

**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held at 7.00 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES  
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 19 SEPTEMBER 2000**

Present:- Councillor A R Row – Chairman.  
Councillors Mrs C A Bayley, Mrs D Cornell, Mrs C M Dean, Mrs S Flack,  
D W Gregory, M A Hibbs, A J Ketteridge, Mrs J I Loughlin,  
Mrs J E Menell, D M Miller, D J Morson and A C Streeter.

Also present:- Councillor R P Chambers.

Also present at the invitation of the Chairman:- Councillor P G F Lewis.

Officers in attendance:- Mrs G Bradley, R Chamberlain, J B Dickson, B D Perkins,  
M T Purkiss, Mrs C Roberts, R Secker and A Stewart.

**91 PRESENTATION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ESSEX SOCIAL SERVICES –  
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT “AGE MATTERS”**

Roger Sinden and Lynn Jacobs of Essex Social Services attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the consultation document “Age Matters”, concerning services for older people.

Mr Sinden reported that, following a number of requests, it had been decided to hold a public meeting on Thursday 5 October 2000 at 7.30 pm at the Common Room, Hatherley House.

He reported that the consultation document intended to develop a joint strategy between Essex Social Services, North Essex Health Authority and South Essex Health Authority to improve the life of the older people of Essex so that they could achieve maximum levels of independence and fitness. He stated that, whilst care in the community had been a success in many aspects, it was recognised that there was a need to improve. In developing a joint strategy there was an awareness of the increasing number of older people in Essex and that the rising demand for services would stretch resources.

The intention of the review was to ensure that services were provided which elderly people wanted and valued. There were six main themes:-

- Making the best use of health and social services resources
- Understanding older people’s needs
- Care for people living at home
- Residential and Nursing Care
- Support for Carers
- Keeping people safe and independent

Mr Sinden stated that the consultation period would finish at the end of October and the Social Services Committee would consider the response at its meeting in November.

The options to be considered when consulting with residents and their relatives would be

- Retain as residential care home as going concern
- Sale as residential care home as going concern
- Lease transfer as residential care home as going concern
- Development of alternative use in partnership with others, following closure or gradually without the necessity of closure
- Closure

He concluded that this was a genuine attempt to get views and ideas from people across the county and to gauge people's views and reactions before major decisions were taken.

A number of questions were asked including delays in the assessment of people being released from hospital, the alleged inadequate amount paid by the county council for beds in independent homes, the future of respite care and the assessment of the quality of residential homes. In particular a question was asked as to whether further serious consideration should be given to the option of allowing residential homes to manage their own budgets to help avoid the high overheads imposed by the county council.

## **92 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Mr G Hallett attended the meeting to ask a question. However, he stated that his question related to the possibility of a public meeting being held and this had been answered during the presentation. He was concerned that Hatherley House would not be a suitable venue and considered that a larger venue should be found in order to enable more people to attend. He hoped that Uttlesford District would make an appropriate resolution to the county council in relation to the consultation document.

## **93 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E C Abrahams, R C Dean and G W Powers.

## **94 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Members made declarations of interest:-

Councillor Mrs D Cornell	Item about travel concessions because she has a travel concession.
Councillor Mrs C M Dean	Item about the coffee ring project – Stansted because she is a member of Stansted Parish Council.

Councillor A J Ketteridge	In the item about the consultation document “Age Matters”, because he is the coordinator of “Crossroads”.
Councillor R P Chambers	In the item about Turpin’s Bowls Clubs, because he is a member of the Club.
Councillor Mrs J E Menell	In the item on National Health Service changes, because she is a member of the Primary Care Group.
Councillor D W Gregory	In any item concerning taxis or the taxi company he worked for.

## 95 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2000 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 96 **BUSINESS ARISING**

### **Minute 40 – Response to Essex County Council Study on Decriminalisation**

The Community Development Manager reported that it was likely that the County Council would give consideration to the study report on decriminalisation at a meeting of the Executive Committee on 28 September 2000.

