

**COMMUNITY and LEISURE COMMITTEE held at 7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 4 SEPTEMBER 2001**

Present:- Councillor A R Row – Chairman.  
Councillors Mrs C A Bayley, R J Copping, R C Dean,  
D W Gregory, Mrs J E Menell, D M Miller and G Sell.

Also present:- Councillor R P Chambers.

Officers in attendance:- N Harris, Mrs S McLagan, B D Perkins and  
Mrs C Roberts.

**CL1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E C Abrahams and  
Mrs D Cornell.

**CL2 MINUTES – COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on  
12 June 2001 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a  
correct record.

**CL3 PARKING STRATEGY WORKING PARTY**

It was noted that the item about the Minutes of the meeting of the Parking  
Strategy Working Party held on 12 July 2001 would be considered at the  
meeting of the Environment and Transport Committee on 18 September 2001.

**CL4 POLICY PRIORITIES AND BUDGET 2002/03**

The Principal Accountant explained that this report outlined the proposals for  
budget saving targets and committee cash limits arising from the review of  
priorities which had now been undertaken by the Administration. Subject to  
each committee's consideration and overall confirmation by the Council, the  
targets and the Administration proposals underlying them would be used by  
officers as the basis for preparing service plans and committee budgets for  
2002/03. The funding gap which had been projected in June required  
sustainable savings of £465,000. The Administration was proposing a  
savings total of £635,000, being £170,000 more than the June figure. The  
£170,000 represented, apart from any Council Tax increase above 2.5%, all  
that was available to meet growth items including amounts needed in support  
of the work of scrutiny committees. Page 10  
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position, any inability fully to achieve the budget targets and anything else unforeseen at this stage. The target saving for the Community and Leisure Committee was £156,000 and in consequence the committee direct costs budget target 2002/03 was proposed to be £979,000.

Councillor R P Chambers referred to the Administration's policy priorities for 2002/2003 and the proposed committee cash limits. He informed the Committee that it was important to settle the target saving at this meeting to meet the effects of the negative housing subsidy withdrawal. The question how to meet that target could be resolved later. He suggested that scrutiny committees would need £10,000 each to enable them to carry out their work. In answer to a question regarding arts development he suggested that the Council could be more proactive in its role.

It was confirmed that the Committee's decision could be questioned by the appropriate scrutiny committee. Councillor Chambers sought suggestions from Members and Officers on how to meet the cash limits.

Councillor R J Copping welcomed the early publication of the Administration's proposals this year. The deadline imposed by the Policy and Resources Committee had been met.

RESOLVED that officers prepare service plans and detailed budgets based on the stated cash limits subject to overall confirmation by the Council on 16 October 2001.

## CL5 **CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR ESSEX**

The Head of Community and Leisure Services submitted a report which commented upon the draft cultural strategy for Essex – "Celebrating Essex" and provided information about the benefit and impact of the strategy on the work of the Council. It was a government requirement. The document had been developed following extensive consultation across the county and views were now sought.

It was the view of officers that the strategy was a step in the right direction, but more could have been said in relation to transport and youth issues.

Councillors R J Copping and D M Miller stressed the importance of cost implications since there was little financial support. As a result there could be a lack of realism about the Strategy. Councillor D M Miller thought it necessary that resources be concentrated on the museum and sports centres as they made a considerable contribution to the culture of the district. Councillor R J Copping had doubts about the value of the strategy influencing the image of Essex or making a positive difference to life in the County in five years time. Business in Essex was likely to be generated by the airport rather than any strategy.

The Head of Community and Leisure Services stressed that with a cultural strategy in place, the Council was better placed to access potential

government funding. Members noted, however, that such funding was usually only half of any costs.

Whilst generally agreeing the officer comments in the report Members expressed some doubts. In addition Councillor Mrs C A Bayley identified the absence of adequate play areas.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the comments in the report be agreed with the proviso that the Committee has some doubts about the realism of achieving the Strategy and whether or not it would bring additional benefits to Essex and specifically to Uttlesford, and especially that there is a need for more play areas/open space
- 2 subject to the above, the comments set out in the report be forwarded to the consultants regarding the draft cultural strategy for Essex – “Celebrating Essex”.

CL6

## **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chairman said that any written reports would be circulated to all Members of the appropriate committee.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm