

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 – COMMUNITY AND HOUSING held at  
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on  
19 JANUARY 2005**

Present:- Councillor A R Row – Chairman.  
Councillors M A Gayler, D W Gregory, R T Harris, S Jones,  
A J Ketteridge, E Tealby-Watson, A Wattebot and P A Wilcock.

Officers in attendance:- E Blackie, G Bradley, R Chamberlain, M Purkiss,  
C Roberts and J Sadler.

**S1.29 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Corke and from Tracy Turner, the new Executive Manager Strategic Performance.

**S1.30 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2004 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**S1.31 BUSINESS ARISING**

**(i) Minute S1.23 - Performance Management – Bin Collections**

The Democratic Services Manager informed the meeting that, during the first six months of the year, the number of bins missed but collected on the same day was 369 and that 55 in addition were not collected due to other factors. He added that these figures would be provided for further information at future meetings in addition to the figures the Council was required to collect.

**(ii) Minute S1.24 – Appraisals**

The Democratic Services Manager informed the meeting that 43% of appraisals had now been completed, but that not all of these had been entered in the records. The Human Resources Section had devised a system for reminding appraisers and appraisees of appointments.

**(iii) Minute S1.25 – Role of Members on outside bodies**

The Chairman referred to the decision at the last meeting that all Members representing the Council on outside bodies should prepare a short annual written report.

He said that he had written an article for the Members Bulletin urging Members to submit these reports by April.

Members felt that the value of representation on these organisations should be reviewed regularly and that more information on what each organisation did would be helpful.

**(iv) Minute S1.28 – Leisure Centres; Newport Youth Club**

Councillor Wilcock informed Members that the Essex County Council Cabinet Member had still not resolved the issue of accommodation for Newport Youth Club.

The Leisure Manager updated the meeting on action taken regarding cleanliness of the Leisure Centres.

**S1.32 STOCK OPTIONS/DECENT HOMES**

The Committee received the report of the Executive Manager Housing Services on the stock options appraisal process. He explained the Government's requirements for the carrying out of the exercise and the consultation activities which were planned.

Members noted that the exercise was intended to establish a financially viable way of managing the stock. The costs of the exercise would be £30,000 for provision of an independent tenant adviser and £15-20,000 for the services of a consultant, and would in effect be met from the Housing Revenue Account.

He said that Members would be kept informed and a Member workshop would be held.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes the current position regarding the Stock Options Appraisal.

**S1.33 TOURISM INITIATIVES**

The Committee considered a report by the Leisure Manager about initiatives in tourism being undertaken pursuant to the Quality of Life Plan. The report covered tourist signing, on-line accommodation booking, a visitor guide and a Stansted Airport guide, a poster campaign, cycling discovery maps, Turpin's Trail and a "cultural tourism" project.

Councillor E Tealby-Watson emphasized the importance of making visitor guides available at various destinations from Stansted Airport, particularly at Prestwick. She also referred to increased funding which she understood was available to improve the Flitch Way and asked if further details could be made available at the next meeting.

In relation to signage, Councillor Ketteridge was concerned that there were too many signs in some areas. Officers confirmed that town and parish Councils would be consulted and said that Essex County Council would remove redundant signs.

Councillor Tealby-Watson indicated that the report contained details of a number of good tourism initiatives for the launch of which maximum publicity should be obtained.

As regards the Essex-wide project Members requested a further report on the benefit to be received in Uttlesford.

S1.34

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Committee considered the report of the Communications and PR Officer on internal and external communications.

An addendum to the report was circulated at the meeting.

Members commented that the Communications and PR Officer had improved the coverage given by the press to Council issues.

In answer to a question the Communications and PR Officer informed the meeting that the cost of "Uttlesford Life" was between £8,000 and £10,000.

Members were anxious to assist with communications where possible.

Members were particularly concerned that the Internal Telephone Directory had not been updated since October 2003 and officers agreed to pursue this matter.

S1.35

### **HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE – 6 JANUARY 2005**

#### **Item 9 – Garage Sites Policy Review**

In answer to a question from Councillor A J Ketteridge the Housing Services Manager gave further details of the Review.

#### **Item 11 – Right of way over land adjacent to 6 Woodside, Rickling.**

Councillor Wilcock explained that he had approached officers with a view to having this decision called in, but that following discussion it had been agreed that a further report would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 9.28 p.m.