## 97 **“AGE MATTERS” – CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

The Housing Services Manager explained that the consultation document concerned the need to look after the health and social needs of an increasing elderly population in Essex during the next 10 years. In addition, Essex Social Services had decided to consult again on the future options for directly provided older peoples homes where these were not already the subject of bids for sale or lease. There was a link with the Hatherley House/Court, Saffron Walden situation which was the subject of a separate report on the Agenda.

Members felt that the public meeting regarding Hatherley should be held in the Council Chamber rather than at Hatherley itself where numbers were limited to 65.

Councillor M A Hibbs referred to the very rural nature of the Uttlesford community and asked that this be an integral part of the response to the paper. Councillors A J Ketteridge and Mrs D Cornell expressed the view that consideration should be given to homes such as Hatherley going “grant maintained” rather than being sold.

It was noted that there were sensible suggestions in the consultation document but that there were few facts and figures in it. Some Members expressed the view that economies of scale worked against the interests of the rural communities since costs were bound to be higher. Councillor A J Ketteridge pointed out that discrepancies were produced by targeting the supply rate for services for the elderly by postcode.

Some Members commented also on the need for resources in view of the number of untreated cases of dementia.

Councillors D W Gregory and Mrs D Cornell asked that Members' wish to retain local County Council residential care homes be included in the reply to the consultation paper.

RESOLVED that

- 1 officers in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee draft a reply to the consultation paper taking into account Members' concerns.
- 2 the Essex County Council be requested to hold the public meeting about the future of Hatherley House/Court in the Uttlesford District Council Chamber.

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### **FUTURE OF HATHERLEY COURT/HOUSE**

The Housing Services Manager explained that Officers had carried out an informal consultation exercise with the Council's tenants to explore the possibility of joint transfer of Hatherley Court and Hatherley House to a registered social landlord (RSL) to try to keep Hatherley House operating as a residential home. The tenants had voted by 13 to 1 that they wished to remain tenants of the Council and did not wish to pursue the RSL proposal.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the Committee notes the views of the tenants of Hatherley Court and notifies the County Council that there is no realistic scope for a joint scheme being established at Hatherley and
- 2 the County Council takes all necessary steps to ensure that Hatherley House is retained as an Essex County Council residential home serving the local community.
- 3 The County Council be urged to consider the option of the Home being retained by the County Council but operated by an independent management body.

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### **BUDGET STRATEGY 2001/02**

The Committee considered a report from the Budget Strategy Group giving information about the impact on shire districts of the Chancellor's comprehensive spending review for 2001/04. The Corporate Director – Finance explained the implications of the report and the timetable for the financial settlement. He drew attention to the fact that the Business Centre Managers were critically examining all budgets with a view to assessing the implications of achieving a 5% reduction. In

addition, the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 26 September would be examining all budgets.

Councillor R P Chambers informed the meeting that he would make his report to the next Policy and Resources available to all Councillors. In consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee and officers, he had identified savings of £250,000 for the next year. This was unrelated to the issue of grants or to the 5% budget reduction sought from Business Centre Managers. A change in the management structure would provide some cost reductions and other possible savings. Members would have to take difficult decisions and the shortfall would need to be overcome within 5 years.

Councillor Mrs J E Menell stated that grave concern was being caused at the Museum as a result of the report and she asked for Chairmen of Sub-Committees to be consulted as well as Chairmen of Committees. In answer to a question from Councillor Hibbs, Councillor Chambers stated that if the report were approved, the Council would give publicity to this for the benefit of Council Tax payers. Councillor Chambers considered that there would be a whole cycle of meetings during which the subject could be discussed again.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 The Budget Strategy Group meet with Business Centre Managers and Committee Chairmen to examine all budgets and to examine the impact and collate a corporate approach.
- 2 Members endorse that there is a need for expenditure reduction,
- 3 Further reports be submitted as necessary to the next cycle of meetings.

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### **TRAVEL CONCESSIONS AFTER THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000**

The Community Development Manager informed Members about changes to be made by the Transport Act 2000 in the provision of travel concessions. Budgetary provision would be necessary to meet additional costs and the Council would be obliged to provide the choice of a bus pass without charge to any resident in receipt of a state pension or being registered disabled. The report outlined the Council's options, either of which involved providing further bus passes. Councillor M A Hibbs asked that the extension of the railcard scheme to college students be pursued.

RECOMMENDED that the Council remains part of the existing countywide concessionary fare scheme and increases the budgetary provision from £32,000 to £44,800 to meet the additional costs caused by the legislation.

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### **HOUSING STRATEGY STATEMENT 2001/2005**

The Housing Services Manager submitted the Housing Strategy Statement for Committee approval for submission to the DETR.

RESOLVED that the Housing Strategy Statement 2001/05 be approved.

**102 STANSTED YOUTH 2000 - THE 'COFFEE RING' PROJECT**

The Committee received a report detailing progress made with the Stansted Youth 2000 project and recommending that £10,000 earmarked in the General Capital Programme for 2000/01 be released to enable construction of a young people's coffee bar facility at Stansted. The Leisure Manager gave details of the progress of the project and proposed development of it. The report also detailed possible future funding for the project.

RESOLVED that the £10,000 earmarked in the General Capital Programme for the development of the Stansted Mountfitchet Youth facilities to fund phase 1 of the Stansted Youth 2000 Coffee Bar project be released.

**103 NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CHANGES**

The Head of Environmental Services reported on the Uttlesford Primary Care Group's application for trust status. The report informed Members of a workshop on 17 October 2000 to discuss the trust application and its benefits to the Uttlesford community. It also described the study commissioned by Professor Peter Fentem for the potential for development of the hospital and community services in Saffron Walden. The Health Authority had agreed that no sale would take place until Professor Fentem's study was completed this autumn.

RESOLVED that responses to the Uttlesford PCG application for trust status and the report on the future of Saffron Walden Community Hospital Services be agreed by officers in consultation with the Chairman of the Community Services Committee, following the Members' Workshop on 17 October 2000.

**104 BURIAL GROUND AT GREAT DUNMOW**

The Committee received a report describing the progress of the provision of a new cemetery at Great Dunmow. Additional funding was required to meet the necessary costs, in particular of rights over an access road and car park, the difference in land value between the original assessment at agricultural values and the subsequent one and the cost of an archaeological investigation, which was a condition of the planning permission. In addition there were costs involved in closing the public footpath which crossed the land.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee be requested to make provision of a further £10,000 from usable capital receipts to cover the anticipated costs of providing the new burial ground.

**105 TURPIN'S INDOOR BOWLING CLUB – NEW CHARGES 2000/01 SEASON**

The Committee received a report on new charges to be introduced at the Turpins Indoor Bowling Club for the 2000/01 season. The club was required under the terms of its lease to obtain Council approval to the charges. The report set out an amended charging structure for approval.

RESOLVED that the proposed changes to the charging structure, as set out in the report, be approved.

The Chairman of the Committee informed the meeting that all Committee members were invited to a social evening at the club on 3 October. He reminded them that any hospitality received should be entered in the hospitality register

**106 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Services Sub-Committee held on 5 September 2000 were received.

**107 AMENITIES SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Sub-Committee held on 7 September 2000 were received.

**108 LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 18 April, 11 July and 6 September 2000 were received.

**109 HOUSING SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Services Sub-Committee held on 12 September 2000 were received.

**110 RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ESSEX**

The Committee and PR Manager informed the meeting that Councillor G W Powers was endeavouring to arrange a presentation on the activities of this organisation by Nick Shuttleworth prior to the Council meeting on 9 January 2001.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm.