



**Rochford District
Council**

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1999

January - December

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**Rochford District
Council**

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL MINUTES

1999

September (Part 2)

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 7 September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes, T G Cutmore, J M Dickson, D M Ford, K A Gibbs, D R Helson, Mrs J Helson, V D Hutchings, R A Pearson, Mrs W M Stevenson, Mrs M S Vince and Mrs M J Webster

Apologies: Councillor P A Beckers.

122. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor V D Hutchings was appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee for the Municipal year

123. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 23 June 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

124. CRIME & DISORDER STRATEGY MONITORING UPDATE 1

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which updated Members on the current situation with regard to the actions required by the Crime & Disorder Strategy. During discussion the following points were raised by Members.

7.1 Primary Objective – Reduce the number of incidences of criminal damage (vandalism within Rochford District).

.1 – Members noted that the action would be ongoing.

.6 – Due to the nature of schools within the District, with some being grant-maintained, the task was considered ambitious and possibly unachievable. Rochford District Council Officers would be meeting with the Essex County Council Education Department to clarify this and other matters.

.7 – Mention was made of incidents concerning shopping trolleys being used in attacks against motor vehicles and Members considered that Officers should investigate the re-introduction of a fine system with supermarkets on abandoned shopping trolleys. Members agreed that a letter should be sent to supermarkets asking them to consider introducing deposits for trolleys to do what they can to prevent trolleys, being used inconsiderately. It was noted that, as a result of the September meeting of Transportation Sub-Committee being cancelled, this item would need to be reported to the next meeting of Transportation and Environmental Services Committee

.12 – Members were pleased to note that since the Crime & Disorder Road Show, six new Neighbourhood Watches had been set up within the District.

13 – Mobile CCTV was raised as an issue by a number of Members. It was noted that whilst the existing cameras were able to work at night using infra red technology, there was still no provision for outside all weather cameras. Concern was expressed with reference to the next item (Police Report – Minute 125 "CCTV") of cameras being underused. Some Members had often requested cameras for use within their

Wards, but had been told that all cameras were in use. Members agreed that future requests should be made directly to Inspector Coady of Rayleigh Police in order that requests could be monitored. In response to a question as to whether Rochford District Council should have its own set of cameras, Members were advised of the need to consider new legislation governing the use of CCTV currently being implemented.

7.2 – Primary Objective 3 – Carry out a data-led programme of Road Safety of Road Safety as set out in the County Council and Rochford District Council Road Safety Plan for 1998/2000.

With regard to "Cycle Training", Members noted that whilst cycling on pavements had always been an offence, it now carried a fixed penalty fine for over 16s. Members further noted however that identification of offenders could be difficult.

Members requested an update, in respect of "Reception Walks", to the next meeting, particularly regarding whether other schools in the District had been invited to participate.

With regard to "Safer Journeys to School", a Member questioned whether schools could be approached with regard to parent congregation outside schools during morning and afternoon pick-up and drop-off times, occasionally causing obstruction, to the detriment of highway safety. It was considered appropriate also for Essex County Council Highways Department to be approached in this regard.

7.3 Primary Objective – Drug and Alcohol Related Abuse – To Reduce Crime and Disorder Attributable to Drug and Alcohol Related Abuse District-wide.

.5 – Members agreed in principle for £100 per person to be set aside for the next Financial Year for Rochford pupils to participate in the Teemex Peer Education Programme and considered that the proposal should be brought back for approval at the appropriate time.

7.6.6. Domestic Violence

Members requested, if possible, feedback on the Secondary Schools Education Programme.

7.7(a) Primary Objective – To Reduce the Levels of Crime & Disorder and to Address the Causes of Crime & Disorder in Rochford Roche Ward.

.11 – Members were advised that the matter was in hand, Essex County Council Social Services saw no problem with meeting the September 2000 deadline.

Further to the debate, Members were mindful of the need to be kept properly apprised of all developments within the Crime & Disorder Strategy and requested that future reports should contain a critical analysis of all partners action in achieving the strategy aims. It was further considered that the format of the report was correct, although some correlation by date would aid the Sub-Committee in noting imminent deadlines.

RECOMMENDED

That update reports be submitted to future Meetings of the Sub-Committee taking into account the points outlined above. (HCPI)

124. POLICE REPORT

The Sub-Committee received and noted the report of the Head of Corporate Policy & Initiatives which apprised Members of the current situation as far as the police action on the Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy is concerned. Chief Inspector Bottrill took Members item by item through the Appendix to the Report. Members questions were answered specifically in relation to –

- Drug-related crimes
- Anti-social behaviour statistics.
- Neighbourhood Watch including the promotion through the Yellow Advertiser.
- The number of door-step crimes, questionnaires in Rayleigh High Street, charity collections and cold-calling via the telephone.
- The use of mobile phones for victims of domestic violence.

Further to the point in relation to increased promotion of Neighbourhood Watches, Members considered that Parish Council Newsletters could be an appropriate vehicle for such matters. Members also expressed an interest in widening the coverage from the one newspaper used at present, using Crime and Disorder funds if necessary.

125. ROCHE AND ST ANDREWS WARD: WARD PROFILE (Minute 132/99)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which sought Members approval and funding for the first stage of achieving a comprehensive Ward profile by engaging residents in the process of community involvement. It was noted that the Council's Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy had identified various priority areas, which included parts of these Wards for action. South Essex Health/Rochford Primary Care Group Locality Action Programme 1999/2002 also identified Roche Ward as the main priority area within Rochford District, however, given its proximity, they were prepared to include St. Andrews Ward.

Members endorsed the proposed way forward, for an "Information and Briefing day" to be held on 22nd September 1999, with as diverse a representative attendance as possible, with this Authority contributing £1000 from the Crime & Disorder Budget towards a small central fund to facilitate the next phase of public consultation. On a Motion put by Councillor D M Ford and seconded by Councillor R A Pearson, it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That an allocation of £1000 from the Crime & Disorder Budget facilitate the initial phase of the public consultation be agreed.
- (2) That further update reports be submitted to future Meetings of this Sub-Committee. (HCPI)(HHHCC)

126 EASTWOOD WARD: A SURVEY TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF VULNERABILITY TO CRIME & DISORDER ISSUES

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy & Initiatives which informed Members of a proposal to conduct a survey in Eastwood Ward and appraise them of the cost implication. It was noted that the Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy has highlighted Eastwood Ward as an area of concern and Primary Objective 7.7(c) Action 4 required that a survey be completed in Eastwood Ward which identified areas of vulnerability to Crime & Disorder issues with particular emphasise on harassment.

The proposal for a questionnaire to be sent to the residents of the Ward, incorporating a "free draw" of a sponsored dinner for two prize, to encourage residents to complete and return the form was endorsed as a suitable way forward.

Members further noted the questionnaire would include questions about traffic conditions on the Anne Boleyn Estate and that Essex County Council Transportation and Operational Services would be conducting a Traffic Survey in the area in the Autumn, placing a caravan in the area for display and consultation purposes. The proposal that a Member of the Community Safety Department of this Council be in attendance to discuss any relevant matters with residents and also to further the public awareness campaign was endorsed.

Members requested further information as to the availability of Essex County Council's caravan for hire, for use at other events.

A Member reminded the meeting of funds in the Capital Programme for Rochford's own vehicle for such purposes and the Sub-Committee requested a feasibility report on the matter as soon as possible. On a Motion put by Councillor D M Ford and seconded by Councillor Mrs. M.S. Vince, it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the proposals to hold a survey in Eastwood Ward as outlined in the report be agreed.
- (2) That an allocation of £500 for production of the questionnaire, posters and to carry out the mail drop be agreed. (HCPI)

127. GRANGE AND RAWRETH WARD: SURVEY TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF VULNERABILITY TO CRIME AND DISORDER ISSUES

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which sought Members approval for the first stage of the consultation process to achieve the objectives set out in the Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy Primary Objective 7.7.(d) Complete a Survey which identifies area of Vulnerability to Crime & Disorder Issues with particular emphasis on harassment. Members noted that the Council's Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy had identified parts of Grange and Rawreth Ward as priority areas for action. The proposal for a series of "road show" format public meetings to be held throughout the Ward beginning in Rawreth involving the Youth Service were endorsed by Members as an appropriate way forward, with any expense incurred being met from money set aside within the Crime & Disorder Budget. On a show of hands, it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the "road show" format for public meetings be approved.
- (2) That Members note the change in timetable for the completion of the survey.
- (3) That an amount of £500 be set aside for this part of the survey.
- (4) That progress reports be received by this Sub-Committee (HCPI)

128. **PROOF OF AGE SCHEME: UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which sought Members approval for additional funding for the Proof of Age Cards and appraise Members of the current situation regarding the launch of the scheme.

In noting the background to the scheme, Members considered that the shortfall of £271 for this Authority's contribution to the scheme and also the £500 for the launch could be met from the Crime & Disorder Budget and on a show of hands it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That funding the shortfall of £271 for provision of the Proof of Age Cards be agreed.
- (2) That arrangements for the launch of the Scheme be approved.
- (3) That an additional amount of £500 to cover expenses for the launch of the Scheme be approved. (HCPI)(HFS)

129. **DISTRICT EMERGENCY PLAN REVIEW – FIRST DRAFT**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services which gave Members an opportunity to consider the first draft of the new District Emergency Plan, and sought authority to conduct necessary wide-spread consultation with external agencies and partner Authorities. Noting the background to the Review, Members raised the following points:

- Recognition of animal welfare issues in emergency situations and the logistics involved in such issues.
- The need for management issues to be correctly placed in documentation so as not to give the wrong impression regarding the Authority's priorities.
- The need for adequate training.
- The inclusion of the Civil Aviation Authority in the section relating to Roles and Responsibility.
- The security for any emergency rooms/buildings.

In endorsing the consultation process suggested, Members considered further that due to the sensitive nature of information kept within the document, the proposed Yellow Pages detailing home and addresses and phone numbers of staff should be printed on purple paper in order for its confidentiality to be easily recognised.

RECOMMENDED

That Officers be authorised to consult with external agencies and partner Local Authorities as outlined in the report. (6402)(HLS)

The Meeting closed at 10.15pm.

Chairman... 

Date... 21/10/99

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leisure Sub Committee

At a Meeting held on 8th September 1999. Present: Councillors J M Dickson, D M Ford, K A Gibbs, J E Grey, N Harris, D R Helson, Mrs A R Hutchings and Mrs M J Webster.

Apologies: Councillors P A Beckers and Mrs S J Lemon.

Substitute: Councillor Mrs J M Giles.

Visiting: Councillor P F A Webster.

51. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor D M Ford was appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year.

52. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 10th February 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

53 MEMBERS INTEREST

Councillor Mrs A R Hutchings declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item 'Arts Audit and Draft Strategy' (Minute 54) by virtue of being Chairman of the Hockley Chamber of Trade.

54. ARTS AUDIT AND DRAFT STRATEGY

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which sought Members approval of the draft Art Strategy and proposed the appointment of an Arts Development Officer. Members welcomed Ms Anita Tebbutt, the consultant who had been commissioned by the Eastern Arts Board to undertake the Arts Audit and produce an Arts Strategy for the Rochford District. With the aid of view foils Ms Tebbutt presented to Members the key considerations of adopting an Arts Strategy, the background of Local Cultural Strategies, of which Rochford had already completed its Leisure Strategy, and the proposed way forward including the establishment of an Arts Development Officer to carry out the aims of the proposed strategy.

Members questions were answered specifically in relation to the following:-

- The Department of Culture Media and Sports guidance on the production of Local Cultural Strategies, and Rochford's preferred "Service Specific" approach to achieving this.
- The work undertaken in production of the draft Arts Strategy.
- The cultural nature of the Rochford District
- Participation in the Arts In Transit (AIT2000) Project.

DMJab

Members were divided in their support for the introduction of an Arts Development Officer post, given the current financial uncertainties for the Authority. It was considered appropriate for the draft strategy to form the basis of a consultation with the public in order for their views to be taken into consideration. Members further considered that the appointment of an Arts Development Officer could be decided once the consultation response was known.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the draft Arts Strategy be adopted subject to the outcome of public consultation
- (2) That consideration of the Arts Development Officer post be reviewed in light of the response to the Arts Strategy Consultation. (HLCS)(576)

55. CIRCA LEISURE MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Sub-Committee noted the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services with regard to the latest Circa Leisure Management Report. Mrs Wendy Edwards from Circa Leisure attended the meeting to answer Members questions relating to the report.

The issue of season ticket holders and a swipe card facility was mooted by a Member and the Sub-Committee noted that as yet this, facility had not been actioned although it was an issue Circa Leisure Plc were keen to install at Clements Hall.

Mindful of the works being carried out at Mill Hall as part of the refurbishment works, Members considered the request for the redecoration of the Coffee Mill at the same time was to be supported. The issue of signage at the site, in particular the Coffee Mill was considered to be an issue which could be investigated further.

With regard to Great Wakering Sport Centre and the proposed refurbishment, Members noted that finances had not yet been found for the proposal.

Congratulating Circa Leisure Plc on their achievement of 'highly commended' in their renewal of the Quest Accreditation at Clements Hall. Members were pleased to note the Award to Mr James Myhill of Clements Hall as Health and Fitness Manager of the Year.

56. CLEMENTS HALL LEISURE CENTRE

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services following a request from Circa Leisure to convert the Gallery Office in Clements Hall Leisure Centre into three separate therapy rooms to accommodate an aromatherapist, dietician and physiotherapist. Noting Circa Leisure would fund all works and ensure all building regulations would be adhered to, Members wished to see that alternative accommodation would be found for those items currently stored within the room and on a show of hands it was

RECOMMENDED

That Circa Leisure be granted permission to carry out the works detailed in the report. (HLCS)(6771)

57. ROCHFORD DISTRICT TOWN TRAILS (Minute 472/98)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which gave Members an opportunity to consider the draft Town Trails and District

Trail produced by a Blue Badge Guide which had been agreed by the Leisure Services Sub-Committee in November 1998. Members were pleased to note the production of the draft leaflets, although as there seemed to be a number of minor factual errors it was considered appropriate to seek the Parish Council and Town Council's involvement at this stage, to ensure accuracy and appropriateness of content of the District Town Trails, with the matter being brought back to the November Meeting of the Community Services Committee for approval.

RECOMMENDED

That before production of the Town and District Trails, accuracy is ascertained with Parish and Town Councils and that the matter be brought back to the November meeting of the Community Services Committee. (HLCS)(131)

58 SPORTS DEVELOPMENT (Minute 89/98)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which requested that Members identify a budget for sports development activities for the forthcoming financial year. Mindful of the history and background to the work of the Sports Development Officer, Members endorsed a request for £4,000 to be set aside for sports development for the forthcoming financial year. Members further requested that Officers produce a report to the Members Budget Monitoring Working Group detailing a draft three year strategy for Leisure to enable forward planning for Sports Development to continue.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Community Services Committee be requested to include provision of £4,000 as part of the budget process for the forthcoming financial year.
- (2) That a report be submitted to the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group detailing a three year strategy for Leisure Service Budgets (HLCS)(33562)

The Meeting closed at 10.15pm.

Chairman *D.M. Jod*

Date .. *2-11-99*

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 9 September 1999. Present: Councillors C R Morgan (Chairman) and V H Leach

Apologies: Councillor G Fox.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 29 July 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE FEES - BARN DANCE AT LUBBARDS FARM, RAYLEIGH

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care on an application for waiver of Public Entertainment Licence Fees for a Barn Dance to be held at Lubbards Farm, Rayleigh on 24th September 1999.

Members noted that the application met with the Council's criteria and it was:-

Resolved

That, subject to the Public Entertainment Licence for the Barn Dance at Lubbards Farm, Rayleigh being issued, a 100% fee waiver be granted. (HHHCC)

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

7. CONSULTANCY FOR THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CONTRACT (Minute 319/97)

NOTE: The Chairman admitted this item of business as urgent on the grounds that the contract was due to commence in the week commencing 13th September 1999

The Sub-Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Administrative & Member Services on the award of a contract for consultancy to support the re-letting of the Council's Information Technology Facilities Management Contract. Copies of the original tenders were available for Member inspection.

Responding to questions, the Head of Administrative & Member Services emphasised that tenders have been evaluated on the basis of cost; evidence of how the consultant might meet the specification, relevant experience of procuring facility management contractors and knowledge of the information technology market place and its future development. The discrepancies between the twenty eight tenders received was likely to be due to a combination of interpretation of the Council's specification and varying day rate charges.

During debate, Members recognised that it was important to consider the qualitative nature of bids. Whilst £1,500 above the original budget figure, it was agreed that the bid from Vantagepoint (who had submitted the sixth lowest tender) most clearly met the Council's specification.

Resolved

- (1) That the Information Technology Facilities Management Contract, commencing 13th September 1999, be awarded to Vantagepoint in the sum of £31,500.
- (2) That a further £1,500 be added to the Information Technology Consultancy budget head, to be met from contingencies. (HAMS/HFS)

The Meeting closed at 6.40pm

Chairman

Date

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ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environmental Health Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 14 September 1999. Present: Councillors A Hosking (Chairman), Mrs J E Ford, J E Grey, V H Leach, Mrs M S Vince and Mrs M J Webster.

Apologies Councillors G C Angus, B R Ayling, P A Beckers, D M Ford, K A Gibbs and C C Langlands

Substitutes: Councillors J M Dickson, Mrs J M Giles, Mrs J Helson and Mrs M A Werr.

Visiting: Councillor D E Barnes

Advisor: Mrs J V Rigby (Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils).

75. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 August 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

76. A WAY WITH WASTE – A DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY FOR ENGLAND AND WALES – CONSULTATION PAPER

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives and Head of Housing, Health and Community Care giving Members the opportunity to comment on the Government's proposals on waste outlined in the consultation paper "A Way With Waste – A Draft Strategy for England and Wales"

Members were disappointed that the consultation document had not been produced in a style of English more comprehensible to the layman. The short consultation time which had been allowed for this document was criticised. In endorsing the comments outlined in the report Members raised the following points:-

- The Authority's policy was to oppose incineration and the proposed strategic waste management site in West Rayleigh.
- Contributions from landfill operators to develop new and innovative uses of recycled materials and the regulations concerning the same.
- The need to identify markets for recycled products including issues relating to cost, best value and a brokerage system.
- Concern over the large variations outlined in the report relating to incinerator capacity, MRF and composting facilities.
- The need for Central Government funds or an increase in the SSA to allow the strategy to be implemented.
- The need for regional rather than National strategies.

- Concern over the proposal for a single tier waste authority.

Members were of the opinion that the response for the consultation should not only include the comments outlined in the Heads of Service report and the comments outlined above, but also the Ecologika strategies previously considered by this Authority, as proof of the Council's intention to implement a waste strategy. The Ecologika reports were to be copied to the Minister as well as the two local MPs.

Concern was further expressed over the seeming lack of direction from Central Government over this important issue

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That subject to the comments listed above, this report accompanied by the Ecologika strategies previously considered by this Authority form the basis of a response to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions on the consultation document "A Way With Waste".
- (2) That a copy of the response be sent direct to the relevant Minister and to both Dr Michael Clark MP and Sir Teddy Taylor MP. (HCPI)

77. WASTE MANAGEMENT/SCHOOL RESOURCE DATA BASE (Minute 103/99)

The Sub-Committee received and noted the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives outlining a waste management project that was being undertaken within the District, in partnership with the Business Education Partnership (South East Essex).

In endorsing the project which attempted to turn waste from local businesses into resources which could be utilised by schools it was considered appropriate for all schools to be made aware of the resource with any excess being directed to local interest groups. Considering that all businesses in the District could potentially contribute to such a project it was felt appropriate for the matter to be the subject of a suitable press release

78. LOCAL AGENDA 21 STRATEGY – UPDATE (Minute 103/99)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which outlined the proposed timetable for the Rochford District Local Agenda 21 Strategy and sought Member approval to the publication of a draft strategy as the next stage in the Local Agenda process. In endorsing the proposed timetable for the production of the final Local Agenda 21 Strategy, it was considered appropriate for the Authority to be seen to lead by example in areas such as sustainable purchasing, replacement vehicles and energy saving and on a show of hands it was

RECOMMENDED

That Members approve the timetable for the production of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy. (HCPI)

79 A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE – THE UK SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Sub-Committee received and noted the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which provided Members with the summary of the Government's new strategy for sustainable development entitled "A Better Quality of Life".

Mindful of the four main aims of the strategy, the key objectives and the headline indicators outlined in the report, Members considered the strategy to be contradictory in some areas, particularly relating to the previously considered item "A Way With Waste". It was further considered that the strategy aims in promoting "A Better Quality of Life" did not encompass real life, day to day issues.

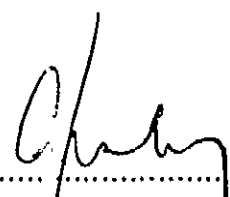
80. **LOCAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE – MEMBER TRAINING**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives detailing a workshop on local capacity building for stakeholder dialogue. Noting the details of the proposed workshop and its aims Members considered places should be allocated on a pro-rata basis with one Member from the Liberal Democrats, one from Labour and one from the Conservatives accompanying a Rochford District Council Officer, with Group Leaders being requested to make their nominations accordingly.

RECOMMENDED

That Group Leaders make their nominations to the Workshop on local capacity building for stakeholder dialogue to accompany a Rochford Council Officer. (HCPI)

The Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Chairman ..  ..
Date 9th March 1999

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Policy Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 15 September 1999. Present: Councillors D A Weir (Chairman), C I Black, J M Dickson, K A Gibbs, Mrs J M Giles, D R Helson, V D Hutchings, R A Pearson, Mrs M J Webster and Mrs M A Weir.

Apologies: Councillors D M Ford, C C Langlands and Mrs S J Lemon.

Substitutes: Councillors A Hosking and C R Morgan.

Visiting: Councillor T Cutmore.

69. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 June 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

70. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Non-pecuniary interests were declared in the report concerning Essex Historic Towns – Supplementary Planning Guidance by Councillors A Hosking and Mrs M J Webster by virtue of their involvement with the National Trust.

71. ESSEX HISTORIC TOWNS – SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which explained the purpose and content of advice on historic towns that had been prepared by Essex County Council and sought Members' agreement to adopt the document as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Members were informed that the document had been produced by the Heritage and Conservation Group (HCG) of the County Council in discussion with district council officers, and that the County Council was now formally requesting each district to consider the proposals before a report back to County Members early next year. A copy of the report had been placed in the Members' Room and relevant extracts were attached to the Head of Service's report. The Sub-Committee received details of the criteria used to select the towns to be included in the survey and the management zones that would be adopted for each town. Coloured maps identifying the location of these zones within Rochford and Rayleigh were presented to the meeting

During consideration of the guidance, the following main points arose:

- Members were anxious to ensure that the maps upon which the management zones were shown were as accurate as possible. It was explained that the maps had been prepared using data from the latest Geographical Information Systems which, although the most currently available, would not necessarily show areas of very recent housing development.
- Boundaries. The Sub-Committee considered in some detail the boundaries of the various management zones illustrated on the maps for Rochford and Rayleigh. As a general principle, it was considered essential that the boundaries should be drawn in such a way as to provide the maximum protection possible for historic areas. It was explained that it was

possible for the boundaries around ancient monuments to be reviewed, and it was considered that the preparation of the advice and the submission of the District's views to the County Council provided a good opportunity to make any changes to the boundaries that were considered appropriate, in particular where extensions were thought necessary. The Sub-Committee requested Officers to draw particular attention to the following sites in the submission to the County Council, where the boundaries/designation could be reviewed.

- The castle in Rayleigh.
 - Rochford Hall. It was explained that The Barns on this site were designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument at a time when they were disused, whereas the Hall, occupied by the Golf Club, was a Grade I listed building. Despite the high level of protection this offered, some Members considered that, in view of the history of the Manor House, the designation should be reviewed.
 - St Andrews Hall and the railway cottages in Rochford. Surprise was expressed that these buildings were not included in the management zone.
- The link between the structure and local plans and the advice on historic towns. In reply to Member questions, it was explained that an additional policy statement would be included within the Local Plan emphasising the need for account to be taken of the new advice. The Local Plan had been prepared in conformity with the Structure Plan, which also made reference to the need to adhere to archaeological guidance for historic towns. It was considered that the advice would serve to provide an enhanced level of transparency in the planning process, enabling potential developers of sites in historic towns to gain a clearer understanding of planning requirements.
 - Churches. The Head of Service explained that the majority of churches were listed buildings and, while still in use, the Diocese would closely monitor proposed alterations. When disused, the listed status would remain, but it would be the responsibility of the local planning authority to make any decisions concerning extensions or alterations; any opportunity for development would be severely limited. It was noted that St Andrews Church in Rochford was Grade II* Listed and that Canewdon Church was situated in a conservation area.

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee agreed that the advice on historic towns should be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance with a submission to the County Council reflecting Members' views about the boundaries and designation of specific sites as outlined above.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That Essex Historic Towns 1999 prepared by Essex County Council be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- (2) That a policy be included in Rochford District Replacement Local Plan referring to the guidance documents.
- (3) That the Sub-Committee's views concerning the management zone boundaries shown on the Local Plan Town Centre Inset Maps as outlined above, be submitted to Essex County Council. (HCPI)

The Meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

Chairman 

Date 26.10.99

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Member Budget Monitoring Group

At a Meeting held on 16th September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes (Chairman), V H Leach, C R Morgan and P F A Webster.

Apologies. Councillor R E Vingo

Substitutes. Councillor V D Hutchings.

Visiting. Councillor Mrs J Helson.

36 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th August 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

37. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D E Barnes declared an interest in the item on Asset Review by virtue of his role as Chairman of Rayleigh Age Concern.

Councillor V H Leach declared an interest in the item on Asset Review by virtue of his role as a Hawkwell Parish Councillor.

38 ASSET REVIEW

NOTE: Councillor P F A Webster declared an interest in this item by virtue of being a Clements Hall Leisure Centre season ticket holder

The Group considered the report of the Head of Legal Services on the Council's landholdings with regard to specified leisure assets.

At the commencement of debate, the Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration) advised that a wide variety of options could be considered (including those of asset disposal) and that it was important for the Council to identify preferred direction. In terms of annual costs within the Leisure Budget, the Clements Hall Leisure Centre could be seen as key to considerations.

During debate Members recognised that decisions relating to leisure assets should be made in the context of the Council's overall budgetary position and three year rolling programme. There was value in the Budget Monitoring Group identifying the value of assets to assist the work of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering Panel.

Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration) advised that it should be possible to obtain a quotation for the cost of undertaking advice and valuation of sites within the Leisure Contract from Savills in time for the next Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Chief Executive confirmed that Officers would need to work on the identification of leisure facility customer usage figures and that further information would be provided with regard to the licensing of the Rayleigh Mill.

RECOMMENDED

That the Council's Valuer be instructed to provide advice and valuation of the real property included in the Leisure Contract, subject to a quotation on fees being available at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. (CD(LPA))

39 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

40. WEBSTERS WAY CAR PARK

NOTE: The Chairman admitted this item as urgent in view of the need to obtain an early identification of land values.

The Chairman referred to the work of the Websters Way Working Party and to indications of interest which external parties had expressed in the car park site. Given that the Working Party was considering the future of the site, the identification of land values would be useful.

Officers advised that planning permission relating to the site would have a bearing on values and that they would approach the District Valuer to identify guideline valuations.

The Meeting adjourned at 8.10pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized capital letter 'L' with a horizontal bar extending to the right and a small loop at the bottom.

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Community Services Committee

At a Meeting held on 16 September 1999 Present: Councillors Mrs W M Stevenson (Chairman), T G Cutmore, J M Dickson, D M Ford, K A Gibbs, J E Grey, Mrs J Helson, N Harris, Mrs S J Lemon, R A Pearson, Mrs M S Vince, Mrs M J Webster and Mrs M A Weir

Apologies: Councillors P A Beckers, Mrs A R Hutchings and C C Langlands.

Substitutes: Councillors Mrs J M Giles, V D Hutchings and T Livings.

Ex officio Member Attending: Councillor D R Helson

347. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 July 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

348. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs J M Giles declared an interest in the item "Telecommunication masts" (Minute 356) by virtue of her son's employment

Councillors T Livings and Mrs M J Webster each declared a non-pecuniary interests in the item "Door entry system – consultation" (Minute 362) by virtue of knowledge of a leaseholder of a former Council property.

349. ADVISORS FROM RAYLEIGH ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES

The Committee welcomed Mrs Pat Booth and Mrs Beryl Byford, advisors from R A V S who were attending their first Meeting of the Community Services Committee.

350. PRESENTATION BY ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ON ITS CURRENT PROPOSALS IN RELATION TO CARE HOME PROVISION THROUGHOUT ESSEX

The Committee welcomed Mr Roger Sinden, Essex County Council Manager for Older Persons Care Homes and County Councillors Mrs Pascoe, Pike and Smith from Essex County Council's Social Services Committee who had been invited to attend the Meeting to present the County's current proposals in relation to care home provision throughout Essex and answer Members questions accordingly. Members were advised of the background and history to the proposals by Mr Sinden and the part of the proposal affecting the Rochford District, in particular, the proposed lease transfer of Albert Jones Court to the private sector with Swayne Court remaining under Essex County Council management.

County Councillor Mrs Pascoe, Chairman of Essex County Council Social Services Committee answered Members questions specifically relating to:-

- the provision of services in the private sector including costs and proposed savings.

- the service of a "Notice of Concern" on Albert Jones Court from the Registration and Inspection Unit.
- the proposed lease transfer of Albert Jones Court to the private sector including the lessees obligations to bring the home up to registration standard.
- the 2001 deadline for all County-owned homes to be brought up to registration standard
- the promise of money from the sale of the bungalow site being used for the upgrade of Albert Jones Court.
- the implications on staffing with the changes including the implications of the TUPE Regulations.
- the continuation of day service provision following lease transfer of Albert Jones Court.

Members, in listening to the answers given, considered the consultation response should contain the following points:-

"The Authority welcomes the stated retention of Sweyne Court within Rochford District area, however, fundamentally opposes the leased transfer of Albert Jones Court to the private sector, given concern over :-

- the possible consequences should lease transfer fail
- the welfare of residents during upgrade works
- the standards in the private sector.
- the commitment to reinvest monies from the sale of The Bungalow which had not materialised.
- the areas priority status within the Crime & Disorder Strategy with various indices showing the area to be of great need.
- the lack of choice for residents of Rochford in choosing either private or public care home provision."

Members further wished their displeasure at homes being allowed to fall well below registration standard, for a number of years, to be stated. The consultation was considered by the Committee to be a 'fait accompli' and Members concurred with the view of a County Member in that they had not liked what they had heard before and they did not like what they heard now. Members further wished to see an early warning should a lessee not be found for the Albert Jones Court site. Members thanked Mr Sinden and County Councillors Mrs Pascoe, Pike and Smith for their attendance and they then left the Meeting

Resolved

That the comments above be this Authority's response to the County Council's consultation on the future of care home provision throughout Essex. (HHHCC)

351. SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee considered the Sub-Committee Minutes and the Recommendations contained therein.

(1) Housing Management Sub-Committee – 1 September 1999

During discussion of these Minutes, a Member wished her thanks to be placed on record for Officers work in writing to the Minister in relation to Right to Buy, although, regrettably, this had not led to a change in Government policy on the matter.

Minute 69– Adaption for the Disabled

Resolved

- (1) That the responsive repairs allocation be increased from £36,000 to £56,000 to meet anticipated demand for adaptations for the disabled.
- (2) That the whole of the responsive repairs allocation be made from balances. (HRHM)

Minute 70 – Housing Capital Programme

Recommended

- (1) That the revised capital programme as set out at Appendix 1 to the Housing Management Sub-Committee Minutes, be approved with the underspend of £108, 200 being applied as followed:-

£22,200 to balances.
£6,000 for the Millbourne Court door entry system.
£80,000 for the Tunstall Call System.
- (2) That the element of the Housing Investment Programme Bid relating to repairs and improvements to council housing stock be on the basis set out at Appendix 2 to the Housing Management Sub-Committee Minutes. (HRHM)

Minute 72 – Housing Revenue Account Repairs and Maintenance Budget

Recommended

- (1) That the current year budget for repairs and maintenance be made up as follows.-

Description	£	£
Planned Services – Service Contracts etc	88,000	
Cyclical Decorations and Repairs	141,000	
Warden Schemes – Internal Decorations	39,500	
Asbestos Works	14,700	
<hr/>		
Total Planned Repairs		283,200
Housing Repairs and Maintenance	491,800	
Internal Decorations – Void Properties	110,000	
Plant Replacement	15,000	
Adaptations for the Disabled	56,000	
Skip Hire	1,000	
<hr/>		
Total Responsive Repairs		<u>683,800</u>
Total Repairs Maintenance		967,000

- (2) That Volume Statistics detailing the type and nature of works and order levels within each category be submitted to the next Sub-Committee
- (3) That the Head of Revenue and Housing Management reports on spending within each budget item on a quarterly basis. (HRHM)
- (11) **Community Safety Sub-Committee – 7 September 1999**

Minute 124 – Crime & Disorder Strategy Monitoring Update

Resolved

That update reports be submitted to future Meetings of the Sub-Committee taking into account the points outlined in the Minutes

Minute 125 – Roche and St Andrews Ward: Ward Profile (Minute 132/99)

Resolved

- (1) Allocation of £1000 from the Crime & Disorder Budget to facilitate the initial phase of the public consultation be agreed.
- (2) That further update reports be submitted to future Meetings of the Community Safety Sub-Committee (HCPI)(HHHCC)

Minute 126 – Eastwood Ward: A Survey to Identify Areas of Vulnerability to Crime & Disorder Issues

Resolved

- (1) That proposals to hold a survey in Eastwood Ward as outlined in the report be agreed.
- (2) That an allocation of £500 for production of the questionnaire, posters and to carry out the mail drop be agreed. (HCPI)

Minute 127 – Grange & Rawreth Ward: Survey to Identify Areas of Vulnerability to Crime & Disorder Issues

Resolved

- (1) That the "Road Show" format for public meetings be approved
- (2) That Members note the change in timetable for the completion of the survey.
- (3) That an amount of £500 be set aside for this part of the survey.
- (4) That progress reports be received by the Community Safety Sub-Committee. (HCPI)

Minute 128 – Proof of Age Scheme: Update

Resolved

- (1) That funding the shortfall of £271 for provision of the proof of age cards be agreed.
- (2) That arrangements for the launch of the scheme be approved.
- (3) That an additional amount of £500 to cover expenses for the launch of the scheme be approved.

Minute 129 – District Emergency Plan Review – First Draft

Resolved

That Officers be authorised to consult with external agencies and partner Local Authorities as outlined in the report. (6402)(HLS)

(iii) Leisure Sub-Committee – 8 September 1999

Minute 54 – Arts Audit and Draft Strategy

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Arts Strategy be adopted subject to the outcome of public consultation
- (2) That consideration of the Arts Development Officer post be reviewed in light of the response to the Arts Strategy Consultation. (HLCS)(576)

Minute 56 – Clements Hall Leisure Centre

Resolved

That CIRCA Leisure be granted permission to carry out the conversion of the Gallery Office in Clements Hall into three separate therapy rooms as outlined in the report

Minute 57 – Rochford District Town Trails

Resolved

That before production of the Town and District Trails, accuracy is ascertained with Parish and Town Councils and that the matter be brought back to the November Meeting of the Community Services Committee. (HLCS)(131)

Minute 58 – Sports Development (Minute 89/98

Resolved

- (1) That the Community Services Committee be requested to include provision of £4,000 as part of the budget process for the forthcoming financial year.

That a report be submitted to the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group detailing a 3 year strategy for Leisure Service Budgets. (HLCS)(33562)

352. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

The Committee considered that all necessary action had been taken, Minute 214/99(HHHCC) was carried forward.

353. CASTLE POINT AND ROCHFORD SOCIAL SERVICES LOCALITY PANEL SEMINAR

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) advising of an invitation from Essex County Council for this Authority to nominate up to six representatives to attend the above Seminar on 25 October 1999. Members considered that as the Chairman of this Committee had a prior engagement, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, the Chairman of the Community Safety Sub-Committee together with one Member each from the Conservative and Liberal Groups should accompany a Council Officer to the Seminar.

Resolved

That the Vice-Chairman of the Community Services Committee, the Chairman of the Community Safety Sub-Committee and one Member from each the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups be nominated to attend this Seminar and that it be an approved duty. (CD(CF&ES))

354. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – AN ACTION PLAN FOR ESSEX – CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy & Initiatives which explained the County's draft plan for actions for delivery of Special Educational Needs. Noting the background to the policy and its principles and aims, Members considered the following points should form the basis of this Authority's response to the consultation.-

- the vital need that assessment and statementing is collated quickly.
- parents to have immediate feedback as to what is going on.
- Parents must be closely involved from the beginning.
- Good representation from the LEA during assessment process.
- Needs should be looked at in each individual case – e.g. no youngster should be forced into mainstream schooling just to prove a point.
- Dismay at the continuous growth of children on the 1 to 3 Essex stages of assessment – is this an indication of a growing trend or that professionals are recognising the problems earlier?
- Members welcomed the planned early intervention
- There are serious concerns over funding being sufficient to achieve stated aims.
- There are serious concerns that training will be adequate to achieve stated aims

Further to the debate, Members requested information on the following points:-

- (1) How many pupils within Rochford District require special teaching?
- (2) Where do they currently go to school?
- (3) If pupils are transported out of the District, it is important that travel be kept to a minimum. Long distance travelling is extremely stressful normally and would be more so for those with special needs.

In summing up, it was considered appropriate for the response to include any points raised at the Meeting of Partnership Sub-Committee on 21 September 1999 when the matter was to be discussed further

Resolved

That the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives be authorised to submit a response to Essex County Council on the Consultation Document (Special Educational Needs – An Action Plan for Essex) to include both the points outlined above and those comments raised at the Meeting of Partnership Sub-Committee on 21 September 1999 (HCPI)

355. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Financial Services which advised Members of matters relating to the revised Capital Programme for 1999/2000, Private Sector Renewal Grants and the Housing Investment Programme (HIP bid) 2000/01. In approving the proposal for a cash incentive scheme in the sum of £57,000 for 1999/2000 and for a Local Authority Social Housing Grant for £36,300, concern was raised at a Housing Association purchasing another property next to others already in its ownership, Members not wishing to see areas of concentrated social housing. The change of support from the Government with the withdrawal of the 60% support for grants other than Disabled Facility Grants after March 2000 was noted although the potential for the grants budget to be less than £70,000 for the next financial year was of concern.

It was noted that whilst the Member Budget Monitoring Group had put on hold all new grant applications, applicants did have the right of appeal for their application to be determined. The current situation relating to the Housing Investment Programme bid 2000/2001 was noted.

Recommended

That the Finance & General Purposes Committee approve the revised Capital Programme in respect of 1999/2000.

356. TELECOMMUNICATION MASTS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which advised Members on current Government guidance on the health implications of electromagnetic fields, specifically those relating to telecommunications masts. Noting that investigation into the subject was ongoing by a number of organisations, it was considered prudent for continued advice to be sought from both the NRPB in respect of emissions from telecommunications masts and from the Government specifically relating to planning applications relating to the same.

Resolved

- (1) That this Authority continues to seek advice and guidance for the National Radiological Protection Board in respect of emissions from telecommunication masts.
- (2) That this Authority urges the Secretary of State to issue specific guidance as to whether or not "cordon sanitaire" policies will be acceptable in respect of determining planning applications for the siting of telecommunication masts. (HHHCC)

357. LIQUOR LICENSING AND PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING HOURS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which outlined the liquor licensing hours for this New Year's Eve and invited Members to determine the finishing hours on Public Entertainment Licences for this New Year's Eve.

Noting the details of the Deregulation Millennium Licensing (Order 1999) Members endorsed the Officers proposals and on a show of hands, it was

Resolved

- (1) That Head of Health & Community Care is given delegated power to apply for a Millennium Restriction Order following consultation with Essex Police and the Head of Legal Services;
- (2) That the normal PEL variation procedure to extend the terminal hour this New Year's Eve is waived;
- (3) That the terminal hour for this New Year's Eve on all existing PELs for premises with an on-licence or registered clubs is extended from noon on Friday 31st December 1999 until the terminal hour specified on the licence for Saturday 1st January 2000, which is between midnight and 2am, unless the Licensing Justices have made a Millennium Restriction Order;
- (4) That the terminal hour for this New Year's Eve on all existing PELs for premises with an on-licence or registered clubs subject to a Millennium Restriction Order is extended from noon on Friday 31st December 1999 until the terminal hour specified on the Millennium Restriction Order if that is later than the terminal hour specified on the PEL for Friday 31st December 1999,
- (5) That the terminal hour for this New Year's Eve on all existing PELs for premises without an on-licence and unregistered clubs eg. church and village halls is extended from noon on Friday 31st December 1999 until the terminal hour specified on the PEL for Saturday 1st January 2000, which is between midnight and 2am, unless the Licensing Justices have granted an Occasional Licence or Occasional Permission;
- (6) That the terminal hour for this New Year's Eve on all existing PELs for premises without an on-licence and unregistered clubs eg. church and village halls, with an Occasional Licence or Occasional Permission is extended from noon on Friday 31st December 1999 until the terminal hour specified on Occasional Licence or Occasional Permission if that is later than the terminal hour specified on the PEL for Friday 31st December 1999;
- (7) That where a new annual or occasional licence PEL for this New Year's Eve is required the principles in Resolutions 3 to 6 above will be applied to determine the terminal hour;
- (8) That Head of Housing, Health and Community Care's decision to refuse to accept late applications for PELs for this New Year's Eve will be final. (HHHCC)

358. DISPERSED ALARM SYSTEM – CARELINES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management concerning the handing over of responsibility for the Careline system to a voluntary organisation. Members were pleased to note that Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Services had indicated their willingness to take on the service from the Council – with a one-off payment of £350 being made to cover start-up costs. In endorsing the proposal, Members wished to see

a service level agreement drawn up between RAVS and Chelmsford Borough Council to ensure service standards were kept and on a show of hands, it was

Resolved

- (1) That transfer of the administration of Carelmes with effect from 1st October 1999 be agreed.
- (2) That a one-off payment of £350 towards the set-up costs of the service be made to RAVS (HRHM)

359. MECHANICAL WORKS AT THE MILLHALL

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which sought Members agreement to the update of the Building Energy Management System at Mill Hall

Noting the background to investigation which had been undertaken in respect of the proposal, some questions were raised with regard to the previous contractor's statement that the existing system was in fact Year 2000 compliant. Further concern was raised over the large margins of error in relation to the first three options and, mindful of these costs, Members considered that it would be appropriate for this system to be replaced at a cost of £22,000 with the costs being met from a virement from money set aside for Clements Hall Special Items to Mill Hall Special Items. On a show of hands, it was

Resolved

That the Building Management System at the Mill Hall be upgraded as per item 4 in the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services.

It was further:-

Recommended

That the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to approve the virement as outlined above (HLCS)

360 57 SOUTH STREET, ROCHFORD

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which advised Members of progress to date with regard to the above project and sought approval for Officers to prepare a lease and a management agreement for the building and submit a planning application for a change of use

Considering that the planning application, when submitted, should be fast-tracked, Members endorsed the proposal although questioned whether the lease should be a full repairing lease. Questions were further raised as to the Parish Council contribution to the project and the future requirement for repairs and maintenance funding from this Authority. It was considered appropriate for the matter to be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for approval of finances.

Resolved

- (1) That Officers be authorised to complete a leasing agreement between Rochford District Council and Essex County Council Youth Service for the occupancy and use of 57 South Street for a youth facility. The lease to be at a peppercorn rent for less than 7 years and on such other terms and conditions as agreed between the parties.
- (1) That Officers be authorised to produce a management agreement between Rochford District Council, Rochford Parish Council and Essex County Council Youth Service for the management and programming of the youth facility at 57 South Street. The District Council representatives to be nominated
- (3) That Officers be authorised to prepare and submit a planning application for the change of use at 57 South Street from office to educational use.

It was further.-

RECOMMENDED

That the Finance & General Purposes Committee be requested to agree the additional funding for the project from the Community Safety budget. (HHHCC)

361. GLEBE CLOSE/MORRINS CLOSE (134/99)

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which appraised Members of progress regarding the provision of new play areas in Morrins Close/Glebe Close, Great Wakering. In endorsing the proposed way forward, outlined in the report, Members considered that the Parish Council should match fund the Authority's contribution to the project. Members further considered that a report should be submitted to the Member Budget Monitoring Group on the possible sale of the third piece of land which had been identified in previous reports.

Resolved

- (1) That the Parish Council be requested to match the District's contribution of £3,500
- (2) That Members approve the action taken to date.
- (3) That a report be submitted to the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group specifically regarding the possible sale of a third piece of land which had been previously identified near to the site. (HLCS)

362. DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM- CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which updated Members on progress in relation to the proposed installation of the door entry system to blocks of flats in Worcester Drive/Essex Close, Rayleigh. Mindful of the background to the scheme, it was noted that consultation with residents had taken place, the results of which were noted. It was further considered appropriate to install a door entry system mainly to 23-28 Essex Close with the four other remaining blocks indicating a majority in favour of door entry system being installed as a rolling programme. Members considered it appropriate for the Housing Management Sub-Committee to consider the installation of fencing at the site as well as the door entry systems outlined above and on a motion put by Councillor Mrs M S Vince and

seconded by Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson, it was

Resolved

- (1) That the Committee recommends to the Housing Management Sub-Committee that a door entry system be fitted to 23-28 Essex Close.
- (2) That the four remaining blocks of flats indicating a positive response be dealt with as a rolling programme.
- (3) That the Housing Management Sub-Committee look at providing fencing to the area and that Officers enter into a dialogue with residents on the outcome of the scheme. (HRHM)

363. HOUSE CONDITION SURVEY

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which sought Members approval for a bid to be placed in the draft estimates for 2000/01 for the production of an up to date housing condition survey. Mindful of the need for robust up to date information in relation to the condition of housing throughout the District, Members endorsed the proposal and it was

RECOMMENDED

That the Finance & General Purposes Committee include the sum of £35,000 within the draft 2000/2001 estimates for a house condition survey. (HHHCC)

364. 172 – 174 ROCHFORD GARDEN WAY

NOTE: The Chairman admitted this item of urgent business in view of the need to implement a scheme within a short a time period as possible.

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure & Client Services which advised Members of a request from the Ward Councillor for Rochford St Andrews for an artistic graffiti project to be undertaken to combat the recurrence of obscene graffiti in the alleyway between 172 – 174 Rochford Garden Way. Members endorsed the proposal to employ a local graffiti artist with the costs being met from within the Housing revenue Account and a virement from existing General fund provisions.

Resolved

- (1) That an artistic graffiti project be undertaken in the alleyway between 172 – 174 Rochford Garden Way
- (2) That the project is funded from existing budgets as detailed above (HLCS)

365 TENDER RETURNS – PLAYSPACES ROLLING PROGRAMME

NOTE. The Chairman admitted this item of urgent business in view of the need to implement the programme within a specified timescale.

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which advised Members of the outcome of tender returns for the playspace rolling programme for 1999/2000 and sought a decision on which playspaces were to proceed.

In noting that the tendered cost was in excess of the provision within the Capital Programme, Members considered that all three playspaces should be upgraded with the shortfall being met from money set aside from the upgrade and improvement works of Tynney Avenue Playspace, which was currently closed. Concern was expressed at the difference between the estimated and tendered costs for the refurbishment and Members questioned whether this figure would be taken as a benchmark cost for the improvement of other playspaces.

Recommended

That the Finance & General Purposes Committee be requested to release the £30,000 allocated to Tynney Avenue playspace to allow implementation of the whole programme for 1999/2000 and roll-over Tynney Avenue into 2000/2001, and that further information be submitted regarding the tenders received (HLCS)

366. SUMMER SWIMMING SCHEME

Members were advised by the Chairman of a response received from Hullbridge Riverside Junior School in relation to its lack of participation in the scheme. It was noted that the Head of the Governors had stated that as the pool had been financed by parents for use for the children of the school and that in their opinion the pool's construction could not withstand such intensive use, they had unfortunately had to decline the request

367. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 13(9) of the Schedule of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972

368 UNFIT HOUSE (MINUTE 227/99) AND (MINUTE 301/99)

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which provided Members with further update information in relation to an unfit property within the District. Mindful of the owners express wish as outlined in the report and the options to either serve a demolition order or serve a deferred action notice, Members considered that a deferred action notice should be served and that home repair assistance grants should be offered to remedy the more urgent works needed to the property

Resolved

That deferred action be taken, and

- (a) the Council serves "Minded to Take Action Notice" for this course of action.
- (b) that in the event of representations from the owner following service of the "Minded to Take Action" Notice, a further report be made to this Committee
- (c) that in the event of no representations, the Council serves a Deferred Action Notice under the provision of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 Section 81.
- (d) that upon receipt of Home Repairs Assistance application from the owner, a maximum of £4,000 is approved to help with the cost of urgent works

- (e) re-inspection of the property is undertaken in 18 months time and a further report made to the Committee.

It was further:-

RECOMMENDED

That the Finance & General Purposes Committee be requested to authorise funding of home repair assistance from the Private Sector Renewal Budget. (30332)(HHHCC)

369. CONTRACT OF STANDING ORDERS - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received and noted the confidential report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which detailed orders placed by the Housing Health & Community Care Division for the period 1st February to 31st July 1999.

370. ANALYSIS OF TENDERS RECEIVED FOR FULLY COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT FOR SERVICING OF FIRE ALARMS AND EMERGENCY LIGHTING

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Leisure and Client Services which sought Members approval to the acceptance of tenders received on the above contract

Resolved

That Members accept the lowest tender returned from IBS in the sum of £34,647.78 fixed price for the first two years and for the years 3 to 5 to be adjusted to the average change in the Building Maintenance Institute cost indices as published by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. (HLCS)

371. REPLACEMENT OF VEHICLE 710

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Leisure & Client Services which proposed and gave details of a replacement for vehicle 710. Noting the costs of both leasing and outright purchase of the vehicle, Members considered that the report should stand deferred to the next Meeting in order for more information regarding the current vehicle's condition, use and additional quotes regarding purchase.

Resolved

That the report stands deferred to the next Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee in order for more information to be gathered as outlined above. (HLCS)

The Meeting closed at 11 30pm.

Chairman

Date ...

M. W. Stevens
(6/11/99)

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Member Budget Monitoring Group

At a Meeting held on 20 September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes (Chairman), V H Leach, C R Morgan, and P F A Webster.

Members of the CCT Working Party Attending By Invitation: Councillors Mrs J Helson and D A Weir

42. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

43. PROPOSED BID FOR A HIGH DIVERSION RECYCLING TRIAL IN RAYLEIGH

The Monitoring Group considered the confidential report of the Head of Housing Health and Community Care which provided Members with information and guidance, together with a copy of the application form and a diagrammatic illustration, on the proposals in relation to a bid for a High Diversion Recycling Trial in Rayleigh. In noting the contents of guidance for any proposed trial round, and the recommendation of Environmental Health Sub Committee Meeting on 17 August relating to a bid for a high diversion trial, Members considered it prudent to submit a bid, although were mindful of the budgetary constraints currently affecting the Authority

It was considered appropriate to seek County Council funding for the majority of the trial scheme given the impact it would have, if successful, on the costs borne by the County Council in disposing of this District's waste. It was also considered of importance to demonstrate that the Council is looking at ways of dealing with this Authority's waste, given the forthcoming Waste Local Plan Inquiry, specifically issues relating to the proposal for a strategic waste management site in West Rayleigh

During discussion of the operational and management issues of such an intensive trial, reference was made to the trial currently in place in Hawkewell and the issues which had so far arisen from the same. Members were mindful that such trials relied heavily on public support and participation; whilst the public could be encouraged to participate, they could not be forced

Concern at the timescale was raised as an issue given the need for such major contracts to satisfy statutory notices and European regulations. Members questioned what other Authorities were doing in relation to bidding for a high recycling trial within their area. Noting the contents of a letter received from Essex County Council advising the Chief Executive of the County's position regarding their contribution to schemes, and the tabled financial information produced by Officers which detailed the capital and revenue costs for such a scheme, Members considered that the Meeting should be adjourned given the lateness of the hour and to allow Officers to investigate and report back on the current financial situation for the Authority, highlighting any funds that could be made available to support such a scheme.

It was agreed that the Meeting be adjourned until 8pm Wednesday 22 September 1999 for a report back on the financial situation of the Authority (HFS)

The Meeting adjourned at 8 15pm



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ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 20 September 1999. Present: Councillors C R Morgan (Chairman) and V H Leach

Apologies: Councillor G Fox.

Visiting: Councillors D E Barnes, Mrs J Helson, P F A Webster and D A Weir.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEMBER BUDGET MONITORING WORKING GROUP – 20TH SEPTEMBER 1999

It was considered appropriate for the Urgency Sub-Committee to be adjourned until the rising of the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group on 22nd September 1999 in order for the recommendation to be resolved on the night.

The Meeting adjourned at 8.22pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CR/9', is written to the right of the text 'The Meeting adjourned at 8.22pm.'

Draft/f&gp.urg.sub/minutescp20

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Partnership Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 21st September 1999. Present: Councillors G Fox (Chairman), P A Beckers, T G Cutmore, G A Mockford and Mrs M S Vince.

Visiting: Councillors T Livings and R E Vingoe

Representing Essex County Council: Councillors K Bobbin, Mrs T Chapman, J J Gordon and Mrs E M Hart.

Representing Town and Parish Councils: Mrs. M Beckers (Rawreth Parish Council), M Ewers (Rochford Parish Council), Mrs M Guyett (Hockley Parish Council), Mrs M Liles (Clerk - Rayleigh Town Council), C Lumley and Mrs J Lumley (Rayleigh Town Council), Mrs P M V Pearse (Rayleigh Town Council), I J Rooke (Hawkwell Parish Council), Mrs J Rigby (Clerk, Stambbridge Parish Council), Mrs J Smith (Canewdon Parish Council), P Stebbing (Great Wakering Parish Council) and Mrs L A Vingoe (Hockley Parish Council).

Representing Primary Schools and Secondary Schools: Mrs C Miller (Edward Francis County Infant), Mrs J Pallett (Holt Farm County Infant), Ms K Spiller (The Sweyne Park School) and Mr M Waudby (Doggetts County Primary and Nursery School)

Apologies: Mrs S Bridger (Edward Francis County Junior), Mr J F O'Brien (Our Lady of Ransom R.C. Primary), Mrs A Fox (Great Wakering Parish Council), Mrs D Lucas (Rawreth Parish Council), Mrs A M Richardson (Canewdon Endowed Primary), Mrs N Stevens (St. Teresa's R.C. Primary) and Mr P Warren (Chief Executive - Rochford District Council).

Some of the Members present served at more than one tier.

82. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st July 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

83. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 80 - Periodic Electoral Review

The Head of Administrative and Member Services informed the Sub-Committee that notification had been received that the review would commence on 30 November 1999. Advertisements would be placed in the local press and all Local Authorities would be formally contacted by the Local Government Commission for England nearer the time. As yet, however, no guidance had been received.

84. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The following Members declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 (the draft Essex Action Plan for Special Educational Needs) by virtue of their position as a School Governor: Mrs T Chapman, Mr M Ewers, Mr G Fox, Mrs M Guyett, Mrs E M Hart, Mr T Livings, Mr C Lumley, Mrs J Rigby, Mrs J Smith, Mrs M S Vince and Mr R E Vingoe.

An additional non-pecuniary interest in this report was declared by Councillor G Fox by virtue of his position as Chairman of Essex County Council's Special Educational Needs and Learning Support Panel.

A pecuniary interest was also declared by Parish Councillor M Ewers whose wife was a teacher at a special school.

A non-pecuniary interest in item 7, (Bus Services) was declared by Councillor T Cutmore as he held a bus pass.

85. THE DRAFT ESSEX ACTION PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Chairman introduced, and welcomed to the Meeting, Jackie Jackson-Smith (Principal Officer, Special Provision Development, Learning Services Directorate, Essex County Council) who gave a presentation concerning the background, purpose and contents of the draft Essex Action Plan for Special Educational Needs. This document had been produced by Essex County Council's Learning Services Directorate and had been sent to the District, Parish and Town Councils in Rochford as part of the consultation process.

Mrs Smith explained that, after outlining the national and local background in Essex, the draft Essex Action Plan set out principles and aims established through the consultation process and provided an overview of the current situation. The plan then made proposals, details of which were presented to the Sub-Committee, under the five main themes used during the consultation process, as follows:

- Theme 1: Maintaining and developing parental confidence.
- Theme 2: Promoting prevention and early intervention.
- Theme 3: Resourcing including the level of statements.
- Theme 4: Increasing inclusion and meeting a continuum of need.
- Theme 5: Working effectively with other agencies.

During subsequent discussion of the draft plan, the following main points arose:

- Members welcomed the proposals and the opportunity to comment on them.
- There should be recognition that some, but not all, pupils would be suitable for inclusion in mainstream schools and that individual needs must be met.
- Continuity of support was seen as a crucial issue.
- There was a view that the proposals could be viewed as a cost cutting exercise as there were large sums of money involved. County Members emphasised their support for the retention of special schools, although it was recognised that some re-structuring of the current form of special needs provision would be necessary.
- The terminology used should be simplified
- Concern was expressed that a school that provided a good inclusion policy suffered a substantial budget cut this year. Mrs Jackson-Smith undertook to investigate the background to this particular case.
- A number of local special schools were, following the recent Local Government Review, controlled by Southend Borough Council. Concern was expressed at the potential implications if the Borough Council was at any time to change its policy towards accepting placements from the Rochford District and elsewhere in Essex.. It was suggested that the Plan should make clear the strategies to be adopted for the remainder of special schools, under the County Council's control, to address this issue.
- Concern was expressed about the need for adequate teacher training to include special needs
- What steps could be taken to assist all parents to take an active interest in their children's welfare? Was there a method of monitoring available? It was indicated that Central Government's proposals in the revised code of practice would include increased parental involvement in the assessment process, and monitoring. Close liaison with Social Services Department should serve to identify any problems or concern by parents. This would also be addressed by the Education Welfare Officers.

- Funding was considered to be a fundamental issue. Many schools would have to undertake major adaptations in order to accommodate children with special physical needs. It was thought essential for the money allocated to schools to meet these and other needs to be available soon after the child starting at the school. Whilst it had to be recognised that it was unlikely that "new" money would be introduced in to the special needs sector, nevertheless there was a clear statement of intent in the Action Plan that the necessary funding would be made available. Arrangements were being made to review the way in which the sum of money to be allocated for special needs children was determined.
- Some parents had a real fear that as special schools cost more over time they would be closed and, whether appropriate or not, children would be transferred into mainstream schools. It was important to ensure that any transfers would take the individual needs of the children into account. It was recognised that, where mainstream secondary schools cater for children with special needs, a resource package should be made available in order that the necessary support structure could be fully developed, and that the schools' confidence in the delivery of such a service is enhanced.
- No mention was made of the excellent work done by classroom assistants. It was considered that action should be taken to ensure that they play a full part in the new proposals. Mrs Jackson-Smith acknowledged that teaching assistants had, in the past, been a somewhat under-funded and unrecognised sector, but there were now proposals to introduce accredited training and a defined career structure to remedy the deficiencies.
- It was of fundamental importance to realise that no child should be "written off". Every child had their own strengths, and their education should serve to enhance these qualities to allow their full potential to be realised.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Jackson-Smith for a most informative presentation, and confirmed that this Sub-Committee's views, along with those expressed by the Community Services Committee at its Meeting on 16 September, would comprise the District Council's response to the consultation document, which would be conveyed to Essex County Council. The points made at Community Services Committee were summarised for the benefit of those Members who had not been present at that Meeting by the District Council's Community Safety Officer, Mrs Kathy Morgan

86. BUS SERVICES

The Chairman introduced, and welcomed to the Meeting, Mr David Whiteside, Group Manager, Transportation and Recreational Land Management from Essex County Council who gave a presentation concerning the roles, responsibilities and relationship between the various agencies involved in the provision of bus services. This included the following main topics:

- Operation of Bus Services
 - Implications of the Transport Act 1985
 - Bus operators' powers and obligations
- The Local Authority Role
 - Social Need Services
 - Concessionary Fares - Eligibility
 - Information about Services
 - Operating Conditions - Improvements to infrastructure
- Traffic Regulation Condition
- Relationship between Bus Operators and Local Authorities
- Integrated Transport White Paper - (July 1998) - Implications

During subsequent discussion, the following main points arose.

- A Member expressed concern about the withdrawal of the subsidised bus service to Stambridge County Primary School and, in particular, the lack of prior consultation.

Mr Whiteside undertook to investigate this particular case and respond direct to the Member.

- The need adequately to publicise the availability of services to encourage use was emphasised, particularly in cases where the operating company changes.
- It was confirmed that the number of passengers using the subsidised service was electromcally monitored on a daily journey-by-journey basis.
- In reply to a Member question, Mr Whiteside indicated that the Local Transport Plan could be used to encourage contributions and involvement by bus users, in the absence of a national consumer body.
- The role of the Traffic Commissioner was explained. This comprised three elements: licensing the operator; receipt of local bus service registrations; and driver licensing.
- It was acknowledged that the integration of bus and rail services was difficult to achieve except where there was a high frequency of service. The inadequacy of the current obligation by bus operators to advertise changes in services was also recognised.
- The lack of control over bus operators following the Transport Act (1985) was highlighted; Essex County Council had, as a result, no powers of intervention in the services provided, but was still required to subsidise rural routes.
- It was pointed out that the use of Government subsidies to provide bus services is rigorously controlled, and it was considered that greater flexibility in the use of this source of finance should be permitted. A Member drew attention to the principles of the Government's 'Best Value' policy, which could enable consideration to be given to tenders that, although not the cheapest, could more closely meet the Council's requirements. It was also considered that bus operators should attempt to provide vehicles more suited to the disabled, and mothers with pushchairs, Mr Whiteside indicated in reply that, from next year, all new single decker buses would be required to have low floors.
- A number of Members enquired about the possibility of a once-monthly subsidised bus service from Southend to the Hall Road cemetery in Rochford for the elderly/disabled, for whom access would otherwise be difficult.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Mr Whiteside for his presentation, which had provoked some useful discussion.

87. TOPIC AREAS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Sub-Committee agreed that the next Meeting, which would be held on 25 January 2000, might consider reports concerning the Primary Care Group and Periodic Electoral Review.

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm

Chairman *H. S. Vince*
Date . 25.....January, 2000

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group

At a Reconvened Meeting held on 22 September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes (Chairman), V H Leach, C R Morgan, R E Vingoe and P F A Webster

Members of the CCT Working Party Attending by Invitation: Councillors G Fox and Mrs J Helson

Visiting Councillors J E Grey and Mrs M J Webster

44 PROPOSED BID FOR A HIGH DIVERSION RECYCLING TRIAL IN RAYLEIGH – FINANCIAL ISSUES

The Monitoring Group considered further the confidential report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care which advised Members of information relating to this Authority's bid for a high diversion recycling trial in Rayleigh. Members had before them the tabled report of the Head of Financial Services which outlined the Authority's current financial position, giving Members projected budget figures up to the financial year 2002/03 and provided information in relation to the Capital Programme up to the financial year 2002/03.

In endorsing the proposal for a bid to be made to the County Council for funds to allow a trial to be carried out within the District, Members were mindful of the capital and revenue implications over the four year trial period and their effect on the Authority's budgets overall. Although some savings in the specification could be identified, Members considered nevertheless that the bid should be made on the basis of the financial report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care which detailed year on year costs for the trial, with a minor amendment to costs stated for Public Relations being split as follows, for the first year.

Public Relations

Capital	Revenue
£40,000	£20,000

Members considered that the County Council should be advised that this Authority would contribute up to £100,000 towards capital costs and that any revenue funding would be considered during the normal budgetary process, although any contribution was likely to be minimal. The County would then be requested to cover the remaining costs of the trial. On a motion put by Councillor R E Vingoe and seconded by Councillor C R Morgan it was

RECOMMENDED

(1) That this Authority make a qualified bid in relation to a high diversion recycling trial, with the capital element identified, however that the County Council be advised that more time would be needed to identify some revenue support for the scheme. This would be considered during the budget process.

(2) That the Essex County Council be advised that this Authority would welcome any early feedback on the success of the bid (HHHCC)

The Meeting closed at 10.15 pm

Chairman 
Date 30 September 1999

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee

At a Reconvened Meeting held on 22 September 1999. Present: Councillors C R Morgan (Chairman), G Fox and V H Leach.

Visiting: Councillors D E Barnes, J E Grey, Mrs J Helson, R E Vingoe, Mrs M J Webster and P F A Webster

9. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 September 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. RECOMMENDATION FROM MEMBER BUDGET MONITORING WORKING GROUP - 22ND SEPTEMBER 1999

The Sub-Committee considered the recommendation of the Meeting of the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group held on 22nd September 1999 and it was unanimously

Resolved

(1) That this Authority make a qualified bid in relation to a high diversion trial, with the capital element identified, however that the County Council be advised that more time would be needed to identify some revenue support for the scheme. This would be considered during the budget process.

(2) That Essex County Council be advised that this Authority would welcome any early feedback on the success of the bid.

The Meeting closed at 10.20pm.

Chairman

Date

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Member Budget Monitoring Group

At a reconvened Meeting held on 23 September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes (Chairman), C R Morgan and P F A Webster.

Apologies Councillors V H Leach and R E Vingoe.

Substitutes. Councillor Mrs J Helson

41. ASSET REVIEW – NON LEISURE SITES

The Group considered the confidential addendum report of the Chief Executive on the outcome of the Officer Review of sites to be considered for disposal and listed on the confidential appendix to these Minutes.


Following a detailed review, the Group proposed that a number of sites be offered for sale on the open market through local estate agents. Further information was requested in connection with the remaining parcels including site visits where appropriate, which should include the Local Ward Councillors. It was also requested that a report be brought forward on the Causton Way site.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to take all necessary action to dispose of the following sites by sale on the open market through local agents -
 - (i) Land at Hambro Hill, Rayleigh
 - (ii) 125 High Road, Rayleigh
 - (iii) Land at Malvern Road, Hockley
 - (iv) Land at Tylny Avenue, Rochford
- (2) That land at Coventry Hill, Hullbridge, be offered for sale to the current leaseholder, subject to a clause providing for betterment value should the current use change. (HLS)

At the close of the Meeting it was agreed that the Group should commence work on an item by item review of the Budget Book at its next Meeting

The Meeting closed at 7.25pm


Chairman
Date 30th September 1999

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Transportation and Environmental Services Committee

At a Meeting held on 23 September 1999. Present: Councillors V H Leach (Chairman), R Adams, D E Barnes, C I Black, Mrs J M Giles, Mrs H L A Glynn, J E Grey, A Hosking, D R Helson, C C Langlands, Mrs M S Vince, and Mrs M J Webster

Apologies: Councillors G C Angus, J M Dickson, D M Ford, Mrs J E Ford and V D Hutchings.

Substitutes: Councillors C R Morgan, R E Vingoe and Mrs M A Weir

Visiting: Councillor Mrs J Helson

372. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meetings of 7th and 15th July 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to Minute 308 being amended to indicate that Aylesford Newsprint had stated categorically that they would take and recycle all newspapers collected from the district.

With regard to Minute 309, further clarification was requested in respect of the County's Environmental mitigation measures being incorporated within the new A130 scheme. Members noted that Essex County Council would not be installing a 'lipped' embankment to the section of the new A130 from Rettendon Turnpike to the A127, as had been requested by District Council Members.

373. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Clarification was sought by Members as to the current position with regard to the car parking area adjacent to 200 Ashington Road, which had been the subject of a recent Notice of Motion and Planning Application. The Committee was advised that the Notice of Motion had been deferred pending the outcome of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management's Review of Car Parking and Strategy. Members were further advised that, whilst a planning application had been received in respect of the same site, it had been deferred pending further negotiation with the applicant to seek to bring the land back into use as a Car Park.

A point was raised in respect of the Height Barriers which had been installed at the Castle Road Civic Amenity site and Members were advised that Essex County Council would be considering a progress report on this issue early in the New Year.

Members were further advised of the production of the report on the Stambridge Sewage Treatment Works by the Environment Agency. Although the document had been passed to the Minister, it had not been made public. Officers were seeking to obtain a copy of the report with a view to it being reported to the next meeting of the Working Party.

Members were satisfied that all necessary action had been taken, subject to the inclusion of Minute 159/99 in respect of the second recycling trial.

Minutes 401/98 (HHHCC), 28/99 (i)(v) (HHHCC) and 28/99 (iii) (HCPI) were carried forward

374 **SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee considered the Sub-Committee Minutes and the Recommendations contained therein.

(i) Environmental Health Sub-Committee - 16 July 1999

(ii) Transportation & Environmental Services Urgency Sub-Committee - 16 July 1999

(iii) Environmental Health Sub-Committee - 17 August 1999

Minute 73 - Waste Strategy

Resolved

(1) That Ecologika's draft reports be accepted in principle, with the inclusion of green waste within stage one of the Kerbside Recycling Programme subject to financial considerations.

(2) That the reports' principles be incorporated into the Council's future Waste Management Contract, for detailed consideration at a joint Meeting of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering Panel and Member Budget Monitoring Working Group.

(3) That in principle, subject to satisfactory financial and operational arrangements being agreed with Essex County Council and other Local Authorities as necessary, the Council commits to achieve a minimum target of 40% recycling/composting of household waste by the end of 2004, and seeks to achieve a minimum recycling/composting target of 60% by 2007.

(4) That a bid be submitted for a high diversion trial to take place in Rayleigh, subject to funding being made available from Essex County Council and such other assistance as may be required.

(5) That the funding of a Market Development Programme be supported, including the allocation of £871 in the current Financial Year and inclusion of a bid for £3,485 in the estimates for 2000/2001. (HHHCC)

(iv) Environmental Health Sub-Committee - 14 September 1999

Minute 76 - A Way with Waste - A Draft Waste Strategy for England and Wales - Consultation Paper

Resolved

(1) That subject to the comments listed above, this report accompanied by the Ecologika strategies previously considered by this Authority form the basis of a response to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions on the consultation document "A Way with Waste".

(2) That a copy of the response be sent direct to the relevant Minister and to both Dr Michael Clark MP and Sir Teddy Taylor MP (HCPI)

Minute 78 - Local Agenda 21 Strategy - Update (Minute 103/99)

Resolved

That the timetable for the production of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy be approved. (HCPI)

Minute 80 - Local Capacity Building for Stakeholder Dialogue - Member Training

Resolved

That Group Leaders make their nominations to the Workshop on local capacity building for stakeholder dialogue to accompany a Rochford Council Officer (HCPI)

(v) Planning Policy Sub-Committee - 15 September 1999

It was noted that Cllr D R Helson was not present at this meeting.

Minute 71 - Essex Historic Towns - Supplementary Planning Guidance

Resolved

(1) That Essex Historic Towns 1999 prepared by Essex County Council be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance

(2) That a policy be included in Rochford District Replacement Local Plan referring to the guidance documents.

(3) That the Sub-Committee's views concerning the management zone boundaries shown on the Local Plan Town Centre Inset Maps as outlined above, be submitted to Essex County Council (HCPI)

375. TAXI LICENSING RESTRICTION ON PLATES (Minute 107/99)

Members concurred with the view of the Chairman that this report should be referred to the next Transportation Sub-Committee on 4 November 1999, as that Sub-Committee had delegated powers to resolve matters relating to Hackney Carriage Licensing. It was agreed that a copy of the correspondence from the applicant, together with the letter of reply to petitions, be sent to all Members of the Transportation & Environmental Services Committee. (HRHM)

376. WASTE MANAGEMENT SEMINAR

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care which sought Members agreement to appoint attendees to the one day Waste Management Seminar organised jointly by the Consortium of Essex Waste Collection Authorities and Essex County Council

Resolved

That Councillors R Adams, R S Allen, A Hosking, V D Hutchings, V H Leach and G A Mockford attend the Waste Management Seminar and that this be an approved duty for attendance allowance purposes (HHHCC)

377. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 9 of the Schedule of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

378. **PAPER RECYCLING CONTRACT**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care which advised members of the new terms and conditions relating to the above Contract.

Members expressed concern over the implications stated within the report and considered that officers should attempt to negotiate a 3 month extension to the existing contract in order for the possible alternative arrangements to be investigated. It was further considered appropriate for officers to contact neighbouring authorities on the matter of newspaper recycling and to defer the site visit to Aylesford Newsprint until the situation had been resolved.

On a Motion put by Councillor D E Barnes and seconded by Councillor R A Pearson, it was -

Resolved

(1) That officers negotiate with the existing paper recycling contractor to attempt to extend the current contract by 3 months.

(2) That the visit to Aylesford Newsprint be deferred

(3) That officers enter into discussion with neighbouring authorities and contractors to establish whether alternative arrangements for paper collection can be made.

The meeting closed at 8 45 pm

Chairman

Date

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Structural & Procedural Review Working Group

At a Meeting held on 28 September 1999 Present: Councillors R Adams, D E Barnes, Mrs H L A Glynn, D R Helson, Mrs J Helson, V D Hutchings, C R Morgan, P F A Webster, and Mrs M A Weir.

Visiting: Councillor J E Grey.

47. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mrs J Helson was appointed Chairman of the Working Group for the remainder of the Municipal Year

48. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th April 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

49. THE MODERNISING AGENDA – NEW POLITICAL STRUCTURES

The Working Group considered the report of the Chief Executive on options for change in the light of information now available on the Draft Local Government (Organisation and Standards) Bill. Members agreed that it would be appropriate to consider the report of the Head of Administrative & Member Services on the title and status of Council Working Groups, Working Parties and Panels in tandem with the Chief Executive's report.

During debate Members emphasised the following points:-

- The Authority should remain mindful of costs
- Freeing up the amount of time spent at Meetings would provide more time for constituency work/work within political groups.
- A favourable model would be one which recognised the equality of Members, providing all with an opportunity to contribute to decision making and understand the totality of the Council's work.
- The rationalisation of Working Groups and the development of protocol would help to remove disparities.
- Any change should be introduced on a trial basis.
- Forthcoming boundary changes may alter the political complexion of the Council.

Members endorsed the comment of the Chief Executive on the value of introducing mechanisms capable of raising the Council's public profile and enabling an understanding of its activity.

The Group favoured the view that, given the politically balanced nature of the Authority, it would be appropriate to consider increasing the powers reserved to meetings of Full Council and abolishing some Service Committees. Such a model would not necessarily preclude the Council from future moves in other directions.

In terms of moving forward, the Chief Executive advised that it would be possible to schedule an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council for 23 November when proposals could be considered.

Advance consultation could be undertaken with all Members. The Group endorsed this approach.

Members agreed a Motion moved by Councillor D E Barnes and seconded by Councillor Mrs H L A Glynn and it was:-

RECOMMENDED

(1) That the Chief Executive report to an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council in November 1999 on a possible new political structure for the Council, to be trialled for one year on the following basis:-

- (i) Development of the role of Full Council.
- (ii) The abolition of Service Committees
- (iii) The rationalisation of Sub-Committees, Panels and Working Groups.
- (iv) A combination of scrutiny and probity roles within the revised structure.
- (v) A review of Members' allowances and administration support arrangements. (CE)

(2) That the Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration) produce for Council on 19th October 1999 a protocol for the operation and management of Working Groups, Working Parties and Panels. (CD(LPA))

50. URGENCY SUB-COMMITTEES

The Working Party considered the report of the Head of Administrative & Member Services on the administrative arrangements for convening Meetings of Urgency Sub-Committees.

During debate Members wished to emphasise that Urgency Sub-Committees should only be convened when absolutely necessary. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to ask Council to amend Standing Orders to provide that all three Members of an Urgency Sub-Committee should give signed consent to any decision.

RECOMMENDED

(1) That Standing Order 15(1) be amended by the addition of the following after the words "Members are present": "save that, in the case of Urgency Sub-Committees, three voting Members must be present".

(2) That Standing Order 17 be amended by the addition of a new clause (3) to read "when reaching any decision, all three Members of the Urgency Sub-Committee must give their signed consent to such decision. This consent to be retained with the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. In the event that consent is not provided by all three Members, the matter under debate be referred to the Sub-Committee's Parent Committee for determination". Existing clause (3) to be renumbered (4).

The Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Chairman

Date . . . 29/6/2000

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee

At a Meeting held on 28 September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes (Chairman), R Adams, G. Fox, D R Helson, Mrs J Helson, C R Morgan, V H Leach, R E Vingoe, P F A Webster and Mrs M A Weir

Apologies Councillors Mrs J M Giles, T Livings and D A Weir.

Substitutes. Councillors J E Grey and N Harris

Visiting Councillor Mrs H L A Glynn.

256. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 July 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

257. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The following non-pecuniary interests were declared.

- Councillor G Fox in item 8 (Training Access Point for Rochford Town Centre) by virtue of his position as a governor of the Adult Community College in Rochford.
- Councillor Mrs J Helson in item 10 (Millennium Clock, Rayleigh) and item 12 (Application for Waiver of Public Entertainment Licence Fees – Rayleigh Town Council – Millennium Celebrations) by virtue of her position as Chairman of Rayleigh Town Council.
- Councillor R E Vingoe in item 13 (Application for Waiver of Street Trading Consent Fees – Hockley Christmas Lights)

258. EAST OF ENGLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which provided an outline of the contents of the consultation draft "East of England Regional Economic Development Strategy", and sought Members' comments on the questions for consultation within the strategy.

The strategy provided a snapshot of the state of the economy in the Eastern Region, and had highlighted a range of economic issues against which a vision and a set of priorities had been identified. Members noted that it was intended that the vision of the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) would be achieved by concentrating efforts on developing a competitive infrastructure and focusing on jobs and skills. Priorities for attention had been identified and a programme of action, which was appended to the report, had been drawn up. The draft strategy posed a series of questions about, and sought views upon, a number of key areas which included the following.

- Measurement of economic growth in the region.
- Establishment of a Regional Observatory as a two-way information, research and intelligence gathering exercise between EEDA and sub-regional partners.
- Defining accountability and responsibility for action.

It was noted that no formal deadline for the submission of views upon the Strategy had been set, which therefore allowed the Council further time to consider its response. Consequently, a number of Members suggested that it would be of value for the Sub-Committee to receive a presentation from the EEDA before preparation of the submissions, and a motion to this effect moved by Councillor P F A Webster and seconded by Councillor C R Morgan was agreed unanimously.

In reply to Member questions, Officers advised as follows.

- The EEDA was comprised government appointed staff, and secondees from the public and private sectors. Its aim was to bring together all the disparate organisations that had hitherto addressed issues of economic regeneration across the region as a whole, rather than solely those relating to the District or County.
- There had been a number of significant moves to develop regional governance. These included the establishment of a "Shadow Chamber" by the EEDA (upon which the District was represented) and examination of the possibility of setting up a planning framework for the region which could result in the Agency undertaking responsibility for SERPLAN. A conference was to be held to consider regional planning in more detail, the outcome of which would be reported to Members. A report was also to be considered by Finance and General Purposes Committee concerning a proposal for the East of England Conference to become a regional 'arm' of the EEDA.
- Members considered that the funding implications of the EEDA subsuming a number of other regional organisations should be identified.

RECOMMENDED

That the Sub-Committee receives a presentation by a representative from the East of England Development Agency at the earliest opportunity, to assist with the preparation of the Council's response to the consultation draft Strategy. (HCPI)

259 APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF STREET TRADING CONSENT FEES CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, SPA ROAD, HOCKLEY – SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER 1999

Officers reported that the necessary information for the waiver of Street Trading consent fees had not yet been received from Hockley Parish Council, and it was, with the Charman's consent, agreed to withdraw this report from the Agenda.

260. APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE FEES, RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL – MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care which sought Members' views concerning an application for the waiver of public

entertainment licences fees for Rayleigh Town Council's Millennium celebrations planned for next year.

The Chairman of Rayleigh Town Council provided the Sub-Committee with updated details of the planned events. Members took account of the purpose of the occasion - to give all people of Rayleigh and District an entertaining weekend - and that although sponsorship for some events would be received, and a small admission charge be made, a profit was not expected.

On a motion put by Councillor R E Vingoe and seconded by Councillor C R Morgan, it was

RECOMMENDED

That a full waiver of the fee due for a public entertainment licence for the Millennium Celebrations planned by Rayleigh Town Council be granted. (HHHCC)

261. JOINT MANAGEMENT OF KING GEORGE'S PLAYING FIELD, RAYLEIGH

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration) concerning discussions that had taken place with Rayleigh Town Council with regard to joint management of King George's Field, Rayleigh.

It was noted that the simplest way to achieve shared responsibility would be to invite the Town Council to become a joint trustee with the District Council, and a constitution could be prepared which would set out the purposes of the trust, the mechanics of management (probably a management committee of Councillors from authorities) and related matters. The Sub-Committee was advised that preparation of the scheme would fall to the Charity Commission.

Members received details of the proposed arrangements for grounds maintenance, and also noted that the Town Council was in a position to release funds for improvements to the Pavilion, Children's Play Area and any other parts of the Field that the Joint Trustees may consider in need of attention. Under the proposal, the Trust would receive a boost in capital resources, and this Council could, at the same time, improve facilities at one of its prime Public Open Spaces.

During discussion, a number of Members expressed the view that the District Council should retain overall control of the site under the terms of the Trust, through the Management Committee that would be established. A Motion to this effect, moved by Councillor P F A Webster and seconded by Councillor G Fox, was agreed. The Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration) emphasised that the Field was not in the ownership of the Council, but was held by it in Trust; nevertheless, discussions could be held with the Charity Commission to consider ways in which the Council could retain the level of control that Members wished. In reply to a Member question, it was explained that the role of the National Playing Fields Association would be to oversee the management of the site and to ensure that the Council was fulfilling its obligations under the terms of the Trust. Any income arising from hire of the field would accrue to the Trust.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That Rayleigh Town Council be invited to become a Joint Trustee of the King George V Field, Rayleigh, but that the District Council should retain control under the terms of the constitution of the Trust.



- (2) That the Charity Commission be requested to create a scheme and that a formal constitution for the trust be prepared accordingly.
- (3) That a further report on the management arrangements for the Trust be made to this Sub-Committee in due course. (CD(LP&A))

262. TRAINING ACCESS POINT FOR ROCHFORD TOWN CENTRE

NOTE: Mr P Warren, the Chief Executive, declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in this matter, as he had been invited to become a governor of the Adult Community College, Rochford.

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which informed Members of progress in securing a Training Access Point in Rochford Town Centre to increase the take up of further education opportunities within the District.

Members were informed that Training Access points are 'touch screen' Information Kiosks that display information about training opportunities in Essex and are funded by the Essex Training & Enterprise Council. Following an approach from officers at Rochford District Council, the TEC had agreed that local information relating to the provision of Information Technology courses at the Adult Community College Rochford (ACCR) could be installed in Rochford Town Centre. Barclays Bank, in Rochford Market Square, had agreed to carry out a trial of the Kiosk in their main reception, since it was considered that potential course participants were more likely to use this information in an environment that they have chosen to enter rather than make a specific trip to, for example, the Reception Area at the Council Offices in South Street. The installation of the information kiosk in the Town Centre would, it was anticipated, increase the accessibility of information relating to training opportunities for local residents. No time limit had been set for the trial's duration.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the proposal to locate a Training Access Point in Barclays Bank, Rochford be endorsed
- (2) That formal thanks be sent to Barclays Bank for their commitment to Community Development. (HCPI)

263. IT PROGRESS REPORT

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services which outlined progress with achieving Year 2000 compliance for the Council's computer systems and gave further information about other IT projects.

Members were reminded that the previously agreed strategy was to implement a compliant hardware and operating platform on which could be run compliant versions of existing software systems. Where necessary, new hardware and software had been acquired and the Project was now nearing completion. It was anticipated that completion of the Year 2000 Project would enable the Government to upgrade the status of the Council's preparedness to the highest level of readiness. Details concerning other IT projects including: the establishment of a computerised land and property register; assistance with the implementation of a job evaluation scheme for staff; and the assessment of possible Committee administration packages were also received. In view of the need to examine the budgetary and associated implications of achieving Year 2000 compliance, it was then

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

It was noted that a range of new hardware and software, together with training would be required, the cost of which (£50,000) could be met from the 1999/2000 capital programme. Taking this expenditure in to account, it was anticipated that there would be a capital underspend of £70,000 but that as a result of problems and delays associated with the Financial Systems there had been a revenue overspend of £70,000 in the current financial year. Members considered that further investigation was necessary, especially in view of the possibility that the overspend could increase if it was necessary to continue to run two systems concurrently beyond the end of October. The Sub-Committee therefore agreed that a full report concerning the background to, and implications of, the current situation together with possible solutions should be presented to a future meeting, as a matter of urgency.

RECOMMENDED

That a report be presented to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee, as a matter of urgency, concerning the background to the revenue expenditure associated with achieving Year 2000 I T compliance and identifying possible solutions to potential future problems. (HAMS)

The Sub-Committee then agreed that the Meeting be re-opened to the public.

264 MILLENNIUM CLOCK, RAYLEIGH

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives concerning the installation of the Council's crest on the Rayleigh Millennium Clock. Members were reminded that they had previously agreed in principle to the proposal for a Council coat of arms to be fitted to the new Rayleigh Millennium clock, subject to the cost being funded through an application to the Essex County Council Millennium Fund. However, Essex County Council had recently informed this Council that the proposed Millennium Fund would not apply to the provision of material objects, but would focus instead upon specific projects.

The Head of Service informed the Sub-Committee that he had, since preparation of the report, received a letter confirming that the Town Council had decided to proceed with the purchase of the Crest, the cost of which was £850. The cost of the planning application had been met from other funds made available to the Town Council for Millennium events

The Sub-Committee considered at some length whether the Council should contribute financially to the project. Some Members were of the opinion that no contribution should be made, and that external funding sources should be sought, whilst others suggested that it was a prestigious and worthwhile proposal which merited a financial input by the Council. A Motion put by Councillor P F A Webster and seconded by Councillor J E Grey that no objection be raised to the scheme proceeding with the assistance of external sponsorship to be sought by the Town Council, but that there be no financial contribution by the District Council was lost upon a show of hands. A motion by Councillor V H Leach, seconded by Councillor N Harris, that a sum of £850 be contributed by the District Council towards the cost of the project, to be met from contingency funds was, on a show of hands, declared carried



RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

That £850 be contributed from contingency funds towards the cost of installing the Council's Crest on the Rayleigh Millennium Clock. (HCPI)

265. ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL TIME CAPSULE

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Initiatives which provided further information concerning the Council's Time Capsule, in particular details of its construction, and proposed arrangements for its burial. Members also considered items for inclusion within the capsule, which included contributions from local children, schools, community groups and Council departments. It was agreed that a group of Councillors should be established to give further consideration to this matter.

The Sub-Committee was also informed that Rayleigh Town Council would be organising a Millennium event, to be held on 31 December, which would include the burying of a time capsule and the lighting of the beacon that had been re-erected at the Mill Hall site. The Chairman of the District Council had been invited to participate in the event.

On a motion put by Councillor D R Helson and seconded by Councillor V H Leach it was:

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That a burying ceremony for the Rochford Millennium Capsule be organised to take place in January or February 2000.
- (2) That a group of Councillors, to comprise the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council and one Member from each Group, be established to consider the detailed contents of the time capsule. (HCPI)

266. TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services concerning the proposed programme of Member training for the remainder of the current municipal year. The Meeting was further informed that the Housing Needs course would cost £800 and that the dates of some of the training sessions were still to be determined.

A timetable appended to the report showed proposed training sessions for the period to March 2000, which reflected the stated preferences of those Members who responded to the survey of training needs undertaken by the Chief Executive earlier this year. The timetable was noted by the Sub-Committee. Any additions to the training programme and further information would be provided in future editions of the Chief Executive's Newsletter.

Members were concerned that, to achieve maximum value from the training sessions, optimum attendance was desirable; Officers were therefore requested to ensure that, where dates were yet to be identified, those chosen were as convenient to as many Members as possible, particularly for those courses involving the use of external providers

In reply to Member questions, Officers advised as follows:

- The appraisal training was intended, at this stage, for Members of this Sub-Committee only since it was they who would be undertaking the forthcoming staff appraisals.



- Attendance at "in house" courses had been authorised as an approved duty, for which allowances could be claimed, but the approval of Council to externally located courses being similarly designated would need to be sought.

The Sub-Committee was also informed that the Council had been invited to nominate up to 5 Members to attend two training events organised by the Association of Essex Councils (AEC) and it was agreed that nominees would be identified at the next Meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the invitation from the AEC to send delegates to forthcoming Member development events on 19 October and 18 November be accepted, and that a maximum of five Members to attend each event be nominated
- (2) That attendance at these AEC courses be designated as an approved duty for the payment of Member allowances. (HAMS)

267. PROJECTION EQUIPMENT FOR THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Administrative and Member Services which sought agreement in principle to the replacement of the projection equipment in the Council Chamber

Members were reminded of the problems and limitations of the existing equipment, many of which could be overcome using current multi-media display technology, although clearly any solution would be governed by the nature and room layout of the Council Chamber. Discussions with a supplier of presentation equipment had indicated that the Council should consider installing a new projector and screen; a large screen TV to enable those sitting on, and immediately in front of, the dais to view presentations, a laptop computer, visualiser and video recorder; and a new speaker system. All the equipment would be controlled by the presenter from a single control desk. The estimated cost of the complete system was £30,000. Improvements could also be made to the existing microphone and sound system at an estimated additional cost of £5,000. It was noted that the sum currently included in the capital programme for 2000/01 would need to be increased substantially to enable this scheme to be implemented.

RECOMMENDED

That the Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration) be requested to prepare a specification and arrange demonstrations of new presentation equipment for the Council Chamber. (HAMS)

268. SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Law, Planning and Administration) which confirmed the Council's revised Scheme of Delegations to Officers, which had been adjusted following restructuring at the end of 1998.

Three Chief Officer posts had been deleted from the establishment and their responsibilities and, by implication, the delegations associated with the deleted posts had been transferred to the Chief Executive and two Corporate Directors. Members noted that this was a housekeeping exercise and that no new delegations to Officers had been created. A copy of the Scheme was appended to the report and is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.

RECOMMENDED

That the revised Scheme of Delegations to Officers, as appended, be approved (CD(LPA))

269 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraphs 7, 1 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

270. 128 HIGH STREET, GREAT WAKERING

The Sub-Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Legal Services concerning the future use of 128 High Street, Great Waking. It was noted that the permitted use of the premises was a unisex hairdressing salon for which the current 7 year lease had expired. A request for a new lease for a term of 14 years had been received. Members examined details of the current and potential future rent, and the obligations for the maintenance of the premises under the lease by the Council.

RECOMMENDED

That the Head of Legal Services:

- (1) Obtains a market rental for a short Lease for a term of 14 years.
- (2) Completes a new Lease on similar terms to the current Lease, and such other terms as the Head of Legal Services thinks fit, the Lessee being responsible for the Valuers' costs including VAT and the legal costs of the Head of Legal Services. (HLS)

271. MILLENNIUM WORKING

The Sub-Committee considered the confidential report of the Chief Executive which sought Members' views with regard to the payment of sheltered housing scheme wardens over the millennium period. It was noted that it had been the accepted custom and practice that sheltered scheme wardens provided cover on public and statutory holidays, and that their salary was deemed to incorporate this requirement.

The Council had already agreed to make a special one-off payment to other staff who are required to be on standby over the 4 day millennium period and it was suggested that a similar approach should be adopted for sheltered scheme wardens. However, given that the wardens' integrated pay/emoluments package was already deemed to reimburse them for cover over holiday periods, it was considered that there would be some rationale for awarding them a lower payment than for staff whose contracts do not extend to coverage over the holiday period. The cost of this payment could be met from the Housing Revenue budget.

It was noted that the Personnel Officer had already begun to consider the measures necessary to improve the clarity and enforceability of the Wardens' contracts

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the sheltered housing scheme wardens be offered a one-off millennium standby payment as outlined in the Chief Executive's report. (CE)



- (2) That a report concerning the conditions of service and working practices of the sheltered housing wardens be presented to a future Meeting of the Sub-Committee. (HAMS)

272. CHIEF OFFICERS' REMUNERATION

The Sub-Committee considered the confidential report of the Chief Executive concerning the requirement for all local authorities to review the remuneration of their Chief Officers, and were informed which staff would be covered by such a review

A number of methods for carrying out the evaluation was considered and Members were informed that that JNC had issued guidelines concerning the factors that are to be taken into account in deciding where, in relation to the range, posts should be remunerated. With this option, it was considered appropriate for the Chief Executive and Personnel Manager to conduct the review and develop proposals for Members' consideration and decision, thereby avoiding the need to use external consultants.

RECOMMENDED

That the Chief Executive and Personnel Manager be requested to jointly conduct the review and develop proposals for the consideration of this Sub-Committee (CE)


273. MILL HALL COMPLEX - PROPOSED EDUCATION CENTRE - ADDITIONAL LAND

The Sub-Committee considered the confidential report of the Head of Legal Services which sought approval to the disposal of a small, additional, parcel of land for the proposed Education Centre. Members were reminded that the Finance & General Purposes Committee, at its meeting on 15 June 1999, authorised a lease of land for 125 years at the Mill Hall complex to Rayleigh Town Council for the site of the proposed Education Centre. It had since become apparent that an additional small triangle of land would be required in order that the project could proceed. A plan showing the land in question was appended to the report.

RECOMMENDED

That the additional parcel of land is included in the lease on the same terms and conditions as that authorised under Minute 249/99 (HLS)

Meeting closed at 10.05pm.

Chairman 
Date 20/10/99



ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

This Scheme of Delegations is designed to enable the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees to retain full and final decision over policy matters whilst enabling Officers to administer the day to day operation of services within these policies.

This Scheme is a codification of existing delegated powers to Officers and is to be operated subject to the following terms of reference:

1. No Officer exercising delegated powers shall exercise those powers in a manner inconsistent with nor make any decision contrary to any policy of the Council or a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council as embodied in a formal resolution of the Council or Committee or Sub-Committee nor make a decision involving a question of general policy which has not previously been considered by the Council or Committee or Sub-Committee.
2. No Officer in exercising a delegated power shall incur any expenditure unless appropriate provision has been made in the approved Annual Estimates and/or Capital Programme except as provided in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
3. Nothing in this Delegation Scheme shall be construed in such a way as to remove the requirement that no action may be taken contrary to the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

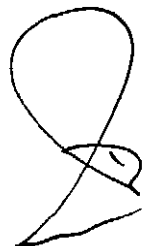
GENERAL DELEGATIONS

1. Appointments

The Proper Officer to compile the lists of background papers and form an opinion as to which papers are to be included, under the Local Government Act 1972, is the Officer in whose name the report is prepared with the first named Officer being designated in the case of joint reports.

2. Each statutory Chief Officer is authorised to

- (a) represent the Council at any hearing or public inquiry arising from the performance of the affairs of the Council
- (b) attend meetings of local organisations etc. provided the Chairman of the appropriate Committee has indicated their concurrence
- (c) authorise any other officer within his/her area of responsibility to act on his behalf
- (d) implement the provisions of Section 41 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 with regard to lost or uncollected property in buildings or premises within his/her area of responsibility.
- (e) enter into contracts and grant exemptions in accordance with Contract Standing Orders to a maximum of £31,000.



DELEGATED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

(Authority to be exercised by the Deputy Chief Executive in his absence.
This position will be held by the Corporate Directors on a rotational basis.)

1. Appointments

- * Head of the Authority's Paid Service pursuant to section 4 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989.
- * Returning Officer for District and Parish Council elections in the District of Rochford, retaining the right to appoint others to discharge any or all of the functions of Returning Officer.
- * Electoral Registration Officer for the Council with authority to bring proceedings and to defend actions under the Representation of the People Act 1982 and any associated regulations.
- * Proper Officer for all statutory purposes and standing orders except where a specific appointment has been delegated to another Officer.
- * Council representative on the Essex Branch of the Association of Local Government.
- * Responsible Officer for the internal audit of the Authority.
- * Information co-ordinator under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992
- * Emergency Controller for the District of Rochford

2. Responsibility for all staffing matters subject to corporate policies and practice including:-

- i) determination of staffing levels for services to maintain efficiency and effectiveness including variations within budgetary provision.
- ii) recruitment, training and dismissals.
- iii) approval of secondary employment, leave, overtime, ex-gratia payments in accordance with NJC Conditions, training courses, membership of and attendance at professional bodies.
- iv) obtaining medical advice when necessary on the health of particular employees.

3. Specific Areas of Delegation

Authority to:

- i) handle complaints made to the Ombudsman, Members of Parliament and others as appropriate.

- ii) act on behalf of the Council in twinning matters.
- iii) liaise with Local Authorities on Partnership issues.
- iv) in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, approve the use of the gardens at the rear of the Council Offices by bona fide organisations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' or 'Z' shape with a horizontal line extending to the right.

**DELEGATED TO THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (LAW, PLANNING &
ADMINISTRATION)**

(Authority to be exercised by the Head of Legal Services in his absence.)

1. Appointments

- * Monitoring Officer pursuant to Section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (the Head of Legal Services to act as deputy).
- * Clerk to all Appeals Panels unless his directorate is involved in the appeal in which case the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) will be appointed for that matter.
- * Clerk to the Local Review Board.
- * "Proper Officer" for the following functions and duties

(a) Under the Local Government Act 1972

Section 96(1)	Receipt of Notices of pecuniary interest.
Section 94, 96(1) & 96(2)	Keeping record of disclosures of pecuniary interests
Section 204(3)	Receipt of applications for licences under the Licensing Act 1964 Schedule 2.
Section 225(1)	Deposit of documents.
Section 229(5)	Certification of photographic copies of documents.
Section 234(1) and (2)	Authentication of documents
Section 236 (10)	Sending copies of Bye-laws for Parish records and to the County Council.
Section 238	Certification of Bye-laws.
Section 248	Keeping a roll of Freemen.
Schedule 14	Certification of resolutions, Para 25.
Section 212	Local Registrar of Land Charges

Access to Information

Section 100B(2)	Identifying confidential agenda items.
Section 100B(7)(C)	Supplying committee papers to the press.
Section 100C(2)	Preparing summaries of confidential proceedings.
Section 100F(2)	Deciding exempt information not open to Members.
Section 100G	Registers of Members and List of Delegations.

(b) Under the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 and any regulations made thereunder:-

Section 19	Members Interests
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(c) Standing Orders

Standing Order 33(1) Registration of Interests of Officers
& (3)
Standing Order 34(1) Safe Custody of the Common Seal
Standing Order 34(3) Attesting of the Common Seal.

2. Authority to act on behalf of the Council in connection with all matters except those reserved to Council or any Committee or Sub-Committee under legislation with regard to the Control of Development in respect of


- a
 - i) Licensing
 - ii) Registration
 - iii) the issue of certificates, orders and service of notices
 - iv) the appointment of Inspectors
 - v) statutory consultations, returns and reports, subject to confirmations of action taken.
 - vi) building regulations,

b the appointment of officers for:

- i) the inspection of property and records
- ii) the exercise of powers of entry and seizure
- iii) issues related to access for the disabled
- iv) the requisitioning of information
- v) the sampling and testing of materials
- vi) the implementation and enforcements of legislation including Byelaws

c. determination of planning applications in connection with:

- i) private garages within curtilage of established residential properties.
- ii) new or altered means of access to existing developments subject to the necessary consultations with the Highway Authority.
- iii) shop fronts relating only to shopping uses outside and not materially affecting designated Conservation Areas.
- iv) fences, boundary walls and other means of enclosure to residential properties
- v) approval of reserved matters relating to landscaping and external materials.
- vi) minor amendments to approved plans.
- vii) the temporary siting of caravans where an approved building is in the course of construction.
- viii) all extensions to residential buildings.
- ix) refusal because of Metropolitan Green Belt policy.



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- x) determine changes of use in accordance with an appropriate formal planning policy or plan.
- xi) determine applications for changes of use of land to private residential gardens.
- xii) approve applications for the renewal of a temporary permission for demountable classrooms.
- xiii) determine applications for the replacement of temporary school buildings.
- xiv) determine advertisements outside Conservation Areas and/or which do not affect the character or setting of Listed Buildings.
- xv) determine applications for Listed Building consents where the concurrent planning application is within the existing delegation scheme.
- xvi) determine applications for Listed Building Consents where the building work involved does not require planning permission.
- xvii) approve applications for the repair and maintenance of school buildings.
- xviii) determine applications submitted under Part 6 and 7 of Schedule 2 to the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 to make a decision on applications for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the local planning authority is required in respect of certain details for prescribed categories of permitted agricultural development.
- xix) under the Town & Country Planning (Demolition - Description of Buildings) Direction 1992: Planning Controls over Demolition (DoE Circular 16/92), to make a decision on applications for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the local planning authority is required, to the method of the proposed demolition and any proposed restoration of the site.
- xx) determine applications submitted under Part VI and VII of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.

3. General Delegations

Authority to:-

- (a) prosecute, defend or appear on behalf of the Council in any legal proceedings or Public Inquiry in accordance with Section 222 Local Government Act 1972
- b) authorise appearances in Court pursuant to Section 60(2) of the County Court Act 1984 and Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972 on behalf of the Council.
- c) act on behalf of appointed Health & Safety Inspectors under the provisions of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- d) instruct private solicitors/barristers in connection with such legal work as in his opinion cannot reasonably or expeditiously be undertaken 'in-house'.

- e) take all necessary action including the institution of legal proceedings on the recommendation of the responsible officer for offences, contraventions, non-compliance or breaches of statute, bye-laws, conditions of license or notices
- f) issue formal cautions as an alternative to the institution of legal proceedings where this is deemed the most appropriate course of action
- g) to extend the period for compliance with statutory notices where it is considered reasonable to do so.
- h) authorise other persons to accompany Inspectors
- i) to issue licences, registrations etc. in respect of the following:-

House to House Collections

Street Collections

Betting, Gaming and Lotteries (except Amusements with Permits)

"Society" lotteries under the Lotteries & Amusement Act 1976 and to approve Lottery Schemes adopted by Societies where the total value of tickets to be sold in any lottery does not exceed £20,000

4. Specific Areas of Delegation

A Law & Administration

Authority to:-

- (a) complete agreements under Section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 with owners of premises unsuitable for re-occupation on the recommendation of the responsible officer.
- (b) grant licences for access onto Council owned land where similar licences are in existence.
- (c) grant Way-Leaves and easements to statutory undertakings and bodies with similar powers and sales of electricity sub-stations, gas regulators and telephone junction box sites or similar as appropriate.
- (d) on application, to reduce charges made for Public Footpath Orders where, in the opinion of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services), there are genuine grounds for such a reduction.
- (e) decide applications for the hire of the public meeting rooms at the Civic Suite.
- (f) complete the lifting of restrictive covenants from former Council property at full betterment value in cases where a valid planning permission has been granted for the proposed use.
- (g) adopt and maintain open spaces associated with developments on the Council's behalf.

- (h) under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990:-
- (i) make determinations under Section 56
 - (ii) determine applications and issue certificates under Sections 191 and 192
 - (iii) serve planning contravention notices under Section 171(c).
 - (iv) issue and serve Notices under Section 215 in consultation with the responsible officer.
 - (v) complete agreements under section 106 in respect of planning applications determined under delegated authority.
- (i) determine applications for temporary street closures in consultation with the Police and Highway Authority.
- (j) make representations to the Licensing Authority on applications for Goods Vehicles Operators Licenses on the advice of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)

B. Planning

Authority to:-

- a) authorise officers to dispense informal planning advice and informal consultations at their own discretion, taking into account the regulations in place at the time.
- b) accept and agree amendments to submitted applications at his/her discretion.
- c) determine applications on the Weekly List in accordance with the recommendations unless within the agreed timescale a request is received for an application to be referred to the Planning Services Committee
- d) complete obligations or Agreements under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of planning applications determined under delegated authority.
- e) carry out street numbering schemes.
- f) take all necessary action to remedy breaches of planning control relating to the use of land for sales or markets including car boot sales.
- g) take all necessary enforcement action to secure the removal of advertisements appearing in contravention of regulations for the control of advertisements
- h) to set the necessary charges for the Building Regulation function.
- i) to determine prior notification applications, submitted pursuant to Part 7, (Forestry, Building and Operations) and Part 24, (Development by Telecommunications Code System Operators) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995).

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**DELEGATED TO THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (FINANCE & EXTERNAL
SERVICES)**

(Authority to be exercised by the Head of Financial Services and/or the Head of Housing,
Health & Community Care in his absence.)

1. Appointments

- * Registrar for the purposes of recording the Council's loan transactions pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989.
- * Responsible Officer for the accountability and administration of Value Added Tax in respect of all transactions relating to the Council.
- * Proper Officer under the Local Government Act 1972 for the following functions and duties:

Section 115(2)	Receipt of money due from Officers
Section 146(1)(a) and (b)	Declarations and Certificates with regard to securities.
Section 151	Administration of financial affairs
Section 228(3)	Accounts of any Proper Officer to be open to inspection by any Member of the Authority.

- * Clerk to any Appeals Panel in place of the Corporate Director (Law Planning & Administration) where that Officer's directorate is involved in the Appeal.
- * Responsible Officer for all insurance matters relating to the Council and authorised to take such action as is considered necessary.
- * Data Protection Co-ordinator for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1984.

2. Authority to act on behalf of the Council in connection with all matters except those reserved to Council or any Committee or Sub-Committee under legislation with regard to:

- (a) Public Protection
- (b) Environmental Protection
- (c) Animal
- (d) Leisure and Recreation

in respect of:

- A.
- i) Licensing
 - vii) Registration
 - viii) the issue of certificates, orders and service of notices
 - ix) the appointment of Inspectors
 - x) control of pests and vermin
 - xi) the abatement of nuisance and conditions prejudicial to health
 - xii) air pollution, chimneys, furnaces, boilers and industrial plant
 - xiii) Dangerous Buildings, ruinous and dilapidated buildings and neglected sites
 - xiv) water supply, drainage, cesspools and water courses
 - xv) grants in respect of repair, renovation, disabled facilities and improvement of property, including Historic Building Grants

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- xvi) caravans, markets, tree preservation and hedgerows
- xvii) statutory consultations, returns and reports, subject to confirmations of action taken.
- xviii) contract supervision.

B. the appointment of officers for

- vii) the inspection of property and records
- viii) the exercise of powers of entry and seizure
- ix) the requisitioning of information
- x) the sampling and testing of materials
- xi) the implementation and enforcements of legislation including Byelaws
- xii) the making of Tree Preservation Orders

3. Specific Areas of Delegation

A. Finance

Authority to:-

- (a) undertake the Council's Treasury Management function in accordance with approved policy and practice
- (b) implement salary awards, NJC allowance and car allowance decisions on receipt of official notification
- (c) operate National Giro Accounts as necessary
- (d) operate the Rent Allowance Schemes in accordance with relevant legislation
- (e) effect payment of grants in accordance with approved policy and practice
- (f) decide all applications in respect of House Purchase Loans
- (g) approve car loans under the provisions of Appendix F of the Scheme of Conditions of Service
- (h) countersign and authorise the countersignature of cheques over £5,000
- (i) switch Capital and Revenue expenditure where this is in the best interests of the Council
- (j) operate and make such decisions as are required for the proper administration of the Housing Benefits Schemes in accordance with relevant legislation
- (k) adjust all financial sums contained in the Council's Financial Standing Orders and Regulations annually by reference to the Retail Price Index
- (l) write off arrears not exceeding £310
- (m) approve virements up to £3,100
- (n) use contract hire vehicles where financial savings can be demonstrated

- (o) undertake the Council's functions in connection with management and administration of residual Community Charge, Council Tax and National Non-domestic Rate not otherwise reserved to the Council
- (p) determine reasonable charges for the supply of goods and services in consultation with the Responsible Officer
- (q) pass details of penalty notices issued in relation to unlicensed vehicles to the Essex Police
- (r) accept payment in respect of the grant or renewal of licenses under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 by annual instalments
- (s) make determinations under Sections 42(2)(q), 56(1), 60(2) and 63(1) of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989
- (t) decide to remit in whole or part fees or charges to educational or charitable organisations in consultation with the Responsible Officer and Chairman of the relevant Committee
- (u) undertake the Council's functions in connection with the management and administration of Hackney Carriage licensing and registration not otherwise reserved to the relevant Committee
- (v) determine applications for other than ordinary use of car parks not resulting in a significant loss of revenue
- (w) to approve requests for minor works up to a total of 1% of the Repairs and Maintenance Budget of the Housing Revenue Account and that the Member Budget Monitoring Working Group be requested to consider and agree any necessary limit that should apply to such delegation.
- (x) for approval of Hackney Carriage and private hire vehicle licensing driver and operator licensing under the Provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (as amended) and the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions (Act) 1976

B. Environmental Health

Authority to:-

- a) arrange for burial or cremation of deceased persons where no suitable arrangements have been made for the disposal of the body.
- b) notify the appropriate authorities in cases of infectious diseases.
- c) appoint consultant Veterinary Surgeons within the scale of fees approved by the British Veterinary Association.
- d) agree transfers and assignments of responsibility for enforcement with the Health & Safety Executive in accordance with relevant legislation
- e) carry out works at the request of an owner at his/her expenses following service of a repair notice.

- f) provide food hygiene training and make contributions to others providing training.
- g) determine all matters related to authorisations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- h) take steps to secure holdings and recover expenses incurred under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.
- i) approve premises, ambient stores, rewrapping centres and cold stores under the Meat Products (Hygiene) Regulations 1994.
- j) issue formal cautions as an alternative to the institution of legal proceedings where this is deemed the most appropriate course of action.
- k) to extend the period for compliance with statutory notices where it is considered reasonable to do so.
- l) authorise other persons to accompany Inspectors.
- m) complete agreements under Section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 with owners of premises unsuitable for re-occupation and to revoke such agreements should the premises be, in his opinion, made suitable for habitation.
- n) decide what is reasonable in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.
- o) make Home Loss payments under the Land Compensation Act 1973
- p) grant permissions pursuant to Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980, subject to prior notification being given to Members and an opportunity formed for the matter to be put before Committee for consideration and such conditions as he considers appropriate and subject to the consent of the Highway Authority.
- q) refuse an application for permission where the Highway Authority does not give consent or frontages have not given consent or where the appropriate planning permission has not been obtained or where premises are licensed for the sale of alcohol.
- r) determine applications for financial assistance for the repair, conversion, improvement or adaptation of property and to authorise payments in accordance with current Government guidance and Council policy
- s) serve deferred actions notices

C. Leisure & Client Services

Authority to:

- i) agree the opening and cleaning times of public conveniences.



- iii) undertake clearance measures in a highway emergency.
- iv) set charges for rustic products not listed in the Schedule of Charges and arrange sponsorship for the development of informal recreation.
- v) permit the use of playing fields for annual charity fireworks displays.
- vi) temporarily close play areas giving rise to serious behavioural problems.
- vii) take all action necessary under relevant legislation for the removal and disposal of broken down or abandoned vehicles.
- viii) process requests for use of Rochford Reservoir.
- ix) vary the Leisure contract inventory to a maximum of £3,100 To make decisions in respect of all matters arising from the provisions of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997

D. Housing

- a) Authority to act on behalf of the Council in relation to its statutory duties with regard to housing the homeless including the offer of accommodation from temporary or permanent housing stock as appropriate.
- b) Authority to deal with all matters related to the operational management of:
 - i) the Council's housing stock, garages and leasehold dwellings
 - ii) Finchfield Trust property
 - iii) Dutch Cottage
 - iv) nominations to Housing Association property

in accordance with the approved policy set out in the Council's Housing Policy Book and not otherwise reserved to the Council.
- c) determine matters related to the Right to Buy under the Housing Act 1985 (as amended)
- d) issue notices seeking possession and to authorise signatories to such notices
- e) attend meetings of Tenants' Associations
- f) review decisions under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and act thereon.
- g) determine appeals against the proposed refusal of any grant application which does not meet the Council's policy criteria, any subsequent appeal will be to the Local Review Board
- h) allocate housing in accordance with the council's Transfer Policy to tenants of Registered Social Landlords resident in the District
- i) enter rent and deposit guarantee agreements with letting agents/landlords

**5. DELEGATED TO THE SOUTH ESSEX HEALTH AUTHORITY
ACTING BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH OR
SUCH OTHER PERSON AS IT SHALL NOMINATE**

Authority to act on behalf of the Council in connection with:

- (a) all matters related to common lodging houses, notifiable diseases and food poisoning under the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984.
- (b) the removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention under Section 47 of the National Assistance Act 1948.

A handwritten signature, possibly of the Director of Public Health, is written in the bottom right corner of the page.

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Audit Services Committee

At a Meeting held on 29 September 1999. Present. Councillors N Harris (Chairman), G Fox, Mrs J Hall, G A Mockford, C R Morgan, P D Stebbing, and R E Vingoe.

Substitutes Councillors T G Cutmore and C C Langlands

379 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 July 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

380. BEST VALUE

The Committee received and noted the report of the Chief Executive which gave details of the timetable for implementation of Best Value to meet the latest Audit Commission guidelines. Members were reminded of the purpose of Best Value and the framework that had been established to achieve the initiative's objectives.

The Audit Commission had now issued guidelines for milestones to be reached prior to the full implementation of Best Value on 1 April 2000. The targets identified for achievement by September were as follows.

Agreement on –

- Timetable for Best Value
- Corporate objectives and policies
- Five-year rolling programme for service reviews
- Methodology for conducting service reviews
- Framework for annual performance plans

Under way –

- Pilot reviews
- Development of performance indicators, standards and targets
- Budget process for 2000/01

As at December 1999 the following additional milestones would also need to be reached

- First annual performance plan drafted
- Consultations under way with employees and stakeholders on the performance plan.

The Committee was provided with details of the action already taken and the future proposals that had been identified to enable achievement of the Commission's programme.

The Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) informed Members that forthcoming reports to Finance and General Purposes Committee concerning the Corporate Plan and Best Value would address a wide range of issues relating to Best Value. In addition, it was noted that the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions had, in the past week, issued comprehensive guidance on Best Value, a precis of which would be issued to Members. The Audit Commission had also recently issued its performance indicators, relating to Best Value, and the Council would be expected to meet both these and locally identified criteria.

381 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act

382. COUNTERING HOUSING BENEFIT FRAUD

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) which was the fourth in a series that had been agreed at a previous meeting. It examined the management of investigations and the procedure for investigating fraud, and included a 'Checklist for Action' taken from the Audit Commission Handbook. Against each of the Handbook's recommendations was shown an indicator of the extent of the Authority's existing compliance.

A number of areas were considered in more detail by the Committee as shown below:

Points 14-21 (Procedures and Administrative Support)

The Corporate Director informed the Committee that it was, following Benefit Fraud Inspectorate recommendations, intended to introduce a Management Information System to improve record keeping. It was noted that, hitherto, the Council had always exceeded D S.S recovery targets and, as a result, had received a supplementary grant which covered salary costs, however, the targets were increased each year, thereby making their achievement more difficult. The Corporate Director undertook to provide a Member with details of the gross recovery figure.

Point 21 – (Record Potentially Dangerous Addresses)

The Committee concurred with the view of a Member that the information held in respect of potentially dangerous addresses should be cross-referenced with the Crime and Disorder Strategy, and that links between the two sources of information should be strengthened. Details concerning dangerous addresses were currently circulated internally on E-mail, and the Council's Fraud Officers had frequent contact with the Police and D S.S.

Point 23 – (Investigators visiting alone or in pairs)

In reply to a Member question, the Corporate Director indicated that Officers already visited dangerous addresses in pairs. Similarly, two Officers would attend cases of suspected fraud for evidential purposes. These arrangements had already been taken into account when assessing staffing resources.

Point 32 – Use of risk analyses and fraud stock surveys to select the types of case on which to focus

The B F I had recommended that the Council should analyse and target referrals, examining the potential financial returns if fraud was to be proven. A management system would facilitate such an analysis, and Officers had examined a range of software systems.

Point 42 – (Proactive Investigations)

The Committee was given examples of proactive investigations, which included co-operation with neighbouring Authorities such as Castle Point and Chelmsford, to target a specific area and then share the resulting returns

Point 43 – (Investigators also examine appropriate cases that are no longer in payment)

The B.F.I. had suggested that the Council should pursue cases of this nature with more vigour. It was recognised that this area had hitherto received less attention, but it had been considered more important to target staff resources to cases that offered a potentially greater return

Members also noted that the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) had completed its inspection of the Benefit Office and would be reporting formally to the Committee at its Meeting on 11th January. The Corporate Director informed the Committee that the Inspectorate's report was due to be signed on 4th January 2000 by the Minister, at which point it would become a public document. If, however, there was a delay in this timetable, the report would be considered in confidential session by the Committee; in this event, Members could then agree a press release to be issued in advance of the report being publicly available. It was also noted that the external auditors would be presenting their annual report to the January Meeting and it was agreed that, consequently, it would be appropriate to begin that Meeting at 6.30pm rather than 7.30pm as usual.

In order that full consideration could be given to any BFI proposals, it would be necessary to have completed the review of the Audit Commission Handbook before that Meeting, and it was therefore agreed to accelerate the timetable in order to conclude the review at the Committee's next Meeting in November. A composite report regarding the issues arising from the review that had been identified by the Committee as requiring further consideration could be taken to the January Meeting. It would also be necessary for the Committee to consider and approve a formal prosecution policy prior to the issue of the BFI report.

Resolved

(1) That the revised timetable for completing the review of the Audit Commission's Handbook be agreed.

(2) That action concerning the Audit Commission's recommendations regarding the management of investigations, and the procedure for investigating fraud as outlined in the Corporate Director's report and reflecting the views expressed by the Committee, be taken (CD(F&ES))

383. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Chief Executive which included the following:-

- Summaries of three internal audit reports, concerning Housing Rents (2), Planning Fees (3) and Contracts – Housing and Leisure (7)
- The up-to-date copy of the monitoring document for the audit report recommendations.
- The monitoring report for the Audit Commission publications.

- Summaries of two further Audit Commission documents. "Time Waits for No-One", concerning Year 2000 planning; and "Planning to Succeed", relating to Best Value

During discussion, Officers informed/advised as follows.

- It was noted that, in respect of the Housing Rents Report, additional checks and controls had been introduced within the appropriate section, primarily to separate the input and totalling functions.
- The Head of Planning Services had devised an action plan to speed up the processing of planning applications to meet the Government's eight-week target, the outcome of which would be reported to Members as soon as meaningful results were available. Clarification of the range of information regarding planning applications that is currently circulated to Members would be provided at the next Meeting
- The Contracts-Housing and Leisure audit related to the 1998/99 Audit Plan, but the report had been up-dated and moved forward. It was intended to recruit an Officer to examine the contractors' list. Members were advised that steps had been taken to improve the quality of record keeping, part of which included ensuring consistency between the Housing and Leisure and Client Services files and the use of checklists. A corporate standard for contracts had also been developed.

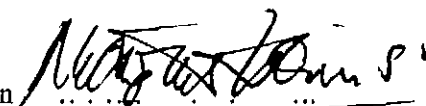
Resolved

- (1) That the recommendations from the audit reports be agreed.
- (2) That the updated information on the audit recommendations be agreed.
- (3) That the updated Audit Commission monitoring sheet be agreed
- (4) That the Audit Commission publications are acknowledged and the recommendations arising from them noted. (CEX)

384. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next Meeting, on 23rd November 1999, would begin at 6 00pm rather than 7 30pm.

The Meeting closed at 8 15pm

Chairman 
Date 23-11-99

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Member Budget Monitoring Group

At a Meeting held on 30 September 1999. Present: Councillors D E Barnes (Chairman), R E Vingoe and P F A Webster.

Apologies: Councillors V H Leach and C R Morgan

Substitutes: Councillors Mrs J Helson and Mrs W M Stevenson

45 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meetings held on 16 September and 20 September 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

46 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

47. BUDGET STRATEGY

The Group considered the confidential report of the Head of Financial Services identifying the key elements that needed to be addressed to deliver a budget strategy for the three year period commencing 2000/01 and the setting of the Council Tax 2000/01. It was noted that the report reflected the underspend situation following the closure of Accounts 1998/99 exercise and that, given the Council was only a few months into the current Financial Year, figures were very much projections. Full revised estimates would be available by the end of October.

With regard to the budget strategy, it was agreed that it would be useful if future reports could include the business rate and revenue support grant figures.

In noting the key budget issues to be determined, Members agreed that a copy of the report should be distributed to all Members of the Council to raise awareness of the key issues to be considered during the determination of the budget for 2000/01 and subsequent years. The Chief Executive provided detail of paperwork being submitted to the next Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on Best Value and advised that a key issue in addressing Best Value would be the maintenance of the Council's output and services

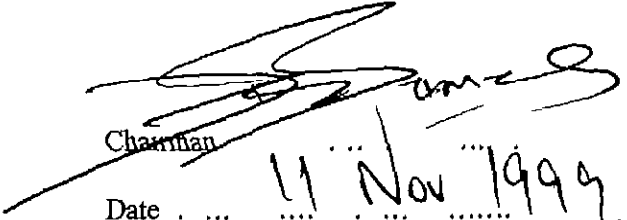
In response to a request from the Chairman, Officers provided details of the total costs associated with the Council's leisure assets. It could be recognised that costs were high for this non-statutory service area, and that, given the financial situation, it may be appropriate to consider whether this service could be delivered without costs to the Council.

Whilst it is important not to prejudice the Council's position with regard to re-tendering of the Leisure Contract, it could be possible for Officers to consult the current leisure contractor on a "without prejudice" basis. The Chief Executive indicated that Officers could also consult the Council's external auditor on the possibilities of structuring an arrangement that could deliver Best Value but remove costs

RECOMMENDED

That Officers be authorised to consult the current leisure contractor (on a "without prejudice" basis) and external auditors on the possibilities with regard to structuring an arrangement which could deliver Best Value but remove costs from the Council's Leisure Services activity (CMB)

The Meeting closed at 7 15pm


Chairman
Date . . . 11 Nov 1999