

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on 28 SEPTEMBER 2010**

Present: Councillor A Dean (Chairman)
Councillors S Anjum, R P Chambers, D M Jones,
H S Rolfe, G Sell, S V Schneider and L A Wells.

Also present: Councillors C Cant and A Walters,
Wendy Barron – representing Dunmow Day Centre;
Peter Caulfield – Essex Police Uttlesford Area Crime
Reduction Officer.

Officers
in attendance: G Bradley (Community Partnerships Manager), M
Ford (Community Safety Officer), R Harborough
(Director of Development), S Martin (Head of
Customer Support and Revenue Services), C
Roberts (Democratic Services Officer), B Tice
(Project Officer).

SC8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A M Wattebot and
A C Yarwood.

*Councillor Cant declared a personal interest in the item on Uttlesford's
Day Centres, as the Council's representative on Dunmow Day Centre.*

*Councillor Sell declared a personal interest in the same item, as he was
Chairman of Stansted Parish Council, which owned Stansted Day
Centre.*

*Councillor Chambers declared a personal interest in the item on CCTV,
as he was the Chairman of the Essex Police Authority.*

SC9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2010 were received and
signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SC10 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute SC3 – 2012 Olympics

In reply to a question from Councillor Sell, the Community Partnerships
Manager said that an approach had been made to the Essex County
Council regarding working with them on the Olympics. A meeting was
being set up.

SC11

CCTV

The Committee considered the report of the Community Safety Officer who drew attention in particular to paragraphs 15 -17 of the report, detailing action taken to try to establish the contribution made by CCTV towards crime and disorder reduction.

The Chairman welcomed Peter Caulfield, the Essex Police Uttlesford Area Crime Reduction Officer.

Councillor Chambers considered that CCTV worked very well in small towns and rural villages, forming an important part of the safety of the community and providing peace of mind.

Councillor Rolfe referred to the Government's concern to discourage organisations from promoting a "big brother" ethos by installing cameras they could not afford to run.

Councillor Walters spoke about the remarkable effectiveness of the Saffron Walden cameras in reducing vandalism. He thought the town centre cameras were very important, particularly at night on Fridays and Saturdays, and that the need for these could only increase in view of the reduced police patrols. He stressed the importance of good quality images to enable identification by night.

Peter Caulfield added that although there was no record of CCTV use in police processes, the deterrent value was undoubtedly very high and the identification evidence provided by it reduced case processing times dramatically by promoting guilty pleas.

Councillor Sell informed the meeting about the cost of operating Stansted cameras and the Community Partnerships Manager reminded the meeting that owing to the sale of the former council office at Dunmow it was necessary to relocate the CCTV system in Dunmow. Councillor Walters agreed to speak to the Chairman of the Chamber of Trade, Michael Perry, about this and Wendy Barron informed the meeting that the Dunmow Town Council had budgeted for the purchase of two cameras.

Members were in agreement that the effectiveness of cameras had been established by the evidence put before the Committee and there was a consensus that the review had been useful.

SC12

LEAD OFFICER'S REPORT/ACTION LIST

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Customer Support and Revenue Services and discussed the possibility of the Council being represented at the 2011 Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference.

Members recognised that scrutiny training was important for the Council especially in view of the possible change to cabinet government. It was felt that a decision on attendance should be taken in 2011 in the light of the comprehensive spending review.

The progress shown in the committee action list was noted.

SC13

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF UTTLESFORD DAY CENTRES

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Operations on the review of the Council's day centres following the decisions at the last meeting of the Committee to explore the feasibility of providing an enhanced co-ordinating resource for the day centres initially on a pilot basis with a view to the resource becoming self-sustaining, to make a comparative analysis of the management agreements between the day centres and to make recommendations for a revision of the management agreements.

Councillor Rolfe commented that the further report appeared helpful.

Members invited the views of the representatives present from the Dunmow Day Centre, who informed the meeting that the management committee did not support the proposal that the day centres should jointly fund a coordinator from lettings income. Councillor Cant added that the Dunmow Day Centre was booked for most of the week so the opportunity for increasing use was quite small. Importantly, the time of the volunteers on whom the Centre depended was being taken up in doing what they least liked, administration, risk assessments, fire drills and paperwork and it was with this type of task that the centres wanted support from council staff.

Councillor Chambers suggested that the situation needed a part time member of staff to go into each day centre for one day in the week.

Councillor Rolfe suggested that the revised recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee were needed. Members were not clear what re-branding was being suggested.

Councillor Schneider asked about the current management agreements and their implications for new arrangements in the future. Councillor Cant asked that day centres be kept informed of developments.

RESOLVED

- 1) The report be noted
- 2) The Chairman draft recommendations arising from the scrutiny review.

SC14

LIBERATING THE NHS – EQUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

The Director of Development reported on the Government's proposals for the NHS by reference to a presentation by Catherine O'Connell, the Chief Executive of NHS West Essex and he referred to the lack of clarity in the proposed accountability arrangements about the role of district councils. He undertook to find out how other organisations in west Essex proposed to respond.

RESOLVED that NHS West Essex be invited to address the next meetings of the Council's Area Forums.

SC15

DECISION LISTS

Members considered the decision lists from the meetings of the Environment Committee on 8 June and 7 September, the Community and Housing Committee on 10 June and 9 September and the Finance and Administration Committee on 17 June and 16 September 2010.

Members decided that, unless there was a constitutional requirement for it, this standard item should not appear on the agenda of the Committee in future.

Members also asked for advice to be circulated reminding all members about the details of the call in procedure.

The meeting ended at 9.10pm.