

**COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD  
SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on 21 JUNE 2007**

Present:- Councillor S V Schneider – Chairman.  
Councillors E L Bellingham-Smith, R Chamberlain, E W Hicks,  
S J Howell, J E Hudson, J E Menell, D J Morson, J A Redfern,  
D J Sadler, G Sell and C C Smith.

Tenant Forum Representative:- Mrs D Cornell.

Officers in attendance:- G Bradley, D Burrige, A Clarke, W Cockerell, M  
Cox, P O'Dell, R Millership, J Mitchell, L Petrie, G Smith and S  
Walker.

**C1 MRS JILL BOLVIG-HANSON**

The Committee stood for a minutes silence in memory of Jill Bolvig-Hanson who had been the Chairman of the Tenant's Panel for many years.

**C2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E C Abrahams,  
M J Miller and A C Yarwood.

Councillors G Sell and J E Hudson declared personal interests in agenda item 7 as members of Stansted Parish Council.

Councillor D J Sadler declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 as a member of Saffron Walden Town Council.

**C3 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2007 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**C4 BUSINESS ARISING**

**(i) Minute C69 – Museum Service: Heritage Quest Centre and Heritage Lottery Fund**

Councillor Morson reported that following the recommendation at the last meeting, the Operations Committee had decided to reduce the funding for the project from £150,000 to £100,000. He asked for a meeting of the Museum Resource Centre Project Team to be arranged in the near future.

**(ii) Minute C72 – Stansted Day Centre**

It was reported that a manager had now been appointed to the Day Centre and positive reports had been received.

C5

## **LEAD OFFICER'S REPORT**

Members received a report which set out matters arising from the Minutes that were not on the agenda. It also set out the areas covered by the Committee and the directorates responsible. It also included the agreed method of managing the agenda and meetings.

Councillor Chamberlain reported that a productive meeting had been held with Ashdon Parish Council regarding its request to lease land from the Council for the provision of a recreational area and he hoped that there would soon be a positive outcome. He then asked if the Organisational Re-Engineering Report for the Housing Service would be considered by this Committee. The Director of Operations confirmed that this was a work stream of the 2011 project that reported to Operations Committee.

Councillor Sell commented that the Committee had a lot of work to get through and it was important to ensure that the community and leisure aspects were not marginalised.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that any presentations take place prior to 7.30 pm when the meeting commences.

C6

## **GREENWAYS PLAY AREA**

The Committee was asked to agree to the play area in Greenways, Saffron Walden being transferred to Saffron Walden Town Council. Major work was needed to refurbish the area and this Council did not have the expertise and resources in-house to manage play areas. It was proposed that the area be transferred to the Town Council along with a contribution of £20,000 towards the refurbishment with the area being absorbed into their existing inspection and maintenance arrangements. The Town Council had recently agreed to this request provided that the £20,000 be transferred and officers work with the Town Council to raise the additional £30,000 that would be required to refurbish the play area.

Officers had suggested that a survey of local residents be carried out to identify if the play area was required in this location. However, Members felt that any such survey would be inconclusive as there would be residents both in favour and against a play area. It was agreed that the play area should remain in this location and the officers should consult on the type of equipment to be provided.

There was some concern about the capital contribution but it was noted that there was no revenue provision for this facility in the Council's budget and no in-house expertise to manage the facility. The additional £30,000 might be forthcoming from a bid to the Big Lottery in relation to the play strategy that was currently being prepared. Members said that this had been a long running issue and the proposal appeared to be a sensible solution.

RECOMMENDED to the Operations Committee on 28 June and Council on 31 July 2007 that:-

- 1 The area of land containing the children's play area, shown hatched at appendix 1 (and possibly a little more land if it was decided to enlarge the play area to be negotiated by officers) be leased on a peppercorn rent to Saffron Walden Town Council for a period of 99 years if the Town Council also approves of this arrangement.
- 2 A capital contribution of £20,000 be made to Saffron Walden Town Council towards the refurbishment and maintenance of the play area.
- 3 A residents' survey be undertaken to ascertain the preferred type of equipment to be provided on the site.
- 4 Officers work with Saffron Walden Town Council to raise external funding to enable a suitable range of equipment to be installed on the site.

#### **C7 DOG CONTROL ORDERS**

Further to the report to the Environment Committee in September 2006, a process of consultation with Town and Parish Councils had been undertaken in preparation for the introduction of dog control orders. A list of sites had been identified and set out in the appendix to the report. In addition to the specific sites, it was suggested that all footpaths and verges which abut roads in 30mph areas be included in the Order.

It was confirmed that additional areas in the district could be added to the Order in future. Also the orders had the advantage over byelaws in that fixed penalty notices could be issued for offences and that Police Community Support Officers were empowered to take enforcement action.

RESOLVED that formal consultation process with the public be commenced in accordance with the procedure in the Dog Control Orders (Procedures) Regulations 2006.

#### **C8 HOUSING POLICY UPDATE**

Further to the meeting in September 2006, officers had now consulted with Stansted Parish Council on the possibility of short stay managed accommodation at the Council owned site at Manor Road, Stansted. A development plan had now been agreed in partnership with the Flagship Housing group for four self contained units which could be adapted for families.

Members asked a number of questions and were informed that the next stage would be to undertake public consultation with a bid to the Housing

Corporation in September. The facility would continue to be managed by the Council.

RESOLVED that the site for short stay managed accommodation at Manor Road, Stansted be agreed and planning permission be sought.

Councillor Chamberlain commented that there were a number of ongoing housing issues that were the responsibility of this Committee but it was not possible for these to be discussed in detail at the full committee. He suggested that a Task Group be established to enable specific issues to be discussed and referred to the Community Committee for a decision.

RESOLVED that the Committee establish a Housing Initiative Task Group to be time limited to the next Annual Council meeting, to meet when required to discuss specific housing issues; the group to comprise eight Members, four from the administration, two from the opposition and two representatives from the Tenants' Forum.

#### C9 **TENANT FORUM MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2007 were received for information.

#### C10 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2007/08**

The Director of Operations informed the Committee of known issues that would be submitted to the Committee for decision and the dates that Members could expect reports. Councillor Morson said that the Committee was also responsible for health issues and this should be borne in mind for future agenda.

#### C11 **URGENT BUSINESS**

*The Chairman agreed to the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds of urgency as action was required before the next meeting of the Committee.*

##### (i) **Museum Heritage Presentation**

The Committee was advised that there would be a further presentation for town and parish councils on 4 July 2007. District Councillors were invited to attend.

##### (ii) **Supporting People Representative**

Councillor Schneider said that at the Annual Council meeting she had been appointed as the Council's representative on Supporting People, but had subsequently realised that she would not be available on the day that the meetings were held. She had therefore asked Councillor Chamberlain to

attend the meetings on her behalf until the next meeting of the Council when he could be appointed as the Council's official representative.

**(iii) Flooding at Ashdon**

Councillor Chamberlain gave a detailed account of the severe bad weather that had lead to flooding in Ashdon on 14/15 June. He thanked the District Council and the other agencies for their support, but also noted that some aspects could be improved for future incidents. He asked that, as a matter of urgency, a meeting be held with all agencies involved, including the District and Parish Councils, Essex County Council's Highways, The Environment Agency and Anglian Water to put measures in place to avoid any future problems. It was agreed that the District Council would liaise with Ashdon Parish Council to progress this meeting.

**(iv) Presentation to future meetings**

Councillor Menell asked if she could make a presentation to a future meeting about the work of the Buffy Bus.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm.