the Village Hall.

**RECOMMENDED**

That a waiver of 80% of the fee due for a public entertainment licence be granted. (HHHCC)

**320 APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE FEES – HAWKWELL VILLAGE FAIR**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care which gave details of an application for the waiver of Public Entertainment Licence fees relating to a Millennium Village Fair being organised by Hawkwell Parish Council. A copy of the application, together with the Parish Council's audited accounts, and a summary of the entertainment to be provided were appended to the report.

Members noted that the purpose of the event was to bring together the local community to celebrate the Millennium Year, and that there would be free public admission. The Parish Council had undertaken to meet the running costs of the event.

**RECOMMENDED**

That a waiver of 100% of the fee due for a public entertainment licence be granted. (HHHCC)

**321 APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE FEES – HULLBRIDGE VILLAGE FAIR**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care which gave details of an application for the waiver of Public Entertainment Licence fees relating to a Millennium Village Fair being organised by Hullbridge Parish Council. A copy of the application, together with the Parish Council's audited accounts were appended to the report.

Members noted that the objective of the Fair was to provide free entertainment for the local community and to enable voluntary organisations within the village to raise funds. Public admission would be free, and a discretionary payment would be requested from the organisations that would be present.

**RECOMMENDED**



That a waiver of 100% of the fee due for a public entertainment licence be granted. (HHHCC)

**322 APPLICATION FOR STREET TRADING CONSENT FEE WAIVER  
MAY FAYRE, MARKET SQUARE & WEST STREET, ROCHFORD**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care which requested Members to determine the fee due if Street Trading Consent was to be granted for a May Fayre organised by Rochford Parish Council at Market Square and West Street, Rochford, on Sunday 30 April 2000,

Members noted that the application related to stalls at the Fayre run by charitable/voluntary organisations and a commercial candy floss stall; any other traders wishing to participate would need to apply for their own Street Trading Consent. The purpose of the event was to maintain the tradition of an annual Fayre in Rochford which would involve community groups and schools in providing entertainment and allow charitable organisations to raise funds and recruit new members.

**RECOMMENDED**

That a waiver of 100% of the fee due for a Street Trading Consent Licence be granted. (HHHCC)

**323 RELOCATION OF FLOOD SIREN AT HULLBRIDGE**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services which sought approval to the relocation of the Hullbridge flood siren, from County Council owned land, to a site within Hullbridge

Recreation Ground, in the ownership of this Council. A plan showing the proposed site was attached to the report.

It was noted that the proposal would need to be the subject of a planning application, which would involve public consultation. A licence at a nominal fee would be drawn up with the County Council.

**RECOMMENDED**

That, subject to planning permission, the Head of Legal Services completes a licence at a nominal fee with Essex County Council for the erection of a flood warning siren in the approximate position within Hullbridge Recreation Ground as marked on the plan attached to the report and on such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services deems fit. (HLS)

**324 RAYLEIGH ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided information on the latest position of the Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Services. (RAVS).

It was noted that, in late February, notification had been provided by RAVS that their offices in Rochford would be temporarily closed until further notice. Further clarification had since been sought as to the Association's plans, and a letter from the Vice-Chairman, a copy of which had been circulated to Members, had been received. The Council, through this Sub-Committee, had agreed to grant aid RAVS a sum of £1,500 in 2000/2001 and it was agreed that given the current position, the Council should defer any payment of the grant until further clarification was provided.

Members agreed that this matter should be considered in further detail in the private and confidential section of the Agenda, as outlined in Minute 328.

### **RECOMMENDED**

That the payment to RAVS of £1,500 grant aid for 2000/2001 be deferred until the position of the organisation can be clarified. (CEX)

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

#### **Resolved**

That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraphs 7 and 1

of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **325 APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE FEES: OPEN AIR CONCERT & CUSTOM/CLASSIC SHOW, MALYONS FARM, LOWER ROAD, HULLBRIDGE**

The Sub-Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which gave details of an application for the waiver of Public Entertainment Licence fees relating to an open air concert and custom/classic show at Malyons Farm, Lower Road, Hullbridge. A copy of the application, together with supporting financial details, was appended to the report.

Members noted that the purpose of the event was to raise funds for physically handicapped children, and details of the sums donated from a similar event in 1999 were received.

### **RECOMMENDED**

That a waiver of 80% of the fee due for a public entertainment licence be granted. (HHHCC)

### **326 CHIEF OFFICERS' REMUNERATION**

Members noted the information provided from a comparative survey involving other Local Authorities and the guidance issued by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities.

**RECOMMENDED**

That the grade for 3<sup>rd</sup> tier officers subject to JNC Chief Officer pay and conditions be amended as outlined in the confidential report. (CEX)

**327 CORPORATE RESOURCES SUB COMMITTEE – 15 FEBRUARY 2000 (Min 310)**

Arising out of the above Minute the Sub-Committee received a report from the Chief Executive dealing with personnel issues. The Sub-Committee was of the view that these matters should be addressed without further delay and requested a meeting of Finance & General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee to consider its recommendations which are contained in a separate confidential Minute. (CEX)

**327 RAYLEIGH ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES**

The Sub-Committee noted confidential information received by a member from the Acting Chairman of RAVS with regard to the closure of the Rochford Resource Centre. (CEX)

The meeting closed at 10.20pm.

Chairman

Date

Final Corporate Resources 28 March mins